

Lesson 1

Does God Exist?

We live in a day and age where for many people this is the first question that needs to be answered? This is a sign of the times because there was a time, not too long ago, in the history of our country where this was not true. Most everyone believed that there is a God, they were not too sure what He is like but at least believed that He does in fact exist. Unfortunately that is no longer true and now we must begin our discussion with how we know that God exist.

THE EVIDENCE OF CREATION

Our Bible begins with the words “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”. It is interesting that our Bibles begin with the assumption that there is a God. There is no great discourse on a defense of His existence. What follows in Genesis is in fact one of the main reasons why we know that He exists i.e. creation.

In **Romans 1:19** we read, **“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,”**

When we look at the world around us i.e. creation, it is logical for us to understand that something comes from something. This is known as the **law of “cause and effect.” For every cause there is an effect and the effect is greater than the cause.** For example if we are hit in the head with a rock, we do not automatically assume the rock picked itself up and threw itself at our head. We know immediately that someone or something propelled that rock to our head. Therefore, it is natural for us to conclude that our world was made by a greater cause and that this cause has not been caused by another. This uncaused cause is God.

IT IS IMPLANTED IN OUR CONSCIENCE

A second reason we know that there is a God is because it is implanted in our conscious. In the Gospel of **John 1:9** it is spoken of as the light that is given to every man. In **Romans 1:19** we read that, **“what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.”** In **Acts 17:28** the Apostle Paul is preaching a sermon in which he states, **“for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of our own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’”** In other words, God has planted the knowledge of the existence of God within us so that it is natural for us to believe that there is a God.

This is why mankind is naturally religious. All humans, regardless of race, nationality, culture or society believe in god in one form or another. Not everyone believes in Him the same way or according to the truth of His Word, but all believe that there is a god. You will notice the switch from a capital “G” to a small “g”. This is because even though the idea of god is planted within us all, not all believe in the truth that God has given to us in His Word. Which is why we read in **Romans 1:21-23** **“because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man – and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.”**

Therefore, it is important that we understand that it is not enough to believe in the idea of god but to believe the truth of God as revealed in His Word. There is a difference between religions and belief systems. We believe that the truth is found in the Bible

GOD IS THE STANDARD FOR MORALITY

We know that all humans have a morality; something that guides them in determining what is right and wrong. At times this is referred to as “natural law”. For example every cultural believes that it is wrong to commit murder. The question we now ask is where did this “natural law” come from? The most logical answer is that just as there is an ultimate cause for the natural world there is an ultimate cause for natural law or morality. The idea of not committing murder, not stealing, not lying etc. is found in all cultures, even those who have never heard of the “Ten Commandments”.

GOD BECAME MAN

The ultimate reason why we know that there is a God is because He has communicated with us in terms that we can understand. We have already seen how He has revealed Himself in His creation, including not only the world around us but in the creation of humanity who has been created in the image of God.

He has communicated to us in the person of His Son. God became a man to communicate to mankind that He is and that He rewards those who come to Him by faith (**Hebrews 11:6**). This is the teaching of **John 1:1-14** esp. verse 14 where we read, “**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**” The word “**Word**” here is the manifestation of the essence of what God is. In other words, if you want to know how God would act as a man and how He would respond to the human condition then you need only look at His Son our Lord Jesus Christ.

God became man for two reasons, to communicate to man in terms that mankind can understand and to die for the sins of mankind. The human condition is that of sin and sin has cursed all of creation, which has resulted in all manner of disease and calamity. God’s response is to pay the wages of sin with the death of His own son Romans 5:8. We will have more of that in later lessons.

GOD IS SEEN IN THE RESURRECTION

This brings us to the evidence of the resurrection. Not only did God take on the form of a man to communicate to us and to die for our sins, but raised His son up from the dead. This takes us back to Paul’s sermon in **Acts 17:32**, “**He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.**” If anyone wishes to disprove Christianity as the true religion they need only to disprove the resurrection. Many have tried such as a lawyer by the name of Frank Morison who studied the last week of our Lord from a lawyer’s perspective, intending to disprove the resurrection. Instead, after studying all the facts came to this conclusion, “There may be, and, as the writer thinks, there certainly is, a deep and profoundly historical basis for that much disputed sentence in the Apostles’ Creed – ‘The *third day* he rose again from the dead.’” (*Who Moved The Stone?* P. 192). The resurrection proves that God exists; that He has communicated to man by becoming man; that this man Jesus Christ is God as seen in that He arose from the dead.

GOD IS SEEN IN THE LIVES OF BELIEVERS

One last evidence of the existence of God which is the changed lives of those who believe in Him. There is no other religion or philosophy in the world today that has done more to improve the human condition than Christianity. The influence of Christianity can be seen in the ethic of love to provide hospitals, nursing homes and other kinds of caring institutions. It can be seen to influence Art and Architecture, World language study, education, ethics, government, religion and philosophy (*Apologetics*, Dr. Jim Anderson p. 78-82).

There is nothing more powerful or more persuasive than the believer who gives testimony not only to the existence of God but to the life changing experience of faith in His Son through the working of His Spirit in our lives.

To put into the words of the essay *One Solitary Life* "I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, all the navies that were ever built; all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has that one solitary life."

So, we conclude that God does indeed exist as seen in creation, within mankind, by His written revelation, the revelation of those who have believed upon Him, and the revelation of His Son our Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins and was raised up for our justification.

Questions for Review:

1. Why do you think that creation proves that God exists?
2. How would you explain the “law of cause and effect”?
3. In what ways have you sensed that there is a God?
4. If it is natural to believe that there is a God, why are there so many atheists in the world?
5. Where does morality come from?
6. What does John 1:14 mean when it says that the Word became flesh?
7. God became man for what two reasons?
8. What would be the quickest way to disprove Christianity?
9. In what way does the testimony of the believer give evidence to the existence of God?
10. What are some ways in which Christianity has influenced the world?
11. What would you say to someone who says that there is no God?