

LESSON ONE - GOD IS!

INTRODUCTION:

A. ONE OF THE FIRST QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED TODAY IS WHETHER THERE IS A GOD. WE WANT TO GIVE SEVERAL REASONS FOR BELIEVING IN GOD. GOD EXPECTS US TO DEFEND OUR FAITH (1 Pet. 3:15).

B. WE CANNOT DECIDE THIS QUESTION SIMPLY ON THE BASIS OF WHAT WISE MEN BELIEVE OR TEACH BECAUSE THEY DIFFER. SOME OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST SCIENTISTS AND PHILOSOPHERS ARE ATHEIST, AND SOME OF THEM BELIEVE IN GOD. MANY OF OUR MODERN AMERICAN SCIENTISTS WHO WORK IN ATOMIC RESEARCH AND OTHER HIGHLY TECHNICAL FIELDS BELIEVE IN GOD, BELIEVE IN THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AS DESCRIBED IN GENESIS, AND BELIEVE THE BIBLE TO BE THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD.

C. IN THIS LESSON WE WANT TO GIVE SOME REASONS FOR OUR BELIEF.

I. THE EXISTENCE OF THE UNIVERSE.

A. Something cannot come from nothing, therefore, something has always been. Every effect must have a cause. Everything that we see in the universe around us must have had some one or some thing that caused it or brought it about.

B. The atheist must argue that the first cause was matter. We argue that because of the superior nature of mind, mind came before matter.

1. Matter, in and of itself, has no power. Without something acting on it, matter will not even move.

2. That which existed first must have had other attributes which mind possesses but which matter doesn't. This original being must have had the power to think, plan, and feel.

II. THE UNIVERSE SHOWS DESIGN AND PURPOSE(Rom. 1:20).

A.

invisible things-----things made

God's >-----are clearly seen-----< the universe

power & divinity-----order & design

B. If we see the footprint of a bear in the woods, we know that there was a bear to make that footprint. When we see a fine Swiss watch, we know that there was a fine Swiss watch maker. When we see the things which are made, we know that there is one who is powerful enough and intelligent enough to make those things, whether they be footprints, watches or the universe.

III. THE UNIQUE NATURE OF MAN.

A. Man has the capacity for **rational thought**. Animals can be trained to do certain things by use of their instincts, but they never train themselves. Man alone has the ability of rational thought. Man is left to reason out his destiny while animals perform upon instinct.

B. Man alone has a **sense of morals** - a moral standard. "Man alone of all earthly creatures does wrong. Willfully or ignorantly he disobeys the laws of his nature or fails at complete fulfillment even when desiring it. Theft is no crime in a monkey or a bear. Bloodthirstiness is no vice in a tiger, nor vanity in a peacock. A dishonest or cruel or vain man breaks the laws of his own nature"(Hamilton, Basis of Faith, p. 221).

Consider any argument between young children. Cries of "He hit me first," "She got more than I did," "I was in line first," are mere appeals to a standard of conduct. We call this a "moral standard." Animals and outlaws are not concerned with such a standard. They live by the law of the jungle, "Might makes right." **Where did man's sense of morals come from?**

C. Man has a **conscience**. When man violates his standard of conduct and those laws which he has learned, he feels guilt. What animal has ever stayed awake all night worrying whether or not the days activities were moral or immoral. (A man's conscience may be seared, 1 Tim. 4:1-2).

D. Man has an **esthetic nature**. Man is able to create and appreciate beauty, art, poetry, etc. Can a cow be moved by a beautiful painting, a sunset or a poem?

E. Man is inherently religious. Even the most primitive civilizations have a sense of a higher being, a basic fear of death, a conception of life after death, and a form of worship. Animals are completely devoid of any inherent religious intuition.

F. All of these marks of **personality** in man prove two things: Man is created in the image of a "personal God" with those same qualities of intellect, free will, moral sense, etc., and was not the product of so called "resident forces" in the material universe. Second, there is something in man that is not material.

IV. WE BELIEVE IN GOD BECAUSE ALL THE OBJECTIONS TO BELIEVING IN GOD LIE WITH EQUAL

FORCE AGAINST ATHEISM.

Every objection which the atheist can make against the existence of God can be made against his belief in the eternal existence of matter! Where did matter come from? Atheism has insuperable difficulties of its own. How can life, intelligent planning, and law come from dead matter?

"THE FOOL HATH SAID IN HIS HEART, THERE IS NO GOD"

(Psa. 53:1).