

*1 The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. (Psalm 14:1)*

Atheism, denial of the existence of God, may be considered on three levels: professed atheism, true atheism, and practical atheism.

The professed atheist is not necessarily a true atheist. He outwardly declares to men that he does not believe in the existence of God for various reasons. He may want to justify his godless life, his neglect of religion, and his immoral behavior. He may simply want to appear sophisticated and worldly. He may want to appear “scientific-minded,” in step with so-called modern intellectual enlightenment. He, for some reason, may have a deep-seated hatred of preachers or churches or religious people. His profession of atheism is, therefore, not an honest statement made after objective research into the plausibility of God’s existence.

The true atheist really believes in his heart that there is no God. It is ironic that the theist, he who believes in God, doubts the existence of the man who truly disbelieves the existence of God. Indeed, if the facts were known, most, if not all who profess atheism, profess it for the reasons in the above paragraph, not because they truly believe in their heart there is no God. One particularly keen-minded young man, after listening to a debate in which a professed atheist attacked belief in God, stated, “You know, she denies that there is a God, but it is evident from her tone and words that she *hates Him*.” We do truly have God-haters, but it is in serious doubt if the person exists who can truly say from the bottom of his heart that there is no God. God Himself has put the conviction of His existence in all His creatures’ heart. He has stamped the image of Himself upon men, and they cannot escape it.

The practical atheist knows in his heart there is a God, and quite often professes faith in, not only God, but Christ Jesus as well. But his life and behavior deny what he professes. He professes the truth with his mouth, but believes the “no God” lie of his wicked heart. Practical atheists make up the majority of the people on earth. They *live* as if there were no God. They break His laws, refuse to worship Him, ignore Him, never speak His name, never thank Him, never acknowledge His goodness, and, for all practical purposes, live godless lives. It would do us well if we stopped and asked ourselves this question: *If there were no God*, how much different would I live from the way I now live?

-C.M.