

Readers debate the existence of a God

December 13, 2010

Faith and belief systems are an integral part of human life.

As such, they are worthy topics for the Opinion page. With that in mind, we invited readers on StatesmanJournal.com to discuss this question, "Do you believe in God?"

A provocative discussion ensued, with more than 250 responses. Some were simply "yes" or "no." Others contained lengthy explanations or sparked back-and-forth debates.

By publishing readers' responses, we are not trying to support one belief system over another, to imply that any particular viewpoint is right or wrong, or to proselytize in any way. Rather, we seek to encourage a relevant, civil community discussion.

Here is a sampling of those responses, which are edited for length:

"Simple question that deserves a simple answer: nope."

— StatesmanJournal.com user jordan314

"Of course. Look at the regularity of the seasons. The temperature ranges. Food and water are here, and we need what for life? Food and water. The air is just right for breathing. One has only to look around to see signs of God all around us."

— StatesmanJournal.com user mahzeltoffee

"If by god you mean an invisible, supernatural being with magic powers capable of suspending the physical laws of the universe, the answer is no."

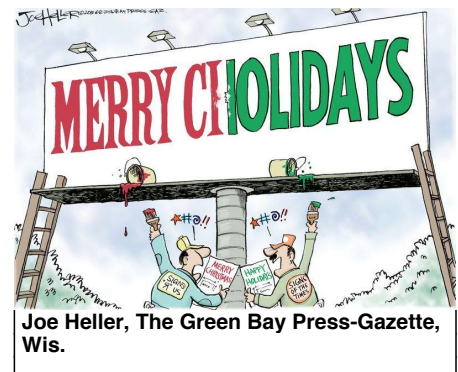
— StatesmanJournal.com user TravisRedfish

"There are only two choices. You believe in God or you believe in the 'incredible dot,' i.e., the tiny singularity that somehow banged and made the universe and everything in it.

"I've never seen a dot of anything that powerful, that not only exploded, but contained all the energy, power, material, intelligence and capability to evolve into the known universe.

"I can't explain God either, but He is a far more logical proposition than the 'dot.' I know God exists. ...

"... Yes, as an amateur astronomer I believe in the Big Bang and all that stuff. However, you've got to figure out who made the Big Bang. Ditto for ... any other system of creation you come up with: who made it, where did it come from? ..."



Joe Heller, The Green Bay Press-Gazette, Wis.

Read more

To read more comments about the existence of God, or to comment on this or other topics, click on the Forum link at StatesmanJournal.com/Opinion or go to StatesmanJournal.com/LocalStand.

"Science can never answer the question of creation."

— StatesmanJournal.com user courtndd

"I believe in faith but not the religious fanatics that claim to be the conduit of their god. Faith is good; it's religion that is not so good."

— StatesmanJournal.com user coliwabl

"I do not believe in God as a man that created Earth. I believe in God as a philosophy — as an idea that we are flawed human beings that make mistakes. I believe that we should treat each other with respect, help our neighbors.

"I believe it takes a village to raise a child and that a church can be that village — especially if you are missing a family. Not all of us have family. I believe that because so many people try so hard to NOT believe, that it helps feed this society of anger, greed and selfishness.

"That is not to say that people who claim they are believers are not without fault. All I know is that most of the 'good ways' to live come from the Bible — as well as the 'bad' — and I choose the good ways. ...

"I think we should just accept people as they are, regardless of religion. If you just sit and talk to one person who is 'different' from you, you will see how much alike we all really are."

— StatesmanJournal.com user lasermarker

"... It may seem unlikely that the conditions for life came together here on Earth without some intelligent guidance until you factor in the billions of galaxies and the billions upon billions of planets, and the billions of years this universe has been here.

"Given the science we have now, the existence of many planets similar to Earth is all but a mathematical certainty, not to mention all of the possibilities for other types of life, with no need for supernatural intervention.

"Recent work in physics has offered an explanation for what came before the Big Bang, the possibility that there are an infinite number of universes, spawned by an infinite number of Big Bangs, and that time itself may be infinite.

"So, the existence of the Earth, and the universe, is not evidence for God. God is simply one possible explanation, for which there is no empirical evidence.

"The simple, direct answer to the question is 'Yes,' 'No', or 'I don't know.' Belief, or lack of it, demands no evidence. For me, science is so much more compelling than the supernatural explanation.

"If God is responsible, where has she been for the last few billion years? I have some questions and complaints."

— StatesmanJournal.com user Android

"I'd have to qualify myself as an agnostic. ... After many years of unanswered prayers, I began to question. At first, the question was not, 'Do I believe in God?' Rather it was, 'Does God believe in me?'"

— StatesmanJournal.com user keyjo

"I believe that there is a God. Even if he is a creation of Man, he nevertheless is more powerful than any of us. He has created our universe ... and has set forth to guide us.

"I don't believe that he is so strict and so limited in power and worth that only one religion is right. I believe that we all know a little piece of him and that piece of info is not always shared among us, just like ourselves as we are not the same to everyone. That he is here to guide us along our individual path and chooses different methods for each of us."

— StatesmanJournal.com user Digasi

"Yes. But not anything we small-minded apes can understand.

"I certainly do not think 'god' cares one bit, seeing the immense chaos, destruction and rebirth witnessed in the universe we can see with our instruments. ..."

— StatesmanJournal.com user DarwinsBulldog

"Yes, because at times, he is the only one that believed in me."

— StatesmanJournal.com user madderg

"... we can't even begin to know how or why the universe — or dirt — exists. To pretend to know is arrogance of the highest order and is the root cause of war and hatred in this world. There is nothing wrong with 'I don't know' as an answer to the question.

"After all, the mysterious is beautiful and wondrous, and needs no 'God' to make it so."

— StatesmanJournal.com user rockn1

"I certainly believe in a super intelligence of some description or the fact that this planet stays in an orbit would make no sense. I believe 'God' is a super intelligence energy of which we have much to learn.

"I also believe that the 'God' many people are taught to revere is largely man's creation to try to maintain control of a great many things, and that many of those teachings have little to do with the super intelligence of which I speak."

— StatesmanJournal.com user Satindoll444

"Given the option, why would anyone choose not to believe in God?"

— StatesmanJournal.com user zeero

"If you mean a god like the Christians have painted him/her? No.

"If you mean a god like the Muslims have painted him/her? No.

If you mean a god like the Jews have painted him/her? No.

"If you mean deity that have many faces depending on how you interact with it? Yes."

— StatesmanJournal.com user torvan

"Sure. I believe in God. My belief gives me moral guidance and keeps me moving through life in the directions that I prefer to go. It gives me strength in hard times. It would be very hard for me to believe that all life and all things were just an accident of nature.

"It may be, for you non-believers, that my faith is misguided. If I am wrong, I lose nothing. If you are wrong, you lose everything."

— StatesmanJournal.com user Freedom63