

# I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist

## Session 5

### 1. Chapter 7 Mother Teresa vs. Hitler

- a. Is there a standard?
  - i. If there is no objective moral standard, then life is nothing more than a glorified Monopoly game. Whatever you acquire goes back in the box when you die.
  - ii. Why do most human beings seem to have the same intuitive sense that they ought to do good and shun evil?
  - iii. Hypothesis: there is a Moral Law that has been written on our hearts
  - iv. The logical Moral Law argument (pg. 171)
    1. Every law has a law giver
    2. There is a Moral Law
    3. Therefore, there is a Moral Law Giver
  - v. Is there really a Moral Law
    1. The Declaration of Independence states that this Law is "self-evident"
    2. Without an objective standard of meaning and morality, then life is meaningless and there's nothing absolutely right or absolutely wrong. Everything is merely a matter of personal opinion.
    3. The Moral Law is demonstrated by the observation that all people are impressed with a fundamental sense of right and wrong (even if some ignore it).
      - a. Love is superior to hate
      - b. Courage is better than cowardice
      - c. There is no land where murder is a virtue and gratitude is a vice
      - d. Everyone knows there are absolute moral obligations that are binding on all people, at all times, and in all places.
    4. How do we know the Moral Law exists?
      - a. The Moral Law is undeniable
      - b. We know it by our reactions
      - c. It is the basis for all human rights
      - d. It is the unchanging standard of justice
      - e. It defines a real difference between moral positions
      - f. Since we know what is absolutely wrong, then there must be an absolute standard of moral rightness
      - g. The Moral Law is the basis for political and social dissent
      - h. If the Moral Law did not exist, then we would not make excuses for violating it
  - vi. The Moral Law is undeniable
    1. If there really is no absolute truth, then a claim that there is no absolute truth can't be true (roadrunner tactic). An irrational claim that affirms what is attempted to be denied
    2. Relativists are absolutely sure that there are no absolutes

3. Absolute values are undeniable. The person who denies the existence of values, actually values the right to deny absolute values, and he wants people to value him for his views.
  4. Saying, "Sit down and shut up, you egghead. Who wants to hear your opinion?" to someone who denies that real values exist will certainly generate a response that proves that they do believe in certain values – namely the right not to be spoken to in a disrespectful way and to have their opinions heard by others.
- vii. Our reactions help to discover the Moral Law
1. The outrage of a relativist student receiving an F on a paper that merely affirms his relativist worldview (he is not relativistic with regards to scoring his work).
  2. Even relativists believe in moral absolutes when they feel they have been treated unfairly or immorally
  3. Reactions to being treated unfairly reveal the Moral Law written on their hearts
  4. Relativism is ultimately an unlivable existence for anyone
  5. Relativism contradicts our reactions and our common sense
  6. Reactions help us identify right and wrong as a nation. Our national reaction to 9/11 reveals that certain acts against innocent people are absolutely wrong
  7. The Moral Law is not always apparent from our own actions (humans choose to do terrible things all the time), but it is revealed in our reactions when we see or experience terrible things for ourselves.
  8. The Moral Law is not always the standard by which we treat others, but it is nearly always the standard by which we expect others to treat us (pg. 175).
  9. It does not describe *how* we actually behave, but rather prescribes how we *ought* to behave.
- viii. Without the Moral Law, there could be no human rights ( or violations of human rights)
1. The Founding Fathers believed that human rights are God-given
  2. They appealed to our Creator to justify their cause because His Moral Law is the unchanging, absolute standard of right and wrong
  3. We know that Hitler and the Nazis actions were absolutely wrong, so there must be an absolute Moral Law
- ix. Without the Moral Law, we couldn't know justice or injustice
1. We can only detect injustice because we know in our hearts what justice is
  2. Without an objective standard, any objection to evil is nothing but your personal opinion
  3. We intuitively know that someone's taste in food (chocolate vs. vanilla) is not the same as having a preference for good or evil
  4. Without a Moral Law, we could not detect injustice of any kind
  5. Without justice, injustice is meaningless
  6. Therefore, because we know evil exists, the Moral law must also exist
- x. Without the Moral Law, there would be no way to measure moral differences
1. If your moral ideas can be truer than someone else's (like the Nazis), then there must be something – some Real Morality – for them to be true about. C.S. Lewis
  2. Moral claims must be based on a real Moral Law
    - a. Murder is evil
    - b. Racism is wrong
    - c. Child abuse is wrong
  3. These standards are clearly not matters of personal preference or opinion

4. The universal, unchanging human standard for morals must be the Moral Law
- xi. Without the Moral Law, we cannot know right and wrong
  1. Attempts to deny that we can know right vs. wrong fail anytime a relativist asserts that something is in fact wrong in their view
  2. Every negation (declaring wrong) implies an affirmation (that is, something must be right or there must be an unchanging standard) – (pg. 180)
  3. Some claim there is no such thing as right or wrong. However, their view is that to accept their standard is right, but opposing their standard is wrong
- xii. Without the Moral Law, there is no moral ground for political or social dissent
  1. By rebelling against the Moral Law, atheists have, ironically, undermined their grounds for rebelling against anything
  2. We know that issues involving life and liberty are more than mere preferences – that they involve real moral rights – therefore, the Moral Law exists.
- xiii. Why make excuses for violating a law that does not exist?
  1. Making excuses for bad behavior is an admission of the Moral Law
  2. Why should anyone have to be tolerant of bad behavior without a Moral Law?
  3. The Moral Law exceeds the plea for tolerance and demands that we demonstrate love for others, not just tolerate them
  4. You don't need to plead with people to tolerate good and moral behavior
- xiv. Confusion over Absolute and Relative Morality
  1. Changing behavior
    - a. What people actually do changes, but what they ought to do does not
    - b. Relativists confuse what people are doing with what they ought to do
  2. Changing perceptions of the facts
    - a. Executing witches who cannot cast murderous spells is wrong, but punishing actual murders is not wrong; it is actually morally correct
    - b. Eating cows is not morally wrong; eating grandma who became a cow would be wrong / murder
    - c. Both examples uphold the same moral code regarding murder as being a violation of the Moral Law
  3. Absolute Morals vs Situational Ethics
    - a. The absolute Moral Law exists even if people fail to apply it properly
    - b. Life has value. The Moral Law confirms this
    - c. Hitler, Islam and countless others had to first dehumanize people in their ideology in order to then justify murdering them. In doing so, they were actually affirming the existence of the Moral Law that prohibits murder
    - d. If one moral obligation can be proven to exist (murder, rape, torture) then the Moral Law is confirmed by our collective human conscience.
  4. Absolute Command vs. Relative Culture
    - a. What vs. how confirms rather than denies the Moral Law (treating strangers with kindness).
    - b. The Moral Law is absolute, how it is practiced is relative
  5. Absolute Morals vs. Moral Disagreements
    - a. Right to Life vs. Right to Liberty
    - b. The controversy is over which value holds the higher moral obligation?
    - c. Suppressing the Moral Law by improper interpretation does not invalidate it

6. Absolute Ends (Values) vs. Relative Means (how it is applied)
  - a. Helping the poor is a value; the means of helping the poor reveals relative viewpoints on how it should be done
  - b. Peace is a value; how to achieve peace is a relative viewpoint
- xv. What do Darwinists Say?
  1. Only matter (materials) exists. But materials don't have inherent morality standards and thus can offer no explanation or justification for morality
  2. Morality is not merely an instinct
    - a. We have multiple, competing instincts
    - b. Something in us tells us to ignore a stronger instinct in order to do something more noble for others (laying down our lives in battle)
  3. Social morals could not have evolved. Blind, naturalistic forces cannot be used to explain higher purposes like survival of the species through moral acts
  4. Darwinists assume survival is a good thing, but there can be no good without a moral law
  5. Darwinists confuse how we come to acknowledge the Moral Law with the Moral Law itself
    - a. Laws in nature exist regardless of how we come to discover them
    - b. Morality exists independently from how each person comes to know it
  6. Darwinists cannot explain why anyone *should* abide by any moral sentiment if it does not come from God
- xvi. Ideas have consequences
  1. Hitler believed in Darwinian principles and determined that certain human races had no inherent right to exist. Hitler murdered millions of innocent humans based on this philosophy, as did many evil regimes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century alone.
  2. Racism and genocide is a logical outworking of materialism and Darwinism
  3. Accepting God and His Moral Law should result in love and self-sacrifice because we can and do recognize the existence of the Moral Law
  4. Darwinists can only consider rape, murder, torture genocide and other forms of evil as personal dislikes rather than real moral wrongdoings.
  5. Darwinists make moral assertions, not arguments. They have eliminated the possibility of a Moral Law Giver from their worldview, so all they can do is offer an assertion or plea for their personal preferences
  6. Darwinists claim that all behaviors are genetically determined. So murder, rape and other attacks on other humans is a natural phenomenon that should not be judged as right or wrong. This assertion is consistent with their materialistic or Darwinist worldviews
  7. In the final analysis, morality without a Law Giver is another "just-so" story in the atheistic worldview
  8. C.S. Lewis: "Human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and cannot really get rid of it. Secondly, they do not in fact behave that way. They know the Law of Nature; they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in."
  9. It is clearly unreasonable to believe that generally accepted moral principles arose from nothing. If they had no source, then they can change along with human preferences for societies to exist.