

## *The Parish of Wellow*

### Searching Issues

#### 'How do I know God exists?'

#### Passage, Sermon Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these sermon notes home with you and you may wish to find some time during next week to consider the questions below.

#### 1. Sermon Passage

##### Acts 17:24-28

“The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’”

#### 2. Sermon Notes

Four possible proofs used for God’s existence:

1. Visible Proof.
2. Cosmological Proof.
3. Designer’s Proof.
4. Anthropological Proof.

##### 2.1. Visible Proof

The claims of Jesus lead Christians to believe that Jesus was God in human flesh. Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? John 14:8-9. God (or Father) came in human flesh, in the person of Jesus, to give a clear picture of who God is and what He is like. ‘The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.’ John 1:1

##### 2.2. Cosmological Proof

The very order and existence of the universe leads Christians to believe that God exists. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”, Genesis 1:1. - The Bible claims the universe:

- (a) had a beginning,
- (b) its beginning was caused, and
- (c) it was caused by a person named God.

Atheists (people who do not believe in God) argue that the universe came into existence by chance, life came from non-life, order came from chaos, the laws of nature resulted from random acts. This is like saying that if you have a million monkeys banging on a million typewriters over a long enough period of time, eventually you will get a novel.

### 2.3. Designer's Proof

The observable design of all that we see around us in our creation speaks of the existence of an intelligent designer, who Christians believe is God.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world." Psalm 19:1-4

### 2.4. Anthropological Proof

Christians believe that God exists because God's character is reflected in mankind. Man's ability to a) think in conceptual terms and communicate our ideas with language b) experience emotion c) make free and independent choices d) understand the difference between right and wrong all suggest that we are more than animals, we are moral creatures. The Bible claims that man is created in God's image. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." Genesis 1:27.

A universal desire for and belief in God also leads Christians to believe that God exists. The Bible argues God has planted this desire for him in our hearts. "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.'" Acts 17:24-28

### 3. Questions to consider back at home

3.1 Philip asks Jesus a vital question in John 14:8. How does Jesus' answer in verse 9 help our quest to prove the existence of God?

3.2 What is a) a Theist b) an Agnostic and c) an Atheist? What does each one of these believe in relation to God? What would each say about the creation of the universe?

3.3 In Psalm 8 David uses the three proofs for God existence: Cosmological, Designer's and Anthropological. Which verses support each proof?

3.4 A close scientific friend of yours states "Science has proved long ago that God does not exist." How would you respond?

3.5 Can you think of anything that you haven't seen, heard, smelled, tasted or touched but that you know exists?

3.6 The Bible says that we were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). What does that mean, and how is it evidence for the existence of God?

3.7 Why would God create us so that we would seek him? How does this speak to the reality of God?

3.8 Over a drink one day down at the pub a friend says that "it's obvious the universe was created by a big bang and that everything evolved from there, why does God have to be involved?" How would you respond?

If you would like to discuss these questions further please feel free to call me on 01761 432293