

## Defending the Faith- Week 2

### The Existence of God

**Discussion:** Why do you believe that God exists?

**Genesis 1:1-** *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*

**Romans 1:20-** *"For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made."*

### Arguments for the Existence of God

\*Quick note: Even these arguments require a certain amount of faith. But so does everything else in life. We cannot possibly know every detail when we sit in a chair, eat food, or take an elevator. Demanding 100% proof is unreasonable. We make decisions and act based upon what we *do* know, not what we *don't* know. But notice that rejecting them *also* requires a great amount of faith!

**Hebrews 11:6-** *"And without faith it is impossible to please him (God), for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."*

#### 1. **The Cosmological Argument-** the universe has to have a Creator.

The argument goes like this:

- 1) Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
- 2) The universe began to exist.
- 3) Therefore, the universe has a cause.

Everything that we observe in life has a cause. The only thing that comes from nothing is *nothing*. Something must come from *something*, or *someone*.

If you walked up on a sand castle on the beach, would you assume that it has always been there? Or that at some point in time, it had a beginning?

**John 1:3** ESV- *"All things were made through Him (the Word), and without him was not anything made that was made."*

#### 2. **The Teleological Argument-** the fine tuning of the universe must be the handiwork of an Intelligent Designer.

If something appears to be intricately geared for a specific purpose, it is likely that someone or something made it to be that way. (Ex. a watch)

Consider *gravity*.

- 1) If gravity was *slightly* stronger or weaker, stars and galaxies couldn't have formed and life as we know it would be impossible.
- 2) Gravity is finely tuned to 1 part in 10<sup>36</sup> (that's a 1 followed by 36 zeroes). The probability of gravity being tuned just right is the same chance of it falling on *one inch* out of *14 billion light years* worth of inches.

Or the *expansion of the universe*.

- 1) The expansion rate (if slightly slower or faster) would have prohibited life from forming. It is tuned to 1 part in 1060 (1 in  $10^{60}$ ). That's about the chance of flying hundreds of miles into space, turning around, throwing a dart at the Earth, and hitting a target a trillionth of a trillionth of an inch in diameter!<sup>1</sup>

Or just *the right number of protons and electrons* coming about.

- 1) That's about 1 part in 1037 (or 1 in  $10^{37}$ ). Astrophysicist Hugh Ross says that would be the same odds as covering one million continents the size of North America in dimes, stacked up to the height of the moon, then painting one dime red, mixing it in with the one million North American continents worth of dimes, and having a blindfolded friend pick out one red dime. The odds that your blindfolded friend would pick out the one red dime is roughly 1 in  $10^{37}$ .

Multiply these odds together, and it is *extremely improbable*, nearly impossible, for us to have life *by chance*. The fine tuning points to an Intelligent Designer.

### 3. **The Moral Argument-** To have an objective morality you must have a God.

The argument goes like this:

- 1) If God does not exist, objective<sup>2</sup> moral values and duties do not exist.
- 2) Objective moral values and duties do exist.
- 3) Therefore, God exists.

**Values.** If there is no God, nothing is intrinsically valuable, including humans. We are just another biological organism living on a planet, no more valuable than an ant.

- An atheist may retort: "humans are more valuable because they are more advanced and intelligent." But who gets to decide that something is more valuable if it is more advanced or intelligent? Why not value the simplest life forms?

Furthermore, no other *values* can exist: love, goodness, and beauty are all just chemical reactions or perceptions in our brains that have no real value. Ultimately, they are meaningless.

**Duties.** If moral values do not exist, neither do moral duties. Killing a person is no different than killing an ant. As Dostoevsky said, "If God does not exist, then all things are permitted." This is why atheistic countries tend to have so many human rights violations.

However, we know that these things clearly do exist. We attribute value to things. And we know that certain things are clearly wrong and some are clearly right. There *must* be an objective morality and truth that gives meaning and purpose to our lives, and it must come from *outside* us.

**Discussion:** Which one of these arguments makes the most sense to you? Which one do you believe to be the most compelling?

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<sup>1</sup> Lee Strobel uses this analogy in the film The Case for A Creator.

<sup>2</sup> Objective means that it is what it is regardless of what anyone thinks. Something is *subjective* if it is dependent on someone's opinion.