

Sam Harris

Quotes

*Religious, Believe, Atheist, People, Thinking, Religion, Ignorance, Christian,
Book, Our World, Atheism, Men, World, War, Islam, Spiritual, Self, Lying,
Civilization, Way*

The problem with religion, because it's been sheltered from criticism, is that it allows people to believe en masse what only idiots or lunatics could believe in isolation.

~Sam Harris

Either God can do nothing to stop catastrophes like this, or he doesn't care to, or he doesn't exist. God is either impotent, evil, or imaginary. Take your pick, and choose wisely.

~Sam Harris

A puppet is free as long as he loves his strings.

~Sam Harris

We have a choice. We have two options as human beings. We have a choice between conversation and war. That's it. Conversation and violence. And faith is a conversation stopper.

~Sam Harris

How we pay attention to the present moment...determines the character of our experience and...the quality of our lives.

~Sam Harris

You can do what you decide to do " but you cannot decide what you will decide to do.

~Sam Harris

How can we be "free" as conscious agents if everything that we consciously intend is caused by events in our brain that we do not intend and of which we are entirely unaware? We can't.

~Sam Harris

You don't get anything worth getting, by pretending to know things you don't know.

~Sam Harris

Jesus Christâ€™”who, as it turns out, was born of a virgin, cheated death, and rose bodily into the heavensâ€™”can now be eaten in the form of a cracker

~Sam Harris

The position of the Muslim community in the face of all provocations seems to be: Islam is a religion of peace, and if you say that it isn't, we will kill you.

~Sam Harris

Religious moderation is the product of secular knowledge and scriptural ignorance.

~Sam Harris

It is time that we admitted that faith is nothing more than the license religious people give one another to keep believing when reasons fail.

~Sam Harris

As an atheist, I am angry that we live in a society in which the plain truth cannot be spoken without offending 90% of the population.

~Sam Harris

People who harbor strong convictions without evidence belong at the margins of our societies, not in our halls of power.

~Sam Harris

Faith does not offer a strong link between our beliefs and actual states of the world.

~Sam Harris

We will see that the greatest problem confronting civilization is not merely religious extremism: rather, it is the larger set of cultural and intellectual accommodations we have made to faith itself.

~Sam Harris

120 million of us place the big bang 2,500 years after the Babylonians and Sumerians learned to brew beer.

~Sam Harris

You almost never get the pleasure of seeing that you won the argument in real time. People just don't like to publicly change their minds. They change their minds in private.

~Sam Harris

What we do in every other area of our lives (other than religion), is, rather than respect somebody's beliefs, we evaluate their reasons.

~Sam Harris

Christians have abused, oppressed, enslaved, insulted, tormented, tortured, and killed people in the name of God for centuries, on the basis of a theologically defensible reading of the Bible.

~Sam Harris

Unlike statements of fact, which require no further work on our part, lies must be continually protected from collisions with reality.

~Sam Harris

Islam, at the moment, is the motherlode of bad ideas.

~Sam Harris

In the year 2006, a person can have sufficient intellectual and material resources to build a nuclear bomb and still believe that he will get seventy-two virgins in Paradise.

~Sam Harris

You are not controlling the storm, and you are not lost in it. You are the storm.

~Sam Harris

Human experience depends on everything that can influence states of the human brain, ranging from changes in our genome to changes in the global economy.

~Sam Harris

The habit of spending nearly every waking moment lost in thought leaves us at the mercy of whatever our thoughts happen to be. Meditation is a way of breaking this spell.

~Sam Harris

It's simply untrue that religion provides the only framework for a universal morality.

~Sam Harris

It is time that scientists and other public intellectuals observed that the contest between faith and reason is zero-sum.

~Sam Harris

Our world is fast succumbing to the activities of men and women who would stake the future of our species on beliefs that should not survive an elementary school education.

~Sam Harris

The core of science is not a mathematical modeling--it is intellectual honesty. It is a willingness to have our certainties about the world constrained by good evidence and good argument.

~Sam Harris

Science, in the broadest sense, includes all reasonable claims to knowledge about ourselves and the world.

~Sam Harris

Religious faith obscures uncertainty where uncertainty . . . exists, allowing the unknown, the implausible, and the . . . false to achieve

primacy over the facts.

~Sam Harris

This is the true horror of religion. It allows perfectly decent and sane people to believe by the billions, what only lunatics could believe on their own.

~Sam Harris

Most of us are wiser than we may appear to be. ... On one level, wisdom is nothing more profound than an ability to follow one's own advice.

~Sam Harris

Atheism is just a way of clearing the space for better conversations.

~Sam Harris

Unfortunately, failure enjoys a natural advantage. Wrong answers to any problem outnumber right ones by a wide margin, and it seems that it will always be easier to break things than to fix them.

~Sam Harris

Muslims must learn that if they make belligerent and fanatical claims upon the tolerance of free societies, they will meet the limits of that tolerance.

~Sam Harris

It is as though a portal in time has opened, and the Christians of the 14th century are pouring into our world.

~Sam Harris

The science of morality is about maximizing psychological and social health. It's really no more inflammatory than that.

~Sam Harris

Just as there is no such thing as Christian physics or Muslim Algebra, we will see tht there is no such thing as Christian or Muslim morality.

~Sam Harris

What I'm asking you to entertain is that there is nothing we need to believe on insufficient evidence in order to have deeply ethical and spiritual lives.

~Sam Harris

We are all prisoners of our thoughts.

~Sam Harris

Some propositions are so dangerous that it may even be ethical to kill people for believing them.

~Sam Harris

Theology is ignorance with wings.

~Sam Harris

You know, when you get to the New World and you develop your three branches of government and you have a civil society, you can just jettison all the barbarism I recommended in the first books.

~Sam Harris

We are now in the 21st century: all books, including the Koran, should be fair game for flushing down the toilet without fear of violent reprisal.

~Sam Harris

We are free to burn the Qur'an or any other book, and to criticize Muhammad or any other human being. Let no one forget it.

~Sam Harris

Religious faith is the one species of human ignorance that will not admit of even the possibility of correction.

~Sam Harris

Values reduce to facts about the well-being of conscious creatures.

~Sam Harris

I'm the Ted Bundy of string theory.

~Sam Harris

Faith enables many of us to endure life's difficulties with an equanimity that would be scarcely conceivable in a world lit only by reason.

~Sam Harris

False encouragement is a kind of theft: it steals time, energy, and motivation a person could put toward some other purpose.

~Sam Harris

The atheist, by merely being in touch with reality, appears shamefully out of touch with the fantasy life of his neighbors.

~Sam Harris

[I]t is difficult to imagine a set of beliefs more suggestive of mental illness than those that lie at the heart of many of our religious traditions.

~Sam Harris

Reason is nothing less than the guardian of love

~Sam Harris

There's no way to reconcile Islam with Christianity. This difference of opinion admits of compromise as much as a coin toss does.

~Sam Harris

What are the chances that we will one day discover that DNA has absolutely nothing to do with inheritance? They are effectively zero.

~Sam Harris

Atheism is nothing more than the noises reasonable people make when in the presence of religious dogma.

~Sam Harris

The freedom to think out loud on certain topics, without fear of being hounded into hiding or killed, has already been lost.

~Sam Harris

The power of psychedelics... is that they often reveal, in the span of a few hours, depths of awe and understanding that can otherwise elude us for a lifetime.

~Sam Harris

The truth that we must finally confront is that Islam contains specific notions of martyrdom and jihad that fully explain the character of Muslim violence.

~Sam Harris

Let me assure you that my intent is not to offend or merely be provocative. I'm simply worried.

~Sam Harris

The point is that most of what we currently hold sacred is not sacred for any reason other than that it was thought sacred yesterday.

~Sam Harris

We should profile Muslims, or anyone who looks like he or she could conceivably be Muslim, and we should be honest about it.

~Sam Harris

You can learn something about a person by the company she keeps.

~Sam Harris

The fact that my continuous and public rejection of Christianity does not worry me in the least should suggest to you just how inadequate I think your reasons for being a Christian are.

~Sam Harris

Man is manifestly not the measure of all things. This universe is shot through with mystery. The very fact of its being, and of our own, is a mystery absolute, and the only miracle worthy of the name.

~Sam Harris

We know enough at this moment to say that the God of Abraham is not only unworthy of the immensity of creation; he is unworthy even of man.

~Sam Harris

I know of no society in human history that ever suffered because its people became too desirous of evidence in support of their core beliefs.

~Sam Harris

The faith of religion is belief on insufficient evidence.

~Sam Harris

The wealthiest Americans often live as though they and their children had nothing to gain from investments in education, infrastructure, clean-energy, and scientific research.

~Sam Harris

Fundamentalism is only a problem if the fundamentals are a problem

~Sam Harris

One could surely argue that the Buddhist tradition, taken as a whole, represents the richest source of contemplative wisdom that any civilization has produced.

~Sam Harris

Either our wills are determined by prior causes and we are not responsible for them, or they are the product of chance and we are not responsible for them.

~Sam Harris

I am one of the few people I know of who has argued in print that torture may be an ethical necessity in our war on terror.

~Sam Harris

Of course, the liar often imagines that he does no harm as long as his lies go undetected.

~Sam Harris

Morality and values depend on the existence of conscious minds - and specifically on the fact that such minds can experience various forms of well-being and suffering in this universe.

~Sam Harris

The problem of human suffering is never too much rational thinking, or too high a demand for evidence. But the solutions are. ... Reason is nothing less than the guardian of love.

~Sam Harris

There is no reason whatsoever to think that Buddhism can compete successfully with the relentless evangelizing of Christianity and Islam. Nor should it try to.

~Sam Harris

It is time we admitted that we are not at war with "terrorism." We are at war with Islam.

~Sam Harris

The moral landscape is the framework I use for thinking about questions of morality and human values in universal terms.

~Sam Harris

It is utterly astonishing how ordinary a book can be and still be thought the product of omniscience.

~Sam Harris

That religion may have served some necessary function for us in the past does not preclude the possibility that it is now the greatest impediment to our building a global civilization.

~Sam Harris

The difference between science and religion is the difference between a willingness to dispassionately consider new evidence and new arguments , and a passionate unwillingness to do so.

~Sam Harris

If you are perpetually angry, depressed, confused, and unloving, or your attention is elsewhere, it won't matter how successful you become or who is in your life - you won't enjoy any of it.

~Sam Harris

Where we have reasons for what we believe, we have no need of faith; where we have no reasons, we have lost both our connection to the world and to one another.

~Sam Harris

If one doesn't value logic, what logical argument would you invoke to prove they should value logic?

~Sam Harris

You cannot take death for apostasy seriously and be working for peace.

~Sam Harris

From my point of view, compatibilism is a little like saying: a puppet is free so long as it loves its strings.

~Sam Harris

The deity who stalked the deserts of the Middle East millennia ago-and who seems to have abandoned them to bloodshed in his name ever since-is no one to consult on questions of ethics.

~Sam Harris

The truth is that we simply do not know what happens after death.

~Sam Harris

We will continue to spill blood in what is, at bottom, a war of ideas

~Sam Harris

Moderates want their faith respected. They don't want faith itself criticized, and yet faith itself is what is bringing us all this - this lunacy.

~Sam Harris

To not believe in God is to know that it falls to us to make the world a better place.

~Sam Harris

As a man believes, so he will act.

~Sam Harris

If premarital sex is a sin, who is the victim?

~Sam Harris

To say that I would have done otherwise had I wanted to is simply to say that I would have lived in a different universe had I been in a different universe.

~Sam Harris

We must continually remind ourselves that there is a difference between what is natural and what is actually good for us.

~Sam Harris

Unreason is now ascendant in the United Statesâ€”in our schools, in our courts, and in each branch of the federal government.

~Sam Harris

Any conception of human well-being you could plausibly have, the Taliban patently fails to maximize it.

~Sam Harris

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