

DOES GOD EXIST?

July/August 2014

Volume 41 Number 4

PROOF OF GOD



***A nonprofit effort
to convince mankind
that God is real and
the Bible is His Word.***

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PROOF OF GOD

For a number of readers of this journal, the title of this article is offensive. There are generally two groups that will object to it. The first group is the skeptic element of our readers who will say that the existence of God can never be proven because of its nature. The idea is that no experiment can be conducted with rigorous scientific method which can test whether or not God exists. The term used to describe this process is called falsification. Webster describes “falsify” as “to show to be unfounded or untrue.” Since the concept of God cannot be falsified, any idea of “proof” is said to be an ignorant proposal.

Philosophical battles have raged for as long as man has discussed this topic, but what is being described as “proof” is “absolute proof.” The bottom line is that none of us lives with absolute proof of anything. In fact, such a notion does not exist in science. Isaac Newton gave us proof that gravity is a function of mass. You can hang two large bags of sand next to each other and measure the angle of the strings carefully and you will find they are pulled toward each other. With a little vector algebra you can measure the force between the bags that is causing the bags to move, and from that you can show that the force is accurately described by the equation:

$$F = G \frac{m_1 \times m_2}{d^2}$$

F is the force, m_1 is the mass of one bag, m_2 is the mass of the other bag, and d is the distance between them. To make the equation work G , a proportionality constant for gravity, is needed. This is 6.67×10^{-11} . This experiment is, in fact, part of the public high school science curriculum.

Does this mean gravity being a property of mass has been absolutely proven? The answer is NO! Albert Einstein was able to show

evidence in experiments that gravity is actually a product of the shape of space. Einstein's description gives better explanations of some observations than did Newton's—such as the movement of the orbit of the planet Mercury. So has Einstein's concept of gravity been absolutely proven? The answer is NO! New measurements and better understandings of the nature of waves and space are now suggesting a way of modifying Einstein's ideas to an even better explanation of gravity, which may result in new technologies.

Quantum mechanics has challenged many understandings of science that had been considered proven. This is the nature of science. It is how science works. We come to new understanding by continuing to look at new evidence and re-examining old evidence. Absolute proof does not exist in science. When there is massive evidence that an understanding is correct, we call it “proof,” realizing there may always be changes and new understandings.

The second group that opposes the use of the word “proof” in reference to the existence of God is the religionist. The objection in this case is that if you say you have proven the existence of God, then you have eliminated faith. Once again, the absolute nature of our proof is an issue. God has never called us to absolute blind faith. When Thomas was consumed with doubt about the resurrection, Jesus provided him with evidence. First Peter 3:15 tells us to “be ready to give an answer to every man who asks of the reason of the hope that is within you.” Numerous biblical passages call believers to use evidence to validate faith (see Psalm 19:1, Psalm 139:14, Romans 1:18–22). What we are called to is a reasonable faith. Offering evidence simply strengthens our beliefs, but faith is never eliminated. The miracles of the Bible are always accepted or rejected on the basis of faith. The virgin birth, the resurrection, and other miracles are accepted or rejected on faith.

When we talk about proof in any common sense, we are talking about the weight of the evidence. When you drive your car down the highway, you have no absolute proof that someone will not cross the center line, hit you head on, and kill you. The evidence is, however, that this is a very rare event, so you have enough proof that you will not be killed in this way as you drive your car. In the same way, we have proof of the existence of God. There is massive evidence that God does exist. The purpose of this journal has been and continues to be to present a small sampling of each of these areas. These include the following:



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CREATION

The formation of time, space, and matter/energy requires a creative source that exists in a higher dimension than these quantities. Elaborate higher dimensional entities such as superstrings, multiverses, and branes have been proposed, but those ideas are untestable. Sometimes proposals like superstrings have mathematical equations that seem to fit the model. However, there are 10^{500} different possible solutions to these equations, so they are not a practical proof that superstrings exist. There are properties of the cosmos that suggest an intelligence was involved, eliminating pure naturalism as a reasonable belief system for the creation of the cosmos. (See January 1978, May/June 1987, and May/June 2002 issues of this journal for more information on this concept.)

DESIGN EVIDENCE

The evidence for intelligence involved in the creation can be approached in a variety of ways. Design is not a scientific method, but rather an apologetic, or proof of God. The alternative to believing that an intelligence was a part of the cause of the cosmos is to believe that it could occur by chance. The number of parameters involved in the

formation of anything in the physical universe has turned out to be huge. When statistical methods are applied to the question of whether or not chance is a reasonable proposal, the probabilities make chance difficult to accept. There is also a question as to whether the observer effects chance processes.



Calculations by atheists and believers alike show that the number of parameters necessary for life to exist on a stable planet is huge. That makes the probability of all of them coming into existence by chance alone so unlikely that chance cannot be a reasonable explanation. We have 47 such parameters available in an article titled “Evidences for Design in the Universe.” (This booklet is available upon request, and is also on our doesgodexist.org website, or use the QR code.) Numerous books have been written on this subject, but all of them come up with probabilities of one chance in 10^{800} power or more. That is far beyond the scientific Dirac limit of what can be considered possible.



Attempts to circumvent this problem by atheist authors by inventing models of multiple or parallel universes fail. This is because not only do all of the parameters have to be at the same time, but they have to be at the same place in space/time.

ONTOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Ontology relates to the nature or essence of being or existence. A definition of ontology says that it involves investigations of experiences, either beyond the sphere of the present world or in any other way incapable of being the direct object of consciousness, which can be deduced immediately from the possession of certain feelings or principles and faculties of the human soul.

On a very practical level, the question is why do sentient beings conceive the idea of God? Why do we choose to worship God? What is it that causes humans universally to formulate some concept of the supernatural?

In addition to the question of why humans worship God, ontological evidence also centers around what it is that gives us the ability to create art and to express ourselves in music. There have been elaborate efforts to ascribe artistic and musical expression to some animal behaviors. In spite of our tendency toward anthropomorphic understandings of animal behavior, new scientific data shows otherwise. The artistic works and musical expressions of animals have better explanations in terms of survival techniques than in art expression for the joy of creativity. The cardinal singing beautifully outside your bedroom window is not just composing music as Mozart did, but is in reality warning all other competitors to stay out of his territory. Whale singing is communication, not artistic expression of emotions.



In addition to ontological questions about the origins of creativity and worship, there are similar questions about feelings of guilt, sympathy, and compassion. Dogs do not cower because they have feelings of guilt, but rather because they have learned it is a way to survive when they have offended. It is important to understand that these expressions are not a function of intelligence. Mentally challenged human beings show these characteristics, and very intelligent animals do not. Animals raised in human homes do not show these emotions unless such expression promotes their survival. Animals reverting to destructive animal behavior are very common — such as chimps raised in human homes suddenly attacking

a guest or even the owner. Ontological evidence of these characteristics is strong and leads us to moral arguments.

MORAL EVIDENCE

Why do we have a definition of right and wrong? Why do humans engage in altruistic behavior? Can humans be moral without belief in a supreme being who provides a fixed set of laws to live by and to whom we must ultimately answer? Atheists like Richard Dawkins evade the problem of evil by simply saying it does not exist (see *River Out of Eden*, [New York: BasicBooks, 1995], page 133). There have been books written claiming atheism is void of moral stance (see *Can We Be Good Without God?* by Paul Chamberlain, Intervarsity Press).

If God created us and gave us a “field guide” on how to live with one another, the system he gave us should work and attempts to live with another set of instructions should not work. In fact, the evidence is strong that attempts to build a morality, without faith in God simply does not work. When atheists have tried a social experiment of having a town or a society where no religious values are allowed, the result has been negative time and again. Liberal, Missouri, is a famous American example where the town was built with no churches of any kind being allowed. In the book *This Strange Town: Liberal Missouri* (see information at this site: <http://evermore.imagedjinn.com/blg/>) J.P. Moore details the collapse of the community because of a lack of absolute values of right and wrong. Our ministry has an extensive correspondence course program available in prisons. When we get into the lesson on morality and making moral choices one of the most common comments I hear from prisoners is that if they had studied the proof of God’s existence years before, they would not be in prison now. Their violation of the law stemmed from having no religious foundation of right and wrong. Survival of the fittest is not a viable way to base moral beliefs and practices. When religious people do something immoral, they do so knowing they violated what they know is right and wrong. The guilt and emotional scars from this are baggage they struggle with for their entire lives. Atheists have no such baggage because they have denied that there is such a thing as evil and wrong.



INSPIRATIONAL EVIDENCE

If the Bible shows inspiration, there has to have been an “inspirer.” The wisdom and practical value of living as Christ calls us



to live is shown in changed lives, in charity and relief work, in the promotion of education, in the arts, in medical relief, in care facilities, and in social work. Biblical minimalists have failed miserably in their attempts to discredit the Bible, showing massive ignorance and poor

scholarship in the process. (For details on this see “Maligning God in Ignorance” in our January/February 2009 issue. Also see *The Dawkins Delusion* by Alister McGrath.)

Atheist complaints about the Bible fall into one of six categories:

A. Theological and philosophical objections to God’s actions. Questioning why God did something, or whether we like what God did in ancient Israel is not an indictment of the Bible as being fraudulent.

B. Misunderstanding characteristics of God. God being a jealous God, for example, does not mean that God is like a child, mad because someone has something he does not. God’s jealousy is over the unfaithfulness of his people. It is like a man being jealous when his wife is unfaithful to him. It is a rejection of God in spite of all he has done for us in favor of a false substitute.

C. Translation issues. We have to look at who wrote it, why they wrote it, to whom they wrote it, and how the people of the time would have understood it. Going back to the original language is frequently necessary to understand what is being said. The difference between God creating (Hebrew *bara*) and God making (Hebrew *asah*) in Genesis 1 has huge implications for our understanding of the message that is being given. Sometimes translation errors are also an issue — always easy to straighten out, but sometimes misleading.

D. Not understanding the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament. Charges of animal cruelty, misogynistic behavior, brutality, and polygamy are frequently made by Bible skeptics using Old Testament stories.

E. Not understanding the difference between the physical and the spiritual in both events and in worship activity.

F. Not recognizing the purpose of human existence.

In addition to these errors (and a variety of others that could be given) critics of the Bible neglect to look at the positive evidence. A wide range of scientific statements are made and implied in the Bible that are beyond the knowledge of the authors and cannot be ascribed to chance. The essential nature of blood (Leviticus 17:11–14), the practice of quarantine (Leviticus 13–15), hygienic laws (Deuteronomy 23:12–14), the sequence of the creation in Genesis 1, Spencer’s scientific principles given in Genesis 1, the water cycle, and a variety of psychological issues are all a testimony to the fact that there is a uniqueness to the Bible that sets it apart. (A listing of these and other examples are available upon request or are on the doesgodexist.org website in the Appendix A section of the correspondence course.)



The practical value of the Bible and what it has meant for mankind cannot be denied. Alvin J. Schmidt’s book *How Christianity Changed the World* (Zondervan) does a wonderful job of showing what a positive influence for good the Bible has been. This does not happen unless there is a uniqueness to the book, and the Bible stands out as being so unique that it is difficult to ascribe it to the ancient work of ignorant men.

When scientists come to a conclusion about a natural phenomenon they do not do that based on one piece of evidence. Numerous experiments are conducted in a variety of disciplines over a very long period of time. As new evidence becomes available, it too is used to continue to analyze the understanding in question, or a change is made in the understanding. The proof of God’s existence is not based on one experience or one area of study. We have not discussed philosophical, psychological, historical, or other disciplines in which experts in those fields have offered evidence, but that kind of support continues to grow.

We can find enough evidence to build a dynamic faith that gives meaning to life, guides us in and through life’s difficult times, and answers the challenges of those still searching for that proof that will move them to act. For some of us, not much evidence is needed, but for others we need to hear “the reason of the hope that is within you.” That proof God has given in a variety of ways, but perhaps the change it makes in the life of a lost soul is the most convincing proof of the reality of the existence of God.

— John N. Clayton





ADEQUATE EVIDENCE

by Owen D. Olbricht

Adequate evidence is available to convince anyone who wants to do God's will that God exists, that the Bible is his word, and that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. David wrote, "The fool has said in his heart, there is no God" (Psalm 14:1). That statement in the Psalms might sound arrogant and bigoted to an unbeliever, but the failure to believe that God exists may appear as foolishness when almost

everything in the universe affirms that there is a Creator.

Quoting the Bible to prove God exists is a weak way to lead someone to faith in God. Some have said, "It is so because the Bible says so." That is not a good response unless there is evidence in the Bible itself that it is the word of God.

In a sense, the Bible assumes God is the mind that inspired the men who wrote the Bible. The nature of the Bible itself, however, is evidence that it is from God, and, therefore, that he exists. If I write a letter, I do not have to prove I exist. The letter itself is proof of my existence. The Bible has ample proof that mortal man could not have been the mind behind the writing of the Bible and that a Mind greater than that of a man is its author.

What I intend to do is to present principles from the Bible, that can point to the existence of God.

FOUR IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES

1. The creation is so designed that all that is needed for the life, health, and happiness of man is built into our planet.

On Paul's first missionary journey, he confronted the idolatrous people of Lystra with the challenge that God left witness of his existence by providing good things that satisfied all their needs. As John Clayton pointed out that those who accept intelligent design believe, "... if God designed the world for human habitation, he would have built into it a large number of devices to assist humans living on the planet." (John Clayton, *Does God Exist?* March/April 2013, 22).

Paul presented this principle by stating, "Nevertheless, he did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain

from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts 14:17, all references are from the NKJV).

2. The glory, creative ability, and existence of the Creator can be seen in his creative works.

Perhaps David was moved to write the following observation based on his gazing into the starry heavens on clear nights as he tended his father’s sheep.



The heavens declare the glory of God;

And the firmament [expanse] shows His handiwork.

Day unto day utters speech,
And night unto night reveals knowledge. (Psalm 19:1, 2).

3. The reality, nature, and existence of the Creator can be under-

stand by what exists.

The Gentiles had given themselves over to dumb idols. As a result, they were worshiping the creation instead of the Creator. Paul maintained that this was inexcusable because God’s invisible attributes are revealed by what he created. “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:20).

4. A house does not just happen, but it is evidence of a builder. So also the creation speaks of a Creator.

The purpose of the writer of the book of Hebrews was to show the superiority of Jesus over Moses, who was only a servant in God’s house (Hebrews 3:3). Instead of a servant, Jesus was the builder of the house. The writer correctly affirmed that a house must have a builder, as also does this universe. “For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God” (Hebrews 3:4).



EVIDENCE ABOUT JESUS

The evidence of a Creator is adequate—more is not needed. This is also true of evidence that Jesus is the Christ of God, based on God’s

witness through Jesus' works, and that of witnesses of his works. "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater ... he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because He has not believed the witness that God has given of His Son" (1 John 5:9a, 10b).

God gave testimony concerning Jesus by verbal confirmation (Matthew 3:17; 17:5) and through miraculous works that Jesus performed (John 5:36). "Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, and wonders" (Acts 2:22). "... these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).

UNBELIEVERS

In spite of all the evidence, why do some not believe? Many reasons may be given. The Bible gives some.

1. Satisfaction with abundance of possessions. "Feed me with the food allotted to me; lest I be full and deny You, and say, 'Who is the Lord?'" (Proverbs 30:8b, 9a).

2. Hard and impenitent hearts. "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God" (Romans 2:4, 5).

3. Not being convinced by obvious miracles as testified in the Bible (John 6:26). "But although [Jesus] had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in him" (John 12:37).

4. Lack of desire to do God's will. "Jesus answered them and said, 'My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority'" (John 7:16, 17).

ADEQUATE EVIDENCE

The evidence for the existence of God, the inspiration of the Bible, and the deity of Jesus is adequate for those who desire to do God's will. No more is needed and no more will be given. Our responsibility

is to search for the truth and accept the truth that is revealed. The stakes are high. Those who believe and are born again have hope in Jesus that they will have eternal life in heaven (1 Peter 1:3, 4). Those who do not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:15, 16).



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THE EQUIVOCATION OF NOTHING

by
Peter Bryan



Nothing,
Nada, Zilch!

Problem: The publication of a text claiming a possibility of the coming into being of the universe by its own means.

Solution: To point out that the text equivocates in its use of the word “nothing” in order to make its claim. Nothing can come into existence by itself.

There is a Peanuts cartoon where Charlie Brown and, if I remember correctly, Schroeder, were outside at night looking at the stars. The first picture had Charlie Brown say, “It was made” and Schroeder say, “It happened.” Then there were two pictures where nothing was said and then the last where Charlie Brown says again, “It was made” and Schroeder again, “It happened.” This cartoon distills the essence of the current debate between the atheist and the theist regarding the origin of the universe. The question that the atheist needs to answer in its most basic form is whether it is possible for nature to be responsible for herself; that is, can she by herself be responsible for both her coming into being and for her subsequent development. Although not generally acknowledged, the atheist does have the burden of proof in this regard.

In 2012 Lawrence Krauss, a theoretical physicist and cosmologist and one of the leading members of the New Atheist movement, published a book entitled *A Universe from Nothing: Why There Is Something Rather than Nothing*. In the book the author attempts to explain in scientific terms how it is possible for the universe to

have come into existence by itself out of nothing. His arguments are scientific and technical, and therefore hard for a non-physicist to comprehend. Basically he says that if we were to measure all the positive and negative energy in the universe they would cancel each other out. We would then arrive at the conclusion that the energy would have been zero at the time of the big bang. He also says that the state of nothingness, or zero, is very unstable. He then says it would be surprising, given that instability, if the universe did not come into being by itself. Steven Hawking, another theoretical physicist and perhaps the world's best-known living scientist, seems to have arrived at a similar conclusion. In his 2010 book *The Grand Design*, he wrote that because there is such a thing as the law of gravity the universe had to come into existence out of nothing. Hawking famously wrote, "It is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the universe going." Both Krauss and Hawking see that the question addressed in the Peanuts cartoon needs an answer. They believe they have one.



It is impossible to assess what effect statements and publications like these have on people generally, but it is worrying. If someone were leaning toward the atheist view, a statement like the above could move them in that direction. If such questions could be answered in this way by leading scientists, some people might assume that they would no longer have to think carefully about it themselves. Even for members of the church, such statements from these people can be intimidating. The intimidation comes from the fact that most of us are scientific laity, and have no way of assessing the science involved in coming to such conclusions.

The question asked by Charlie and Schroeder, though, is not a scientific question. It is both philosophical and theological, and can be answered by anybody, and should be addressed by everybody. It cannot be, and never will be, answered by scientific investigation. This is not to say that such investigation is unimportant and that we cannot make some informed predictions concerning past and future states of the universe. It is to say that such predictions, all of them, are irrelevant to the question concerning the origin of the universe, except in the sense that certain kinds of evidence may be made available. Then again the existence of the universe itself is a kind of evidence.

As I said, the title to the book by Lawrence Krauss is *A Universe from Nothing* and the subtitle is *Why There Is Something Rather than Nothing*. The word “nothing” is used in both the title and subtitle, but in each part it has a different meaning. This is called equivocation—an attempt to prove something by using a word to say one thing when it can have two meanings. In the first part “nothing” would appear to mean truly nothing—the supposed state of affairs at the time of the big bang. In this sense “nothing” is a physical concept and properly under the domain of physical science. In that regard there is substantial scientific literature on the subject of the big bang and the state of affairs at that time and the developments that appeared to have taken place just after that time.

In the subtitle the author is referring to a metaphysical principle; “nothing comes from nothing.” Krauss knows of this principle and he knows it forms an important part of strong arguments for God’s existence. The principle was first suggested by ancient Greek philosophers—in particular by a philosopher named Parmenides, a precursor to Aristotle. Krauss wishes to appear to have disproved this principle. But the word “nothing” in this context does not mean a physical state of emptiness. It means non-being. This is confusing because non-being is harder



to understand than a physical state of emptiness. It is impossible to fully grasp the idea because there is nothing we can think of that is not something in some way. You cannot imagine “nothing” in this sense. But we can understand it. If we can understand the non-existence of something, we can understand non-existence. When we see that the word denotes this absence of being, it does become clear that the principle “nothing comes from nothing” is fully justified and inviolable. Nothing can come from non-existence. One could say that a state of non-existence is a contradiction in terms. A state, which is something, of non-existence, which is nothing, cannot exist. Nothing can come from a state that does not exist. This refers to any state, general or particular, past, or present. Nothing can come from some particular thing that does not exist. If it truly is the case that “nothing comes from nothing,” it must also be the case that if there are things now, there can never have been a state of general non-being. There must always have been, and still must be, one thing that needs nothing for its existence. We can see how such a principle leads to the idea that God must exist.

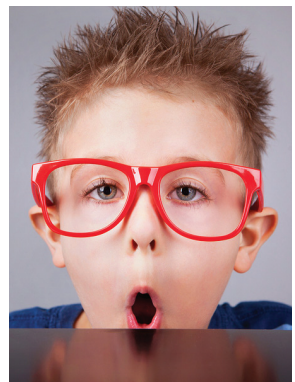
There are principles that define what it means to be rational. Without these principles it is impossible to think in a rational way.

These are called first principles. They are first in the sense that everything that is rational follows from them. They are self-justifying. They cannot be proven, but are the basis of proof for all subsequent conclusions. One of these principles is called the law of identity. This law says that a thing cannot exist and not exist at the same time. It also means that a thing cannot be one thing and another different thing at the same time. The apple in your fruit bowl is not an orange nor is it an apple pie (although it could become one). We realize these things are obvious, but it is when we clarify why certain things are obvious or simply reasonable we see an underlying truth that can be very important. “Nothing comes from nothing” is related to this principle in the sense that for something to come into existence by itself means that it would have to be and not be at the same time. If we say the universe brought itself into being, we are saying it was there to bring itself into being while it was not there.

There are principles of causality that are also contravened by the idea that the universe brought itself into being. The principles say that every effect must have a cause, and that cause is at least equal to the effect. This is directly related to the preceding principle. To produce an effect that is greater than the cause, or to produce an effect without a cause, means precisely to produce something from nothing—being from non-being. We see that this idea of “nothing” is actually very important as it forms a much greater part of our normal thinking about the world than we are usually aware.

We do see all of these principles working in daily life, not just in the universe. We do not expect things to appear out of nowhere by themselves. I do not expect to see a blue whale appear by itself in my front room. I expect to see water come out of a water faucet. We cannot hit home runs without batters. All of these things exemplify the principles of causality and identity. Life would be unlivable if things did not work in precisely this regular and logical way. The way we undertake scientific investigation also relies upon these principles. If these principles did not hold, no scientific experiment or calculation could possibly be reliable. One could not make any kind of scientific prediction or come to any scientific conclusion if things could just pop in and out of existence—including universes. Aristotle felt that without these principles, true statements about the world could not be made, and that language itself would break down.

Krauss is aware that these principles must eventually and inexorably lead to the conclusion that God must exist. He understands that to consistently deny God’s



existence one would have to show that the universe can pop into being from literally nothing, and that things that exist can do so without a cause. This is the burden of proof of which we spoke earlier, and is the purpose of his book. Krauss claims to have done this, but it is only done by confusing the meaning of a word that is crucial to a rational understanding of the world.

Over the last three centuries atheism as a worldview has left the private chambers of a few individuals. It is now a fundamental assumption of most Western governments. Today it is a social movement that has a tremendous influence over our entire educational system. Exactly how this has happened is a long story. We now have to clarify why certain arguments really are unreasonable.

All things philosophical or otherwise must eventually come under the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit. Paul says in his letter to the Romans (1:19–20) that the people whose behavior he condemns in the preceding verses could have known of God’s existence because God had made it plain to them. There are several conclusions we could reach from these two verses, but for now we find that even the most obvious of things must lead us to God. It may be said that all roads lead to God.

God called himself “Jahweh” which means “I am that I am.” It is difficult not to see in this a reference to the one who needs nothing to exist, who is the source of the existence of everything else, who is the ultimate cause without needing a cause himself, and who has to exist if anything at all does exist.



THE FUTURE OF APOLOGETICS IS NOW!

One of the issues that should concern all Christians is how to meet the growing tide of opposition to belief in God and to Christianity. Since 1968, the **Does God Exist?** ministry has functioned to challenge disbelief and to help all people battle with their doubts. We have done this through lectureships, books, booklets, websites, videos, CDs, and correspondence courses. We have also attempted to train others to do what we have been doing and to build their own ministries to fight the aggressive advances of atheism, naturalism, and skepticism. We have done that through week-long summer seminar training programs which we have conducted nearly every summer. Before long we will lay our “weapons” down and others will need to step in and take over what we have tried to do. Finding those who will dedicate themselves to such a ministry, realizing that opposition comes not only from the world, but from those who

claim to be Christians, is extraordinarily difficult. I am encouraged that there are those in the Restoration Movement who are even now building ministries that are larger and more effective than I have ever dreamed would be possible.

One of these is Dr. John Oakes, the president of the Apologetics Research Society. We have reviewed a number of books by Dr. Oakes in past issues of this journal. Now he has prepared an independent study program. Classes operate from a syllabus, have required books and readings, and have a DVD as the basis of the course. Students do a research paper, take an exam, and receive a Christian Apologetics Certificate after completing all ten classes. Each class is \$150, which covers all materials, mentoring, and grading of the exam and paper. Those interested can contact Dr. Oakes at johnoakes@gccod.edu or at 5758 Avenida Sanchez, San Diego, CA 92124. His website is www.EvidenceForChristianity.org.



The titles of the courses are:



Teachers in these courses include Robert Kurka, Douglas Jacoby, Glenn Giles, Dan Conder, John Wilson, and Foster Stanback. I know many of these men personally and can recommend their scholarship and expertise in these subjects. Education is the answer to doubt and skepticism, and the work these Christians are doing in apologetics gives everyone the opportunity to grow and become trained in this vital area.

—JNC

GREAT SCIENTISTS AND GOD

Editor's Note: There are many writers who claimed that good scientists and intelligent, well-educated people do not believe in God. This simply is not true. Tihomir Dimitrov (<http://nobelists.net>) has been researching the statements of the greatest scientists of all time, and we are reproducing some of their statements in this column.

ARTHUR COMPTON

Nobel Prize in 1927¹⁸⁹²⁻¹⁹⁶² for confirming the dual nature of light as both a wave and a particle

“If religion is to be acceptable to science, it is important to examine the hypothesis of an intelligence working in nature. The discussion of the evidences for an intelligent God is as old as philosophy itself.

“The argument on the basis of design, though trite, has never been adequately refuted. On the contrary, as we learn more about our world, the probability of its having resulted by chance processes becomes more and more remote, so that few indeed are the scientific men of today who will defend an atheistic attitude.”

“To me God appears in three aspects, all of which are closely related. The **first aspect** of God is universally recognized. It is simply the best one knows, to which he devotes his life. The best includes the love of one's fellow men, particularly those for whom one has some special responsibility. It includes truth of whatever kind may serve as a guide to life.

“The **second aspect** of God that I recognize is the basis of existence and of life and of motivation, which I think of as a conscious Power. This Power appears to be as having a special concern for its conscious creatures who share the responsibility for shaping their part of the world.

“More particularly, I follow Jesus' teaching that this Power that is the basis of existence holds toward me and all other persons the attitude of a wise and loving father. This recognition of kinship with the Creator-God is for me a matter of vital importance. ...

“The **third aspect** of God that I recognize is that which shows itself in the lives of noble men. It is in their lives that I see exemplified the virtues to which I would commit my own life.

“For me the outstanding example of these noble men is Jesus. His teaching and example of his life form the most reliable guide that I have found for shaping my own actions. It is because I accept his leadership that I call myself a Christian.”

Cynthia's Corner

WHY I BELIEVE.



My husband was raised to be an atheist, but he came to believe in God through science and in the God of the Bible by studying God's Word. I was raised to believe in God. I attended a nearby church, and there I heard about God, Jesus, and the Bible. When I was about 12, I was sprinkled (they called it "baptized") to join the church. I had accepted the belief of my mom and the country in general (in the '50s and '60s). I enjoyed listening to Billy Graham and always responded to the message in my heart. I accepted and prayed Jesus into my heart many times, but something always seemed to be missing.

After my second child was born, I was invited to a Bible study. For the first time, I met people who were eagerly studying God's Word to know him and to know themselves. They discussed it in detail and talked about how they could apply it to their lives. They read it with the intention of doing what it said. They talked personally about sin and repentance. They wanted to change their lives, hearts, and attitudes to conform to whatever God said.

Until then, I had accepted God mentally and emotionally and assumed my sins were forgiven because of my "belief." Studying the Bible, I learned the difference between that kind of belief and saving, obedient faith. I learned from the Bible that saying I was a sinner was not the same as being personally convicted of my sins. If our heart and mind are open to God, his Word will show us our motives and attitudes, our secret sins, and who we really are. God's Word "is living and active; ... it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

Studying God's Word helped me see that God is not only loving, but also holy and just. His holiness and justice demanded payment for sin. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). He loves us so much he sent his Son to pay the price for our sins. I learned from the Bible that there is no forgiveness of sins without true repentance. I had to give up my sins, and obey God. I had to be buried with Christ in baptism to crucify my old self and die to my sins (Romans 6). That is when my sins were washed away and I received God's Spirit to help me live for him (Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16).

I believed in God all my life, but that "belief" was not based on God's Word. By studying the Bible, I came to a deeper understanding of who God is, who I am, and God's purpose for my life. My accepting "belief" became a saving, obedient faith when I acted upon the truths revealed in God's Word.

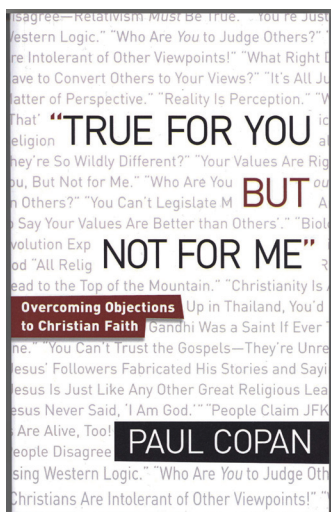
—Cynthia Clayton



The books that are reviewed in the Book Reviews section are not available through us, but can be obtained from a local bookstore or through many online bookstores.

“True for You But Not for Me”

by Paul Copan, Bethany House Publishers, ©2009,
240 pages, \$15.99 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-0-7642-0650-4

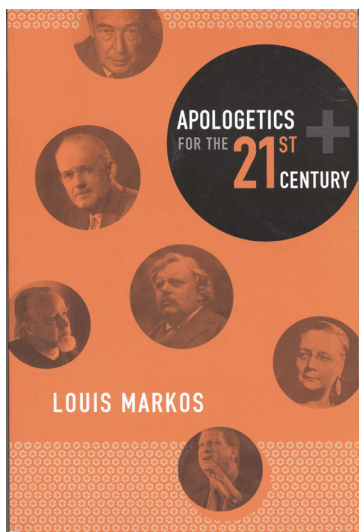


The **Does God Exist?** ministry deals with evidence, mostly scientific evidence, for the existence of God and the credibility of the Bible as the Word of God. All of us who are Christians run into moral objections to Christ and to Christianity. Statements like, “That’s just your opinion,” “Who are you to judge others,” “You can’t legislate morality,” “It’s arrogant to say your values are better than others,” “We can be good without God,” “All religions are basically the same,” “You can’t trust the gospels—they’re unreliable,” “It doesn’t matter what you believe—as long as you’re sincere,” and so forth. It is those objections that this book is about.

That is a small sampling of the questions dealt with by Copan. He divides the questions into five parts titled “Absolutely Relative,” “The Absolutism of Moral Relativism,” “The Exclusivism of Religious Pluralism,” “The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ: Myth or Reality,” and “No Other Name: The Question of the Unevangelized.” Copan is a philosopher holding a Ph.D. from Marquette University, and his answers are well researched and well documented. The format of the book is to take questions we all hear and give his answers to those questions. His answers are not always the ones I would give. In a few cases, I would disagree with his approach, but it is well written and useful reading. The questions and answers are very relevant to the needs of people in today’s world.

Apologetics for the 21st Century

by Louis Markos, Crossway Publishers, © 2010,
271 pages, \$17.99 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-1-4335-1448-7



When you study the evidence for the existence of God, there are certain scholars and writers whose names come up again and again. These include C.S. Lewis, G. K. Chesterton, Dorothy Sayers, Francis Schaeffer, Josh McDowell, William Dembinski, Dinesh D’Sousa, Norman Geisler, Michael Behe, F. F. Bruce, Gary Habermas, Phillip Johnson, Alvin Plantinga, John Stott, Lee Strobel, and Ravi Zacharias. This book analyzes all of these as well as their rebuttals of atheists like Dawkins, Harris, and Hitchens.

The book is divided into two sections. The first is titled “The Legacy of Lewis and Chesterton.” This section traces the history of the work of Lewis, Chesterton, Sayers, and Schaeffer, and ends with Josh McDowell. The second section is titled “Making the Case for Faith in a (Post) Modern World.” Markos takes the challenges of the new atheists and shows the work of modern apologists in answering those challenges. There are good explanations of Intelligent Design proponents, and answers to Hume, Dawkins, Hitchens, and Harris by apologetic scholars.

Markos writes clearly and explains things well. There is a great deal of philosophy in the book, but it is not so abstract as to detract from the answers it gives. Issues like human suffering, the validity of Christ as God in the flesh, the Da Vinci Code, Gnosticism, and why Christianity is the only way to God are all included in the book. There is a series of useful appendices which include a timeline of apologetics starting in 1908, a glossary, a “Who’s Who of Apologetics,” an annotated bibliography, and a list of websites.

We recommend this book to the serious student of apologetics. It will be helpful to anyone who is teaching classes on the evidence for the existence of God, and it will be helpful to workers on state university campuses. For the average reader in the pew, it will be a book to read carefully. Reading it will build anyone’s faith and help them to “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Peter 3:15).

DANDY DESIGNS

NEW MIGRATION CHAMPION! THE GODWIT

For many years, we have discussed animals that do incredible migrations. These have included the Arctic tern, whales, caribou, salmon, sea turtles and monarch butterflies. All of these have incredible migratory journeys, but new data has revealed a new long distance champion—the bar-tailed godwit.



In previous issues, we have discussed the Arctic tern which travels some 12,000 miles twice a year. The bar-tailed godwit travels 18,425 miles, including legs as long as 7,254 miles taking eight days. This bird weighs less than a pound and it cannot swim. The godwit begins its journey in Alaska where it accumulates fat and empties its stomach right before it takes off. When a low pressure system sweeps through the area, the godwit leaves on the trailing edge of the system creating a tail wind that sweeps it southward. It flies for over 200 hours non-stop battling the doldrums and headwinds until it finally lands in New Zealand. The bird has burned off all of its fat and spends several months in New Zealand.

The return trip is truly astounding. The godwit returns to Alaska by way of China. Once again it fattens up and repeats the process, flying 6,500 miles to China's Yellow Sea. There it feeds on the invertebrate mud flats in spring before flying back to Alaska, another 4,625 miles. That makes a total of 18,425 miles. Research has shown amazing factors that make this trip possible. The godwit's stomach shrinks right before take off, minimizing drag, while the flight muscles enlarge. The wind direction is critical and is carefully chosen. The bird is awake for 200 hours or more at a stretch. The

Bar-tailed godwit: © daveмонтруил. Image from BigStockPhoto.com. Arctic tern: © AndreaMita. Image from BigStockPhoto.com. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bar-tailed_Godwit_migration.jpg.

navigation is complex since the return flight is so radically different from the original flight.

It would seem that survival for this small bird is threatened by having a genetic program that forces such extreme flight routes. Its food needs could be met in much simpler ways. Potential food sources exist all over the Pacific rim. The benefits this amazing journey brings to widely separated geographic areas and the life forms in those areas are huge. We would suggest a strong testimony to a designer who genetically programmed a small bird to meet a multiplicity of needs in widely separated geographic areas. We can see God's design in the things that he has made, and the godwits are an extreme example of that design.

Source: *Alaska* magazine, October 2013, pages 46.

The bar-tailed godwit makes the longest migration of any animal.



The Arctic tern's amazing migration falls short of the trophy.

U.S. Geological Survey satellite tracking map of the actual migration of bar-tailed godwits from New Zealand to the Yellow Sea in China—the longest non-stop flight of any bird.



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News and Notes

MOVIES. Early 2014 brought movies that relate to the issues we address in this journal. The first one titled *God's Not Dead* we recommend for its apologetic approach. The film presents a young Christian confronted by an atheistic professor bent on destroying faith in God among his students. Many college students have had this experience. The student in the film presents an apologetic argument in response to the atheist professor. The film builds a number of character dossiers and is solidly Christian in its approach.

The second film is very different. Directed by an atheist, it distorts and misrepresents the Bible at nearly every turn. Jerry Blount, preacher at The Pillar Church of Christ, made the following observations:

We went to see *Noah*, the movie. You can read the truth about Noah in Genesis 6–9. The producers of the movie chose blasphemy over Scripture. Noah is depicted as a demented fellow who cannot figure out what God wants from him. He looks like (and his family considers him) to be a madman—a torn fellow that cannot figure out what to do. This is a slander both on a godly man and the God who created him.

In the movie, rather than his sons taking wives on the ark, Shem gets a wife and Noah abandons Ham's prospective wife to be trampled (alienating Ham). Shem's wife has twin girls on the ark. This appears to allow for the other two sons to have wives and repopulate the earth. (??) Noah, however, thinks his mandate is to murder his granddaughters to cause all of mankind to cease to exist. In the movie, Tubal Cain, with Ham's help, stows away on the ark for the duration and tries to murder Noah. The fact of the flood and a few of the names are about all the story line has in common with Scripture.

You expect Hollywood to ad-lib on a lot of gaps in dialogue, etc. This time they chose to turn one of God's all-time favorite righteous people into little more than a madman. When God was speaking to Ezekiel he chose three men as the ultimate examples of righteousness. Noah was one of them. (Ezekiel 14:14, 20). To make Noah into some sort of a murder-crazed psycho is blasphemy. A Bible-believing Christian is going to be angry when he leaves. Far from simply using poetic

license, they made a deliberate attempt to undermine what the text actually reveals. They also purposely smeared the integrity of a godly, righteous man. The only good thing that I can see coming from this movie is providing a Christian the opportunity to correct the slander leveled against one of the most treasured stories of scripture.

COSMOSSERIES REVISED. *Cosmos* is another media presentation relating to the existence of God and the skeptic arguments against. In 1980, Carl Sagan and his wife Ann Druyan produced a series of films that promoted the secular humanist view of cosmology. Sagan started in the “spaceship of your imagination” and toured from outer space inward revealing modern discoveries and interpreting them in an atheistic and secular humanistic framework. The program was a beautifully made, high budget production funded by Arco Petroleum. Druyan and Neil deGrasse Tyson (an astronomer) have revised the program (Sagan died in 1996) and released it on Fox, National Geographic, and a variety of international networks. The first of the 13 programs being shown on March 9 of this year.

The new version of *Cosmos* is even more beautifully done, technically and visually, than the 1980 version, but the approach is even more atheistic and biased. Science and faith are consistently portrayed as enemies and opponents. The facts shown in the presentations are not the issue, but the slant of the program is very atheistic. Believers are presented as ignorant, uneducated people who relied on ghosts and spirits to explain everything. The enormous contributions of believers whose faith in God led to their discoveries is omitted. When great believers (like Isaac Newton) are presented, their logical basis of faith is ignored and their misunderstandings are emphasized. Newton’s attempt with alchemy, for example, is presented as well as his attempt to use biblical numerology. His acceptance of the moral teachings of the Bible and his belief that God created with order and logic is ignored. Robert Hook is presented correctly as Newton’s nemesis, but Hook’s atheistic views and immoral lifestyle which led to his premature death are ignored. Evolutionary theory is presented, but views like those of Francis Collins of the Human Genome Project are ignored. Microevolution is presented but confused with macroevolution. Macroevolution is presented as a fact with no attention being paid to the enormous leaps of faith in atheistic evolutionary theory, or the fact that many evolutionists are believers. As an example, the evolution from sightlessness to complex eyes was graphically presented with no solid evidence that by random chance this actually happened.

Cosmos has beautiful graphics, is well written, and is well funded by private sources. It is accurate in its facts, but selective on what

facts it presents—and it makes poor distinctions between facts and speculations.

BIBLE PEOPLE CONFIRMED IN INSCRIPTIONS. In the March/April 2014 (Volume 40, number 2) issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review* is a very useful article (page 42) and chart (page 46). It shows characters in the Bible who have been documented in archeological finds. Fifty different people are listed whose names have been found in archeological discoveries, along with the passages where they are mentioned in the Bible. It is an interesting and useful chart.

ANIMAL RIGHTS SUITS GROWING. The Nonhuman Rights



Project has started a “long series of suits” on behalf of pet chimpanzees. They say the owners are slave owners holding chimps against their will. Four chimps (Tommy, Hercules, Kiko, and Leo) are being represented in suits against their owners. The suits claim that New York laws “do not limit legal personhood to homo sapiens.” If you do not view man as special and created in the image of God, then these suits will continue on behalf of dogs, cats, cockroaches, etc. Why limit it to chimps? Source: *Citizen* magazine, March 2014, page 9.

OLDEST TREE. Swedish researchers have found a tree with a dendritic dating of 9,550 years. This is like using tree rings to determine age and is not based on radioactive techniques of any kind. Dispensationalist traditions that demand a 6,000 year age to the earth continue to run into evidential problems with their denominational creeds. Source: *Time* magazine, March 10, 2014, page 15.

PHELPS FAMILY LEADER DIES. The classic embodiment of misuse of the Bible is the Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas. For years members of this church have made their presence known by picketing funerals, and disrupting public displays of unity and compassion by sit-ins, sign waving, and abusive lawsuits. Their most publicized events were the picketing at the funerals of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, Matthew Shephard’s funeral, and the funerals of Sandy Hook Elementary students. The Westboro Church is not “baptist” or even a “church” by any standard. Forgiveness, turning the other cheek, compassion, loving the sinner but not the sin, going the second mile, and returning good for evil are not in the radar

of this group. It was led by Fred Phelps who *Time* magazine calls “a colossal jerk” (April 7, 2014, page 25) who had a law degree and claimed to be a preacher. The damage done to the cause of Christ is huge, but Phelps died on March 20, 2014. Even the media has noted how he was the antithesis of everything Jesus Christ taught, and thus makes a somewhat inverted argument for the actual teachings of Christ. Also discussed in *The Week*, April 4, 2014, pages 15 and 38.

CLOVIS BURIAL SITE FOUND. There has been massive evidence that the people of a culture called Clovis were among the first humans to come to America. Newest DNA studies show that the Clovis people came from Asia and that native people in the Americas have a connection to the Clovis people. In *Science News* (March 22, 2014, page 6) is a report that the first burial site of a small child that is Clovis has been verified in Montana. Burial sites tell us a great deal about the culture, and since this one dates to over 12,000 years ago, it is an early time in human ventures to the Americas. When humans dispersed across the earth after the flood, the spread was rapid and included such far away places as Montana. There is a lot to be learned about human migration across the planet, but one fact is obvious as Acts 17:26 tells us “From one man he made every nation of men that they should inhabit the whole earth”

WHO IS MORE DOGMATIC—DAWKINS OR BECK?

Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt has written a book titled *The Righteous Mind* and has released a study comparing the writings of Richard Dawkins and Sam Harris with Glenn Beck to see who uses dogmatic phrases and words like “always,” “never,” “undeniable,” etc. the most. The atheist use far exceeds any of the right wing political writers. Sam Harris is the champion using these words and phrases more than 2.5% of every word in his book. From Haidt’s research we can see that the new atheists are pushing their own predetermined conclusions rather than presenting every side to allow their readers to reach informed decisions.

PRIMORDIAL GRAVITATIONAL WAVES FOUND? One of the predictions of the Big Bang has been that if time, space, and matter/energy came into existence in a singularity, the universe would have expanded by a factor of 10^{75} during the first trillionth of a trillionth of a second after it happened. Such an event would have produced effects that should be visible today, including gravitational waves. On March 17, 2014, researchers at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics announced that they had detected the presence of these waves. Other researchers have to verify the observations for it to be accepted by the scientific community. If this observation stands, it will

have major implications for relativity, quantum mechanics, and our understanding of the origin of the universe. This is exciting research with huge implications. The big bang is not an issue for apologetics, because it does not attempt to explain what banged or who banged it. What it does do is tell us that there was a beginning to time, space, and matter/energy as the Bible maintains. This beginning logically has to have been caused. The question of what caused it is answered by looking at the properties such a cause would have to possess. All of those properties are seen in the biblical concept of what God is. Our discussion of cosmology on our doesgodexist.org website group goes into this in some depth. Source: *Science News*, April 5, 2014, page 6, and *Time*, March 31, 2014, page 22.

GRAVITY WAVES AND MULTIVERSES. One product of the discussion on gravity waves is that the mathematics involved makes it possible for many universes to exist, ours just being one of them. This is an interesting speculation, but the biggest problem with this speculation is that it is not testable. Einstein proposed a version of the multiverses known as the oscillating universe, but ultimately it was discarded because the model proposed violated some calculations and observations. The current theory as it exists now is untestable. There is no experiment or observation that can prove or disprove it. Many scientists believe it is not a scientific subject because of its very nature, and philosophers have raised many major logical issues with the proposal. Our discussions about the existence of God are based on evidence, and at this time there is no evidence of multiverses. If that changes, we will look at it. Source: “Multiverse Musings: Is It Testable?” by Dr. Jeff Zweerink, *Reasons to Believe* website reasons.org, Nov. 25, 2013.



PEDOPHILIA REVIVED. In the 1970s pedophiles organized a group called The Pedophile Information Exchange which was a pro-sex-with-children group. The claim was connected to gay rights movements with the pedophiles claiming their civil rights are being violated. We now see some movement in England to revive this group based upon the fact that they are a minority and thus should have their rights protected. We would suggest this just shows how ridiculous it is to suggest everyone has equal rights no matter what those rights do to others. In a culture that is leaving God’s moral standards it is inevitable. Source: *The Week*, March 14, 2014, page 14.

BENEFITS OF DARK SKIN. There has been a tendency for many people to think that black races came about in recent times and that white races are the majority. The fact is the lighter the skin the less

likely it is that the individual will survive. Recent studies have shown that the lighter the skin the more likely it is that melanoma, a usually fatal skin cancer, will develop. We have pointed out the latitude effect of darker races tending to have their origins in equatorial areas while lighter skin seems to dominate in northern areas. Adam and Eve most likely had darker skin, and white skin color is the newcomer to this planet. It is interesting that in Song Of Solomon 1:1–7 reference is made in a positive way to the dark skin of one of Solomon’s wives. The dark pigmentation is a design feature of the human body that protects against the damaging effects of ultraviolet radiation. Source: *Science News*, April 5, 2014, page 9.

ADDICTION AND GOD. In *Science News* (March 22, 2014, page 16) there is an interesting article about addiction. The article discusses research on addiction causes and cures and handles the chronic disease of addiction and its role as a temporary failure to cope. What is of interest to us is the fact that the article compares two types of treatments for drug addiction, but emphasizes the prevalence of 12-step centers that promote “recognizing a higher power that enables one to quit.” In my 50 years of working with addicted young people in public schools and adults in the prison population, I have seen how well knowing Jesus as that “higher power” works. Research is supporting what many of us have seen on a practical level as a way to stop addiction.

IS AGE RELATED TO BELIEF? What happens to our gullibility as we get older? Are we more or less skeptical? AARP reports on a study from the University of Texas at Austin about what people over 50 believe as compared to younger people. It is an interesting comparison. Here are some of the results:

DO YOU BELIEVE IN ...		Over 50	Younger
Space aliens?	“Yes”	14%	27%
Ghosts?	“Yes”	18%	33%
Astrology?	“Yes”	10%	19%
Bigfoot?	“Yes”	12%	22%
Angels?	“Yes”	57%	46%
Heaven?	“Yes”	68%	56%

Source: *AARP The Magazine*, April 2014, page 8.

This journal is a part of a program of service titled **Does God Exist?** The purpose of the program is to provide thinking, seeking people with scientific evidence that God does exist and that the Bible is His Word. It is our conviction that all men can logically and rationally believe in God. In addition to this bimonthly journal, the **Does God Exist?** program offers DVDs and video tapes, CDs and audio tapes, courses, books, and other materials. These materials are offered on a loan basis or at our cost. We also are more than willing to correspond with you and answer any specific question(s) you might have. If you would like further information on borrowing or purchasing these materials, we would be glad to send it to you. Check the boxes below to describe what you would like and mail it to us. We will get it right out to you.

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