

## God And The Mind Of Man

The argument often goes something like this: "We wish for someone greater than we, who can help us cope with the complexities and barbarities of society. Hence we 'invent' God to meet this inner compulsion" ("Atheist Dodges of the Theistic Evidences", Worth, *The Preceptor*, March 1982, p. 22). But I have always had a problem with this explanation of God for a number of reasons, the first of which is that mankind could not have invented God. I find it hard to believe that dishonest, weak, fearful, and deluded individuals invented the character and moral attributes of God. We are not perfect, so how could imperfection have invented its opposite? Consider this parable:

*If we were to raise a group of individuals in total darkness for their entire lives, from birth, without ever telling them about the existence of light, do you suppose any one of them, or all of them combined, would ever be able to "invent" the concept of light? If they had known nothing else but darkness, always, without any knowledge of light, would they be capable of just waking up at some point and saying, "I wish that there would be light. Maybe when I die, I will finally be able to see light." So how is it possible that mankind, in its imperfection (darkness), with total ignorance of anything to the alternative, could have just invented perfection?*

The argument that man invented God also does not make sense because why would the pressures of life result in the belief in the supernatural rather than despair? How could man have known what suffering, injustice, immorality, and sin were unless a moral standard existed first? *"Furthermore, if there isn't some kind of standard of right and wrong why should we even be able to recognize the existence of barbarity, injustice, and corruption? Wouldn't the natural situation be the blind acceptance of this norm? Wouldn't the normal result be a materialistic predestination doctrine rather than any thought of the desirability of escape?"* (Worth p. 22).

If man just invented the concept of God, that is, if God is just a product of man's selfish desires, then why did man invent a Creator who condemns selfishness (Galatians 5:19-21). Why would we invent a God who requires that we place Him first (Matthew 6:33,10:37). Why is the God of man's wishes, so against the "wishes" of most people? We have certainly done ourselves no favors by inventing a God who requires so much from us, who seems so strict, so unwavering, and so cruel to the disobedient. He does not let anyone off the hook: young as well as old have responsibilities (Ecc. 12:1; Ephesians 6:1-4; Titus 2:3-6), the rich as well as the poor (1 Timothy 6:17ff), the slave as well as his master (Colossians 3:22-4:2), the man as well as the woman (Colossians 3:18-19). Inventing a God who does not grant wishes cannot possibly just be a form of wish fulfillment!

### **"Religion is for weak-minded people"**

In all fairness, the bible actually claims that all people have weaknesses (Romans 3:23,5:6-8). We also need to define weakness, if that is what the atheist wants to call a Christian. What is true weakness? Is it weakness to acknowledge that you are

not perfect, that you need somebody else, that you need to be held accountable in order to become a better person? Is it weakness to admit that mere human wisdom does not have all of the answers (Jeremiah 10:23)? So when it comes to religion and weakness, we have only two choices:

- Either you will be the self-proclaimed sufficient person who argues they need nothing and their goal in life is to avoid things they do not want to do (Luke 12:16-21, 2 Timothy 3:1-4). This is the person who says that only the feeble-minded or the simple need to rely on religion for strength and stability.
- Or you will proclaim that you are not sufficient in yourself and that you are dependent on God and other people. This is the person who admits that he sins, needs an advocate, appreciates grace, and obeys the commandments of God. He loves his spouse, denies himself, patches his relationships, approaches sin honestly, does the right thing for others, has sincere motives, forgives others, remains patient in light of his own shortcomings, and loves truth.

Which person sounds weak? I guess the real question is does it take a weak person to be a Christian? Hardly! I find it hard to believe that a religion that requires total commitment, both spiritual and physical, to the highest Being is designed to accommodate weakness. It is more weak to follow your lusts (James 1:12-15), give in to your passions, follow your own doctrine (2 Timothy 4:2-5), and love the comforts of the world more than God (2 Timothy 4:10, 1 Timothy 6:17-19, Matthew 19:21-24).