

In the back of the auditorium in the New Johnsonville Church of Christ sits a little black box. On the outside it looks are very simple in nature. It has a slit in the top in which anyone who wishes can put a question. I have received many interesting questions over the past several months and would like to broaden the scope of how I receive these questions. If you would like to have a question answered and cannot make it to the building to put your question in the "little black box"; please e-mail your questions to [rhodes2818@hotmail.com](mailto:rhodes2818@hotmail.com). Please put in the subject box the word "Question" and if you would like your question answered in the bulletin please make reference to that in your e-mail.

We have recently been announcing the upcoming debate between Blair Scott and Kyle Butt on Thursday September 29, 2011 at 7PM. Kyle Butt is a graduate of Freed-Hardeman University, where he earned a B.A. with a double major in Bible and communications, and an M.A. in New Testament. Currently, he serves in the Bible department at Apologetics Press and as editor of *Discovery* magazine. He speaks frequently around the country at youth rallies, lectureships, Gospel meetings, etc. (Information taken from [apologeticspress.com](http://apologeticspress.com) website). Blair Scott writes this about himself on his website, "I am the Communications Director, National Affiliate Director, and Alabama State Director for [American Atheists, Inc.](http://AmericanAtheists.com) I am a staff writer for [American Atheist Magazine](http://AmericanAtheistMagazine.com) and I manage and moderate the [NoGodBlog](http://NoGodBlog.com). My co-host Tom Hand and I run [The Critical Eye Podcast](http://TheCriticalEyePodcast.com). In addition, I am the Founder and Public Relations Director for the [North Alabama Freethought Association](http://NorthAlabamaFreethoughtAssociation.com) based in Huntsville, Alabama."

Now this brings to light the question at hand I received from the question box mentioned in the first paragraph of this article. The question is, "Who, where, and why do they give an award for the atheist of the year?" I have researched the answers and here is what I have found. **Atheist Alliance International** (AAI) is a global network of [atheist](http://AtheistAlliance.org) organizations around the [world](http://WorldAtheistAlliance.org). AAI was founded in 1991. AAI's vision is "to transform society into one that understands and respects atheism; that supports and respects a worldview based on the values of reason, empiricism and naturalism; and that respects and protects the separation of religion and government and the constitutional and human rights of atheists as members of society in free, democratic and open nations." Its unofficial tagline is "A positive global voice for atheism and secularism." The first annual convention of Atheist Alliance International took place in 1995 in [Los Angeles](http://LosAngelesAAI.com). AAI has typically held at least one convention each year since then, until 2010 all of these were held in the United States. Since 2010, AAI has expanded the coverage and frequency of its conventions, with multiple conferences held each year across various continents. The largest convention that AAI has hosted to-date was the 2010 Global Atheists Convention - *The Rise of Atheism*, held in March 2010 in [Melbourne, Australia](http://MelbourneAAI.com). The Richard Dawkins Award is a prize awarded by AAI since 2003. The award is named after [Richard Dawkins](http://RichardDawkins.com), a prominent British atheist. The official award criteria state that: "*The Richard Dawkins Award will be given every year to honor an outstanding atheist whose contributions raise public awareness of the nontheist life stance; who through writings, media, the arts, film, and/or the stage advocates increased scientific knowledge; who through work or by example teaches acceptance of the nontheist philosophy; and whose public posture mirrors the uncompromising nontheist life stance of Dr. Richard Dawkins.*"

How astounding it is to know that so many people across the country simply do not believe in the God that created them and the world they live in (Genesis 1&2). Even more astounding is the cold hard fact that even more people in the world have taken their own ideas and added them to the Word of God and formed their own "man-made religion".

Brothers and sisters in Christ, it is high time we began to defend the Word of God in a world that is so perverse and does not heed the commandments of God. God is looking for those who will defend His ways as Paul did in his lifetime and as many of our forefather's have done. We have become lax in our approach to the eternal resting place of our own souls and the lost souls that surround us each day. Romans 13:11-12, "And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. <sup>12</sup> The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." Paul writes to the Corinthians and says, 2 Corinthians 6:2, "For He says: " In an acceptable **time** I have heard you, And in the day **of salvation** I have helped you." Behold, **now is** the accepted **time**; behold, **now is** the day **of salvation**."

The question is then asked: "Is there a Christian of the year?" I have not found where anyone anywhere was "voted" Christian of the Year. However, I can encourage each of us to seek God in every aspect of our life and allow the scriptures to answer the question better than man made words. Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please **Him**, for he who comes to God must believe **that** He is, and **that** He is a **rewarder of those** who diligently **seek Him**." Let us seek God and prepare to meet Him in judgment. Allow yourself to feel His love and compassion in your life. Do not seek the approval of man or some man-made award, but seek the reward of heaven eternal.