



Discovering Christianity

Lesson 1 – Does God Exist?

by Stephen Moore

Discovering Christianity Introduction

Discovering Christianity is designed to introduce people to what the Bible teaches and to stimulate discussion about the God of the Bible. Each lesson will deal with a particular question or topic, and through discussion and study will present what the Bible teaches about the particular question or topic being considered.

The lesson is interactive and the student has various tasks to do or words to write down. These tasks or spaces for words are identified by the colour blue. There are various boxes identified by the symbol of a pen where the student is encouraged to take notes during the lesson.

Lesson Introduction

Every culture and society e.g. the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans has had a belief in a god or gods. Many of these cultures and societies have arrived at a belief in a god or gods _____¹ of each other which has to more than just coincidence. There is an instinct within each and every person to look beyond the physical realm for something transcendent[◊] i.e. God.

- *Read Ecclesiastes 3:11*

"If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world." — C.S. Lewis

The existence of God is a subject that people have been considering for centuries. During the 20th Century Communistic regimes such as Russia and China promoted atheism and in recent years many people in the West have also been adopting atheism as their chosen belief system. The general trend however within Western society is towards _____² i.e. God may or may not be there but either way He is irrelevant.

Write down what your initial thoughts concerning the meaning of the term "God" are:

[◊] The "argument from desire" argues that our natural instincts generally serve us well e.g. our desire for food and relationship etc. Generally speaking if we have a natural instinct for something then that thing exists and is good for us. The natural instinct to look for the transcendent therefore suggests that the transcendent exists. (Romans 1:18-25)



There is an argument that the fact people think about or discuss the existence of God is proof there is a God. All of us have some idea about what the term “God” means and the argument suggests that if there was no God then we would have no knowledge or concept of God.[⊗]

Major Belief Systems and what the Bible says to refute them:

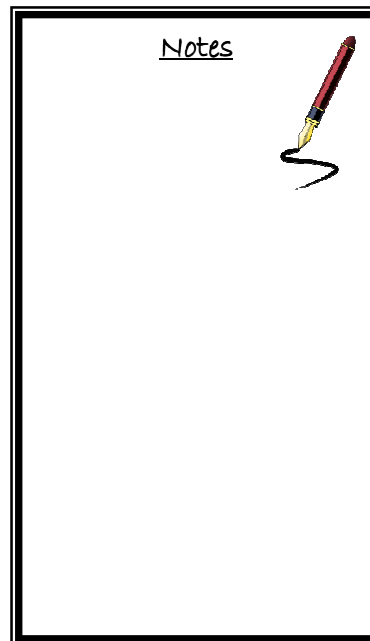
- *Read Genesis 1:1*

1. **ATHEISM** (there is no God)
In the beginning God

2. **POLYTHEISM**³ (there are many Gods)

3. **AGNOSTICISM** (God is irrelevant)

4. **PANTHEISM**⁶ (everything is God)



What does the Bible teach?

The Bible teaches another belief system known as _____⁸ which simply means that there is _____⁹ God. The Bible describes what this God is like including His triune nature and His characteristics. The Bible teaches that there is one God in _____¹⁰ persons known as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This teaching is known as the trinity.

- *Read 1Timothy 2:5, Genesis 1:26, Matthew 28:19*

Write down what you think the evidence is for the non existence of God:

Write down what you think the evidence is for the existence of God:

[⊗] The ontological argument argues for the existence of God based entirely on reason. The argument suggests that knowing what “God” means makes it obvious that God’s non-existence is impossible. The claim that God does not exist is self-contradictory.



Biblical evidence for the existence of God:

The Bible presents four principal pieces of evidence for the existence of God.



1. CREATION

- Read Hebrews 3:4

The heavens declare the glory of God." - Psalm 19:1

First Cause

Just as a building is evidence that there was a builder and a painting is evidence that there was a painter then logic[◇] demands that creation itself is evidence that there was and is a creator. The fact that the universe had a beginning implies that there must have been something outside of the universe that caused the beginning. Something cannot be created by nothing and the Bible teaches that God is the _____¹¹ _____¹² of the universe.*

Design/Fine tuning[♦]

Not only is creation evidence of a creator but the design and fine tuning within the universe presents to us the character of the creator.

- Read Isaiah 45:18

"The remarkable picture that is gradually emerging from modern physics and cosmology is one of a universe whose fundamental forces are amazingly, intricately, and delicately balanced or "fine-tuned" in order for the universe to be able to sustain life." – John Lennox

The universe is perfect for human habitation. If the earth was just a little closer to the sun then everything would be too warm for life to exist and if it was just a little farther away then everything would be too cold for life to exist. A change of only 2% would cause all life to cease.[♥] The earth and its inhabitants are not at the centre of the universe but they are at the centre of God's _____¹³ and attention.



2. CONSCIENCE[□]

There are some things in this world that can't exist unless something else exists alongside it e.g. you can't have something being carried unless you have something carrying it.

- Read Romans 2:14-15

Road signs along a road stating the speed limit imply that someone i.e. the government has decided upon the speed limit and has produced and given the law. Logic demands that because each individual has knowledge of right and wrong _____¹⁴ them then there must have been a _____¹⁵ who wrote this law on our hearts. The law and the lawgiver exist together.



[◇] Logic is the art of reasoning

* Also known as the "first cause argument" or the "cosmological argument."

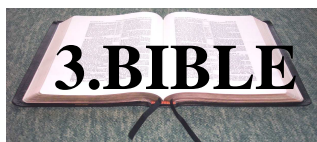
♦ Also known as the "argument from design" or the "teleological argument." Simply the argument suggests that since the universe bears the hallmarks of design then there must have been a designer.

♥ John Lennox writes in his book "God's undertaker – has science buried God?" that, "Surface gravity and temperature are also critical to within a few per cent for the earth to have a life-sustaining atmosphere – retaining the right mix of gases necessary for life." The list of evidence for fine-tuning goes on.

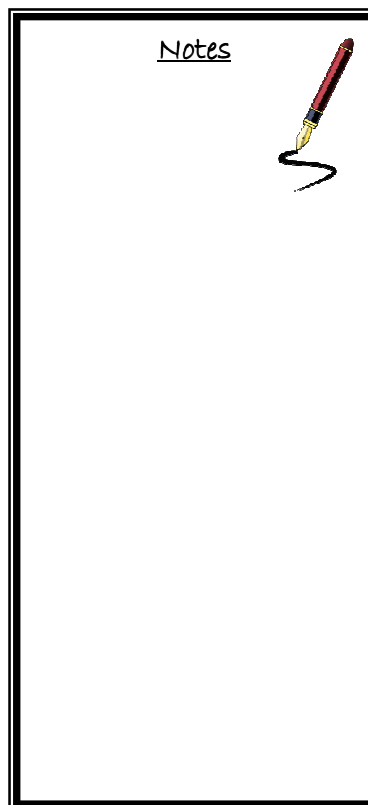
□ Conscience is an ability or a faculty that distinguishes whether one's actions are right or wrong.



The Bible teaches that God gave us our moral conscience and He alone has decided what is right and wrong. There is an amazing similarity about people's knowledge of right and wrong throughout the world. There may be some cultural differences however most cultures agree on _____¹⁶ than what they disagree on. There are many laws that are universal which people everywhere have written on their hearts that transcend countries, governments and cultures e.g. cheating on a man's wife, killing the innocent, stealing and so on. If there is no absolute moral lawgiver then there is no absolute moral law which is very dangerous territory



"Supposing science ever became complete so that it knew every single thing in the whole universe. Is it not plain that the questions, 'Why is there a universe?' 'Why does it go on as it does?' 'Has it any meaning?' would remain just as they were?" – C.S. Lewis



If there is a God who is able to create the universe and write a moral law on the heart of each person then that God is able to _____¹⁷ with His creation. The Bible claims to be God's word to mankind and its content and uniqueness is evidence of its divine origin. The Bible is God's communication* to us explaining where we came from, why we are here, and where we are going. The Bible is God's letter to mankind of all the things He wants us to know.

- [Read 2Timothy 3:15-17](#)

The Bible is scientifically, historically, geographically, medically, and prophetically accurate and provides answers to the "why" questions which people have been asking for centuries. The Bible and more specifically the God of the Bible has changed the lives of millions and millions of people and continues to change lives even today.



4. JESUS CHRIST



- [Read John 1:1+14+18.](#)

The Lord Jesus Christ claimed to be God whenever He was here on earth, proved that He was God by the miracles which He did, and He showed us what God is like.

Conclusion

We are special to God because we are created in God's image with the capacity to communicate with Him and to have a relationship with Him. God wants a relationship with mankind but our sin separates us from Him. This is why He came to die on the cross for our sins and rise again to make that relationship possible.

* Creation and conscience are known as general revelation from God, whereas the Bible and Jesus Christ are known as special revelation from God.



Notes

What do you think the strongest arguments for the existence of God are:



Answers and Further Information

- 1 Independently
- 2 Agnosticism
- 3 Polytheism e.g. Folk religions, Mormonism, Voodoo, Hinduism.
- 4 In the beginning God (singular)
- 5 In the beginning God created (creation is hardly irrelevant)
- 6 Pantheism e.g. Hinduism, Buddhism, New Age Movement, Taoism.
- 7 In the beginning God created (God created things so all is not God!)
- 8 Monotheism

Most of the other world religions believe what the Bible teaches anyway because the majority of them believe that there is one single supreme God. Islam believes in the supremacy of Allah, Judaism believes in the supremacy of Jehovah, even Hinduism which is a polytheistic religion believes in one supreme God called Brahma who is higher than all other Gods. Even the Greeks who believed in many gods still thought Zeus was the leader of the gods.

- 9 One
- 10 Three
- 11 Uncaused
- 12 Cause

Did God have a beginning? – Everything that has a beginning must have had a cause because nothing comes from nothing, not even God. Whenever we read the Bible we discover that God is eternal and lives outside of time. He never had a beginning therefore there was no cause that caused God!

- 13 Purpose
- 14 Within
- 15 Lawgiver
- 16 More
- 17 Communicate

Bible references

"He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end." (Ecclesiastes 3:11)

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

"For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything." (Hebrews 3:4)

"For this is what the LORD says.....He who fashioned and made the earth, He founded it; He did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited." (Isaiah 45:18)

"Even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them." (Romans 2:15)

"And how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2Timothy 2:15-17)

"No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made Him known." (John 1:18)



