

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!

Prayer Updates

HOSPITALIZED & SURGERIES this past week...

Barbara Miller – kidney problems with edema
Don Syres – liver surgery at Stanford, 4/23
Dorrell Smith – ulceration of the upper stomach and lower esophagus
Ian Tupper – surgery
Irvin Smith – long-term recovery from pedestrian/auto accident
Karla Bogard – long term recovery from major, experimental cancer surgery
Olga Pappas – ICU, diagnosis unknown

Recent hospitalizations /surgeries: Adrienne Gomes, Helen Ellis, Vera Hetherington, Bettye Smith

HOME WITH THE LORD

Our compassionate prayers are given in support of Linda Kitch and sons, Todd and Troy, in the painful loss of their husband and father, **Ted Kitch**. Ted was a kind-hearted, very positive, enthusiastic man with many friends who will be grieving along with the extended family. Ted served as the Chairman of our Kay Trust Committee, providing camp scholarships for under-resourced children in Santa Cruz County. A memorial is scheduled for Sunday, April 22, 2pm at Twin Lakes Church (contributions may be made to Twin Lakes Church, Kitch Youth Scholarship Fund).

We want to provide pastoral support...

Please call 465-3395 when someone is hospitalized, scheduled for surgery, becomes a shut-in, or in special need. Prayer support is available through our pastors and numerous prayer groups — call 689-9400. Please pick up a Prayer Update at the Information Desk or Welcome Center.

WHY BELIEVE

“Why Believe in God?”

April 21 & 22, 2007 • René Schlaepfer

1. THE BIG PICTURE: A universe _____ by God

“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...” Romans 1:20

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

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
 - Must have few supernovae eruptions in later stages
 - Must be in right spot of spiral arm
 - Must be close enough to white dwarf stars
- 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 _____
- Getting the right _____
 - 2% closer: All life in earth is destroyed
 - 2% further: All life in earth is destroyed

“Despite massive improbabilities, the properties of the universe appear to have been precisely tuned for life... Humans are also unique in ways that defy evolutionary explanation and point to their spiritual nature. This includes the search for God that characterizes all human cultures.” (Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the Human Genome Project, *The Language of God*, 2006, p. 200)

“A common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that 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)

2. THE LITTLE PICTURE: People _____ for God

"Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. . ." Psalm 103:2

Universal Thirst for God

"We are born with an innate tendency for belief. . . religions are found in virtually every culture on earth. No matter how much science can explain, the real gap that God fills is an emptiness. . . a yearning for the supernatural." ("Why Do We Believe?", *The New York Times Magazine*, March 4, 2007, p. 39)

Brains "Hard-Wired" for God

"This report is a presentation of scientific evidence that. . . we are hardwired for. . . moral meaning and openness to the transcendent. Meeting these basic needs is essential to health and to human flourishing. For what may be the first time, a diverse group of scientists is publicly recommending that our society pay considerably more attention to moral, spiritual, and religious needs." (*Hardwired to Connect*, cosponsored by YMCA and Dartmouth Medical School, 2003)

Life Span

People who attend church regularly and say they have a "personal relationship" with God live on average 12.7 years longer than "church goers" and 21.7 years longer than atheists. (*An extensive global study by epidemiologist Ronald Grossarth-Maticek of the European Union-funded Institute for Preventive Healthcare Research*)

Health

A comprehensive review of nearly 250 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*, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 9-35)

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, pp. 32-38)

Marriage

Regular church attendance predicts marital satisfaction better than any other variable. (*Glenn and Weaver, "A Multivariate, Multi-Survey Study of Marital Happiness"*, *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, vol. 40, pp. 269-282)

Conclusions

- _____
- _____

"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."
Psalm 139:13-14

Resources

Francis Collins, *The Language of God*

Patrick Glynn, *God: The Evidence*

Timothy Johnson, *Finding God in the Questions*

Dale Matthews, *The Faith Factor*

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

Ravi Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God?*

Daily Meditations

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?



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

over

