

"I wish I had had this book to read when I was going through my struggles with faith."

—Julia Sweeney

## The Purpose-Driven Atheist

### A Freethinker's Guide to Finding Meaning in Life

A 2009 survey showed 15 percent of Americans say they have "no religion," a figure that has doubled since 1990. Do these people find purpose in their lives without a formal religious creed to guide them? Dan Barker thinks so.

Barker is co-director of the nation's leading freethinker advocacy group, the Freedom From Religion Foundation. Barker's new book, *The Good Atheist*, is all about leading a purpose-driven life—without God. In the controversial book, Barker argues that if your purpose must come from outside yourself, you are a slave to another mind.

He says, "Asking, 'If there is no God, what is the purpose of life?' is like asking, 'If there is no master, whose slave will I be?' If your purpose of life is to submit as a slave, then your meaning comes from flattering the ego of a person whom you should detest."

Christianity, he argues, cheats its followers with a sleight-of-hand trick—trading purpose for purpose, euthanizing the individual by giving their life choices to something outside themselves.

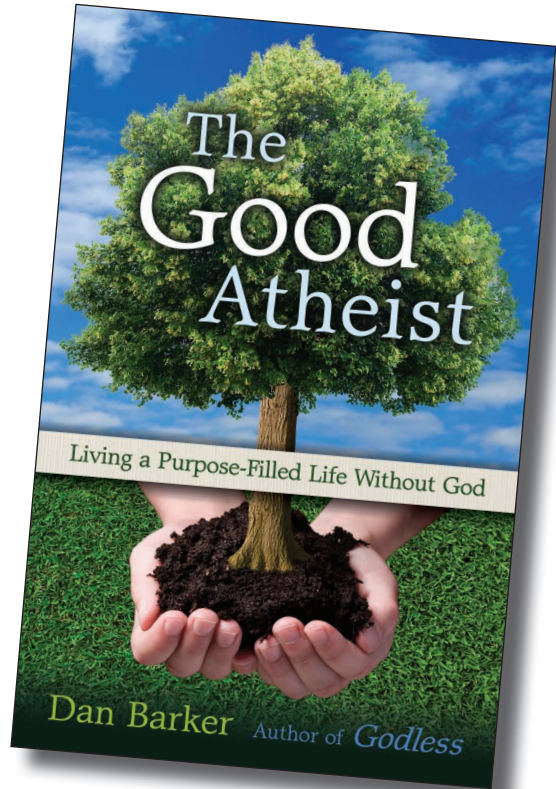
He adds, "When a new baby comes into the world, we don't say, 'How sweet! Another worker for the cause. Another laborer for the plantation. Another cog in the machine. Another soldier marching off to war. Another voice to sing praises to our Master!' What an insult to a new life! If a baby is born with preordained orders, then its life is cheapened."

One might think that comparing Christians to slaves is the rationale of a lifelong atheist, but Barker is no stranger to scripture. In *The Good Atheist*, he points to passages in the Bible that back up this argument. His first book, *Godless*, was a memoir of his deconversion from fundamentalist preacher to devout freethinker.

The second part of *The Good Atheist* profiles respectable public figures who accomplished great things without the guidance of religious convictions, such as Mark Twain, Kurt Vonnegut, Thomas Paine, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Susan B. Anthony.

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*The Good Atheist* is available for giveaways, excerpts, or reviews. For these or to interview preacher-turned-atheist Dan Barker, please contact Karma Bennett at 510-601-8301 x108 or [karmabennett@ulyssespress.com](mailto:karmabennett@ulyssespress.com)



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#### About the Author

**Dan Barker** is co-president of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, which publishes freethought books and pamphlets, produces films and music, awards scholarships, and has brought more than forty First Amendment lawsuits since 1977. Some of their legal challenges include prayers in public schools, payment of public funds for religious purposes, government funding of pervasively sectarian institutions, and the ongoing campaign led by churches against civil rights for women, gays, and lesbians. The Foundation has taken and won more challenges of the "faith-based initiative" than any other national group to date.

*The Daily Show*, *Phil Donahue*, *Oprah*, *Good Morning America*, and *Hannity & Colmes* are just a few of the nationwide shows Barker has appeared on. He is also co-host of Freethought Radio, the nation's only atheist radio show.

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