

Hymns: 27 To God Be the Glory 65 This Is My Father's World

Genesis 1:1. *In the beginning God...*

Much of philosophy and certainly theology hinges on those four words.

Do you believe them?

If so, why?

As Christians we're charged to have faith---not blind faith, but logical, reasonable faith.

Today we will briefly explore a few major points of how we **know** God is real and that the Bible is His word.

Around the year 1990, a colleague at work came to me with this challenge:

If God is so great, why can't He make a rock so big that He can't pick it up?

That threw me a bit, but I responded along the correct lines. God cannot do anything that is logically contradictory. As a matter of fact, there are many things an almighty holy God cannot do. God cannot lie (Romans 3:4). God cannot sin. He is perfect. The colleague, an avowed agnostic, didn't believe in God said he "wanted to die like a dog." Then I asked him a question:

What if you're wrong, and God does exist?

He said he'd use logic to talk his way out of the problem. He died suddenly of a heart attack about ten years ago. Well before his death, I sent him a book that answered all of his questions. Sadly, from the tenor of his funeral and other evidence I could gather, short of a deathbed confession, he died an unbeliever.

The Bible says the unbeliever "will not die like a dog" but will be raised from the dead. They will bow and acknowledge Jesus as Lord, be judged, and cast into the Lake of Fire. This is called the second death. This is serious stuff and worthy of our attention.

So let's break this down (do you believe "in the beginning God"):

1. I exist,
2. God exists,
3. Genesis 1:1 (and more generally the Bible) is true.

1. Do I Exist?

Keep in mind **philosophers will not grant you** the use of your senses to address this one.

Any skilled magician can easily demonstrate that your senses cannot be trusted.

Philosophers may also try to take you down the road that **what you think you are experiencing** is simply imaginary and an elaborate dream.

Rene Descartes, a 17th Century mathematician elegantly solved the problem with just five words:

– I think, therefore, I am.

As many of us know, especially as we age some of our senses may fail us, but that does not diminish our person.

It's this self-awareness that guarantees to us that we do exist.

2. Does God Exist?

A. Root Cause

Evolutionists love to go into great detail describing the process of evolution. What they like **to avoid at all costs** is the root cause. The reason is that although they need one, they have none.

Where did matter come from?

We know everything winds down

A drop of food color in a glass of water naturally disperses.

An eternal universe is impossible because it would have wound down.

By contrast, we who believe in God do have a root cause. It is God. While He exists apart from His creation, He is fully able to interact with it.

(Mention circular reasoning)

Observation: The creation demands a creator. (Romans 1:20)

*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world **are clearly seen**, being understood **by the things that are made**, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

Psalm 19

[1] The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

Reason: *The fool has said in his heart, there is no God.* (Psalm 14:1)

Personal relationship: I know his presence and power in my life. (Romans 8:16)

*The Spirit itself **bearth witness with our spirit**, that we are the children of God:*

You ask me how I know **He lives**, He lives within my heart.

3. Is the Bible God's Word?

A. Manuscript evidence:

Masoretic text – the authoritative text of the Hebrew Bible.
Hebrew scribes followed religious rules to assure accurate copies
counted letters and words
earliest copies 10th century AD
verified by Septuagint (BC 100) and Dead Sea Scrolls (BC 300)

Textus Receptus – by Desiderius Erasmus 1516 – Catholic priest and theologian
selected the best Greek texts available
agrees with earliest known texts
Majority Text – based on the high correlation with 5300+
ancient Greek manuscripts

B. Accurate with respect to verifiable archeology.

Noted archaeologist Dr. Nelson Glueck

- Cover of the December 13, 1963 issue of *Time Magazine*
- Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archeology at Hebrew Union College

writes:

"It may be clearly stated categorically that no archeological discovery has ever controverted a single biblical reference. Scores of archeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible."

Dr. Nelson Glueck, Rivers in the Desert, (New York: Farrar, Strous and Cudahy, 1959), 136.

C. Real as opposed to mythological:

Persons: (Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Jesus, Pilate, Caesar)

Places: (Israel, Egypt, Italy, Cyprus, Turkey)

Ancient Nations: (Egyptian, Hittite, Persian, Babylonian, Greek, Roman)

D. Accurate with respect to prophecy---over 300 prophecies regarding Jesus Christ alone fulfilled in detail.

Astronomical odds---**virtual certainty** (Chuck Missler)

Micah 5:2	Born in Bethlehem
Zechariah 9:9	King on a donkey
Zechariah 11:12	30 pieces of silver
Zechariah 11:13	Temple, potter, etc
Zechariah 13:6	Wounds in hands
Isaiah 53:7	No defense; innocent
Isaiah 53:9	Died with wicked; grave with rich
Psalms 22:16	Crucified

E. Claims to be the **Inspired** Word of God:

II Peter 1

*[16] For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were **eyewitnesses** of his majesty.*

*[21] For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God **spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.***

II Timothy 3

*[16] All scripture is given by **inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

Jesus spoke of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Daniel, David, Solomon, Jonah, Elijah, and quoted from the law, the prophets, and the Psalms.

The Bible says Jesus is the Word of God:

John 1

*[1] In the **beginning** was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the **Word was God.***

[2] The same was in the beginning with God.

*[3] **All things were made by him;** and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

[4] In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

*[17] For the law was given by Moses, but **grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.***

But in the final analysis, **everything hinges on the resurrection of Jesus Christ:**

I Corinthians 15

[12] Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

[13] But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

*[14] And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and **your faith is also vain.***

*[20] But **now is Christ risen** from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*

[21] For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

[22] For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

In the beginning God...

What does it mean to us?

1. It means we are **not master** of *your* universe
2. It means we are **accountable** to a Higher Authority
3. It means we need to **pay attention** to what He has said
4. It means we need to **accept his free gift** of grace through faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son.

II Timothy 3

*[15] ...thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee **wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.***

In the beginning God...

We can trust that.

We can be secure in that.

We can rest in that.

I Timothy 1:17

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.