

The Delusion of Disbelief

Discussion Questions

Chapter 1: The Four Horsemen

1. While each of the atheist writers—Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris—attacks religion in general, their criticism seems specifically directed at Christianity. Why might that be?
2. Author David Aikman calls the four atheist writers the Four Horsemen. How is this a fitting label?
3. Author David Aikman attributes the current rise in popularity of these atheist writers and their ideas to a number of factors. What are these factors? Can you think of other reasons that might contribute to such an upsurge?

Chapter 2: The Attack of the Four Horsemen

1. It seems clear that although each of the Four Horsemen brings a different perspective to the argument, their common goal is to convert believers into atheists. From their perspective, what would this accomplish?
2. Explain Christopher Hitchens's comment that "I would not prohibit [religious faith] even if I thought I could."

Chapter 3: They Don't Like God

1. Author David Aikman says that "the overwhelming impression one gets from reading Dawkins, Dennett, Harris & Hitchens is that they are asserting the nonexistence of someone they sort of know—or at least think they know *about*—but whom they dislike venomously . . . clandestinely admire . . . or simply would not care to become acquainted with if he did exist." What is it that these authors most dislike about the God they claim does not exist?

Chapter 4: The Science Problem

1. What is a *meme*? How does the meme theory relate to this discussion of religion and atheism?
2. Why do the atheist writers all cite the cargo cults in their books?
3. In what ways are science and faith intertwined, both now and throughout history?

Chapter 5: The Problem of Wicked Atheists

1. Richard Dawkins does not believe that atheism influences people toward evil. Do you agree or disagree?
2. If the majority of people were to accept atheism, what might that mean for society at large?
3. Why did Friedrich Engels say that the person he most hated in life was English evangelist Charles Spurgeon? What did the Christian movement mean for people like Engels and Karl Marx?
4. Author David Aikman explains how the Soviet Union's attempt to eradicate religion actually led to a new form of worship: the cult of Lenin. To what do you attribute this shift, and what are the implications of such devotion?

Chapter 6: The Christian Worldview Is the Foundation of Liberty

1. Author David Aikman says that atheism, when adopted wholesale by any government or society, has very profound and disturbing consequences for political liberty. Consider how this might be true, and think of examples that support this statement.
2. What evidence does author David Aikman give to show that America's Founding Fathers were *not* atheists?
3. George Washington clearly linked religion and morality with political prosperity. In what ways do you see faith influencing (either good or bad) political order and progress throughout history and even today?
4. Why is using the Treaty with Tripoli to support the argument that the United States is not a Christian nation a flawed approach?
5. To what might you attribute the fact that Christianity is now the fastest-growing religion in China?
6. A young Chinese journalist made this statement: "Faith in God as Lord is the beginning of freedom." Do you believe this to be true? Why or why not?
7. When adopted as an official government philosophy, why is atheism dangerous to human freedom?