

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:

Dr. Darrel Ray

Voice (913) 724-3600

FAX (913) 724-3463

darrelray@thegodvirus.net

<http://www.thegodvirus.net/>

USA, January 20, 2009 - Is religion a virus that infects otherwise healthy individuals? That is a question raised by a provocative new book entitled, *The God Virus*. It is by noted psychologist and student of religion, Dr. Darrel Ray.

In a cogent and highly readable analysis, Dr. Ray traces the contagion course of religion as it enters the lives of countless individuals, beginning in childhood and infecting their behavior, professions, sex lives, and virtually every aspect of living. And Dr. Ray knows whereof he speaks, for he is the child of fundamentalist, evangelical parents, who frequently took their young son to Bible thumping religious revival meetings.

“At the time that my parents began taking me to hear ministers, I was just old enough to understand the words that they preached at us,” said Dr. Ray. “From those experiences, I learned who was good and who was bad: people of other religions or of no religions were sinners who would wind up in Hell. Such teachings infected my young mind and had a profound effect on my life, at least until I outgrew my impressionable teenage years and was sufficiently determined to think for myself. The degrees that I earned in religion and psychology immeasurably helped me to see through prejudice, myth, and superstition. My situation is not uncommon, but my book is. And I believe that people who want to think intelligently and rationally about religion, whether they are believers or non-believers, will find my book a useful resource.”

The God Virus carefully details the practical consequences of fundamentalist religious beliefs, infecting personalities, families, and cultures. It deals with the superstitions of religion propagated by clerics who, for example, told congregants that cancer and other diseases were the results of sinful living. As science became more sophisticated and was able to explain the causes of past diseases, such as the Black Plague, religious figures had to back off their initial pronouncements. Such a paradigm continued as researchers discovered the non-divine causes of yellow fever, polio, small pox, pneumonia, tuberculosis, syphilis, gonorrhea, influenza, etc. Such discoveries, unfortunately, did not prevent religious leaders from condemning evolution, homosexuality, aspects of astronomy, anthropology, psychology, and even economics. Blind belief in the righteousness of one's beliefs have caused fundamentalist Christian leaders to claim that the attacks of 9/11 were caused by the sinful behavior of Americans. Such a pronouncement was not different in intent or origin from fundamentalist Muslim clerics who declared that Hurricane Katrina was sent by God as a punishment to America.

ABOUT - Dr. Ray, as a resident of Kansas, has seen first hand how fundamentalist religious beliefs have a negative effect on education, for it was in his state that members of the board of education wanted to ban the teaching of evolution and substitute the teaching of creationism, which propounded that the Earth is only a few thousand years old.

As Dr. Ray has written, “Religion seems to inject itself into schools, courts, legislatures, presidential politics, and local school boards, detracting from rational conversation about real-world problems, such as science, education, economics, economic development, disaster relief, and war.”

Dr. Frank Schaeffer, the celebrated author of *Crazy for God*, wrote: “I am a religious person, a churchgoer. Nevertheless, this one-of-a-kind book [*The God Virus*] is a vital reminder of the fact that we think objectively at what religion does to us.”

And Earl Doherty, author of the best-selling book, *The Jesus Puzzle*, wrote: “Dr. Ray's approach is non-confrontational. He advocates understanding and tolerance. He gets inside the American fundamentalist movement in ways which show that such entities have a collective life of their own, functioning as large-scale organisms which their individual members may not themselves understand or be aware of.”

Whether you are a believer, an atheist, or an agnostic, you will find *The God Virus* an exciting and challenging experience, especially if you are not frightened or timid about being a being a rational, thoughtful, and compassionate human being. One has nothing to lose but the mental chains of superstition and intolerance that can keep one in a perpetual state of fear.

“By writing *The God Virus*,” stated Dr. Ray, “I have attempted to inoculate my readers against a viral infection that results in terminal ignorance and fear.” Many grateful readers agree.

For further information, please visit www.thegodvirus.net

-END-