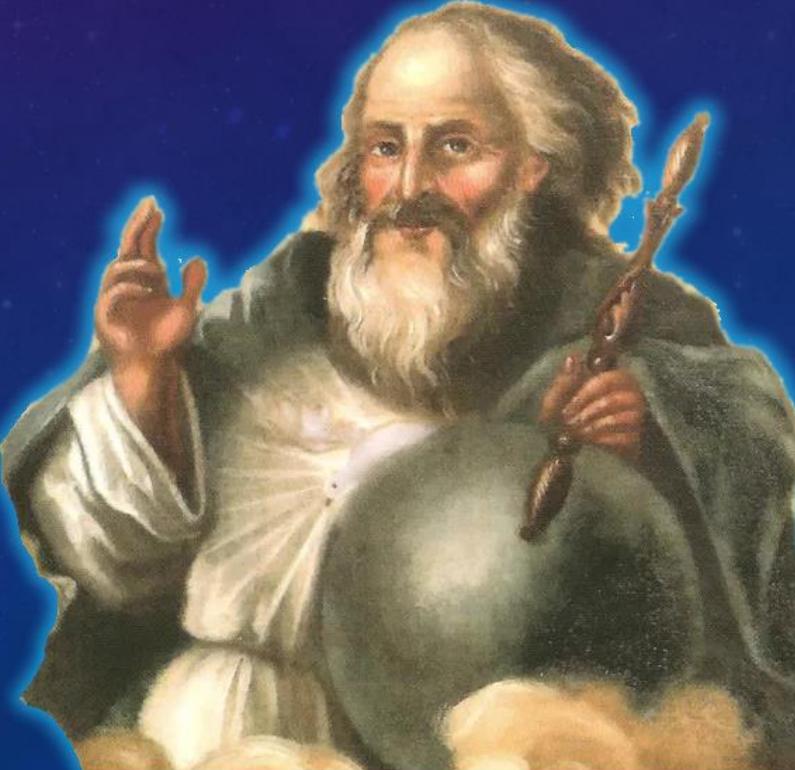


BAD ATHEIST MEMES

SANTA VS GOD



HELLO AND WELCOME

- We atheists have a number of things in our toolbelts, and one of those is memes.
- Many of these memes are oversimplifications or just flat out wrong, so I thought I would create a series to address some of our worst memes and explain why they are so bad.



SANTA VS GOD

- One of the worst comparisons I see us atheists make is comparing God to Santa (or any other mythological character).
- This is a terrible take.

SANTA vs **GOD**
by unreasonable faith.com



Keeps a list of who's naughty or nice	✓	✓
All-knowing and omnipresent	✓	✓
Long white beard	✓	✓
Taught to children by parents	✓	✓
Generally believed in by children	✓	✓
Not believed in by intelligent adults	✓	✓
Sing songs about	✓	✓
Demands sacrifices, tithes or cookies	✓	✓
Has servants or helpers	✓	✓
Never returns calls	✓	✓
Said to reward virtue and punish evil	✓	✓
Makes sense in any way	✗	✗
Has evidence for existence	✗	✗

Is there *really* any difference?

THE COMPARISONS

- I understand the reason comparisons like this start.
- Many of us atheists regard both Santa and god as myths, which is fine, but what is not fine is that is where the comparison ought to stop.
- Unfortunately, as you saw from the image, it isn't.
- The image, and most of the comparisons refer to the Abrahamic or Omni God, so that is what I will be using for this show too.

ONTOLOGY

All-knowing and omnipresent



- God is a metaphysical being said to be the all-powerful, all-knowing, loving, creator of the universe, humans, morality.
- Santa is a physical being, based on a human (St. Nicholas) and has been turned into a character that once a year travels the world on a sled giving out presents to good children

BELIEF

Taught to children by parents	✓	✓
Generally believed in by children	✓	✓
Not believed in by intelligent adults	✓	✓

- Children believe in Santa but as they grow up learn that he isn't real and is just a story based on St. Nicholas.
- Billions of people believe in various gods and the majority believe in some version of the Abrahamic deity.
- Intelligence should not come in to play with beliefs in a deity. There are a tonne of dumb atheists and bright theists.

RELIGION

- The God character forms the central part of religion, with a tonne of stories around the belief.
- There is no religion of Santa.
- Santa Claus is not a religious figure or symbol—
Santa is **an amalgam of a little bit of Christianity**, a little bit of pre-Christian paganism, and a whole lot of modern, secular myth-making.

MORALITY

Keeps a list of who's naughty or nice



- God is the arbiter of morality, and provides strict rules to follow
- Santa judges if you are naughty or nice without providing a standard
- God casts you to hell or heaven
- Santa gives you coal or a present
- God keeps no physical list, he knows everything
- Santa keeps a physical list

EVIDENCE

Has evidence for existence

X

X

- Regardless of if you agree with the evidence, or find it strong or convincing, there is evidence for both characters.
- For God there is the holy books, and various logical arguments.
- For Santa we have the presents that arrive, the stories, the fact the cookies and milk are gone etc. Yes, we learn this was all our parents but at the time we knew no better. These things raised the probability of Santa existing.
- For more info about evidence, check out SciPhi Short on the matter.

SACRIFICES

Demands sacrifices, tithes or cookies



- Where God did demand sacrifices in the bible, he doesn't ask anywhere near as much now. There are still certain things asked for by God. He does not demand cookies.
- Santa does not demand any sacrifice. The cookies are not a demand, they are to be nice. In fact, they were originally for the feast of jolly old St. Nick. On December 6th, children would leave food and drink for the saint and his attendants. These offerings would be exchanged for gifts overnight.

MAKES SENSE?

Makes sense in any way



- Actually, in a way, both make sense.
- I do not believe either of them, and think that, especially with the Abrahamic deity, there are a lot of logical inconsistencies, but that doesn't mean they have no explanatory power.
- For a child it very much makes sense that these presents have been delivered by Santa.
- I think it is silly to say they make no sense, even if we can point out some issues with both. They at least make SOME.

SUMMARY

- Whilst you might believe both Santa and God are myths or beings with magical powers, when you break it down, they are really different characters.
- If you're trying to convince someone they have an erroneous belief, condescending to them won't get you very far.
- If you're trying to convince a theist they are wrong, then treating their belief as nothing more than a young child's fantasy will not gain you any favour.
- Question why you're having these conversations, and if you're just making fun of theists, consider you're essentially bullying, and it isn't a good look for us atheists.