

## Does God Exist?

This is a great question that has lots of implications. If there is a God (especially one who made us and holds us accountable for how we respond to him), we do well to pay attention. If there is no such being, then religious matters are probably take it or leave it propositions at the very best.

Most people define God as invisible, meaning we can't see him directly with our eyes. That said, we should not expect to see God as we would an apple on the counter, but rather like we "see" gravity—by the evidence that points to its existence. When it comes to God, there is substantial evidence of his existence.

First, we have the fact that **the universe is here**. Science definitively tells us the universe is something that did not always exist. As world-renown cosmologist Alex Vilenkin has said, "With the proof now in place, cosmologists can no longer hide behind the possibility of a past-eternal universe." But if the universe didn't always exist, where did it come from? Human experience confirms nothing comes into existence without a cause, whether it be a baby or a star, so there must be a cause behind the universe. Considering the universe consists of matter, space, and time, it follows that the cause of the universe must be immaterial, non-spatial, and non-temporal, not to mention creative and intelligent. All of this is in line with the biblical view of God.

Some might ask in response to this first piece of evidence: "If everything needs a cause, what caused God?" But this question is what philosophers call a "category" mistake. Those things that fit in the category of "things that come into existence" need a cause behind them just as the universe does. But things in the category of "eternal" or "ever-present" don't need to have cause because they have always been. God is almost universally considered to be in the latter category, so to ask the cause behind God is a category mistake. It's sort of like asking why a circle doesn't have corners.

Second, when considering the evidence of an invisible God, there is the **remarkable fine-tuning** exhibited by the world. One might expect to see some rock formations that by chance look like a human face, but no one would expect to find something as precise and detailed as Mount Rushmore without some kind of intelligent creator behind it. Scientists in the last several decades have discovered how remarkably fine-tuned the universe is for life. For example, change the gravitational constant by just 1 part in  $10^{60}$  and the planets and stars would have either collapsed on themselves or never come together in the first place. Dozens of other constants must be just right as well, like the expansion rate and the weak nuclear force. Some say, "Well, we just got lucky." That seems a little far-fetched given the precision of the fine-tuning and the multiple factors that must be lined up simultaneously. Again, that would be like saying that the faces on Mt. Rushmore just came about by luck. When we see precision that can't be reasonably accounted for by chance, we search for the intelligence behind it. It seems to me that we do well to look for the intelligence behind the universe, an intelligence that fits well with the biblical God.

Third, **the existence of objective morals and duties** provides evidence of an invisible God. You might say, "I don't believe in objective morals or duties. I think they are just constructed by society or governments." But have you ever recognized that this position leaves you unable to judge behavior you don't like in others? Let's suppose a deep jungle tribe likes to steal babies from another tribe and eats them. Do we really want to say that behavior is okay for the first tribe? Or, consider the Nazi's ghastly experiments on babies, the disabled, and the sick. I doubt you would stand by and say, "Well, that's okay

for them, since that's what they decided, and nothing is really objectively wrong with what they did?" During the Nuremberg trials, the Nazis tried to argue that outside nations didn't have a right to judge what Germany had done. As we know, they lost the case, and they lost it in part because the Allied forces argued that there is a law above the laws.

The question we must ask is where does this law above the laws come from and why do we have a sense of duty towards it. Again, it can't just come from society or governmental rules, or no one could judge another culture no matter how heinous its actions. If there are no objective morals, we couldn't even protest something we saw wrong in our own culture, since our culture would have already decided the behavior in question to be okay. No, if we are going to anchor objective morals and duties, they must be anchored in something outside of human cultures. Christianity says that anchor is God, especially since morals are reflections of his character. All this is to say that when push comes to shove we all believe certain things to be objectively wrong (at least we act that way!), and if that's the case, the existence of objective morals and duties presents compelling evidence for God.

These aren't the only evidences for God, but they are evidences I find compelling. They give me confidence that at the very least my belief in God is not unreasonable.

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