

How Can I Believe in God?

Series: How Can I Believe?

Brad Bailey – April 15, 2018

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” Gen. 1:1

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge” – Prov.1:7

1. Our _____ does not suggest that we are the source and center of life.

2. Our existence appears to have a point of _____.

3. Our world must have a _____ that is not dependent nor contingent on the material world created.

4. The “_____” of power, beauty, and goodness in what exists.

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

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. - Romans 1:20

5. Human life bears a longing for _____ - a connection beyond the bounds of time and space.

“God has planted eternity in the human heart.” - Ecclesiastes 3:11

6. Human life is drawn into _____ – as a window to what we long to realize.

7. Human life bears a sense of _____ right ...and _____.

8. The _____ as an encounter with what is true and trustworthy.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. - John 1:14

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being. - Hebrews 1:3

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Main point: To help engage some of the reasonable basis for believing in God....while recognizing that it is a relationship between ourselves as finite and God as infinite which cannot be reduced merely to our reason.

Intro –

Today we are continuing our series entitled... “How Can I Believe?”

In the seven weeks ahead, we are going to engage seven questions:

- *How Can I Believe **in God?***
- *How Can I Believe in the **Bible?***
- *How Can I Believe in **Jesus?***
- *How Can I Believe in **One Ultimate Truth?***
- *How Can I Believe in **a Good God in a Suffering World?***
- *How Can I Believe in **God and Science?***
- *How Can I Believe **What is Often Associated with Hate and Hypocrisy?***

Today...we begin with: ***How can I believe in God?***

I know that some are here for whom this has become so true as to find yourself almost beyond questions. It may not seem natural to engage such a relationship to such a mere rational assessment. And indeed, it shouldn't.

Yesterday we celebrated my wife's birthday. And if you asked me to tell you about the love that I have for her... it would be a rich response...but if you asked me to prove her existence...or perhaps prove that love itself even exists... in many respects the whole process would be limited. So we are wise to understand that a relationship does not come from mere mental assessment.

But I think many if not most of us may appreciate the man who said to Jesus,

“I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!” - Mark 9:24

Jesus heard an honest heart. It reflects the reality that when we speak about the larger questions of life, we always are speaking about that in which we may have both reasons to believe...and things we don't understand. We will always be developing an ability to trust what we don't understand by what we do understand...and that is really what faith is.

So I want to help us to know that faith has its questions ...and its reasons.

Many may be aware or familiar with what is often referred to as the “New atheist.” Over the past decade... the voices of Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and the late Christopher Hitchens

rose up as **emboldened voices of atheism**... denouncing belief in God. They each **wrote books** meant to **reach popular culture**...and **engage in a lot of public venues**.

Those who have written assessment of these new works in particular.... Nearly all have the same observation... there is **nothing really new in the arguments they offer**.

So what is creating a new force against belief in God? It's not primarily new insights...but new **antagonism towards the ills of religion**. [1]

This recent movement ...arose in light of the events of 9/11.

Watching those planes fly into those buildings... it **left a deep impression in all of us**. We watched one of the greatest atrocities done in the name of God. We have a history of wars that claimed religious identity...across religious identities. So I certainly share their disdain.

But I wonder if that really says more about us...about the human nature than the existence of God. The truth is that people have used the name of God to rally what is really just their own pursuit of power... their own justification to stir hate. Claiming God is both one of the easiest ways to justify human violence... and one of the most evil. The truth is that people have carried out horrible acts regardless of any meaningful religious meaning. It is **human nature**.

But of course, they **don't just attack** what they deem to be the **effects** of religion...but ultimately the **basis** for religion or beliefs.

They deem belief in God in the most condescending way.

From what **I read... hear**... what **many of their own colleagues** hear...is that **while bright and bold**... there is something **quite simplistic** in their assessment. They are simplistic in what they generalize about what people belief...and they are simplistic in grasping the limitations of what we really know.

The Bible never argues for the existence of God. It begins instead with a simple, majestic sentence:

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

The Bible begins with a **declaration**... **not with an argument**.

There is a God who created all things.

If you do not start there, you will miss the central truth of the universe.

That's what Proverbs 1:7 means when it says...

***"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge..."* - Proverbs 1:7**

All things begin with God.

All knowledge begins with God.

It is in precisely this sense that the Bible proclaims that **those who deny God are “fools”** (Psalms 14:1). It is not a matter of intelligence... IQ...but of wisdom.

If you **leave God out** of the calculation, you have **missed the central fact** of the universe. You are **wrong at the very core of life**, and therefore **life itself will remain a mystery to you**. [2]

So the first point to consider is that...

1. Our existence does not suggest that we are the source and center of life.

This at once reminds us that in asking “How can we believe in God?”...we are not asking about what lies in the material creation...but **we are speaking** of that which **transcends us... our space, time, nature, reasoning**.

As N.T. Wright says...

“A great many arguments about God - God's existence, God's nature, God's actions in the world-run the risk of being like pointing a flashlight toward the sky to see if the sun is shining. It is all too easy to make the mistake of speaking and thinking as though God (if there is a God) might be a being, an entity, within our world, accessible to our interested study in the same sort of way we might study music or mathematics, open to our investigation by the same sort of techniques we use for objects and entities within our world. The difficulty is that speaking of God in anything like the Christian sense is like staring into the sun. It's dazzling. It's easier, actually, to look away from the sun itself and to enjoy the fact that, once it's well and truly risen, you can see everything else clearly. [3]

Wisdom would remind us that the knowledge of God involves grasping that our position is that of being finite creatures not looking within our finite world... but to that which transcends it.

This little matter of existence is itself a rather significant starting place... which leads to a second point.

2. Our existence appears to have a point of grand beginning.

The theory of **macro evolution... of life evolving over time...** has left many wondering how it should affect their belief in God.

We will focus specifically on the **nature of science and God in a few weeks...** but what I do want to note today... is that the **tension lies more with secondary issues**.

Many have naturally read the declaration that God created as a poetic summary... in which the process is secondary. There was a grand beginning and God was behind it.

In one of the most startling developments of modern science, we now have pretty strong evidence that the universe is not eternal in the past but had an absolute beginning about 13 billion years ago in a cataclysmic event known as the Big Bang. What makes the Big Bang so startling is that it represents the origin of the universe from literally nothing. For all matter and energy, even physical space and time themselves, came into being at the Big Bang.

Professor Nathan Aviezer of Bar-Ilan University told the Times of Israel.

“Without addressing who or what caused it, the mechanics of the creation process in the Big Bang match the Genesis story perfectly. If I had to make up a theory to match the first passages in Genesis, the Big Bang theory would be it.” [4]

The point is that if one believes the increasingly accepted theory of all the material world ...and space and time... coming into existence in some nano-second big bang... what it describes it not in conflict with the central declaration of God creating the heavens and the earth... it captures it.

And it points further when we consider a third point...

3. Our world must have a source that is not dependent nor contingent on the material world created.

The simplest way to describe this point is that everything in the material world that exists... came into existence by something else. Something doesn't come from nothing.

All things need a cause outside of themselves in order to exist. Therefore there must Uncaused Being who does not have to receive existence like us—and like every other link in the chain of receivers.

And the cause or source cannot be contingent or dependent on what it creates. What lies behind the creation of matter must not be contingent on such matter. And if space and time had a moment of beginning...then the source was not dependent on that space and time which was created.

So everything points to there being an uncaused being that is pre-existent... outside of space and time...and of infinite power.

4. The “fingerprints” of power, beauty, and goodness in what exists.

Psalm 19:1

The heavens declare the glory of God.

The heaven's declare the glory of God... that is ...the GOODNESS of God.

Romans 1:20

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.

Something about God “gets through” to every person.

Paul comments that the truth of God in nature has been “clearly seen, being understood from what has been made.” “Clearly seen” means that everyone has seen something of divine power and nature....and it is understood...meaning one will at some level recognize that there is indeed a power of greatness... beauty that should awe us...and rightness that should beckon us.

There nature of our world does do this...it speaks of **qualities** that **amaze us... inspire us.**

The massive nature of our universe and the energy of the sun...they declare a source of power that can't be grasped. And there is a beauty that defies necessity. A beauty that countless artists try to capture... that all the CGI can never out due. There are qualities of goodness that inspire us...that can move us to tears.

These qualities of power, beauty, and goodness... reveal **God's invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature.**

The problem is not simply that we dismiss them...but we allow them to become the greatest worth in themselves...the very things we worship. That is how clearly they remain that which so many say gives them a sense of something spiritual...of feeling close to God.

They are what we could call the fingerprints of God. [5]

Ad if we think more deeply about the nature of the qualities we look to, some would note that we define the very nature of such qualities in life by degrees... or levels. What inspires us is the degree of something and that suggests that there is an ultimate degree...the perfection.

William Lane Craig explains...

“In other words, we all recognize that intelligent being is better than unintelligent being; that a being able to give and receive love is better than one that cannot; that our way of being is better, richer and fuller than that of a stone, a flower, an earthworm, an ant, or even a baby seal.

But if these degrees of perfection pertain to being and being is caused in finite creatures, then there must exist a "best," a source and real standard of all the perfections that we recognize belong to us as beings. This absolutely perfect being—the "Being of all beings," "the Perfection of all perfections"—is God.” [6]

So if we stand in awe of what we deem to be vast... the open ocean... the breadth of the sky... the very quality of greater vastness would be the infinitely vast... the timeless and boundless... fitting the God of eternity testified to in the Scriptures.

And this leads to the nature of our longings.

We have longings that are **deep within our nature**... longings for that which suggests that there are **qualities that transcend our self**. [7]

All of our strongest instincts, all of our strongest desires, correspond to a strong reality. Hunger indicates food. Tiredness suggests sleep. Sexual desire implies sex.

This is true not only of physical desires. Loneliness implies friendship. The desire to behave decently implies the existence of decency.

These longings transcend culture... they exist across human history...

5. Human life bears a longing for transcendence - a connection beyond the bounds of time and space.

We are **drawn to the expanse**... a moment of quietness sitting by the ocean ... a moment of **being swept into a piece of music**... a draw to experience that which is **“bigger than life.”**

The Scriptures tells us that this comes from what God has placed in us.

“God has planted eternity in the human heart.” - Ecclesiastes 3:11

As many have described... there is within us a longing for what this world can never satisfy. Thought it is filled with many moments of joy and goodness... we are never fully home.

Similarly...

6. Human life is drawn into beauty – as a window to what we long to realize.

C.S. Lewis describes this so well...

“We do not want merely to see beauty, though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words — to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. At present we are on the outside of the world, the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendors we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so. Some day, God willing, we shall get in.” [8]

7. Human life bears a sense of moral right ...and justice.

We long for the world to be made right.

As soon as a child develops their voice...it's not long before we are likely to hear screamed out: "It's not fair." It's runs throughout our lives. But what are we appealing to.

How can we **call for what is fair... speak of what is right... or be angry against injustice...**unless there is some basis to claim that such qualities exist that we would both agree to in common.

The question here is not: "must we believe in God in order to live moral lives?" I'm not claiming that we must. Nor is the question: "Can we recognize objective moral values without believing in God?" I think that we can.

Rather the question is: "If God does not exist, do objective moral values exist?"

Again...horrible things have been done in the name of God. But the very premise that they can be deemed wrong...fundamentally wrong...not just functionally preferred... is rooted in the reality that there is a fundamental standard.

If there is no source to our existence...if it is merely a meaningless material process...then we would have to accept that we can never call anything fundamentally wrong. **The one thing that is clear... we cannot refer to what is fair, right, or just if all that exists is the material world. [10]**

Richard Dawkins informs us that his belief in materialistic atheism declares, *"there is at bottom no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pointless indifference. . . . We are machines for propagating DNA It is every living object's sole reason for being."* [9]

Dawkins is being honest. He acknowledges that any idea of good and evil is simply subjective.

Many may like that idea... it means there are no rules...and that can sound appealing. Until...one suffers violence or injustice. In that case they invariably stand with the rest of us in recognizing that certain things ought never to be done.

It is reasonable to understand that moral conscience is the voice of God within the soul, because moral value exists only on the level of persons, minds and wills. And it is hard, if not impossible, to conceive of objective moral principles somehow floating around on their own, apart from any persons.

Finally...

8. The person of Jesus as an encounter with what is true and trustworthy.

How does Jesus help us to consider belief in God? Because there is a lot that is hard to understand...to make sense of...but he is the one deemed to make God clearest to us...to show us what God is like.

John 1:14 (NIV)

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Hebrews 1:3 (NIV)

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being.

There is much we cannot understand... but I see in him that which speaks truth... unlike any other. So when I can't understand... I look at Jesus.

He makes more sense of the world around me...and the world within me...than any other. And while many in this world may be bright and bold... none strike me as trustworthy.

CLOSING:

Let me close with a final word of perspective. **God is not a material body you can know by measuring...** but rather spiritual presence that is always present. God is Spirit, experienced in our spirits... in our hearts... in the way we experience love, peace, and aspiration.

It comes with **reflecting** on the **impact He has** on you and on others.

In the same way that what is believed about the universe is not directly seen...but is derived from the effects that can be seen... so we see what he has done and is doing.

And when we consider believing in God...we are **not asking merely about a proposition...**but a **relationship... between our soul and it's source. There's a danger that arguments for the existence of God could actually distract one's attention from God Himself.**

We mustn't so concentrate on the proofs that we fail to hear the inner voice of God speaking to our heart. For those who listen, God becomes an immediate reality in their lives.

If you're sincerely seeking God, God will make His existence evident to you. The Bible says, **"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."** - James 4:8 (NKJV)

Augustine...after seeking a wild life searching for satisfaction... came to a moment when he realized the greatness of God...and found what his soul had longed for. He would come to write:

"Lord, you have made us for yourself. Our hearts are restless until they find rest in you." - Augustine

Resources:

Why I Believe in God – Ray Pritchard; <https://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/why-i-believe-in-god/>

[Free eBooklet: "Two Dozen Theistic Arguments," by Alvin Plantinga](#)

20 Arguments For God's Existence by [Dr. Peter Kreeft](#)

Filed under [The Existence of God](#)

<http://strangenotions.com/god-exists/>

The New Atheism and Five Arguments for God - William Lane Craig

<https://www.reasonablefaith.org/writings/popular-writings/existence-nature-of-god/the-new-atheism-and-five-arguments-for-god/>

The God question: listen to your inner voice - Greg Sheridan, The Australian, October 28, 2017;

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/inquirer/the-god-question-listen-to-your-inner-voice/news-story/2fe03ae045e5540e04e85bb44e665151>

Does God Exist? William Lane Craig

<https://www.reasonablefaith.org/writings/popular-writings/existence-nature-of-god/does-god-exist/>

Notes:

1. Regarding the nature of narratives regarding what is foolish...

The new atheism once again espouses that it is the champion of those who embrace the "unencumbered self" and seek after universal truths independent of any particular communal narrative or influence. True "belief," it was asserted, is something we must attain to by ourselves, and is based on a blind optimism about the power of individualism and human reason to bring us to absolute certainty in knowledge. Religious faith, as such, was abstracted from the "text" of communal life, rituals and teaching -- the very context wherein faith was ordinarily born throughout human history!

We must recall that one narrative assumes belief in God is simply a myth that is culturally needed and passed on. But in truth - no one is free of personal and cultural influence...and I would suggest that the greatest danger in belief lies in those who think they have none.

As writer Greg Sheridan notes,

It is the most insufferable condescension and unjustified vanity on our part to think of all of the rest of humanity, in the past, and beyond our little slice of the West today, as trapped in superstition, while we alone are wise, enlightened and free.

Understand that there is nothing in reason that contradicts God. That our public culture so routinely suppresses this knowledge, mocks it and teaches the reverse, demonstrates just what a

strange and dangerous cultural dead end we have wandered into. Yet even in our moment, in our society, there is already a nostalgia for God.

Reasoning from first principles, of course, is not even the primary rational way you can come to a rational knowledge of God.

For it is one of the central realities of humanity, one of the deep mysteries of the human condition, that all truth involves a balance of truths. Rationality needs a context in order to be rational. In isolation from all the other human faculties, it becomes a cult of hyper-rationality. And this is not more and better rationality but distorted rationality, and often leads to irrational conclusions. For example, you may describe in exquisite, painstaking rational detail a finger pulling the trigger of a gun, which fires a bullet, which kills a child. The description can become extraordinarily detailed and rational, following an unassailable logic. You can claim as a consequence that you have rationally and exhaustively explained the death of the child.

Yet you have not explained murder. You have said nothing about the morality, or even in a larger sense the cause, of the child's death. Rationality alone is not sufficient — necessary, yes, but not sufficient.

Consider something entirely different. In one of the most important decisions we make in life, rationality is a part, but only a part, and not always the most important part. When you choose, say, your life's partner, the decision is partly rational but not purely or wholly rational. There is a spark of romance, an intuition of commitment, an excitement, a sense beyond the rational of adventure and deep homecoming." - The God question: listen to your inner voice - Greg Sheridan, The Australian, October 28, 2017;

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/inquirer/the-god-question-listen-to-your-inner-voice/news-story/2fe03ae045e5540e04e85bb44e665151>

Also... Benjamin Wiker, Ph.D notes, "Despite the touting of atheism as purely rational, the truth is that atheism is more an emotional response than a reasonable conclusion."

From: Emotional Atheism by Benjamin Wiker, Ph.D (from 'tothesource') -

<http://tothesource.org/anti-theism/emotional-atheism-2/>

2. Atheism is not just a philosophical position. It's also a moral choice of the heart. To choose not to believe has enormous moral implications. Because we do not live in true moral neutrality, someone is truly and absolutely and utterly wrong. And they are wrong at the starting point. While we cannot become the actual judges, who discern a person's heart, we can say that there is more than mere rational deduction at hand. The process of deduction involves spiritual sight...and the will of the heart.

2 Corinthians 4:4 declares. "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."

3. From "Simply Christian" by N.T. Wright, pp. 55-56

4. From: New Big Bang evidence supports Biblical creation - By David Shamah, 19 March 2014, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/with-new-big-bang-evidence-creation-is-a-fact/>

The article goes on to state:

According to Genesis, the universe was created from a ball of energy and light that appeared suddenly from nothingness — exactly the same ball of energy and light described in the Big Bang theory. Throughout the centuries, creation ex nihilo was considered impossible, but today it is taken as scientific fact, said Aviezer.

Accepting this has nothing to do with religion, he added; no less a personage than Cambridge University cosmologist Prof. Steven Hawking wrote that “the actual point of creation lies outside the scope of presently known laws of physics.” According to Prof. Joseph Silk of the University of California, author of a recent book on modern cosmology, “the big bang is the modern version of the creation of the universe.”

In his book, “In the Beginning,” Aviezer quotes a wide range of scientists (“and I make sure never to quote religious scientists,” he added), including Paul Dirac, a Nobel laureate from Cambridge University and a leading physicist of the twentieth century. “Dirac said very clearly that the Big Bang theory means that ‘it is certain that the universe began at a definite time through an act of creation,’ and Dirac is a big atheist.”

One doesn’t have to believe in God to accept the Bible’s point of view on the Big Bang, Aviezer said. “It’s an example of Divine irony that it took atheistic scientists like Dirac and all the others to point out the truth of the Torah. At this point I think we can say that creation is a scientific fact.”

Related to this issue P. C. W. Davies explains, "the coming into being of the universe, as discussed in modern science . . . is not just a matter of imposing some sort of organization . . . upon a previous incoherent state, but literally the coming-into-being of all physical things from nothing."

It should be noted that Richard Dawkin’s makes clear that Darwin explained what is not merely “random” chance...but a guiding process of natural selection. That is a helpful distinction. But to the stuff that doesn’t fit ... he shows his presupposition. He suggests that God cannot be the something from which everything came...because it must be less than what was. He says: “Intelligent, creative, complex, statistically improbable things come late into the universe, as the product of evolution or some other process of gradual escalation from simple beginnings. They come late into the universe and therefore cannot be responsible for designing it.” - Richard Dawkins in *Why There Almost Certainly Is No God* (October 23, 2006)

5. One author (whose source I lost) noted the significance often looked away from'

Isa 40:26 "Look up at the sky! Who created the stars that you see? The One who leads them out like an army, He knows how many there are and calls them each one by name."

ILLUS: One night Napoleon Bonaparte was sailing down the Mediterranean toward Egypt with his military force. His officers, most of them skeptics, were standing under the glittering stars on the ship's deck talking about their atheist theories. After a while Napoleon grew tired of it all and said, "Your arguments are all very clever, gentlemen, but who made all those stars?" A heavy silence followed as Napoleon walked his way to his sleeping quarters and left the men gazing up to the dazzling stars in the sky. Billions of them.

And if God knows the names of 200 billion stars, he hasn't forgotten your name. What matters to you, matters to him. What concerns you, concerns him. What troubles you, troubles him. The Creator of the Universe is not too big, too removed, too powerful to know your name, to care for you, and to guide your life. The stars shout out "God cares. He's interested in people. He knows our names."

6 From: The New Atheism and Five Arguments for God - William Lane Craig

<https://www.reasonablefaith.org/writings/popular-writings/existence-nature-of-god/the-new-atheism-and-five-arguments-for-god/>

The Argument from Degrees of Perfection

7. As Larry Crabb, a well-known psychologist describes,

"Ever since God expelled Adam and Eve from the garden, we have lived in an unnatural environment, a world in which we were not designed to live. We were built to enjoy a garden without weeds, relationships without friction, fellowship without distance. But something is wrong, and we know it, both within our world and within ourselves. Deep inside we sense we're out of the nest, always ending the day in a motel room, never at home."

(Larry Crabb, Inside Out)

Malcolm Muggeridge also describes the strange sense of satisfaction of not being home that we must keep alive

"For me there has always been--and I count it the greatest of all blessings--a window never finally blacked out, a light never finally extinguished. I had a sense, sometimes enormously vivid, that I was a stranger in a strange land; a visitor, not a native, a displaced person. The feeling, I was surprised to find, gave me a great sense of satisfaction, almost of ecstasy. Days or weeks or months might pass. Would it ever return--the lostness? I strain my ears to hear it, like a distant music; my eyes see it as a very bright light very far away. Has it gone forever? And then--ah! the relief. Like slipping away from a sleeping embrace, silently shutting the door behind one, tiptoeing off in the gray light of dawn--a stranger again. The only ultimate disaster that can befall

all of us, I have come to realize, is to feel ourselves at home here on earth. As long as we are aliens, we cannot forget our true homeland."

8. From C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*. The complete quote:

"We do not want merely to see beauty, though, God knows, even that is bounty enough. We want something else which can hardly be put into words—to be united with the beauty we see, to pass into it, to receive it into ourselves, to bathe in it, to become part of it. That is why we have peopled air and earth and water with gods and goddesses and nymphs and elves—that, though we cannot, yet these projections can, enjoy in themselves that beauty, grace, and power of which Nature is the image. That is why the poets tell us such lovely falsehoods. They talk as if the west wind could really sweep into a human soul; but it can't... Or not yet. For if we take the imagery of Scripture seriously... then we may surmise that both the ancient myths and the modern poetry, so false as history, may be very near the truth as prophecy. At present we are on the outside of the world, the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendors we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so. Some day, God willing, we shall get in." C.S. Lewis

Consider also...

"The books or the music in which we thought beauty was located will betray us if we trust to them; it was not in them, it only came through them, and what came through them was longing. These things - the beauty, the memory of our own past are good images of what we really desire; but if they are mistaken for the thing itself they turn into dumb idols, breaking the hearts of their worshipers. For they are not the thing itself; they are only the scent of a flower we have not found, the echo of a tune we have not heard, news from a country we have never yet visited." ...C.S. Lewis, *A Mind Awake* pp. 22-23

"The tragedy of the world is that the echo is mistaken for the Original Shout. When our back is to the breathtaking beauty of God, we cast a shadow on the earth and fall in love with it. But it does not satisfy.".....John Piper

Also...Regarding how we experience the world, John Horgan is Director of the Center for Science Writings at Stevens Institute of Technology (New Jersey)...and former senior writer at *Scientific American*. In a recent debate (2/15) on "Can Faith and Science Coexist?"... he wanted to explain why he was not an atheist....

Anti-religion scientists such as Dawkins, [Lawrence Krauss](#) and [Stephen Hawking](#) have overstated science's power to solve all the secrets of the universe. Yes, science has helped us map out the structure and history of reality, from the largest to the smallest scales. And yet the origin

of the universe and of life and the nature of consciousness [remain paradoxically as mysterious as ever](#).

Science and religion converge in one important way. The more scientists investigate our origins, the more improbable our existence seems. If you define a miracle as an infinitely improbable event, then our existence, you might say, is a miracle. Scientists try in vain to hand-wave our improbability away with silly tautologies such as the anthropic principle, which says that reality must be as we observe it to be, because otherwise we wouldn't be here to observe it. During so-called religious or mystical experiences, we experience reality's miraculousness—and especially its goodness—in a powerful, visceral way, which makes it hard to believe that reality stems from pure chance. Even Steven Weinberg, a physicist and adamant atheist, once conceded that "[sometimes nature seems more beautiful than strictly necessary](#)." My own mystical intuitions keep me from ruling out the possibility of supernatural creation.

9. William Craig cites: The quotation seems to be a pastiche from Richard Dawkins, *River out of Eden: A Darwinian View of Life* (New York: Basic, 1996), 133, and Richard Dawkins, "The Ultraviolet Garden," Lecture 4 of 7 Royal Institution Christmas Lectures (1992), <http://physicshead.blogspot.com/2007/01/richard-dawkins-lecture-4-ultraviolet.html>

10. The theory of evolution guided solely by natural selection alone is challenged to provide a reason to care for the weak. Darwin's own thoughts seem at the very least to strain...

"With savages, the weak in body or mind are soon eliminated; and those that survive commonly exhibit a vigorous state of health. We civilized men, on the other hand, do our utmost to check the process of elimination. We build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed and the sick; we institute poor-laws; and our medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of every one to the last moment. There is reason to believe that vaccination has preserved thousands, who from a weak constitution would formerly have succumbed to small-pox. Thus the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind. No one who has attended to the breeding of domestic animals will doubt that this must be highly injurious to the race of man. It is surprising how soon a want of care, or care wrongly directed, leads to the degeneration of a domestic race; but excepting in the case of man himself, hardly anyone is so ignorant as to allow his worst animals to breed.

The aid which we feel impelled to give to the helpless is mainly an incidental result of the instinct of sympathy, which was originally acquired as part of the social instincts, but subsequently rendered, in the manner previously indicated, more tender and more widely diffused. Nor could we check our sympathy, even at the urging of hard reason, without deterioration in the noblest part of our nature. The surgeon may harden himself whilst performing an operation, for he knows that he is acting for the good of his patient; but if we were intentionally to neglect the weak and helpless, it could only be for a contingent benefit, with an overwhelming present evil. Hence we must bear without complaining the undoubtedly bad

effects of the weak surviving and propagating their kind; but there appears to be at least one check in steady action, namely the weaker and inferior members of society not marrying so freely as the sound; and this check might be indefinitely increased, though this is more to be hoped for than expected.” - Charles Darwin (1871) *The Descent of Man*, 1st edition, [pages 168 - 169](#)

See also - *Morality Requires A God, Whether You're Religious Or Not* by Gerald K Harrison, Lecturer in Philosophy, Massey University, May 28, 2015

<https://theconversation.com/morality-requires-a-god-whether-youre-religious-or-not-42411>