

Class # 2

Why Believe in God Anyway?

(I) EXPLORING WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT GOD

READ PSALM 19 This Psalm tells us that God has shown Himself to us two ways (1) Through Nature (2) Through His Word – The Bible

Here's some discussion questions to jump into the class with , followed by what others have said and answering some thorny questions.

1. What do the heavens and skies have to say to us? (19:1)
2. On what two themes did David focus in this psalm? (19:1-14)
3. In what way do the heavens "display knowledge"? (19:2)
4. How far does the voice of the heavens extend? (19:3-4)
5. What role did God's law play in David's life? (19:7-14)
6. What words did David use to describe God's law? (19:7-14)
7. What power does God's law have in the lives of His people? (19:7-14)
8. How did the psalm writer describe the worthiness of God's law? (19:10)
9. What results from keeping God's laws? (19:11)
10. What did David say about our faults? (19:12)
11. What two types of sins or faults do we need God's help with? (19:12-13)
12. What was David's desire and prayer? (19:13-14)
13. What can we learn about God from nature?
14. What has nature taught you about God?
15. What steps could you take to be more open to God's Word?

REMEMBER THAT THE STUDENT HANDOUTS HAVE THE SAME NOTES AS YOU, EXCEPT YOU HAVE MORE. THE NOTES THEY HAVE ARE YOUR NOTES WITH THE FRAME AROUND THEM. SOME OF THEIR NOTES HAVE BLANK SPACES FOR THEM TO FILL OUT. THESE ARE UNDERLINED ON YOUR NOTES.

(II) EXPLORING WHAT SOME OTHERS HAVE SAID ABOUT GOD

<i>I shall always be convinced that a watch proves a watchmaker, and that a universe proves a God. - Voltaire</i>

Voltaire definitely was not a believer. In fact just the opposite. He was a philosopher and author who lived in the 1700's. He was a primary figure in the movement that came to be called the "Enlightenment" where people came to the conclusions that we didn't need God and people would figure out all the problems of people. Nevertheless, he made the observation that things that are created must in fact have a creator.

Imagine taking a watch apart and then putting all the pieces in a bag. Once they are in the bag shake it up and let the pieces fall to the floor. How many times do you think you would have to

toss the pieces into the middle of the floor until it reassembled itself as a watch? Right. It would probably never do so. Complex things do not assemble themselves by chance. SOMEBODY puts them together and sets them in motion.

Besides even if the pieces came together to function as a watch (which certainly would never happen) somebody still made some very complicated mechanisms that each interact with each other in order to make functioning clock. Anything created requires a creator.

(III) REASONS FOR BELIEVING IN GOD

(A) THERE ARE THREE MAIN REASONS WE BELIEVE GOD EXISTS

- 1) The Bible tells us so. Over the next several weeks we'll see why we can trust the Bible in everything it says
- 2) The Created Order tells us so. Look around and you will see that God exists. It's obvious.
- 3) Atheists who say God does not exist have no proof for their statement and cannot prove it. It is impossible to prove God does not exist.

(B) DOES THE BIBLE TRY TO PROVE GOD EXISTS

- 1) No. The Bible doesn't try to prove that God exist. Right from the very first verse it asserts that He does

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

- 2) Here's what the Bible says about those who don't believe n God:

"The fool has said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1).

Only a foolish person would deny that God exists. The fact of His existence should be obvious to all.

- 3) As we move through this study this year we will often come back to the issue of God existing and creating the world.

- 4) Offer tapes to any students who would like to learn more about this. We have a five tape series for free in the bookstore.

(IV) ARE THERE ANY PROOFS THAT GOD EXISTS?

A) Yes, many!

B) HERE ARE FEW THE PROOFS (as to belief in a personal and knowable God)

- 1) The REVELATION of the universe - Psalm 19:1; Romans 1:20

Psalm 19:1 (NIV)

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The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.

Romans 1:20 (NIV)

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 men are without excuse.

2) The RECORDS that are readable and available for study) II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21) The Bible's contents have proven it to be true and it speaks of the existence of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:19-21 (NIV)

¹⁹ And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

a) Consider its UNITY - 40 authors; 1588 years

b) Consider its HISTORICAL INFORMATION - nations, events, dates, persons, places, etc.

c) Consider its WISDOM AND MORAL VALUES

d) Consider its TRANSLATION AND DISTRIBUTION – it is translated and distributed more than any book in history

e) Consider its FULFILLED PROPHECIES

2) THE REALITY of Jesus Christ and His claims

3) The REALIZATION of personal experience (prayer, work of Holy Spirit, miracles, new birth, the thousands who have experienced God's love.)

C) FIRST CAUSE

1) This means everything that exists or happens is caused to happen. If there is a universe in which we live it came from somewhere. It could not have just been by chance. Larry

Richards has written a wonderful book on this available called, “It Couldn’t Just Happen.”

D) PEOPLE

1) Don Stewart, co-writer with Josh McDowell said, “We learn something about God and His existence from the way in which we are made. Human beings are rational, intelligent beings – reflecting, in some ways, their Creator. All of us feel the need to worship something greater than ourselves. All of these truths points to the existence of God.”

E) THE WATCH AND THE WATCHMAKER

1) We have briefly touched on this one. A man named Thomas Aquinas is said to be the first one to use this argument. Don Stewart continuing on the theme above said this about the watchmaker:

“One of the oldest illustrations that is used to point to design is that of a watch. When a person examines a watch it bears the marks of design. There are a number of parts of the watch that are put together for a purpose. They are arranged in such a way as to regulate the motion of the watch in order to tell time.

Two things can be inferred from looking at the design of a watch. First, the watch had to have had a maker. Second, the maker had a purpose in mind when designing the watch. We make these conclusions even though we never saw the watch being made, never saw the watchmaker, or had no idea how the work could be done.

In the same manner, when we look at the universe and its intricate design we assume that it had a Designer who wisely made it for a purpose. The belief in a Designer is not affected by the fact that we did not see Him, did not observe His construction, and cannot understand how He did it.”

