



IF THERE IS NO GOD, MURDER ISN'T WRONG

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Do you believe that good and evil exist?

The answer to this question separates Judeo-Christian values from secular values.

Let me offer the clearest possible example: murder.

Is murder wrong? Is it evil? Nearly everyone would answer yes. But now I'll pose a much harder question: How do you know?

I am sure that you think that murder is wrong. But how do you know?

If I asked you how you know that the earth is round, you would show me photographs from outer space, or offer me measurable data. But what photographs could you show, what measurements could you provide, that prove that murder or rape or theft is wrong?

The fact is...you can't. There are scientific facts, but without God there are no moral facts.

In a secular world, there can only be opinions about morality. They may be personal opinions or society's opinion. But only opinions. Every atheist philosopher I have read or debated on this subject has acknowledged that if there is no God, there is no objective morality.

Judeo-Christian values are predicated on the existence of a God of morality. In other words, only if there is a God who says murder is wrong, is murder wrong. Otherwise, all morality is opinion.

The entire Western world – what we call Western Civilization – is based on this understanding.

Now, let me make two things clear.

First, this doesn't mean that if you don't believe in God, you can't be a good person. There are plenty of kind and moral individuals who don't believe in God and Judeo-Christian values. But the existence of these good people has nothing – nothing – to do with the question of whether good and evil really exist if there is no God.

Second, there have been plenty of people who believed in God who were not good people; indeed, more than a few have been evil – and have even committed evil in God's name. The existence of God doesn't ensure people will do good. I wish it did. The existence of God only ensures that good and evil objectively exist and are not merely opinions.

Without God, we therefore end up with what is known as moral relativism – meaning that morality is not absolute, but only relative to the individual or to the society. Without God, the words “good” and “evil” are just another way of saying “I like” and “I don’t like.” If there is no God, the statement “Murder is evil” is the same as the statement “I don’t like murder.”

Now, many will argue that you don’t need moral absolutes; people won’t murder because they don’t want to be murdered. But that argument is just wishful thinking. Hitler, Stalin, and Mao didn’t want to be murdered, but that hardly stopped them from murdering about a hundred million people.

It is not a coincidence that the rejection of Judeo-Christian values in the Western world – by Nazism and Communism – led to the murder of all these innocent people.

It is also not a coincidence that the first societies in the world to abolish slavery – an institution that existed in every known society in human history – were Western societies rooted in Judeo-Christian values. And so were the first societies to affirm universal human rights; to emancipate women; and to proclaim the value of liberty.

Today, the rejection of Judeo-Christian values and moral absolutes has led to a world of moral confusion.

In the New York Times, in March 2015, a professor of philosophy confirmed this.

He wrote: “What would you say if you found out that our public schools were teaching children that it is not true that it’s wrong to kill people for fun? Would you be surprised? I was.”

The professor then added: “The overwhelming majority of college freshmen view moral claims as mere opinions.”

So, then, whatever you believe about God or religion, here is a fact:

Without a God who is the source of morality, morality is just a matter of opinion. So, if you want a good world, the death of Judeo-Christian values should frighten you.

I’m Dennis Prager.