

Opening Words

Without God, there is no basis for morality and justice among people. Without God, we are left only with preferences and there is no right or wrong.

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We are nearing the end of our series Tough Questions for Today's Christian. We have examined eight of the hardest questions skeptics ask and they are not always easy to answer. We have been using Lee Strobel's book, *The Case for Faith* as our guide. Strobel, an Ivy school educated, law-degreed, confirmed atheist and award-winning writer for the Chicago Tribune gave his life to Christ in 1981 when he saw changed lives around him and when he saw the evidence for the reliability of the Bible and of Jesus as Messiah. This compelled him to turn from his atheism and to Christ. He has become an effective spokesman for Christ and a writer of numerous books that present compelling evidence for a Creator and that the Creator came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ.

Let's take a moment and list these eight objections again. Here they are:

1. Since evil and suffering exist, a loving God cannot
2. Since miracles contradict science, they cannot have really happened
3. Evolution explains life, so we don't need God
4. God isn't worthy of our worship if he kills innocent children
5. It is offensive to claim that Jesus is the only way to God
6. A loving God would never send and torture people in Hell
7. Church history is littered with oppression and violence
8. I have doubts, so I can't become a Christian

To tackle these objections, Strobel traveled to the offices or the homes of eight prominent Christians who have excelled in the academic world. Each one provided outstanding rebuttals to the objections and clarified many misconceptions attached. We have covered their thoughts in this series. In them all, Strobel mentioned that he discerned three steps every person must take to travel the road from unbelief to belief, from skepticism to certainty that Christ is real and that we can have life in him. The three steps are investigation, decision, and transformation.

Let's briefly look at these three steps. First, what do we mean by investigation? We mean that if we have doubts, if we have objections, we must be willing to investigate to see if our objections and doubts are valid, or if there are answers to them. What is crucial in this first step is that we must examine *all* the evidence.

Many times, people have a favorite objection they like to use to poke holes in the Christian faith. But people must go beyond taking hold of just one piece and not consider the evidence in other areas. For example, some people dislike the thought of Hell and for that reason they will not believe. Some people may be offended by the things that happened in church history. Others may look at passages in the Old Testament or the problem of suffering and hold onto that. But we cannot hold onto to

random objections only and say, “I don’t believe.” We must look at all the questions, consider all the evidence, and develop a unified theory that explains all the evidence we see around us. If a person wants to be an atheist, he must develop a unified theory for atheism that accounts for all the facts. That’s the tough challenge for skeptics and atheists.

Let me explain this more by going over six facts we learned in our tough questions that will help us better understand the need for a unified explanation for the data.

First is what scientists call the Big Bang Theory. William Lane Craig spoke to this and explained how science has discovered that the universe and time had a definite beginning. It used to be thought that the universe was eternal but this has been discovered to be false. There was a time when it did not exist. Then, “bang”, there it was. What was the cause of this “bang.” What was the cause of this beginning? Craig argued that only a Creator who is uncaused, changeless, timeless, and immaterial could have caused it.

Second is the amazing evidence that our universe is fine-tuned that makes life possible for us. About 50 measurements have been taken that show that life balances on a razor’s edge. The big bang was not some random explosion that sent debris in different directions. Rather, an incredible amount of information was placed in that beginning. If, for example, the forces of gravity were off by 1×10^{100} life would not be possible on earth. There are about 50 such measurements that have stunned scientists. The universe is finely tuned for life as if a Grand Designer planned it that way. Things like this don’t happen by chance.

Third is the area of moral law. Without God, there is no basis for morality and justice among people. Without God, there is no right or wrong. Without God, all that exists is chemical reactions in our bodies and instead of morality and justice we are left only with preferences.

Fourth, we have the origin of life. Life cannot emerge from non-life. Darwinism has never had a solution for this. We have learned that the early atmosphere of the earth was such that life could not have arisen spontaneously by the interaction of chemicals. We learned that assembling the building blocks of life, amino acids into proteins is so incredibly complex that it staggers the imagination. Then, we must reckon with DNA and the incomprehensible amount of information that is packed into every cell of our body. Here’s one of my favorite facts to share about DNA. If you took all the DNA in your cells and scrunched it up, it would fit into the size of an ice cube. But if you took that same DNA and stretched it end to end like you were hooking up paper clips, it would stretch from earth to the sun ... and back ... 456 times! Do we really think that DNA happened by chance?

Fifth, we must examine the credibility of the Bible. There is more evidence for the reliability of the Bible than for any other book in ancient history. We read ancient history and don’t dispute those books. Why do we dispute the Bible? Archaeology has confirmed, again and again, the reliability of Scripture. Just today I read about another discovery – Shiloh – which is mentioned in Scripture. Before Solomon’s temple was built God’s people pitched a tent for worship called the tabernacle. This was placed in Shiloh and Shiloh has now been discovered. In addition, we have prophecies, numerous prophecies fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. We have the reports of his miracles which are also attested in writings outside the New Testament.

Sixth, and finally, we have the resurrection of Jesus. William Lane Craig has built a compelling case showing that the best explanation for the evidence is that Jesus rose from the dead, as he said he would. His burial site was known, his burial site was guarded and then found empty on the third day, hundreds of people claimed to have talked with him and eaten with him, and lives were changed. The apostles went from cowardly, frightened, defeated followers to the greatest force for change in the world.

So, there you have six major arguments – the beginning of the universe, the fine-tuning of the universe, life itself with its complex and massive information in every cell, morality, the Bible and the resurrection of Jesus. What is the point of this? People love to take their favorite argument and ask tough questions and attempt to poke holes in the faith of people. But what they really need to do is come up with a comprehensive, unified theory that accounts for the universe's origin, the complexity of life, the finely tuned universe, moral law, the Bible and the resurrection without God. How does one do that? There is no theory that can explain these except for one – the Bible is true. Jesus is Lord. He did rise from the dead. God does exist. There is a reason for life. There is a foundation for morality.

Let me give a simple explanation as to why it is important that we urge people to look at all the evidence. Dr. J.P. Moreland, who answered questions about Hell offered this illustration. What if someone saw his wife in a shopping center holding hands with another man. They could take a picture of that incident and present it as proof that she was not being faithful to her husband. They could attempt to poke holes in her faithfulness and try to bring down their marriage as a shamble. Or, they could look at all the evidence by talking to his wife and to Dr. Moreland and try to find out all the facts about the situation. What is their character like? Do they have a good marriage? Who was the other man? Was it a lover or was he an old friend that she had not seen in years? What they would need to do would be to find out all the facts.

This happened to me years ago. A very dear friend of mine, a female with whom I went to high school came into town. I arranged to meet her at the entrance of her hotel and we would then drive together to visit the home of our high school principal. When I arrived I was a bit nervous. I hadn't seen this person in 35 years. When she emerged from the hotel into the parking lot, where I said I would meet her, we gave each other a big hug. Then we got into a car drove away and a few hours later returned where we gave each other another hug and said goodbye. Now, what if someone had taken photos of that. They could have created a scandal. But it would have been 100% inaccurate. Some might think, "Jonathan you were unwise to do that." But I never gave that a thought as this was one of my best friends and it seemed totally natural to see her and visit with her. Besides, I told my wife ahead of time about it and she gave me permission to do this. She knew exactly where we would be and what we would be doing. That was all the evidence! And by the way, two nights later, my wife and I took my high school friend out to dinner and we had a wonderful time together.

It's easy to have a favorite argument to poke holes in the faith. It's harder to look at all the evidence and try to come up with a theory that explains everything without God. Why not stop doing that? Why not look at all the evidence and begin your faith journey with Christ today?