

Questions

4/11/21

Does God Exist?

Sunday AM

I like the story told of a father/son out fishing one day. While in the boat, the young boy, curious about the world around him, began asking his dad questions. "Dad, how does this boat float?" His dad replied, "Son, I don't rightly know." A few min. later, the boy asked, "Dad, how do fish breath underwater?" Again, the dad said, "Son, I don't rightly know." The boy then asked, "Well do you know why is the sky blue?" His dad replied, "Nope, I don't rightly know." Finally, the son asked, "Dad, do you mind me asking you all these questions?" The dad replied, "Of course not, son. if you don't ask questions, you'll never learn nothin'."

Questions are essential in life – aren't they? And yes, every once in a while, we're likely to ask a question some might consider to be a dumb question. Personally, I believe all questions at their core are good b/c they're seeking answers/explanations to something for which we lack knowledge, understanding, or insight. So, **NEVER** be afraid to ask dumb questions – because dumb questions are easier to handle and correct than dumb mistakes.

DYK Jesus was the king of questions. He'd often answer a question w/ a question. So was the guy who influenced/discipled me. Carl actually had a printed list of 153 key questions about faith/life. Like Jesus, he'd often answer any question w/ a question.

Today, I want to take a few weeks to answer questions you might have about faith, life, and culture. Questions you might have, or that you've been asked. While I'm not likely to get to all of your questions in 5 weeks, I'm hoping I can hit on 1/2. To begin, I think the first question must begin w/ God – ***Does God exist?***

This is the fundamental question to life! If there's a God, then what's life about? Whereas, if there's no God, then what's our obligation to ourselves? Whether you know it or not – there are just (3) conclusions:

- **Theism** – God Exists
- **Agnosticism** – God might exist
- **Atheism** – God does not exist

Rest assured – whichever "ISM" you choose, it'll be a choice of faith that'll influence every aspect of life. So, choose wisely. Not only will it impact your morals/values, your sense of right/wrong, good/evil; it will impact how you see/treat people – and potentially, most importantly – it could impact your eternity!

Point – like elections, ideas/beliefs have consequences

Morality – what is right and what is wrong?

Faith – is there a God or not?

Truth – are there any real absolutes in life?

Eternity – is there life after death or is this life it?

WTM – let's delve into the existence of God.

Have you heard of the ***God Particle***? In 1964, physicist Peter Higgs introduced this quantum theory that's also known as the ***Higgs boson***. The theory claims the *God Particle* is a unique subatomic particle that "*allows all other particles in the universe*" to bond together and have mass. In theory, the *God Particle* is the atomic matter that keeps all other matter from becoming anti-matter causing our universe to implode.

In Feb. 2009, scientists gathered at Chicago's Fermilab to conduct experiments to discover the God particle. Taking the elements of an atom (protons, electrons, neutrons and the (17) sub-atomic particles of (6) uncharged leptons, (6) charged quarks and (5) force-carrying bosons, – they believed by smashing these particles into each other they could replicate the "Big Bang." The idea was b/c the *God particle* is a charged particle, it'd pull/hold matter together. Of course, they admitted that should they prove the Higgs boson does not exist; they'd have to create a new theory to explain *how atoms congeal into matter*. Even though they still haven't concluded the origin of these atomic elements.

In a July 26, 2009 Parade article, the spokesman for Fermilab assessed their progress w/ an ongoing question from his mother, "Have you found God yet?" His answer was concise – NO! Could it be b/c they're looking to find God but to disproved His existence?

Question – Is there enough proof about God to validate putting your faith in His existence?

Let's begin w/ an important observation – while we cannot use the Bible to defend the existence of God (b/c it'd be self-serving circular reasoning) – the Bible neither avoids nor attempts to prove God's existence. From the first verse in the Bible – **God IS!**

In the beginning, God created... Genesis 1:1

So, what about extra-Biblical evidence? Let me offer the **Big 4** arguments for the existence of God:

I The **ONTOLOGICAL** Argument

Based on Psalm 53:1 – *The fool says in his heart there is no God*, Anselm formed the ontological argument.

This philosophical argument says b/c we can conceive there **IS** a God, then there must **BE** a God.

Truth – nearly all cultures (if not all) thru-out history have a concept of God/morality? Raising the question of how do we account for this inherent knowledge?

Some have suggested this vast knowledge of God is due to a "God-shaped vacuum" in the human heart. The Apostle Paul spoke to this idea in Romans 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 people are w/out excuse.

IOW – All a person has to do is look around and w/in and something inside them will scream there is a God. Something will tell them that they're here b/c someone outside of themselves put everything in place.

II The **COSMOLOGICAL** Argument

Also known as the **CAUSATION** argument – this argument says b/c there's a universe, something beyond itself had to have **caused** it b/c something cannot come from nothing.

Question: *Why is there something instead of nothing?* Whether you accept it or not, the universe demands a verdict? Either God created or something else did.

This is where Science/Scripture agree – evidence proves everything comes from something including our universe. Meaning *everything has a beginning*. The difference is the Bible says God is the cause while some in science claim that when nothing existed, somehow, in some way, something from nothing came to be. **IOW, the Big Bang is the product of nothing combusting from nothing to make something.**

The Bible explains it was God thru Jesus – *The Son is the image (physical representation) of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in Him all things were created... all things have been created thru Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.* Colossians 1:17

III The **TELEOLOGICAL** Argument

Also known as the **DESIGN** argument – this argument says b/c there's compelling evidence of design, order, purpose, and complexity – there must be a designer.

DYK scientist have identified 75 finely tuned aspects of our world which if not present couldn't sustain life. If one was "out of tune" life on earth couldn't survive.

If the earth were 1 degree closer to the sun, we'd fry! If we were 1 degree further, we'd freeze!

If the moon was any closer/larger, the tides would destroy the coast lines. If any smaller/further away, the oceans would die from a lack of nutrient movement.

If Jupiter were any farther, asteroids/comets would hit the earth. If any closer, our orbit would be unstable.

If gravity was any stronger, the earth would retain too much ammonia/methane gas. If any weaker, the atmosphere would lose too much water.

The probability of these 75 factors occurring anywhere in the universe – is 12^{125} . If that's not enough – some 100 bil. other things had to occur for these 75 to exist!

All of this screams, b/c there's order/design, there has to be an intelligent designer.

There's a plethora of examples. Is it possible rain and wind erosion produced the carving on the side of Stone Mtn? Theoretically – **yes**. Probably – **no**. And no sane person would conclude anything other than the work was performed by a sculptor.

If I have all the pieces to a watch and put them in my pocket, how long would I have to walk around until all the pieces fell perfectly into place to have a working watch? Never. Yet b/c I have a working watch, we'd all conclude it was b/c there was a watchmaker!

Consider a box of toothpicks. Suppose I set off a firecracker in the box. What is the probability the explosion will create a toothpick bridge? ZERO! Why? B/c order does not result from chaos; instead, it always points to a designer.

What does this mean? It means the Psalmist knew what he was saying in **Psalm 19**.

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Psalm 19:1

VI The **AXIOLOGICAL** Argument

Known as the **MORAL** Argument – it contends that based on man's conscious knowledge of right/wrong and good/evil (morality), there must be a Lawgiver.

IOW – If life is the result of a random act of evolution, and God doesn't exist; then absolute truth, morality, and ethics are irrelevant/meaningless. But, if life is the result of an omnipotent, holy God, then moral law not only makes sense, it's absolutely necessary.

This argument was formed by Kant who said – *Two things fill the mind w/ ever increasing admiration/awe – the starry heavens above me, the moral law w/in me.*

If there are no moral absolutes such as **God is**, then we're relegated to relativism. That is, there are no absolutes as it relates to culture, morality, and society.

Consider the true story of a philosophy student who wrote an ethics paper arguing there are no absolutes and everything is relative. Judged by the research and scholarship, the paper deserved an "A". But the prof gave it an "F" w/ a note explaining, "I do not like blue covers!" When the student received his grade, he went ballistic and stormed the prof's office, "This isn't fair! Why am I be graded on the color of the cover instead of on the content of the paper." The prof asked, "Was this the paper which argued there are no objective moral absolutes such as fairness/justice and everything is relative to one's preferences?" The student replied, "Yes! The prof said, "Well then, I don't like blue covers – so you get an F!" Suddenly the student realized that moral absolutes are unavoidable. He believed in moral principles such as fairness/justice and expected them to be applied in this situation.

Truth – while on the surface, relativism may appear impressive/inviting, it's philosophically/pragmatically false – logically contradictory, morally inadequate, relationally uncooperative, and existentially unlivable.

So, there you have it. Reason, causality, design, and morality are a few of the reasons for God's existence.

If you remember, when we started, I shared that no matter your choice of belief, whether to be a theist, agnostic, or atheist – *it was a step of faith*. This doesn't mean there's not sufficient evidence or confusion – there is! For me, I believe the evidence for the existence of God is over-whelming.

One thing is certain – a contemplation of the existence of the Divine requires due diligence and faith. So, no one can afford to be like the man fishing who every time he caught a big fish threw it back and only kept the small ones. A mystified bystander asked the man why he was throwing out the big for the small. He replied, "I'm throwing the big ones back b/c I only have an 8" frying pan. Fact is, too many so called agnostics/atheists reject the idea of God b/c it doesn't fit into their naturalistic, intellectual frying pan and their unwilling to make the time to consider the notion that God just might exist. Which is odd when you consider that if God doesn't exist, then they've lost nothing; BUT if He does exist, it'll cost them eternity. **Just how smart is that?**