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Elves, unicorns, gods, leprechauns, angels, fairies, ghosts, Santa Claus, zombies, the Tooth Fairy...

All of these mythological creatures have served a function in the human mind. Gods were invented to explain natural phenomena, like thunder and lightning. The Tooth Fairy was invented to make children less afraid of their baby teeth falling out, which is a normal part of growing up. Zombies were invented just to be scary, and Angels were said to be guardian spirits, sort of little agents of God, who help protect people from harm. Santa Claus was invented to regulate children's behavior, since he divides all children into one of two groups, either "Naughty" or "Nice," and showers Christmas gifts only upon the "Nice" children. You can choose to believe in any or none of these mythical beings, just as you can choose to believe in a God or not. They are all creations of the human mind, and none of them are real.

**Good News Clubs:** You may have heard of elementary school Bible groups called "Good News Clubs," that teach children they are "born sinners," have a "natural want to disobey, lie and be unkind to others" and deserve to be punished by going to Hell. They teach children that Jesus Christ was killed because of "your sin and your deceitful heart." These programs are likewise based on mythology and are designed to frighten, shame and terrify children into submission and silence, and teach them not to ask questions and believe whatever they are told. Many people consider these types of programs psychologically abusive to kids, so beware of them.

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Have more questions about atheism and not believing in God? Contact us! We'd love to hear from you.



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## It's Okay to Not Believe in God!

It's smart to ask questions and demand proof before you believe things people tell you, no matter what those things are, and no matter who is saying it.



If I told you I had a purple elephant living in my back yard, would you believe it?

You'd probably want to come and see it for yourself before you would believe such an incredible claim. People make many similar claims about God's existence.

It's okay to demand the same level of proof before believing in God. If you don't believe God really exists, you are an atheist, which is defined as "someone who lacks belief in the existence of God or gods." Just because lots of people say God exists doesn't make it true. Demand to be convinced to your own level of satisfaction of any claim that something is true.

Remember, if something sounds too incredible to be true, it probably isn't true.



People who are easily convinced to believe **wild claims** are called over-trusting or "gullible." Gullible people make good targets for criminals and may lose money or valuables to schemers and fraudsters. Never be afraid to ask questions, and don't believe anything without a credible explanation.

**"If I say I don't believe in God, people will bully me."** You don't have to tell anyone you don't believe in God, but there lots of people just like you, who don't believe in God and are afraid to say so. A 2015 study by the *Christian Post* found around 1 in 4 people don't believe in God, so chances are good that if you do say you don't believe, someone else will agree with you.



**"But without God, how will I know right from wrong?"**

Belief in God has nothing to do with knowing right from wrong. To figure out if something is right or wrong, just try it out on yourself first: Before you lie to someone, ask yourself if you would like others to lie to you. If you're thinking about stealing from someone or teasing a friend, ask yourself if you would like to be teased that way, or stolen from. All you really need to do to figure out right from wrong is use the "Golden Rule," which is: **Treat others the**

Why do so many people believe in God, anyway?



Belief in God dates back when cave people walked the Earth. Pre-historic people had no idea how the world worked. They couldn't figure out why some people suddenly got sick and died, or why the sun rose and set, or why lightning, thunder or avalanches happened. The only explanation they could think of was that someone invisible and more powerful than them was manipulating everything and they were helpless to control any of that stuff. So they started trying to appease this invisible, powerful entity, whom they called "God," to keep bad things from happening to them and their families. Today many people still believe in a God, even though now, thanks to hundreds of years of scientific inquiry into fields like microbiology, meteorology, geology, biology and astronomy, we now know far more about how the world works, and why many natural processes occur. As science has provided logical explanations for previously mysterious natural phenomena, it has greatly reduced people's need rely on God for an explanation.