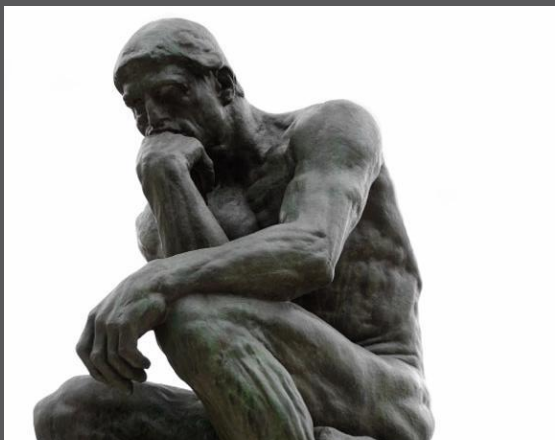


Am I stupid to believe in God?

Why do so many people say they believe there is a God but yet their hearts and their lives are far away from God? Some people have tremendous faith without needing any evidence at all. Through their own lens and experience they know God to be true. Others have believed in a God since they were young, but as adults they don't really know why, and have drifted so far away that they really don't know what to believe. Then there are others that believe that science either has, or someday will have, all the answers. They probably believe theories like, "it's always been there", or "the universe is a massive accident that over time evolved into what we see today", or "there are an infinite number of universes and we just got the lucky draw", or "aliens were here". While science offers an explanation for the properties, characteristics, and behaviors of our universe, it is not a complete framework for understanding the reality and purpose of man and the universe.

There are also people like me. Although in my heart I believed there was a God and that I had a soul, a part of me craved more evidence, to challenge my own beliefs, and seek truth. I didn't want to fall for lies or fairy tales. If this is real, it must be backed up by logic, reason, and actual evidence. When I started my faith journey, in my mid 30's, I was amazed by what God was doing in my life and the transformation I was seeing in others. I was also pleasantly surprised that it was okay to have doubts, ask tough questions, and challenge old assumptions about my faith. The bible itself provided me with a ton of "a-ha" moments and the deeper I went, and the more questions I asked, the stronger my faith became.

At the end of this letter, I am going to share with you the practical evidence that led me to believe there must be a God. There is much more to the story but the point I am trying to make is that a person can be rational AND believe in God. Maybe you have done your own homework and are convinced otherwise. You have your own reasons and I will just respectfully disagree. What about the reader that is taking a neutral stance? This letter is for you and I want to challenge you to make a decision now!



BY: DAVID HALSEY

The big questions – Why am I here? What is my purpose? Is there a God or isn't there? When I die is that really the end? Everyone is faced with their own mortality and it's a scary thought... We will all die! Yep, I just went there....the elephant in the room. But yet our reaction is to put the big questions aside and get on with our busy lives.

Sadly, a lot of people live in "quiet desperation", with little faith or hope in anything that lasts. Why do so many people avoid asking the deep questions and thinking the deep thoughts? Is it fear? Have we been fooled into thinking that science has or will prove that we are just squirrels trying to get a nut in a material world? Is that really all there is? This would certainly explain the self-centeredness and materialism we see in the world. But there is much more to the story, and deep down we all feel it, and know it...don't we?

SCIENCE VS. RELIGION?

What was, and still is, fascinating to me is that science and God do not have to be exclusive. I loved science as a kid. Going into college I actually wanted to be biology teacher. When I learned that science and God do not have to be at odds, and that science actually points to a creator, I got pretty excited about that. Prior to that I probably avoided intermingling faith and science because I was afraid I would be disappointed.

I am a follower of Jesus Christ... I am a Christian. The purpose of this letter is not to convince anyone to become a Christian, although I wish I could. First things first though. I believe it is my faith in, and relationship with God that compelled me to write this, and to share with you some things that "make you go hmmm" about the possibility of a real, living God, that created us in his image, wants to be a part of our lives, and built the entire universe just for us!

I am not a scientist. I am a sales director for a large telecommunications company. I have a bachelor's degree and a master's degree but never considered myself an intellectual, or very smart for that matter...just "smart enough" and a pretty determined person. I'm sure there are a lot of really intelligent people that have the big words and scientific theories to challenge these points in order to support their claim that there is no God. I would argue that most of them are also faith-based arguments.

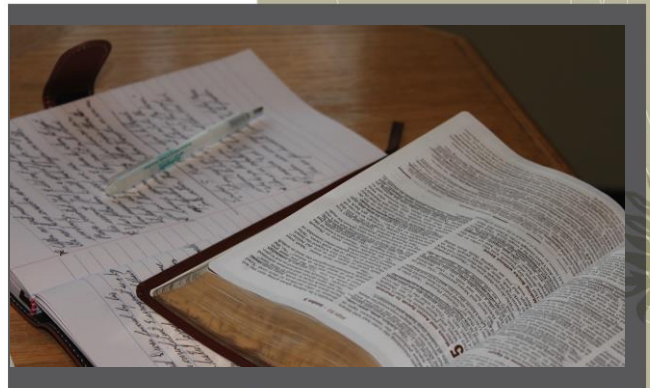
Is it wrong to be open to the possibility of a divine creator, even if you consider yourself an atheist today? If there is a God, how does that change things for you? A God that created everything in the universe wouldn't just drop us off and leave us here would he? He would at least give us an instruction manual right? He might also teach us how to live so that we can carry his legacy and his plan forward. If he wanted to stay in touch and have a relationship with us he would need to establish a way to communicate. He would also leave clues all over the place for us to find and give us the ability to seek and understand him. I'm assuming that he loves us like a father loves his children (only infinitely better at it), and he wants us to love him, so he would have to give us a choice, even if that meant a great deal of pain and suffering.

Why Wait?

If you are willing to take the next step and make a decision that God is real, I urge you to go embark on your own journey and find a community of others to do it with. Dive into God's instruction manual, the bible, and find out what it means to be "created in his image", why he gave you free will, how we screwed up and what he did to fix it, and the part you play in the story. It's a wild and challenging ride that leads to a life of fulfillment. Isn't that what we are all seeking?

It's time to get off the fence. Even if you are an "agnostic", that is really a form of atheism by indecision, otherwise known as practical atheism. There is really no point to it.

I will admit there are a lot of stubborn "religious" people out there that are not open to exploration and discovery, and are pretty harsh with others that have serious questions about our universe and doubts about God. On the other hand, there are also a lot of people that have become "religious" about science and opposition to God. It goes both ways. So I just ask that you be open to the possibility of God. It is okay to search for truth, challenge yourself intellectually, be excited about scientific discoveries, and still believe that there is divine purpose and design weaved into our existence. It took me a while to get here, but my life and my purpose make a whole lot more sense to me now that I understand how I fit into the big picture of God's creation. You don't have to believe me, but I hope you find out for yourself.



EVIDENCE FOR A CREATOR

The Big Bang

- There was a definitive start to time as we know it, a singularity. This means there must be a realm that operates outside of time.
- Our laws of physics state matter cannot be created from non-matter (i.e. can't create something from nothing)
- There must be an origin to the universe that operates outside of time and space. Something started it.

The Universe cannot be infinite

Our laws of physics state that heat/energy can't last forever. In effect, if the universe were here forever it would no longer be here.

The Universe was made perfectly for life on earth

- The universe is not random...it is not an open system. It is a closed system governed by mathematics and physical law. It is expanding. There is design and purpose to it, and it all points to us and our life on earth!
- The fine-tuning of the physical constants that control the physics of the universe - the settings of the basic forces (strong nuclear force constant, weak nuclear force constant, gravitational force constant, and electromagnetic force constant) are on a knife's edge. A minor change in these or any of dozens of other universal parameters would make life impossible.
- Is their life on other planets? Maybe. It is an intriguing question but the chance of life occurring on another planet, yet alone something even remotely close to human/animal life, is astronomically low. Finding some type of life form on another planet would certainly be amazing and it doesn't disqualify God. The bible talks about our universe and our special place within it, but doesn't comment on the possibility of life elsewhere.



The Origin of Life

Dead chemicals cannot become alive on their own. The cell is a miniature factory with many active processes, not a simple blob of "protoplasm" as believed in Darwin's day. Lightening striking a mud puddle or some "warm little pond" will never produce life. This is another view of the core issue of information as the simplest living cell requires a vast amount of information to be present. The "Law of Biogenesis" states that life comes only from prior life.

Irreducible Complexity

Take the atom, the molecule, the cell, DNA, or bacteria for example.... None of these could have evolved into what they are over time. It's like a mouse trap. If any single part of a mouse trap is not there, it cannot function. How can you drive a car without an engine, or without tires? These building blocks of our universe and as life as we know it are complex machines that had to have been created at once to survive. They could not have evolved no matter how much time they had. How could any organism survive without a complete biological system? Can you imagine animals surviving with partial hearts, brains, blood flow, eyes, etc.?

EVIDENCE FOR A CREATOR

Our Ecosystem

It is made up of very complex, interdependent relationships. From the diversity of food sources, the reliance of the smallest micro-organisms to the largest animals to work together in balance for mutual benefit...it speaks to design and purpose, not randomness and chance.

Sexual Reproduction

- Many creatures reproduce asexually. Why would animals abandon simpler asexual reproduction in favor of more costly and inefficient sexual reproduction? Sexual reproduction is a very complex process that is only useful if fully in place. For sexual reproduction to have evolved complimentary male and female sex organs, sperm and eggs, and all the associated machinery in tandem defies the imagination.
- In addition, what is the evolutionary purpose of the pleasure and the physical/ emotional bond created by sexual intercourse? These are not requirements for reproduction to occur.

Consciousness

We are aware of our existence, we seek purpose and meaning, we are built to love and to be loved, we long for something greater beyond us. The bible states that God "set eternity in the human heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11). We seem to be connected to something beyond our reach, beyond this world, yet it is unnecessary from an evolutionary perspective. Chemicals alone cannot explain self-awareness, creativity, reasoning, emotions of love and hate, sensations of pleasure and pain, possessing and remembering experiences, and free will.

Morality

We have an inherent sense of right and wrong. It is universal. This inner-voice, or conscience, can be corrupted by external factors, but it is consistently hard-wired into the being of every person. How did it get there?



Reality beyond Reality

- There is a reality beyond what our senses can perceive. Some may think that we will eventually figure everything out but we are limited to our 5 senses. Things happen all the time that cannot be explained by our reality.
- Alone in the forest, a dark starry night on the beach, a long walk on a crisp fall day, a hike through the mountains, fishing on a calm morning as the sun rises over the lake, watching an intense thunderstorm roll in, rafting through a torrent river, the beautiful sound of voices or instruments coming together in music, watching a child being born... These are just a few examples where we can't help but to say to ourselves, "how did all this happen by accident?" Nature is full of wonder, adventure, danger, beauty, colors, sounds, smells, and tastes that seem to be put in place for us to appreciate and enjoy.

Rationality

We have the ability to observe, ponder, study, and use science, intellectual reasoning, and logic to draw conclusions about the universe and our world. These characteristics are not necessary for survival yet we are wired to seek knowledge and understanding, to ask the deep questions and search for answers.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE FAITH IN?

According to Hebrews 11:1, faith is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” For the agnostic, why did you take reason as far as it can go and then decide to stop there? Why did you quit just because you don’t know? Again, are not the questions like “why am I here”, “is this all there is”, “what happens when I die”, the most important questions in your life? Reason can only take you so far, so faith is the way to break through that. For the atheist, aren’t you taking a huge gamble with your position that science and reason does, and will answer these questions? If you are correct that there is no God...well, then we all go away losers. However, by rejecting God while you are alive, you are also risking eternal separation from God. Logically speaking, isn’t the winning position to seek God with all your heart? Why not pursue a relationship with God and also discover new truths through a scientific lens at the same time?



Prayer of the Skeptic, by Philosopher Peter Kreeft:

“God, I don’t know whether you even exist. I’m a skeptic. I doubt. I think you may be only a myth. But I’m not certain (at least not when I’m completely honest with myself). So if you do exist, and if you really did promise to reward all seekers, you must be hearing me now. So I hereby declare myself a seeker, a seeker of the truth, whatever it is and wherever it is. I want to know the truth and live the truth. If you are the truth, please help me.”

The bible promises that all who seek God with an open and honest heart will find him.

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www.facebook.com/bobjourney

Ask about my other articles, including:

“Am I crazy to be a Christian?”

“Why are there so many other religions if they are all fake?”

I didn’t make all this up. References I used include:

“What’s So Great About Christianity”, by Dinesh D’Souza

“Case for a Creator”, by Lee Strobel

“Top Evidences for Creation” - <http://bestbiblescience.org/top.htm>

The NIV Study Bible