

## How Do We Know God Exists? For the week of April 7, 2024

### Reflection

1. What were some of the takeaways, for you, from Sunday's sermon?
2. Were there questions, comments, concerns...?

In this study, groups will review, examine, and discuss three arguments of Defending the Faith (apologetics) on "How Do We Know God Exists." At the end of each argument, there will be space to write observations, thoughts, and questions.

**Christian apologetics is neither a new practice nor is it unbiblical. In fact, it is not only modeled in the New Testament, but it is also commanded. The Greek word *apologia*, which is where we get our word *apologetics*, is used to describe a defense, as in a legal defense or making a case. In the New Testament it is translated as *defense* or *vindication*<sup>1</sup> (Acts 22:1; Phil 1:7, 16; 1 Pet3:15-16). In Acts 17:22–34, we see a picture of Paul practicing apologetics in Athens on Mars Hill.<sup>2</sup>**

### **The Cosmological Argument** (Gen 1:1; Jn 1:1-3; Rom 1:20; Col 1:16; Heb 11:3; Rev 4:11)

The theory of relativity, which is almost universally accepted among scientists, has certain implications for this Law of Cause and Effect. One is that the universe, defined as time, space, matter, and physical energy had a beginning, that it is not eternal. And it is through Einstein's equations that scientists can trace the development of the universe back to its very origin, back to what is called the "singularity event" when it actually came into being. Science has proven that the universe really did have a beginning. This means that if the universe had a starting point in history, then it obviously began to exist, and it must have a cause for its existence.

Therefore, if the universe needs a cause for its coming into being, then that cause must be beyond the universe—which is time, space, matter, and physical energy. That cause must be something similar to what Christians call "God."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Doug Powell, [Holman QuickSource Guide to Christian Apologetics](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2006), 12.

<sup>2</sup> Doug Powell, [Holman QuickSource Guide to Christian Apologetics](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2006), 14.

<sup>3</sup> Got Questions Ministries, [Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered](#) (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2002–2013).

We can best summarize this cosmological evidence with the following statements:

- (1) Whatever begins to exist must have a cause for its existence.
- (2) The universe began to exist.
- (3) Therefore, the universe must have a cause for its existence.
- (4) The attributes of the cause of the universe (being timeless, existing outside of space, and so on) are the attributes of God.
- (5) Therefore, the cause of the universe must be God (Genesis 1:1).<sup>4</sup>

### 3. Observations/Thoughts on the Cosmological Argument

#### **The Moral Argument** (Rom 2:14-15; James 4:12)

The moral argument begins with the fact that all people recognize some moral code (that some things are right, and some things are wrong). Every time we argue over right and wrong, we appeal to a higher law that we assume everyone is aware of, holds to, and is not free to arbitrarily change. Right and wrong imply a higher standard or law, and law requires a lawgiver. Because the Moral Law transcends humanity, this universal law requires a universal lawgiver. This, it is argued, is God.<sup>5</sup>

Morals are not opinions. They are not personal, private decisions, and they are not descriptions of behavior. They are prescriptions for behavior and motive that have the force of a command. They contain a sense of obligation and oughtness that is universal, authoritative, and outweighs considerations of culture, time, and place.<sup>6</sup>

If God does not exist, then morality does not exist. Morality does exist. Therefore, God exists.

### 4. Observations/Thoughts on the Moral Argument

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<sup>4</sup> Got Questions Ministries, [Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered](#) (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2002–2013).

<sup>5</sup> Got Questions Ministries, [Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered](#) (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2002–2013).

<sup>6</sup> Doug Powell, [Holman QuickSource Guide to Christian Apologetics](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2006), 82.

**The (Design) Teleological** (the study of a thing's purpose or design) **Argument** (Psalm 119:18; Rom 1:20; Heb 11:3)

Imagine you are walking through the woods and find a watch lying on the ground. What would your first thought be? That random factors over time just happened to form a watch and then cough it up from the ground? That stray bits of metal chanced to assemble themselves in a way that just happened to be useful? That a spring was formed with no purpose and inadvertently came across a cog that was formed with no purpose and then were joined accidentally to a number of other gears, springs, and cogs, eventually forming a fully functioning and accurate instrument that could measure time? Of course not. You would assume someone had dropped it. This is because of its obvious design features. The precision and intentionality of the mechanism betray a purpose, a plan. There must have been an intelligence who conceived of the watch and its workings and then created the watch.<sup>7</sup>

If designs imply a designer, and the universe shows marks of design, then the universe was designed. Clearly, every life form in Earth's history has been highly complex. A single strand of DNA equates to one volume of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. The human brain has approximately 10 billion gigabytes of capacity. Besides living things here on Earth, the whole universe seems designed for life. Literally hundreds of conditions are required for life on Earth—everything from the mass density of the universe down to earthquake activity must be fine-tuned in order for life to survive. The random chance of all these things occurring is literally beyond imagination. The odds are many orders of magnitude higher than the number of atomic particles in the whole universe! With this much design, it is difficult to believe that we are simply an accident.<sup>8</sup>

## 5. Observations/Thoughts on the Teleological Argument

### Questions:

6. Why do you believe God exists?

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<sup>7</sup> Doug Powell, [Holman QuickSource Guide to Christian Apologetics](#) (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2006), 49–50.

<sup>8</sup> Got Questions Ministries, [Got Questions? Bible Questions Answered](#) (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2002–2013).

