

SHEFFEY BIBLE COLLEGE — STUDENT HANDOUT

Course: Systematic Theology I
Instructor: Dr. Ancel Presnell, Jr
Chapter 9 — The Existence of God

What You Should Learn from Today's Lecture

Define how we know that God exists.
Explain humanity's inner sense of God.
Identify the evidence of God in Scripture and nature.
Understand the traditional proofs for God's existence.
Recognize why true belief requires God's intervention.

I. Humanity's Inner Sense of God

All people have a deep, inner sense that God exists, that they are His creatures, and that He is their Creator.

The Bible teaches that even unbelievers:

- Knew God
- Did not honor Him
- Suppressed the truth

“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.”

—Romans 1:19

“For that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful...”

—Romans 1:21

“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God...”

—Psalm 14:1

Sin causes people to:

- Suppress truth
- Think irrationally
- Deny what they know

In the believer, this awareness becomes personal and relational:

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:”
—Romans 8:16

Notes:

Key Truth:

All people possess an inner knowledge of God, but sin suppresses that truth until God awakens the heart.

II. Believing the Evidence in Scripture and Nature

God has revealed Himself not only internally, but externally through Scripture and creation.

Scripture assumes God’s existence:

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”
—Genesis 1:1

Creation clearly reveals God:

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen...”
—Romans 1:20

Creation testifies to:

- God’s eternal power
- God’s divine nature
- God’s wisdom and design

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.”
—Psalm 19:1–2

All creation points to God:

- Human life
- Nature
- Daily provision

Notes:

Key Truth:

God has clearly revealed Himself through Scripture and creation, leaving all humanity without excuse.

III. Traditional Proofs for the Existence of God

These arguments analyze the evidence from creation and show that belief in God is rational.

Cosmological Argument

The universe has a cause → that cause is God

Teleological Argument

The universe shows design and purpose → there must be a Designer

Ontological Argument

God is the greatest conceivable being → existence belongs to His nature

Moral Argument

Moral law exists → there must be a moral Lawgiver

These proofs:

- Are based on true facts
- Are logically valid
- Help answer objections

However:

- They cannot produce saving faith
- They cannot overcome sinful resistance

Notes:

Key Truth:

Rational arguments affirm God’s existence, but they cannot replace the need for spiritual transformation.

IV. Only God Enables True Belief

Because of sin, people are spiritually blind and unable to come to true belief on their own.

“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not...”

—2 Corinthians 4:4

“...the world by wisdom knew not God...”

—1 Corinthians 1:21

“And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom...
That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”

—1 Corinthians 2:4–5

Key truths:

- Human wisdom is insufficient
- Sin blinds the mind
- God must open the heart
- Faith comes through God’s power

Notes:

Key Truth:

Only God can overcome spiritual blindness and enable a person to truly believe in His existence.

V. Discussion Questions

Why do people deny God’s existence even when evidence is clearly present?

How should a believer respond to someone who rejects the existence of God?

Things to Know (Exam Review Section)

All people possess an inner sense of God's existence.

Sin causes suppression of truth, not absence of knowledge.

Denial of God is rooted in moral rebellion.

Scripture assumes and reveals God's existence.

Creation clearly testifies to God's power and nature.

Faith in God is based on reliable evidence, not blind belief.

The cosmological argument teaches that God is the cause of the universe.

The teleological argument teaches that design requires a designer.

The moral argument teaches that moral law requires a lawgiver.

Only God can enable true belief due to spiritual blindness.

Closing Summary

The existence of God is clearly revealed through both the inner awareness placed within humanity and the external evidence found in Scripture and creation. Though sinful man suppresses this truth, the evidence remains overwhelming. Rational arguments confirm what creation declares, but only God can open the heart to believe. Therefore, faith in God is both reasonable and dependent upon His power.

ASSIGNMENT

Read Chapter 9 — The Existence of God