Time Marches On: Another Atheist Bites the Dust

By John A. Lynn

Renowned atheist Christopher Hitchens, author of the book, God Is Not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything, died this past December 15. A local rabbi’s editorial about it in our Indianapolis newspaper was curiously titled, “Atheist’s Questions of Faith Live On After His Death.” His piece contains too many biblically antithetical statements to deal with here, but we can examine a few of them.

When he penned the title of his book, Hitchens failed to realize that the first half of it is entirely false and the second half entirely true. Sorry, Christopher, but God most certainly is great (see Bible: e.g., Red Sea extravaganza, Resurrection of Jesus, talking donkey, etc.). Yes, Christopher, religion does poison everything.

How so? Because “religion” is the antithesis of Christianity. Religion is man-made, while Christianity is God-made. Religion is man trying to earn God’s favor by his own works. Christianity is God trying to give man the gift of righteousness by simple trust in the work of Jesus Christ. Finally, in religion, man is the subject and God is the object of his overtures—man goes first. In Christianity, GOD is THE SUBJECT and man is the object of His love—God goes first by giving His Son. After all, God was here first.

In direct contrast to that indispensable truth, our local rabbi quotes another rabbi who suggests that the problem with much of theology is that, “we tend to speak of God as the ‘subject’ of the sentence: ‘God is just;’ ‘God is kind;’ ‘God is love.’” Rabbi #2 suggests that we understand God as the “predicate”: ‘Justice is godly;’ ‘kindness is godly;’ ‘love is godly.’” He says we should “imitate those qualities we identify as godly in our own existence and our interaction with others.” WHOA, NELLIE!

I trust you see the problem: WHO SAYS what justice is, what kindness is, what love is? It is not we who define those verities; it is God, their Author.

Rabbi #1 muddies the waters even more when he states: “There are ways of being religious even more when he states: “There are ways of being religious where doubt is celebrated…” Huh? Later he laments the fact that “the language of faith” (by which he means what people say about God, etc. rather than what God says about Himself, Jesus, etc.) has been “co-opted by those who believe that faith is in ‘the answer’ rather than in ‘the question.’”

Oops! That would put Jesus in that category. Sure, remember the record in Matthew 16 when, at a critical juncture of his ministry, Jesus asked Peter and the boys: “Who do men say that I am?”
Then, before they could give him the latest poll numbers, he went on to say: “Of course, that’s merely a rhetorical question, and it’s one that I want you to ponder for the rest of your lives. No one knows the answer, so just have faith in the question.” At this point, I must borrow a line from a VeggieTales® episode: “What are you, NUTS?!”

That would be like when the last NASA space shuttle was about to take off, and one of the strapped-in astronauts casually asked, “You do know how to get us back to earth, don’t you?” And as the technician closes him in, he taps the window and says, “Just have faith in that excellent question. See ya.” The last thing we see through the window is the astronaut gesticulating wildly as the rocket blasts off. Please.

Trusting in a question is insane. The question of the ages is the one Jesus then posited to Peter: “Who do you say that I am?” That question still echoes through the vaults of time, but what good is a question without an answer, and Jesus Christ is THE ANSWER. How do we know? Acts 17:31 (and Rom. 1:4) plainly proclaim that God’s raising Jesus from the dead is the proof that he is the Son of God, and the only Savior of mankind. Cha-ching!

Rabbi #1 quotes a New York Times piece stating that 93% of Americans profess belief in a higher power, as they dabble in everything from Catholicism to Kabbalah. The author says that these seekers are “not looking for the ‘true faith’ but for a ‘functional’ (reasonable, helpful, sensible) religiosity.” Can you say “raging oxymoron”? Sure you can. The true faith is functional, reasonable, helpful, sensible—and life-giving.

As the bumper sticker on my car says (you can purchase one for yourself in our online store): DEATH SUCKS. Scripture makes it clear that death was never part of God’s plan for mankind, and He hates it with a passion. God’s heart of love is pricked at anyone’s death, but He must feel extreme sorrow when someone who has hardened his heart toward Him has run out of opportunities to turn to Him and be saved from everlasting death.

The next thing Christopher Hitchens will see is Jesus Christ, when the Lord raises him from the dead. If somehow Hitchens did get born again in one moment of his life, perhaps as a child, he will meet Jesus “in the air” *(“Group 1”), but if, as it appears, he did not, he will meet him on earth at the Resurrection of the Unjust *(“Group 3”). In either case, the Lord will judge him with pure justice, and Hitchens will either live or die forever.

*For a complete explanation of the chronology of Jesus Christ raising from the dead Groups 1, 2, and 3 (that is, all humans who have ever lived), see our dynamic 6-hour video titled The End Times, subtitled, “Good News! We Win!”