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## Is Christianity Dangerous to Society?

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Here's how to stack a deck for a false argument. Collect unrelated statistics and pass them off as proving causation. A decline in steel production may be an item of interest, but it doesn't have anything to do with a rise in asparagus eating among retirees.

Keep that in mind as you read Ruth Gledhill's [column](#) in Tuesday's edition of *The Times* [London]. Gledhill, the paper's religion correspondent, reported: *Religious belief can cause damage to a society, contributing towards high murder rates, abortion, sexual promiscuity and suicide, according to research published today. According to the study, belief in and worship of God are not only unnecessary for a healthy society but may actually contribute to social problems.*

The research study she cites, published in the *Journal of Religion and Society*, compared more secular societies like England and Japan with nations like the United States, where a larger percentage of the population is comprised of active Christians. The report supposedly shows high levels of social pathologies in the more Christian nations. Of course, this proves nothing, since an almost limitless number of unrelated factors could explain the differences claimed by the study. This didn't stop researcher Gregory Paul from claiming far more. "The widely held fear that a Godless citizenry must experience societal disaster is therefore refuted," he said. Not so fast, Mr. Paul.

He did make one very interesting observation, linking Christian belief to a rejection of evolutionary theory. According to Gledhill's report: *He said that most Western nations would become more religious only if the theory of evolution could be overturned and the existence of God scientifically proven. Likewise, the theory of evolution would not enjoy majority support in the US unless there was a marked decline in religious belief, Mr Paul said.* That's something to think about.

The text of Paul's article, "[Cross-Cultural Correlations of Quantifiable Societal Health with Popular Religiosity and Secularism in the Prosperous Democracies](#)," is available through the *Journal of Religion and Society*.

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