



DOES GOD EXIST?

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

Third Quarter 2021

Volume 48 Number 3

Is Life
Worth Living?

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Correspondence should be addressed to John Clayton
1555 Echo Valley Dr., Niles, MI 49120-8738
e-mail: jncdge@aol.com
Home phone: 269-687-9426

Does God Exist? websites: <http://www.doesgodexist.org>;
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Send subscription requests, orders, or address changes to:

Does God Exist?, PO Box 2704, South Bend, IN 46680-2704
Phone: 574-514-1400 or by e-mail: marcusen@michiana.org

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Is Life Worth Living?

People sometimes ask, “Is life worth living?” I recently read a police report of a young man standing on the ledge of a very tall building threatening to jump. He finally said to the police officer who was trying to talk him down, “Can you convince me that life is worth living?” The officer hesitated, not knowing how to answer that question, and the young man jumped. An interesting fact about life on Earth is that only humans can commit suicide.

The year 2020 gave everyone reasons to question the value of life. Disease, loss of loved ones, abuse, political chaos, sexual issues, and various mental issues have combined to cause people to desire a life worth living. One argument for faith is that it provides a reason to live, even when life’s traumas make it difficult.

What does atheism offer to make life worth living when things turn bad? When I was a child, singer Peggy Lee had a song titled “Is That All There Is?” She sang about wanting something very badly, but the result was never as good as what she imagined. It is like buying an expensive new car you have wanted to own for a very long time. Then after having it for a while, wondering why you spent that much money. Everything in life is like that. Even marriage has the familiar half-life. In courtship and engagement, you have the belief that your potential mate is that person with whom you want to spend your life. But once the newness wears off, marriage becomes something that takes effort to keep it working.



What I have described so far applies to all of us. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon, a man with great wealth and power, expressed his struggle with what the world offers. As you read through the book, you see that he does it all and has it all, but he finds it is all meaningless. The Bible is full of stories about men who had opportunities to be very successful. Moses had it made as the adopted son of the Pharaoh's daughter. Then Hebrews 11:24–27 tells us that he “forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: ... as seeing him who is invisible.” Paul was trained by Gamaliel, a well-known scholar, and was on his way to becoming a leader of Judaism (Acts 22:3). But, like Moses, he found something better.

So atheists and Christians face similar problems in keeping an active life worth living. What makes Christianity different, and why does it lead to an optimistic, upbeat feeling about life, even when things go wrong? The answer is that Christians have a purpose for our lives. Solomon wrote

as a conclusion to his discussion of life's meaninglessness: “I have seen the burden God has laid on men. 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 the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That every man may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God” (Ecclesiastes 3:9–13 NIV1984).

Paul wrote in Ephesians 3:8–11 that God had a purpose for his life and an eternal purpose which was accomplished in Christ. In Acts 9:10–19, God tells Ananias about Saul and says that “this man is my chosen instrument.” Having that purpose for his life drove Saul to become Paul



Top: © neirfy; middle: © Milkos; bottom: © shisuka. Images from big stock.com

and leave his leadership in Judaism to suffer abuse as a Christian with a purpose.

We are all chosen instruments. Our skills and talents may not be as spectacular as Paul's, but God created every one of us to do something unique. We must choose whether or not to accept the purpose for which God created us. But having a purpose and fulfilling that purpose makes life worth living, meaningful, and worthwhile. Not only do we find fulfillment in doing what God created us to do, but having purpose means being able to face the problems of life and use those things to accomplishing our purpose.

Being a Christian does not mean we will be immune to the problems that everyone faces. If that were the case, people would become Christians for the wrong reason to escape their problems. Instead, what Christians have is the promise of God that there will be a way of escape from those problems (1 Corinthians 10:13). Furthermore, the problems, including death, will be used as part of our service to God.



The heartbreak of having a child born with multiple handicaps and later losing my wife have given me unique opportunities and satisfaction in my efforts as a Christian. It has helped me to reach out and support others facing similar challenges. There is a life worth living when you have a

purpose for existing, and you can see that the purpose extends beyond your existence on Earth.

—John N. Clayton





One of the major arguments against naturalistic evolution is the philosophical question of where does your belief system takes you in life? What we really believe affects every facet of how we live. “Survival of the fittest” is a statement of naturalistic evolution. While it has applications in the biological world, for humans, it is a philosophical belief system in which we base every life decision on what will make me more “fit.” That is a **TAKER** mentality.

A person with a **TAKER** mentality might do something good for someone else only if they can visualize how the act might ultimately benefit them. Narcissism is a natural product of this kind of thinking. Hoarding, abuse, control, and deception are all a product of a **TAKER** mentality. People even use religion to promote **TAKER** value systems. In the Bible, we read of numerous cases where the goal of an individual was self-promotion. For example, in Acts 8:18–24, we see a man named Simon who attempted to use his religion for his personal gain.

The Christian system as taught by Jesus Christ offers a diametrically opposite view of life. Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). He lived that belief system even to the point of dying for it. In today’s world, we see the fruit of rejecting the teachings of Christ and living a “survival of the fittest” belief system. The misery index and suicide rate of our culture are at an all-time high. Sexual satisfaction is at an all-time low, with abuse of all kinds at astronomical levels. Racism and hatred are destroying the fabric of our society.

So how do I become a **GIVER** instead of a **TAKER**? May I suggest three things you can do that will change your whole outlook on life? As a result, you can become more blessed, happier, and more satisfied with life. These are biblical teachings, and they work:



BUILD FAITH IN GOD by studying the evidence that God is an abundant giver. Spend some time looking at the creation. Go to apod.nasa.gov and see the wonderful pictures each day showing the cosmos that God created. On a clear night, look up at the sky and reflect on what God has created for us to exist. The Psalms and Proverbs are full of admonitions to do this. For example, read Psalms 8:3–9; 19:1–3, and Proverbs chapter 8. Then read Psalm 139:1–14, and consider John 3:16

FOCUS ON HOW YOUR LIFE CAN BLESS OTHERS rather than on what your activity brings to you. Matthew 6:1–4 states this well. The story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1–11 demonstrates the wrong motives some people have when they seek glory for themselves rather than being faithful GIVERS. Realize that TAKERS view sex as something that brings pleasure to them, rather than giving pleasure and satisfaction to someone else. As a result, TAKERS are left with an empty feeling of frustration.

LET GOD’S SPIRIT WORK IN YOUR LIFE. The Holy Spirit working in us can help us to become joyful GIVERS. In 2 Corinthians 8:3–7, we see that the ability to give is a “grace” that God wants to give to us. Luke 6:38 tells us that givers will receive back in proportion to their giving.

As long as we live, we have 168 hours every week to use either as a GIVER or a TAKER. Give a tithe of your time—10% of 168. Include time spent in worship, in class, in prayer, and in meditation.

Be sure also to spend part of that 16.8 hours in action. Matthew 25:31–40 gives various areas to choose from where we can give as Jesus calls us to. When we see God work through us, it will motivate



us to do more, and God will open doors we never thought possible. We will come to understand what Jesus meant when he said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

—JNC



What Is a Human?

What is a human? Do you define humans as naked apes? Is your concept of being human that we are just animals and nothing more? Are we just the end product of millions of years of evolution? If so, have you considered where that belief logically takes you? Believing that survival of the fittest and chance evolutionary processes made you what you are has led to slavery, racial prejudice, abortion, ethnic cleansing, and a distorted view of sex.

If humans are only animals and “survival of the fittest” determines the value of a race, then inferior races should serve superior races. This, of course, was the whole basis of Hitler’s extermination of the Jews. The history of the world is full of the enslavement of other humans. Even today, white supremacy is based on evolutionary assumptions. Abortion is justified on the belief that an unborn child is not human and should not inconvenience others. Ethnic cleansing is based on the notion that one ethnic group is superior to another and justifies eliminating the inferior group.

The history of America’s use of evolution is horrendous. In 1904 a Mbuti tribal man was kidnapped from the Belgian Congo and



exhibited as an attraction in New York City’s Bronx Zoo. In 1911 a museum in San Francisco showcased a Yahí man calling him “the last wild Indian in California.”

Today, most cultures view sex as recreation at best and a tool of control at worst. Likewise, most evolutionists would not entertain the notion that sex can create a unique and incredible bond between a man and a woman for life.

Evolutionists say that humans are the product of millions of years of evolution.



That belief says that survival of the fittest and chance evolutionary processes made you who you are. Also, it has logically led to slavery, racial prejudice, ethnic cleansing, and abortion. But is that true, or should we accept the Bible description of humans?

description of humans?

Genesis 2:3 uses two different Hebrew words to describe the creation process. The passage says, “God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it: because that in it he rested from all his work which God created (*bara* in Hebrew) and made (*asah* in Hebrew).” Some translations do not distinguish between them, but the words refer to two different processes.

Asah refers to making something from materials that have already been created. In contrast to *asah*, the word *bara* refers to something only God can do in creating something that did not exist before. Those two words describe two different processes, and the distinction is essential.

There are two other significant Hebrew words used in the Genesis creation account. One of them is *yatshur*. It describes artistic work in the creative process. It means to form or shape as a sculptor



would do. Genesis 2:7 tells us that “God formed (*yatshur*) man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” The reference to the living being



uses the Hebrew word *nephesh*, which refers to a breathing creature. It is also used to refer to animals.

The similarity between *asah* and *yatshur* is that they both refer to the shaping of something

from materials already created (*bara*). Genesis uses the word *asah* when referring to God making animals. Psalm 94:9 uses *yatshur* to describe the formation of the human eye. Jeremiah 1:5 uses it to refer to the formation of the fetus in the womb. The word *bara* is connected to the Bible description of humans. *Bara* refers to something only God can do in creating something that did not exist before. The Bible uses that word in describing the creation of the first humans.

Genesis 1:1 uses *bara* to refer to God creating the universe and planet Earth out of nothing. The same word is used in Genesis 1:20 for the creation of the first life when only non-living matter existed before. Then it is used in Genesis 1:27 for the creation of the first humans in the image of God. Genesis 1:27 says, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.” This view of what a human is, values every person. All human lives matter because all lives, all races, all ethnic groups, and both sexes are created in the image of God.

All attempts to get animals to exhibit characteristics unique to humans, such as artistic creation, musical synthesis, worship, and teaching them to think, have been a failure. There are horror stories of animals raised in human homes as humans and how they eventually reverted to their instinctive drives. One of them was a chimpanzee raised as part of a family. It savagely attacked and wounded a female visitor whom the chimp considered an invader in his territory.

The Bible is very clear in its teaching about the unique nature of humans and their equality with one another. In John 4:1–42, Jesus interacts with a Samaritan woman. Verse 9 points out that Jews at that time did not even talk to Samaritans, much less a Samaritan woman.

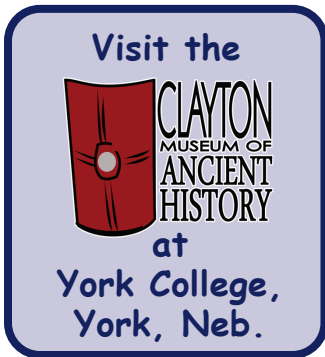
Verse 27 tells us that the disciples marveled that Jesus spoke with her. Galatians 3:26–29 states the Christian view of the equality of all humans in no uncertain terms.

Skeptics have attempted to say the Bible denigrates some humans as second-class citizens by pointing out the conflict between Jews and Gentiles. That conflict had nothing to do with race but was over religious matters. Others have suggested that Genesis 6:1–8 denigrates some groups by calling them *nephilim*. The word *nephilim* does not mean a giant or an alien or a half-human. The word’s literal meaning is “fallen ones,” and the passage’s context is clear that it describes people who have rejected God and his will. The word for a giant in Hebrew is *gibbor* (Job 16:14) or *rapha* (Deuteronomy 2:11, 20; 2 Samuel 21:16, 18, 20, 22).



The biblical concept of humans is not only that all races and nationalities are equal, but that humans as a whole are unique and special because they are created in God’s image. The lineage of all people on Earth today goes back to the creation of the first humans. No other faith but Christianity has given the instructions to treat one another—even our enemies—with love, respect, and care (Matthew 5:38–48). That is because we are all created in God’s image.

—JNC



FAKE NEWS

Living in an Age of Fake

We live in an age of irrationality. The list of wild claims seems to grow every day. People are claiming “fraud” about everything. It is not just an election or a question about global warming. It is a willingness to attach the label “fraud” to everything.

When the Salk vaccine became available in the 1950s, I had friends who were dying of polio. As a science student, I followed the work of Dr. Salk and knew it was valid. Nevertheless, full-page newspaper ads claimed that the polio vaccine was fake and that taking the vaccine was likely to kill a child. Here we are in 2021, and the same thing is happening. The scientific evidence indicates that we have a way to stop the virus, but many detractors say it is a dangerous fraud.

What has happened in recent years is that outlandish claims have significantly increased. Health issues have been a major subject in modern times. People

widely circulate untested and unproven claims about cures for cancer. This is personal for me because my son-in-law bought into the claim of a marijuana treatment for his cancer. That claim proved to be worthless and ultimately took his life when conventional medical treatment



would have allowed him to live for several decades.

False claims are nothing new. The Bible contains stories about people suffering from bogus solutions to human problems. In Acts 8:9–24, we read about a man named Simon who “bewitched the people with sorceries.” In Acts 19:13–16, there is a funny story about the seven sons of a Jewish priest named Sceva. They tried to practice a cure on a person who “had evil spirits.” In Mark 5:25–29, we read about a woman who had been fighting an “issue of blood for 12 years and had suffered many things of many physicians and had spent all she had and was no better.” Finally, she “heard about Jesus,” and unlike the other two cases, she operated on evidence and investigated for herself.

The lesson for us is do not trust any individual who offers us information that you cannot confirm. Politicians are likely to have a vested interest in what they are encouraging us to do. The media outlets are connected to groups that are selling a political platform. Religious claims are suspect because the promoters have an ulterior motive in what they offer.

What did Jesus do when John the Baptist sent his disciples to see if Jesus was the promised Messiah? Matthew 11:4–6 records the response of Christ: Go and show John again those things which you hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Notice that Jesus did not tell them to go to another source for the information. Jesus told the disciples of John to report those things which YOU HEAR AND SEE. They were to witness for themselves the things that answered the questions they were asking.

You cannot rely on humans to tell you what the Bible says. Please read it for yourself! Do not take someone’s word regarding global warming. Look at the evidence! Do not rely on someone’s assertion that the covid vaccine is dangerous. Read for yourself the studies of how the vaccine works. Please do not take anyone’s claim of a cure for a disease or ailment until you have checked the facts yourself. The bottom line is, never take anyone’s statement that something is fake or a hoax until you carefully review the evidence.

Our focus should be on the teachings of Christ and living according to them. When something is being done that runs contrary to what Jesus taught, it is wrong. Read Matthew 5–7 and follow it. Christians should be the leaders in saying that everyone’s life matters. No one should be pushing an agenda that deprives others of the necessities of life or of the right to live as a child of God. Instead, we should recognize everyone as precious and important. We live in an age of uncertainty, but the one thing that is certain and never fake is God’s message for life which we find in his Word.

—JNC



The Axion

The complexity of the cosmos is so incredible that it baffles the best scientific minds of our day. So scientists have employed elaborate machines to try to understand more of the nature of the creation.

When I was a high school student, we learned that the cosmos is made up of electrons, protons, and neutrons. All of chemistry and physics could be explained by the measurements of these three particles. When I took my first college course in nuclear science, I began to work in the cyclotron, assisting graduate Ph.D. candidates. I realized the creation was not as simple as it appears. As an atheist, this was distressing because I could see that human knowledge of the complexity of the cosmos was, at best, incomplete.

As a graduate student, I was privileged to work with equipment that could smash protons to see what was inside. “Fundamental particles” was a term that began to show up in the scientific literature, and gradually another “simple explanation of everything” began to emerge. It was called “The Standard Model of particle physics.” It consisted of leptons (such as the electron), and quarks which made up protons and neutrons.

This model also required force particles called bosons to hold things together. With larger and more powerful accelerators, scientists discovered still more particles which were the glue holding everything together. These particles were part of the structure of matter called gluons and the Higgs boson. The complexity of the cosmos was becoming more impressive.



Despite all of this work by literally thousands of physicists worldwide, they still saw things that did not fit all of the models. For example, galaxies were spinning too fast to hold together unless some unknown and unseen force was counteracting the centrifugal force of

the rotation. The latest measurements show that 68.3% of the creation is made up of energy we cannot detect by any existing instrumentation. We can measure the mass of the cosmos, but 26.8% of the mass we know must be there because of gravitational fields is missing. Scientists now refer to the two missing quantities as “dark energy” and “dark matter.”

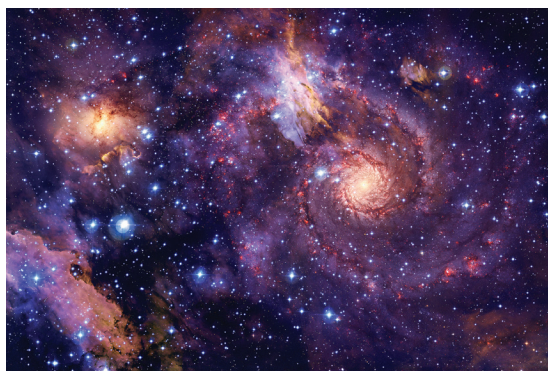
To make their theories work, scientists now say that there must be a bizarre form of matter that does not affect or interact with light, visible or invisible, in any way. They call this hypothetical particle that scientists cannot see or detect, “the axion.” The axion would explain dark matter, but the big question is how can we detect it?

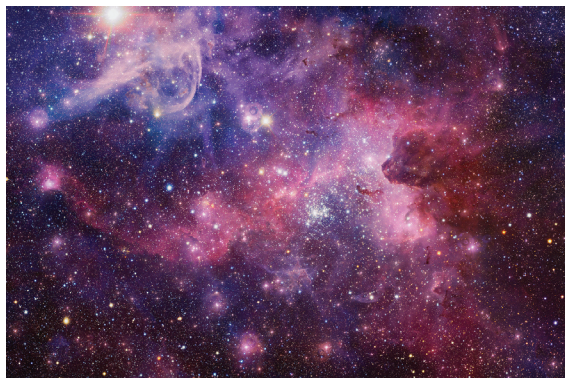


As science attempts to understand the nature of the world we live in, it becomes evident that the creation is not just the physical world that our senses can detect. Seeing, smelling, hearing, feeling, and tasting are wonderful, but they are just physical manifestations

of something far more significant. The complexity of the cosmos causes us to wonder at the intelligence that created all of this.

For Christians, this is not the mystery that it might be to an atheist. Hebrews 11:3 says it well: “Through faith we understand





that the worlds were framed by the Word of God so that things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.” My physics studies have convinced me that the world we can see is just a snippet of the total creation.

We are beginning to understand that there are many dimensions beyond what our senses perceive. Even when we extend our senses with machines, we still cannot detect the axion. The wonder of creation simply brings us back to the Psalmist’s song: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the sky above proclaims his handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). The cry of wisdom in Proverbs 8:22–23 reminds us of our limitations: “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.”

Remember that “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3). Science is a friend of faith, and God has given us a limited view of what he has done. The full scope of creation is beyond our comprehension, but science helps fill in some gaps in our understanding. Perhaps someday science will find the axion.

—JNC





Secular Humanism and the Sexual Revolution

by Cecil May Jr, - Dean Emeritus Faulkner University

Biblical religionists have lost a major battle to those who oppose any mention of Jesus as Lord, any reference to the Bible, any letting the Bible define conduct as sin, or to the practice of prayer anywhere except in religious services inside church buildings. A Christianity confined to church buildings is like salt that never gets out of the saltbox.

The opinion-makers in the USA—including the mainstream media—has sold the idea that opposing homosexual relations, which the Bible clearly labels sin, is a civil rights issue, equivalent to racial discrimination. The redefinition of marriage from God’s “one man for one woman for life” into two women or two men for each other came in the same package. So did no-fault divorce, unmarried couples living together, and “open marriages,” where other sexual partners are both expected and accepted.

Here is what the Bible says about marriage:

Let marriage be held in honor among all,
and let the marriage bed be undefiled.

—Hebrews 13:4

He who finds a wife finds a good thing and
obtains favor from the LORD.

—Proverbs 18:22

Here is what the Bible says about sexual relations outside of marriage:

“... but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”
—Hebrews 13:4

“Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality ... will inherit the kingdom of God.”

—1 Corinthians 6:9–10

Marriage is widely discounted as “just a piece of paper.” But it is much more than that. Aside from being a significant legal document, it signifies commitment. More than that, the lack of marriage loudly proclaims the absence of commitment. No commitment of either husband or wife to the other, “for better or worse” or “for as long as we both shall live.” No commitment of a father or mother to whatever children may be born to that non-committed union.

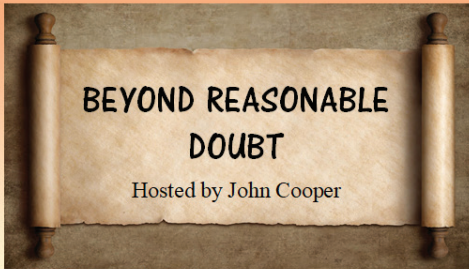
An aged married woman had a severe case of dementia. Her husband finally had to put her in a nursing home. He came to see her every day. He helped feed her, dress her, and fix her hair. She often had to ask, “Who was that man?” Someone asked him, “Why do you come every day since she doesn’t even know who you are?” He replied, “I know who she is, and I know who I am. She is my wife.”

That is what marriage is, more than “just a piece of paper,” committed love!



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We have just completed a new video series with John Cooper, recorded at the Clayton Museum of Ancient History!

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Or you can watch it online for free at DoesGodExist.TV.

BEYOND REASONABLE DOUBT

This series of lectures deals with biblical archaeology, the reliability of the Scriptures, and the divinity of Jesus. Your speaker is John Cooper, a Christian minister whose study and travels have given him a broad knowledge of the subject matter. The series uses video and photographs of important archaeological sites and artifacts. It was recorded in the Clayton Museum of Ancient History at York College in York, Nebraska.



- 1-Introduction (26 minutes)
- 2-The Textual Reliability of the Bible (25 minutes)
- 3-Old Testament Archaeology Part 1 (29 minutes)
- 4-Old Testament Archaeology Part 2 (28 minutes)
- 5-New Testament Archaeology Part 1 (23 minutes)
- 6-New Testament Archaeology Part 2 (28 minutes)
- 7-The Inspiration of the Bible (37 minutes)
- 8-The Historicity of Jesus (31 minutes)
- 9-The Divinity of Jesus (32 minutes)

SCIENTISTS AND GOD

Editor's note: Atheists attempt to suggest that scientists are intelligent people who have rejected faith and do not believe in God. The fact is that some of the most productive scientists who have ever lived were believers in God. We share some of their thoughts with you in this column.

John Polkinghorne
(1930 – 2021)

English Theoretical Physicist
Involved in the discovery of the quark
Professor of Mathematical Physics
at the University of Cambridge

Resigned to study for the Anglican Priesthood
President of Queen's College, Cambridge 1988 – 96

“My impression is that scientists are as likely to be religious believers as any other section of the community. Nevertheless, there is a feeling abroad that somehow science and religion are opposed to each other. Someone like myself, who is an Anglican priest and a now honorary Professor of Theoretical Physics, is sometimes regarded either with the amazement appropriate the strange mixture of the centaur or with the wariness appropriate to the sleight-of-hand artist. Neither image is, I think just. In fact, science and theology seem to me to have in common that they are both exploring aspects of reality. They are capable of mutual interaction which, though at times it is puzzling, can also be fruitful.”



This quotation is from Polkinghorne's book, *One World: The Interactions of Science and Theology* (Preface, page xv), first published in 1987 and revised in 2006. Before his death in March 2021, he authored five books on physics and twenty-six books on the relation between science and religion.

Cynthia's Corner

IS LIFE WORTH LIVING WITHOUT GOD?



Humans are the only creation that God made with an eternal soul and in God's spiritual image (Genesis 1:26–27). Because we have a soul, we have unique qualities that other animals do not have. We have creative and artistic yearnings, which we express in many ways. We can appreciate the complex beauty and design of God's creation. A sunset moves us, a beautiful scene inspires us, and nature soothes our souls. Higher animals have emotions, but, only humans have the capacity for *agape* sacrificial love, manifested in unselfish choices we make for the benefit of others.

Even humans who reject God and live without acknowledging him benefit from the spiritual nature he gave us. Atheists can love and need to be loved. They can live good, upright lives, be good citizens, and love their families. But, because they reject God and his teachings, their ability to love sacrificially is limited because all humans have a sinful nature. Without God's influence in our lives, our innate selfish nature will dominate (Romans 7:14–25). If we believe this life is all there is, that there are no absolute moral standards and no Judgement to come, why should we not look out for number one first? Why should we not get all the pleasure and worldly things possible to make us as happy as we can be in this life? The atheist essentially lives to please himself and loves others as long as it benefits him.

In contrast, those who have given their lives to God are devoted to honoring him by serving others on a spiritual journey to become more like Christ. They desire to grow in the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23). This focus changes our whole life and makes it about something greater than self. We also have a family of believers to help, love, and encourage us in our journey.

For a Christian, when life gets difficult and even overwhelming, we have a promise from God that he will not allow us to experience more than we can bear. God will always provide a way for us to endure it (1 Corinthians 10:13). The atheist does not have that promise and does not have a spiritual support network or the confident hope of eternal life in heaven. So what happens to the atheist when life gets hard, problems overwhelm, and relationships are broken? Where can he turn, and what can he do? That is when he asks, "Is life still worth living?"

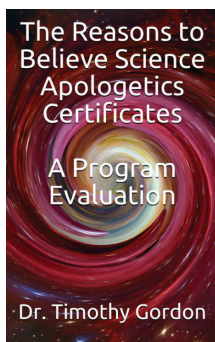
—Cynthia Clayton



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.

The Reasons to Believe Science Apologetics Certificates

by Dr. Timothy Gordon, Intermountain Institute
for Religion, Science & Culture, © 2021, Kindle \$9.99,
Paperback, \$19.99, 271 pages, ISBN-13: 9798593653673



Reasons to Believe (RTB) is the most aggressive apologetics program not tied to young earth theology. This organization has a large staff led by Hugh Ross, who has a Ph.D. in astronomy. We have previously reviewed some of Ross's excellent books. In recent years, RTB has added five research scholars and over 20 visiting scholars and has engaged in the writing of over 1,500 articles

and over 26 books.

One project of RTB is the production of science apologetics certificate programs. Their certificate programs attempt to address the lack of scientific literacy of Christians.

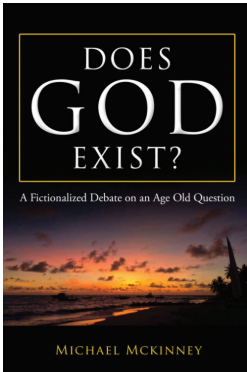
Dr. Timothy Gordon is a retired Navy Commander with some 30 years of service, and we have known him for many years. He holds a doctorate in Christian apologetics and worked as a manufacturing and clinical data analyst for almost 25 years. Timothy has written this book as a part of his requirements for a Doctor of Ministry degree at Southern Evangelical Seminary in Matthews, North Carolina.

This book has 257 pages and will be of particular interest to anyone who may be considering studying for a certificate from Reasons to Believe. The book has seven chapters, with the last one giving conclusions and recommendations. The two appendices contain a survey and a copy of the James Engle Spiritual Decision-Making Model.

This book covers in positive ways all that the RTB program attempts to do with biblical and scientific literacy. More than that, it provides valuable suggestions for church leaders and many resources for anyone involved in church education. We recommend it highly to preachers, elders, church educational directors, and Christian colleges.

Does God Exist? A Fictionalized Debate on an Age-Old Question

by Michael McKinney. Michael McKinney, © 2017,
Kindle \$3.99, Paperback \$6,00, 100 pages, ISBN-13: 9781549656460



Many times we are given a picture of atheist arguments that are easy to refute. But, unfortunately, those do not represent most of the arguments we hear from atheists, especially on college campuses. In this book, Michael McKinney has put forth the atheist agenda on an intellectual level by postulating a debate on the existence of God on a fictitious campus called Wellington University. The book presents the atheist as a Ph.D. professor in marine evolutionary biology, and the Christian is a well-educated but unemployed

theology student.

The atheist position is well presented, including everything from the unnecessary nature of religious belief to the problem of God allowing the pandemic and massive suffering of innocent people. The atheist advances the superiority of scientific explanations over religious explanations. The fictional believer in this book accepts evolutionary theory and just touches cosmological arguments for God's existence, but the answers to the atheist's arguments are excellent. The believer's position is more defensive than offensive, but that is a helpful approach, especially for people challenged by atheist arguments.

The **Does God Exist?** ministry deals with evidence. Our approach is to examine the positive evidence for God and the scientific support for believing that what we see cannot be the product of blind chance. This book deals more with philosophical problems that atheists face and the benefits of belief in God.

We recommend this book. You may disagree with the endorsement of evolutionary theory, but we have pointed out that evolution assumes creation. Evolution takes that creation and tries to explain how changes happened in living matter once it reached a certain level of complexity. It has nothing to do with the existence of God. Knowing how to answer an atheist professor's arguments is essential for young college students, and this book does a good job of that.

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DANDY DESIGNS

PENGUINS OF DANGER ISLANDS



Scientists were concerned that the population of this penguin species was declining until a recent discovery on the Danger Islands.

Adélie penguins (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) live on the perimeter of Antarctica. They have a “follow the Sun” migration. During summer in the Southern Hemisphere, they remain on the edge of the land. As winter comes on and the Sun moves northward, the ice fastened to the Antarctic continent extends farther north. Adélie penguins migrate northward at that time, following the growing ice so they can stay in the sunshine. In the spring, as the ice recedes, the Adélie remain on the edge of the ice as they migrate southward to their breeding grounds on land. For many of the Adélie penguins, their annual migration can be 8,100 miles (13,000 km).

The penguins were fearless because Adélie penguins had no experience with humans or other animals when the early Antarctic explorers were crossing the ice with their dogsleds. As the dogs barked at the Adélie, the penguins seemed to think that it was some kind of greeting. They would run toward the dogs. The louder the dogs barked, the more excited the penguins became to greet them. When the penguins got close enough that the harnessed dogs could reach



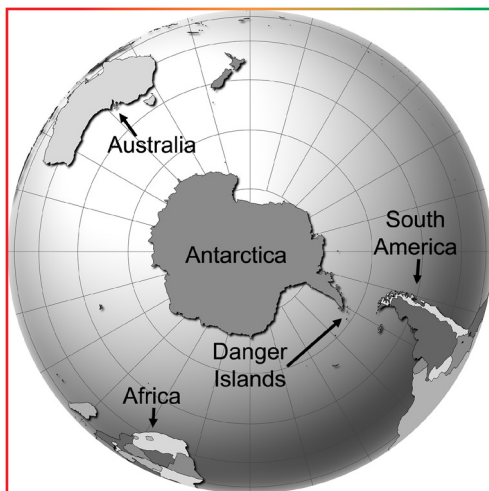
them, the dogs killed them. If the dogsled driver tried to catch the penguins to move them away, the penguins would fight to get back to the dogs. It was a frustrating experience for the explorers.

Adélie penguins may not

know to stay away from dogs, but they are well adapted to their environment. Because they are exposed to very salty water in the desert of Antarctica, they have unique adaptations. They eat krill, which has lower salt concentrations, and their stomachs alter the ion concentrations to reduce sodium and potassium ions. They feed their chicks with regurgitated krill that they have partially digested and desalinated. The adults concentrate the salts in their waste, and they have nasal glands that remove excess salt, which the penguins eject from their nostrils.

But what about the discovery on the Danger Islands? The Danger Islands of Antarctica should not be confused with Danger Island in the Indian Ocean. These islands are located at the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula. Explorers in 1842 gave them the name Danger Islands because they are “guarded” by icebergs which are dangerous to ships. Scientists were concerned about declining numbers of Adélie penguins until they discovered 1.5 million of them nesting on the Danger Islands in 2018. That almost doubled the known population.

Scientists studied the Danger Islands population by using drones, which are not endangered by the icebergs. Human creativity, ingenuity, and curiosity have provided a way for us to study and care for these penguins that God has given the ability to survive in a hostile environment.



News and Notes

STAY UP-TO-DATE ON NEWS AND NOTES: The stories in News and Notes are condensed from articles previously published on our website www.DoesGodExist.today. You can use the QR codes with each of these articles to see the original posts for more details and references. There are also many other interesting and informative articles on that website each day. We encourage you to follow us daily on “Does God Exist? Today.” On that website, you can also subscribe to our free weekly e-mail update. We call it “The Best of the Week from DOES GOD EXIST?” It contains links to the most popular of our posts on DGE? Today and our Facebook page (Facebook.com/evidence4god).

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST RELIGIOUS BELIEFS: One of the most challenging issues facing churches, businesses, and the court system is how to resolve situations where a business owner refuses to do something that would violate their religious beliefs. For example, recent cases have involved a flower store owner who was asked to provide flower arrangements for a same-sex wedding and a cake artist who was asked to create a cake for a same-sex wedding and then a sex transition celebration. Both of these cases involve discrimination against religious beliefs.

A florist named Barronelle Stutzman in the state of Washington refused to prepare a floral display for a same-sex wedding because she believes that marriage can only be between a man and a woman. Unfortunately, the United States Supreme Court refused to hear Stutzman’s appeal, allowing the lower court ruling against her to stand.

An even more consequential challenge involving children existed in Philadelphia. The city of Philadelphia refused to place foster-care children with a Catholic agency because it would not allow same-sex couples to apply. In a narrow ruling, the Supreme Court decided in favor of the Catholic agency.

Since our political system has embraced everything from prostitution to marijuana, the days ahead look difficult for people trying to live as Christ taught us to live. Remember that Christians in the first century faced the



same kind of problems, but Rome never claimed to guarantee religious freedom as the United States Constitution does. Source: <https://adfflegal.org/blog/devastating-news-us-supreme-court-declines-hear-barronelle-stutzmans-case>

MILITARY SUICIDES INCREASING: General Mark Milley, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, testified on June 23, 2021, to the House Armed Services Committee. He said that the suicide rate among military personnel is so high that it affects the training and deployment of troops. In 2018, 326 active-duty troops died by suicide. Last year that number had risen to 377. All indications are that the suicides in 2021 will be well over 400.

The military has placed increasing restrictions on chaplains and significant pressure on them to support Islam, Buddhism, atheism, and LGBTQ belief systems. It has become increasingly difficult for them to hold Christian services. Chaplains are not allowed to frame patriotism in Christian values. Is it any wonder that military suicides are increasing?

If you are convinced that there is no God and no life beyond this life, what is the motivation to participate in a war for America? “Survival of the fittest” does not suggest that a person should die for a political system that will never benefit them.

There is an old, false saying, “There are no atheists in foxholes.” I know it is not true because I was an atheist in the army, and I was in foxholes and maintained my atheism. Many young men around me depended on their faith and the chaplain to get them through the military experience. I have to admit that they were better soldiers than I was. Christian values have always been the foundation of this country. Trying to turn America into a secular state opposed to Christianity has a great deal of collateral damage, including an increase in military suicides. Source: Tom Vanden Brook, *South Bend Tribune*, June 24, 2021, page 8A.



LIGHTNING AND HYDROXYL RADICALS: Lightning and hydroxyl radicals are among the lesser-known agents that clean our atmosphere. Hydroxyl radicals are composed of a single oxygen atom combined with a hydrogen atom. Hydroxyls attach themselves to common atmospheric pollutants. Recent discoveries have shown that lightning produces significant numbers of hydroxyls. Electricity from lightning can produce enough hydroxyl radicals to keep our air clean of any natural pollutants and help to reduce human-caused pollution.



We have said before that lightning takes nitrogen from the atmosphere and produces nitrates that provide essential nutrients for plants. Now we know that lightning is also indispensable as an air cleaning tool. With lightning and hydroxyl radicals, God has designed a tool that not only allows plants to provide our food but also cleans our air. Source: *Science News*, June 5, 2021, page 13.



THE ANTIMATTER DILEMMA: One of the fascinating problems scientists face as they investigate the creation is the antimatter dilemma. Einstein’s famous equation $E=mc^2$ tells us that energy and mass are directly related. We know that mass can be turned into energy, which is the basis of the atomic bomb and nuclear power generation.

Complex experiments have allowed scientists to turn energy into mass, producing two kinds of matter — ordinary matter and antimatter. When antimatter comes in contact with ordinary matter, they destroy each other and revert to the energy from which they came.

The Bible tells us that God is energy (light — 1 John 1:5). Because of that, God could create the universe by simply taking some energy and turning it into matter. Suggesting that the creation process was not guided by intelligence means some unknown force solved the antimatter dilemma by separating matter and antimatter at the point of creation. But, of course, that does not explain the origin of energy.

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth” is a very simple statement, but the presence of antimatter tells us that what God did is incredibly complex. This is real creation and speaks once again of God’s wisdom and power. Source: *Science News*, June 5, 2021, page 8.



ALCOHOL AND MARIJUANA DATA: In Michigan, marijuana was approved for recreational use in January 2020. The state has just released data for OWI (Operating While Impaired) cases since that time. The state records show a 73% increase in “cannabinoid-involved” crashes in 2020.

Another area of concern is the increased use of alcohol. Researchers from the University of Oxford studied 25,000 people and found disturbing effects of any amount of alcohol intake. The study focused on the effect of drinking on gray matter in the brain, involving regions that process information. The more people drank, the lower their volume of gray matter. Gray matter decreases with age and dementia but adding the effect of alcohol speeds up the process.



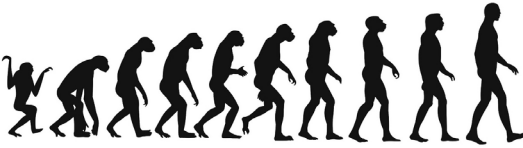
The conclusion of the Oxford research was there is “no safe level of drinking.” The researchers say that damage to the brain is greater than damage from having a high BMI or smoking. Of course, there are other concerns, such as the effect on the heart and lungs, but drinking is a significant factor as far as brain damage is concerned. Source: Jeff Parrott, *South Bend Tribune*, June 7, 2021, page A1.



FOSSIL APES AND HUMAN EVOLUTION: Most of the media versions of human evolution are fictitious and inconsistent with the evidence. That is the finding of a study conducted by scholars from the American Museum of Natural History released in the journal *Science* (May 7, 2021), titled “Fossil Apes and Human Evolution.”

“When you look at the narrative for hominin origins [referring to bipedal apes and modern humans], it’s just a big mess—there’s no consensus whatsoever.” That is a quote from Sergio Almecija, the

lead author and a senior research scientist at the American Museum of Natural History’s Division of Anthropology.



He went on to say, “People are working under completely different paradigms, and that’s something that I don’t see happening in other fields of science.”

According to the study of fossil apes and human evolution, science has a wealth of fossils, but “many of these fossils show ... combinations of features that do not match expectations for ancient representatives of the modern ape and human lineages.” The museum’s article does not deny human evolution but clearly shows that the story given to the general public is a false impression that our history is a cut and dried factual record on which all scientists agree.

The biblical explanation of human creation is not a detailed physical explanation of human origins. Genesis 2:7 tells us, “... God formed a man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living soul.” The essential factor is that human beings were created in the image of God. “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he them, male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:27).

It is a destructive message to tell humans they are just animals with no unique qualities or purpose in existing. Humans are created with a spiritual makeup that means we are all equal in God’s sight and have a spiritual purpose for existing.



SEAWEED AS A NATURAL RESOURCE: Overfishing, pollution, ocean acidification, and global warming combine to make life difficult for people living in coastal areas who depend on fishing. The use of seaweed is a solution to much of this.

Growing food in the ocean is more efficient than raising it on the land. There is no need to worry about water or fertilizer because seawater has all the nutrients needed. There are collateral benefits as well since many marine species depend on seaweed to reproduce.

Companies extract carrageenan from seaweed and use it in the production of cosmetics, foods, and medicines. More than 25,000 people are employed in farming seaweed in Tanzania, and extensive training programs teach local farmers how to farm seaweed in their coastal waters.

Not only does seaweed provide food directly to humans, but it can be dried and used as food for cattle, sheep, and goats. Seaweed also helps the planet by reducing the carbon dioxide in the air and increasing the oxygen content. The diversity that God has built into the creation allows us to overcome the problem of feeding a growing population while finding ways to reduce pollution. Source: <https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/sustainable-aquaculture-a-viable-economic-alternative-to-fishing/>



TIMOTHY CLAYTON GAINED HIS SIGHT! On July 27, 2021, at 12:25 p.m., John Clayton's son, Tim Clayton, who had been blind all of his life, became able to see. He also got to be with his mother, Phyllis Clayton, who died in 2008. Tim passed away from complications of COVID-19. Tim Clayton has gained his sight.

Tim had 57 years of life when the medical profession predicted he would pass away before age 12. Tim's life was full of challenges, including blindness, muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, schizophrenia, and being mentally challenged. Despite that, he never complained and his faith was a witness to many people.

Tim was a Christian, and his life demonstrated that no matter what your handicaps and troubles might be, every Christian life has a purpose. He shared his faith with every doctor, nurse, caregiver, teacher, and health worker he met.



Timothy—
My Son and My Teacher



We wrote a book titled *Timothy—My Son and My Teacher* to tell how his life impacted and taught lessons to people around him. That book became Tim's tool to share his faith with others. He gave copies of the book to everyone he could. It has blessed other parents of children with congenital disabilities and severe health problems. The book is available directly from this ministry or from the PowerVine Store (<https://powervine.store/> or use the QR code)



This is a time of joy and praise to God for Tim's family and friends, that his journey through life is finally over. Tim Clayton has gained his sight.

EVERYONE HAS FAITH, BUT IN WHAT? I am an old man, and sometimes I make contact with atheistic people I knew years ago when I was an atheist. If they are still atheists, they cannot give me any evidence to support their atheistic faith. They are opposed to belief in God, but their atheism has not blessed them. They are getting ready to die with nothing but frustration, anger, disappointment, and disillusionment.

My atheist friend admitted that being an atheist had not improved his life. He then challenged me to show him how my faith had improved my life. That was easy. My faith led me to a wife who was a blessing to me. When death took her from me, my faith sustained me and led me to a second wonderful woman who has blessed my life. My faith has caused me to have an excellent relationship with my children. It has helped me find joy in a son who sustained multiple birth defects.

My faith has also given me friends I can trust and rely on in all circumstances. My faith led me to a career in teaching instead of the one my father picked out for me, which primarily involved making money. My teaching experience was rewarding and full of joy. My faith took me into a ministry that makes my life full of purpose and value. My faith causes me not to fear death.



Everyone has faith, but in what? I want to share my faith with others because I want the world to be saturated with a belief based on love, service, and peace. Life teaches us that not having faith in God and his Word brings misery and frustration. Yet, today we have more evidence than ever to believe and live by faith in God.

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 quarterly journal, the **Does God Exist?** program offers DVDs, CDs, 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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*It's scientists vs. preachers,
 not science vs. the Bible.*

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