

Everyone at one time or another wonders, is there really a God? How can I be sure? We've all heard people say man just made up the idea of a God to be a crutch for emotional cripples. What if they are right? Some even say the idea of a 'god' is harmful because it takes away a person's personal responsibility. They say we have outgrown the need of God in this enlightened, scientific era. How are we to answer these claims? How are we to teach our children? Paul says we must "Be ready always to give an answer to any man who asks you the reason of the hope that is in you." (I Peter 3:15) What is our answer to those who say we cannot prove the existence of God?

HOW DO WE  
KNOW THERE IS  
A GOD?

First, we must admit we cannot prove God by the scientific method. But neither can anyone prove Napoleon. There is nothing of either of them to handle, to put under a microscope, but there is plenty of evidence to prove the existence of each one. We're only concerned with God, not Napoleon. There is logical, rational proof that there is a God. These are some of the main arguments:

1. In A Series on Apologetics  
by Jerry Schroyer

**1. THE COSOMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT** is based on cause and effect. There must be an uncaused **cause** for every effect. No **effect** can be produced without a cause that is outside it and greater than it. That book on your table proves there was someone who made it, for it wouldn't have been able to make itself. The same is true of the world around us. This is also true of our subjective emotions like love and hate. There must have been someone beyond and greater than them to create them.

Part of this argument is based on **motion** in the universe. Nothing can move itself. An external agent or force is required. There must be a Being who is the ultimate source of all motion in the universe or it couldn't have gone from non motion to motion by itself.

Everything in nature is **interrelated** and absolutely dependent on the other. There must be a Being who is totally independent of and above this to start it all.

Everything is moving away from **perfection**, breaking down. The second law of thermodynamics states this. This winding down (entropy) points back to a starting time and shows things moving away from perfection. This, too, points back to God.

**2. THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT** is based on order and design. No one would ever think a wristwatch could come into being on its own. We assume there was an intelligent designer behind it. For this world to just 'happen' would be like the Gettysburg Address resulting from an explosion in a print shop! The fact that there is **order** in the universe points back to Someone causing that order (Hebrews 11:3). Evolution says it took billions of years for the correct it to just 'happen,' recognizing the unlikelyhood of it. **Design**, too, shows there is a God. Whatever is composed of parts requires a designer (Romans 1:20). Creation is stamped with beauty and design to show us God (Psalm 19:1).

**3. THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT** uses the existence of our **moral nature** point to a God. Where did our moral nature come from? Surely our possession of it argues for the existence of a moral governor to whom man feels accountable and responsible. All people everywhere at all times have had moral standards and enforced them. All man always have known there is a right and wrong (Romans 2:14-15), even if they don't always see the same things as right and wrong. In addition, the moral values we hold inside are not always rewarded in this life. Something inside man cries that there must be reward for good and punishment for evil. All men long for justice. Where did this desire come from? Even more, when will it be fulfilled? This, and the

basic belief in life beyond this life that all people have always held point to a power and force beyond man that will reward good and punish evil beyond this life. We all know inside there must be something more to life than just these years on this earth. Where did this restlessness and awareness come from if there was nothing there to meet it?

Man everywhere in all time has naturally known there is a **power greater than and outside** himself that he has worshipped. Satan counterfeits this but it is natural in man to look for that which is outside himself and greater than himself.

**4. THE SUBJECTIVE INNER AWARENESS ARGUMENT** isn't of the same ration basis as the arguments mentioned above, but those who are God's children know inside there is a God. It can't be put under a microscope, or even described, but there is a confident inner awareness that there is a God (Galatians 4:6) deep within us that gives an assurance beyond the need of external proof that there is a God who loves and cares. Where does this come from if not from God Himself?

If there is this strong, conclusive proof of God, then **WHY DO SO MANY PEOPLE REJECT THE IDEA OF GOD?** I think the basic reason is that man doesn't want to believe in God today because if he admits there is a power greater than and outside himself then it only stands to reason that man is accountable to that power. If there is a God man is responsible to find what God would have of him and then obey it. Man doesn't want that, he wants to be his own god and not submit to Anyone. Thus it isn't lack of evidence that man rejects the idea of God, but purely because of self-centered presuppositions. In order to live life for himself and continue in his own prideful and selfish existence, man must deny the fact of a God. To admit to a God means man then must obey His will and direction or face the consequences. Modern man doesn't want to do either. He thinks by denying there is a God he exempts himself from accountability to that God. However just saying God doesn't exist doesn't make it so. Even convincing yourself completely He doesn't exist doe nothing to remove Him from existence. In doing so man is gambling with his eternal existence, putting it on the line for a few short years of self-centered indulgence.

How should we approach those who deny the existence of God? Don't bring up these rational, intellectual arguments unless they are open enough to consider them. Belief starts in the heart, not the head. Pray for them to be open to the truth. Share with them how Jesus meets your needs, gives you meaning and satisfaction, purpose and peace. They can't argue with this nor disprove it. God will use it in His time to convict them of their need. He will fan the flames you start. Keep off intellectual arguments, you'll never force anyone to believe something they don't want to believe. They are only good with those who are open to finding the truth. Then use them, for we must always be ready to give a person the reason of the hope that is in us!

This is one in a series of article on Apologetics: Other subjects include "How Do We Know The Bible Is Inspired?" and "How Do We Know Jesus Is Really God?" For more information about any of these subjects contact Jerry Schmoyer at 348-8086 or write to 252 W. State St., Doylestown, Pa. Any and all inquiries are welcome.