



Life's Ultimate Questions

A Case for the Existence of God

All of us as human beings who have ever lived or ever will live, are asking, or will ask five basic worldview questions: (1) Where did I come from? (2) Why am I here? (3) What is wrong with the world? (4) How can what is wrong be made right? (5) Where am I going?

Answering Atheism/Skepticism

There are no answers to any of these questions if *atheism* is true! But what is atheism and why is it impossible to live as an atheist?

Atheism – the belief that there is no God and that only that which is physical exists.

Making a Case for God's Existence:

1. The existence of "stuff." (Genesis 1:1) – The Cosmological Argument

See, stuff not only happens, stuff exists. Which creates a huge problem for the atheist.

Because if nothing exists, then we don't have to explain it. But the minute we acknowledge that something is real, then we have to come up with an explanation for it.

The universe exists. It's real. We live in it. We see it, hear it, feel it, and breathe its air.

Where did all this stuff we feel, hear, breathe, smell come from?

Here's a principle universally accepted by all objective scientists...

The law of cause and effect:

For every effect, there has to be an equal or greater cause.

This means that with all that exists in the universe (which is the effect) there has to be someone equal to it or greater than it that caused it to come into existence.

But what about God coming into existence? God is infinite and has to be because in order for finite things to come into existence someone who is infinite has to have created them otherwise

you have finite things creating finite things but each of those finite things has a beginning so you are stuck with the same dilemma... Who created the first finite thing?

That leads us to another scientific law that must be dealt with by the atheist or skeptic...

The law of causality or the necessary causer:

Everything that has a beginning has a beginner.

This is closely related to the law of cause and effect but goes one step further and says that not only must the effect have an equal or greater causer but there is a first causer that began all effects that is outside of time, space, matter, and energy.

The existence of “stuff” points to the existence of God.

2. The nature of “stuff.” (Psalm 19:1) – The Teleological Argument

Or, more specifically, the nature of the universe. The universe is a huge, complex, marvelously well-ordered place. Since it is so extremely well ordered and fine tuned you have to explain where it came from as well as how it became so precisely fine tuned.

Before we go any further let me just a few of the numerous examples we have of the precise fine tuning of the universe in order to sustain life:

- The earth’s rotation was even fractionally slower or faster.
- We were 2% closer or further from the sun.
- Earth had a 1% change in sunlight.
- Earth was smaller or larger.
- The moon was smaller or larger.
- We had more than one moon.
- Earth’s crust were thinner or thicker.
- Pizza Hut only served thin crust pizza. (Just seeing if you’re still awake!)
- Ozone layer was slightly greater or less.

Let’s take this one step further... Now that we have looked at a few of the precisely fine-tuned aspects of the universe we need to answer not only how stuff got here but how it got so precisely fine-tuned or well ordered so that it could sustain life.

One possible explanation for how something got here is that *it was self-created*. It came from itself. But that doesn't follow logically. You know why? Scientists who study this sort of thing tell us that ***everything in the universe is contingent or dependent upon something else.***

Illustrations:

Take trees for example. They need air to exist, air to survive, air to have been created in the first place. Trees are *contingent* on air.

Oxygen can't exist apart from just the right atmosphere.

The atmosphere can't exist apart from a planet that is just the right size with just the right gravitational force to sustain an atmosphere.

The earth needs the sun. The sun needs the solar system, and gravity, and a whole host of photo and electrochemical reactions to be able to exist.

Nothing we observe around us seems to be absolutely self-caused or self-reliant. In fact, it's easy to conclude that everything we can see around us did not exist at one time, and will not continue to exist forever.

So, if everything we observe is dependent on something else, and not independent or self-caused, the principle of dependency leads us to ask, ***If all that exists is dependent, fragile, and temporary, who or what is responsible for all these dependent objects and beings?***

20 *"For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse."* (**Romans 1:20**)

3. My sense of morality. (Romans 2:14-15) – The Moral Law Argument

In order to have a sense of good and evil you must have an absolute standard for goodness. If every individual is free to decide for themselves what is right and wrong you no longer have any basis for accountability and law due to the fact that there is no longer a standard for goodness.

In fact, you can't say things like the Holocaust were wrong because it's simply survival of the fittest. You can't say that the terrorist attacks of 9/11 were wrong because that is left to the individual. In fact, you can't say anything is wrong because right and wrong are just an illusion, something created by random chemical processes.

4. My sense of desire or craving. (Ecclesiastes 3:11) – The Law of Fed Urge

We have desires for things that correspond to reality. Desires such as hunger, a sex drive, and to know God point to the existence of food, sex, and God.

Illustration:

We have a desire for food because food exists.

We have a desire for sex because sexual fulfillment exists.

We get tired and that corresponds to the reality of sleep.

We have a desire to love and be loved because love exists.

We have a deep desire for purpose and meaning because meaning and purpose exist.

We have a curiosity about God because God exists.

Put all those together and you have an eternal, all powerful, smart, beautiful, loving, moral Creator. And that comes very close to a working definition of God, doesn't it?

And really, what are the alternatives? Random chance and circumstance? Which takes more faith? Which is more intellectually honest?

I would argue that it takes more faith to believe that there is no God than to believe that there is one.

Evil and Suffering:

But how do you answer the objection that an all-powerful and all-loving God and all the evil and suffering in the world cannot both exist? In other words, can the presence of evil be reconciled with the existence of an all-powerful, all-loving Creator?

Answer: Just like with the existence of objective moral values not being able to exist apart from an objective moral standard by which to measure all values, so evil and suffering cannot exist unless there is something to measure good and evil, suffering and pleasure by. Therefore, the existence of evil points to, not away from, the existence of God.

Reconciling Evil & Suffering with the Existence of an All-Powerful, All-Loving God:

1. *Evil can be reconciled if we have an accurate view of free agency.*

It has been said that someone cannot be made to do something freely. Freedom in all its beauty comes with associated dangers, and those dangers include the consequences of evil committed by either ourselves or others.

2. *Evil can be reconciled if we hold an appropriate definition of love.*

Love is defined as “willing good towards another.” As this is the definition of love, God could very well use evil and suffering for our good even when we can’t see what the outcome is going to be. Sometimes it will be for our good and at other times the evil and suffering we experience may be for the good of another.

3. *Evil can be reconciled if we understand its role in character development.*

Loving parents are usually more concerned with their children’s character than their comfort, and character is often times developed more through adversity than advantage. Some forms of perceived evil may simply be an effort on the part of a divine Creator to develop the character of His children with eternity in mind.

4. *Evil can be reconciled if we recognize its power to draw us.*

It is often times only in dire situations that people consider life beyond the material universe. If there is a loving, Divine Creator who has designed us for an existence beyond the grave, it might not be unreasonable for this Creator to use hardship to refocus those of us who haven’t been paying attention. Some forms of perceived evil may simply be evidence of God attempting to point us in the right direction.

5. *Evil can be reconciled if we recognize its existence as a consequence.*

Sometimes evil and suffering are simply a result of our bad choices, even choices we made years prior.

6. *Evil can be reconciled if we acknowledge our limited understanding.*

If there is a vastly superior Divine Creator, we shouldn't expect to understand every motive, every thought, and every intended outcome in the Creator's mind. Some forms of perceived evil may have to be patiently endured, given our limited perspective and the complexity of the issues involved.

7. *Evil can be reconciled when we see how God used the greatest evil of all (deicide) to bring about the greatest triumph of all (salvation).*

We must never forget that the greatest evil ever committed, the murder of Jesus (God), brought about the greatest victory of all time, the defeat of sin and death. Some forms of perceived evil are actually allowed by God because of the victories they will end up bringing about.

Connecting All the Dots:

The cumulative case for the existence of God is getting stronger through the existence of the universe, the nature of the universe, the existence of objective moral law, and the existence and reason for evil and suffering.

To round out the verdict that a personal, loving, eternal, creative, all-powerful God exists that has clearly made Himself known we will lay out an airtight case for that God through the person of Jesus Christ and His Word written to us that we call the Bible.