

ask

ANYTHING

Religion is a Crutch

November 15, 2020

Matthew 5:1-12 (ESV)

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons^[a] of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

INTRODUCTION

Religion is a crutch for humankind. It's for weak people who cannot think and act for themselves.

How would you respond to that?

“I do not think it a very dignified or respect-worthy posture for an adult to go around sucking a [soother] for comfort.” —Richard Dawkins

1. Who says this proves anything?

The “religion is a crutch” statement doesn't prove anything because

1. it is based on one massive assumption.

2. everyone (not just religious people) wish certain things were true.

“I want atheism to be true. . . . It isn't just that I don't believe in God and naturally hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope that there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that.” —Thomas Nagel

3. everyone (not just religious people) use certain crutches for support.

2. Who says Christianity makes life easier?

“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” —Matthew 16:24-25

“To put it more bluntly: Do you really want to tithe, in addition to paying your taxes? Do you want your work-week disrupted by the demands of observance, and your social or romantic life circumscribed by rules that many of your friends think ridiculous? Do you want to drag your kids to religious education for years on end, often missing things they’d rather do in the meantime? Do you want to be laughed at in the secular Western public square? . . . Then get yourself to church.” —Mary Eberstadt

3. Who says it’s bad to use a crutch?

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” —Matthew 5:3

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs (and only theirs!) is the kingdom of heaven.” —Matthew 5:3

“Cursed are the rich in spirit, for they will never enjoy life in God’s kingdom.”

“Poverty of spirit is the personal acknowledgement of spiritual bankruptcy. It is the conscious confession of unworth before God. As such it is the deepest form of repentance.” —D.A. Carson

“William Carey, Born August 17th, 1761, Died June 9th 1834. A wretched, poor, and helpless worm, on thy kind arms I fall.”

Nothing in my hand I bring,
Solely to thy cross I cling,
Foul I to the fountain fly,
Wash me Saviour or I die

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus’ blood and righteousness

Prayer

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Savior. Amen.