

## What Are Atheism and Agnosticism?

### Atheism Claims...

Atheism disbelieves in the existence of God. The universe—matter—is all that exists. The universe operates via natural physical laws. Any event that may seem supernatural is really a natural occurrence. Miracles do not occur. The reality of evil, the apparent purposelessness of life, the seeming randomness of the universe, and the fact of evolution all argue against the existence of God. Christianity is false. The Bible is an error-filled book of flawed human origin. Jesus, if he even existed, performed no miracles, did not rise from the dead, and was not God.

### Agnosticism Claims...

Agnosticism asserts that God may or may not exist. Since it is impossible to prove the existence or non-existence of God, we just don't know if God exists or not. A *universal*, *hard* or *aggressive* agnostic denies that anyone can answer the question of God. The only wise course of action is to reserve judgment and remain skeptical. A *local*, *soft* or *modest* agnostic claims that the evidence for or against God is not enough to warrant a decision. Therefore, such an agnostic remains undecided.

### You Should Also Know...

- The word "atheist" comes from the Greek *a*, meaning "not" or "no," and *theos*, meaning "God." An atheist embraces a belief system that says "not God." The word "agnostic" is derived from the Greek *gnosis* ("knowledge") and literally means "no knowledge."
- Modern atheism emerged as a formal philosophy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many

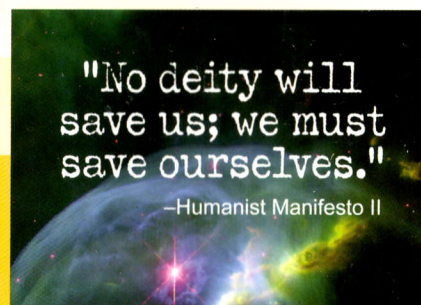
### The Bible Teaches...

God exists and has chosen to reveal himself through creation, moral conscience, and the Bible.

From these sources of revelation, Christians conclude that God exists beyond the world (transcendent), yet is active in creation (immanent), created the world out of nothing (*ex nihilo*), is all powerful (omnipotent), all knowing (omniscient), ever present (omnipresent), and all loving (omnibenevolent).

The natural universe is not all that exists. Since God exists, miracles are possible.

The case for biblical Christianity as the best explanation of reality includes, but is not limited to: historical evidence, archaeology, philosophical integrity, and eyewitness testimony.



contemporary atheists prefer to be called humanists.

- The atheist says that nothing exists outside of the known physical universe. Agnosticism asserts that definite knowledge about God is unattainable. But the assertion, "No one can really know anything for sure about God," is also a definitive statement regarding what one knows about God.

## What Can We Know About the Existence of God?

### Atheism Claims...

Many atheists have a high regard for reason with a bias toward empiricism (that which can be measured by the senses). Since God cannot be measured and quantified, there is no viable evidence for his existence. Science and philosophical reasoning argue against the existence of God. Since evolution explains human origins, God is unnecessary. If the universe is eternal or can be shown to have come into existence spontaneously and by chance, then God is also unnecessary.

### Agnosticism Claims...

Agnostics are skeptical of reason and all other systems of knowing. As a result, they shy away from claiming certain knowledge about reality or God. One cannot or does not know anything for certain; therefore one cannot or does not know if God exists. Although agnostics claim not to know whether God exists, many function as atheists.

"... the most plausible answer to the question of why something exists rather than nothing is that God exists."

—William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith*

### You Should Also Know...

While atheists in particular exalt human reason and the capacity to interpret reality scientifically, the very nature of reason is in question if God does not exist. If humans are the products of evolutionary chance, why should our reasoning abilities be trusted?

Arguments for the existence of God:

### The Bible Teaches...

Christianity has a high regard for reason, but recognizes its limitations in defining a God who is by nature unlimited. The God of the Bible has revealed much about himself that is conclusively knowable. God reveals himself through creation, communication through his Word, and conscience.

**Creation** Our complex universe shows evidence of a Creator. Sensory input from the physical world provides knowledge through which we know God. Sometimes called *general revelation*, these are things God reveals about himself through nature to everyone (Romans 1:20).

**Communication** The content of the *Bible* gives evidence of divine origin. This communication is called *special revelation*; these are the things God told to specific people at specific times in history.

**Conscience** The moral law written on human *conscience* points to a Moral Lawgiver (Romans 2:14-15).

### Cosmological argument<sup>2</sup>

- Everything that had a beginning has a cause.
- The universe had a beginning.
- Therefore, the universe had a cause.

### Design argument<sup>3</sup>

- Every design has a designer.
- The universe—and life—has highly complex design.
- Therefore, there is a Great Designer.

### Moral argument<sup>4</sup>

- Moral laws require a lawgiver.
- Absolute moral laws exist.
- Therefore, there is an absolute Moral Lawgiver.



## What Can We Know About Right and Wrong?

### Atheism Claims...

Since God does not exist, neither do transcendent moral absolutes. Morality is relative to one's personal perspective or cultural norms. There may be some widely accepted and enduring values, perhaps to aid in our survival. Because values do not come from God, they must originate with human beings.

An individual's judgment or the decision of the majority determines societal values. Some atheists favor utilitarian ethics, where "the good" is what is best for the greatest number of people over the long run.

Making God the source of morality is flawed. If God simply declares something good or bad, his decision seems arbitrary, but if God merely acknowledges the good that already exists, God seems unnecessary or less than the good.

### Agnosticism Claims...

Depending on the individual agnostic, there are various views of morality. Some will apply their agnosticism to the question of ethics. As a result, ethics are also unknowable; however, these kinds of agnostics would approve of a social contract form of ethics.

In order for society to properly function, it is generally in everyone's best interests to go along with culturally accepted moral standards.

### You Should Also Know...

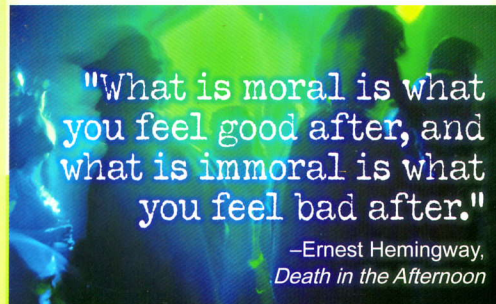
Atheism claims that if moral values exist, they must have their source in human beings. But atheists believe human beings are products of *impersonal* chance and time. However, moral values dictate *personal* behavior between personal beings. How is it that an impersonal universe could result in personal morality?

### The Bible Teaches...

Right and wrong exist, and the fact of their existence is rooted in God's nature. These transcendent laws are both written on the hearts of all people, are known in one's moral conscience (Romans 2:15) and are revealed by God in the Bible.

A study of numerous cultures shows an amazing similarity about peoples' regard for right and wrong. While there is room for some cultural variation, what these cultures agree on is greater than what they disagree about.<sup>5</sup>

Because a righteous God exists, morality is *absolute*, not *relative*. Since morality is based on God's character rather than on human opinion, actions may be identified as good or evil. God is the "measuring stick" for determining right and wrong.



The atheistic belief that either 1) God is arbitrary in his insistence that something is good, or 2) good is greater than God, is false. Values are rooted in God's perfect nature. Since this is the case, standards of right and wrong flow naturally from God. Atheists have no basis for saying evil exists. For how can one know something is unjust unless one knows a standard of justice by which to pronounce it unjust?

## Is Belief in God Compatible with Science?

### Atheism Claims...

If Christians can claim that God had no beginning, then atheists can claim that what makes up the universe is uncaused and eternal. Even if the universe had a beginning, this does not mean that God caused it. Evolution, over time and chance, explains human origins, not God.

Science has made God unnecessary. As humanity progresses and increases in scientific knowledge, questions that were once answered by appealing to religion and God are solved by science. God is not needed to fill in the gaps.

### Agnosticism Claims...

While agnostics by definition do not claim to know whether or not God exists, they tend to side with atheists when reconciling science and religion. If God exists, he must be much less than the Christian view of God, since the universe could have been designed better. Instead, there is evidence of flawed biological design, death and decay, viciousness in the animal world, and seemingly no purpose to the universe. If there is a God, he must be limited, distant, or wicked.

### You Should Also Know...

Science has *not* made God unnecessary. As C.S. Lewis wrote: "Supposing science ever became complete so that it knew every single thing in the whole universe. Is it not plain that the questions, 'Why is there a universe?' 'Why does it go on as it does?' 'Has it any meaning?' would remain just as they were?"<sup>6</sup>

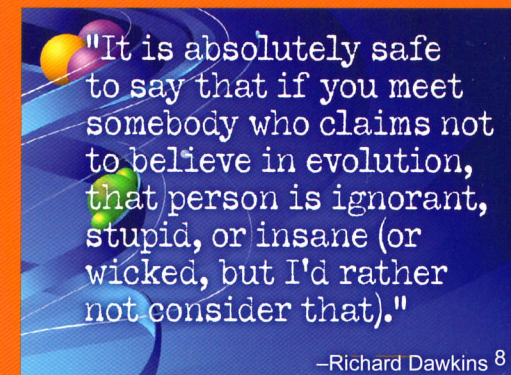
Claiming the universe had a beginning is not outmoded. Scientists Stephen Hawking and Roger Penrose admit "... almost everyone now believes that the

### The Bible Teaches...

All truth is God's truth. Christianity welcomes scientific investigation. God has given us a vast amount of material to explore and understand.

Christians can agree with microevolution—moderate changes within certain types of life such as dogs and cats. Macroevolution, however, claims large-scale changes such as the random development of new structures like wings, new organs like lungs, and new body plans. The lack of transitional forms in the fossil record combined with signs of the abrupt appearance of fully-formed creatures argues against macroevolution. Many credible scientists admit that a viable "missing link" has yet to be found, even though Darwin expected many to be found.

The evidence can be explained by the existence of a Designer who created the universe *ex nihilo* at a specific point in time. Evidence shows that complex design in living things requires the involvement of a Designer.



universe, and time itself, had a beginning at the big bang."<sup>7</sup>



## Is There Scientific Evidence Supporting Belief in God?

### Atheism Claims...

Atheists reject the validity of scientific evidence for the existence of God. Since atheists are naturalists, miracles are rejected, including supernatural elements of the Bible. Miracles are either defined out of existence or considered contrary to the scientific method. If anything, science offers evidence *against* the existence of God such as macroevolution and imperfections in biological systems. Why would an all-powerful God create flawed designs?

### Agnosticism Claims...

Agnostics question the possibility that science can prove or disprove the existence of God. Some agnostics would take a harder stance, arguing that since God is unknowable, the question of what science can prove or disprove in this regard is irrelevant. Other agnostics are open to various lines of evidence, but doubt that science can help arrive at a Creator. Other believe that since macroevolution is assumed to be truth rather than theory, the scientific case against God appears formidable.

### You Should Also Know...

The question of whether scientific evidence can support the existence of God requires an assessment of what science is dealing with and what it can and cannot do. *Operation science* studies the present, is repeatable, and examines how things work. It deals with the way things normally operate. However, origin events were not observed and cannot be repeated. *Origin science*, therefore, operates more like *forensic science*, by which the past is reconstructed on the basis of evidence that remains in the present.

### The Bible Teaches...

God has revealed himself—"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse" (Romans 1:20).

Christians have contributed significantly to the development of science as a field of study because of interest in learning about God's creation.

The anthropic ("man-centered") principle argues that the universe shows signs that it is so finely tuned to support human life that it cannot be an accident that human life exists. Even slight variations in seemingly inconsequential factors (such as rotation speed, temperature, atmosphere, the tilt of the earth) would be catastrophic.

These lines of evidence point to the existence of a Designer who is intelligent and powerful.

**"Is there any dogma more unsupported by the facts than from the scientist who stands up and says, 'I know there is no God'? Science is woefully unsuited to ask the question of God in the first place."**

—Francis Collins,  
United States' top geneticist <sup>9</sup>



## If God is Good, Why Is There Evil?

### Atheism Claims...

Theists claim that God is all powerful and all loving. But evil exists both morally, in what people do, and naturally in earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, and more. How could a loving God allow evil?

An absolutely good God must have a good purpose for everything, so if evil exists, there cannot be an absolutely good God. The reality of evil demonstrates that either there is no God or he is not the good God of theism and, therefore, not worthy of worship.

### Agnosticism Claims...

Because we do not know reality conclusively, it is impossible to say that evil exists. What seems evil may be only incomplete knowledge. The judgment that something is evil may simply be a judgment made with no basis in reality. If God exists and has attributes like those described by the Bible, then it seems inconsistent for evil and suffering to exist.

### You Should Also Know...

Without an objective standard of right and wrong, how can atheists and agnostics call anything "evil"? Atheists (and most agnostics) assume that evil exists and point to injustices as evidence against God. But "evil" and "injustice" are concepts that require the existence of a standard. If God does not exist, where does this standard come from?

Evil is parasitic—it only exists as a negation of good, not as a thing itself. God did not create evil, but by creating free creatures God left open the

### The Bible Teaches...

A good God created human beings with the power of free will to choose between good and evil. Abuse of free choice (moral evil) is explained by the bad choices of free creatures. Without freedom, people would be robots. They could not choose to love or to respond to love. Therefore, God has allowed evil to exist, but people are responsible for choosing it.

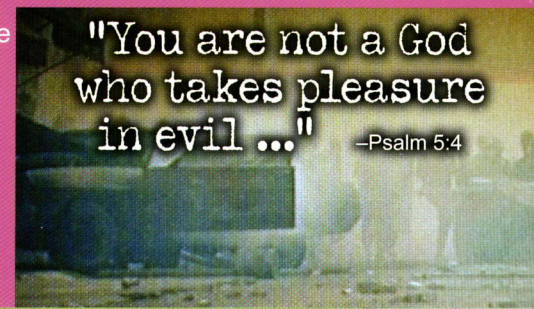
Natural evil (natural disaster) was also introduced into the physical world as a consequence of bad choices from Adam on. We live in a fallen world—"the whole creation has been groaning" (Romans 8:22).

The dilemma: Either God is sovereign and he has allowed evil for a good purpose, or God is not sovereign and evil is a power equal with God. The Bible shows that the second option is incorrect, and that God did, indeed, allow evil for a greater good. In other words, this is not the best *world*, but the best *way* to the best possible world.

possibility of the choice of evil. God is responsible for the *fact* of freedom, but not the *acts* of freedom. If God were to destroy all evil now, no one would exist. God would have to destroy both actual and potential evil; this means he would have to destroy all free will.

**"You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil ..."**

—Psalm 5:4





# Tips for Talking with Atheists and Agnostics

**D** **Don't** assume that atheists and agnostics have nothing positive to contribute. Many believe in positively contributing to society, the cultivation of ethical values, and are supportive of the arts, education, and science.

**D** **Do** carefully consider arguments presented by atheists and agnostics. God calls Christians to reason (Isaiah 1:18), to use their minds (Matthew 22:37), and to "test everything" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Contrary to misconceptions among some atheists and agnostics, Christianity embraces reason, including the application of logic to philosophical arguments.

**D** **Don't** be combative, even if the atheist or agnostic you are talking with takes this stance. Scripture calls Christians to speak to others "with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15), not with combative behavior and divisive speech. Gentleness and love in the midst of hostility will be a silent but powerful witness.

**D** **Do** take the time to learn about arguments supporting the existence of God, the reliability of the New Testament, and the core truths of Christianity. Atheists and agnostics often have good questions. Fortunately,

Christianity has great answers for those "prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15).

**D** **Don't** be afraid, "For God hath not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7, KJV). This may be easier said than done, particularly for Christians new to sharing their faith. The more you learn about the sound arguments in support of the existence of God and the reality of Christ and his claims, the more comfortable you will be in dialoguing with atheists and agnostics.

**D** **Do** pray for atheists and agnostics, as well as for your own ability to share with them. Entering into a discussion about God is about more than having the right arguments—it is also about having a prepared and humble attitude.



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## Q What About All the Evil Done in the Name of God?

### Atheism Claims...

Religion has done more harm than good. Christianity is responsible for countless atrocities throughout history including the Crusades, the Salem witch trials, the Inquisition, the KKK, and more.

What God would allow all this evil to be done in his name? The history of the world clearly shows that wherever religion is present, there is sure to be evil done in God's name. This is evidence that God does not exist.

### Agnosticism Claims...

While it can't be known whether or not God exists, religious history shows a pattern of evil done in the name of God, usually by Christians.

If everyone were agnostic, the world would be a safer place. There would be no need for different religions to war against one another or against atheists and agnostics. The idea of God appears to be more trouble than it's worth.

**"A loving God' could not possibly be the author of the horrors we have been describing ... it is obvious that there cannot be a loving God."**

—Charles Templeton, *Farewell to God*

### You Should Also Know...

Christians could point to all the atrocities done in the name of atheistic worldviews such as Communism. In China alone the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed some 65 million deaths as a result of a belief system based on atheism. Logically, however, this does not mean that atheism is false. Likewise, pointing to atrocities done in the name of God does not mean Christianity is false. If anything, evil in the world supports the Christian belief that everyone has a bent toward selfishness and egotism—what the Bible calls “sin.” Moreover,

### The Bible Teaches...

While it is true that some people claiming to be Christian have committed atrocities in the name of God, this does not mean that God does not exist. Sometimes evil done in the name of God is done by misguided Christians, and sometimes they are the acts of “cultural” Christians who do not truly follow God's rules for living.

Evil done in the name of God is not in line with the teachings of Jesus. If everyone followed the teachings of Christ correctly, no evil would be done in the name of God.

Jesus taught people to love God and their neighbors (Matthew 22:37-40), as well as what has become known as the Golden Rule: “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you” (Matthew 7:12). Evil done in the name of God does not represent true Christianity.

when atheists and agnostics argue against God on the basis of evil done in his name, they acknowledge the reality of standards of good and evil, something they cannot rationally do based on atheistic beliefs.

Christians have founded hospitals, institutions of higher learning, and humanitarian organizations in order to help fellow human beings whom they realize are made in the image of God and, therefore, are inherently valuable. Love, not hate, is the foundation of Christian ethics.

## 8 "All Scripture is God-breathed ..." —2 Timothy 3:16

## Q Is the Bible an Unreliable Collection of Myths?

### Atheism Claims...

The Bible is an unreliable book of legends and myths. It is at best irrelevant, possibly heavily rewritten, and at worst is subversive and dangerous. Since the Bible includes miracles, it can't be right. It was written at a simpler time when people were more easily fooled. If Jesus ever existed, the Bible was put together long after he died, thereby allowing his followers to make up whatever they wanted. Even Christian scholars admit that we don't have the original Bible manuscripts. How can we know whether anything written about Jesus is true? The Bible is full of contradictions and scientific errors.

### Agnosticism Claims...

The Bible may contain some great literature, but there is no way to know for sure whether what it records really happened or not. Christians have to take it on faith. Although it can't be known for certain whether or not the Bible is true, based on the available evidence the Bible appears to be unreliable. It contains errors, contradicts science, and is full of “miracles.”

### You Should Also Know...

Some portions of the New Testament were written within just 20 years or so of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. These portions, such as 1 Corinthians 15, put forth core truths about Christianity. There was no time for legends and myths to develop. Many people who witnessed events during the time of Christ were alive when the New Testament was written and circulated. All ancient works—sacred and secular—were written on very fragile material such as leather or papyrus. Therefore we do not possess

### The Bible Teaches...

The Bible records real events that took place in real historical settings, about real people, and that tell about real miracles. The Bible mentions historically verifiable facts, supported by thousands of archaeological discoveries. Many inscriptions, archaeological objects, and excavations of ancient cities verify the Bible's reliability on historical events.<sup>10</sup> The Bible also records that Jesus claimed to be God in the flesh (see, for example, Mark 2:5-7; John 8:58; 10:33), something he demonstrated by many miracles and especially by rising from the dead, an event verified by both friends and enemies.

The Bible is God's Word. It was written by men who were inspired and guided by God. The Bible is without error in the original manuscripts.

**"... a mass of fables and traditions, mere mythology."**

—Mark Twain on the Bible

the original biblical manuscripts. What we do have are very accurate copies that convey all the essential truths of the originals.

The main reason atheists and some unbelieving scholars reject the Bible is not on the basis of the evidence, but on the basis of anti-supernaturalism. Seeming contradictions are just that—seeming. Bible scholars have offered numerous works answering critics.<sup>11</sup>



# 9

## Q: Is There Life after Death?

### Atheism Claims...

This life is all there is. Good works or the advancement of human understanding can cause you to leave behind an impression in the memories of others. Immortality in the Christian sense is false. Human beings will not live forever. Once the body dies, there is nothing more. One might say that as the body decays, it will ultimately rejoin the universe and be part of it in some way, but once we die, consciousness as we know it ceases to exist. No heaven or hell awaits us. This life is all we have. There is no need for salvation.

### Agnosticism Claims...

No one knows whether or not there is life after death. The best available evidence seems to support naturalism. While a definitive decision can't be made on the question of the afterlife, it seems as though the Christian position is wrong. Science shows we are just material beings. Evidence for life after death is anecdotal. Stories of "near-death experiences" hardly prove that consciousness exists beyond death forever. Salvation is not possible, nor necessary, since this life is probably all there is.

### You Should Also Know...

The mind-body problem is a serious challenge for atheists and agnostics. Whether it is called consciousness, mind, or the soul, there appears to be an immaterial component to human beings. If the material world is all that exists, why does evidence seem to point to an immaterial component to human beings?

Why, for instance, do ideas themselves matter so much to humans? Concepts like freedom, love, justice, humor, and beauty cannot be reduced to the simply

# 10

## Q: Is There Meaning and Purpose to Life?

### A: The Bible Teaches...

Human beings are both material and immaterial. After death, we enter an intermediate state until the resurrection of the body occurs. At the time of the final judgment, we will either spend eternity separated from God or in his presence. Although there is evidence for life after death beyond the Bible, the greatest testimony is Jesus Christ. He not only predicted his death and resurrection, but it actually happened in history. At one point more than 500 people saw Jesus alive after his death and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:6).

Salvation is by God's grace, through faith, in Christ alone. Since "man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment" (Hebrews 9:27), it is critical to choose to live for Christ before death.

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

—1 Corinthians 15:55

material without the loss of these properties. In fact, the very things that make us most human, that set us apart, are these immaterial truths residing in the consciousness. This data is ignored by the materialist or dismissed as irrelevant.

If God exists, the case for immortality (life after death) makes sense, since it is this data, these properties, that mark us in God's image and are eternal.

### Atheism Claims...

In general, atheists believe there is no universal meaning or purpose to life. Some atheists believe there is no apparent purpose to life other than biological determinism (to reproduce and therefore to ensure survival of the species). Others believe that since no god exists, this life is the ultimate purpose and should be maximized or lived in order to advance the race and extend human knowledge. Atheists of the humanistic variety are more hopeful, claiming that we can leave a good legacy to future generations.

### Agnosticism Claims...

The purpose of life is either unknowable or nonexistent. Some agnostics are convinced that the universe, including human life, is merely the product of chance and time. In this sense, the Darwinian "survival of the fittest" can be said to provide some purpose—the survival and improvement of the human animal. Other agnostics say there is a longing in them that nothing on earth can satisfy. They sense there must be something more to life—some greater purpose—but they have yet to find conclusive evidence of such a purpose.

### You Should Also Know...

The logical outcome of the atheistic worldview is *nihilism*, a philosophy that says nothing in the world has real existence. Ultimately, given atheistic beliefs there is no lasting meaning and purpose to life. Some atheists acknowledge this, while others, such as secular humanists, continue to argue that human life still has purpose even without God. Even famed atheist Bertrand Russell admitted, "Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark ...".<sup>13</sup>

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

—Jesus, John 10:10

### A: The Bible Teaches...

Life has meaning and purpose because God exists. History has a purpose because it is guided by the greater purposes of God. Individuals have meaning and purpose. Being created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), every person is of inherent value, capable of expressing emotion, engaging the intellect, using creativity, and longing for God.

God, as St. Augustine wrote, has made us for himself and "our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee" [God].<sup>12</sup> Ultimate meaning and purpose is found in a relationship with God, through Christ, that impacts both belief and behavior.

Agnostics straddle the fence of decision intellectually, yet remain indecisive. Many live as functional atheists and are closer to nihilism than they think. If a person cannot know whether or not God exists, life may as well be meaningless.

Christianity offers a better way, grounded in the reality of the existence of God. There is a yearning in everyone that only God can fill.



# Glossary of Atheistic & Agnostic Terms

**Agnosticism:** Meaning “no knowledge,” agnosticism believes the existence of God can neither be proven nor disproven. Many agnostics live as functional atheists.

**Apologetics:** Reasoned arguments in justification of a theory. Christian apologetics use reason and logic to demonstrate the reliability of Christianity. Apologetics may be positive, such as arguing for the reliability of the Bible, or negative, such as critiquing competing worldviews (see 1 Peter 3:15).

**Atheism:** The belief that God or gods do not exist. Only matter exists; this worldview is often called naturalism. Atheism has much in common with secular humanism.

**Big Bang:** A scientific theory that the universe began as an explosion of dense matter.

**Cosmological arguments:** These kinds of arguments claim that belief in God is reasonable due to the origin and existence of the universe. For example, the *kalam* (“First Cause”) cosmological argument states that anything that has a beginning has a cause. Since the universe had a beginning, it must have had a cause. The best explanation for the cause of the universe is God.

**Design arguments:** Also known as teleological arguments, the basic approach of design arguments is to argue for the existence of God on the basis of design in the universe. Hints of this argument are found in Psalm 19 and Romans 1:20.

**Empiricism:** Theory that all knowledge comes through experience. Empirical knowledge can be proven through experiment and observation; by extension, the senses may be relied upon to correctly interpret reality.

**Ex nihilo:** Creation “out of nothing.” Christians believe God created the universe *ex nihilo*. Atheists and agnostics generally believe that matter and energy are eternal or that the universe came into existence from nothing and by nothing.

**Moral/axiological arguments:** Moral arguments for the existence of God claim that the existence of moral laws suggests the existence of a transcendent moral lawgiver.

**Moral relativism:** Belief that morality is relative. Rejecting or doubting the existence of God, atheists and agnostics attempt to ground moral values in human nature, evolutionary processes, social contracts, etc., rather than in a transcendent source.

**Naturalism:** A worldview that embraces matter as all that exists, thus rejecting anything supernatural including the existence of God and the possibility of miracles.

**Problem of evil:** If a good, loving God exists, why is there evil? Theological efforts to reconcile God's attributes with the existence of evil are known as *theodicies*. Many theodicies exist.

**Secular humanism:** Belief that human beings are basically good, and are capable of living morally and being fulfilled without belief in God or reference to anything divine or supernatural.

**Skepticism:** Doubt or denial regarding the capacity to arrive at absolute conclusions about knowledge. Skepticism has much in common with agnosticism. Skeptics, however, do not appear skeptical of skepticism, which leads to internal inconsistencies.

**Supernaturalism:** A worldview that believes in not only the existence of the material world, but also the reality of a supernatural realm. Christianity embraces supernaturalism, while atheism rejects it.

**Theism:** Belief in the existence of God or gods, especially belief in the Judeo-Christian God who created the universe and sustains it and his creatures in a personal way. From the Greek *theos* (God).

**Transcendent:** Beyond the range of normal or physical human experience.

**Worldview:** How one views and interprets reality, particularly in relation to the great questions of life.

"The greatest proof of Christianity for others is not how far a man can logically analyze his reasons for believing, but how far in practice he will stake his life on his belief."

—T.S. Eliot

# Resources

The inclusion of a work does not necessarily mean endorsement of all its contents or of other works by the same author(s).

## LITERATURE

- 20 Compelling Evidences That God Exists* by Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr. (River Oak, 2002)
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- Archaeology and the Bible: New Testament* (Rose Publishing, 2003)
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- Darwin's Black Box* by Michael Behe (Free Press, 1998)
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- I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist* by Norman Geisler and Frank Turek (Crossway, 2004)
- Jesus Among Other Gods* by Ravi Zacharias (Word, 2000)
- Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis (Macmillan, 1952).
- More Than a Carpenter* by Josh McDowell (Tyndale, 1977)
- New Dictionary of Christian Apologetics* edited by W.C. Campbell-Jack and Gavin McGrath (InterVarsity, 2006)
- No Doubt About It* by Winfried Corduan (Broadman & Holman, 1997)
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- Scaling the Secular City* by J.P. Moreland (Baker, 1987)
- Signs of Intelligence* edited by William A. Dembski and James M. Kushiner (Brazos Press, 2001)
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- The 10 Most Common Objections to Christianity (And How to Effectively Answer Them)* by Alex McFarland (Regal, 2007)
- The Abolition of Man* by C.S. Lewis (Macmillan, 1947)
- The Case for a Creator* by Lee Strobel (Zondervan, 2004)
- The Case for Faith* by Lee Strobel (Zondervan, 2000)
- The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* by Francis Collins (Free Press, 1006)

- The Roots of Evil* by Norman Geisler (Zondervan, 1978)
- The Twilight of Atheism* by Alister McGrath (Doubleday, 2004)
- The Universe Next Door* by James W. Sire (InterVarsity, 2004)
- To Everyone An Answer* edited by Francis J. Beckwith, William Lane Craig, and J.P. Moreland (InterVarsity, 2004)
- When Critics Ask* by Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe (Victor, 1992)
- When Skeptics Ask* by Norman Geisler and Ron Brooks (Victor, 1990)
- Why I Am a Christian* edited by Norman Geisler and Paul Hoffman (Baker, 2001)
- Why Mike's Not a Christian* by Ben Young (Harvest House, 2006)
- Without a Doubt* by Kenneth Richard Samples (Baker, 2004)

## VIDEO/DVD

- The Case for a Creator* (Illustra Media, 2006)
- The Privileged Planet* (Illustra Media, 2004)
- The Question of God: Sigmund Freud and C.S. Lewis* (PBS, 2004)
- Unlocking the Mystery of Life* (Illustra Media, 2002)

## POWERPOINT®

- 10 Questions and Answers on Atheism and Agnosticism* (Rose Publishing, Inc., 2007)

## INTERNET

- Access Research Network [www.arn.org](http://www.arn.org)
- Apologetics.com [www.apologetics.com](http://www.apologetics.com)
- Discovery Institute [www.discovery.org/csc/](http://www.discovery.org/csc/)
- Leadership U [www.leaderu.com](http://www.leaderu.com)
- Lee Strobel [www.leestrobel.com](http://www.leestrobel.com)
- Norman Geisler [www.normgeisler.com](http://www.normgeisler.com)

## NOTES

- 1 C. Sagan, “Cosmos,” 1980.
- 2 See W. L. Craig, *Does God Exist?*
- 3 See M. Behe, *Darwin's Black Box*
- 4 See C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
- 5 See C.S. Lewis, appendix to *The Abolition of Man*
- 6 C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 32
- 7 *The Nature of Space and Time* by Stephen Hawking and Roger Penrose (Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 20
- 8 R. Dawkins, “Signs of Intelligence,” NY Times, April 9, 1989, sec. VII, p. 34
- 9 F. Collins, “The Discover Interview” by D.E. Duncan, *Discover* magazine, February, 2007, p. 75
- 10 See “Archaeology and the Bible,” Rose Publishing
- 11 See Geisler & Howe, *When Critics Ask*
- 12 Augustine, *Confessions* 1.1
- 13 B. Russell, “A Free Man's Worship”

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