

Daniel 06-05-21a

This is the 21st day of May, 2006. We continue this morning our study in the book of Daniel. We pick up in the end of chapter 11.

As we approach the study of the word of God, it is always a good idea to look to the status of our souls. Of course, there's never a time when that's not a good idea. To ensure that God the Holy Spirit can energize, activate, and make use of the transforming power of God's word.

There is no problem with the arm of the Lord. It is not shortened that it cannot save. His ear is not heavy that it cannot hear.

The problem is with our choice, our volition, our priorities, our goals. This is the only thing in the universe that will stop God's power from transforming us to be like his son. It's an amazing thing that we sometimes choose to pit our ideas and our choices against the plan and purpose and power of God.

But God respects the free will that he has granted to each one of us. And if we choose to not avail ourselves of his grace and his presence and to participate in his plan in a positive way, he is not going to override or impose himself on us. So it is critically important that we recognize our opportunity to be equipped for good works, to be examples and manifestations of God's grace and God's glory on the positive side.

Everything works together to make God's point in history. The question is, are we going to be a positive example or a negative example? Well, there is no more important time to recognize those truths than when we approach formally the study of the word of God. Shall we pray? Father, we always are amazed at your loving kindness, your patience, your grace toward us who are undeserving.

We are hopeless, helpless and useless in this world apart from your work and your love. We thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ who recognized our lost and hopeless condition and voluntarily came to empty himself and take on the form of a servant, bear our iniquities, be bruised for our sins, and we recognize that it is through his stripes that we are healed. We thank you for the opportunity, the privilege and the potential that is ours.

Having been entered into relationship with you through his work, we know that he now sits at your right hand interceding on our behalf. We know that God the Holy Spirit translates our prayers and the lack of wisdom and the lack of clarity and the lack of understanding that we have. He changes those things and expresses our needs and our thoughts in words which cannot be uttered before your throne.

We ask your blessing on us as we study together. We ask your continued blessing on our nation. We recognize that we have been preserved for over four and a half years now from attacks upon our nation by those who would terrorize us, those who would demoralize us and

try to alter foreign policy and even domestic policy by their unlawful and horrendous actions.

We thank you for blessing the efforts of those who work to preserve the peace and the safety that is ours in this country. We recognize that one of the main reasons why you continue to keep a hedge about our nation is so that we can learn and grow in grace and in knowledge of the Savior. We ask your blessing on us now as we study together.

May God the Holy Spirit illuminate your word in our hearts. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

As I said, our scripture reading this morning is in Psalm 14. We are going to be looking at the latter portion of Daniel chapter 11 which lifts off. I think of Daniel chapter 11 kind of like a big Boeing jet going down the runway.

And while its tires are on the ground, it is talking about Antiochus Epiphanes and the historical events that were future for Daniel but are past for us. And although it is the same airplane, it lifts off and leaves Antiochus behind to picture the future coming Antichrist. And we have already seen that he is going to try to supersede religion.

He is going to try to supersede God belief with something of his own devising. And this is going to be accepted. It is going to be popular.

It is going to be the norm. And God belief, specifically biblical belief, is going to result in great persecution. Many are going to be martyred and slain.

We saw this in our Revelation study. Because the protection and the hedge about believers is not going to have the same form and the same substance that it has today. Well, there is no better place to see the fruitlessness of the godless approach to life than in the Psalms.

Psalm 14 which echoes some of the themes that you also find in Psalm 53. This is dedicated to the chief musician. I always like these that are dedicated to the chief musician.

Because this indicates that David wanted this song to be performed, to be sung in front of the congregation of the nation of Israel. This wasn't something for a special occasion. It wasn't something that came to his mind to match a particular tune.

We have some of these that are attached to tunes which for the time being we don't know. I'm sure when David comes back we'll find that some of these tunes like Death of the Son and some of the others are going to be heard once again. But this is specifically to the chief musician.

You get the idea that this was supposed to be one of the main hymns in the hymnal for Israel. So its thoughts are important and emphasized as being of universal importance and universal consequence. To the chief musician, a Psalm of David.

The fool has said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt. They have done abominable works.

There is none who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside.

They have together become corrupt. There is none who does good. No, not one.

Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread, and do not call on the Lord? There they are in great fear, for God is with the generation of the righteous. You shame the counsel of the poor, but the Lord is his refuge. Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion.

When the Lord brings back the captivity of his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad. This is a fascinating Psalm. I've talked about these principles and these statements in the Word of God in the past, but it's been a while.

I want to review because it is very pertinent to the section of Daniel and the look forward to the 70th week of Daniel that we are finding in front of us in Daniel chapter 11. This Psalm begins, The fool has said in his heart, there is no God. If you are one who delights in making notes in your Bible, you ought to circle that word fool.

The fool. The subject of the sentence, the subject of this Psalm is the fool. This is category fool.

It's not talking about one single fool, it's talking about those on earth who are the fool. This is a general statement of principle. The fool has said in his heart, there is no God.

Now, what else do you find in that verse? They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good. Who is they? They is the fool. Category fool is corrupt.

Category fool has done abominable works. Category fool, there is none in that category who does good. Now, how can I say that? Am I just arbitrarily pushing things to one side and the other in this Psalm? Not at all, and we'll see why as we go forward.

The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men. What do you think the word children is in Hebrew? B'nai, sons of men. Sons of men.

Have you ever been driving around and you look over and you see a Jewish synagogue? Some of them call it temple, you know, we're going to temple, but they're talking about their synagogue. And you'll see on the side and they'll say B'nai and then B'rith. B'nai, B'rith, this is what it looks like, looks like B'nai, B'rith.

Well, that's B'nai, Berit. Berit is the Hebrew word for covenant. These come over into Aramaic, this is sort of an Aramaicized Hebrew or a modern Hebrew that goes back to ancient Hebrew.

But these are sons of the covenant. B'nai, B'rith, sons of the covenant. The sons of men are on the earth and the Lord looks down from heaven upon them to see if there are any who understand and who seek God.

Now, this is not all mankind. This verse and its equivalent over in Psalm 53 are often cited by Calvin as saying, total depravity, all of mankind, there is none who does good. They have all together become corrupt.

There is not a single righteous one among the sons of men. Okay, let's just hold that thought for a moment and continue with the psalm. If you take that view, then among all mankind, they have all turned aside.

All mankind has together become corrupt. There is not a single man on the earth who does righteousness, no not one, who does good. Now, we're going to get a statement about these who work iniquity.

The psalm has just said that there are these who do abominable works, who are corrupt and who don't do good. These workers of iniquity have no knowledge. Who eat up my people as they eat bread.

Now wait a minute, if we're talking about all the people in the human race, then who are my people that are being eaten up like bread? You can't make that interpretation work. Eat up my people as bread and do not call on the Lord. There are people who do call on the Lord and they are not in this category of workers of iniquity that do abominable works and there are none who does good.

He said in verse 2 that there are none who seek God. Well, if there are none who seek God, who are these who call on the Lord? Category fool is what is in view in this psalm. The children of men are set in distinction to the sons of God.

What does John chapter 1 tell us? Jesus Christ came to his own and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the authority. The word for power there in Greek means authority.

To be called what? Sons of God. What does it tell us back in the... Well, skip that thought. I don't want to distract myself.

So the Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there are any who understand and who seek God. They, the children of men, they, the fools, have turned aside. They have become corrupt.

They don't do good. Not a single one. The workers of iniquity have they no knowledge who eat up my people as they eat bread and do not call on the Lord.

There they are in great fear for God is with the generation of the righteous. Now, generation, this is humanity, right? We don't talk about generations of angels. Generation means those who are born and who rise up and who have children of their own.

That's what we call a generation. There is a generation of the righteous who do call upon God.

You shame the counsel of the poor, but the Lord is his refuge.

Whose refuge? The poor, those who call on the Lord, who are my people in God's view. So, you can't quote this psalm as a statement of total depravity, as a statement of absolute inability to do good for all mankind. That is a misunderstanding and a misinterpretation because there is nobody to be the bread to be eaten.

But what does this tell us? Those who have turned aside become corrupt and who have not a single one in their ranks who do good. This is, of course, self-evident because without having relationship with God, we can't do good. Even believers who have separated themselves from God by their bad decisions can't do good.

Isaiah tells us about this. We are all as an unclean thing. And all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

And we all do fade as a leaf. And our iniquities, like the wind, have carried us away. This is disobedient Israel.

This is Israel in discipline. This is apathetic, rebellious, stiff-necked Israel. Has become unclean.

Their righteousness has turned to filthy rags. You find the same thing in Malachi. Their sacrifices and their offerings are tainted and are a stench in God's nostrils.

Because they are not claiming God's righteousness by faith. There are three kinds of people in the world when it comes to righteousness and unrighteousness. There are unbelievers who are completely incapable of doing anything that can please God.

There are believers in two categories. There are believers who are also doing nothing that can please God. And then there are believers who, by faith, claim the righteousness of God and are pleasing in His sight.

As an unbeliever, you have no choice. No matter what you do, it is going to displease God until you make that decision of acceptance. Until there is the change of mind.

And there is no longer suppressing the truth in unrighteousness. And the whole scenario painted in the last half of Romans chapter 1. As long as men suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Because what may be known of God is manifest to them.

And they push it away. And when they know Him as God, they don't glorify Him. They are not thankful.

They empty their mind of the truth of God and fill it with vain imaginings. You have that whole, very specific, very detailed account in Romans chapter 1. So the fool says in his heart, there is no God. Why is he a fool? Because he knows better.

God has placed the knowledge of Himself in the heart of every man. Solomon says in

Ecclesiastes, God has put eternity in their hearts. A sense of the eternal.

A knowledge of the eternal. God Himself represents and embodies eternity. And He has put that in their hearts.

Paul says the same thing in Romans 1. But when that knowledge comes. When they know Him as God and they don't glorify Him. And they are not thankful.

They become vain and empty and foolish. The fool says there is no God. The fool is corrupt.

Does abominable works. And cannot do good. And does not do good.

The Lord looks down to see if there are any who understand and who seek God. We saw this in Ezekiel. Where are the ones? Do you remember the ink horn angel? Where are those who sigh and cry over the distress of Jerusalem.

Over the discipline and the judgment that is coming on the people of God. And those who sigh and cry are given a mark. And they are protected from the slaughter angels.

Who come behind the ink horn angel. And judge those who ought to be caring about the things of God and do not. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge.

Who eat up my people as they eat bread. Notice God is aware that His people are being eaten up. They are being consumed by the ungodly.

And He doesn't intervene. He doesn't stop it. This idea is of course at the heart of our study in the book of Job.

God sometimes allows adversity. The Sabaeans and the Chaldeans to come in and consume His people. Allows Satan through.

So that we end up wrestling against principalities and powers and rulers in this age. Workers of iniquity do not call on the Lord. But then it goes on in verse 5 to say an interesting thing.

He doesn't say behold judgment on the workers of iniquity is coming. But He says they are in great fear. For God is with the generation of the righteous.

Part of the motivation for the attacks on those who believe in God. The nation of Israel and other believers in ancient times. And today it is Christians.

It is the church. The body of Christ. The attacks and the opposition.

The denigration. The mocking. The opposition.

The Bible says the root of it is fear. You think well these people don't seem very fearful to me. They seem smug.

They seem self-confident. They seem even arrogant. They have a lot of hubris.

They laugh. They think that they are reasonable and they are rational. And that we are mystical and benighted.

And living in the dark ages and haven't crawled out of the cave. And that our faith is something like cave paintings to ward off the evil spirits or something. That we are afraid.

That we need a crutch. That we can't cope with life as it is. Reality is too tough for us.

And we have to use our imagination. And make up a reason and a purpose when none really exists. And there is an endless litany of this nonsense.

What does this come from? There is a knowledge that God has placed in the heart of every man. Unbelievers who at the point that God the Holy Spirit convicts them of sin, righteousness and judgment. All of which revolves around the existence and the fact of God.

Everyone knows it. You can talk to any atheist, any agnostic, any apathetic, indifferent, unbeliever. And one assumption you can make with confidence is they know there is a God.

In their heart of hearts. Now they may overlay it. They may deny it.

They may have put 16 coats of rationalizations over it. But in their heart of hearts, at the very center of their being. God the Holy Spirit has been there and has convicted them of the existence of God.

God has placed the knowledge of himself in the heart of every man. So why all of this? Why are they not content to just live and let live? And say, well, you know, people want to believe in that. They need a crutch.

That's great. And you may find a few atheists of this ilk. But most of them can't just let it be.

They have to attack. They feel a pathological, psychological need to attack and to denigrate and to undermine. And to try to erode and mock and denigrate Christianity in particular.

You don't find very many atheist websites going after the Buddhists. Or going after Islam. Or going after the Hindu belief system.

When you find atheists, you find them attacking specifically Christianity. Why? At the root of it, having rejected God and having the knowledge of judgment. There is at the root of it, and I don't care what they say and I don't care how they act.

The word of God says at the very heart and root of their opposition, there is a fear. A lot of people react. No one likes to feel fearful.

I don't think anybody, well I guess there are some bungee jumpers maybe, like to feel fear. But really what they like to feel is the rush of overcoming their fear. I don't think just the fear is

what they're after.

It's how they feel after they've survived. People go to amusement rides and I think there's an element of fear in some of these. Mr. Freeze and the wild rides that you can find.

But this is a different kind of fear. This is deeply rooted in the center of the human soul. What does the New Testament tell us about belief? You believe in God.

You do well. Even the demons believe in what? Tremble. The demons believe in God also and tremble.

It isn't whether or not there is a God. It is knowing that there is a God and that last element of conviction in John 14, 15, and 16. That great discourse Jesus gives about the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

When he comes he will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. There is an absolute standard of good. These do no good, can't do good, can't produce good, and they know it in their heart of hearts.

There is no deception like self-deception. There is none who does good, no not one. Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? Who eat up my people as they eat bread? The answer to this question is negative.

They do have knowledge. God has placed the knowledge of himself in the heart of every man. Have they no knowledge who eat up my people and do not call on the Lord? No, they do have knowledge.

But that knowledge, because they reject God, creates the same fear that you find in the demons. What did the demons say when Jesus was talking to the man with the legion over the Gerasene or Gadarene demoniac? What did they say? We know who you are, the Holy One of God. Have you come to torture us before the time? Have you come to judge us before the time? They were afraid.

They said, don't send us into oblivion, send us into the swine. Confronting God, confronting the Son of God, there is fear. Now, there's a lot of people in the world today, especially a lot of Christians who haven't learned much of the Word of God, who say, well, the devil's after me, or there's the demon of poverty, there's the demon of depression, there's the demon of discord that's screwing up my marriage, there's the demon of rebellion that's in my children, and so on.

They ascribe things to demons. And it's a superstitious sort of fear of demons. We ought to have confidence.

The fear is on the evil side. Perfect love casts out fear. There is no fear in love.

Fear thou not, for I am with thee. How many times does the Bible say, fear ought not to be a part of the Christian life? Fear is on the side of those who do not believe in God, who do not

accept God. It isn't even so much really a question of belief, it is a question of acceptance.

That's the point that Jesus makes. It's a matter of acceptance. The fool says in his heart, there is no God.

Why is that foolish? Because he is stating something that is counter to his knowledge. He does have knowledge, but he has to go try to eat up the people of God like bread. And the root of it is fear.

They are in great fear because God is with the generation of the righteous. This is the motivation. It's fear on one side, and it's the presence of God on the other.

They are going to have the same reaction to the people of God that they have to God himself. If you look at the anti-intelligent design movement, why is there all of this heated, vehement, blistering, bitter opposition? And when there is a defeat, as one could expect, in the courts, saying, no, you cannot mention anything having to do, because intelligent design is just creationism dressed up in other clothes. It's a wolf in sheep's clothing, and we see what you're doing.

For science to acknowledge that there are so many elements of biological life that cannot be explained by random processes, which is a fact. It's a scientific fact that there is no scientific explanation for the variety, the diversity, and the complexity of biological life on this planet. There is no scientific explanation.

There is no explanation for how life arose from non-life. None. There is not an experiment.

There is not a material theory. Have you ever heard someone try to explain, well, we think that there were little bubbles of protein. Nobody can explain where the information came from.

Even if you can construct a theory that explains where the computer came from, where did the program come from? Where did the information stored in DNA and RNA come from? Now, RNA serves to replicate DNA, but they like to say, well, before there was DNA, there was RNA, and that was the information carrier, and then it evolved into DNA, and now RNA is just a copying function. But they say, well, the physical pieces could have, you know, we can put proteins out here, and in a certain environment, they'll form little bubbles. So now you have a protein bubble, and that's like a cell wall.

So now all we need is a theory for how primitive RNA or DNA got inside the bubble, and then it just started reproducing itself. I mean, anybody with common sense, you don't have to be a scientist. You dress yourself up with a PhD and a lab coat, and you say, well, you know, this could happen.

Well, your common sense will tell you what? So this is the perfect analog. Let's say that metal and silicon and gold and plastic could fall together and form a computer and fall together and form a hard drive and fall together and form a RAM. Let's just grant you that much, okay? So

you've got a place where programs can run and information can be stored.

Okay. One in a billion shot, but there's billions of planets in the universe, and hey, it happened. Here's a brand spanking new Pentium 4 with a gigabyte of RAM, an 80-gigabyte hard drive.

Okay, I give you that much. It fell into place by some mysterious physical process. And not only that, but a copper element cord magically appeared with three prongs and plugged itself into some form of energy we know not what, but it's providing great 120-volt, 60-cycle AC current to run the thing.

Okay, there it is, i.e., these inanimate, inorganic materials came together and formed something, and it's now alive. By some definition, it's alive. It's got power, and it's floating around in the primordial muck.

Okay, fine. Now, here's your computer. What's the computer going to do? It's powered up.

It's spinning. And what's it going to do? Well, what's the first thing that happens when you turn a computer on? You say, well, it boots up. What does boot up mean? Well, it checks itself to make sure all of its hardware is functional.

Not all of its hardware, but the essential hardware to start up. And then what does it do? It goes to sector zero on the hard drive, and it's looking for the bootstrap, which is going to look another place on the hard drive, and ultimately load the operating system, which is the information that tells it, I am a computer and not a microwave oven or a toaster or a calculator or whatever. So, fine.

Where does that come from? You cannot randomly generate meaningful information. Information, by definition, is intelligently produced. That's what information is.

I don't care how many letters of the alphabet you spray on a wall out of a fire hose, you're never going to get Shakespeare. I don't care how long you do it. I don't care how big the wall is or how many letters you've got.

You can spray random letters against a wall until kingdom come, which it will, and you'll never get Shakespeare. In fact, you won't get the first sentence of Shakespeare. It's been mathematically proven.

You can't even get the first six words of Hamlet's soliloquy. To be or not to be, that's the question. Maybe that's a little more than six words.

Mathematically, randomly generating things, you'll never get it. Here's my point. There is a conscious and fear-based attack on the things of God and on the people of God because it points out that the emperor has no clothes.

You remember that story of the emperor's no clothes? That's what Christianity stands for. That's what the Bible stands for. That's why it's Christianity that is attacked and not Hinduism

and a lot of the other religions and cults and philosophies of life because it is Christianity that not only maintains that there is a creator, but it is unique in that that creator holds mortal creatures morally accountable for their actions and that there is a judgment.

You will never get such a vehement, bitter outcry from the atheist crowd and those who attack Christianity as when you start talking about hell. What kind of a God, etc., etc.? God is with the generation of the righteous. You shame the counsel of the poor.

This is the attitude that you'll get. They shame you because you look to God for counsel and for comfort and for encouragement and for strength and they say you're weak. You need a crutch.

There's something wrong with you. You're irrational. You can't deal with reality.

You have to cushion reality by this imaginary God belief. You're weak. Well, this is ever the pot calling the kettle black.

People who feel weakness, who feel fear, are going to lash out at others and try to tar them with the... They say, oh no, I don't want to be fearful. I don't want to be weak. I don't want to have no solution.

You're weak. You have no solution. You're no better than me.

If you boil away the fluff and the exterior skin over all of this, you'll see that the Bible is right and it is rooted in fear. What if the Christians are right? I was telling Patty yesterday, I've mused on this many times, that if you look at belief systems, Christianity is all about the resurrection, about the afterlife, and unbelievers are never going to know if they're right. When they say, ah, when you die you're just dead meat.

Well, if that is true, they're never going to know it because their death is going to be essentially falling asleep and never waking up. So if they're right, they'll never know. The only people who are going to know for sure they're right is us because when we are resurrected and raised, we will know.

And they will know when they're raised 1,007 years later at the great white throne judgment. So there is an element of, I told you so, in the Christian faith because we will be there and we will know that our faith is vindicated and justified. The unbelieving world, if they were correct, what's the point? You're just dead meat when you die.

You're never going to know that there's no afterlife if you're right, but of course they will all know. Well, the final verse here says, Oh, that the deliverance of Israel would come out of Zion. When the Lord brings back the captivity of his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad.

And that's the point that I just made. What is the captivity of his people? We are imprisoned in flesh. We have this earthly dwelling that is falling apart.

Paul makes this point, Corinthians 15 and so on. We don't wish to be unclothed, but to be

clothed upon. We want to move into that permanent dwelling, that tabernacle not made with hands, rather than this flesh.

When the deliverance of Israel, from the Old Testament perspective, they are the people of God. When the Lord brings back the captivity of his people, the whole creation, Paul says, groans, waiting for the deliverance of the people of God. And when the Lord does that, Jacob will rejoice and Israel will be glad.

We will celebrate our deliverance from mortality, our deliverance from corruption, our deliverance from this constant attack and constant opposition by those who reject God, both angelic and human. It is going to be one of the great things to celebrate when the Lord Jesus comes back for us, is that we are going to get relief and respite and deliverance from all of this negative opposition. But that opposition will have created in us strength.

And if you believe in God and trust in God and develop your faith, when the chips are down and there's great opposition, we don't have to hope that God would strap our belief and our volition and our choosing down on the positive pole for all eternity. Oh, I'm afraid I might fall like Satan. You don't have to be afraid.

It's the a fortiori principle. If you trust in God and if you look to God and honor God in a fallen world in the flesh with devilish and demonic opposition, why would you fall and reject God in the eternal future when all of those things have gone away? That's why it is a great thing, the reason God leaves us here, to develop our faith, to develop our strong love for Him. The first and great commandment, love the Lord your God.

And if you can do it when things are at their worst, it's that much easier to do it when they're at their best. Well, this all illuminates our passage over in Daniel chapter 11 because we have seen, beginning in verse 40, that this account lifts up. It really begins in verse 36.

The king shall do according to his own will. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god. You cannot believe the push in recent days for eliminating God belief.

It is unprecedented on an international level. You might have a nation, you might have the Soviet Union that tries to suppress and eliminate God belief. But it is nothing like what we see today.

It is unprecedented in history. He will exalt and magnify himself above every god, will speak blasphemies against the god of gods, will prosper till wrath has been accomplished. He will regard neither the god of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god.

He will exalt himself above them all. In their place he shall honor a god of fortresses, and a god which his fathers did not know he will honor with gold, silver, precious stones, and pleasant things. That whole section, 36 through 39, talks about the elimination of God belief by the Antichrist.

When Antiochus Epiphanes tried this, he restricted his efforts to Israel. But in the latter half of the 70th week of Daniel, the Antichrist, remember he lets Israel worship and do sacrifice and offering. He makes a covenant, a seven year covenant with them.

But he is going to break it halfway through and say, you know, we're going to have trouble as long as there is this God belief. And he's going to try to eliminate it. There is, like you've never seen, for example, last year a movie came out called *The God Who Wasn't There*.

It's out on DVD. And it was reviewed in *Newsweek*. *Newsweek* had a big article, big bold headline that said, Brian Fleming's most famous project was this off-Broadway show.

But now he's turned his attention to a figure he claims is equally fictional, Jesus Christ. His new documentary, *The God Who Wasn't There*, irreverently lays out the case that Jesus Christ never existed. The L.A. Times documentary questions existence of Jesus.

Asked why he chose to question Jesus' existence instead of his divinity, Fleming said, I think the idea that an individual could be the son of a God is already so ridiculous it doesn't need to be debunked. San Francisco Bay Guardian. Their headline is, Faith Nil.

So did Jesus exist? Fleming, a former hardcore fundamentalist, taps his sense of humor, deadpan narration, rapid-fire Hollywoodized race through the life of Jesus, adding up all the acts of violence and the passion of the Christ, and the talking heads of authors, historians, and folklorists to state his case. *The God Who Wasn't There* is thought-provoking enough to maybe crack open a few closed minds. There is a website.

By the way, that *God Who Wasn't There* is, as of last month, number one on the Amazon.com independent documentaries list. It is the most popular independent documentary being sold. Of course, Amazon sends DVDs and VHS tapes all over the world.

The movie has become a word-of-mouth phenomenon. The controversial documentary, called provocative to put it mildly, presents the case that Jesus Christ did not exist. The home video's success has been driven by Beyond Belief's innovative approach to theatrical screenings.

The company allows anyone to hold a public screening of the movie without sharing revenue from paid admissions with Beyond Belief Media. Since its world premiere in May 2005, it has had theatrical exposure in New York, L.A., San Francisco, and dozens of other cities. The DVD sells for \$16 on Amazon.

Their little blurb says, *Bowling for Columbine* did it for the gun culture. *Super Size Me* did it to fast food. Now *The God Who Wasn't There* does it to religion.

Holding modern Christianity up to a bright spotlight, this bold new film asks the questions few dare to ask. There is a website that's been around for about a dozen years now called Positive Atheism. Discussing the history, ethics, and philosophy of atheism promotes liberty, responsibility, and peace of mind.

Since September of 1995, serving people with no reason to believe, for those seeking to initiate or invigorate their awareness of their own freedom from superstition and theistic faith. I've mentioned several times before the Skeptic's Bible. All you have to do, if you want to see how pervasive this is, put atheism into Google and look at what you get.

Visit some of the websites and look around. There is an active, venomous, bitter, sarcastic, aggressive assault on Christianity in particular and God belief in general. Many, many people all over the world are saying religion is the problem.

We need to get past religion. Religion is responsible for war. Religion is responsible for division.

Just look at Ireland and the Irish Republican Army. Look at the Catholics and the Protestants. Look at the Serbs and the Croats.

Look at the Middle East. It's all about religion. We've got to eliminate religion so that we can get world peace.

This is the hue and cry. If you haven't heard it, you need to go look because it is widespread. It is blogged.

It is flogged. It is all over the place. You hear it in the press.

You hear it on PBS. You can't believe it. Well, we're going to take a look at how this is the setup for the Antichrist when we come back from the break.