

☞POINTS TO PONDER

How do we know God exists?

As Christians, we already believe God exists, so why this study?

1. Because it will strengthen our faith.
2. Because we'll be better prepared to talk with others about it.

1 Peter 3:15

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

- Peter Kreeft (author of more than 80 books on Christian philosophy, theology and apologetics) ... *If we had absolute proof instead of clues, then you could no more deny God than you could the sun. If we had no evidence at all, you could never get there. God gives us just enough evidence so that those who want Him can have Him. Those who want to follow the clues will.*

- Charles Colson... *Christian faith is not an irrational leap. Examined objectively, the claims of the Bible are rational propositions well supported by reason and evidence.*

☞7 Reasons to believe in God's existence... None of these are absolutely foolproof, but they are compelling.

1. ☞The Confirmation of the Bible

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is God-breathed

-Norman Geisler... *There's more evidence that the Bible is a reliable source than there is for any other book from the ancient world.*

The Bible is very unified: 66 books written in different literary styles, by 40 different authors with diverse backgrounds over 1600 years and yet contains one central message.

1000's of archaeological finds in the Middle East support the Biblical record.

Prophecies fulfilled: The Bible is the only book in the world that has precise, specific predictions that were made 100's of years in advance and that were literally fulfilled. There were 191 predictions in the OT regarding the coming of Christ that were correct.

The Bible has transforming power. It changes people.

☞Isaiah 40:8

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.

-Billy Graham, regarding the Bible... Its critics, who claimed it to be filled with forgery, fiction, and unfulfilled promises, are finding that the difficulties lie with themselves, and not the Bible. Greater and more careful scholarship has shown that apparent contradictions were caused by incorrect translations rather than divine inconsistencies. It was man and not the Bible that needed correcting. It is the blueprint of the Master Architect.

2. ☞ The Uncaused Cause

Anything that comes to exist must have a cause. This goes back to infinity. There must be a first cause of the existence of everything else. The universe began to exist. Therefore, the universe must have a cause of its beginning. This first cause is God. Since something cannot just come out of nothing, there has to be a transcendent cause beyond space and time which brought the universe into being.

-Fred Heeren (author of "Show Me God") ... Einstein tried to find an explanation for his general relativity equations that would not require a beginning and a beginner for the universe, and he came away a believer in both. He later wrote of his desire "to know how God created the universe."

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

☞ John 1:1-3

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was with God in the beginning. 3 **Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.**

3. ☞ The Complexity of Life

There is order in the universe... The complexity of life implies an intelligent designer. The delicate balance of nearly infinite possibilities required for life, make life without God absurd. The order in the universe tells us there is a God.

-Fred Heeren... Physicists speak of four fundamental forces in nature: gravity, electromagnetism, and the strong and weak nuclear forces. If any one of them had a slightly different strength, we'd have a universe in which life would not be possible.

☞ Romans 1:20

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, so that men are without excuse.

You can just look around at creation and see evidence of God. And if you dig deeper, you will see even more evidence. At the molecular level, living organisms have tiny biological machines that are just like gears and conveyor belts and such.

Psalm 139:14

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful

-James Tour... *Only a rookie who knows nothing about science would say science takes away from faith. If you really study science, it will bring you closer to God.*

Scientifically speaking, it's far more probable for a life-prohibiting universe to exist than a life-sustaining one. Life is balanced on a razor's edge.

-Stephen Hawking (theoretical physicist and cosmologist) ... *The odds against a universe like ours emerging out of something like the big bang are enormous... I think clearly there are religious implications whenever you start to discuss the origins of the universe.*

4. ☞ **The Consistency of Morality**

All human beings have an innate sense of right and wrong. Many moral values are the same in every culture. Why is this?

If there is no God, then moral values are merely the products of socio-biological evolution. If there is no God, then morality is just a matter of personal taste. However, we all know deep down that, in fact, objective moral values do exist. And since these objective moral values cannot exist without God and they unquestionably do exist, then it follows logically and inescapably that God exists.

☞ **Romans 2:13-15**

it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous. **14** (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, **15** since they show that **the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness**, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.)

- Augustine... *If there is no God, why is there so much good?*

- Peter Kreeft... *If there is no God, where did we get the standard of goodness by which we judge evil?*

5. ☞ **The Craving for Meaning**

Without God life becomes meaningless. We are just accidents of nature who live a very short time.

Without God the universe is the result of a cosmic accident, a chance explosion. Therefore, life is utterly without reason. By implication, you are completely insignificant.

Psalms 8:4

...what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him?

In Ecclesiastes, Solomon explored every possible avenue to find meaning in life...

2:1 Pleasure

2:11 Work

2:15 Wisdom

5:10 Wealth

☞ **Ecclesiastes 12:8**

"Meaningless! Meaningless!" says the Teacher. **"Everything is meaningless!"**

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole [duty] of man. **14** For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

Without God, life is meaningless; we are just random accidents. Yet, nearly all people wonder "Why am I here?" God can answer that question.

6. ☞ The Compulsion for More

This argument simply asserts the presence of an unfulfilled desire in the heart of every human being. All people everywhere can relate to the desire for something more, something that this life just doesn't seem to offer, or at least hasn't offered yet.

-Peter Kreeft... *"1. Every natural, innate desire in us corresponds to some real object that can satisfy that desire. 2. But there exists in us a desire which nothing in time, nothing on earth, no creature can satisfy. 3. Therefore there must exist something more than time, earth and creatures, which can satisfy this desire. 4. This something is what people call 'God' and 'life with God forever.'"*

Norman Geisler (theologian and philosopher) says, *"The mere presence of this desire in the soul is felt to be more precious and joyful than any other satisfaction. However inadequately we express it, what we long for is paradise, heaven, or eternity. Even atheists experience this longing."*

☞ **Ecclesiastes 3:11**

He has made everything beautiful in its time. **He has also set eternity in the hearts of men;** yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Job 19:25-27

I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. **26** And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; **27** I myself will see him with my own eyes — I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Kreeft says: *Because it is not a matter of temperament, this deep unhappiness appears most clearly not when one would expect, when life is full of fears or sufferings. If it appeared mainly at such times, we might dismiss it as escapism. But it is precisely when life treats us best that the deepest dissatisfaction arises. As long as we lack worldly happiness, we can deceive ourselves with the 'if only' syndrome: If only I had this or that, I would be happy. But once we have all our thises and thats and are still unhappy, the deception is exposed. That's why rich and powerful modern societies are not happier than previous cultures.*

C.S. Lewis: *"If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world."*

7. ☞ The Conviction of Many

Ultimately, the reason a Christian really knows that Christianity is true is through the self-authenticating witness of God's Spirit. Other evidence, though still valid, is basically confirmatory.

☞ Romans 8:16

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

Testimony of people... Many have experienced the presence of God. And many speak of a personal relationship with God. Either these are self-deluded or there's something there. Billy Graham said, "I can tell you that God is alive because I talked with Him this morning."

Conclusion

-J.P. Moreland... *God maintains a delicate balance between keeping His existence sufficiently evident so people will know He's there and yet hiding His presence enough so that people who want to choose to ignore Him can do it. This way, their choice of destiny is really free.*

Psalms 53:1

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God."

Psalms 10:4

In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.

It's foolishness and pride that keep people from realizing there is a god.

In Luke 16:27-3, Jesus explained that some people will refuse to believe even if they see a miracle such as someone rising from the dead.

-Norman Geisler... *It's not for a lack of evidence that people turn from God, it's from their pride or their will.*

Pascal's wager... Which will you choose – that God exists or that He does not? If you wager that God exists and He does, you have gained eternal life and infinite happiness. If He does not exist, you have lost nothing. On the other hand, if you wager that God does not exist and He does, then you have suffered infinite loss. If He does not in fact exist, then you have gained nothing. Hence, the only prudent choice is to believe that God exists.

Suppose you hear reports that your house is on fire and your children are inside. You do not know whether the reports are true or false. What is the reasonable thing to do— to ignore them or to take the time to run home or at least phone home just in case the reports are true?

There are many compelling reasons to believe that God is real.

1. **☞ The Confirmation of the Bible**
2. **The Cause which was Uncaused**
3. **The Complexity of Life**
4. **The Consistency of Morality**
5. **The Craving for Meaning**
6. **The Compulsion for More**
7. **The Conviction of Many**

My Redeemer Lives

Who taught the sun where to stand in the morning?

And who told the ocean you can only come this far?

And who showed the moon where to hide 'til evening?

Whose words alone can catch a falling star?

Well I know my redeemer lives

I know my redeemer lives

All of creation testifies

This life within me cries

I know my redeemer lives