

The Road to Deism

56 People Explain Their Journey to Deism From Atheism, Christianity, Islam, Mormonism, Baha'i Faith, Agnosticism, Jehovah's Witness - including clergy members from these "revealed" religions

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World Union of Deists

Box 4052

Clearwater, FL 33758

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Contents

Introduction

From Christianity and Through Religious Violence via al-Qaeda to Deism

From Communist Inspired Atheism to Deism

From Pentecostal Christianity and Through Profound Pain to Deism

None to Deist

From Methodist to Deist

From "Born Again Christian", to Baptist Minister, to Atheist, to Deist in 65 Years

The Road of Curiosity Brought Her to Deism

A Generic Christian Freed From Cerebral Slavery by Deism!

You can, "keep the faith", I'll take the facts! The story of one man's leap FROM faith!

Great Minds Do Think Alike

From Practicing Catholic to Deist

From Pretending to be a Christian to Being a Real Deist

From Islam to Deism

A Searcher Connects With Deism

I Found Freedom From Thinking I Was Going to Hell

Deism is Free From Fear and Guilt

Deism is Scientifically Friendly

At 82 Brought to Deism by *The Age of Reason*

My Path to Enlightenment

A Light Switched On! (Deism helps a victim of child abuse)

No “Revelation” Required

From Islam to Deism

God-given Reason Guided Her to Deism

From End-Timer to Deist

Awe of Nature Lead to Deism

From Baptist to Deist

From Lutheran, to Catholic, to Atheist, to Deist

The Bible Just Didn’t Add Up

From Mennonite to Deist

From the Church of God to Deism

Catholic to Deist

Belief in God Hit Me Like a Ton of Bricks

I Knew I Was a Deist

Deists Need to Come Out of the Closet

I’m Completely at East With My Belief in God

Now That I am a Deist . . .

. . . a Journey of Liberation, Intelligence and Joy

I Have Always Thought That “God Is” and That Is Enough

Atheism Didn’t Suit Me

Now My Mind Is Free and Happy

You Sound Like a Deist

I am Now an Ardent Deist

The Age of Reason Has Come to This Searcher

I Was a Deist Without Knowing It!

Happy to Find People Who Believe as I Do

. . . the One Belief System That Actually Makes Sense!

. . . Doors of My Mind Have Continued to Open

From Seventh Day Adventism to Baptist to Deism

I Discovered I Was a Deist and Much More

Accepting the Existence of Nature's God

From Baha'I Faith to Deism

From Jehovah's Witness to Deist

From Baptist Deacon to Deist

**A Spiritual and Intellectual Journey From Momonism
to Deism**

**From Roman Catholic to Evangelical/Fundamentalist Christian
to Deist**

From None to Deist

Introduction

Deism is the belief in God based on the application of your reason on the designs and laws of Nature. To a Deist the designs point us to our Designer. Deism's reliance on God-given reason requires Deists to reject all unreasonable claims, even those made by religions.

The European Enlightenment saw the growth of Deism reach new levels. Enlightenment thinkers such as [Leonardo da Vinci](#), [Voltaire](#) and Rosseau were Deists. Voltaire believed the existence of God is so obvious that there is no need for faith. He wrote, "What is faith? Is it to believe that which is evident? No. It is perfectly evident to my mind that there exists a necessary, eternal, supreme, and intelligent being. This is no matter of faith, but of reason."

In America Deists such as [George Washington](#), [Thomas Paine](#), [Thomas Jefferson](#), etc., played major indispensable roles in the American Revolution. Two Deists who were active in the American Revolution actually wrote books about Deism. Ethan Allen wrote [*Reason: The Only Oracle of Man*](#) and Thomas Paine wrote [*The Age of Reason*](#).

Deism's constant promotion of reason has a very beneficial influence in the lives of individual Deists. This book offers 63 examples written by individual Deists. They tell their story, sometimes in as little as one paragraph or up to several pages, of where they were prior to learning about Deism and how Deism has brought about positive change in their thinking and in their lives. Six of them are former members of the clergy.

These pages are written by people from across the religious/spiritual spectrum. Atheists, Agnostics, New Agers, Baha'i Faith, fundamentalist Christians and Muslims all tell their story of evolving out of their past religious beliefs and into Deism. One lady was a victim of religious violence brought about by an al Qaeda bomb attack in London which crippled her and killed her husband. Another person was a victim of sexual abuse whose wounds were made worse by the teachings of the Bible and Christianity. After he learned of Deism these deep and damaging wounds were healed. The positive potential of Deism is truly beautiful and unlimited!

I would like to thank all the Deists who took the time to write about their road to Deism. I hope their writings will touch many other people and will inspire people to learn more about Deism and the good it does.

Progress!

Bob Johnson
Founder and Director
World Union of Deists
www.deism.com

Why Deism?

From Christianity and Through Religious Violence via al-Qaeda to Deism

by Linda

I am a Deist living in England and saw what you wrote about revealed religions not being about God. I love Nature and believe in the God of Nature. I am a survivor of the 7/7 bombings in London which also killed my husband, injured some of my friends and put me in a wheelchair and pain for life. I struggled for a long time trying to find a meaning to it all and tried to be an Atheist but the one reason I could not succeed in doing that is because I looked at Nature and thought there must be a Creator - all this must have been created by a Creator. There could not be design without a Designer. But I couldn't find any way to believe in God without religions. So I studied them all.

It was religion specifically Islam, (although I must admit they were fanatics), who put me in my wheelchair and pain. And for that they think they will be rewarded by having entrance to Paradise. Well of course I could not believe in that religion because any God must be a God of love and there is no love in that way of thinking. Then I looked at Christianity - but there is no love in that either because what sort of God would require the sadistic blood sacrifice of his own son to save the world and then send all those who failed to believe in him to hell to be tortured for eternity? Then I looked at the Eastern religions with their doctrine of karma and their caste system and saw that treat the dalits, (outcasts) with utmost cruelty and barbarism. I looked at all these religions and all I saw in all of them was superstition, hatred and control. And I still believed in a God of love.

I also believed in scientific medicine and not faith healing or all that gobbledegook. But still I could not find how God could fit into that because a lot of scientists are against religion. But the more I studied science the more I saw order behind things. Science being more the evidence of a God than proving that there is no God. And then I came across Thomas Paine and Deism and suddenly it all started to make sense.

I got blown up because I was in the wrong place at the wrong time and got pain because of scientific reasons because my body was injured. I wasn't being punished because I didn't believe and because I wasn't an agent of Satan and or his demons, (which don't exist anyway). I didn't get hurt because of karma and had lived a bad life in a previous existence. I was just in the wrong place at the wrong time.

And there is a God - but one of reason who has given me a brain to think with so I can find a way around my problems together with other people who can think such as doctors and the people who research and produce medicines to stop pain and this is the way forward. Not following the understanding of religions from the dark ages who fill people with superstition based on fear and control. I am glad I had enough belief in the power of my own intelligence and knowing that this was given to me by God to help me go forward.

Your website has been one of the things that has pulled me through my darkest hours and I thank you for it. And God for my God given reason to make sense of things where people practise their own darkness by relying on revealed religions and faith even when they demonstrably do not work. Thank God for reason which has shined like a beacon to me when I was trying to make sense of things. And thank God to him for creating it so it could be a path by which we could come to know him more.

Why Deism?

From Communist Inspired Atheism to Deism

My name is Henry C. and I am 16 years old.

I am a second generation Chinese American. My parents were victims of the state-induced atheism that was prevalent at the time in 20th century unenlightened Communist China. Up until the age of twelve, I was told that there is no God, and I believed it.

However, at that point I began to question what was told. I realized that my arguments against the existence of a God basically took the form of "You were told by your parents that there is a God. Why do you have to believe it?" I realized how hypocritical this was, having myself been force-fed "There is no God" by my own parents.

I began to question. I read enlightenment philosophy, and tried to understand it as well as a 12-year old possibly could. I read on scientific explanations for the nature of the universe. I practiced debates with both atheists and theists to check the worth of their arguments.

By the age of fourteen I was absolutely certain that atheism was wrong. Scientific explanations for the origin of the universe, taking the form of theories such as that of strings, seemed way too exotic to make any sense. Occam's Razor lead me to the conclusion that there must be a God.

Of course, we have all heard the reasons why revealed theism does not make any sense, so I will not repeat it. I'm not going to reword [The Age of Reason](#). I was of the impression that there is a God that created the universe, and may or may not interfere with its workings from time to time.

I had not yet declared myself a Deist, not having heard that term yet. I called myself a "reasonable theist", and this was what was posted on my Facebook profile up until a little more than a year ago, when I happened upon the term "Deism". After a sleepless night reading the majority of articles on this [site](#), I am now proud to call myself a Deist.

Why Deism?

From Pentecostal Christianity and Through Profound Pain to Deism

by Bev Little

I am a late-comer to Deism, having only discovered it some five years ago. Only, I wasn't aware of what it was that I found. I was born and reared in a strict fundamental, Pentecostal home. Our lives revolved around church, so it was only natural that I find a local church to attend when I left home. I married, and upon the diagnosis of my first child to Gaucher Disease Type Two, (a rare genetic enzyme disorder), that I returned to a local church, searching for a reason. I thought the answers were to be found through the church. I was told it happened, because of some supposed sin I had committed. At first, I was foolish enough to fall for it. I became heavily involved in church activities, after the diagnosis of my other two children with Gaucher's, and after the death of my first son.

I became confused, between all the miracles written in the Bible, and compared it to my children, believing the dogma taught in the church. Many prayers were said for Jesus to heal my children. Anointed prayer cloths were placed upon my children. I was told to pin the prayer cloths on my children, and to trust, and believe that Jesus was all powerful, to perform miracles of healing. This was in the 1970's, Gaucher's was even more unheard of than it is today. So, I was full of faith, wanting to believe, when I was told my children would be healed, and that they could be a testament to the power of Jesus' name.

With each visit to the doctors, test results were growing more and more negative. I reported this to the church, and the pastor called the congregation around myself, and my children. Bibles were placed upon us, and 'demons' were ordered to come out of my children. I wasn't certain demons were in them, and took offense to this.

One by one, I laid my children to eternal rest, and moved on with my life. When I asked the pastors why weren't my children healed like they all said would happen, I was told I didn't have enough 'faith' to believe in a miracle; therefore, I should not question why the healings never came. To question why God chose to take them, the pastor said was blasphemy, and I should just accept the fact that God knew what was best for my children. I was told God probably knew if they were healed, they might have grown up to be criminals; so it was best this way. I was deeply hurt, and rebelled against those words.

I went on with my life, disclaiming, against everything the church told me, from that point on, although it took years for me to quit, totally. I gradually quit participating in church activities first, by not giving any more money in the offering plate. I began to study the Bible on my own, going from one religion to another, in search of a different point of view. I discovered they all

believed in the Bible miracles, without proof outside of the church, and no outside references, that I could check into. I became depressed, and fearful of dying without salvation.

The clincher came for me, one Sunday evening at church, when an altar call was given, as a woman began to "speak in tongues". Since I was sitting in the back, as an observer, trying to get the last ounce of courage to turn my back on my religion, this woman began to say the same phrase over and over. I perked up my ears to what she was saying. The church was as excited as this poor woman, and they believed she was being filled with the Holy Spirit, and I began to chuckle to myself. I suddenly knew her strange words. She was constantly repeating one word, over and over in my Cajun dialect of French. It was then I discovered, this too, is a hoax of false religion. She was saying, "sausage, sausage". I walked out of that church, turning my back on revealed religion, forever. Something wasn't adding up, and I was determined to get to the bottom of it.

I got a computer, hooked up to the Internet, (something the pastor didn't want the congregation to do), and I was amazed at the info out there. I took it all with a grain of salt. But one day, as I was studying the American Founders, I chanced upon Thomas Paine's Age of Reason. I couldn't read enough about our Founders, and discovered the majority of them were Deists. It was the first time I had ever heard this word.

My curiosity got the best of me, and I mentally drank in everything about Deism that I could get my hands on. I suddenly realized, I wasn't crazy after all. The questioning I had done through the years was in fact, Deism. It didn't take me long to figure out, after I got the answers to Gaucher's, that Jesus couldn't heal, because it was genetic. I and my ex-husband share a common ancestor, from 300 years ago, and I was not to find this out until 1993. It wasn't sin the children or I committed, but genetics, plain and simple. Finally, putting the loose ends of the puzzle together, helped a great deal to unconfuse my mind. I gradually de-programmed myself of all the unfulfilled teachings of the church that I had been taught. It angered me that none of the church pastors, through those awful years, knew enough about their Bible to tell me the truth.

Connecting my own beliefs of the Creator with Deism has strengthened me, spiritually. I no longer have to fall for half truths. Christianity has failed me, in more ways than one. I no longer need to read a book, that can't be proven outside of its pages to the existence, or divinity of Jesus. All I need to do, is to enjoy the beauty of Creation around me, to know God exists. But, not in the way man would have us believe. When I was a Christian, the Bible was causing me to hold hatred for other peoples, because of what it teaches. I could not reconcile the hatred between those pages, with a loving Creator.

Christianity added much grief to my soul, when my children were on the earth. Deism, has answered all my questions, and has brought the peace I so desperately searched for. I wrote a book, "[Mustard Seed Mountain](#)", about my experiences with Gaucher's Type Two, and about the battle I had with my soul, in Christianity. In my book, I credit Deism for my sanity. I looked at

that verse in the Bible, of Matthew 17:20, metaphorically, and not as giving credit to Christianity at all.

Today, I see the Creator's handiwork all around me, and I can truly appreciate it for what it really is. Revealed religion separates Creation from the Creator. Each revealed religion claims to have the answers for mankind, and none of them do. It is nothing more than divide and conquer, mass mind control. I will be eternally grateful for finding Deism. Instead of being judgmental, towards someone for their beliefs, I am tolerant and understanding of why they believe the things they do. And when religion comes up in a conversation, I tell them how I found Deism. It is their choice if they choose to look into it, as I have. And if they don't, it's never pushed on them because I know we are all our Creator's children, and Deism is tolerant of all. I too, once was blind, but now I see.

Why Deism?

None* to Deist

by Anonymous

Compared to many people, I am rather young-in my early 20's, and yet I realize that, without a doubt, I am a Deist.

I grew up in a middle-size town in Michigan, with a single mother looking after me. She was very devout, so every Sunday, we went to a church that still operates today. I was fine with the Christian religion until I was about 13, when my mother told me that if I did not want to go to church, I did not have to. At first, I took her up on her offer to sleep in on Sunday-and wow, it felt great! But then I began to look into other religions. And each time, I was confused-every religion claimed to be the 'only one', the one through which their followers would be allowed into heaven. And not only that, they would be the ONLY ones allowed. Baffled, I decided to read the Bible more closely-and became even more confused at all of the contradictions inside. Why would a loving god, who I had been told loves us with all he is, condemn those who didn't follow him a certain way to burn forever in hell? Why would a loving god even create a hell (for it's mentioned that god created it as a place for Satan) in the first place? And why would a loving god allow a deceiver to even exist and corrupt his people?

I asked, and I was told that it was that god gave us free will to choose. But even then, I realized that made no sense-because again, if you did not chose the correct way, you would burn forever. The Bible also talked about following god as a 'Servant', and that he was Lord-and yet I was told the Bible said everyone was equal! How can we be equal if we are not considered equal to this 'loving' god, but only as Servants to do His will? And for that matter, I had doubts about this 'loving' god. Take the story of Job, where a man who was God's greatest follower became a subject to a BET between God and Satan. He lost everything, and he mourned, and he asked god why. Afterwards, when he had gotten everything back double, he was told not to question. How could that be loving?

Or how it talked about the Egyptians-that god would "harden Pharaoh's heart" so he would not permit the Jews to leave, and thus PUNISHED innocent people with plague, torment, and the loss of children! All because GOD HIMSELF must have wanted to see them punished? How could you then say that God loved everyone-because it becomes obvious through readings of the bible that the biblical god does NOT love everyone-he only loves his followers.

Not only that, but I have been witness to what terrible things so-called 'Christians' will do in the name of their god. From hypocrisy (something the bible says god hates) to shaming to outright hate and disgust towards people who will not conform to their religion. My mother, who is honestly more of a Deist in her thinking than she will admit, allowed a friend of mine who was a

lesbian inside her house, hugged her, and told her she loved her for who she was. When she recounted this to some of her church members, they recoiled-actually recoiled!-in horror and said 'but how could you! Aren't you afraid that her sexual thinking will rub off on your daughter?' As if homosexuality was a disease instead of a sexual preference, and that her having it meant that she was infected and below them! I was once even told that my drawing style, which was modeled after the style of Japanese animation, was a part of the devil's work, and that it was sinful.

On the topic of sin, the more I read about it, the more I realize sin and the shaming of it was illogical. Some was common sense-it's not right to kill or steal, but not because it was a sin said by some kind of wrathful-yet-loving-god, but because it was simply WRONG! Some made no sense to me-why was having sex out of marriage a sin? Sex felt good, and I'd experimented with myself, but even some books I read said THAT was a sin! How could it be a sin if the act is pleasurable and we are made to feel that pleasure? For that matter, why was it a sin to watch other people have sex? Because it made you have pleasurable feelings and want to experience that pleasure? Or that the first sin was eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge? The implications of that were frightening-that their god NEVER INTENDED for us to think, to know? That ultimately, what their god wanted was mindless SERVANTS, and now that we were not mindless, we had to MAKE ourselves be mindless servants to him again? I did not want to follow a god that did not want me to use my natural reason!

I'd also heard other arguments: that marriage cannot happen without god, that morals cannot happen without god, that because we are flawed, sinful creatures, we must supplicate ourselves to this wrathful, jealous, 'loving' being and APOLOGIZE for our very natures that was said that HE created within us! I also knew that any new thing, most Christians opposed-Pokemon, Yugioh, Harry Potter-without even LOOKING at the material they claimed was of the devil, blindly following what their pastors had told them instead of actually using their OWN REASON to decide if it was bad for their kids or not!

As an intelligent, rationally-thinking woman, I decided I wanted nothing to do with organized religion-any organized religion. I had found through my studies that religion seemed to be a very, VERY good way of controlling and subjugating people, and ultimately making them do what the higher ups wanted them to do. I Looked and looked, but nowhere could I find the truth I had been searching for-instead, I only found fear and hate mongering. I still believed in God-a creator of the universe, and I believed he merely watched us-not interfering in our day to day lives, as so many Christians say, but watched and guided when necessary. Not so much a 'loving god' (although as I've outlined before, calling god 'loving' also makes me think it will be wrathful and jealous), but at least a benign presence. I loved the world around me, and I loved nature so much that I wanted to know everything I could about it, and I still try to this day. And each little scrap of fact merely confirmed what I believed-SOMEONE had to make this beautiful world around me, or at the very least set it into motion. I continued to pray to god-not to ask for things, but to say thank you for this glorious, complex world of nature around me.

However, I was not aware of Deism. For years, I merely thought I was the unusual one in my beliefs, and that when asked about my religion, I would say I believed in God but not in religion. Then one day, traveling on the Internet, I happened to click on a banner. That led me to the site, and when I read what Deism was about, a rush of excitement ran through me. This was it. This was what I believed, and there were others out there who believed it with me! The joy I felt as I read the site-read what Deism was-nearly knocked me over. I was not alone! I finally had a name for what I believed!

Although I'm very new to Deism, I want to spread this good news-that you don't have to be shackled and imprisoned by what religion says you must do to love God. That you can follow your own natural inclinations-and that even if you are homosexual (or omnisexual, as I identify myself as) you can still love God. The amount of freedom is amazing-and it is the true blessing a God would give. You don't have to follow a certain set of rules how to dress, how to eat, how to live your life. God wouldn't care about those things. Instead, live your life in happiness, in peace, and in joy for everyone and the world around you. Life is beautiful, and never forget that! And thank God, I am not alone in realizing it!

*"Nones" are people who believe in God but not in religion. They hold Deistic beliefs but have probably never heard of Deism. A [religious survey](#) shows there are about 34 million "nones" in the U.S. alone.

Why Deism?

From Methodist to Deist

by Julie

As a little girl I attended Sunday school at our local Methodist Church. I always have felt close to God and early on believed that following a revealed religion was the only way to be close to him. As I grew older and began to notice the hypocrisy within all revealed religions, I began to question God's existence and whether the whole concept of a great and loving creator was a man made lie to control us.

I could not accept the virgin birth of Christ, I could not accept that he was half man, half God, I could not accept that humanity was to be damned eternally if we did not conform to the threats and control of the church. My reason told me that these were conditions imposed by man, not God. How could a supposed God appointed representative in the guise of a priest or pastor, relieve a person of their wrong-doings in his name?

I had so many questions and set myself to ask people of different religions their interpretations of what God is to them through their set of indoctrinated beliefs. Instead of making me feel closer to God, the more I heard the more I felt I could not believe in such a cruel judgmental and vindictive being. He loves you on terms, he judges you constantly, yet he manages to throw out a miracle or two to those lucky enough to be considered worthy by him. Why? How? What about ALL sick children? Don't they all deserve a miracle? My heart was heavy and still I searched. Blood transfusions are wrong, all the dead will rise when Jesus returns? What a mess. No wonder so many dreadful atrocities have been committed in the name of God and Allah. After all, if man can make the rules and then change them to suit the occasion, all the time saying it is the word of God, we have no hope of a united and loving earth.

So I began calling myself "spiritual". I believed in God, but had no category for myself. I believed in being good for the sake of being good, no promise of reward at the end. I believed God gave us Earth and all that pertains to life, and when I looked outside at rain, or a beautiful sunset, or clouds scurrying across the bluest of skies I knew I had truly found Him. I didn't need a building, or a book of myths, or a threat of hell. I didn't need promises of heaven or being controlled by fear and bigotry. I have God in every part of my everyday life, from the birds chirping in the morning, to the wonder of new medical breakthroughs I hear about on the news. I know that God gave us the knowledge and reason and here on earth we can have heaven we all want.

But I still didn't know about Deism. I didn't know if others thought like me, or if I was alone. I wanted to investigate my kind of "religion" and see if anyone shared my thoughts. It was then I discovered that not only wasn't I alone, but my beliefs had a name. It wasn't a religion, but a

sharing of love for God our creator. No threats, no right or wrong, no ridiculous myths or scaremongering. At last I was at peace. I have found Deism.

Why Deism?

From "Born Again Christian", to Baptist Minister, to Atheist, to Deist in 65 Years

by Richard Conner

Every one of us is a product of our environment. We are shaped by our parents, our friends, and the country or section of the country in which we spend our formative years. I am no different. Born in southern California, my mother, my grandparents, and my uncle, who was seven years my senior, shaped me and placed me in a little box that was called "Christian" first and "Baptist" a close second.

Another influence on my religious life was a very fundamentalist group called "The Fisherman's Club." Consisting of males only, I attended weekly meetings from the age of fifteen, and participated in projects that involved the distribution of Christian literature and talking to people about "being born again." When I see the little fish emblem on the back of cars, which is the emblem for mainstream, evangelical Christianity today, it reminds me of my experiences in that club - the motto taken from Jesus saying, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

It was quite evident that I had no chance to think anything different than what these influences had on my life. That is until I began thinking for myself. Then my life began to take a little turn. But it wasn't going to come easy. There were still many obstacles to overcome. Deeply imbedded superstitions are hard to erase. There was a glimmer of hope, however, that came from another source. This turned out to be the single most important influence that led me into the light of Deism. I have always had some doubts about many of the teachings found in the Bible, even when I was attending theological school. Even when I was in the pulpit, much of what I was saying didn't ring true. There were too many episodes and stories found in the scriptures appeared to be myths, superstitions, dogmas, doctrines that didn't make sense. However I could not break away from those having the most influence on my life. My uncle, a missionary to China prior to the Communist takeover, was the most influential to my Christian beliefs. So, being a "committed Christian," I felt "led by the Lord" to attend a Christian college. After two years in a secular school, El Camino College, in Lawndale, California, I enrolled in, and eventually graduated from one of the most religiously fundamentalist Christian schools in the country... BIOLA College. Well, maybe Bob Jones University could give it some competition. I was ordained as a "minister of the gospel" from the First Baptist Church in Torrance, CA in 1954. Still being confused about a lot of things, I began thinking somewhat on my own again (a dangerous habit, according to mainstream religion). However, some of my very fundamentalist teachings planted by my relatives, the Fisherman's Club and BIOLA College kept following me. Still feeling that the ministry was my calling, I accepted an offer to be the assistant director of a Christian youth center in east L.A.

Following ventures as a family counselor with the Salvation Army in Seattle, and Baptist minister, my life took another course. I decided I could no longer be true to myself if I remained in the ministry. I became program director of a YMCA in Culver City. The YMCA, now referred to as the "Y", is probably more Deist than Christian. This was the beginning of a different path for me and led to a career I could be happy with. I became a certified Y director and had positions in California, Idaho and Washington over a period of 30 years. The more liberal attitude of the Y, with its emphasis on doing the right thing, and helping our fellow man, gave me more to think about and a chance to move away from conservative Christianity. Especially was this true in the camping program, where we had activities to teach good principles to the campers that were in our care. And though we often referred to the teachings in the Bible and spoke of Jesus and God in the same breath, emphasizing life's principles were more important than dwelling on the merits of salvation, the hope of heaven and the fear of a fiery hell. The challenges we offered to the campers in accepting and developing better principles in their lives were through simple ceremonies each year, called the "Raggers Society." These ceremonies took campers through many steps of growth, and were very Deistic in nature.

As I look back now, it is remarkably clear to me that it was definitely the Y chapters in my life that led me into the light of Deism. How did I not see this before! For a long while, thinking that if I could just be an Atheist or Agnostic, believe in the teachings that led me to a better life, I could be happy with that. This was not satisfactory to me. There must be another answer, my reason said. The overwhelming evidence that there is a God, defied my thinking otherwise. Previously, it never dawned on me that there was an alternative to being a Christian or Atheist/Agnostic. Thank God I found that alternative. It is true that false influences can easily affect one's life. The good news is, that if you use God given reason, which is available to all, those influences can be overcome. Now I gladly consider myself to be a Deist, (finally free) believing that there is one true God who created a perfectly designed world, that can readily be seen each day, and which validates His eternal existence. The fallacies of the revealed religions, (including Christian) which have so long kept me on the dark path of superstition, not allowing me to see the god-given road of reason, are gone forever from my life. No longer do I have to carry the weight of apologizing for the myths, contradictions and distortions of the character of God as revealed in the Bible. Feeling more alive, free and content than ever before, there is absolute contentment in my life. Thank God for what I have found in Deism.

Why Deism?

The Road of Curiosity Brought Her to Deism

by Jennifer D.

"But there are so many bibles and religious beliefs, how do I know which one is correct?"

This was the question I asked in Junior High, when I first began to explore different religions. Although I began questioning religion right around the same time I questioned the existence of Santa and the Easter Bunny, curiosity stayed with me, and I felt the need to know. The area where I was living at the time was Southern Baptists, so of course that was the very first church I had attended. After that, I spent many years attending services of every denomination, researching and gathering as much information as possible so I could be sure that I was making the "right" decision. I didn't find the answers and enlightenment I was searching for, instead I was left more confused than ever. So I went back to where I started, the Southern Baptist church, and asked them which religion was the TRUE religion? Which texts, beliefs and thoughts were RIGHT? "Ours, of course!" was the response, with a look of complete disbelief. "But how do you KNOW?" I pressed on. "You just do, you just have faith and believe." Of course that is what they said. Turns out it was what they all said. I found contradictions everywhere, it seemed that no matter which religion I choose, no matter which belief system I followed, someone, somewhere would think I had it completely wrong, and that I may very well end up in hell for it.

It didn't help that I had many family members that were strict Christians, who thought it was their purpose in life to save me from the grasp of the devil. I tried to explain, I don't BELIEVE in the devil, I don't BELIEVE in hell! I do, however, believe in God, without a doubt in my heart or mind. I just could not fathom God as this vengeful being that would punish me to an eternity of damnation for making a wrong decision or not agreeing with a certain belief system. Believing in God, to them, was not enough. I had to take Jesus as my savior, I must be baptized. I must attend church every Sunday and read the Holy Bible. I was young, I was scared, I believed I had to make it my life's mission to become one of the 144,000 people allowed into heaven. That was a number my grandmother had burned into my mind, another thing I was not allowed to question, I was just supposed to believe. I was not comfortable with the thought that out of all the people in the world to have ever lived, only 144,000 would be allowed into heaven no matter what. That is such a small number compared to the world's population. Would securing my place among that select few mean taking someone else's place? Would my admission to heaven mean sending Johnny DoGoodAlways or Mary PraysEveryday to hell? "Not to hell, necessarily, but to roam the earth as a lost soul." I was told. Well, I was not okay with this either, and did not think that anyone should be!

Despite my questions and disbeliefs, I came to the conclusion that I better get it together and become the good Christian girl that I was supposed to be. Even if I did not make it into the elite

144,000, at least I wouldn't be cast to hell. I was okay with the idea of roaming the earth, burning for eternity, not so much.

I went to church every Sunday. I joined a youth group and only spent time with other Christians. I got down on my knees and claimed Jesus as my holy savior. I was baptized into a bath of holy water. Did I honestly feel different? No. Did I feel better for trying? Yes.

Flash forward just a few months later. It was after the regular Sunday service, and I was standing around with the other church members chatting with the preacher. This woman started talking about her baby girl, just three months old that was deathly ill. She was requesting prayers for her innocent baby that may not survive much longer. "Is she baptized" someone asked? "No." the lady replied, looking confused and even more distraught. "Well you must have her baptized immediately, or her soul will not be allowed into heaven! All unbaptised souls go to hell." this poor mother was told.

That was the day I walked away from the church. I refused to believe that the God I knew would turn his back on an innocent child and cast her away. It just wasn't possible. I felt sorry for them that they did and wondered if God was angry at them for saying such horrible things.

For years I found myself having to defend my lack of religion. The assumption was, where I lived, if you were not Christian, if you had not found Jesus, you must be an atheist. You were going to hell. I argued that I was NOT an atheist, that I fully believed in God, I just didn't believe in religion. I was told you cannot have God without religion.

Well, maybe that is true. So I spent the next few years searching for a religion I could live with, a religion I agreed with, a religion that I felt was true in my heart. Then I found Deism, and I knew I had found my truth. A religion that was based on free thought, not a text from an unknown source. A religion that showed God as a creator of all life, who was not out to punish, but to allow his creations to make decisions based on what they felt was right. A religion that wants us to focus on the beauty of nature, not the evils of the world.

I had found my religion, I had found my beliefs. I have found my peace, and I know in my heart, that God is giving me the thumbs up for making my own decisions and living my life the best way I know how.

Why Deism?

A Generic Christian Freed From Cerebral Slavery by Deism!

by Tyrone T.

I recently discovered your WUD website and it has really been a pleasure (and relief) to read. This is my story on how I became what I now know to be called... a Deist.

I was raised by a Methodist mother and an Atheist father. Very confusing religious upbringing to say the least. As a young boy I was drawn more toward my mother's Methodist ways (since my father rarely, if ever, discussed religion). I began reading the Bible at the young age of nine. My favorite stories were about David and Goliath and the story of the strong Sampson. At around ten years of age, I began to second guess these stories and wonder about the validity of them. Why would God kill every man, woman and child in a flood if he was a loving and kind God? How DID Noah get two of every land creature inside that Ark? Why don't we see any miracles as mentioned in the Bible such as water to wine, walking on water, healing the sick and casting out demons? Why was there no mention of dinosaurs, since there was obvious proof of their existence in the bones scientist found? No one was able to satisfy my natural boyish curiosity and questions about the Bible. As a result, and of the useless retoric and religious traditions of worship, I slowly drifted away from organized religion all together.

By the time I was an adult, I knew I believed in a God and that all of this (the Universe) was not some cosmic accident. I also came to the conclusion that, however, I didn't know what to tell people when asked about my religion, so I used the most general and generic term I knew of... the everpopular Christian!

I was not comfortable with this term to describe my spirituality. I say spirituality because I considered myself very spiritual but not religious. So, I began to research various popular religions and creeds in search of a better, more accurate term for my beliefs. In all of these mainstream religions I found a recurring theme. Man made rules governed all of them in some way or another... some even worshiped a man, which definately was not within my spiritual constraints to do so. I began to lose confidence that there even WAS a term to describe my spiritual beliefs.

Then one day, I stumbled upon an article describing and debating the actual religious beliefs of our Founding Fathers. My interest became especially peaked when the article began describing Thomas Paine and his authoring of "The Age of Reason". This Tom Paine fellow felt exactly as I do! Furthermore, it was debatable that the rest of the Founding Fathers (Washington, Jefferson, Franklin) were arguably Deists as well, just not as openly public or courageous about it as Mr. Thomas Paine.

After researching this strange philosophy called Deism, I was excited to discover there was a name for my spirituality and beliefs. And I was especially proud of the fact that I was in good company, as there were many historical figures that felt and believed that same way.

I immediately ordered your book [*Deism: A Revolution in Religion, A Revolution in You*](#); as well as signed up to be an official member of WUD. I look forward to learning more about Deism and how I can better help turn the light on for those still mindlessly following the revealed religions. I listened to the [radio broadcasts](#) listed on the WUD website, and would like to close with a quote that Jayson X said in one of the shows:

"God gave us all the Gift of Reason; Some just can't figure out how to open the box."

Why Deism?

You can, "keep the faith", I'll take the facts! The story of one man's leap FROM faith!

by Matthew Kahl

Mine is not unlike the story of a countless many in that I was raised a Christian. Our home life growing up was plagued with the often nightly violence and brutality of a raging, drunken step-father. I recall, in the sheer desperation of those years of my life, that Mother's faith in Jesus became my faith as well. Not so much so for my brother and sister, but as for Mom and I, it was a life line, and when drowning, one must take hold of whatever line is thrown. I recall preaching my very first sermon...I was 13 years old. My message was on "un-saved parents" and by the time I was finished that Sunday morning, there wasn't a dry eye in the house. Oh how I studied, read and prayed after that glorious Sunday, seeking the will of God thru pastors and church elders, everyone but myself. Many years had passed before the, often nightly, cops and chaos came to an end...but it did end.

Shortly thereafter, I moved out, married my beautiful wife and we started our family with the arrival of my daughter, Kaylee, and have continued to build that family over the years with the addition of three sons, Maverick, Mason and little Dewey. We lived in a kind of ignorant bliss, church on Sundays and Wednesdays, employee at a Christian book store, "street ministry," you name it! Now, so as not to portray myself as un-wavering in my devotion, I will say that in 18 years of marriage, and not unlike a lot of young marriages, ours has had its share of up's and down's and that goes for my "faith" as well. With that being said, we'll fast forward to a more recent history...

From the years of 2003 to 2006, the heart that I have always had for God REALLY shone through and the bond that I developed as a young man to this faith propelled me to new aspirations in ministry. As a musician, I recorded a Christian album which was quite popular, amongst the flock if you will and I have proclaimed my faithful belief as life saving truth in countless venues in Ohio, Tennessee, Missouri, Indianapolis Indiana, New York, Idaho and Montana. My "testimony" was broadcast on K-LOVE Christian radio to a listening audience of 30 million people. My ministry was at an all time high.

It was about this time that my lifelong friend and colleague, Thomas Burson, called me on the telephone one fateful day and proposed some very challenging information pertaining to "the faith" I'd always known. Now Tom was also raised a Christian, so for him to be questioning "our faith" could only mean one thing, Tom had backslidden, a kind of falling away if you will. I recall, quite clearly feeling "taken" by the information that I had heard, as well as feeling un-nerved at my ignorance pertaining to the matter, especially being a ministering Christian at the

time. I remember thinking, "How could this be?!?!", while at the same time, reeling from what I perceived to be, "an attack of the Devil," a "fiery dart" meant to shake my "faith." This reaction is an instantaneous defense mechanism that is a characteristic of "blind faith," I should know! In reality, to deem the unknown as, "of the Devil," is to wallow in the stagnant shallows of ignorance. An un-excusable act given the great potential that comes with being created in the image of ALL!

It's strange looking back on all of this, as I recall somehow fending off what I had heard and making conscious efforts to suppress the logic that was so desperately trying to manifest within my being. Over the course of the next few months, however, I found that I could not wrestle with the overwhelming feeling that had come over me...and it was at that moment that I knew. You could have driven a bus through the enormous hole in my heart as I realized what I must do. Tom was with me at that moment and I remember, as tears were streaming down my face, asking him in desperation, "How am I going to tell my children that Jesus isn't real and that Daddy was wrong?" It was the hardest thing I'd ever faced...hands down. My mind was whirling with thoughts, all bad, of how they would react. What will they think of me?!? How could I have been so wrong?!? NOW WHAT DO WE DO?!?! I want to say, before I go any further, that my children listened very closely to what I knew of the matter at that time, it is amazing to reflect back on how uninhibited reason and logic is when coming from a younger, less "calloused" mind. What an advantage it is for children to know the truth!

However, at this point, I had some MAJOR ISSUES to resolve as I felt as if everything I'd ever known was a lie! I was tormented with fear, ANGER (that was a big one), sadness and confusion. I had to know what was going to happen to our soul?! That's when Tom and I began a Biblical and historical quest for facts and knowledge that I can say with confidence was, and is, the most intricate, precise, monumental undertaking of our lives. We poured ourselves through every facet and fracture of the pretended word of God in fluid motion for HOURS on end, every day, reading, cross referencing from one Bible to the next and to the next...We even somehow managed to call a Rabbi, in Jerusalem, several times to inquire of Biblical matters! It was when we discovered the disdain that our founding fathers had for, "...the most bloody religion that ever existed," (John Adams) coupled with the seemingly Divine insight of Thomas Paine and *The Age of Reason*, that we finally stood in the warm light of understanding that is Deism.

After several years of combined study and research, we have come to understand the difference between mere belief and knowledge based in facts, logic and reason. We have, "shaken off all the fears of servile prejudices, under which weak minds are servilely crouched and fixed wisdom firmly in her seat, and called on her tribunal for every fact, every opinion. We questioned with boldness even the existence of God; because, if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason than that of blindfolded fear." (Thomas Jefferson) We too, "...hold it to be presumption in man to make an article of faith as to what will happen to us in the hereafter." (Thomas Paine) Now, my family and I are standing on the SOLID ground of real knowledge and understanding, NOT because of any revelations, or miracles, but because we took the time to

look and listen to the divine principles of truth that resonate so strongly in Deism. It is an almost un-explainable feeling to no longer live in constant fear....and once more, to be FREE.

Why Deism?

Great Minds Do Think Alike

By Rose

My name is Rose. I am 15 years old and a newly proclaimed Deist.

A few weeks ago in my Humanities class, we were learning about the Enlightenment era and les Philosophes. And when my teacher reached the foundation of Deism, everything just clicked: it was a balance that had finally been struck between my scientific nature and my desire to know that there was something out there. And, sure, it could be God. Just not necessarily the formidable, frightening Catholic God that I had been originally raised familiar with.

And really, I'd always basically believed in Deism, anyway--but learning about it in greater detail just sort of helped clarify and seal the deal.

All the original fathers of the Enlightenment are my philosophical idols, now--they had the right idea all along. And doesn't it feel great to know that an opinion I'd always felt to be true in my heart was shared by some of the greatest minds in history? You bet it does.

I'm not sure if I was the only student that had been so profoundly affected by those lessons, but I was more than likely the most grateful to have learned them. I just hope more kids like me can one day learn about Deism and realize that the old idiom is true: Great minds do, in fact, think alike.

Why Deism?

From Practicing Catholic to Deist

by Ken

I was a practicing Catholic for decades before finally confessing (to myself) that all that practicing hadn't really made me believe the "revealed" God is the real God. If you, too, are a slow learner, perhaps my evolution to deist may interest you. Not that I seek a label for my spiritual status, but the definition of deist appears to fit, so....

I'll start here: the belief that God is perfect, and Leibniz's contention that this is the best of all possible worlds, seem to stand or fall in concert. Thus, even if God is perfect in his omnipotence and the world is the best possible arrangement of natural laws, by what logic does it necessarily follow that the creator is perfect morally? Wouldn't a perfect God know that might does not make right?

The opposite side of the coin, atheism, also fails my "smell test." There isn't a snowman's chance in hell that the complexity of the universe and life came about by anything other than intelligent design. But this design must include ALL of creation. You can't pick and choose, crediting the creator for all things good and beautiful while absolving him for creating diseases and natural disasters. Let's face it – we were deliberately made to suffer and die and not know why.

Some have tried to put a positive spin on suffering by saying it can build character and maturity. But how does that apply to infants suffering from terminal cancer, for example? Others justify our mortal condition by defending some variation of the might makes right argument. How does that square with the "God is love" claim?

I don't know if there is life after death, but it doesn't seem to make sense that the creator would go to all this complexity just for the sake of creating and then walk away from it. Surely, given reversed roles, the creator wouldn't want done to him what he has done to us. And yet, unless everything can somehow be made right in the next life, what is the basis for a moral, loving relationship between creator and created (not to mention between created and created)? In that context, the word "somehow" seems beyond amoral omnipotence.

Why Deism?

From Pretending to be a Christian to Being a Real Deist

By Eric

All my life I have been pretending to be a Christian because that was the religion I was born into. As I grew and matured I realized too many problems with Christianity. I often thought Jesus was probably misunderstood and his message was garbled over the centuries. So I started to work backwards from where I was and eliminate, in my mind, the ideas I thought were ridiculous or absurd. Before I even heard of Deism I had decided that prayer should only be used to give “Thanks” to the Almighty for granting me the life I was experiencing and felt a sense of guilt when I tried to ask for things. I always wondered, “Why is God being so nice to me when I don't even subscribe to all the ideas in the Bible.”

After the tragic death of my father, I started to look for answers that the Christian religion didn't answer. There were even things in the Bible that made me uncomfortable and angry. That's when I stumbled onto Deism and realized I have been a Deist my whole life and just pretending to be a Christian. It was like I finally found the round peg for the round hole. I found peace with my father's death and I feel like it's okay to talk directly to my father when Christianity doesn't even allow that. At times I think I even feel his presence.

I'm happier as a Deist because it just feels natural.

Why Deism?

From Islam to Deism

by Shahnawaz

I was a Muslim since my birth in 1987. My teachers, family and everyone was very happy with me, because I learned many chapters/verses of the Qur'an. I didn't know what those verses even meant; I was just imitating or learning them from my teacher. I was taught about Islam since I was very young. I had been told many stories and miracles about the prophets of Islam. The emotional stories usually attracted me and strengthened my faith in Islam. They used to tell me about how people threw stones at the prophet and how his grandchildren were martyred. They didn't even allow me to have any doubts or questions about Islam. If I had to ask any doubtful questions, they used to say I should not ask questions like that and have doubts which can lead me to a wrong path.

I was a very good student in my school, and I used to get the highest grade in the exams every year. But once when I was very religious, I thought, If I pray to God, God will do anything for me. I started studying less in school courses and started studying more about Islam. It was very funny and annoying for me to pray every second of my life. For example, if I had to enter the mosque, I had to learn a verse to recite before I entered. I also recited a verse to start eating, a verse in the middle of eating and a verse to finish eating; a verse to read before going to the bathroom to protect me from ghosts or Satan; and a verse to leave the bathroom. I don't remember all of them, but there are a lot of verses to do things. I already had a natural desire to be perfect in everything, and I used to feel like "Be perfect, or do nothing." But the praying didn't work. Lots of prayers and studying less resulted in a bad school exam score, and I had to bear my family's anger as a result. I stopped praying and fasting after that.

The most annoying thing in Islam for me is the prohibition against listening to music. I don't drink, but I love music. If I can't listen to music, my life becomes so boring and rough. And I heard I can't even put posters of my favorite celebrities on my room walls because there are demons in those photos, or something like that. So I kept removed the posters and stopped listening to music. Then I ignored Islam for a while, put up the posters and listened to the music, and the whole cycle would start again.

Here people focus on just reading the Arabic text of the Qur'an instead of trying to understand it. The scholars and imams of Islam are afraid that their followers will find teachings in the Qur'an against their sect or religion. So their argument is that you need a lot of Islamic knowledge before you start reading a translation of the Qur'an. It's very sensitive. So some people even don't dare to touch it. Even in my own house, it's placed in the topmost part of the closet and it's full of dust when I pick it up to read some verses about some doubts asked by non-Muslims--Qur'anic teachings which are against humanity. My family used to tell me, "Don't touch, until you are

clean.” So every time before I touched it, I had to wash my face, nose, ears, neck, feet, arms, and hands.

My parents were not that religious, so they didn't like extremism in Islam. Here Islamic teachers beat children very badly. They torture them a lot. I remember my friend and I were very young. I was 8 years old, and he was even younger than me. He was not able to pronounce "R" correctly and was pronouncing it as "L" because of his young age or disability, so the teacher held his hair and was throwing him against the walls. I was so scared and told my parents that I don't want to be taught by this teacher, and there were almost same type of teachers everywhere. In the mosques, they had a wooden stick to beat students, or they used things like a pipe to throw at children. I remember when I went to a mosque, the teacher threw a wooden stick at a student to punish him. It almost hit me!

Finally, I told my parents that I wouldn't go to a mosque to learn how to read the Qur'an anymore, so they hired a teacher to teach me at home. He used to punish me at home too, but after seeing my father's anger, he stopped punishing me. I got brave enough to ask him questions, too. He said, “Your questions are stupid. You are already on a wrong path, and you'll put me in the wrong path too by asking me those questions.” I asked him, "Why do you believe in Allah?" He said, “It's my faith.” I asked, “What proof do you have?” He said, “This Qur'an.” Then I kept asking about the proofs, and he was confused and said, “Don't ever ask me questions about this again.” I asked him, “Why there are so many sects in Islam if Islam is a very true and good religion?” He had no answer.

Even though he tried to answer some of my questions by telling me some old stories, those stories weren't enough to satisfy me. Eventually, he warned my uncle, who is his friend, that he will not teach me the Qur'an if I ask him those questions. And everyone in my house and my uncle told me that I have to study the Qur'an and not to ask questions and to respect the teacher. So I finished reading the Arabic text of the Qur'an, and I did not ask questions. He asked me to read a bit of the Qur'an every day, so that I would not forget it. But I've never read it again after I finished the book.

Things changed after my father's murder in 2005 by a mafia-type group. We changed our home, I got an Internet connection and got more time to stay on our computer without having to fear my father. In my country, the man is the most powerful person in the house. I improved my English by using the Internet, electronic chatting and making new friends around the globe. They are of every religion and from every country. I learned a lot of things from them.

Many times, I watched a man on TV with a hat, coat and a tie. His name is Dr. Zakir Naik. He satisfied me almost with his intelligent replies to most of my religious questions. I changed my sect because of him from Berelwhi to Wahhabi. He stopped people from worshiping graves, going to tombs, making permanent graves and praying to prophets and saints. He impressed me a lot, and then I again became religious. My family couldn't bear for me to change my sect. I had

to face a lot criticism from them. They said, "If you follow the religion of your father and grandfather, you must follow their sect of Islam too, because we are right and others are wrong."

I was watching a program on TV about the tensions between India and Pakistan, and an Indian soldier said, "Why is world against you? Why is everyone blaming Islam for terrorism? There must be wrong in your religion." And that statement made me think, Why we are criticized by people? Why in the world we are called terrorists? It's illogical to say that I'm right and all others are wrong.

My faith in Islam was getting weaker and weaker every day again. I started hating the Taliban because they were killing civilians here. I found that Islam is against many human rights or humanity. Just recently I was watching videos on YouTube and I found a video of Dr. Zakir Naik, who was my favorite scholar of Islam. I've watched almost all of his programs, but that video was posted by a man of another sect. He said Dr. Zakir Naik's sect is bad because he supported "Capital punishment in Islam for apostasy." When I first heard this, I couldn't believe it. But later I investigated, and many told me that there is capital punishment for apostasy. I started wondering, How cruel is this religion? We don't even have a choice to choose a religion for ourselves, if we are born Muslims. I said to myself, I will no longer to be a member of this cruel religion. But I still feel like I believe in God. When I see the sun, moon and God's creatures, I start loving them, and I say to myself, 'There must be a Creator of all these beautiful things.' My heart told me that there is a God but he is not cruel. He must love us and understand our problems. Why would such a great God need our slavery? Why would he want us to pray to him all the time? It'll give him nothing if we strike our head multiple times on the floor. But if we want to show love to God, we must love his creatures, not to harm any of his things and start loving them as we're loving God.

I told this to my youngest uncle, who supported my beliefs in a new sect of Islam, but he couldn't bear me changing my religion. He said, "If I had a brick in my hand, I'd have smashed your head with it and you'd be bleeding. You are insulting our prophet by not believing in him. Listen to how great our prophet is, and now you're insulting him by rejecting his truth. Don't ever tell anyone about your belief, because everyone wishes to enter Paradise and they will enter Paradise by killing you, an apostate." I was very scared because of his reaction to me, an apostate. I thought to myself, *If my closest uncle feels that way, how will other people react? Now I have to lie to everyone here, saying that I'm a Muslim, in order to survive.*

I wanted new teachings and a new way to live. I want to join an organization of people who think like me. So I asked my atheist American friend about it, and she told me to join Unitarian Universalism. I couldn't understand it; it was complicated. I saw and studied many things about Christianity and many Christians. I searched in Google: "I believe in God, but I don't believe in any religion." And there was a link to Yahoo Answers where somebody already asked that question. He was told that he's a Deist, and that's how I learned about Deism. I'm very impressed by it. I think that I've got what I was always searching for: **freedom to think and to believe**. No

need to show artificial love to God by praying in the mosque. I can listen to my favorite music and do whatever I like. No fear of burning in hell. Now I'm thinking about myself and my society, and I will choose to live my life happily, enjoying it as much as I can. No tensions, no confusions anymore.

Why Deism?

A Searcher Connects With Deism

by Caleb J. M.

I would simply like to tell my story to someone. Someone that is like minded. I will try not to write too terribly much because I believe everyone's time is important.

I was born and raised in the central areas of Oklahoma. There I was raised by devout Christians and really no other religious contact. The range in my family (grandparents, to parents, to grandparents) was liberal Christian to heavily conservative Christians. I was also the second child of three in my family and the research nut. I remember reading my Bible a lot and enjoying the little stories. Yet somewhere between the ages of 8 and 12 I began finding discrepancies that I didn't understand. I remember talking to my family and the church members about my questions and never getting answers that satisfied me. This sent me on a slow drift away from organized religion and I began to heavily research other religions.

I grew and around the ages of 17 to 18 ceased going to church all together, but as things would happen I was also heading for a drastic emotional collapse. I had been holding onto a lot of depression for years and in my freshman year of college that depression ruptured the tight little container I held it in. At this point I fell back into Christian groups on campus. I now look back and know that I was trying to find emotional acceptance from people. Looking for people to help comfort me and accept me how I was. I dropped out of college after my freshman year and continued on with my life. World religions became a hobby of mine and I studied them with zeal. I was also looking for answers for the holes and contradictions I was finding.

Eventually I moved to Kansas City, MO. My girlfriend here is an Atheist who was once a Christian. She showed me her research that she had done many years ago and had saved. Already by this point I had thrown off most of my beliefs in Christianity, but it was comical what I would tell people when they would ask me "well what are you" (speaking in a theological sense) I would tell them "an evolutionary monotheist with Christian tendencies." It usually confused most and they would go on their way. Anyway my research went on for understanding and I thought I would find it somewhere between all the religious texts. I studied with Jehovah's witnesses, Catholics, Buddhists, Wiccans, Pagans, and so much more just to find a happy medium somewhere. Finally I gave up on the religious texts. While all of them had some good teachings they all had a lot of contradictions, plus they were getting too expensive on my wallet. So I went on believing in evolution and a Creator not really caring about some ultimate answer, not worrying about the grand teaching, and just enjoying nature like I had before but without the burden of anything else.

I am now 25 and it wasn't until a week ago that I finally had an answer for people. A coworker of mine was discussing religion and I was listening and just smiling and nodding, enjoying the discussion. Then out of the blue I get asked directly "So what do you believe in?" I paused, not really sure how to explain to people what I am. SO I told them hold on and pulled up "theists" on wikipedia. I was skimming over all the different things that fell under theists and I stumbled across the subheading of Deist. I read over it. Then read over it again and was 98% happy with the explanation of a Deist and my beliefs. So I turned around and smiled and said "I am an evolutionary Deist."

Today I found [the Deism website](#) and have been reading a lot of the articles on it. It really put a finger down on the things I've seen wrong with a lot of texts. It was like connecting all the dots in my head to open up the picture I've been trying to see for so long. I have probably only gotten through a third of all the articles and my brain is now tired. I'll continue again tomorrow.

Why Deism?

I Found Freedom From Thinking I Was Going to Hell

by Jody

I grew up in a Christian home, and throughout the last few years of actually studying the bible (instead of just going by what preachers teach on Sunday, like most Christians do) I found a lot of things that did not make sense. The main thing being the whole issue of salvation. From what would God be saving us from? From going to hell, a place that he would have had to make himself in the first place? Yeah sounds like a loving God to me. I know that I would not send my own son to that kind of a place, no matter what he did wrong. So if we as humans would not do this kind of activity we find in the bible, why should we think that God would? There is so much violence in the bible and perverted sexual things it's a disgrace to call it the word of God. Another thing that really got me is how people say Jesus is such a nice guy. Well if you call someone that is FOR child abuse (matt 15:1-8) and animal abuse (matt 8:32). Jesus okays beating slaves (Lk 12:47). He even says he has come NOT to bring peace but a sword! (Matt 10:34) In (matt 10:35-37) He even talks about he will break up families and that you must love him more than your own family.

I ask you how can we love someone that we cannot see or interact with? Love is an emotion pertaining to physical existence not to faithful ideologies. Yeah, sounds like a real nice guy to me. I'm not worshipping anybody like that.

Then I started researching other religions, I studied Islam and it made a little more sense because they don't worship Jesus but with all the violent things that the religion teaches, that says enough for itself. Zoroastrianism sounds the most logical, but only if you go by the Gathas, which is believed to be the only thing Zarathushtra wrote. But they believe that God is totally 100% good, which is a flawed idea. You can see from the creation how animals have to kill each other every day just to survive. This shows how God is not totally good, for if he was, he would have created a way for all creatures to survive without killing. Of course, if putting the individual above all else, which today's society and Christianity both do, then the way the creation is designed is not good. However, if the importance of the species is more critical than the importance of the individual, then the way the creation is designed makes more sense and in the long run provides more good by benefiting the entire species instead of just the individual. In that case, God is good. We have a lot to think about and a lot to learn, which we are free to do in Deism!

Then I read [*The Age of Reason*](#) and it was totally an eye opener and very true how you can see just how God is right out your front door. That's how I found Deism.

I have an even closer relationship with God now than ever, since I don't have it in the back of my mind I might get sent to hell just because I didn't do something the way God wanted. I still

talk to God everyday but I don't do it in a fearful way anymore, its more comforting to think God wants to help me overcome my problems by being my friend instead of an overruling tyrant.

Why Deism?

Deism is Free From Fear and Guilt

by [Doug Tozier](#)

My journey into Deism has been difficult. Having grown-up in a Christian home, I was taught not to question our beliefs. The problem I had was trying to find answers to many nagging questions. Two of the biggest questions in my mind were: 1. How could a good and loving God sentence his own fragile creatures to an eternity in hell without giving them ample warning or opportunity to know the "truth"? 2. How to explain the incredible miracles that my Sunday School teachers taught with bland, matter-of-fact certainty?

To make matters worse, I have an insatiable desire to find out every conceivable detail of every bit of information that crosses my path. This desire is what ultimately led me to attend seminary, where I was sure I would find satisfactory answers. Then I would be sufficiently "equipped" to dispense the corresponding doctrine to whomever would listen, as well as, many who would not. In the process of absorbing what I was being taught, I became firmly entrenched in Fundamentalism of all places. It turned out that the absolute certainty that was portrayed within the ranks of most of these organizations suited my personality just fine. Over the course of more than 15 years I wrestled with the concept of absolute truth, and the cop-out that if we didn't understand something, then we could chalk it up to a mystery that only God knew. Couple that with the constant admission that we are all as insignificant as worms and you can see the effectiveness of the mentality. The Bible was the ultimate authority and if some teaching didn't make sense then our own understanding must be deficient.

My big break came after I had my last falling-out with a fundamentalist pastor. It was my second such incident and it further hardened my resolve to "know the truth". It was then that I was listening to a Christian radio program about creation vs. evolution and the host of the program suggested further research on the subject, specifically regarding the views of some atheists. I dutifully went to the internet site that he had broadcast over the airwaves. It seemed to be the premier venue for the anti-god movement in America. The first thing I noticed on the website was a quiz (of course); so I immediately took the quiz and was quite satisfied with my score! What alarmed me was the nature of the answers. All were very well documented from their source- the Bible. Many depicted the extremely awful actions and events perpetrated in the name of God and by his chosen people!

Thus began my first genuine search for the truth; no more preconceived notions or contortions to make the evidence fit the way I needed it to fit. I resolved to let the evidence speak for itself and lead me wherever I ought to go. All the old questions suddenly resurfaced with a vengeance. I would make no excuses for God because he should not need to be excused. If God can't explain himself any better than that...

For many months I searched and researched as much information as I could find. Most authors were vehemently anti-God and I soon grew tired of their tirades. Some good did come from these initial forays into the "godless" world I had avoided for most of my life. I marveled at the plethora of alternate, yet viable philosophies that this world had to offer. Enter Deism. Perhaps the most amazing thing I discovered was the connection to this relatively unknown belief system in our own country's history. Of course, I had always been taught that our founding fathers were mostly Christian and wanted to create a Christian nation. While I only partially believed this to be the case, it had fit well with my Christian beliefs and lifestyle and didn't seem to be too dishonest or harmful. But I had also been taught that there were no "little white lies". Truth was supposed to be black and white with no gray areas. One of my biggest pet-peeves is when a lie is used to cover up an obvious discrepancy. History has quickly become one of my favorite subjects. One of the biggest problems in church today is ignorance. Ignorance, not only of our own society, but of what they supposedly believe. Most church-goers know very little about the Bible or what their church actually believes about it. Whenever I raise questions about the authenticity of the Bible and the discrepancies in its pages, I get double-speak and rash generalities, but no real answers. If one claims to believe in the Bible then they ought to know more than "Jesus saves". But they appear to be afraid to go any deeper lest their "paradise" come crumbling down.

That is why I have embraced Deism. That is why my faith is in a God who truly loves all of his creatures and will not stoop to fear and guilt as ploys to gain a following. When I look back through the Bible, as well as my previous beliefs in it, I find many good teachings which I still believe to be beneficial for myself and for society. I choose to accept that which is truly good and reject the things that are morally reprehensible and unfitting for an all-powerful, all-knowing deity. My goal in life is to spread the good news that God is not out to fry the world and we all can be responsible citizens just by reaching inside and letting goodness flow out of a heart that is open and sincere. To that end I am writing a book about my experiences that I hope will contribute to the welfare of countless souls in search of truth. I choose to believe in a God who created us for a noble purpose and does not require blind faith in his creatures.

Perhaps the hardest part of this journey has been the response of my family. My parents and siblings have not been understanding of my change of heart. But even worse has been the difficulty of my wife accepting the change. She does not really understand where I am, and I am afraid that she is one who does truly understand the Bible and what belief in it really means. She seems to want to try to accept what I am saying, but ultimately she is afraid to take a chance, afraid that she will be wrong. What I truly want for her, and for all religious people to understand, is that there is no God waiting to condemn them to hell, but a God of love, willing only to give them freedom and peace of mind.

Why Deism?

Deism is Scientifically Friendly

by Kirk P.

Being Agnostic seemed indecisive, while that of an Atheist too un-scientific.

Deism however allows me security in imagining the unseen power of life, because I can still apply the scientific method to my ideas while living and reasoning rather than just having blind faith.

Why Deism?

At 82 Brought to Deism by *The Age of Reason*

by James O.

I'm 82 years old, raised in a Christian home. Until moving away from home I attended a protestant church; later drifting away as many do. For the last 20 years or so nagging questions about the many exaggerations, murder, plunder and mayhem found in the old testament of the Bible puzzled me. Questioning supposed experts in the religious field, I got unsatisfactory answers.....and even a few "I don't knows". Quite by accident I stumbled across a copy of Thomas Paine's [*The Age of Reason*](#). At last all the answers to my questions and a whole lot more were contained therein. I'm in my 3rd reading of this marvelous book. There is a tremendous amount of information packed into this tiny volume.

Why Deism?

My Path to Enlightenment

by Robert W.

Where do I start? First, I want to thank God for giving me the reason to see him truly how he is. And I think myself, and other folks that follow Deism exercise special gifts. The gifts of reason and logic. Strong reasoning that elevated us over the propaganda of revealed religions. We have to admit, it has a strong hold of most of the people in this world, and it will be a monumental task to overcome this simple-mindedness. But through love, and our daily walk of being the best person you can be, we can show people this is the true teaching of God, and that's how we show our love and appreciation for the Creator.

We have to overcome this ("revealed" religion) or our world is doomed. We must, when appropriate, spread the true meaning of life. It has been only a couple days since I have accepted the belief of Deism. But I feel like a new man, and to know that I'm not the only one that understands what I have believed most of my life; that our Creator is a God of Love, and a just God. Not the one that is depicted in the Bible that scared me as a little kid. Most of my life, I knew that revealed religions were not the answer, just a part of the problem. But at the same time, I knew that there was a "higher power", and it left me confused, and I struggled with the thought. I knew atheism was not the answer, because you can't convince me that everything just happened out of chance, because I see so much beauty in the world, that I knew there is a Creator. So I felt trapped in my spirituality, because I believed that you were either a person of revealed religion, or an atheist. At times, I felt that I was more of an atheist, because I rejected the teachings of revealed religion so much, that this is what I felt was the only path of enlightenment. But not to believe in God or the Creator didn't sit well with me. So I thought for a while I was a "lazy" Christian, because I felt the bible didn't do it for me, and I hated going to church. But I believed that there was a meaning for us being here, and there is something spiritual about being alive on Earth.

Looking back on my life growing up, I was very confused. I grew up in a strict Christian household. My mother, believing that she was doing what was best for me, made me go to church every Sunday. My dad was a Christian, but he would of rather stayed home to watch football, which made me upset, because I wanted to watch the games with him, but I had to go to church. I love my mother so much, and she is a great woman, but she is lost in revealed religion. As a kid, I would notice a big difference in my mother from Monday to Saturday compared to Sundays. Sundays is my favorite day of the week now, but for a while growing up, it was the day I dreaded. My mother was a kind, hard working woman, and did everything to make sure her kids succeeded in a place where I could have been deterred by other evil factors. She made sure education was important to us, and because of that, I have been a success in that part,

making her proud when I graduated from college. But she is a religious zealot who believes that whatever she did was right because she was "holy". And even today, how much I love her, I can't have a conversation with her without her religion getting involved in the conversation which makes it hard for me to go to her with problems or issues in my life because her only answer would be to ask God, and start reading me quotes from the Bible. Sunday would come, and I would awake to a screaming woman, telling me to get up and go to church. Her whole loving mood would change, because she had to get ready to worship. As a child, you notice these things more than others, especially from the person that was most important to you. She would turn into this other woman, and I would wonder why? Because of that, I hated Sundays and I hated church. But of course, I didn't say anything, because I thought something was wrong with me. I believe the old Christian saying, "the Lord works in mysterious ways", because the Creator does. In a midst of religious zealotry all around me, I still had questions about the validity of the Christian God. Why was he so mean? Why did he do these things in the Bible? I had a lot of "whys" that I kept to myself, because I really believed something was wrong with me, and I was so scared of hell, I thought I had to force my way out of this thinking. I remember faking my commitment to the Christian God to satisfy everyone around me. As a little kid, I had this thinking, in which I believe the Creator gave me strong reasoning capabilities, like he did for a lot of us. I will never forget a session of Sunday School, when we were talking about who goes to heaven and hell.

I have been glued to Deism.com the past couple days, and have read a lot of the articles, and one brought me to tears when I read From Baptist to Deist-No One Really Knows by Larry Langston. I identify more with his conversion because that was the denomination that I was brought up in. The arguments he made in that article are what I have been wrestling with my whole life and holds very true to me. Especially the one point that he stated in the third paragraph, "Now, if each created human had equal opportunity (for salvation) you would have equal disbursement of tiny dots of blue and red all over the globe so that any distinction of groups would be impossible to detect. This point simply reflects the fallacy of the idea that each individual has equal opportunity for salvation and consequently, the fallacy of Christianity." He was talking about how in revealed religion, especially Christianity, that in order to please God and go to Heaven, you have to be "saved". But how is that fair to a person in India, where the culture is mostly Hindu? So you're saying that person is going to hell because of where he was born? I asked that question in my Sunday School class as a 10 year old boy. At that time, I just thought I was asking a simple question. But when I look back on it, it shows to me that even then, I was looking for truth and logic behind what I was trying my best to believe in. I remember that the Sunday School teacher never gave me a straight answer, and I was still left with questions. As a teen, I started to drift away from Christianity in my mind, but to please my mother, I still acted like I was a devout Christian, because that would be the ultimate disappointment to her. So I continued throughout my teens, and in my 20s wrestling with am I a Christian or not. I started to think, was I an atheist? I didn't want to be a godless person, because I still knew in my heart that there is a God.

These last couple of days, I feel like I have been reborn. I was reading an article about how religion has declined in our nation. One woman commented on the article, and was responding to a comment of why our leaders have to be a Christian to win in big time politics. And this woman stated how some of our first Presidents were Deists. I had no idea what that was, and being the history and political nerd that I am, I decided to look up what that meant. This could have been one of the best decisions of my life. I read on Wikipedia about what Deism is, who were some of the prominent people of Deism, and what Deists stand for, and I was in awe. This was something I felt was true to my heart for a long time just by seeing the beauty that is in the world. Our Creator has blessed us with reasoning and a free will. He is an awesome God when you look at the beauty in the world. It is the fallacy of revealed religion and evil factors that make this world a scary place a lot of the time. I try to be the best person I can be. I respect other people, and their differences. And still, I wondered if I was going to go to hell, even though I have tried my entire life to be a good man, even though I was not a Christian. But I know what holds true, and that is logic, and that is all our Creator wants for us. He loves us, and he shows us he loves us every day with the beauties of the world. Loving another person, helping others with their needs. Sunsets over the ocean. We show him love when we show love for others, and when we appreciate His creation, which could only have been done through His design.

One of my hobbies is landscape photography. To me, it was a spiritual journey for me to go to these beautiful places, and take pictures, put them on my computer, and sit for hours in awe of the beauty. But now, I think that was my spirituality, and my walk with the Creator. And my walk with God was shown through these escapades. I always knew I loved God as he truly is. A loving God. He has given me the capability to be who I am today. Now I feel whole, because I know that I am right. Deism is the path of enlightenment. Loving God as he truly is should be a joy, not pain. Love, not hatred and discrimination against people not like you. Peace, not violence. We Deists have a job, and that is to spread the true love of God. Because that is the path to love and peace. What really pushes my buttons is when Christians use the Bible to make their point on why they're right like that is the ultimate evidence. If God really had something that he wanted to say, we would know, because he would reveal it, and you would know for sure it is a message from the Creator. I know that my mother would be really disappointed, and she would think she would have failed as a mother if I would tell her I found a different path to understanding the Creator. But I have to do what I believe, and reason and logic tells me that revealed religion is an ill to this world, and will destroy this world unless we can come to an understanding about who God truly is. And if you're new to Deism, and you're reading this, you have come to right place. You're not crazy. You are a reasonable human being that believes loves conquers all. And our God does love you just how you are. And he gave you God given reason and logic to understand His love as it truly is. Wonderful.

Why Deism?

A Light Switched On!

(Deism helps a victim of child abuse)

by Rex

I was born in Blanchard, OK. A wide spot in the road with a population of about 150, who were primarily Conservative Baptists. However, my paternal grandmother attended a Pentecostal Holiness Church in a nearby town of Amber. I was just 5 years old when she took me to my first service at her church. I tell you, when the preaching reached a fever pitch and the congregation started wailing and speaking in tongues, with some, flopping to the floor, and writhing and jerking with eyes rolled back in their heads...it scared the crap out of me! It was such a traumatizing experience that I didn't set foot in another church for years.

My family moved to Oakland, CA to escape the draught ridden dustbowl Oklahoma had become. A young woman named Mona, who lived down the block, started a young people's bible study group in her home and I was invited to join in. I was 7 and my mother's older sister Tillie, lived in a small house next door to us with her 2 boys, Lonnie and Coy. Coy was 14 and mature for his age, and was often my babysitter while the adults all worked. He started sexually molesting me right from the start. He made me promise not tell anyone and that what we did was a secret. Everyone loved him for his cute ways and had a witty sense of humor, so since none of the adults took notice of what he was doing to me, I simply accepted it as a normal way of life. At bible study, I learned that Jesus loved the little children and protected them from harm. I couldn't understand why he wasn't protecting me? I decided that I must be bad and Jesus didn't like me. Subsequently, my feeling of self worth and self esteem fell to the gutter. I became introverted and isolated myself from everyone as best I could. My little room became my world, and a collection of stuffed animals became my only friends. School was torture but I managed to survive by living in a make believe world all my own. The only one who invaded my world was cousin Coy when he slipped into my room late at night to perform his act of 'sodomy' on me. This went on for 2 years until aunt Tillie and the boys moved to Washington. Free at last.

I didn't attend church again until my teens when several of my friends attended Sunday school at a local Protestant church. I was invited to attend and reluctantly did so. I tried to ignore my feeling of discomfort and went through the motions of weekly services. During ensuing years, I drifted in and out of many different churches, always with the same detached feeling. Finally, from age 25 to 55 I rarely, if ever, set foot in a church. It was while casually surfing the internet one afternoon, that I happened upon a website on Deism. As I read the contents, my excitement began to grow with each paragraph. It was as if a light had switched on in my brain! This is what I had been searching for all along and I was stoked. I devoured everything I could find on

Deism and the more I read, the more enlightened I became. Since that day, I have compiled a vast collection of material on Deism that I study avidly on a daily basis.

Today, I am happy and content, knowing that I have the truth to rely on and not the destructive lies that the bible and Christianity evoke. I love Deism.

Why Deism?

No “Revelation” Required

by Yaroslav

I am sending you a [membership application](#) after attentively and carefully familiarizing myself with the basic principles and ideas of Deism. I have found that it is the right religion for me, for it is dynamic and not static, it accepts a broad range of opinions on various issues, it does not destroy human dignity and it provokes thought.

The most brilliant and constructive thought found in the writings of Deists are that we do not need any "revelation" to be close to God and the only sources of our knowledge of Him are Nature and our own reason. There is not, therefore, any necessity for numerous obscure, vague, ambiguous and controversial "Holy Scriptures" that the best thing they can do for us is to perplex, and the worst - to destroy our life and the lives of the people that are close to us - our relatives and friends. It is really inane to build our life on the words of other people and to make decisions according to the recommendations of others but not on our own reason. It is as well absurd to build our life on the books of people who did not have any idea about our modern life.

No one has the right to establish a monopoly on God and to declare themselves the only true representatives of a Higher Being. We are equal under God and He give us an equal chance to cognize Him and His creation. Deists are among the few that recognize that equality and try to let other people know about it.

So, my firm decision is to join the World Union of Deists and make input into spreading the principles of Deism.

Why Deism?

From Islam to Deism

by Talal Y.

This is a short review about my religious background and my views and how I became a Deist. Pardon me for any grammatical mistakes.

Religion vs. Logic

It took me years to free myself from religion (Islam) . It was not an easy process to get rid of the dominance of the religion. I have suffered a lot in searching for the truth and investigate facts. I did not have the chance and opportunity to communicate with the followers of other religions or read about their beliefs and as a result I remained in my prison believing that I have the absolute truth. Thinking that in believing in this religion I will go to heaven and others will go to hell. I am right and others are wrong. Even my religion gives me the right to kill others just because they do not believe in what I believe!! This is what the Holy Book Koran says : for example, Surah (9) At-Taube (Repentance) verse (5) : When the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the pagans wherever you find them, and seize them , beleaguer them , and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war). But if they repent , and establish regular prayers . and pay zakat then open the way for them , for Allah is Oft-forgiving , Most Merciful) . This verse is known as (THE VERS OF SWORD). This verse concerns the pagans. Whiles the verse (29) the same Surah, concerns The People of the Book (Jews and Christians) , this verse says : Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day , nor hold that forbidden which has been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the Religion of truth, from among the people of the Book . Until they pay the Jizya (tax) with willing submission and feel themselves subdued.

And the prophet of Islam Muhammad says : "I was ordered to fight people until they say (there is no gods but Allah and Muhammad his Messenger) , if they say that, their blood and belongings will be protected from me") . Is this logic ?? Is this what God wants me to do ?? To wage a Holy War against other people!!!! To kill them and loot what they possess!!! Violence leads to violence.

I decided to look for the truth no matter how long it may take, so I started from the beginning and asked myself this simple question: (why am I Muslim not Christian or Buddhist ?) and the answer came simply and honestly (I am Muslim because my parents are Muslims, because the society that I live in is Muslim) so logically I inherited this religion , it was no matter of choice .

As a child I did not have any other options. I imitated what my parents told me like a parrot. I imitated what I have been told by my family, school and the whole society surrounding me.

I think this is true and applies to almost all other people. We do not choose our religion but it is imposed on us. We are compelled to follow the teachings of the religion even they are illogic and full of superstitions. God gave us brain which can lead us to God. He cannot give us brains and at the same time give us teachings that contradict our brains.

Consequently, if the revealed religions are reasonable and logic then we (ordinary people) can comprehend and reach to God through the power of our brains and there is no need for messengers. On the other hand , if the revealed religions are unreasonable and illogic, then they are unacceptable and there is no rational justification to believe in them.

Finally, as Descartes said , " I think , therefore I am." I decided to follow my brain which is God's gift to me and I consider it God's messenger to me to enlighten my world and lead me through this life.

Why Deism?

God-given Reason Guided Her to Deism

by Jane B.

Deism was a lifeline to me that I literally stumbled across not long ago while I was lost in the confusing world of revealed religion. I am 46 years old, and have spent the last 27 years visiting so many different Christian churches that I don't think I could list them all! But, something inside me kept me moving from one religion to another and from one church to another, never letting me rest and continually pushing me to find the true path to God. I never understood the reason why I could not settle into Christianity as was expected of me, but now I know! The reason was reason, my own God-given reason! My reason would not let me believe the contradictory and confusing stories presented to me that were not evidenced anywhere! How clear it is now, for the first time in my life, I am finally at peace inside and it feels so good! There really is happiness, peace, and unity in Deism! I am a Deist, and want to share with everyone I love and everyone I meet, and offer the same lifeline out of the miserable and prejudiced dogmas of revealed religions.

Five things I love about Deism (I could list 100, but we will stay with five for now):

1. In Deism, I am not expected to believe stories and ideas presented to me that are not evidenced anywhere in the works of God. Thank you for this one, as God's gift of reason absolutely will not allow me to live a life governed by blind faith!!
2. In Deism, science is a wonderful tool and not an enemy!! Scientific discoveries do not have to pass the 'Bible test' by undergoing reconciliation with the stories of the Bible! I love that Deists recognize that the Creator of man is also the Creator of science, and it is through the study of the creation that we learn of and see God.
3. And thank you Deism for not pretending to know what happens to us after our bodies die!! Reason will not let me believe that our Creator's plan is to torture our everlasting souls if we do not live by the impossible dogmas written and voted upon by a host of men over a thousand years ago! I prefer to trust that our Creator has a plan for us, and just like Thomas Paine, I choose to leave these matters to God.
4. WE ARE ALL EQUAL!! Deists do not believe that God has chosen an enlightened individual to reveal himself to and does not have a chosen group of people to be the recipient of special gifts! This is GREAT news! God's word is visible to all mankind in the works of the creation!! Wow! This makes much more sense than expecting us to believe the stories of mystical appearances and miracles that suspend God's own laws of nature, the very laws on which our existence depends. As the opening of the

Declaration of Independence states, “all men are created equal with certain inalienable rights.” How true this becomes in Deism; all genders, all sexual orientations, and all races - equal. Are those representing man-made religion to decide who in God’s creation is to be accepted and who is to be rejected? Are we to listen to the word of various humans each with their own agendas, or should we turn to the true, unbiased word of God?

5. We are to honor life; our own and that of others. How simple is that? By removing the prejudiced, confusing and contradictory dogmas of the various man-made cultural religions, we are free to return to a simple and pure love of God. No more hatred and violence. No more depending on prayer to make things happen or to save the life of a child, we are created by God who gave us reason, free will, and those who are gifted and driven to study medicine and science. We have the ability to take care of each other, and it is up to us to create the kingdom of God here on earth. In Deism, we are one on this planet sharing God’s beautiful creation together and can turn our focus to protecting and caring for human life and the natural resources of this planet, and opening our minds to the many wonderful discoveries of science! I am going outside now to watch the amazing hummingbirds that have recently discovered the feeder that I filled with nectar for them to enjoy. For some reason, though, the hummingbirds fight over this resource that I have provided for them. I do not understand this as there is plenty of nectar and perches for all, so why can’t they just sit there together and enjoy the sweetness of the nectar? Why must they fight?
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Why Deism?

From End-Timer to Deist

by Richard H.

I grew up in a very Christian household. My mother was extremely religious and very rigid with myself and my siblings when it came to religion.

I was always subjected to end of the world propaganda for as long as I can remember. She later died when I was 14 years old so of course at that age I was very confused why God would take my mother from me at such a young age. I later lived with my aunt and uncle and of course was forced to go to Sunday school which never really felt right for me. They used to send me to bible camps every summer and when I came back I would throw away all of my possessions that were considered secular because I really wanted to believe the religion. After awhile I was content to know that god existed but I still believed in Jesus, heaven, hell, and Satan. So I was always concerned about what I did in this life. As I became more Libertarian in my thinking I began to study the Founders and found that a majority of them were Deists not Christians as we are all led to believe. So I became curious about Deism and learned what it meant. I can honestly say I am much happier in my life because of it. I no longer have shame for being alive and doing those things that make life interesting.

Every day I wake up and see the world with new eyes. Natures God is everywhere. I have thrown off the shackles of religion that bound me at one time and have embraced life. Whenever anyone asks my religion I am proud to say I am a Deist, which in turn leads to lengthy conversations on the subject.

Why Deism?

Awe of Nature Lead to Deism

by Tom Walker

Hello, my name is Tom Walker, I am sixty years old and I am a Deist.

For many years I have felt that being close to nature was as close to God as one could ever hope to get. After years of looking and not finding, I stumbled across Deism and here I am.

I have never officially been a member of any church or religion but like most of you I have lived in a Christian oriented society my entire life. My parents were both brought up as Christians but never attended church as far as I can remember. I recall going to Sunday school in the basement of the local Presbyterian Church with my older sister when I was 5 or 6 years old, but my Sunday school days were short lived probably because I protested at some point.

I joined the Navy in 1967, and not wanting to be labeled an atheist I put Presbyterian down as my religion. It seemed like the right thing to do at the time and so my dog tags read "PRESB" along with my serial number and blood type.

There were times when I thought that by becoming a Christian and joining a church that I would somehow feel accepted, but I never did and I never have until now.

I have always been "put off" by religion in general, and over time I have become aware of what I call "religious arrogance" among those who practice it and especially those who preach it.

I am in awe of nature and the universe thanks to people like Darwin, Hubble, and many others and I wish that Thomas Paine could return to rewrite "Age of Reason", knowing what we know today.

After reading all of your stories I feel a sense of relief and belonging, and Norma is right; we need to come out of the closet.

Why Deism?

From Baptist to Deist

by Francesca Thomas

I was born and raised in New Zealand - by very religious parents. I was raised a Baptist.

I quit the church at 19, after reading Holy Blood, Holy Grail. And then continued reading to find a belief that I could replace the spiritual hole.

Basically I quit because of the hypocrisy I was seeing in my own church, and in the world, and in history.

Eventually I decided that I believed in God the creator, but nothing else. (no Jesus, no resurrection, no miracles, no Holy Spirit, and the Bible was written by man)

I had no name for this belief, I assumed it was entirely my own belief and that it did not have a name.

Life went on, I did the daily grind at my job, I got married, moved to Canada, had a family, none of us attending any church or following any religion.

Just recently at the age of 42, I stumbled across an article about the American Founders being Deists, and the article described what Deism was. Those beliefs matched mine exactly. Finally after 20 years I have a name for my beliefs.

Why Deism?

From Lutheran, to Catholic, to Atheist, to Deist

by Paul Mopps

I quite by accident found the WUD web site and since have read and re-read every article on it. I am so pleased that I have found exactly what I have believed for 49 years but did not know it by name. Let me share a bit about me.

I was raised a Lutheran. We weren't real strict but went to church/Sunday school every Sunday. Around the age of 12 or so, I attended Lutheran catechism and started questioning my pastor. My pastor and I couldn't agree on so very many things and I would openly argue with him during these classes. I seldom ever got a good answer to any of my questions which made me ask more. He would become angry with me because his answers didn't make any sense to me. The church lost me there. If you can't make a child believe, something must be amiss.

At the end of military high school, 64 -65, I attended a church in the south as was mandatory. I observed a Black family blocked from and turned away at the door of this Christian church. That was one of the first overt racist acts I witnessed. So much for tolerance and goodness. Now even the military school couldn't make me set foot in a church.

I joined the army in 66 and soon married a Catholic girl. I had to attend another indoctrination on Catholicism. I went to the classes to sleep mostly. Found it was a bunch of superstitious rituals that made no sense and everyone seemed to be guilty of living.

Then I was off to Viet Nam and soon became a stone cold Atheist. I care to differ with anyone that says there are no Atheists in fox holes!

My daughter was born in 71. I couldn't look at her and think there was no creator. Now the search began for a meaning or a religion for me to believe. Buddhism seemed the likely place to start. I explored it and some Native American religions but rituals and other things kept me from finding real answers. I finally decided that maybe I was a Pagan. I became very Earth based in my way of thinking. No religion, no rituals, no spells or magic thinking, but a respect for Mother Earth and humankind.

A friend of mine is an avid amateur astronomer and I observed him working on his computer. He brought up a screen of the Big Dipper. He asked me if I had any idea how many galaxies were inside the dipper. WOW!!! I was so shocked at the size of this universe. If that wasn't an eye opener to the power of The Creator of all..... And it's all perfect, no guilt, no shame, no bigotry, no rituals to follow, just one huge universe and we are part of it. We have been given life, endowed with a mind and body to interact with the universe and the knowledge to appreciate and

understand by learning. Natures God is all, I'm in its hands after this life and I trust that. No revealed religion can compare with that!

Why Deism?

The Bible Just Didn't Add Up

by Joe Jones

I was raised a Methodist, and later a Baptist, and was comfortable within the confines of revealed religions until I became an adult. Somewhere around age 40 I began to question the edicts of revealed religion. What about the people who died before Christ? What about all the non-Christians in the world? It just didn't make sense that all these good folks would be condemned.

Then I began to study scripture in earnest. I realized that God is portrayed in many different ways between the testaments. How could a loving God require that Old Testament heroes kill all the women, children and donkeys in furtherance of God's will? It just didn't add up.

It was very difficult for me to mentally challenge everything that I had been taught here in the Bible belt about religion. Nonetheless, I knew that I believed in God and maybe that was enough. I was impressed that the early American heroes like Jefferson and Lincoln were not church members, yet proclaimed a reverence for God in all their work.

Finally, within the last year or so, I crossed the bar and realized that I couldn't intellectually buy-in to any of the revealed religions.

I was glad to find this organization that seemed to legitimize what I had thought personally for a number of years.

The toughest realization for me was that Deism was not synonymous with atheism. Now, having crossed that bridge, I am happy and look for God's will in everything unhampered by synthetic beliefs of organized religion.

Thanks for all that you do.

Why Deism?

From Mennonite to Deist

by Chris W.

I was originally a Mennonite. I had been raised one as far back as I can remember. Up until I was 11 I believed in the teachings of the religion unquestionably. Then, once I hit that age, I started to question the reliability of the bible. The main thing that puzzled me was that if God loved each and every one of us so much, then why would he condemn us, His own creations, to burn for eternity if we so much as slightly disobeyed His wishes?

After these questions started to really get to me, I left the Mennonite church. For years I searched for a belief system that made sense and embraced logic and reason and denied superstition. I had jumped back and forth from atheism, paganism, universalism, etc. At the time they seemed right, however, it always came back to a question of logic and reality. It was not until these past few months that I discovered Deism.

After further research, I came to the realization that I was a Deist! Here was a belief-system that embraced reality, logic and reason, and didn't make false promises! Now that I've become a Deist, things have become much clearer. Now, life has not seemed nearly as grim as it used to be when I was bound down by "revealed" religion.

Why Deism?

From The Church of God to Deism

by Larry T.

When I was a young guy, thirteen and fourteen years old, I was living with my divorced mother to whom everything was a sin. She was a devout "Born again", raised in the Church of God. Sex was a sin and even with ones spouse it was something to be endured and only then to bring forth children. Wearing makeup was a sin, listening to anything except religious music was a sin, likewise was dancing and anything that could be considered personal pleasure. I was dragged to church each Sunday and was thoroughly immersed in the literal teachings of the bible. It was the word of God. If the bible said Jonah lived in the belly of a whale or Jesus turned water into wine, or made a blind man see, it was so and was not to be questioned. It was then that I began to ask questions.

My Mother called my questions blasphemous and called the pastor to talk to me. He angrily told me that God moved in mysterious ways and there were things we were not meant to know. When our meeting was over and he could not answer my questions about the myths of the bible, he told my mother, "I can't do anything with this boy. He is lost. Satan is in him. He has no faith."

As I went through life I read all I could about the world's different religions. Somehow they all seemed to be based on a similar premise and failed to register on my mind. Then a friend loaned me a copy of [*The Age of Reason*](#) by Thomas Paine which I read cover to cover. It was my thoughts exactly. It was then I found I was a Deist. Then I found there was an organization devoted to Deism and it was right here in my home area. That is how I became a Deist.

Why Deism?

From Catholic to Deist

By Carlos Herrera

This is my story:

I was raised Catholic, in a very strict and inflexible way. I don't hold resentment with my mother for doing so, because she was raised this way, too, and she believed she was doing it the right and only way. When at the age of 7 my mind started asking questions whose answers were a blunt rock wall called "dogma". I was also taught that "questioning was sinful". That I was to "believe everything I was taught by the church, otherwise I would be consumed by the fires of hell for eternity". This wasn't my mother, these were the priests and teachers of the Catholic school I attended. Being at that age, when everything seemed to have been already discovered by the "grownups", I fell into their game. I even began to read the biographies of saints and the Bible so much, that sometimes I would correct the teachers at class, and they would even ask me to correct my fellow schoolmates' exams.

"Idolatry", and yet, they have those saint statues everywhere. It would also criticize other religions for their polytheistic approach, considering themselves as the prime monotheistic religion, while having altars for 10,000 saints and one for each specialty! The one who cures illnesses, the one who makes rain, the one who finds lost things, the one who will find you your mate for life. As I reflected on those two facts, I started to develop my own ideas. Out of the program that I was supposed to follow, I made sure that my pupils would not fall into Catholic idolatry and polytheism. Many years later I encountered a branch of Catholic priests, called the Legionaries of Christ, and I found out about the fears they instill in their followers, making them think that everything is a sin. At this point, all of my questions as a child came back to me, and the word "dogma" had a new meaning: "I don't have a clue to that answer but I don't want you to know". The worst part is that the Church (all of the churches) claim to be the real thing, THE ONE ABSOLUTE TRUTH, with no room for error. Human error.

At age 16, I would attend to a school program on Saturdays to teach religion among poor children. But then something happened: I found out that Catholicism was really two things it disclaimed to be. It would criticize the Aztec cults for their I came to realize that the Bible had been written by men, and not by command of God. At this point I told one of my closest friends: "We humans were sent to the world without an instruction manual, without a rule book for the game we were set to play. I wish someone came and told me: "Look, we have no idea what this is all about, but by looking at nature and all of its laws and perfection, we think there may be an intelligent creator behind it, we don't know what may happen to us after we die, but if this is all we got, we think that by observing rules of mutual respect and cooperation we may achieve happiness. We are not sure about this, but this is the way we think." If such a person came, then

I would say "OK! So what do we do next?!" But I knew such a person wouldn't come, and even when surrounded by friends and family, I would feel this terrible loneliness! It was just then when I found in books the minds of some wonderful philosophers that became my friends inside my mind and started accepting some of their ideas and rejecting others. Best of all, I didn't feel alone anymore . Thus I learned that I'm a Freethinker with a Deist approach. I believe in God, but I have learned not to cage Him/Her/It in a definition. It is humans that try to adjust Him/Her/It to their own self and image. I managed to cope with our 89% Catholic population in Mexico. I faced my mother trying not to hurt her in the process and won her respect. And most of all, I made peace with myself after being raised with the Catholic guilt feeling. I hope my story will be useful to you.

Why Deism?

Belief in God Hit Me Like a Ton of Bricks

by Dennis Frey

Ever since I heard the story of Adam and Eve, I knew something was "wrong". I was born and baptized a Lutheran, married [and divorced] a Catholic, and always thought the Jews had it closer to right with the Old Testament.

Being a history buff, I decided to read 'Common Sense' by Thomas Paine and as luck would have it the book also contained 'The Age of Reason'. It was all right there before my very eyes. Every thing that I had doubted, every word that had been pounding in my brain for 50 years, every simple [yet profound] word of faith in the belief of God hit me like a ton of bricks. I was a Deist and didn't even know it!

I live in Tennessee which is the cradle of The Church of Christ and Baptism. To my closest friends, I have no problem confessing my beliefs. To the rest, discretion is the better part of valor. Having retired from the Defense Dept, war, violence, and fighting are in my DNA, but this is not the time to start another war, even of words. I believe winning converts to Deism will be more successful through Friendly Persuasion.

Today, my love of God is deeper than ever. The beauty of Nature's God, Truth, and Love are everything I need to be at peace with myself and to serve others. I do not need a Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, Abraham, or whoever between me and God to know that I am truly blessed.

Why Deism?

I Knew I Was a Deist

by Betty R.

I have known all of my adult life that I was different from my family members, friends, and work associates regarding religion. I have not been baptized. I never experienced the feeling that most people relate about their experience when they were so called "saved". I thought that I was odd and that something was wrong with me.

This is how I was introduced to Deism. Less than one year ago, my boss approached me with a newspaper article from the Nashville Tennessean. The headlines of the article had the term Deist in it. He asked me if I knew what Deist means. I immediately went into the search engine on my computer and a wealth of information opened up to me. As I read I knew that I was a Deist. I haven't stopped reading yet. I am a happier person, I am at peace with myself, and I am thankful for the day that my Boss posed that question to me. I read all of your E-mails ([Deism web-zines](#)). I check every day for new ones. I forward most of them to a friend who is struggling between Deism and Revealed Religion.

Why Deism?

Deists Need to Come Out of the Closet

by Norma

As a very young child, we went to the public library every week and checked out all the fairy tale books (Grimms, etc.). On Sundays, we went to Sunday School and received our religious education. At Christmas, we hid under the covers for fear of seeing Santa, because if you saw him you would not receive any gifts. My point is, of course, that you were supposed to conclude (because you are told to do so) that all this information was fantasy EXCEPT for the stories of the Christian faith... that Jesus was born of a virgin, was the only son of God, walked on water, etc., and that if you believe the story you will live forever in heaven on streets paved with gold. HOWEVER, should you not believe it, you will perish for eternity in a lake of fire. (Control through fear (your natural fear of death) and intimidation...believe or burn in hell.)

It makes no more sense to me as an adult than it did when I was a child. I have the highest of moral standards, honesty, and integrity. I don't believe I am destined to perish in a hell invented by men who wrote those stories in the Bible. When I look in the sky at night and see the incredible creation, I think, "How Great Thou Art." That is my perception of a God. I feel that we do not have the ability to perceive what God is, but surely there is a higher power. I have never been an atheist, but the revealed religions insult my God-given ability to reason. I enjoy the writings of Thomas Paine and consider him a great and courageous man.

If I tell people that I am Unitarian Universalist (which includes Deists and everyone else for that matter), they look at me like I am from another planet. They have never heard of UU or Deism, of course. I live in the South, and everyone is Baptist or Catholic, except for an occasional Jew. Education is long over due. We need to come out of the closet.

Why Deism?

I'm Completely at Ease With My Belief In God

by R.T. Longoria de Voltair, Ph.D.

Dear Friends,

I'm writing this letter at Bob Johnson's request. I had deistic sentiments my whole life, but found that my worldview had a name about 10 years ago. I don't think I ever "became" a Deist. I would say, rather, that I discovered a philosophy that was in line with what I already believed.

I was born into a Catholic family and attended Catholic schools for elementary, high school, and college. As a youth, I would spend some of my leisure time watching the Discovery and Science Channels and learning about nature and physics. I loved learning and in school I learned all about Christianity generally and Roman Catholicism specifically. But I never really believed what I was being told. I had particular problems accepting transubstantiation, original sin, the infallibility of the pope, virgin births, ascension into the heavens, and walking on liquid water. It simply did not fit into my understanding of how the world operated. Secondly, the prohibition on the use of contraception seemed stupid and the proscription on female priests seemed misogynist. Doubt was always present and my mother would marvel at how I could get a C in religion class but straight A's in everything else.

It was in a world history class while I was reading about the Enlightenment that I first saw the term Deism. It immediately sparked my interest and curiosity. I read Thomas Paine, Ethan Allen, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Matthew Tindal, John Toland, Voltaire, Shaftsbury, and others. As I read I saw that my views had already been articulated centuries ago. There was no doubt that I was a Deist. I was committed to using my reason to understand the universe. I was naturally pensive, quiet, and logical. Indeed, I once had an employer tell me that I reminded her of Spock from Star Trek. Logical is certainly one of my traits and I think for that reason Deism was the perfect theological philosophy for me.

I learned that religious wars engulfed the Dark Ages while Catholics and Protestants fought for power. The Enlightenment came along and told people that tolerance was a better path and that religious fanaticism was dangerous. This was a fantastic breakthrough in human morality and one that I support. But it seems to me that this is insufficient as a moral standard. Tolerance is like telling someone, "I hate you, but I'll deal with it and refrain from killing you because of our differences." Acceptance is a much higher standard of morality. When a person is ready to accept someone, despite their differences, as a full member of human society we are acting in a just manner. It is like saying, "If I were in your shoes, I'd like to be treated with dignity and respect. So I'll treat you the same way I would like to be treated." Throughout history Deists

always seemed to be telling others to stop their petty fighting over ridiculous and non-sensical beliefs.

I felt so strongly that Deism was a better moral path that I changed my surname. This is something that many people do. Muslims sometimes take the name Mohammed when they convert. Christians take a confirmation name that symbolizes their link to Christianity. People do this to tell the world, "This is what I believe." There is no shame in that and I want people to know what I believe in. Eventually, I would get excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church, but that is a different story.

It seems to me that very smart people are drawn to Deism. This isn't because Deism will give you all the answers and tell you the Truth, but it is a foundation for seeking the right answers and provides a framework for organizing the world. Ultimately each person has to find their own answers based on what they find reasonable. This strikes a chord with people who are individualists and with those who believe that humanity can be made better. My love of knowledge caused me to pursue my education until I completed a Ph.D. last year. I'm now a college professor and committed to using my mind for the betterment of humankind.

Sincerely,

R.T. Longoria de Voltair, Ph.D.

My Excommunication

December 12, 2004

Dear Friends,

A very extraordinary event occurred earlier this month. I was corresponding with an expert on Canon law from the Las Vegas diocese and I was excommunicated for heresy and apostasy because of my Deist beliefs. Excommunication is no easy task to accomplish. The Roman Catholic Church is committed to a precept known as invincible ignorance. The Church assumes that its members are ignorant of its Canon law and therefore cannot be held culpable for violating that law. As a result even those who steadfastly oppose the Church and its doctrines will not be excommunicated. The Church seeks to keep these members in the hopes that one day they will realize their errors and return to their superstitious past. In fact, the Church has created for itself an incentive to keep its members ignorant of its own rules.

However, the chorus song of “We want you back” must not be taken as the full position of the Church. This speciously seems like a very accepting doctrine and one that is consistent with their emphasis on an all-merciful god. Rather we should hear the full chant, “We want you back, but only after you agree with our position.” This stance is one that seeks to coerce people into accepting their dogma and to exclude those who disagree with it. Those Catholics who seek to leave the community will, nevertheless, still find it difficult to do so with any sense of formality.

Because, in the words of the Church official, no one is “placed outside of the community” severing one’s relationship can only be a one sided affair. Though the individual believes he has left, the Church still considers him a member. At most the individual can only be excommunicated. This is the most severe sanction the Church can impose on a member, but even this person is still in the community though he is as excluded as he can possibly be.

To be excommunicated one must violate Canon law not just materially but formally. Many people can commit a material sin, that is do something wrong in the eyes of the Church but not be considered culpable for that sin. People born in India and who practice the Hindu religion, while “worshipping false gods,” are not sanctioned because of their ignorance of Church bylaws. Similarly, a Catholic who is unaware is not sanctioned for the same reason. They are only materially sinful because of their ignorance.

Indeed, there are several mechanisms by which a person will not be held accountable for their actions. First, a person must have the full the use of their reason; this means that children and those who are otherwise mentally disabled cannot be held accountable. Secondly, a person must have sufficient moral liberty; this means that a person must not have been coerced into taking an action. The action must have been taken of their own free will to be held accountable. Thirdly, the person must be aware of the law and of the penalties.

This last criterion is not as easy as one may suppose. One must become a novice expert on Canon law to incur the penalty. They must not only know what precisely is prohibited, but also know exactly what the sanction is for committing the action. Heresy and apostasy are violations of Canon law that incur the sanction of *latae sententiae* excommunication, and they are the ones committed if one adheres to the traditional Deist views. In the case of excommunication one must not hold to popular misconceptions about the penalty, but understand the penalty and what it entails from the Church’s own perspective.

Once this knowledge is acquired there is yet one more hurdle. One must choose not to cease in the prohibited action. One must be obstinate and recalcitrant. Only with these four criteria met can one be culpable and incur the sanction. It is only then that the sin is consummated and that one is formally in violation of Canon law.

In this regard the Church does make every attempt not to punish its members. And even the sanction of excommunication is designed to “rescue the single lost sheep.” It is imposed so that the person will realize their errors and return to the herd. But verily I say to you, no reasonable

person should wish to be a member of a herd. The tyranny of the priestly shepard over his “sheeple” must be resisted. Sheep are mindless creatures that obey their masters, but people are rational creatures with a capacity for judgment and a will of their own. Eat from the tree of knowledge, form your own opinions and live independently. This is the American way. Freedom from all forms of tyranny, mental and physical, is why we revolted. It is a value that must be defended.

Moreover, error and sin are relative. The Deist could as easily argue that the popish are erroneous and sinful. But I suggest no such thing. Arguments between those with different theological views are intractable. Instead, we should hold steadfast to a higher morality than the Church itself adheres to. To accept those with different views into our lives, by letting them share in our camaraderie, is a stronger moral position than excluding those who disagree with us. I believe the Church to be like a child who says, “I don’t want to play with you anymore.” The Deist is and should be above such petty bickering.

Sincerely,

RTL DV

Why Deism?

Now That I Am a Deist . . .

by Dameyon B.

I think I was always a Deist.

My Father is an Atheist, and my Mother is Catholic. Well she says she is, but she mainly goes to church to play BINGO.

I had a babysitter who used to read bible stories to me, and because of that I had a really good working knowledge of the bible.

I never really went to church until I was 7 or so. My Great Aunt started going to a Missionary church, and I started going with her. I guess the people were nice enough, and since I knew the stories it was easy to sit and learn. Then I asked the question. Why do I pray to Jesus rather than just pray to God? That opened the flood gates. No matter how they tried to explain it, I knew they were full of crap. Shortly thereafter I started thinking about the "miracles" and I realized that such things just don't happen in real life. Oh, and when it occurred to me that people were praying for such trivial things as passing a test, winning a football game, or the lottery, my head almost exploded.

In my later teens, I just considered myself to be an Atheist. This also caused a problem for me because I always felt like the world was too complicated to have just happened.

I'm not a hundred percent sure but I think I came across the definition of deism on your website, (www.deism.com). I read it, it makes sense, and it is now what I believe myself to be. Now that I am a Deist, I don't waste a single moment thinking of what will happen when I die. I am as honest as I ever have been, as faithful a husband as a wife could ask for, and far more tolerant of others.

Why Deism?

. . . a Journey of Liberation, Intelligence and Joy

by Robert Savio

I was born into the Catholic Church and went through the indoctrination of Catechism class; altar boy training and of course strict adherence to the "Sacraments". I always questioned many of the concepts and doctrines of the faith that just did not add up but as a youth, such thoughts were heresy and I was marched off to the Parish office to be "taught in the faith" by the Pastor. During my life I toyed with many other "religions" and sought the "truth" in them all. Each, in its own way failed the test. Finally at age 65, after a lifetime of doubt, confusion, guilt and shame (all emotions readily imposed by all of the "revealed" faiths), I came across a website titled: www.evilbible.com and in the contents was a passing reference to Thomas Paine and Deism. Still on my life long quest for truth and reason I went to the [Deism site](#) and realized that after a lifetime of searching I had arrived. The more I explored Deism and read [THE AGE OF REASON](#), the more clear it became that logic and intelligence are found in Deism alone!! I am still learning all I can about Deism and freeing myself from the mental and emotional bondage of the Catholic Church only THIS time it is a journey of liberation, intelligence and joy!

Why Deism?

I Have Always Thought That "God Is" and That Is Enough

By Eddie

I have always thought "God Is" and that is enough. I really didn't "evolve" into anything special. I grew up in the Methodist Church, participated in many of the activities, the choir, the young people's groups, etc. I do not remember any special "push" to ever believe anything else except that "God Is"... Somewhere along the way, I just stopped going to church; I don't really remember why. My husband also grew up in the Methodist Church, and we were married in a Methodist Church. He had stopped going to the Methodist Church, and had become a Unitarian Universalist, and I joined his church. We participated in some of the activities and attended irregularly. When he died, his memorial service was in the Methodist Church he helped establish in Dallas. The minister knew him personally from those long ago days, and the service was simply a memorial to Bob... We had moved to Arkansas where we did not attend any church. I moved to Oklahoma City after he died, and do not attend any church.

My favorite line in the old movie, "Oh, God", with George Burns, is when someone asks God if Jesus was his son. He replies, Yes, as was Buddha, Mohammed, Krishna, and you and all people.

Once, many years ago, in Arkansas, on a very cold, clear winter night, about 2:00 in the morning, I couldn't sleep, and went outside. The sky was so clear and the stars were so bright and many, that I felt I could see to the "edge" and into the mind of God.

If this makes me a deist, then I am.

Why Deism?

Atheism Didn't Suit Me

by Richard Orr

How I became a Deist? Like so many other things in my life, I just kinda stumbled onto it.

Born and raised Catholic in a very strong Catholic family, the only thing Mass on Sunday meant to me was whether there were two lighted candles lit on the altar or six. If two, it meant a "low Mass" that'd be over in about 45 minutes. If six, it'd be an hour and a half.

In grade school, we had to go to Confession every Friday afternoon. What does anyone know about sin in second and third grade? We made up stuff - at least I did - like I swore 17 times or I disobeyed my parents seven times. I felt weird because surely the priest must know I was lying.

The prayers were rote. Just a bunch of words. No feelings involved. No connection to anything in my life.

I can't even say I was afraid of going to hell. It held no meaning for me. Nothing about the Church or religion in general had any substance to it. In short, I couldn't relate.

Later, as a young adult, I couldn't understand why an all-loving, all-compassionate, all-forgiving, all-knowing God would demand constant praise and blood sacrifice - animals in the Old Testament, his "only begotten son" in the New.

Or why the Jews and Romans are condemned for crucifying Christ. If he died to atone for our sins, they should be hailed as agents of God and thanked instead of vilified.

It occurred to me that the reason the Jews are "the chosen people" is because Jews wrote the Bible.

In college, I came across a book by historian-philosopher Barrows Dunham titled "Heroes and Heretics," which traced the first heretic back to the Egyptian pharaoh who took his people from multi-theism to mono-theism - on through such religious and scientific heretics as Christ, Newton and Einstein.

Since Catholicism virtually ruled the world during a large portion of that period, Dunham dissected the Church, pointed out the horrors it committed in God's name during the Dark Ages and noted that the seven sacraments were designed not to tie us to God, but to the Church.

You couldn't be born, get married or die without a priest at your side. You had to have all the children God wanted you to have and you had to raise them Catholic because "Catholicism is the only true religion."

If it worked in real life like it does on paper, the whole world would eventually be Catholic and the Church would rule it. I began to see the light, but it wasn't the one people normally talk about.

Atheism didn't suit me. It's just as intellectually unsound to insist there is no God as it is to insist there is.

I toyed with agnosticism for a while, yet couldn't get away from the fact there was this fantastic thing called the universe and a world teeming with life of all kinds, forms and functions exquisitely balanced so that no one group could take over the planet.

Even human life was kept in check by disease - at least until the past 100 years or so. Now look where we are in terms of a population trampling other forms into oblivion and, ultimately, our own.

It's dangerous to mess with Mother Nature.

I really don't remember when or where I heard the word Deism. I do recall that it was portrayed along the lines of God creating the universe, winding it up like a clock, then taking off to play golf in Acapulco and not looking back.

Something clicked. Deism doesn't answer all the questions. Nothing does. But it serves to explain how the universe came to be and why good people have bad things happen to them and why good things happen to bad people.

I don't put down people who believe in religion and I don't go around trying to deconvert anyone. Deism cleared my mind about a lot of things, and George Carlin showed me how to accept religion when he said:

"Religion can be likened to elevator shoes. If they make you stand taller, walk straighter and feel better, by all means wear them. But keep in mind that elevator shoes can cripple and for God's sake, let's not go around nailing them to the feet of natives."

Pretty insightful for an atheist.

Why Deism?

Now My Mind Is Free and Happy

by Jayson X

Dear Friends in Deism,

Here is how I became a Deist. I was born on Christmas Eve 1969 and placed for adoption that very day. About a month later, I was adopted by two wonderful people, Richard and Linda Post. Richard was an all-star athlete who served as a sailor during the Vietnam War and later moved back to what was basically his hometown. There, he became a much respected police officer. Linda, who was of Syrian-American heritage, was a devout Eastern Orthodox Christian. Within a year of my adoption, Richard suddenly died from lung cancer, which was caused by Agent Orange exposure. He used to regularly load the toxic defoliant as he served on the aircraft carrier, the USS Independence. Thus, my wonderful adoptive father died from a very questionable practice in a very questionable war before I ever had the chance to really know him. The suffering a war causes does not end when the firing stops. It lasts for generations.

I do not remember the first time I knew that I was adopted or that my adoptive father died from Agent Orange exposure, because my adoptive mother raised me with that knowledge. To this day, I am exceedingly thankful that she did. It is generally better to know the sad truth than to live a happy lie.

Knowing about my adoption and the unjust and devastating death of Richard made me more philosophically inclined than most. From an early age on, I thought to myself, Why is the world so messed up? What should we humans do to fix it?

Christianity, at first, seemed to be the answer. It taught much good morality and that God would empower us through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to do as much good as we can. I figured that if everyone chose to be as good as possible, things like unwanted pregnancies, the Vietnam War, and the use of Agent Orange would not happen. I also wanted to go to Heaven because this life was full of suffering, and I wanted to help others do the same.

Eventually, I became an Eastern Orthodox Christian priest. Well, if you ever want to know something very well, try to teach it seriously. I became an expert in both Christianity and the Bible because I was trying to teach it seriously. The salvation of the world was at stake!

I never imagined at that time that I would ever reject my inherited religion. I was raised to believe that Eastern Orthodox Christianity alone was the one, true faith. Yet, I started noticing that many of the Christians I knew probably would have been better people if they were raised in a simpler religion, a rational religion that taught the best of Christianity without the rest. I believe that such a religion would teach that we should base all of our beliefs on reason, God

exists and is completely good, and God will reward relatively good people and punish relatively evil people. It would not teach that we should believe miracles which probably did not happen, participate in rituals in order to be saved, or tithe to pay for a church and a preacher.

So I took a leave from the ministry, and eventually got excommunicated and deposed. Now my mind is free and happy. I would much rather be a Deist than a member of a supposedly revealed religion. If I were God, I would rather bless and save people who were good and honest than evil and/or credulous. And that is exactly the way God thinks, as far as I know.

I am very happy to be a part of the World Union of Deists. I thank this most important organization for spreading the good news of Deism and allowing me to use my credentials and talents to teach people to base their beliefs on reason and still believe in God.

Why Deism?

You Sound Like a Deist

by Karl Swanson

This is a brief synopsis of how I became a Deist-

After I had become disenchanted with the church and its' hypocrisy, I started researching revealed religions, science, and various philosophies for almost a year. Ironically, without even hearing of Deism, I came to the conclusion that a creator initiated the universe and left everything to evolve. I then shared this reasoning with my mom who stated, "you sound like a Deist."

After my conversation with my mom, I began to study Deism through Deism.com and various texts. Through my studies I continually realized a strong connection to the ideas behind Deism and living by the Golden Rule. In addition, the Deist perspective left me amazed at the world around me and the intricacy of life. I finally came to the logical conclusion that there must be a primordial being, "Nature's God", who started the process.

As a result, if the occasion arises I am never afraid to share with family or friends that I am a Deist!

Why Deism?

I am Now an Ardent Deist

by Robert L. Hamlett

I was forced to attend an evangelical church during my youth. I hated every minute of it. Even at a young age, I was not buying what they were selling. After going away to college, I became an agnostic, which I remained for many years.

Later in my adult life, I did a lot of soul searching about the existence of God. I eventually came to believe that the orderliness of the universe and the miracle of life itself could not be the result of some random event. I came to believe in an omnipotent force in the universe, yes, a God, but retained my hostility to organized religion.

For many years, I thought that I was alone in my beliefs. A few years ago, in a discussion of religious beliefs with a nephew, he convinced me to read "The Age of Reason" by Thomas Paine. This book changed my life. I realized that there were many others who shared my beliefs. By "googleing" Deism, I was introduced to a world that I did not know existed.

I am now an ardent Deist and spread the word at every opportunity. I have written letters to the editor, some of which were printed, informing readers of the existence of Deism. I even have a personalized license plate on my automobile which simply says "DEIST"

On the surface, to those who know me only casually, I have had a successful life. Few people know of the demons that I have fought. During the first 39 years of life I suffered, many times, with debilitating depression. As an adult, I was in and out of psychiatric hospitals, staying weeks or months, until I was once again able to regain my place in society. I was without hope, thinking this was a lifelong affliction.

At 39, I found a psychiatrist who experimented with me, putting me on a combination of anti-depressants. It took eight long weeks, but eventually, for the first time in my life, I was "DEPRESSION FREE". I am now 64 and have lived a wonderful life, free from depression, for the past 25 years.

At the suggestion of my family doctor, who knew my history of depression, I have written a book to be released sometime soon, probably in March or April 2008. The Name of the book is:

[Surviving Depression](#)

[My Agonizing Struggle with Sanity](#)

BY ROBERT L. HAMLETT

I did not write this book to gain fame or make money, but to give the many hopelessly depressed people something that I never had until I was 39. I wanted to give them HOPE that someday they might live depression free and have a normal life.

On the last page of the book I write the following:

"When I was in college, like many college students, I became an agnostic. As I have matured and observed the vastness and order of the universe and the wonder of life itself, I now know that there is an omnipotent force responsible for the creation, yes, a God. Yet, I shun organized religion, preferring a direct personal relationship with my God. I am a Deist."

I hope this book is successful for two reasons (1) to let depressed people know that there is hope and (2) to let the reader know that there is an alternative to the revealed religions.

I hope that everyone who receives this email will read this book and determine whether or not, on its merits, it is worthy of recommending to others. If a large number of people buy this book, particularly, if it receives world wide attention, the more likely the publisher will be encouraged to spend more money in promoting the book and the more people whom will be exposed to DEISM. For more information on it contact me at:

bobhamlett@comcast.net

Why Deism?

The Age of Reason Has Come to This Searcher

by Ben Owen

Having been raised in a Proper Baptist home I considered religion an integral part of my life.

I read the bible for its adventure stories and enjoyed them but could not fit the stories of "Miracles" into my understanding of physics even before I knew what physics was.

When I was in the military service I sought out different churches to attend, thinking I would find one of the 'Revealed' religions closer to the understanding of God's action than the versions I had heard from the pulpit.

After attending a service I would approach the Minister as he stood at the door sending the flock on to 'Cracker Barrel' for lunch.

I would begin my questions by asking; "Would you please explain how...", then insert a puzzling passage from his sermon. The many responses I received can be condensed down to, "Boy, You just have to believe!", indicating his duties for the day to parishioners was over and he had no time for a serviceman with a question.

I felt that everything in the bible should be able to be explained to a reasonably intelligent and curious person who was fervently searching for answers they/I could understand. That did not happen!

After pursuing this avenue without measurable success I tried to find the answers to my questions by religious readings. Some, no, many, of these waxed euphoric over the supernatural ability of 'miracles' God supposedly caused to happen. I considered this as being a great insult to God as I understood him. After all, if he had the power to create the universe and everything in it, He had the intelligence and ability to make things happen that followed the laws of nature that he had created and in a time frame that followed those laws.

When I reached this point, I began to question the motives and teachings of all "revealed" religions asking myself, "What controls the collective behavior of the officials at all levels in these institutions." My answer was they were manufacturing hypothetical situations to control those people who they had influence over to give their money, adulation, effort and thought to the Church, not to God or the worship of God.

I reached the conclusion that all revealed religions were mere cults devised to control the behavior of other humans by threatening them with God's wrath.

In a reverse of their claims, I thought that if God felt inclined to 'Miracles' he would probably be tempted to destroy the churches that force the most gullible in society to give work and money to build huge edifices in celebration of religion by claiming they were worshipping God.

God created the Universe including the rules that control everything we are aware of. Of course he goes by the rules He created!

I have tried to align myself with the most populous religions, then failing in the quest attended 'Friends' Unity and Unitarian beliefs but each left gaps between understanding, behavior and reason.

I had to wait until the Internet became easily accessible to discover Deism, I was not smart enough to discover it by myself.

Now, I believe that the age of reason has come to this searcher.

Why Deism?

I Was a Deist Without Knowing It!

by Bob Richason

I was a Deist without knowing it. I thought I must be at least agnostic or atheist.

At the age of 69 I had been a Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Church of God, Baptist, and probably many others I don't remember.

Attending an Episcopal church, I had a conversation with the priest. He told me that based on my beliefs I was a Deist. A quick trip to the internet using the services of Google confirmed what he told me.

At last I found what makes sense. I think man has a need to believe there is a creator. My objection to organized religion has been that it is so obvious that people like to make up their kind of deity and then they KNOW or BELIEVE every aspect of what someone else has claimed. I find it astounding that people actually buy this stuff without question. I find it so arrogant!

An earth that is 2 billion years old and only in the last several thousand years have humans evolved, yet some believe beyond doubt that the earth is 6000 years old. And they regard any other religion as a superstition without realizing that all organized religions are based on superstition.

I still don't know if there is an afterlife. I am influenced by stories of near death experiences and yes, ghosts. I hope there is something after life and like many, I find the complications of the universe so complex as to doubt that it all just happened, so here I am, a Deist!

Why Deism?

Happy to Find People Who Believe as I Do

by Benjamin Holmes

I have been a deist all of my life without knowing it! I knew my beliefs fit no main-stream religion as I used to call them so I went on Yahoo Answers and posted my beliefs. A user said I was a clear-cut deist. So I visited your website and BAM!!! I was a deist. It was that simple. I am so happy to find people that believe the same things I do!

Why Deism?

. . . the one belief system that actually made sense!

by Megan

Ever since my early teens, I've been unsatisfied with the religion I was raised to believe. While I still loved God with all my heart, I had the hardest time accepting the "facts" in the Bible. So many Christians that I knew were quick to preach, and the exact opposite of what I consider "christ-like". I felt so guilty for even questioning Christianity, and I was afraid to go to hell just because I didn't agree with the belief that one set of rules could apply to and control the choices of so many people. I eventually decided that I didn't have to belong to a religion to love God, but I still didn't like not having a name for the way I felt and believed.

One day I was in the library with an Atheist friend of mine and we got into a discussion where Deism was brought up. All I knew of Deism was the minimal information from history class in regards to our founding fathers. As I do whenever I come across something that I don't know much about, I decided to do some research. I was first led to an article on Wikipedia, where I saw several links to websites of modern Deist societies, which led me to deism.com. As I was reading about the basic history and beliefs of Deism, I finally felt like I had found the one belief system that actually made sense. It wasn't even like hearing a good idea that you would consider adopting as a personal philosophy, it was like having your own thoughts and feelings written down in an articulate way, and then given a name. After years of guilt and searching, I finally felt free in my beliefs. Thank-you so much so making an effort to spread light and reason in the world, and to set free those trapped in the illogical chains of revealed religion!

Why Deism?

. . . doors of my mind have continued to open

by Bob B.

I actually learned the term Deism at a fairly young age. I had an English teacher in high school who took it upon herself to educate us in the history of art and philosophy. Among the many other things we learned, Deism was a focal point during our exploration of the Renaissance and Romantic periods. We learned a great deal about Voltaire and Locke. She believed strongly that our roots as a society and our government could be found in the pages of their works. I would not be surprised to find out that she considered herself a Deist. Only the separation of church and state prevented her from saying so.

Even with an early understanding of Deism, I continued to consider myself an agnostic. I knew the teachings of the Christian faith were immoral and illogical, but I also believed all other religions to be of equal terms. Religion has created so much strife, discontent, and death over the history of mankind, that I was determined that the only course of action was to dismantle and abandon all religious beliefs.

However, this last spring, I went on a business trip to Japan. For the first time I saw a society that could function properly and in a more peaceful manner and still have religious beliefs and faiths. I remembered my high school teachings well. I did a Google search for Deism and Deism.com was the first result. Throughout my time in Japan I read some of the essays posted on the site, while at the same time I visited the ancient Buddhist temples. From that point on, doors of my mind have continued to open and not only do I wish to continue advancing my knowledge of Deism, but that of other religions also. I believe that through understanding one another we can all learn the true nature of God and through our use of his greatest gift (reason) we can discover his glorious designs.

Why Deism?

From Seventh Day Adventism to Baptist to Deism

by Jack Evans

From the age of nine until my rebellious late teens I was raised in the Seventh Day Adventist church where the bible was revered as the inerrant word of God. The church's prophet Ellen G. White and her writings revealed through visions were viewed as inspired, and vital to the understanding of the bible.

After nine years I became disillusioned with its legalistic teachings, and inability to live up to God's demands and those of Ellen G. White and subsequently left the church. After attending Calvary Chapel for a few years I settled in a Baptist Church for another three years.

The last year at the Baptist church we were studying Rick Warren's book "The Purpose Driven Life" when I began to ask questions about the God of the bible as 'revealed' through Warren's book. For instance, why does God require us to worship him constantly if he was self sufficient in himself being the perfect God he is? After all an all benevolent being that is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient doesn't have humanity's psychological baggage. Why does God get jealous if his people choose not to worship him? Isn't jealousy a sin we are commanded not to partake in? Worse of all, why does God command to kill or himself kill those who he doesn't like in violation of his own commandment? The pat answers of "God's ways are not our ways" or you must "have faith" were not enough.

I began to read books like the "Age of Reason" by Paine, "The Crucifixion of Truth" by Tony Bushby and "Biblical Inerrancy" by Dennis McKensey and the scales fell from my eyes. The questioning of my faith in organized religion shook me to the core and I suffered severe cognitive dissonance for two years. I finally left the faith and found Deism as being the closest to what I felt was truth.

Deism has allowed me to throw off the chains of dogmatism, religious slavery and legalistic bondage to revealed texts and prophets in exchange for the reasoning, thinking and logical skills God gave me. I now see that revealed religion has been and still is the major cause of all of the world's suffering under many an oppressive regime in other countries, and a danger to our First Amendment right to freedom of and from religion in this country.

Why Deism?

I Discovered I was a Deist and Much More

by M.S.

To tell you the truth, I don't know exactly how I came to know about Deism. I do remember that I was on the internet doing research on many scriptures that I have always had a hard time believing in by "faith". While searching, I found scriptures that I had never noticed before. Mainly because most churches that I had attended NEVER discussed such subjects as child abuse, murder, genocide, or many other ungodly acts in the bible. Scriptures that I had NEVER heard read from the pulpit! At first I was sad and mad at the same time by these horrific scriptures. I was disappointed by what I felt to be intentional deception from "revealed religions." They have no answers, so they will tell you to pray about your questions and ask for revelation. Just believe and have "faith"! I wanted more. I wanted truth. BLIND faith wasn't working for me any longer! I wanted answers!!!!

Somehow I ended up on Deism.com. Deism described the God of my dreams. The God that I can *honestly* say that I love! I actually get teary-eyed at times when I think of how awesome God Is. He wants us to live life. As I wrote in my article "Will The Real God Please Stand Up", (December issue of [THINKonline!](#)) "The real God would never cause death to any living creation, out of hatred, rage, vengeance."

I am free. Free indeed! I am grateful that I finally found the truth...or maybe the truth found me. All I know is that is how I discovered that I am a Deist. My Creator God made it possible for me to live in a beautiful World, in a awesome Galaxy, that is located in HIS incomprehensible Universe. I can live with that...truly live!!

THINK, LOOK, LISTEN!

Why Deism?

Accepting the Existence of Nature's God

by Jesse Woody

I wasn't born into a Christian family. Many of my relatives on my father's side were devout Southern Baptists. At any early age, while attending vacation bible school, I was persuaded to become a Baptist. I led my mother, father, brother and sister to the church. I believed and taught others that Christianity and the Baptist church was the path to salvation. After graduating from high school in the "bible belt" town of Shawnee, OK, I naturally attended the local Oklahoma Baptist University. At the religion based school, I was required to attend a daily assembly where Baptist doctrine was taught. In order to become sophomores we were required to take a semester each of the Old and New Testament of the bible. I did quite well on tests and assignments. As I began to read and study, I realized that this "holy book" was nothing but a superstitious fairy tale. By having the contents of the whole bible laid out for me to study, rather than providing just those verses and stories that supported the Christian beliefs, my eyes were opened. If this was the word of God, I wanted nothing to do with it. I was amazed that I ever believed in such a fantasy. I certainly couldn't accept a God that had so many human faults.

As I completed the final exams for the course, I approached the instructor, a Baptist Minister. I thanked him for all that I had learned from the bible course. He smiled and said that he hoped I would use what I learned to guide me in the future. I said "yes, I will never set foot in another church again". I left him with his eyes wide and mouth open. He didn't expect my answer and made no response. I was eighteen. I am now 67 and looking back, I don't really know when I realized I was a Deist. As I grew older, my concept of God became completely different from what the "Holy Books" described. I was totally against all "organized religion". The more I read and discovered, the stronger my disbelief became. The only God that my mind could conceive of, was the Creator of the universe. I rejected the idea that all of the complex things in the world around me just happened. I have, using the brain given to me, accepted the existence of "Nature's God".

Why Deism?

From Baha'i Faith to Deism

by Anonymous

Embracing Deist thought was not so much a matter of me leaving the Baha'i Faith as much as evolving out of it. One of the most important imperatives that I learned as a Baha'i was the independent investigation of the truth. It was always a firm conviction of mine that the search for the truth was not something to be taken lightly, nor did it concern finality. Truth is something that always needs to be sought after. Religious truth has always been a vocation of mine, an innate impulse and desire to know and understand more, no matter what the cost.

I must confess that after leaving the Baha'is, I did try my hand at Christianity, so to speak, but found the narrow mindset, puerile dogma and fatuous doctrines more of the same rhetoric with just a different nomenclature.

I realized upon discovering a copy of the book [*The Age of Reason*](#) by Thomas Paine and reading it, that another piece of the puzzle had yet been unfolded to me. Paine's logic, argument and reasoning gave me a framework to unshackle my mind and to see the religions for what they were, man-made creations.

The concept or doctrine so often quoted by the Baha'is of "Progressive Revelation" is flawed from several points. If God could not seem to "get it right" the first time with Adam, what makes a believer think that successive "Manifestations" or "Prophets" will fair any better? I used to believe as a Baha'i that the common foundation of all religions was one. (An essential Baha'i teaching), meaning that God authored them all. Now, I have come to understand, with an altered point of view, that yes, they do come from the same source, the hands of men who believed, for whatever reason, that they were chosen by God, the Creator of the Universe, who being so concerned with this tiny rotating speck of dust, to guide the rest of us unfortunate souls and entrusted these "Manifestations" with "His message".

One only needs to study religious history to understand the convoluted nonsense of these "Holy Books" and the resulting bloody swath that they have cut through the ages of humanity, up to our present day. Read, watch or listen to the daily headlines from your preferred media source, television, newspapers, books or the internet to catch up on the latest religious atrocity, bombing or act of genocide. I must emphasize that humanity has evolved and advanced, not as the Baha'i writings contend, because of religion and progressive revelations, but in spite of it. The Baha'i Faith did not usher in a "New age for mankind", that began in the 17th and 18th centuries with enlightenment thinkers like Voltaire, Locke, Paine, Jefferson and Franklin. These thinking and conscientious men turned their backs on religion and revelation and used God's gift of the mind, free-will and reason to forge ahead a new and progressive age for humanity, divested of the

religious superstitions and institutions that have for centuries imprisoned the minds and souls of men and women.

Baha'i friends, use your minds, investigate the truth and do not settle for a system of religious dogma that relies on "institutional infallibility". Think for yourself. Free your mind and reason or imprison it. The choice is most certainly yours.

Why Deism?

From Jehovah's Witness to Deist

by Fred Thompson

I am a Deist. Even now it sounds strange to me, when you consider my background. I am 56 years old and in 1951 I was born into a Jehovah's Witness family and raised in the teachings and practices of the Witnesses, by very faithful and well meaning parents.

As a toddler I would accompany my parents in the "field ministry" as the door to door work was known. My job was to hand a tract or invitation to a Witness meeting to a receptive house holder. I mean, who could resist the smiling face of a little toddler? I handed out many a tract in my early years.

As Witnesses, you are expected to progress and it wasn't long before I could knock on your door, give you a 5 minute sermon with four scriptures and answer many of your Bible questions. Jehovah's Witnesses had a book called "Make Sure of All Things". It was arranged by subject so if someone asked you why you didn't believe in the Trinity, celebrate Christmas, whatever, you just looked under "Christmas" and there was a little rebuttal, neatly laid out, with supporting scriptures and all.

Many Witnesses had it conveniently bound in with their Bible. So, it looked like they were talking from the Bible exclusively, looking up scripture from memory, all the while giving you a well thought out explanation. Since most "Christians" are not very Bible literate, a lot of Witnesses dazzled many householders with that little "cheat sheet".

In addition to the day to day indoctrination you get from your parents, you attend five meetings a week. There was one on Tuesday, held in a private group where you would meet for an hour to study a publication assigned by the Watchtower Society, which we referred to as the "Book Study". We had the Thursday night Theocratic Ministry School and Service Meeting, each one hour and the Sunday Public Talk and Watchtower study, also each an hour.

So between "field service" on Saturday and often on Sunday before or after the Sunday meeting, preparation for these meetings and personal study on subjects that interested you, the Witnesses pretty much monopolized your life. As a kid, when you add in school, we had little free time.

At age 6 in June of 1958, (I turned 7 in August) I became a member of the Theocratic Ministry School. This is a school where you never graduate. You are assigned to give a talk or Bible reading from specific material. My first "talk" was a Bible reading from Psalms, given to a congregation of approx. 150. Over the years I became a proficient public speaker, one positive thing I did get from the Witnesses.

Another positive thing was that I really have no fear in speaking to people. You develop this by week after week, year after year going to strangers doors with an unpopular message. In school, you're always different, but having the strong personality that I have, this situation only made me stronger. I can't say I never had any fear, but I stood up for my beliefs and am a stronger person as a result.

These two things, being a trained public speaker and having no fear in talking to anyone about anything have served me well through my entire life.

When the Beatles burst on the public scene in 1963 and came to the US in 1964 my life changed. I was 12 and instantly became and still am a huge Beatle fan. I bought a guitar and learned to play somewhat and started to become involved in some little garage bands. The Beatles and rock and roll were an "influence of Satan", so the inevitable conflict with my parents began. As a result, I resorted to the "secret life", as the Witnesses call it. You're a good little Witness while other Witnesses are looking, but you carry on like a "worldly person" every chance you get. I even went so far as to be baptized at 16.

I smoked pot, had "worldly", (non Witness) girlfriends, played in rock bands and generally was your typical 60's teenager. I hid most of this from my parents, but it was evident to them that my Witness enthusiasm was waning, although they were not aware of all that I was doing. Having been indoctrinated since birth, I did have the occasional bout of conscience, but as a rule, I was a 60's wild child.

The majority of the Witness kids did then and do now live that "double life". At one point, I even smoked pot and played in a rock band with several Witness teenagers. In fact, I was seduced by an elder's wife at 17. She was 32 and after a few weeks, her conscience got the best of her, and she confessed to the Elders. Since I was baptized, I was subject to disfellowshipping or excommunication. But, I was only 17 and "jail bait", meaning she would have been guilty of statutory rape. So the whole thing was swept under the rug. However, the news spread like wildfire among the Witness kids. The Elder and his wife eventually left the area.

The whole incident confused me somewhat, as the Elders did not stick to their principals when it came to publically embarrassing one of their own. What should have happened was that she and I should have been publically disfellowshipped. In that case, though, official word of the incident would spread, embarrassing their fellow Elder.

It continued this way until I got out of high school and came to the realization that I had to make a decision. The Witnesses discourage college so I decided that I was not going to College (which I eventually did anyway) and instead dedicate my life to be a Witness. I mean Armageddon (the war in which God kills all you who are not Witnesses) was right around the corner, so why mess with college. That was part of the world that was going to be destroyed by God.

So, at 19 I married an 18 year old “sister” and settled down in “the Truth” (that’s how the Witnesses refer to their religion) and awaited Armageddon. I mean, it was coming and coming fast!!

As a side point, many Witnesses marry very young, with disastrous results. If you can’t have sex outside of marriage, the next best thing is marriage. I mean teenagers as young as 16 were and STILL ARE getting married.

But, we wanted to remain in Jehovah’s favor and be saved through the big war of Armageddon.

This is what we were reading in the late 60’s early 70’s:

From the *Watchtower*, October 15, 1969, pages 622-3 –

"More recently earnest researchers of the Holy Bible have made a recheck of its chronology. According to their calculations the six millenniums of mankind's life on earth would end in the mid-seventies. Thus the seventh millennium from man's creation by Jehovah God would begin within less than ten years. Apart from the global change that present-day world conditions indicate is fast getting near, the arrival of the seventh millennium of man's existence on earth suggests a glad change for war-stricken humankind. In order for the Lord Jesus Christ to be Lord even of the Sabbath day, his thousand-year reign would have to be the seventh in a series of thousand-year periods or millenniums. (Matt 12:8, AV) Thus it would be a sabbatic reign. Since early in the existence of mankind Satan the Devil has been on the loose, making the human family to toil in hard bondage, causing the earth to be filled with violence before the global flood of Noah's day and inducing the same old earth to be filled with even greater violence today. Soon now six millenniums of his wicked exploiting of mankind as his slaves will end, within the lifetime of the generation that has witnessed world events since the close of the gentile times in 1914 till now, according to the prophetic words of Jesus in Matthew 24:34. Would not, then, the end of six millenniums of mankind's laborious enslavement under Satan the Devil be the fitting time for Jehovah God to usher in a Sabbath millennium for all his human creatures? Yes, indeed! And his King Jesus Christ will be Lord of that Sabbath."

Notice that “the end of six millenniums of mankind's laborious enslavement under Satan”, which was to end in 1975, “the six millenniums of mankind's life on earth would end in the mid-seventies.” The *Watchtower* asks “Would not, then, the end of six millenniums of mankind's laborious enslavement under Satan the Devil be the fitting time for Jehovah God to usher in a Sabbath millennium for all his human creatures?”

It answers” Yes, indeed! And his King Jesus Christ will be Lord of that Sabbath." Note the definite article “the” fitting time, not “a” fitting time. “The” fitting time would be a time excluding all other times. It was coming!!!!

We were also reading articles like this from “Our Kingdom Ministry, May, 1974, page 3:

“Yes, the end of this system is so very near! Is that not reason to increase our activity? In this regard we can learn something from a runner who puts on a final burst of speed near the finish of a race. Look at Jesus, who apparently stepped up his activity during his final days on earth. In fact, over 27 percent of the material in the Gospels is devoted to just the last week of Jesus’ earthly ministry!—Matt. 21:1–27:50; Mark 11:1–15:37; Luke 19:29–23:46; John 11:55–19:30.

“By carefully and prayerfully examining our own circumstances, we also may find that we can spend more time and energy in preaching during this final period before the present system ends. Many of our brothers and sisters are doing just that. This is evident from the rapidly increasing number of pioneers.”

“Yes, since the summer of 1973 there have been new peaks in pioneers every month. Now there are 20,394 regular and special pioneers in the United States, an all-time peak. That is 5,190 more than there were in February 1973! A 34-percent increase! Does that not warm our hearts? Reports are heard of brothers selling their homes and property and planning to finish out the rest of their days in this old system in the pioneer service. Certainly this is a fine way to spend the short time remaining before the wicked world’s end.—1 John 2:17.”

These are but a few quotes that we read in the Watchtower Society’s literature previous to 1975. Add to this the anticipation among “the brothers” and the comments made at Witness meetings and conventions and you can get an idea of what the mood of the Witnesses were. Honestly, I had my doubts. The Bible says “no one knows the day or the hour” except for God, and at that time, as a Christian and Bible believer, I thought that was somewhat of a conflict. Never the less, I was confident that Jehovah was about to destroy most of you then living in vicious global carnage.

Well, as you know, nothing happened. After January 1, 1976, on the surface, the Witnesses just kept on their routine with nary a peep from the Watchtower Society, who had months before spoke glowingly of those “brothers selling their homes and property and planning to finish out the rest of their days in this old system in the pioneer service.” I, for one, anxiously awaited the momentary announcement, some explanation, something, and anything from the Watchtower Society concerning 1975.

In its issue of July 15, 1976, The Watchtower, commenting on the inadvisability of setting our sights on a certain date, stated: “If anyone has been disappointed through not following this line of thought, he should now concentrate on adjusting his viewpoint, seeing that it was not the word of God that failed or deceived him and brought disappointment, but that his own understanding was based on wrong premises.”

I was stunned!! I lived this. The Watchtower set 1975 as the date, not the membership! We all bought it and then they say “Don’t blame God”. I was shocked!! This was the beginning of the end for me. I stayed a Witness, but became ever more disillusioned. Five years later, the Watchtower gives us this:

From the Watchtower of March, 15, 1980, in the article “Choosing the Best Way of Life “the following:

“In modern times such eagerness, commendable in itself, has led to attempts at setting dates for the desired liberation from the suffering and troubles that are the lot of persons throughout the earth. With the appearance of the book Life Everlasting—in Freedom of the Sons of God, and its comments as to how appropriate it would be for the millennial reign of Christ to parallel the seventh millennium of man’s existence, considerable expectation was aroused regarding the year 1975. There were statements made then, and thereafter, stressing that this was only a possibility. Unfortunately, however, along with such cautionary information, there were other statements published that implied that such realization of hopes by that year was more of a probability than a mere possibility. It is to be regretted that these latter statements apparently overshadowed the cautionary ones and contributed to a buildup of the expectation already initiated.”

Sort of an explanation, but still not taking any responsibility, admitting no wrong doing and certainly not giving the faithful a substantial explanation. Again, I couldn’t believe what I was reading. The organization that I trusted and put complete faith in as God’s mouthpiece, was plainly wrong and had no clear explanation.

As much as I did not want to accept it, the unmistakable conclusion was that there was no explanation, no rationalization. They simply prophesied falsely. I went back and read everything I could about the 1975 debacle and I could not resolve this issue. There was no other conclusion. God’s chosen organization was wrong.

So how could it be God’s chosen organization?

By the early 80’s, I was pretty much a Witness in name only. I had too many family and business ties to the Witnesses. Besides we all lived in fear of being “disfellowshipped” or excommunicated. That was the tie that binds. Witnesses live in fear of that. Once, disfellowshipped, every Witness shuns you, friends, family, everyone. I was not ready for that so I was content with just maintaining my position. I did not participate fully in congregation activities, I had sporadic meeting attendance and I rarely went door to door.

However the one thing that really opened my eyes was the Internet. Suddenly, we had instant access to so much information. Ex Witnesses, or “Apostates” were quick to see this as a tool to spread “their Satanic message, against God’s chosen people”. Realizing this, the Witnesses relentlessly counseled and admonished the membership to avoid any contact with such websites.

For example, from the Watchtower, 5/1/2000, page 10:

“Some apostates are increasingly using various forms of mass communication, including the Internet, to spread false information about Jehovah’s Witnesses. As a result, when sincere individuals do research on our beliefs, they may stumble across apostate propaganda. Even some

Witnesses have unwittingly exposed themselves to this harmful material. In addition, apostates occasionally take part in television or radio programs.”

“Avoiding all contact with these opponents will protect us from their corrupt thinking. Exposing ourselves to apostate teachings through the various means of modern communication is just as harmful as receiving the apostate himself into our homes. Never should we allow curiosity to lure us into such a calamitous course!”

Of course, I immediately began to look at these sites and see what they had to say. Why would the true religion fear its members looking at opposing views? Wouldn't the “Truth” withstand any challenge? The attitude of the Society made no sense. If they had the truth, it should stand up under any scrutiny.

I decided that I really didn't want to discuss any theological points. It seemed futile. “This scripture means this, etc etc.” The Witnesses feel compelled to explain every word in the Bible and come up with some really loony applications. Since I doubted some of the Witnesses theology anyway, I was interested in more provable concrete facts, like contradictions in their literature and their flip flops on important issues.

I dug into these “apostate” sites, avoiding any theological points, just focusing on the history of Jehovah's Witnesses and the Organization's own literature. Having been a Witness for decades, I had accumulated quite an extensive library as well as most of the Watchtower Library CD's.

I was astounded at the amount of false prophesies, flip flops, outright loony and hypocritical statements, as well as the actual editing of embarrassing information out of the literature.

For example, the Witnesses predicted Armageddon would come in 1914, 1925, 1941 and 1975. I found this on “Apostate sites” but confirmed it with my own original copies of the Watchtower Society's literature.

An example of what I term a loony statement was this, from "The Truth Shall Make You Free" (1943) pp.284-285, ch.XXii "THE TIME OF THE END"

"Man on earth can no more get rid of these demonic "heavens" than man can by airplane or rockets or other means get up above the air envelope which is about our earthly globe and in which man breathes. God alone can and will deliver humankind from such demon powers of control."

Basically, The Watchtower Society says man cannot go into space by any means. I would think God's organization would have been advised by God that this was not true. I have an original "The Truth Shall Make You Free" publication. This is an exact quote.

There are many examples of the editing of wrong and embarrassing information. I have an original single Watchtower as well as a bound volume of the Watchtower from Jan 1, 1989. The

bound volume is all of the Watchtowers for a particular year, put together in one book. Both on page 12, par 8 the last sentence says of the Apostle Paul, "He was also laying a foundation for a work that would be completed in our 20th Century."

In the 2006 CD, the same sentence, from the same Watchtower says "He was also laying a foundation for a work that would be completed in our day."

The work referred to was the Jehovah's Witness preaching work. It continues today, in the 21st century. It did not stop in the 20th Century as the 1989 publication said. The implication that all Witnesses understand is that when their preaching work stops, Armageddon comes. This is a very significant point. Thus the need for the edit in later publications.

By the mid 90's I was done. I still was not out. I can only say that I lacked the guts. The disfellowshipping threat is very powerful and I still had the family and business ties. I still considered myself a Christian, although I had some real questions about the Bible. My relationship with my wife I had married at 19 had never been very good and by this time it was worse. We separated in 2001 and we began talking divorce.

Since I had considerable assets, we began dividing them. I completely left the Witnesses and divorced my wife and what I had dreaded all these years happened. I was disfellowshipped.

Much to my surprise, rather than being the horrible experience I had imagined, it was quite liberating. In fact, it was exhilarating! I felt like I had been released from prison! My mind was free. I could look at things far more objectively without the Watchtower filter. I began to see how I had been misled for so many years, how I was "in chains, never knowing I had the key", to steal a quote from the Eagles.

Still a Christian and still a believer in the Bible, I began to wonder if there was a true religion and if so, how could I find it. Of course, it had to be Bible based, no doubt. But, it occurred to me that in our Judeo/Christian society, we take certain things for granted. Most people believe that the Bible is God's word. People seem to skip over the part of proving whether the Bible itself is true and accurate and accept it verbatim as God's word.

That made no sense to me. So, I decided to start there. Was the Bible true? Astoundingly, I found that it's not. There is not one shred of evidence that God wrote the Bible or that in fact Jesus ever lived. Obviously, approximately 2,000 years ago a Christian "movement" started in the Middle East. That's historically apparent. So while there is no proof that Jesus was a historical figure, this movement had to be started by someone. But, 600 years after that, the Muslim religion was founded and is presently also a very large religious movement. That is also an historical fact, but in terms of which religion is true, these facts prove nothing.

The Bible has a lot of problems. Again, I am not concerned about theological arguments. You get as many interpretations from the Bible as you have readers. Many learned men labor their whole lives over this ancient text, each forming conflicting opinions. **Theology is meaningless.**

The basic concept that God, in his wisdom would communicate with mankind via the written word, when 30% of the world's adult population is illiterate, seems ludicrous. Continuing on this line of reasoning, if a picture is worth a thousand words, than why bother with the thousand words? Particularly if they are in a cryptic book that has thousands of adherents, each claiming exclusive right to its understanding from the Almighty God. On top of all this, each sect claims that the loving and merciful God they worship is going to punish or kill all you other non believers in a most horrible way.

The Bible is fairly historically accurate, but glaringly inaccurate, confusing and contradictory in many other ways. For example, Hebrews chapter 11, verse 1 describes the faith that all Christians must have as: "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" Hebrews 11:1, (The American Standard Version of the Holy Bible.)

So you have to believe in things you cannot possibly prove. You have to be sure that things you hope for will happen and convinced that things you have not seen are real. Just exactly how do you do that? Hebrews chapter 11 goes on to describe examples of faith namely, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and his wife Sarah.

The interesting thing is all of these people, according to the Bible, saw some pretty fantastic stuff. Most spoke to God and saw demonstrations of his power. They did not have the same faith as Christians are required to have, described in chap 11, vs. 1. They allegedly SAW evidence of the Almighty. We are left with "hoping" and "convincing" ourselves.

If according to the Bible, God appeared to anyone of us and did the things in our presence that he did for Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and his wife Sarah, it would be easy to have faith. But here the Bible shoots itself in the foot.

Religion needs faith because it is short of facts. I also investigated claims that the Bible is scientifically accurate and as expected, these too are baseless.

But I felt that there was a God. The wonders of nature and the universe could not have happened by accident. I am convinced blind, accidental evolution is illogical and unscientific. It would be more logical that God started and guided the evolutionary process. There is little evidence that our world and universe were created in a short span of time.

I just didn't see where any religion represents God. It was while I was researching religion and the Constitution for a book I am writing, that I read a biography of Thomas Jefferson. It was then that I first read the term Deist. Jefferson was a Deist as were several of the Founding Fathers, including Thomas Paine. I suddenly realized that I was a Deist. To me, nature and science prove

God's existence. But Religion, specifically Christianity, cannot prove that the book they base their faith on is true and from God.

I realized that while I was spiritual, I was not religious. No religion speaks for or represents God. Religion has been a curse on mankind, promising peace and comfort and delivering oppression and human suffering.

I am at peace with my world and with God. I do not need anyone talking to Him for me or telling me how I should worship. I feel compelled to tell the world my story, if it cares to listen. I am writing a book entitled "I'm Spiritual, Not Religious". I also have a blog by the same name. Deism has brought me peace.

Why Deism?

From Baptist Deacon to Deist

by Larry Langston

Religion is a subject that both fascinates and intrigues me. Supposedly we are here in this life for a very short time, relatively speaking, from which our eternal destiny is determined. If such is the case, this issue then is the only matter of any real importance and that importance is of such magnitude that all else pales in comparison.

Yet we are left without definitive, unambiguous instructions from God as to how to live this life to assure just what that destiny is. Now, I know, any Christian who reads this is jumping up and down to point out that the Bible is God's word and is very clear on the subject. Yet the statement is preposterous when you recognize the amount of diversity within the religion. It seems rather obvious to me that if God had intended to give His "word" to man He would have made it clear and unambiguous and would have made it equally available to all mankind rather than to a select few with reliance on them to disperse it to the remaining majority, especially when the myriad of groups dispersing it cannot agree on what it says. It seems to me that this idea of evangelism or 'spreading the word' is in contradiction of the belief itself. It implies that the salvation of the lost is the responsibility of the saved to 'let them know'. It seems to remove the responsibility of knowing God's will from God and places it upon His chosen. It suggests that many people are lost because the 'saved' can't or don't for whatever reasons make all the rounds. Where is love or fairness in this proposition? Many try to explain it by saying, "well, those that do not know will be judged on the basis of what they do know". This makes absolutely no sense and is in direct contradiction to the crux of the belief that says there can be no salvation without accepting Christ and His shed blood. Furthermore, it makes a mockery of the sacrifice of Jesus. If some could be saved by 'what they know' then all could be and the great sacrifice of Jesus was completely without need or purpose.

Also, the idea of God having favorites or a favorite nation, race or group is ridiculous when you think about it. On the one hand we believe that God is completely fair and that each new created human is equal and has an equal chance or opportunity to find salvation. I trust that you will agree that love and fairness would demand such. Yet Christianity believes that they are now God's chosen as the Jews were in Old Testament times. But if we were to take a world globe and color in the 'saved' say in blue and all the 'lost' in red we would find that the saved and lost were pretty much geographically separate or clustered by culture with some exceptions, of course, but the end result would be mostly large areas of red and other large areas of blue. Now, if each created human had equal opportunity you would have equal disbursement of tiny dots of blue and red all over the globe so that any distinction of groups would be impossible to detect.

This point simply reflects the fallacy of the idea that each individual has equal opportunity for salvation and consequently, the fallacy of Christianity.

Dear Christians, this essay will demonstrate, by way of simple reasoning, that the Bible or Christianity is not at all what God is about and neither can possibly be true. Do not be disheartened, the real 'good news' is that God really is love and is much greater and more glorious than those sources portray. Someone asked me, "ok, but what's your point here"? My point is that I believe that although everyone is very sincere they are not thinking deeper than the surface of their indoctrinated views. They asked, "well then, what's your idea as to how to know the truth?" To me the answer is obvious, we learn truth about God the same way we learn anything else, by intense observation, study and objective thinking, along with using our God given reasoning, deduction and logic. The way we should not make such determination is by simply following our childhood teachings or the crowd without the application of much deeper contemplation, questioning and reasoning. Unfortunately, almost everyone on the planet does precisely the latter. Either their upbringing or some other event or experiences trigger some initial attention and they let that superficial conviction gain momentum and have complete dominance of their thinking from then on. As a consequence we have a multiplicity of beliefs and religions each convinced that they are God's chosen and are responsible for defending God's position with a resulting world of conflict and confusion.

My point then is to attempt to challenge or provoke people to put their beliefs to the test of 'reason'. We have little chance of awakening to a greater realization as long as we are trapped in the 'blind leading the blind' crowd. If people were to come to realize that their religion is based on little more than ancient mythology with a little authentic history mixed in here and there, that God really is love, that He is not interested in punishing anyone, that He has no favorites, that we really are equals, that we actually are objects of His love without condition, and that the real purpose of this life is to awaken to a much greater realization of who and what we really are, we would have a much different world.

I had a couple of Jehovah's Witnesses come to my door a few days ago and we got into quite an interesting discussion on the subject of 'God's Word'. They had their Bibles out and were busy pointing out the selected passages of scripture that "proved" their points. I said, "you know, people have all kinds of ideas about what it takes to please God because almost no two people can agree on what that book you are quoting says". They quickly responded that the Bible interprets itself and that the reason for the differences was because all these other people were trying to make it say what they want it to and were thusly misinterpreting it. And I think that pretty well sums up the situation. Their belief was based on whatever had attracted them to that particular sect and then was ingrained by constant reinforcement. We are clearly subjects of our conditioning. The Muslims believe Islam because they were born and raised in that culture and the same goes for the Christian or Jew. Each believes that it is they who are God's chosen and the rest are hell bound. I read a quote the other day I found amusing. **"Everyone is going to hell according someone's religion"**.

But I wish to concentrate here on Christianity because that is the religion I am most familiar with. However, I believe that the principles of contradiction examined here apply equally to Judaism and Islam and expose the inerrancy of those religions as well. I was raised a Southern Baptist and was as devout as any and served as a Deacon for many years. Eventually, my reasoning caused me to look elsewhere for truth because I just could not make sense of it from any logical standpoint.

My Christian friends, of course, are quick to point out that they know the truth and they point to those scholars who have studied the historical evidence and come to that conclusion as well as other evidence some of which I will admit is at least somewhat compelling and certainly deserves contemplation and sincere consideration. The thing that for me makes the belief completely implausible and impossible to accept is the outright contradiction at the very foundation of the belief. That being that God is love and He is rejecting most of His creation and submitting them to eternal separation and suffering. Many try to exonerate God of this outright cruelty by suggesting that it isn't God sending anyone to hell but each person chooses whether to obey and serve God or to be eternally separated from Him. First of all, no one chooses to go to hell or to be separated from God. They may very well not accept the Christian viewpoint because they simply do not believe it to be true but they are not actually rejecting God or refusing Him and they certainly are not making a conscious choice of going to hell or being separated from their Creator. Secondly, it is God who created all and who established the parameters of right and wrong and reward and punishment. So, if anyone goes to hell it definitely is God sending them there. Thirdly, the Bible clearly says that hell is the punishment for the wicked implying that it is not so much people choosing hell but punishment for disobedience apparently without consideration for their disposition, conditioning or whether or not they are sincerely worshipping God but from a non-Christian perspective. Disobedience is cited as not believing the Christian view regardless of ones upbringing or inherited tendencies in accepting whatever belief they have become convinced of. Fourthly, and most conclusively, the idea that people are choosing hell is shot down by simply observing the ways and beliefs of other religions who obviously have not met the conditions of salvation according to Christianity. Let's take the devout Muslim or Jew for example. These are people who are just as dedicated, sincere and earnest as the devout Christian. They are dedicating their entire lives in the service, worship, devotion and adoration of God. The Christian has absolutely no difficulty in seeing these people as all hell bound. Where is love or fairness in such a belief? These people are doing exactly the same thing as the Christian, worshipping God in the way their culture has convinced them God has intended. They are not refusing God or choosing against Him so what is the justification for sending them to hell? How clear can it be for Pete's sake????

Most Christians believe that God is omniscient which would imply that God knows in advance those headed for hell. If God knew at the outset of creation that the majority of the sentient humans with all their emotions, feelings and ability to suffer pain and discomfort were going to suffer horribly forever He certainly does not meet my concept of love. The belief would have us

accept that God creates a human and places him on earth under the influence of an agent more powerful and cunning than the human and lets the Devil have his way with him. Even if God did not know in advance that most of mankind would fail to meet His requirement He can see every day how Satan is absolutely beating the pants off Him in winning the millions of souls that God is creating each hour. If this is what God is about He is creating more pain and horrible suffering every second than Stalin, who murdered 50 million people, did in his entire life. Christians should be crying out to God to **stop it**, because He is creating much more suffering than He is happiness and bliss. The enormous implications of that last sentence as to the nature of God bears repeating. **According to Christianity, God is creating much more grief, suffering and pain than He is happiness and bliss.**

If God knows in advance those going to hell what could possibly be the point in creating them. It could only imply a masochist or despotic God who enjoyed creating suffering. There is no way that love could possibly conceive such a horrible plan of creation. Christianity has actually turned God into a tyrant who demands His creatures to love and worship Him or be cast into eternal punishment. The Bible portrays old King Nebuchadnezzar as an awful tyrant who demanded all of his kingdom to fall down and worship him or to be cast into the fiery furnace. Sound familiar? It is common for the tyrant or autocrat to employ fear and terror to force people to become followers and compliant to their merciless demands. Do we not see evangelism employing similar tactics when they try to scare people into the faith as they wave their Bibles and proclaim, “save yourselves from the coming wrath of an angry God”? Is God gratified because many if not most of those accepting Him are doing so out of fear of the coming terror of His judgment? Would we find love employing such tactics? How Christianity can honestly feel that the religion reflects a God of love is completely beyond me.

Love does not attach strings or conditions. Love does not condemn. Love is fair. What loving parents would ever consider casting one of their children away in eternal suffering? What loving parents would even consider bringing children into this world if they knew in advance that some of them would wind up in hell?

Speaking of Biblical contradictions, I must say that the believers are very resourceful in ‘developing’ answers for these but generally find those answers inadequate as far as resolution is concerned. I visit the skeptics Web Sites and then the Christian Apologist’s Sites that attempt to answer the skeptics claims. From what I have discovered thus far, the apologists make their statements aimed at answering the skeptics but they do not allow or accommodate any replies to their statements. And they commonly state something to the effect that many of the skeptics claims are without sound reasoning and simply do not warrant any reply from them.

There are far too many Biblical contradictions to attempt to cover in this discourse but I wish to mention one that seems like a major contradiction to the belief. It is Jesus’ dying prayer to the Father, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do”. It seems to me that this beautiful prayer pretty much rips apart the whole of the Christian belief. It was obviously for those who

had rejected Him. These people clearly had not met the Christian conditions for salvation, namely, accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior. How then could this One who is the focus of the religion say a prayer at the conclusion of His ministry at the time when He was receiving the most attention of His entire life in direct contradiction to what He supposedly had spent His life teaching??

Almost the entire Old Testament contradicts a loving God and is a testament not of God's love, mercy and compassion but of His absolute brutal cruelty. Time and time again God orders the Israelites to kill every man, woman and child of the other nations. On one occasion God instructed the Israelite warriors to mercilessly kill every living thing including the animals except they could keep the young virgin girls for themselves. What was God's problem with these nations? Jealousy, they worshipped other gods. Of course they did. That was all they knew. God had not instructed them otherwise. They were doing the very same thing as the Christian, believing in that which their culture and forefathers taught them about what God expected of them. How can we fault that kind of sincerity? If we were talking about a god of love here he would have shared his word with them as well as the Israelites. Were not they an equal part of his creation as well? Is there no love, fairness, understanding or mercy with God? We didn't see God using the Israelites as witnesses to lead these idolaters to the truth. He simply ordered them slaughtered without warning, mercy or compassion.

The creation story itself, right from the very beginning, is a reflection of God's lack of love and compassion. We are told that He simply told Adam and Eve to not eat of the one tree. No where does it indicate that God warned them of the Devil and his cunning ways. Should we be surprised that Eve, then Adam fell vulnerable to a more powerful, crafty, and astute being? Of course not, who among us would not have done the same? But God had no compassion and immediately cast them out into much hardship as punishment for their one slip or failure. Furthermore, this act of Eve's was in no way a rejection of God, it was simply a momentary lapse in judgment, a temporary yielding to a convincing more authoritative voice. If a child is tempted beyond his ability to resist, to reach into the cookie jar against his mothers orders, would we conclude that the child was rejecting his mother or that he was forevermore rotten and unworthy?

Why did God put the forbidden tree there in the first place? A minister friend of mine with a Doctorate in religion answered the question this way. God is love, love demands freedom, freedom demands the ability to choose right or wrong so there had to be that option to satisfy love. But this would make God dependent on evil for love. Also, it would mean there could be no love or freedom in Heaven where there is no evil. So, we are left with the question, why the tree? Did God need to test the 'metal' of His creatures to see if they were good enough to deserve His blessings? And if they were found to be too weak to pass the test he would subject them to extreme hardship? But if He is omniscient He would know that to begin with. I can think of no reason but that He enjoyed watching them fail and dishing out punishment. I know that sounds crude but I'm open to your answers if you're one who accepts the belief.

This thought brings up more issues that speak nonsense about Biblical teachings. The Bible says that all men have sinned and fallen short. This clearly states that God created man incapable of meeting His standard. Man was created to fail????? Some of Christianity believe in the ‘original sin’ concept where God condemns all future creations because the first two didn’t get it right. How do you square that one with love and fairness? But either way, every human God creates is bound in condemnation as created!! Can you imagine human parents having children and considering them unworthy of acceptance until each one meets some kind of prerequisite the parents establish? They would be considered very sick indeed.

This brings to mind the Christian concept of accountability. This concept is not Biblical but is a ‘developed’ concept to attempt to absolve God of the cruelty of tormenting little children. But, whether Biblical or not, if we consider it in conjunction with the ‘original sin’ notion it makes absolutely no sense. That notion infers that all creatures after Adam and Eve are condemned, not because of any accountability on their part, but simply because Eve blew it and all must share that blame and penalty.

The *Left Behind* series which depicts the Christian idea of God’s judgment at the end of the world portrays the awful plight of those who did nothing to deserve God’s judgment. You see, we are created condemned so if we do nothing about it we remain in that condition. We are unacceptable to God as He created us. We have to ‘fix’ our condition by accepting God’s prerequisite remedy.

Christianity portrays the great sacrifice of Jesus as a beautiful act of love and forgiveness on the part of God. But look again, it really makes no sense at all. Since God created man incapable of meeting His standard, the absolute very least He could do would be to provide some sort of possibility of escape or alternative to His awful wrath and judgment for the created sentient beings. Not to do so would be the most horrific act of creation imaginable. This is no demonstration of great love at all, even basic human justice in complete absence of love would require a plan of salvation under such circumstances. But human justice would go much further to insure fairness. It would require God to insure that every single soul knew and completely understood the seriousness of the situation and to ‘sign off’ that the enormous magnitude of the situation had been clearly presented to them, that they had no additional questions and that they were clearly aware of the consequences of their actions and decisions.

I have read many of the books that purport to prove or at least provide strong evidence that Jesus was what the Christians claim. Then I have read many books that purport the opposite. It is interesting that there are many scholars coming from all perspectives who give their lives to the study of the same historical evidence. These are brilliant men and women each equally qualified, diligent, sincere and earnest in their quest to know the truth. Yet they come to vastly different conclusions of what the very same historical evidence reveals. At the same time we have countless religions each claiming to have special access to God or pointing to prior saints and prophets who were “inspired” by God to proclaim His message.

What's a poor searcher to do? Most of us will never be able to perform our own study of the historical evidence as do the scholars. How are we to decipher which of the religions is closest to right?

The real irony of the situation is that here we are, alive and aware of our special existence in a marvelous awe inspiring universe and although many think they do, **no one really knows**. That thought really amazes me. Here we are, yet **NO ONE REALLY KNOWS!!**

I have thusly concluded that the Bible cannot possibly be the word of God for several reasons but primarily because it is based on a major contradiction in concept, that being, God's nature (love) and God's actions (cruelty). Likewise, the Christian religion cannot possibly be true because it is based on the same contradicting principles.

All of these religions are based on ancient myths, legends, fables etc. I was not too surprised to find that the idea of a dying and resurrecting godman had its beginning in pagan mythology hundreds of years before the time of Christ. According to the book, "Jesus and the Lost Goddess" by Timothy Freke, regional variations of the myths were found throughout the ancient world. In Egypt he was known as Osiris, in Greece as Dionysus, in Syria as Adonis, in Asia Minor as Attis, in Mesopotamia as Marduk, and in Persia as Mithras and others. I quote from page 18, "The myths of the Pagan Godman describe a 'Son of God', born to a virgin on 25 December, who dies at Easter through Crucifixion, but who resurrects on the third day. He is a prophet who offers his followers the chance to be born again through the rites of baptism.

He is a wonder-worker who raises the dead and miraculously turns water into wine at a marriage ceremony. He is a savior who offers his followers redemption through partaking in a meal of bread and wine, symbolic of his body and blood." It seems quite implausible to me that God would follow an old pagan myth almost to the letter in His plan of salvation.

(The below is the author's beliefs. Deism just says that the designs in Nature presupposes a Designer of Nature. As to the qualities of our Designer we each have our own opinions. The editor.)

Lest I end this dissertation on a morose note, let me go on to say that I am completely without doubt that God really is love, that we are a part of Him experiencing reality from a standpoint of duality and that we are indeed eternal creations forever bound by His absolute love. Although it is impossible to know the whole truth at this stage of the game, it would be my guess that from where God exists in absolute bliss, He has found that bliss to be more meaningful where there is non-bliss which adds contrast, depth and meaningfulness. Non-bliss resulted from the creation of duality, or polar opposites, hot & cold, good & bad, peace & violence, happiness & sadness,

wellness & sickness, etc. as well as time and space. This universe is God's playhouse where He has established a very complex and intricate system of interplay of consciousness that divides, multiplies, has individuality and freedom. That is where we come in and all that we see and experience is God manifesting Himself in infinite ways as His creation plan continues infinitely and eternally. There is no condemnation but each and every creation of God is fulfilling a grand role in the overall scheme of things, from Mother Teresa to Joseph Stalin. We are here for the experience on behalf of God and as an aspect of Him and cannot possibly get it wrong. There is no right or wrong as far as God is concerned. We do, however, have freedom to make choices within the entire gamut or spectrum of duality and reap the consequences of those choices and our actions either in this life or in other realms so in that sense we can experience a temporary hell. This is necessary if polar opposites are to be experienced, the awful as well as the beautiful.

We are eternal aspects of God experiencing infinite adventures as we continually add collage to His eternal scrapbook. The evidence is absolutely overwhelming from many sources that we do not really die but simply discard this physical carcass at the appointed time and continue on into the non-physical realm without any gap in consciousness whatsoever as we continue our evolutionary progress toward the sublime.

Why Deism?

A Spiritual and Intellectual Journey From Mormonism to Deism

by Richard Williamson

I find it strange that so much of our human intellect and emotion is wasted dwelling on the myths upon which all religions are founded. The conclusion that all religions are manmade was one of the greatest discoveries of my life. All religions are specifically designed by their originators to be self serving and designed to maintain social and political control of the adherents. In some cases the design is so grand as to attempt gaining and maintaining world power, as was the case with the great Universal Church-Catholicism. Today we are vividly witnessing the threatened rise of Islam in its bid to take over the world, with its Jihadist agenda and blatant willingness to kill, maim and destroy the infidel; the infidel being anyone who is not a worshiper of Allah and his prophet Muhammad. Theocratic attempts to rule the world via a hybrid governmental system of mixing religious and political power has always proven to be a failure, a failure that brings death, persecution and fosters a deadly and deepening ignorance of the masses under the control of these prophets and holy men who claim to “speak for God”. It goes without exception that these “prophets of God” always erupt on the scene as self anointed saviors. They all have some new and better book and claim, “God gave me a dream and now the world must listen to me”. Many have claimed that an angle visited them, or God himself showed them that they are to be the new messiah, and if people do not listen to this new brand of religious piracy they will perish in hell for all time and all eternity.

It goes without exception that the threat of eternal death, burning in hell, losing your 70 virgins, or having your family taken away from you in the next life for disobedience to “the one true church” in this life, is always the closing sales pitch of these arrogant and deranged “prophets and holy men” who claim to personally speak for God. This God is of course the one true God, and he loves you, but if you fail to follow the rules as set down by these earthly anointed holy men, you will feel God’s wrath when you die. Should one belong to Islam, or be a victim of its Jihad you may well feel the wrath of Allah while still alive. This living threat of violent reprisal, in today’s world, is mostly limited to Islam, yet countless lives are damaged by the religiocentric arrogance of most religious groups once a person breaks ranks or questions the veracity of their particular sect.

The theme seems to be, that God only really loves you if you believe and behave the way our group says you must, for after all, we speak for God.

Why do religious groups claim such authority? Usually it is because their “authority” comes from a book; for the Christians, they have the Bible, for the Jew the Torah, Islam has the Koran,

and Mormonism claims Joseph Smith brought yet another “one and only true book” written by God himself-via mans’ assistance, [The Book of Mormon](#).

Mormons also claim revelation from God via Joseph Smith in two other exclusively Mormon books, The Book of Abraham and The Doctrine and Covenants-formerly The Book of Commandments. Both books were written by Joseph Smith and are claimed by Mormons to be direct revelations from God to Joseph Smith. The book of Abraham is claimed to be a translation from Egyptian hieroglyphics by Joseph Smith. The book of Abraham has been fully examined by many top academic Egyptologists. The conclusion of these scientists is that Smith’s “revelatory” translation of the Book of Breathing is nonsense. The actual papyrus from which Smith “translated” his book of Abraham is nothing more than a Egyptian funeral text-or Book of Breathing that was commonly used in Egypt at the time of its creation. There are literally thousands of these funeral texts in the possession of museums, private and academic collections the world over. The papyrus Smith had was not a story about Abraham in Egypt; Smith again fabricated a fantastic story of religious fiction and claimed he received a revelation from God. The fact that no one on earth could decipher Egyptian hieroglyphics at the time Smith claimed he could is a well known fact. The Rosetta Stone was not discovered until some 30 years later. This codex was the key to breaking the language of the Egyptian hieroglyphics. The book of Abraham has been thoroughly discredited by every reputable Egyptologist that has investigated this “revelation” of Joseph Smith.

The Abrahamic religions consist of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. All these groups claim to have an original exclusive deal with God as far back as Abraham. Mormons claim their religion actually goes back to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, thus trumping Islam, Judaism and Christianity. I ask where is the evidence for that totally fallacious claim? The only evidence forthcoming from the Mormons is: “Oh, it was revealed by God to Joseph Smith the prophet”! There is no evidence for this exclusive claim of Mormonism....”you must have faith and trust that the leaders are telling you the truth”!

All organized religions breed violence and intolerance. Rare is the occasion when nothing more than lip service is paid to inter-faith religious tolerance. It mystifies me when after thousands of years of recorded history we humans fail to see the light of truth. We have become so very insular in our thinking, to the point of true cognitive dissonance, cognitive dissonance that keeps us from embracing the truth when the evidence is presented to us in clear and valid arguments. I speak of the insurmountable evidence, the scientifically established facts that prove all religions are manmade mythological systems. Yet the faithful just bury their heads in the sand and refuse to look at the evidence and continue to live in ignorance fueled by the denial of reality. It is a cognitive choice to refuse to look at the evidence; I was once like this myself. It can be a frightening concept to think that all my religious indoctrination is false, for what would become of me then. It is claimed that Jesus stated the answer to this fear, “Ye shall know the truth and the truth will set you free”.

During the dark ages, brought about in large part by the intellectually stifling Catholic Church, we saw persecution, torture and killing of anyone who dared challenge the teachings of the Papacy. We see the brutality of Islam today, the riots in cities and the bombing of innocent people because someone put a cartoon in a newspaper that the Jihadist claims, via some form of revelation, that these things are offensive to Allah and his prophet Muhammad and punishment must be meted out. The Jews claim in the Old Testament that God commanded the holy Israelite armies to destroy innocent life, burn villages and towns, kill animals and leave nothing but a razed stubble field. For what reason? Because God said that they are the chosen people and everything else must die. Further we have the historical and archaeological testimony of the “holy wars”, Christians and Muslims fighting for their supremacy as God’s chosen people. Really it was about land, power and world domination. I am convinced God had nothing to do with it.

The Mormons also have a dark legacy that is well hidden from the vast majority of the Mormon faithful. Mountain Meadows Massacre occurred on September 11, 1857. It is the most blatant of many barbarous acts in Mormon history. The Fancher–Baker wagon train party were in route to California from Arkansas, when they met the evil face of the Brigham Young sect of Mormons in Southern Utah. Under a false flag of truce the Mormons lured the settlers out of their circled wagon position, disarmed them and then systematically killed 120 men, women and children. The wagons, draft animals, cattle and personal possessions of the Fancher-Baker party were stolen and divided up among the killers. This barbarous act was the largest act of domestic terrorism until 3,000 people died in the September 11, 2001 Islamic terrorist attacks in New York City.

Honest historians have concluded that the Mountain Meadows Massacre occurred primarily as retribution for the murder of Parley Pratt, a Mormon apostle. Pratt was gunned down by an irate man who was the husband of a woman that Pratt had seduced and convinced to join his group of “celestial wives”. She became one of Pratt’s polygamist wives while still married to another man. This couple was from Arkansas as was the Fancher-Baker party. The Fancher-Baker party became a scapegoat for the Mormon wrath. Being from Arkansas, they were labeled as being responsible for Pratt’s death and rumors were circulating among the Utah Mormons that some male members of the Fancher-Baker party had taken part in killing Joseph Smith at Carthage, Illinois in 1844. None of the men in the Fancher-Baker party were in Carthage, Illinois when Smith was shot. The man who killed Parley Pratt was not a member of the Fancher-Baker party. The Mormons wanted revenge, and the exclusive Mormon doctrine of Blood Atonement provided the justification for killing these 120 people from the Fancher-Baker wagon train.

Blood Atonement is a bizarre doctrine of Mormonism, that they today deny (lie about) was ever taught by the Mormon Church, yet the original Mormon writings prove otherwise. Blood Atonement was taught openly by Brigham Young and other Mormon ecclesiastic leaders in Utah. It is a doctrine that simply states there are certain sins that a person can commit that are not covered by the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. Yet according to true Christian doctrine all sins

are covered by the sacrifice of God's Son on the cross at Calvary. The Mormon blood atonement doctrine states this is not true, and the only way to have certain sins remitted is by having one's own blood shed, because even Jesus cannot save you from certain sins. Thus this doctrine of blood atonement laid the ground work for the killing of the 120 innocent people of the Fancher-Baker party.

Further: The original Utah era Mormon temple endowment ceremony put the members under an Oath of Vengeance to seek the destruction of enemies of the church who were responsible for the death of Smith and his brother Hyrum. This oath was not taken out of the endowment ceremony until the 1930's. There was also a three part symbolic act in the temple endowment ceremony where the patrons simulate having their throats cut across and their tongues pulled out by the root, having their hearts cut out of their chests, and lastly having their intestines cut out-disemboweled for revealing the secret teachings taught in "The House of the Lord". These three self sacrificing acts were removed from the temple endowment ceremony in 1990. I truly fail to see where any of these teachings of hatred and violent action have any place in a church that claims they believe in Jesus Christ.

This is a major reason why Mormonism will never be accepted by the Christian communities of the world as a Christian Church, because Mormonism at its core denies the complete atonement of Jesus Christ according to New Testament theology. There are a host of other exclusively Mormon doctrines which also disqualify Mormonism from being accepted as a Christian Church and rightfully so. Mormonism is not a Christian religion. I did not understand, until I had done a fair amount of research into Christian origins and New Testament theology, as to why Mormonism is not a Christian faith. This is in spite of the fact that Mormons claim to worship Jesus Christ. The Mormon Jesus is not the Jesus of New Testament theology or original Christian theology. The Mormon Jesus is the product of Joseph Smith's imagination.

After decades of historical research into what and why the Mountain Meadows Massacre happened, it is also a strong conclusion that Brigham Young was attempting to send a clear message to the "Mericans" that his rule was absolute and that he should be feared in his little Mormon kingdom of the west. The term "Mericans" is a derogatory term that Brigham Young used to describe the leaders of America's government, and any outsiders who supported the United States of America. Brigham Young was anti-American, for he was God's chosen and anointed prophet and Brigham's law superseded the laws of the Constitutional Republic of the United States. Joseph Smith also believed he was above the law of America, that Joseph Smith's laws were the laws of God, and he would bow to no one. These 1857 killings in Utah were committed on the orders of the leaders of "The One True Church of Jesus Christ-as restored by the prophet Joseph Smith". Apparently Jesus likes the idea of killing innocent people who do not believe in "The one true church of Mormonism".

The 2001 attacks in New York City and Washington DC were also perpetrated by a religious group claiming supremacy in the eyes of God, "the One True religion of Islam with its God

Allah and his prophet Muhammad”. How strange it is that these “revealed” religious attacks occurred on the same date-September 11th.

This aggressive Mormon animosity and religiocentrism really began much earlier in the 1830’s in Missouri under Joseph Smith. Mormons love to cling to the idea that they were and still are today persecuted because of their beliefs. In part this is true, because claiming persecution helps fuel their need to feel superior as they are now God’s chosen church and the persecution badge justifies this self delusion, and it makes them kin to the Jews who were also persecuted. Mostly the Mormons were persecuted only after they made war like actions and threats to their neighbors in Missouri because the Mormons made it clear they were the true Zion people (not the Jews) and that God had promised to deliver the promised land of Missouri to them. This new Zion-Missouri was the rightful inheritance of the new Zionist people-the Mormons. That Missouri was the place of the Garden of Eden, according to Joseph Smith, and that Jesus was coming back to Adam ondi Ahman (a small place near Independence, Missouri) to build the New Jerusalem and at that time a magnificent temple would descend from heaven. This Adam ondi Ahman, getting its name from Joseph Smith, is in Mormon lore the place where the chosen and anointed Mormon faithful will someday walk back to and there they will gather in solemn assemblies to meet personally with Adam and Jesus and all the other holy men of Israelite/Christian history in a big council of God’s elect.

The lionization of Joseph Smith is only recognized within the Mormon Church. History is very clear that Joseph Smith died in a gun fight after having shot three men. Two he killed and a third he wounded, with a Pepper Box 6 barreled pistol that was smuggled into his jail cell. Smith did not die a willing martyr for Jesus Christ, as did many of the early followers of Christ. Smith was a convicted con man, a participant in conspiracy to commit murder, a soothsayer, a worker of black magic, a pedophile, and was married to at least 30 wives, many of whom were married to other men at the time “Old Joe Smith” convinced them to marry him or God would destroy him. Had Smith lived to go to trial, for he had been subpoenaed by the President of the United States to appear before the Supreme Court in Washington D.C. on the charge of treason, Smith’s reign as king of this world and his Mormonism would have ended abruptly. Yes, Smith had himself ordained king of the world by his secret council of 50. What is so odd is that Smith personally chose the members of his council of 50, so for sure they had the power to anoint Smith king of the world. Strangely Smith died in the afore mentioned gun fight in the jail in Carthage, Illinois a short time after being “anointed king of the world”.

Smith was being held on charges of treason and violation of the first amendment constitutional rights of his neighbors. Smith ordered the burning and destruction of a printing press. The press and the printing shop were both destroyed because the truth had been printed about Smith and other elite members of Smith’s Mormon kingdom. They did not like the light of day illuminating their various crimes and sexual indiscretions, after all these were God’s chosen and anointed leaders in these the last days before the return of Jesus Christ. The Mormon Church to this day frowns heavily on any of its members being critical of the “Brethren”. In fact honest and critical

evaluation of Mormon history by its members is highly discouraged. Mormons are today counseled to read only church authorized sources of information. There is an infamous secret vault in Salt Lake City, under the watchful eye of the first presidency of the Mormon Church. This vault is closed to all but a very select few. This is the place where sensitive documents are kept, documents that would re-write the real history of Joseph Smith and his Mormon kingdom. This information is kept out of the public eye, for much of it is damaging and would clearly show Mormonism to be a huge fraud. These facts are known in part, because in the past select researchers have been given access to this vault. Much of the legitimate documentary evidence available in literature and research papers on Mormon origins come from these now secured sources. It is an interesting aside that the Seventh Day Adventists also have a secretive vault for the same purpose as the Mormons, to preserve the false prophecies of Ellen G. White who made similar non-prophecies as Joseph Smith which flopped in their veracity. It seems that cults the world over have secret vaults to keep prying eyes out. The Vatican is another good example.

Recently a Mormon friendly version of “the Joseph Smith papers” has been released by the Mormon Church. It is not complete. The books contain sanitized and re-worked history to promote the idea that Joseph Smith was all the things that the modern Mormon Church leaders teach its members that he was.

I think propaganda that is created and controlled by the same organization should arouse suspicion in our minds. It should at least make one stop and look both ways before stepping out into oncoming traffic.

There is a vast amount of literature and resource material available to thoroughly discredit Joseph Smith and the entire content of the Mormon theology. Mormonism promotes the weakest and weirdest doctrines of all the pseudo-Christian sects that came out of the American revival period in the early 19th century. The entire Mormon temple ceremonies are nothing but hodge-podge Masonic rituals mixed with Joseph Smith’s imagination and some Old Testament flavorings thrown in for good measure. Mormons claim these temple rituals go all the way back in antiquity to Adam and Eve. This is another absurd claim that is easily proven false because there is no record whatever in all of Judaism that even remotely represents Mormonism’s interpretation of ancient Israelite temple worship. Mormons claim that all this was lost because of corrupt priests and evil leaders, and that God revealed it back to Joseph Smith so he could restore these precious lost rituals so all of mankind could learn the mysteries of godliness by going to the Mormon temple. Well someone better notify the Jewish scholars and Rabbis that the Mormons now have all the “lost temple rituals” that the Jews did not even know they had lost.

The Book of Mormon is claimed by Mormons to be the keystone of their religion. They made a big mistake with that statement. The evidence against all things claimed in “Old Joe Smith’s gold bible” is enormous. One does not even have to look at the claims of the Book of Mormon as it relates to America-the place where these magical events allegedly took place- in order to fully

discredit the claimed religious history of the Book of Mormon. Current biblical archaeology alone disproves Smith's 19th century understanding of world history and especially Smith's knowledge of biblical history. When we get past that evidence, we are left with the basic tenets and claims of the Book of Mormon as relating to America, where this religious history is supposed to have occurred. The Book of Mormon is so riddled with anachronisms and faulty history as to make it a fully discredited work of fiction. The archaeological, geographic, literary and genetic evidence prove the Book of Mormon to be nothing more than a blatant fraud perpetrated by Joseph Smith and at least 3 other accomplices; Oliver Cowdrey, Hyrum Smith and Sidney Rigdon. Much of the content of the Book of Mormon was plagiarized from the King James Version of the Bible and at least two other books of religious fiction; View of the Hebrews by Pastor Ethan Smith (no relation to Joseph Smith) and A Manuscript Lost by Rev. Solomon Spaulding. The Book of Mormon was written mostly while Joseph Smith had his head stuck inside his hat while he gazed upon a "magic rock-Seer Stone" which is also the same method Smith used to find hidden treasure in the earth!

The Book of Mormon has been analyzed by advanced computerized programs; the conclusion is that plagiarism is without a doubt present. Most recently a group of researchers at Stanford University put the Book of Mormon through an exhaustive examination utilizing the computer program SPSS, a very sophisticated statistical analysis tool. The lead professor in this venture was an active Mormon man who seemingly could no longer live in the world of cognitive dissonance required by Mormonism in order to "keep your faith". The outcomes of this Stanford University research will be presented at The Ex Mormon Foundation Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah on October 10, 2009 at 10:45am, by Professor Craig Criddle, PhD, Stanford University. I will be in attendance to hear firsthand the results of this extensive study.

Today we know that the Old Testament is not a continuous history of the Israelites. In fact, the unification of Israel did not begin to occur until the time of King Josiah in the 7th century BCE (600 BC). Moses never was in Egypt, and 600,000 armed male Israelites never marched out of Egypt. This is absurd. 600,000 men along with women, wives, and children would by conservative estimates equate to approximately 2 million people. 2 million people with flocks and herds wandering in the wilderness for 40 years and they left not one shred of physical evidence that they were there. What about the bed time story of Joshua and the city of Jericho. Did the walls come tumbling down and the sun stand still because the earth stopped rotating? No, these things did not happen; again the archaeological evidence and the laws of physics speak the truth about these biblical myths. It is clear that today people have begun to challenge many of these age old religious myths and we are finding answers.

The answers are not always pleasant. It is painful when you first conclude as a child that Santa Claus does not live at the North Pole in a hidden village. It is painful when we find out for the first time that most if not all of the "religious truths" we have been taught as children are myths. These realizations hurt. Often our pride is injured as well, when we figure out that we have been misled. Our ego will often refuse to accept the fact that we believe in myths that we thought were

religious doctrines necessary for our salvation. Coming to the conclusion that I had been blinded and fooled was not easy for me, for I was convinced beyond any shadow of a doubt that the Mormon religion was the one true religion of God.

It is rare to find a person of supreme character, a person like Socrates, one who pursued the evidence and followed wherever it lead, and most importantly accepted the new found truths. Along this journey of truth the honest traveler will adjust his or her conclusions and perceptions as they meet the world of reality, often for the first time. This is how we as a human race have progressed from being largely ignorant of the natural world to having a much clearer knowledge of creation. We could still be stuck in the dark ages under the rule of Catholicism had brave men and women not begun to challenge the ignorance and arrogance of the Papacy. After all the earth never was the center of the universe, or even the center of our Milky Way galaxy.

The greatest thing about my journey out of Mormonism is the new truths I have learned along the way. I have become one who is hungry for knowledge of new things. It feels good and right to jettison the old myths that are not productive in the least, in helping me in my quest for enlightenment. Until one finds the courage to take the journey to learn the truth on their own, to challenge and investigate with an open mind, setting aside their fear of the truth, they are confined to live a life of self imposed limits.

Many cling to religion because it gives them a sense of comfort, some because it fuels their need to feel better than other people-superior to the rest of common humanity. Far too many Mormons that I know, and that I have known, take great pride in their self-righteousness.

I was an active Mormon until age 46. I had been a High Priest for 10 years, held numerous positions in the ecclesiastical leadership and been deeply involved as an ordinance worker in the Mormon temple. I was not a neophyte member, but rather a true believer who kept seeking for more knowledge about what I thought to be the true religion of God. There were some major doctrinal and historical teachings that just did not make sense, and after a long investigative journey I could no longer live in the world of cognitive dissonance. I could no longer “just have faith” that I was not being lied to, when in fact I had been lied to for 46 years. Most of the lies were lies of ignorance. My teachers and church leaders were only repeating what they had been told. This I have easily forgiven. The vast majority of the Mormon people are sincere, yet allow themselves to be kept in the dark. The real evil remains hidden in the fact that the “Brethren”, the top 15 men of the Mormon Church know they are not speaking the truth about the history of Joseph Smith nor will they promote the true un-polished history of Mormon origins. Mormonism is a multibillion dollar corporation; these top 15 men are never going to let the truth be told about their house of cards, for it would tumble to the ground over night. What is happening is a small consistent defection. In fact it is not really that small. The best sources estimate that approximately 100,000 active Mormons each year are resigning with official letters of resignation so that the Mormon Church by law must remove their names from its rolls. Recently the Salt Lake Tribune newspaper did an article on the staggering rate of inactivity in Utah among

the Mormon people. It is estimated that state wide approximately 30 % of the Utah Mormons have any regular contact with the Mormon Church (70% have little or no contact). This trend is also being seen in almost all areas of the world where the Mormon Church is proselytizing. The vast majority of converts to this religion fall away or go completely inactive in less than 3 years, most in less than 1 year. The Internet and a general rise in education have a lot to do with this. People can click a mouse and learn all about Mormonism.

The Mormon Church has figured this out and has recently begun to set up websites that promote its propaganda. I think it will fail, because the facts exposing Mormonism are so very divergent from the Mormon propaganda and apologetics websites that most intelligent people will see right through the deception. In fact this is how most Mormons are learning about the historical deception that they have been victims of.

Personally most of my research was done through reading texts, research papers, examining original Mormon source documents and through personal conversations with a few key ex-Mormons who had been in higher leadership positions in the Mormon Church and had been down the road I was on. Two of these men were formerly employed by the Mormon Church as Directors of Seminaries and Institutes of Religious Studies. It was not until after I had resigned from the Mormon Church that I discovered the plethora of information available on the Internet about Mormon history and Mormon origins. I also discovered many good resources and support networks for ex-Mormons. I was glad to see that I was not alone and to learn that 100's of thousands of people have left Mormonism for the same reasons I did. Mormonism is nothing more than bizarre doctrines, half truths and outright lies.

I strive to be a man of integrity. As questions came up about my Mormon beliefs I had to make peace with them. I could no longer allow myself to live like I had an intellectual lobotomy. I have always been a spiritual person, a seeker. I think that this made me an odd Mormon from the start. Always wanting to know more, know the why's of things, questioning if what I read or had been taught by the church was accurate. I was not questioning the veracity of these things, I was questioning my own understanding, and did I understand clearly and accurately what I had learned. I was eager for knowledge, I thank God for this quality.

I have always been an admirer of the founding fathers. The two I would most like to have met were George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. They are without doubt two of the greatest souls to inhabit planet earth. I had always been taught that Washington and Jefferson were Christian men. In a sense they were Christian men, but not Christians. When I learned they were Deists, I balked. So I began to research the faiths of the founding fathers of America. Sure enough many of these men were Deists and critical of the biblical myths and the piracy of the organized religious groups. John Adams, another favorite of mine, was a Unitarian. I think if we had a Unitarian Universalist Church in my small town I would attend services there. The UU congregations are open, inclusive and do not preach mythology or biblical damnation for not following the party line.

Spirituality is in my opinion a key element to our humanness. I also think it is because of this innate desire to feel oneness with creation and the Great Creator that religious myth has become a counterfeit parasite on humanity. I invite all to do the research and see if this theory is not true.

Deism is a natural religion. There is no need for myth or manmade religious falsity to justify our love for God, The Supreme Intelligence, Nature's God.

Where I live in northern Nevada I have a view off my deck that I, my friends and family call The Cathedral. We look directly east at the nearly 12,000 foot elevation of the Ruby and Humbolt mountain ranges, literally about 6 miles away as the crow flies. Each time that I look with intent at these marvels of geologic creation and watch as the seasons change the mountain scenes, as the sun rises and sets, or when the moon rises on snow fields illuminating the dark winter world, I feel deeply that there is a Supreme Creator.

I take issue with those who would embrace the idea that all the geologic and botanical beauty, the natural law and creative-self replicating life forces on our planet happened without purpose. When we look deeper into space we see more evidence of design, intelligent design. I think it a crime that Intelligent Design models are frequently associated with Creationism – **the biblical myth claiming 6 days of creative work and one day off!** Intelligent Design theories are not the same as Creationism. Creationism is based on biblical mythology and is not a scientifically viable thesis.

The wonders and mysteries of the natural world are being laid open daily by advances in scientific discovery- actually I do not think we discover anything. I think that we only uncover, and call it discovery, those things that have always been there, waiting for mankind to find them out and apply these new found wonders to our lives. I wonder how much more we would know about our planet and the universe if for almost 1,200 years Catholicism would not have greatly obstructed the intellectual advancement of mankind. How much further would we be today in reduced loss of life and the horrors of war if there were not Muslims, Christians and Jews fighting over which god is right and which group has the right to live? This has been going on for almost 1,700 years. It is without a doubt time for human beings to wake up and overcome the control of all organized religion and to begin to see that all mankind is equal in their right to live without the propagation of religious myths that cloud their judgment. To feel free to live a life intent on happiness and prosperity, "We hold these truths to be self evident".

The tenants of Deism make such a world possible. The same tenants that were written into the Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson are the same tenants upon which Deism is based. The American Republic established by the founders of America is the best and most secure form of government ever devised, with its strong separation of church and state-for good reason. Let all mankind live a life based on reason and conscience that is rooted in universal morality and we will prosper. Let a strong system of laws be established to assure good social order and assure individual accountability for any infringements upon the rights or property of

others, and mankind will live in a state of harmony never before known in history, which was the goal of America's founders.

My wife and I made this journey out of Mormonism together. We have been blessed with a wonderful marriage of 25 years. We have had many trials and purifying life experiences that we would not trade. It has been our journey in life thus far that has made us who we are. We have a family motto that serves to remind us of our responsibilities as citizens and fellow travelers on our planet, it is as follows: "I will not be involved in anything that is illegal, immoral or unethical and I will do the right thing because it is the right thing to do". This is the basic tenant of Deism; it is sweet, simple and covers all the bases of how to properly conduct one's life. The adherents of organized religion are misled into thinking that moral and ethical truths come from their brand of religion, and without religion there would be utter chaos in the world. Obviously religion has not stopped the world wide chaos we are experiencing. In fact, it is my considered conclusion that religion is the cause of much of the moral and social degeneration we are experiencing. As mankind has begun to figure out the lies of religion, we have become rudderless, and in many cases angry. This has caused a backlash that is evident in the rebellious and immoral nature of our current social climate.

Many people are no longer willing to follow the lies and manipulative tactics of the organized religious bodies. Instead of finding out the truth in full and making wise self preserving decisions that will enhance their lives, far too many have decided to throw the baby out with the bath water; "Oh what the hell, it does not matter anyway"! Was Karl Marx correct, that religion is only an opiate of the people? I would say that this is mostly true. Religion is specifically designed to control people, and it has stooped to the lowest levels of dishonesty to make sure it maintains its control and power. What is the answer? Self government based on sound moral and ethical principles, this is the clarion call of Deism. This is the basis on which the Republic of the United States of America was founded. The only thing that can assure a peaceful and moral society is personal and national integrity.

I see the evidence for God every day of my life. The evidence of the Supreme Creator is all around us. Let us strive to make good in the world and serve each other with the talents we are blessed to possess and that we have developed with our efforts and God given abilities.

Truly, God gave us Reason, Not Religion.

Why Deism?

From Roman Catholic to Evangelical/Fundamentalist Christian to Deist

by Bob Johnson

I was born into a Roman Catholic family. We went to church every Sunday and I was an altar boy for a few years.

When I was 18 I started attending an evangelical/fundamentalist Christian church that a friend of mine was a member of. This church put much more emphasis on the Bible than the Catholic church did. I soon began to believe in faith healing, speaking in tongues and the whole nine yards of Biblical nonsense.

After a few years of sincerely and earnestly trying to claim and apply Bible promises such as faith healing for myself and for others with no success, doubt began to creep into my mind. Of course, I “knew” the doubts were from Satan who was trying to get me to turn from the Bible and Christianity so he could torment me in hell for eternity.

When I was about 25 I had the opportunity through school to read Thomas Paine’s book on God and religion, [*The Age of Reason*](#). I read the first few pages and became so enraged that I physically threw the book on the floor! However, the seeds had been planted and a few years later when I was still running into a brick wall regarding Bible promises I remembered Paine’s *The Age of Reason* and read it cover to cover. What a great awakening! The powerful and undeniable truths that Paine presented were so profound and brought such a relief to me that I would laugh out loud as they were presented to me! I can’t thank Thomas Paine enough!

Why Deism?

From None to Deist and a “life is good” attitude

by Bill M.

Religion and God were not a topic often discussed in our home while I was growing up, though my mother had been raised in the Assembly of God tradition. When I was about 10 years old, I went with my best friend and his mom to an Assembly of God revival meeting. When the preacher started shouting hallelujahs and amen's and the crowd jumped to their feet and started waving their arms and mumbling words I couldn't understand, I got scared and ran outside to wait for the service to be over. That was last time I was in a church until I got married 14 years later.

Over the years, I would occasionally watch a televangelist on TV, but soon discovered that the entire program was geared toward one objective: The Pitch. Send me your (tax-free) money so I can stay on the air. What was unsaid was, and keep living in my expensive home with the swimming pool and keep wearing \$1,000 suits and expensive jewelry. Religion is big business.

It wasn't that I didn't believe in God; I did. I just couldn't believe in the God portrayed in the Bible. I guess I was subconsciously applying my reason to the stories found there and recognized them for what they were, myths and fairytales. About three years ago, I come across www.deism.com and, for the first time, my beliefs had a name. I bought a copy of Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason" and read it until the pages were wore out. It was about this time that I also became interested in the Intelligent Design theory.

I eventually came to believe that Deism, evolution and Intelligent Design fit together, at least for me, like a hand and glove. That led me to a new and deeper understanding of my Creator, both as the first cause and the intelligence behind the evolution of the universe and all life residing there, including on Earth.

In spite of that, God is still a mystery to me. But I don't worry about it because I know that, one day, as I cross over, my Creator will pull back the veil and the mystery will be revealed to me. I no longer fear death because I have absolute trust in my Creator. And life is good.

**"Nones" are people who believe in God but not in religion. They hold Deistic beliefs but have probably never heard of Deism. A [religious survey](#) shows there are about 34 million "nones" in the U.S. alone. It is a goal of the World Union of Deists to reach all of these people with Deism.*

Other eBooks Offered by the World Union of Deists

The Age of Reason, The Complete Edition, by Thomas Paine

Deism: A Revolution in Religion, A Revolution in You, by Bob Johnson

Reason: The Only Oracle of Man, by Ethan Allen

Principles of Nature, by Elihu Palmer

An Answer to C.S. Lewis' Mere Christianity, by Bob Johnson

What Is The Best Theology, by Jayson X

BibleProblems: Some Contradictions, Factual Errors, and Evil Moral Teachings In the Bible, by Jayson X

Radicals in Early American History, by Pauline Rocco

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