

GOD 6. There is no God; if there was a God, we would know about it.
There is, of course, the belief in God (though that doesn't prove anything).

... and all beliefs in God are OK, as long as believers don't coerce others to believe in their God. So these are the two believe-in-God rules: 1) Everybody is entitled to their own belief, 2) but their belief must be tolerant. Thus proselytising or murdering 'infidels' in the name of God is not allowed. In fact, imposing one's beliefs on others or to force rules on the wider population that are derived from some religious beliefs, their dogmas and restrictions, is one of the world's greatest evils. This is perhaps the strongest argument against religion.

'There is no God, but there is the belief in God.' This statement may seem like wicked wordplay, but its implications are profound. Most likely there is no factual God; for God's existence to be deemed fact, there must be proof - the definition for 'fact' is that there is proof - but since there is no proof God exists, it is clear there is no God. But this does not diminish people's right to the belief in their own concept of God - these beliefs often are the cornerstones of caring communities.

*However, in public life the fact that there is no God is significant. One may say, my religious beliefs - derived from God's will - lead me to reject abortion; since this is a person's valid belief, one expects they won't choose abortion for themselves. But since there is no God as a factual entity, this rule cannot be elevated to a law equal to common law - it is a principle that does not apply to anyone who does not share that particular conviction, founded on that specific belief in God.**

The same applies to euthanasia and stem cell research. One's religious belief may prohibit one from accepting euthanasia or treatments derived from advances due to stem cell research - this can be every person's choice. But again, this rejection should apply only to those whose belief in God imposes that constraint on them. Consider the example of vegetarianism: I am a vegetarian - it is my belief animals should not be slaughtered. But I would be considered rather an eccentric should I try to impose this rule as law on the wider community.

There is no God up in heaven who hears our prayers. However, if we believe in an inner God, that belief - in the Kingdom of God within - will give us peace.

I stated in the last paragraph of the footnotes to God 2: The ontological argument for the existence of God asserts: If we can contemplate a concept of God, then that God exists. This argument allows for an inner God. Jiddu Krishnamurti is said to have written (in 1910, when he was fourteen years old) an essay At The Feet Of The Master, a corollary of the teachings he received from his guru, which constitutes an initiation into the Path of living a righteous life. In it he said: "You must dig deep down into yourself to find the God within."

*the full text of the essay is in the public domain
go to my blog 935 and the appendix
see also WISDOM*