

Truths That Matter
ABOUT GOD
1/29/17

The most important question a person can ask is, “Does God exist?”

The second most important question is, “If God exists, what is He like?”

Is what we call god a force to tap into or a person to be obeyed or defied?

Is He the Supreme Being in the universe or are we?

Many today are saying that those who believe in God are weak superstitious people who can't face life without a crutch.

Sam Harris: “Theology is ignorance with wings.”

Christopher Hitchens: “Faith is the surrender of the mind”

Richard Dawkins: “Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence.”

This morning we want to think and evaluate the evidence that God exists.

1. Truth #1: God exists. Romans 1:18-20

a. God has made Himself evident within us. vv. 18-19a

- The first question we need to ask is, “Is this true?”
 - ◆ Throughout history, in every culture the majority of people have believed in a god of some kind.
 - ◆ Mankind intuitively senses that God exists.
 - ◆ At a very young age a disease left Helen Keller unable to see or hear. Anne Sullivan taught Helen to communicate through touch and even to talk.
 - ◇ When Miss Sullivan told Helen about God, the girl's response: *"I always knew He was there, but I didn't know His name!"*
 - ◆ Romans 2:14-16 says that our consciences are a reflection of God in our souls.
- Our passage says that God has made Himself known within us, but that many people suppress that knowledge.

b. God has made Himself evident to us through His creation. vv. 19b-20

- The very existence of the universe demands an explanation.
 - ◆ The universe is not self-existent.
 - ◇ It could not have created itself.
 - ◇ Nothing can create itself out of nothing.
 - ◇ The “Big Bang” theory doesn't answer the question of where all the matter and energy came from originally.
 - ◆ The universe has not been around forever.
 - ◇ The second law of thermodynamics rules out the option that the universe is eternal.

- ◆ The only other option is that the universe was created by a Being who is outside of the sphere of time, matter and energy.
- The universe not only exists, it gives evidence of intricate design. (An intelligent Creator)
- The National Institute of Standards and Technology published a list of over 300 constants and conversion factors for use by the international scientific community.
 - ◆ These physical constants have well defined and unique values. If they had different values, our world could not exist.

20 *Compelling Evidences That God Exists* by Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr.

1.) The ***strong nuclear force*** binds subatomic particles together in the nuclei of atoms.

If this force were stronger or weaker by more than about 1 % our universe could not exist.

2.) The ***weak nuclear force*** makes radioactive decay, fission, and fusion possible.

If this force had been a bit stronger or weaker, no planets would have been formed.

3. The ***electromagnetic force*** binds electrons to the nuclei of atoms.

If this force were slightly weaker the electrons would fly away, and so atoms would not form molecules.

If this force was slightly stronger atoms would not “share” electrons, so again no molecules would form.

4.) The ***gravitational force*** is also just right.

If it were somewhat stronger the stars would be so hot that they would burn out too quickly and unevenly.

If gravity was somewhat weaker the stars would not become hot enough to ignite nuclear fusion.

Stephen Hawking: “The remarkable fact is that the values of these numbers seem to have been very finely adjusted to make possible the development of life.”

5.) The ***expansion rate of the universe***.

If the expansion rate and gravitational force had not been precisely balanced there would be no universe as we know it.

- ◇ If it were only a tiny bit slower, gravity would have slowed the expansion and caused the universe to cave back in on itself a long time ago.
- ◇ If it were a wee bit faster, gravity would not have been able to attract material together to form planets and galaxies.

6.) The ***isotropy*** or evenness of the expansion of the universe.

Oxford mathematician Roger Penrose calculated the allowable margin of error at 1 in 10 to the 10123

Scientists estimate that there are only 10 to the 80th atoms in the entire universe.

The chance of our universe forming was infinitesimally small.

7.) A “just right” solar system

- ◆ We need to be the right distance from the sun and the right temperature

- ◆ We need to have the right shaped orbits.
- ◆ We must have the right sized star.
- ◆ It needs to be in the right place in the spiral arms of the galaxy to produce enough heavy elements to form planets.
- ◆ We need a planet about the size of Jupiter with gravity large enough to suck away a large percentage of asteroids and comets.
 - ◇ But if Jupiter were larger or closer it would interfere with the earth's orbit.
- ◆ Our moon turns out to be just the right size and distance to help stabilize Earth's orbit and produce tidal effects that are significant but not destructive.

8.) A "just right" earth

- ◆ The earth is just the right distance from the sun in order to sustain life above the level of a microbe.
 - ◇ If we were as near to the sun as Venus, the heat would be unbearable.
 - ◇ If we were as far away as Mars, we would have snow and ice every night, even in the warmest regions.
- ◆ The earth rotates at the right rate.
 - ◇ It rotates and 1000 miles per hour.
 - ◇ If it were 100 miles per hour, our days and nights would be 10 times longer. Our planet would alternately burn and freeze. Vegetation would not live.
- ◆ The earth is just the right size.
 - ◇ Too big and the atmosphere would be rich in noxious elements like ammonia and methane.
 - ◇ Too small and the atmosphere wouldn't retain water.
 - ◇ If we were as big as Jupiter, Saturn, or Uranus, gravity would be so strong as to make human movement almost impossible.
- ◆ The earth must turn on its axis and be tilted just enough to prevent extremes in temperature and weather.
- ◆ If the oceans were ½ their size, we would have only ¼ the rainfall that we do now.
- ◆ If the oceans were just 1/8 larger our average rainfall would be 4 times what it currently is.
 - ◇ The earth would be an uninhabitable swamp.
- ◆ The life forms come together in the right symbiotic relationships to recycle elements and compounds so that life can be sustained.
 - ◇ Plants take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen.
 - ◇ Animals use oxygen and give off carbon dioxide

In the creation we have more than sufficient evidence to recognize the existence of God if we are willing.

c. The evidence is overwhelming.

One astronomer has estimated the odds of a life-friendly planet existing anywhere in the universe as less than 1 in 10 to the 129th power.

Stephen Hawking: *The odds against a universe like ours emerging out of something like the big bang are enormous . . . I think clearly there are religious implications whenever you start to discuss the origins of the universe.*

Fred Hoyle, British Astronomer: *A commonsense interpretation of the facts suggests that a super intellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as chemistry and biology . . . The numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question.*

Charles Townes (Nobel Prize in Physics): *Physicists are running into stone walls of things that seem to reflect intelligence at work in natural law.*

Allan Sandage (Astronomer): *It was my science that drove me to the conclusion that the world is much more complicated than can ever be explained by science. It is only through the supernatural that I can understand the mystery of existence.*

d. God has revealed Himself through fulfilled prophecy. Isaiah 41:21ff

- 20% of the Bible was prophetic when written.
- 16 books are almost entirely prophecy.

e. God revealed Himself in the person of Jesus Christ.

- Marvelous miracles
- Insightful teaching
 - ♦ He was able to look beyond actions to the hearts of men.
- Irrefutable resurrection
 - ♦ Jesus not only revealed the existence of God, He revealed God's nature and will.

2. Truth #2: We are without excuse!! Romans 1:20b-23

a. Though we possess a basic knowledge of God's existence we have not honored Him nor given thanks. v. 21a

- Instead people have suppressed their awareness of His existence and turn to foolish and futile speculations.

b. Instead we have turned to futile speculations. v. 21b

George Wald (Nobel Laureate and Harvard Naturalist)

" . . . When it comes to the origin of life there are only two possibilities, creation or spontaneous generation. There is no third option. Spontaneous generation was disproved one hundred years ago, but that leads to only one other conclusion, that of supernatural creation. WE CANNOT ACCEPT THAT ON PHILOSOPHICAL GROUNDS, therefore, we choose to believe the impossible: life arose spontaneously by chance!"

Richard Lewontin, (Harvard geneticist and evolutionist)

'Our willingness to accept scientific claims that are against common sense is the key to an understanding of the real struggle between science and the supernatural. We take the side of

science *in spite* of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, *in spite* of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, *in spite* of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism. . . Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.

Richard Dawkins, (Scientist and renowned atheist) in an interview with Ben Stein, conceded problems with the theory of evolution.

- ◆ But instead of considering that God may have created life on earth, he brings up the possibility that life may have been seeded here by aliens.

If someone doesn't want to believe in God, no amount of evidence can force him to accept God's existence.

c. We exchange worship of the true God for man-made religions and beliefs. vv. 22-23

- We choose to suppress the truth and misdirect our worship.
- These verses tell us that idolatry did not come about as an attempt to know and worship the true God.
- ◆ Idolatry came about as a substitute for worshiping the true God.

3. Truth #3: There are consequences of rejecting our knowledge of God? Romans 1:24-32

a. God gives us over to impurity. vv. 24-25

God doesn't tempt us to sin. cf James 1:13-15

He does abandon us to our own sinful passions and destructive life styles.

b. He gives us over to degrading passions. vv. 26-27

unnatural- against God's created order, the way God designed it

c. God gives us over to depraved minds. vv. 28-32

- Society's problems begin with our suppressing the truth God has revealed to us!!
- 32 Our culture applauds, defends, and even celebrates those who are doing these things.
- This is Not ignorance. It is blatant rebellion.
- Our culture is a revelation of the wrath of God!!!!

Rejecting God ultimately affects our minds and morals.

It is progressive

18-20 rebellious will

21-22 darkened intellect

23 corrupted religious beliefs

24-25 perverted passions

26-32 degenerated morals

4. Truth #4: There is hope

a. God reveals the truth about Himself to those who repent and sincerely seek Him.

1 Chronicles 28:9 . . . for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever.

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Jeremiah 29:13 'You will seek Me and find *Me* when you search for Me with all your heart.

Cf Acts 10-11

- b. Forgiveness of sin and eternal life is freely available to all who draw near to God in faith.
Romans 1:16-17; 5:6-10**

John 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."