



The 60 Second Adventures in Religion

Religion as a virus

David Mitchell:

Sixty second adventures in religion. Number four, religion as a virus.

Richard Dawkins is an atheist, evolutionary biologist and probably not someone you should ask to be a godfather.

He said that religion and science can't sit side by side because belief in god doesn't stand up to scientific scrutiny.

But religion is still so popular because it's like a virus with an innate desire to spread itself and it's various symptoms - like 'believing in things without any scientific evidence' and 'judging people with different beliefs'.

Like a successful gene, this cultural phenomenon or 'meme' has features that made it likely to appeal or be passed on - like being adopted by music and art - or threatening that non-believers will be put to death.

Dawkins' ideas have been pretty successful at spreading themselves. Nowadays he's more widely known for his views on atheism than his work on evolution.

Although, for book sales, he's got a long way to go to catch up on religion. Maybe he should try some viral marketing?