FOOLS AND FOOLISHNESS

Worshippers of the Bible can be depended upon to advise unbelievers that their "holy" book says:

"The fool hath said in his heart, ['There is] no God.'" [Psalms 14:1, and again in Psalms 53:1]

But note the error in logic even on their own terms: even if "the fool" happens to be an atheist it doesn't mean that all atheists are fools, anymore than if a bird flies it means that everything that flies is a bird. Well, the Bible makes that error too, as God himself asserts that bats are "among the fowls" at Leviticus 11:13-19. No mention of penguins, of course, or their Northern Hemisphere cousins that then existed, the auks. But, then, unsurprisingly, the Bible never mentions anything that wasn't known to the Bronze Age sheepherders who wrote it.

Does God believe in a higher power above himself? Does God wonder "where he came from" and "what the meaning is" of his divine life? If not, then God is himself an atheist and, on these accusing believers' logic, a divine fool.

Meanwhile, God himself – as his son, Jesus, according to the Bible – says that:

"but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." [Matthew 5:22]

Now maybe the accusing believers don't worry about this because they feel that they are already "forgiven." But why don't they just forgive atheists who may not "hath ears to hear?" Would a "Heavenly Father" find fault with a son or daughter born deaf, especially when the "Heavenly Father" made them deaf in the first place? Belief is just not something that a normal person can choose or reject.

But now Paul, who arguably was the real inventor of Christianity, and apparently after meeting some resistance to his implausible teachings, seems to have developed a different take on fools and foolishness, to the point of making foolishness into a special kind of wisdom and wisdom into foolishness:

"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." [I Corinthians 1:21]

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." [I Corinthians 1:27]

"If any man among you seems wise ... let him become a fool, that he may be wise." [I Corinthians 3:18]
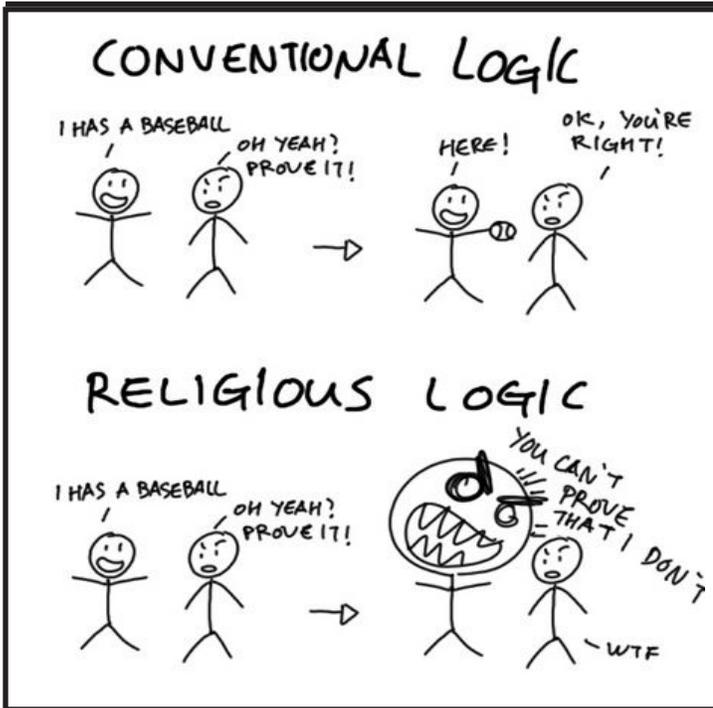
"We [are] fools for Christ's sake." .[I Corinthians 4:10]

What kind of sense can be made of all this? Not much, really.

It brings to mind the famous story Abraham Lincoln (the best evidence concerning whom is that he was an unbeliever) told in which a boy is asked how many legs his calf would have if the calf's tail were called a leg. The boy proudly said: "Five!" Whereupon the young man was reminded that calling the tail a leg did not make it a leg.

Calling the wise foolish and the foolish wise does not make it so, though someone who is generally wise can certainly be foolish at times and someone who is generally foolish can sometimes be wise. The standard in all cases is simply the rule of reason, a set of principles that the ancient Greeks first began to explore (and for which Paul denigrates them, comparing them to his fellow Jews who "require a sign" to be converted) and which eventually led to the scientific understanding and technological progress that we enjoy today.

The most profound foolishness we could possibly commit would be to ignore the rule of reason and the facts of objective reality to which it can be applied.

**YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS
TO THE NTCOF ARE NEEDED,
APPRECIATED,
AND TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!!**

**COMING NEXT MONTH:
"WHAT IS RELIGION, REALLY?"**

>>> Sunday, May 6th, 2012 <<<
SHERATON GRAND DFW AIRPORT
SE CORNER OF 114 AND ESTERS

All NTCOF events can be found through our website calendar (yes, website has now been updated thanks to Sarah and Rusty Nejdl!) , or through our meetup page, from which you can RSVP, at: - www.meetup.com/church-of-freethought - JOIN THE NTCOF MEETUP GROUP !!!

Social Luncheon: Today, immediately after our Service, join us for lunch and discussion at the Golden Corral Buffet and Grill in Grapevine, located just across from the Grapevine Mills Mall, at 2605 E. Grapevine Mills Circle, phone (972) 874-7900. To reach Golden Corral from the Sheraton, cross over the freeway and make a left onto John W. Carpenter Freeway (114) going west. Then take the first exit RIGHT onto International Parkway (121), then Grapevine Mills Parkway exit. Turn LEFT on Stars and Stripes Way, continuing on to E. Grapevine Mills Circle.

Freethought Salon: Get together to discuss today's service topic or other conundrums of interest to Freethinkers. Most Sundays, over breakfast, at the Hilton Vineyard in Grapevine; see the meetup site!

Game Night: The regular game night crew meets nearly every Friday night at the IHOP on 2310 Stemmons Trail (I-35), near Northwest Highway (Loop 12). Plan to arrive at about 7:30 PM, and stay late playing Risk, Rummikub, and other fun games!

Secular Singles: Freethinkers have met their life-partners with whom they have begun families through the Secular Singles group.   Check the meetup site for the next date, time and location!

Catholics don't recognize using birth control, Jews don't recognize the eating of pork, Muslims don't recognize drawing pictures of Mohammed, and Baptists don't recognize each other in a liquor store.

Dallas-Fort Worth Coalition of Reason

The North Texas Church of Freethought
The Fellowship of Unbelievers

Presenters: David Burgess, Sarah Nejdl & Tim Gorski
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Videographer: John Gauthier
Web Redesigners   Rusty and Sarah Nejdl

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