

DOES GOD EXIST?

Focus

Did you hear the one about the atheist and the Loch Ness monster?

An atheist was rowing across Loch Ness in Scotland when all of a sudden the Loch Ness monster attacked and grabbed him from his boat. He panicked and shouted "*God help me!*", and suddenly, the monster stopped.

A voice from the heavens boomed "*You say you don't believe in me, but now you are asking for my help?*"

The atheist looked up and said: "*Well, ten seconds ago I didn't believe in the Loch Ness Monster either!*"

A book that has been at the top of the best sellers over the last few years is the 2006 book by Richard Dawkins – *The God Delusion*. Dawkins is a scientist and atheist who asserts the irrationality of believing in God.

Dawkins contends that a belief in a personal god qualifies as a delusion, which he defines as a persistent false belief held in the face of strong contradictory evidence. He is sympathetic to Robert Pirsig's statement that "*when one person suffers from a delusion it is called insanity. When many people suffer from a delusion it is called religion*".

Contrary to Richard Dawkins - I believe in a God who is personal and knowable. I believe in a God who knows the beginning from the end. I believe in a God who is personally involved in the course of human lives and events. I believe in the one and only God of the Bible.

Am I crazy, unsophisticated, unthinking and irrational? Or are there good reasons to believe in God even these days?

I recognize that I cannot prove that God exists. But my belief in God is based on some evidence which I want to share with you this morning.

6 Reasons Why I Believe in God

1st - The existence of the material universe

As some of you know I like to take pictures – generally landscapes and nature shots. As I walk around and look at the wonderful world around us - it makes me think of God and a Creator.

When you, for instance, look at the expanse of the universe – to me it is a logical conclusion to think that someone bigger, brighter and better than you and me brought all of this into being. You are also led to conclude that this One had to have been in existence before all this was made. Simple logic. The Bible declares the same.

Psalm 19:1-2

*The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.*

Romans 1:20

“For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.” Could the universe around us have come into existence out of nothing? Does one + nothing really equal something?

As you no doubt heard - this past July physicists working in Switzerland at the biggest atom smasher in the world reported they have discovered what is being called “*The God Particle*”. The God Particle is a subatomic particle that implants mass to all matter in the universe and which is believed to have originated during the Big Bang.

But – where did the so called God Particle come from? Where did the gasses that led to the Big Bang come from? Some thing or someone had to be in existence before anything else came into being.

My conclusion is that – if you are open – and allow for the possibility for supernatural intervention – it is easier and more rational to believe in a Creator than to believe in a series of random coincidences taking place perfectly in time and space.

2nd - The order and design of the universe

When you look at creation in detail you soon see that it all fits together perfectly. There is an amazing order and mathematical design. The study of this has kept scientists employed for years.

EG – many things are intensely complex and hard to understand – Why do the planets stay in perfect orbit? Who can really explain why things grow and why things die and decay? You can study it all and know the laws that govern it – but why and how? And how did it all happen? No one can answer that fully apart from God.

CF – Paul and Barnabas confront unbelieving people in Turkey and use a similar argument of the order and design of the world - Acts 14:15-17

“We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them.”¹⁶ In the past, he let all nations go their own way.¹⁷ Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy.”

I have a pretty good Nikon digital SLR camera. But it’s a bit old now so - I was hoping Margo would get me a better one for Christmas. She didn’t. But even if I had the best digital camera out there – it pales in comparison to what our human eyes do every second. The retina of our

eyes is thinner than a sheet of Saran Wrap and yet contains 10 million light sensitive cells. Some of the best digital cameras today will have light sensitivity or what is called dynamic range of about 11,000:1. The retina however can handle a dynamic range of 10 billion to one.

Even an evolutionist by the name of Dr. Ernest Mayer once said that it is a big leap to understand how a finely balanced system like the human eye could be improved by random mutations. Even Darwin once said that the very thought of the complexity of the eye gave him chills.

I've been waiting for my pretty good camera to evolve into something better – but so far it's not happening. If I left it in the corner for the next 10 million years it would still not get any better – only worse.

It seems to me that nature itself is a constant witness to the presence of a superior intelligence. It speaks of plan and design, not chance and chaos.

3rd – The universal belief in god

All around the world, in all cultures and throughout history – there exists an intuitive concept of god. Where would that come from except from a god who exists? How could finite and imperfect human beings from diverse geographies and histories come up with the idea of an infinite and perfect being?

Even Charles Darwin, in his 1871 book, *The Descent of Man*, wrote - "*a belief in all-pervading spiritual agencies seems to be universal*". He went on to reason that this is due to the "*considerable reasoning powers of man, and from a still greater advance in his faculties of imagination, curiosity, and wonder.*"

We can choose to believe that all people and all cultures in all ages all had the same reasoning powers and creativity to make up the idea of a supreme being. Or we can see the universal belief in god as innate – something that is a part of us - because God put it there.

Solomon wrote in the book of Ecclesiastes – "*He (God) has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men*". (3:11)

On August 7th, 1961, 26 year old Major Titov (sp.) was the second Soviet cosmonaut to orbit the earth and return safely. Sometime later, speaking at the world's fair, he said - "*In my excursion into space, I did not see God.*"

Someone in the crowd apparently quipped - "*Had he stepped out of his space suit, he would have.*"

4th - The nature of persons

We are unique and different from animals. We have the ability to reason and to reason in theoretical concepts. I think this points to a creator.

CF – the Bible teaches that people are created in the image of God - Genesis 1:27:

*“So God created mankind in his own image,
in the image of God he created them;”*

God says in the book of Job that we just need to be as smart as the animals in order to understand this. Job 12:7-10:

*“But ask the animals, and they will teach you,
or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you;
or let the fish in the sea inform you.*

*⁹ Which of all these does not know
that the hand of the LORD has done this?*

*¹⁰ In his hand is the life of every creature
and the breath of all mankind.*

Some would argue that this is just blind faith and not based on facts. I like how one writer responded to that: (Hocking p27 – quoting Bolton Davidheiser)

“It has to be blind faith that causes the evolutionist to begin with nothing and produce something as marvelous and complex as the nature of mankind. It is instead a tremendous evidence of the presence and existence of God”

A little girl once asked her mother – *“How did the human race appear?”* The mother answered – *“God made Adam and Eve and they had children, and so all mankind was made”*.

Two days later the girl asked her father the same question. The father said – *“Many years ago there were monkeys from which the human race evolved.”*

The confused girl returned to her mother and said – *“Mom, how come you told me the human race was created by God, and Dad said we developed from monkeys?”*

The mother answered – *“Well, dear, it is very simple. I told you about my side of the family and your father told you about his”*.

5th - The person of Jesus Christ

How do we explain the person of Christ without believing in the existence of God? He is without doubt the most outstanding and unique person in the history of the world. There are over 300 prophecies about the Messiah in the Bible, written hundreds of years before Jesus was even born. He fulfilled all of them in one lifetime.

Who is Jesus? The Bible claims that He is God in the flesh. There was never any doubt among His contemporaries as to who He claimed to be. Some even wanted to stone Him on several occasions, accusing Him of blasphemy because He was making Himself equal with God.

The Bible tells us in Colossians 1:15 that Jesus is the *“image of the invisible God.”* In Colossians 2:9 that in Him – *“all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form”*

What do we do with claims like this? How should we understand Jesus? C.S. Lewis outlined the possible conclusions as either:

1/ We can conclude that Jesus was a lunatic. He was crazy and self-deceived. No different than someone in a mental institute claiming to be Napoleon.

2/ We can conclude that Jesus was a liar. He knew He was not God, but lied about it so He could gain a following and begin a new religion. Or –

3/ We can conclude that Jesus is Lord. He is exactly who He said He was. And if He is Lord we need to bow to Him as Lord.

6th - My personal experience

My experience is certainly not objective evidence about the existence of God. People have reportedly experienced all kinds of things which may or may not be real. But my experience and the experience of many others over many many years is still something that no one can refute, and which needs to be evaluated.

I did not really go looking for God – He came to me through the testimony of another and I found Him. It was not through lightning bolts or an apparition – but inwardly and confidently I came to know that there is a God who is personal and knowable. I put my faith in Him

CF - Hebrews 11:3,6

“By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”

Final Thoughts

I don’t know the beliefs of everyone here this morning. I hope many of you have the same confidence in the existence of God. If so – praise the Lord – worship Him, honour Him, obey Him, love Him and live for Him.

If you are not sure about the existence of God, I encourage you to seek Him till you find Him. He is willing and able to reveal Himself to anyone who is open and honest enough to look for Him.

The Bible says – *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Mat 7:7)*

And in Jeremiah 19:13 – *“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”*