



THE ATHEIST IN EACH OF US

By William Wolfe (a colleague of Pastor Bayes)

"Atheist" (n.)- Doubter; agnostic; nonbeliever.

I've been reading Craig Groeschel's book The Christian Atheist. The title leaned me in the direction of the bookshelf that displayed it. The "half-price for three days only" got me to pick it up. The gift card convinced me to buy it. The book sleeve's sub-heading is *"Believing in God but living as if He doesn't exist."*

Hmmm!

Unfortunately I have to get through the first 11 chapters before coming to the final chapter entitled *"When You Believe In God, But Not in His Church."* (I'm too compliant to jump to the last chapter first. Somewhere in my life- probably first grade- it was hammered into me that "good little boys" didn't do that!)

Atheist is one of those names that we've black-listed, but an atheist is a doubter. That means that at one time Thomas qualified. Even at the end of Matthew, one verse that continues to confound me, talks about the disciples worshipping Jesus, *"but some doubted."* Everyone of us doubts in some way. That doesn't mean that on Sunday I'm going to say something like *"You may have come here this morning with a lot of atheism. You're atheistic about the possibility of healing happening in your life. You're an atheist that hope could come into your life. But, let me assure you that you don't have to leave here today still an atheist. Jesus is big enough to handle your atheist-infected mind."*

The word has history that usually conjures up pictures of Madalyn Murray O'Hair ranting and raving about prayer in the public schools. O'Hair

was named by Life magazine as "the most hated woman in America" in 1964. If you remember her at all you may remember that she didn't really convey having "a warm personality."

So "atheism" has history in Christian circles.

But it's also very close to home in an uncomfortable way! We do doubt! We do live in ways that say we're believers, but not committed to it. When we talk about commitment it too often is defined by how many church activities and study groups we're a part of. The confusing thing is that there are believers who aren't committed to any way. Being committed to a group or a study, or being in a worship service each week would be a welcome sign that they are still alive, let alone following Jesus.

My *"atheism"* shows in my too frequent doubting that people can change. I become cynical that God can mold and shape clay into something extraordinary. History is more often than not a good indication of what will happen in the future, but the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob also has a history of writing the impossible made possible.

Could it be that the "atheism" of the church keeps pulling us back to what we're used to and what we've always experienced? Could it be that a more intimate relationship with God is just outside of our reach because we've doubted that he can extend himself just a little more in our direction?

That takes me to the end of this column, but also the beginning of chapter seven in Groeschel's book. It's entitled *"When You Believe in God, But Don't Think You Can Change."*

WORSHIP

Sunday, August 22, 2010

10:00 a.m. Worship ■ 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Time

"Traveling Light"

Luke 10:1-11

As airlines add charges for every ounce of luggage and gas costs keep rising, these days it pays to travel light. When Jesus sent an advance team out to the towns of Judea, he gave instructions for what they should take with them, and it wasn't much. This Sunday we'll explore what we as Jesus' current "advance team" need to take with us, and what we don't.

Drama: *Security Check* — Dan Evans, Sally Heathcoat, Bob Ryan

Music: *"Blessed Assurance," "Blessing"* — Women's Ensemble
"Celebration of Praise Medley" — Mark Grizzard, violin

Greeters: Gordon & Jean Brown, Jackie Krag, Betty Frank,
Donna Sutherland, Jim & Mary Lou Russell

Welcome Center:
Sharon Rees, Gordon Brown

CALENDAR

Sunday, August 22

10:00 a.m. Worship Service
11:00 a.m. Fellowship Time
11:20 a.m. Bible in 90 Days (Chapel)

Monday, August 23

7:30 a.m. Fun & Fit

Tuesday, August 24

10:00 a.m. M.U.G.S. (Paneras)

Wednesday, August 25

7:30 a.m. Fun & Fit
6:00 p.m. Wednesday Dinner
6:30 p.m. Bible in 90 Days (Chapel)

Friday, August 27

7:30 a.m. Fun & Fit

Saturday, August 28

6:00 p.m. Picnic
7:00 p.m. Chapter 6 Concert

ON VACATION

Pastor Bayes will be away on vacation August 1 through August 24.

Pastor Cheri Grizzard will be on vacation August 12 through August 21.

Pastor Criswell will be available to provide pastoral care. He can be reached at (309) 688-5496.

SAVE THE DATE

Common Place
Walk for Reading

Saturday, September 11, 2010, 8:00 a.m.

514 S. Shelley St., Peoria

Give the Gift of Literacy

PRAYER CONCERNS

Please remember in your prayers:

Rose Kelly	Katherine Paradise
Karen Dainty	Ruben Redard
Gail Sexton	Mike Mason
Don Stoner	Sieg Polakow
Jan Swanson	Madelynn Claire Ryan

HEALTH TIPS

Could it be skin cancer? Monitoring moles is an important defense against skin cancer. To detect melanoma (the most dangerous form of skin cancer) or other skin cancers, use the A-B-C-D-E skin self-examination guide:

A is for asymmetrical shape. Look for moles with irregular shapes.

B is for irregular border. Look for moles with notched or scalloped borders.

C is for changes color.

D is for diameter. Look for growths that are larger than about 1/4 inch.

E is for evolution. Evolution means watching for changes in size, shape, color or texture, as well as itching, tenderness, bleeding, scaliness and pain.

Debbie McGlothlen, 635-3666
Lurene Ladd, 691-2054



TAME YOUR COMPUTER

with SeniorNet Computer Classes

Registration for Fall Classes

Saturday, August 21, 2010, 10:00 AM to Noon

First Baptist Church Media Center

411 W. Lake Ave, Peoria

Classes Start the Week of September 13

Bring a Friend and Join Us

Classes will include: Beginning Computer Fundamentals, Email for the Novice User, Introduction to Scanners, File Management, How to Use the Internet, Intermediate E-mail, eBay-Buying and Selling, Digital Camera Tutorial, Digital Photo Editing, Print Artist, Microsoft Word 2007, Microsoft Excel 2007, Personal Computer Maintenance, Creative Slide Shows, and Cyber Security.

For more information call 1-800-872-4651, ext. 1510 and leave a message. A SeniorNet volunteer will return your call and answer any questions you may have.

THANK YOU

Thanks to all who supported the summer Wednesday night dinners: especially those folks who set up and clean up each week. We offer a very special thank you to our Youth Group, Pete Nicol and Culvers for providing some of the delicious meals. We are grateful to all who helped in any way. Chef Paul and his wonderful crew will be back in the kitchen starting August 18, following a much deserved break.

— The Social Events Team

Sincerest thanks for your prayers, calls, cards and concern during my recent illness.

— Louise Heimann

Dear Friends at First Baptist,

Thank you so much for sharing the furniture from the parlor with us. The 2 couches, 5 lamps, 2 end-tables and pictures will all be put to good use. Here at Youth for Christ, we are enjoying part of the L-shaped couch in our meeting room, and the other couch along with the tables will serve another local church in their youth room.

Dan put pictures of all the pieces into an e-mail that went to the Peoria Area Youth Network to help us find a home for everything.

We are so grateful for your generosity.

Sincerely,
Dan and Carol Learned

First Baptist Church welcomes Chapter 6



Saturday, August 28, 2010
7:00 p.m.

ADMISSION IS FREE

Freewill donation to benefit Hines School

Picnic at 6:00 p.m.

Located on the west lawn of the church.

Plan now to be part of a festive end-of-summer event on August 28th on the church's west lawn (formerly "the orchard.") A picnic supper of hot dogs and fixin's will be provided at 6:00, with a concert at 7:00 by award-winning a cappella group Chapter 6. While the concert is free, donations are requested, with the proceeds going to Hines School. Bring a friend with you for a great way to kick off the fall!

Everyone invited!



Look Who's Coming To Dinner

The Small Group Ministry Team is hoping it will be you, the families and friends of First Baptist.

The Team is, once again, planning mixer dinners for Saturday, September 18 and Sunday, September 19.

Beginning August 22, you will have the opportunity to sign up to host or attend one of these special dinners. Look for bulletin inserts and your friendly Team members to help with the sign-up process on that date.

First Baptist Church of Peoria
411 W Lake Avenue
Peoria IL 61614

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THE MISSION OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IS TO MINISTER TO OUR CONGREGATION, THE COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD, SO THAT ALL MAY EXPERIENCE THE LOVE AND GRACE OF GOD.

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NEWSLETTER CHANGE

Starting in September, The First Baptist News will be mailed on Mondays. This change is made to allow an extra day for the newsletter to be delivered by US Mail.

Articles/notices you wish to appear in the newsletter should be submitted by 12:00 p.m. Thursday, the week before the article will appear. Articles/notices can be submitted by e-mail to fbcpeo@mtco.com or placed in the tray in the church office marked "Newsletter Articles" (on the back counter next to the small printer.)

If you can help prepare the newsletter on any Monday morning or if you have questions about the newsletter, please call the church office at (309) 682-5491.

—Sandy Johansen, Church Secretary

PLEASE SERVE YOUR CHURCH

Your nominating committee is putting together a slate of candidates to serve on the church's Diaconate, Missions Board, Christian Education Board and Board of Trustees next year. There will also be vacancies on the Music and Pastoral Relations committees. If you would like to volunteer, please call or e-mail Barb Drake (692-1201, bdrake@mtco.com). And if you are approached, please consider making this commitment to your church. Strong leadership is necessary to keep First Baptist strong.

—Barb Drake, Nominating Committee Chair