

# SUNBEAMS

Say what you will about the Ten Commandments, you will always come back to the pleasant fact that there are only ten of them.

H.L. Mencken

I was raised an atheist. Every Sunday, we went nowhere. We prayed for nothing. And all our prayers were answered.

Heidi Joyce

When I told the people of Northern Ireland that I was an atheist, a woman in the audience stood up and said, "Yes, but is it the God of the Catholics or the God of the Protestants in whom you don't believe?"

Quentin Crisp

What do atheists scream when they come?

Bill Hicks

Sex and religion are bordering states. They use the same vocabulary, share like ecstasies, and often serve as a substitute for one another.

Jessamyn West

What are the seven deadly sins of Christianity? Gluttony, avarice, sloth, lust . . . They are urges every man feels at least once a day. How could you set yourself up as the most powerful institution on earth? You first find out what every man feels at least once a day, establish that as a sin, and set yourself up as the only institution capable of pardoning that sin.

Anton LaVey

It would be easier to peel off a three-day-old Band-Aid from a hairy kneecap than to remove the patina of Baptist upbringing that coats my psyche.

Mary Ellen Snodgrass

[The Bible is] an oral history. It was passed down, word of mouth, father to son, from Adam to Seth, from Seth to Enos, from Enos to Cainan, for forty generations, a growing, changing story . . . until Moses finally gets it down on lambskin. But lambskins wear out, and need to be recopied. Copies of copies of copies of copies of copies of an oral history passed down through forty generations. From Hebrew it's translated into Arabic, from Arabic to Latin, from Latin to Greek, from Greek to Russian, from Russian to German, from German to an old form of English that you could not read. . . . You can't put a grocery list through that many translations, copies, and retellings, and not expect to have some big changes in the dinner menu when the kids make it back from Kroger. And yet

people are killing each other over this written word. Here's a tip: if you're killing someone in the name of God, you're missing the message.

Nick Annis

One of the things Jesus did was to step aside from the organized religion of his time because it had become corrupt and bogged down with rules. Rules became more important than feeding the hungry.

Corita Kent

I tried to find Him on the Christian cross, but He was not there; I went to the temple of the Hindus and to the old pagodas, but I could not find a trace of Him anywhere. I searched on the mountains and in the valleys, but neither in the heights nor in the depths was I able to find Him. I went to the Kaaba in Mecca, but He was not there either. I questioned the scholars and philosophers, but He was beyond their understanding. I then looked into my heart, and it was there where He dwelled that I saw Him; He was nowhere else to be found.

Jelaluddin Rumi

How important the concept of God is, and how instead of valuing what has been given us, we with light hearts spurn it because of absurdities that have been attached to it.

Leo Tolstoy

People see God every day; they just don't recognize him.

Pearl Bailey

This is my simple religion. There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness.

The Dalai Lama

"I was six when I saw that everything was God, and my hair stood up, and all," Teddy said. "It was on a Sunday, I remember. My sister was a tiny child then, and she was drinking her milk, and all of a sudden I saw that she was God and the milk was God. I mean, all she was doing was pouring God into God, if you know what I mean."

J.D. Salinger

Small amounts of philosophy lead to atheism, but larger amounts lead us back to God.

Francis Bacon

Let your religion be less of a theory and more of a love affair.

G.K. Chesterton

*Sunbeams are welcome and may be sent to The Sun, 107 North Roberson Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27516. We're sorry, but we're unable to respond personally to your suggestions.*