



Why Should I Believe God Exists?

“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...” Rom. 1:20

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

1. THE BIG PICTURE: A universe _____ by God

What it took for the universe to produce life:

- Getting the right _____
 - ◇ Must be spiral (Only 5% are spiral)
 - ◇ Must have many supernovae eruptions in early stages to produce correct elements
 - ◇ Must have few supernovae eruptions in later stages or all life would be exterminated
 - ◇ Solar system must be in right spot of spiral arm
 - ◇ White dwarf stars must be close enough to large stars to attract fluorine
- Getting the right _____
 - ◇ Any more massive: Sun burns too quickly for life to be maintained
 - ◇ Any less massive: Planets would be too close or too far away to support life
 - ◇ If any redder: Photosynthesis would be insufficient
 - ◇ If any bluer: Photosynthesis would be insufficient
- Getting the right _____
 - ◇ The sun’s luminosity has increased 35% since life began. This should have exterminated all life
 - ◇ But life survived because each increase was exactly canceled out each step of the way by a decrease in the greenhouse effect of the earth’s atmosphere
 - ◇ This happened through the careful introduction of just the right species of life in just the right quantities at just the right times
 - ◇ The slightest “evolutionary accident” would have caused either a runaway freeze- up... or a runaway boiling
- Getting the right _____
 - ◇ 2% closer: All life in earth is destroyed
 - ◇ 2% further: All life in earth is destroyed
- Getting the right _____
 - ◇ If greater: Too many life forms would be destroyed
 - ◇ If less: Nutrients on ocean floor would not be recycled to continents

Many more examples are found in Hugh Ross, *The Creator and the Cosmos*

“A super-intellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology...”
-Fred Hoyle, *Annual Reviews of Astronomy and Astrophysics* 20 (1982), p.,. 16

“The laws (of physics) seem themselves to be the product of increasingly ingenious design...(There) is for me powerful evidence that there is something going on behind it all...it seems as though somebody has fine-tuned nature’s chambers to make the Universe...the impression of design is overwhelming.” -Paul Davies, *Superforce*, p. 243, *The Cosmic Blueprint*, p. 203, *Science Digest*, (October 1983), p. 24
Davies is a widely published and well-known astrophysicist who has moved from promoting atheism to a belief in God.

“The exquisite order displayed by our scientific understanding of the physical world calls for the divine.” -Vera Kistiakowsky, famed MIT physicist, *Cosmos, Bios, Theos*, p. 52

“Here is the cosmological proof of the existence of God... the fine tuning of the universe provides evidence of deistic design... Many scientists, when they admit their views, incline toward the design argument” - Cosmologist Edward Harrison, *The Masks of the Universe*, pp. 252, 263

“Astronomy leads us to... a universe with the very delicate balance needed to provide exactly the conditions required to permit life, and one which has an underlying (one might say supernatural) plan.” -Arno Penzias, Nobel prize winner for physics for the discovery of cosmic background radiation, *Cosmos, Bios, Theos*, p. 83

2. THE LITTLE PICTURE: People _____ for God

Personal Lifestyle

Numerous studies show religious believers are far less likely than nonbelievers to commit suicide, abuse drugs or alcohol, experience debilitating stress, get depressed, or get divorced. (A summary of these studies is in Larson, *The Forgotten Factor in Physical and Mental Health*, National Institute for Healthcare Research, 1994)

Suicide

Persons who do not attend church are *four times as likely* to commit suicide than frequent church attenders. (G.W. Comstock and K.B. Partridge, Church Attendance and Health”, *Journal of Chronic Disease* 25: 665-672)

Depression

High levels of faith correlate with lower levels of depression, stress, and greater ability to cope with stress. One study of 720 adults found church attenders had significantly lower levels of psychological distress. More than a dozen other studies have also shown this correlation. (Cited in Larson, pp. 76-81)

Health

A comprehensive 1987 review of nearly 250 epidemiological studies found positive associations between religious faith and physical health (Levin and Schiller, "Is There a Religious factor in Health?" *Journal of Religion and Health* 26, no. 1: 9-35)

Risks of Death

A major study showed: 1.) Risk of arteriosclerosis heart disease for men who attended church frequently was just *60 percent* of that for men who were infrequent attenders; 2.) For women, risk of dying from heart disease, emphysema, and suicide was *twice as high* for infrequent church goers as for frequent church goers. (G.W. Comstock and K.B. Partridge, Church Attendance and Health", *Journal of Chronic Disease* 25: 665-672)

Blood Pressure

A 1989 study found that men who counted religion "very important" in their lives had, on average, diastolic pressure levels *five millimeters lower* than others. A reduction by as little as 2 to 4 millimeters can bring a 10 to 20 percent decline in cardiovascular disease! (D. B. Larson et. al., "The Impact of Religion on Men's Blood Pressure", *Journal of Religion and Health* 28: no. 4:265-278)

Marriage

A 1978 study found that church attendance predicted marital satisfaction better than any other variable. (Glenn and Weaver, "A Multivariate, Multi-Survey Study of Marital Happiness, *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 40:269-282)

Happiness

People of committed religious faith consistently report much higher levels of personal happiness and psychological well-being than atheists or agnostics. (David Myers, "Pursuing Happiness", *Psychology Today*, July-August 1993, 32-38)

Conclusions

This all means...

- _____
- _____

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." Ps. 139:13-14

Resources

Patrick Glynn, *God: The Evidence*

Dale Matthews, *The Faith Factor*

Luis Palau, *God Is Relevant*

Hugh Ross, *The Fingerprint of God* and *The Creator and the Cosmos*

Ravi Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God?*

Daily Meditations

Here's a chance to spend some time each day this week meditating on today's topic! Write your answers on another piece of paper this week.

This week's memory verse: *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Ps. 19:1*

Monday

Read 1 Peter 3:15,16. Peter tells us three things about sharing your faith story: First he says be prepared *always*. How can you be better *prepared* to share your reasons for faith?

Then he says to have *reasons*. What are some of the *reasons* you believe? Next, he says to share your hope with *gentleness and respect, and a clear conscience*. How can you show this to others when sharing your testimony? Why is this essential to leading others to faith? *Thank God today for your hope, ask Him to help you share it this week!*

Tuesday

Read Romans 1:20. What is the point of this verse? What *specifically* can be learned about God through nature? Look around you right now, if possible, at aspects of nature-- the trees, the sky, animals around you. What can you learn about God by observing these things?

If God can be observed in nature, than what logically would be Satan's plan regarding man's relationship to nature? *Thank God that He speaks to us through His word and His world!*

Wednesday

Read Psalm 19:1-4. How do the heavens "declare the glory of God"? What do you think verse 2 means: "Night after night they display knowledge"? If you can, take the Psalmist's advice right now: Go outside and look at the stars or the sun. What do you learn about God as you listen to "the heavens"? Can you remember a time when you were particularly moved by "the heavens" as they displayed God's glory? *Look at the stars or sun and pray-- not to creation, but to the creator. Thank God for speaking through His creation.*

Thursday

Read Psalm 8:3-5. What emotion is the Psalmist feeling here? Have you ever felt this way? When? Why is God mindful of us, when the universe is so massive and we are so small?

Thank God that we matter so much to him that He sent His only Son to us as a willing sacrifice for our sins! If you haven't yet, tell God you trust Him with your life!

Friday

Read Psalm 139:13-16. Review the message notes from last weekend. We talked about the amazing evidences for God's design of the universe. This Psalm talks about the fact that God created *you*. How does this make you feel? What does this mean about your value? What does this imply about the meaning of your life? *Thank God that He made you in a wonderful way! Ask Him to help you appreciate His masterpieces-- including you-- better!*

Saturday

Please pray for the services this weekend and finish any devotions you may have missed. Thanks!