

DOES GOD EXIST?

1555 ECHO VALLEY DR.

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Phone: 269-687-9426

E-mail: jncdge@aol.com

To those who show the **Does God Exist?** video programs: You may wish to use the following questions and their answers as a follow-up to the programs. If questions arise which you cannot answer, send them to us, and we will provide you with an answer.

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Sincerely,
John N. Clayton

Questions for Program 1: The Cosmos—A Logical Proof of God's Existence

1. What destructive view do some preachers and some scientists take concerning the relationship of faith and science?

Answer: That they are opponents or antagonists and that a person has to choose between faith and science.

2. Why is this view destructive?

Answer: Because capable people are kept out of science or religion because of it. Also because it breeds an atmosphere of hostility and suspicion.

3. Why is a study of apologetics important for those who already believe?

Answer: (a) So that we can give answers to friends, family, or associates who are struggling with faith issues and (b) so that we can keep our own belief and faith at a high level, giving us the ability to be more able to resist temptations.

4. What do we mean by the word proof?

Answer: In these programs, we are defining proof as the weight of the evidence, not absolute proof. Absolute proof would leave no room for faith and, in reality, there is no such thing as absolute proof. Philosophy students will enjoy debating this one.

5. What is the difference between the biblical view of the origin of the cosmos and the view of the atheist?

Answer: The Bible states that the creation which was caused by God. The atheist believes that matter has existed forever, is self existing, and modified only by chance.

6. How do we know that the creation had a beginning?
Answer: The cosmos is expanding from a common point in space which marks a beginning.
7. How do we know that we do not live in an oscillating universe that expands and collapses and then expands again forever?
Answer: The cosmos has been proven to be accelerating, not slowing down. That means it cannot collapse. If you press on the accelerator of your car, you do not slow down. This new discovery makes the oscillating universe an impossibility.
8. Some have proposed there are parallel universes with matter/energy oscillating back and forth between those universes. Why is this not a proof that the cosmos has always been?
Answer: First of all, this is a theory. It is based on some observations in quantum mechanics which deal with the very small subatomic world and not the cosmos as a whole. There is no evidence that there are parallel universes or that anything is entering our universe from another one. If this is proven to be true, the question will still be the origin of the whole system—us and the parallel universes.
9. Is the big bang more compatible with the Bible or with atheist views?
Answer: It is much more consistent with the biblical view. All it is talking about is how space/time changed once it was created. It does not explain the origin of space/time. Atheists hate this theory because it does not tell what banged or who banged it.
10. What is the difference between asking where God came from and asking where matter came from?
Answer: When we ask about the origin of matter we are talking about a space- and time-dependent quantity that conforms to all physical laws of chemistry and physics. When we talk about God we are talking about a timeless being that is unlimited in space and not subject to the laws of science. God created time, space, and the laws, so obviously he is not controlled by them.

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Questions for Program 2: The Cause of the Cosmos

1. How do we know that the creation had a beginning?

Answer: Since hydrogen fuels the universe and is constantly being consumed, we would have no hydrogen left if the universe had been here forever. Since there is huge amount of hydrogen in the cosmos, there had to be a beginning. Also since the universe is expanding, it must have come from a point in space which marks a beginning. There are also facts from thermodynamics that make it necessary scientifically that we had a beginning.

2. How do we know how much hydrogen there is in the sun?

Answer: We can measure the light coming from matter in the sun and tell what elements are giving off that light. This is known as spectrographic analysis and is used in all areas of science.

3. Give an example of an every day use of the second law of thermodynamics.

Answer: (a) We are all getting older, (b) children's rooms get more and more disorganized, (c) gases diffuse, (d) black holes exist, (e) a physics book will give many others.

4. Why can the second law not be used to disprove evolution?

Answer: The second law only applies to a closed system—one with nothing being added from the outside. Because the earth is not a closed system, the second law should not be applied to it. Energy is being added to the earth by the sun and other sources. You can argue that the second law makes evolution less likely, but it is a poor argument too use on an atheist.

5. In the first program we saw the cosmos had a beginning. Why is it important to know whether it was caused or not?
Answer: If it was caused, one must decide what caused it.
6. What does the Bible claim about the cause?
Answer: That the cause was God, a being outside of space and time who created with intelligence and purpose.
7. If the atheist admits that there was a beginning, how will he or she explain the cause?
Answer: That some process man does not understand produced matter/energy from nothing.
8. Why is this a difficult answer to challenge?
Answer: One would have to know what man does not understand. It has been said that arguing from ignorance is the safest of all positions.
9. What is the logical problem in saying that matter/energy came from nothing?
Answer: All conservation laws of science are violated (mannerly, momentum, charge, etc.).
10. Why does God not need a cause?
Answer: Because he is outside of space and time. Only time-dependent objects like us need a cause. Anything or anyone that exists outside of time does not need a cause. (More on this in program 6.)
11. If we had a beginning, and if that beginning was caused, what would be the next logical question?
Answer: Was the cause a personal God who created with design, order, purpose, intelligence, and reason; or was the cause something nonpersonal demonstrating only chance?

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Questions for Program 3: Intuitive Design

1. What argument for God's existence is made by this program and the Bible?

Answer: Design demands a designer. We can know God is "through the things he has made" (Romans 1:19—23).

2. What mechanisms do living things have available to them to help them navigate their migratory patterns?

Answer: Sight, sound, smell, magnetic fields, and polarized light.

3. What are three explanations which could be used to explain how living things have acquired the ability to make long migrations?

Answer: a) They learn it (from their parents).
b) Acquired by chance (evolution).
c) Designed and planned by an intelligence.

4. Identify other living things that migrate great distances and tell what value they serve ecologically.

Answer: Whales, ducks, geese, turtles, eels, monarch butterflies, salmon, etc. All provide food for man and other life. Whales shape the sea floor in some places.

5. Why would God cause animals to migrate if the migration does not improve the probability of their survival?

Answer: The migration benefits other forms of life and provides essentials in the ecosystems involved in the migration.

6. What is the difference between marsupial and placental reproduction?
Answer: A marsupial baby is born five weeks after conception. A placental baby is born nine months or so after conception.
7. What is the advantage of this system to the mother kangaroo?
Answer: She does not have to be encumbered by being large and heavy with child. Birth is also easier, improving the mortality rate.
8. A chicken egg is an example of incredible design. Think of how you know this is true.
Answer: a) Right shape to pass through the hen's reproductive system.
b) Porous so the embryo can breathe.
c) Strong (you can stand on a chicken egg, if you do it right).
d) Able to be gotten out of when chick is ready.
e) Does not allow loss of fluids dehydrating embryo.
9. When atheists challenge presentations like this, they say "Here is how it can happen by chance." Then they give an explanation which always has one fatal flaw. What is it?
Answer: They make a series of assumptions as to how the matter got to the point where it could reach the desired conclusion. You see large numbers of "if," "could have," "might have," "has been suggested," etc., in the model. A total lack of evidence for these assumptions makes such an explanation unacceptable.
10. There is death, violence, and suffering in nature. Does this not show a lack of design?
Answer: Death is not the ultimate tragedy. There is increasing evidence that much of what we interpret as tragedy in nature is the result of man's interference. Animals do not kill each other except to eat in normal situations. I am sure you have your own view of this and we will explore it more in programs 6 and 9.

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Question for Program 4: Architectural Design

1. Why is it useful to look for the cause of the order we see in nature?
Answer: If we can prove that there is design in the creation, it logically follows that there must be a designer.
2. What biblical comment is given on this point?
Answer: That “we can know there is a God through the things he has made” (Romans 1:19ff; Psalm 19; Isaiah 40; Job 38, etc.).
3. Why is a hexagon a better shape for the bee to make a honeycomb out of than a triangle, square, or circle, etc.?
Answer:
 - a) They stack against each other wasting no space.
 - b) They distribute an inside load on more than one side.
 - c) They are symmetrical and balanced.
4. A chicken egg is an example of incredible design. Think of how you know this is true.
Answer:
 - a) Right shape to pass through the hen’s reproductive system.
 - b) Porous so the embryo can breathe.
 - c) Strong (you can stand on a chicken egg, if you do it right).
 - d) Able to be gotten out of when chick is ready.
 - e) Does not allow loss of fluids dehydrating embryo.

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Answer: They make a series of assumptions as to how the matter got to the point where it could reach the desired conclusion. You see large numbers of “if,” “could have,” “might have,” “has been suggested,” etc., in the model. A total lack of evidence for these assumptions makes such an explanation unacceptable.

6. What is a Fibonacci series?

Answer: A number when added to the next number in the series gives the third number—for example $1+2=3$; $2+3=5$; $3+5=8$; $5+8=13$; $8+13=21$; $13+21=34$; etc., so the series would be 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34,

7. How does this produce geometric shapes?

Answer: Spirals and rectangles use these numbers and ratios to get their shapes. The equation for Fibonacci spirals is $x^2 - s = a$ number. There is a more complete explanation of this and also references in our *Dandy Designs, volume 1*, pages 15.

8. Why does this ratio suggest intelligent design?

Answer: It offers no survival value to animals and is not stronger than other shapes. There is no chance explanation that works.

9. So does this mean that we use a god-of-the-gaps argument and say that since we do not know why it works, we invent a god to explain it?

Answer: No. There is the positive argument that this phenomena exists because of the aesthetic beauty that it provides. The idea is that beauty and creativity does not come from chance.

10. List some other areas like this Fibonacci ratio that could have similar arguments made for them being a product of design.

Answer:

- a) Color in caves and cave creatures.
- b) Colors in space.
- c) Texture differences in materials.
- d) Colors in animals and insects that are color blind.

These are all examples of things that do not offer survival value, but provide great beauty for humans to enjoy.

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Question for Program 5: Irreducible Complexity and the Anthropic Principle

1. Irreducible complexity applies to systems where many components have to all work to allow the system as a whole to function. Give an example in every day life of something like that.

Answer: Your car in which all the systems have to work—ignition, fuel, mechanical, etc. A bike—the gears, wheels spokes, tires, etc., all have to be functional. Your body—the heart, lungs, digestive system, electrical system, etc.

2. Nobody would suggest that your car evolved from raw elements by chance. What is the difference between that and biological systems?

Answer: The evolutionist would answer that you see no evidence of intermediate forms that were part car and part something else. Later we will see if the biological arguments for the evolution of life are that well supported. If not, then just like the car, intelligence must have been involved. This is the reason we use the atom in our example. No intermediate can be observed or postulated successfully for an intermediate for an atom, or if you have a quantum mechanics approach, for a quark, a string, or a brane (all theoretical building blocks of charge and matter).

3. What is meant by the “anthropic principle?”

Answer: It says that chance is not a valid mechanism to explain the complexities seen in the cosmos.

4. When we have many variables, all critical to the success of an event, what do we do with the probabilities of each variable to get the actual probability of the event?

Answer: Multiply. For the cards in a playing deck the odds of each variable (drawing an ace of spades) is 1 in 52. To draw it four times in a row (preannounced) would be $1/52 \times 1/52 \times 1/52 \times 1/52 = 1/7,311,616$.

5. Is anything impossible?
Answer: In theoretical terms a person might argue “No.” In practical terms, “Yes.” Any event which has a very low probability like 1 in 10^{60} could be called “impossible.” If “impossible” has any meaning at all, the earth’s creation is it.

6. If there are enough places in space, would life occur no matter what the probabilities are?
Answer: Yes—if the number of places match the probabilities. If you draw from a deck of cards 52 times, you are likely to get the ace. In the example in the program, however, we are far, far beyond the number of possible stars in space. The odds are on the order of 10^{700} and the maximum possible number of baryons (particles of which matter is made) is 10^{78} .

7. When scientists say that they have created life in a test tube, is this in violation of the message of the program?
Answer: No. First of all, they used materials already created and already in a finished form. The environment is controlled and manipulated in a way not possibly found in nature.

8. Does this program prove that there is no life in outer space?
Answer: NO—but if there is life in outer space, God created it.

9. How does the existence of God answer the anthropic principle?
Answer: If intelligence, order, and planning are admitted to have been a part of the creation process, then chance is not being proposed. God, then, engineered the right values for the physical constants and arranges the right conditions to sustain life. If you admit design, all probabilities cease to be relevant.

10. What argument does this program make for God’s existence? What is the biblical claim on this subject?
Answer: The creation cannot be the product of chance. It must have been designed and planned by an intelligence (Psalm 19:1ff; Romans 1:19ff; Genesis 1:1; Job 38).

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Questions for Program 6: The Problem of Human Suffering

1. How do trite answers on the problem of human suffering hurt people?
Answer: By giving unsympathetic, quick, inadequate, clichés to people who are sincerely hurting.
2. What are some wrong answers to why tragedies happen to Christians?
Answer: God cannot stop it. God does not want to stop it. God caused it (it is God's will). God is testing you. It is because you are weak. It is due to your sin (which may be true, but not always). More on this in the next program.
3. What causes a vast majority of human suffering?
Answer: Man's sin covers all of it; but man's failure to use his intelligence and to follow God's plan covers a vast percentage.
4. How does our poor use of the environment contribute to this aspect of the problem?
Answer: Pollution and abuse of nature has caused many diseases and disasters.
5. Why does God not prevent us from suffering the consequences of what we do?
Answer: Because that would prevent us from being a free moral agent and from being able to accomplish what we were created to do. (See program 7, "The Nature of Man.")
6. Give biblical examples of people who suffered because of their mistakes.
Answer: Adam and Eve, Abraham, David, etc.
7. Give examples of people who did not cause their own problems.
Answer: Job, Jesus, the blind man in John 9:1-3.

8. Why is it that suffering has to exist for us to survive?
Answer: Physical pain is a design feature in the world to protect us from what is hot, sharp, etc. Emotional pain and spiritual pain make us able to love, forgive, and function in the ways that bring out the best in us.

9. How does our view of death and pain affect our perception of life?
Answer: If we are an atheist, this life is the best we are ever going to have. If we are a Christian, this life is the worst we are ever going to have to endure. That will have a radical effect on how we live, die, and what we do in life.

10. How does the problem of human suffering relate to the idea that we all must be bearers of fruit if we are Christians?
Answer: The problems that each of us have enable us to reach out to a person or group of people that no one else can relate to. Paul is the classic example of a man who used his experience to reach out to others.

11. Give an example in your life of someone you were able to reach because of an experience that you have had.
Answer: Will vary with classes. In the Church, there are many who have built great ministries out of their experiences.

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Questions For Program 7: The Nature of God (Part 1)

1. What erroneous ideas do people get from believing that God is an old man in the sky?

Answer: That God is dead; that they can hide from God; that God has human weaknesses.

2. What questions do people ask that show they do not understand what God is?

Answer: What sex is God? What skin color is God? How can God hear everybody's prayers at once? How can God create things?

3. Why could the man in Flatland not understand what a sphere is?

Answer: It was not a part of his world, nor was it limited to his dimension. This is why we do not totally comprehend the nature of God.

4. What dimension is God in?

Answer: If we are 3-D, time is the fourth dimension, and if we are lower than the angels that would make angels 5-D (outside of time and space). That would mean God is at least 6-D. This blows our mind because we live in 3-D Flatland.

5. What is eternity?

Answer: That condition where time does not pass.

6. What is it like to be in eternity?

Answer: No time-dependent problems. No physical pain; no death; no tears; etc. (see Revelation 21:4). In Mark 12:25 we read we will become "as angels."

7. When we read the biblical definitions of God like “God is love, light, a Spirit,” what is being described?
Answer: The properties of God. Science does the same thing when it discusses things that cannot be seen or perceived through our senses.
8. Why can we not “look on the face of God and live?”
Answer: Because we would have to leave our physical form to do so. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul describes how we would have to be changed.
9. Why do people create idols?
Answer: Their concept of God is physical and they want reinforcement of that physical concept.
10. Why do we have religious hypocrites who blatantly and conscientiously defy God and live immoral lives?
Answer: Either they do not believe in God or they do not understand what God is. Like David they feel they can hide their activities from God.

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Questions For Program 8: The Nature of God (Part 2)

1. What is God?

Answer: A spiritual being that exists in a higher dimension than our own. See program 7 for more information.

2. How do we know we are not physically created in God's image?

Answer: a) God is a Spirit and not flesh and blood.
b) We would all be identical twins.

3. If God is not a sexual being, then why do we have references to Him being our father?

Answer: The father image conveys security, power, care, support, etc. There are many places in both the New and the Old Testament where images of God involve nurturing, loving, caring, feeding, and where feminine figures and word choices are made. God is not sexual is the point; and with the amount of abuse going on in our culture, that cannot be emphasized strongly enough.

4. Who created God?

Answer: The question makes an assumption that is invalid—that there was a time when God did not exist. You would have to believe that time and space existed before God did, but God created both of these—a point the evidence for the big bang confirms. From our perspective, God has always been, but that is a very limited perspective. We have a booklet on this if you are interested.

5. What things are characteristics of man that are not seen in animals?

Answer: Man worships God; creates art and music; can be taught to think, feel guilt; can be sympathetic; is able to forgive; has altruistic potential: etc.

6. Which of the following words and phrases describe animals?

- a) Able to love. c) Loyal. e) Able to learn.
b) Able to communicate. d) Intelligent.

Answer: All of them. The kind of things that animals cannot do involves worship, agape kind of love, language (which is different than speech or communication), creative capacities (such as art and music), and ability to be taught to think.

7. How do we know that these things are not a function of our intelligence?

Answer: Retarded humans do these things and intelligent animals do not—to any degree.

8. How do we know that these things are not conditioned environmentally?

Answer: Experiments done with animals in which they are put into a human environment do not show the abilities listed in question 7—to any extent.

9. What implications are involved in saying that all humans are created spiritually in God's image?

Answer: We are all of equal value no matter what our race, sex, economic status, education, or what we have done.

10. If man is said to be totally a product of his genetics and environment, what logical implication about his value follows?

Answer: We are not of equal value. Favored genetic make-up or environmental history elevates one person over another.

11. How does one's viewpoint of what man is relate to birth defects, abortion, involuntary euthanasia, and mercy killings?

Answer: Our position on these controversial issues will be dependent upon the value we place on humans. Destroying human life is no more a concern than destroying animal life if man is only an animal.

12. What relationships exist between the Godhead and the nature of man?

Answer:

- | | | | | |
|-------------|---|-------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Father | — | Intellect | — | Wisdom, planning, artistic creation |
| Son | — | Personality | — | Love, compassion, guilt |
| Holy Spirit | — | Soul | — | Action, Romans 8:16 |

Each of these parts functions in a specific way, and each is interrelated. You cannot separate your personality from your intellect anymore than you can separate the components of the Godhead.

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Question for Program 9: The Nature of Man—Why are We Here?

1. Give the parity form for each of the following:

ITEM	ANSWER
Left	Right
Plus	Minus
Natural Body	Spiritual Body
Love	Hate
Good	Evil
Matter	Antimatter
Id	Ego

2. Where did evil come from?

Answer: Evil is a consequence of God's existence. If God exists, God is love, and God is good, then there has to be the absence of love and the absence of good. This is called evil.

3. Did God create evil?

Answer: No! Such an idea is alien to the nature of God. God tempts no man. Evil is a consequence of good, not a deliberate creation of God. Passages that speak of God creating evil (such as Isaiah 45:7) are referring to allowing it, in the author's opinion.

4. Is evil equal to good—is this a dualism?

Answer: No! Good is associated with God, but evil did not have a vehicle through which it could act until Satan and his angels chose to embrace it. There is no dual-

ism. Pornography has no force unless it gets into someone's hands. If they do not read the porn, it has no effect. Evil is the same way.

5. Why did God not create us and angels so that we could not choose evil—so that sin was impossible?
Answer: Because we would not have the ability to do or be a part of many other things that are important and of tremendous value. Love is the most important of these. The rape example in the program is the best illustration that I know of. An agape type of love, family, patriotism, and a lot of other human attributes depend on this ability.
6. Why did God create man?
Answer: The author's understanding is that we are free moral choice beings created to demonstrate to all beings, mortal and immortal, the superiority of good over evil.
7. Is evil winning the war?
Answer: No! Many of Israel's finest hours were when they were outnumbered and yet by God's power eventually won out. In some cases God even reduced their numbers so they would not trust themselves. We will win by God's power and grace, not by numbers.
8. Is it fair to put man in a situation he did not ask to be in?
Answer: Does anyone really not want to exist? There are times when we all may feel that way, but the opportunity to live and to have a purpose in being is an ultimate experience.
9. What is the ultimate end of the creation?
Answer: The elements will dissolve in fervent heat (2 Peter 3), and a final barrier will be placed between those who have followed God and those who have followed Satan. It will be timeless, and good and evil will be forever separated. (See the Rich Man and Lazarus.)
10. Does hell make sense?
Answer: There is a lot we do not know about it, but if God gave us life it is reasonable that we be accountable for what we do with that life. We tend to make bad distinctions between what tradition and books like Dante's *Inferno* teach about hell and what the Bible really says.
11. Can I be really happy in heaven without those things that make me happy on earth?
Answer: While it is true that things like sexual love will not be a part of heaven, the existence and love we will have will be so much greater than anything we have ever experienced. The best of what we have had on earth would be to us when we are fifty years old, like a new toy we had as a child.

DOES GOD EXIST?

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Sincerely,
John N. Clayton

Questions for Program 10: UFOs, Strange Phenomena, And God

1. Why is it important to consider such subjects as this one?

Answer: The question of whether we can “work out our own salvation” or not is vital. Knowing we can control our destiny underlies the reason for our being, and our confidence that God is in control needs to be unshakable.

2. What are some of the devious reasons people promote UFO sightings and wild theories about extraterrestrial influences upon man?

Answer:

- a) As a substitute for religion—a way of obtaining immortality.
- b) To make money.
- c) To get attention.
- d) To justify things they do.

3. What things influence the credibility of a witness in this area of concern?

Answer: What is the reputation, education, medical, and mental history of the witness? Does he or she stand to make money or get attention through the experience?

4. What biblical relationships do people sometimes cite to support beliefs in ancient astronauts as the origin of man and his culture?

Answer: “Let us create man in our image.” Some say Jesus was an astronaut (Ezekiel 1). Many quote from Revelation, Sodom and Gomorra. (You might discuss the basic misunderstanding that causes these claims.)

5. Does the Bible say that the earth is the only place that life exists?

Answer: No, but if there is life elsewhere God created it.

6. What natural or man-made things can cause a person to sincerely believe they saw a UFO?

Answer: Eye fatigue—especially in colors; meteorites and boloids; searchlights; experimental aircraft; balloons; background problems; clouds; planets; comets; atmospheric changes; kites; etc.

7. Suppose someone claims they had an experience that proves they had contact with an alien. What things could you do to prove to yourself that their claim is valid or invalid as the case might be?

Answer: Investigate their credibility as a witness (see question 3); demand physical evidence; investigate the environment in which the sighting was made for a natural explanation; and consult an expert.

8. Why could God not be an astronaut?

Answer: An astronaut, if he existed, had to be created. This does not answer the question of creation. Only the Creator of all things, including time, can answer the question of the origin of matter. An astronaut would not have perfect wisdom and could not give us the perfection of the Bible.

9. Why do UFO reports continue to fill the pages of the media with no response from scientists?

Answer: Scientists do respond, but the newspapers either do not print the explanations or bury them so few people see them.

10. It is frequently suggested that aliens from other galaxies (millions of light-years away) or from distant stars in our galaxy (thousands of light-years away) are visiting the earth and returning captives, etc., to their worlds. What impossible situation does this pose?

Answer: If they traveled at the speed of light, it would take thousands or millions of years to get here. Even if they did not age everyone on their home planet would. Their planet and everyone on it would be thousands or millions of years older than they would be. There is no point in an E. T. “going home” because no one they knew would be still alive.

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Questions for Program 11: Morality's Proof of God

1. Is there any logical reason for an atheist to be moral?

Answer: No. There is no reason. That does not mean that atheists will not be moral, but they really have no reason to be. Modern atheists like Richard Dawkins deny that such things as good and evil exist. "In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, and other people are going to get lucky; and you won't find any rhyme or reasoning to it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is at the bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, and no good. Nothing but blind pitiless indifference. DNA neither knows nor cares. DNA just is. And we dance to its music" (Richard Dawkins, *River Out of Eden*, New York: Basic Books, 1992, p. 133). If this life is all there is, why not do anything we want that will give us pleasure? As long as we do not get caught, we will reach all that has meaning.

2. How will atheists answer the challenge in question 1?

Answer: They will say that atheists are as moral as religionists. They will also maintain that the survival of society benefits the atheists and so he or she will be moral. It should be pointed out that inconsistencies in the lives of Christians reinforce this argument. Data from Russia and other studies would challenge the claim, but it is their argument. Survival of society is of no real consequence of the atheist since they will not be around to enjoy it.

3. Give some examples of things which demonstrate the foolishness of using results as a means of making moral decisions.

Answer: Any car accident, any drowning, any alcoholic, etc.

4. How do we know that times are the same today as they were in Jesus' time?
Answer: Historical and archaeological records show what conditions were in ancient times. Looking around today we see the same things going on.
5. How does technology and science influence man's moral decisions?
Answer: It changes the forms of moral corruption and increases the ways of becoming involved in damaging moral decisions. It does not change man's nature.
6. How does a child's education influence moral choices and morality as a whole?
Answer: Classes on sex education as an example, can tell a child how to participate in moral corruption without giving ways of evaluating moral consequences. The same thing is true of classes of value clarification, alcohol use, or any other area that gets into moral decisions.
7. Does science cause moral decisions to be bad or good?
Answer: No. Science cannot determine the use to which its discoveries will be put.
8. What is the basic difference between the Christian and the non Christian in making moral decisions?
Answer: The Christian has an absolute standard (the Bible) on which he or she can make moral decisions. The non Christian can only base decisions on what the current beliefs are about moral conduct.
9. Give some examples of moral decisions that have been made by public people in recent months that have obviously been made on the world's standards instead of God's Word.
Answer: You can use virtually any criminal case as well as decisions of government people. You can also use a popular movie or TV show for this.
10. What approach does the Bible take that makes it able to be used in making moral decisions, even when those decisions involve things that were not in existence in Jesus' time? (Like marijuana, wearing clothes of a certain type, etc.)
Answer: The Bible teaches principles instead of thou shalt nots. Passages like 1 Corinthians 8 and 10 (see 10:31) lay down principles that can be used. This is a beautiful way of meeting the needs of people in all ages.
11. Does God create diseases like STDs, AIDS, etc., to punish the evil doer?
Answer: No! There are, however, scientific, logical consequences of certain acts. The diseases in question are good examples of this.

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Questions for Program 12: Which God Should We Serve?

1. What is meant by “universal inspiration?”

Answer: That the author was gifted or talented like Shakespeare, but not directed by God.

2. What is meant by “partial inspiration” and what is wrong with it?

Answer: It is the view that the Bible contains the Word of God, but that it also contains some opinions of the human authors that might be in error. The problem is that it makes the reader decide what is from God and what is not which makes the Bible become an unreliable moral choice.

3. What is meant by “plenary inspiration?”

Answer: God breathed. The idea is that no mistakes were allowed to get into the writings although the style and background of the writer was allowed to show.

4. What is meant by “biblical clarity?”

Answer: Easy to understand—like Genesis 1 and the plan of salvation.

5. Does the book of Revelation disprove biblical clarity?

Answer: No. If a person looks at who wrote the book, to whom it was written, and why, it is easy to understand. It does, at the same time, challenge the minds of the most brilliant. It is also important to see that it is not essential that we understand the book of Revelation to be saved.

6. Give some examples of “biblical brevity.”

Answer: The creation account being covered in 31 verses. No description of the physical features of Jesus. Only 34 days of Jesus’ life of 12,000 days covered.

7. How does the sordid story of David and Bathsheba show that the Bible did not come from the mind of man?

Answer: Men would have clipped that story out because humans do not expose their heroes.

8. What was unique about the way that Jesus taught?

Answer: Among other things, He taught with authority, and claimed divinity. C. S. Lewis says Jesus was either a lunatic or God. No middle ground exists.

9. Why is it important for every person to ask the question “Which God?”

Answer: Because we need to know why we believe what we believe. Otherwise our faith is really just acceptance and will not be an active living faith.

10. What is the greatest evidence to Christians and possibly to the world that the Bible is inspired, and that Jesus Christ is the answer and is the Son of God?

Answer: In the lives of Christians and the fruits of their works. When people can see changes in other people’s lives and can see Christ living in us they have the greatest evidence that Jesus is what He said He was and that the Bible is God breathed.

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Questions for Program 13: The Bible's Checkability

1. What is meant by "biblical checkability?"

Answer: The Bible contains statements that can be checked in our time to see if they are true or not.

2. What are some explanations for the scientific accuracy of the biblical record?

Answer: a) Knowledge of the writers. (Unlikely since their nation was not scientifically advanced.)
b) Observing of their surroundings. (Why did not others observe it?)
c) GOD INSPIRED IT.

3. Was it the purpose of the authors of biblical writings to reveal scientific facts?

Answer: No! But if the Bible is inspired, it will not contain error.

4. How can the miracles in the Bible be scientifically accurate?

Answer: They are not, because they are miracles. If God says it is a miracle He is saying it will not have a scientific explanation. It is the non-miraculous statements that both atheists and believers have to look at.

5. Does biblical checkability change?

Answer: Yes! As man understands more about the creation and as he studies the Bible more deeply he is going to come to better understandings. "The more we know of the creation, the closer we get to the Creator."

6. Why do people seem to find so many things in the Bible that they believe are untrue?
Answer: a) They assume science and religion are enemies.
b) They confuse human tradition and its teachings with biblical truth.
c) They are ignorant of the Bible and/or science.
d) They let other people tell them what to believe.
7. What is meant by “system design?”
Answer: The Bible shows a workable system that can be seen to be wise and to be beyond the capacity of man to invent. Things like man’s relationship to God, to nature, to woman, etc., are examples of this design.
8. What do we mean by pantheistic religion and what has been the result of following it?
Answer: Religions that equate God to nature—not a personal God. Examples: Hinduism, Buddhism. The result has been starvation and poverty.
9. What has been the result of following the Bible in the standard of living in the world?
Answer: Abundance of food; high standard of living in general.
10. The Bible is unique in teaching monogamy (one man/one wife for life) as the ideal. What would be the logical consequences of polygamy (polygyny [one man having multiple wives] or polyandry [one woman having multiple husbands]).
Answer: Jealousy, competition, loneliness, sexual frustration, lack of identify, child/father or mother isolation, too many children, STDs, etc.
11. What is the greatest evidence to Christians and possibly to the world that the Bible is inspired, and that Jesus Christ is the answer and is the Son of God?
Answer: In the lives of Christians and the fruits of their works. When people can see changes in other people’s lives and can see Christ living in us they have the greatest evidence that Jesus is what He said He was and that the Bible is God breathed.
12. Is this an intolerant lesson?
Answer: Pointing out weaknesses, raising preferences, and promoting a better way are not acts of intolerance. Christianity teaches you to love your enemy, turn the other cheek as much as it depends on you—to live at peace with all men. This is a religion of tolerance.

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Questions for Program 14: The Design of the Biblical System

1. Why do people reject the Church?

Answer: They have seen the inconsistencies of organized religion and the bickering and fighting among people who claim to be Christians.

2. What is unique about the biblical concept of the relationship between God and man?

Answer: The burden of accomplishment is placed upon God—not man. We do not have to achieve to be accepted by God. God reaches out to man asking only obedience by man—not a level of knowledge or accomplishment.

3. What is the purpose of prayer?

Answer: To benefit man (not God). To allow man to communicate with a reliable, loving being higher than himself.

4. What is meant by the statement “Worship is not a spectator sport”?

Answer: We do not worship to be entertained. We are to involve ourselves and participate in all activities of worship.

5. To what extent do members of the Church want entertainment in and by their preachers?

Answer: To a very great extent. Preachers are frequently hired or fired upon their ability to tell funny or emotional stories, rather than their ability to reach the lost.

6. How can we avoid the problem brought up in the previous question?

Answer: Follow the lesson by taking notes, outlining the discussion, reading each passage in our own Bible, changing the format to classroom-type teaching, etc.

7. How can we improve the fellowship and love we have in the Church?
Answer: By making a conscious effort to spend more and more time with our brothers and sisters in Christ. This needs to be done both individually and collectively. You may want to make specific suggestions on this.
8. Why do the biblical qualifications for an elder make sense?
Answer: Each item such as age, given to hospitality, apt to teach, faithful family, etc., serve as positive examples to others. An elder leads by example and the qualifications tell us which areas are vital ones to successful living. You may wish to develop each area in 1 Timothy and Titus.
9. What is the Church?
Answer: The people—not the building. This is a unique and beautiful concept. Matthew 16:17 and 1 Corinthians 3:16ff show a concept not generally recognized by the world.
10. Indicated below are several acts which God expects in obedience to his commands. Explain why each makes sense.
Answer:
- Hear:** If you do not know what to do, you cannot do it.
 - Believe:** If you do not believe, you will not make any significant investment of time, energy, or money.
 - Repent:** No change—no gain spiritually.
 - Confess:** Anonymity will not win others.
 - Baptism:** Beautifully symbolic, a total involvement, and a public emptying of oneself.
 - Life:** If your life does not reflect change, the world will be unaffected. Obviously a variety of other comments could be made on each one.

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Questions for Program 15: Why I Left Atheism (Part 1)

1. Give some examples of things we accept but do not really have faith in (in general).
Answer: Matter of dress; social customs; things like procedures in government; etc. Answers can also include things like church buildings and some things done in Church.
2. To what extent do your friends accept their religion rather than have faith in it?
Answer: Answers will vary.
3. Identify some misconceptions many people have about the Church.
Answer: Answers will vary—a building, an institution.
4. What are some common misconceptions about God?
Answer: He is a man or woman. He has human weaknesses. See program 7.
5. Why is it important to develop one's own faith—not just to have the faith of our parents?
Answer: If we do not have our own faith we will be apathetic, probably lukewarm and stagnant. We also will be hard put to answer the challenges of those outside of Christ.
6. What do you see about Ray Muncy's handling of the situation that was wise.
Answer: He did not state his beliefs or rely on traditional explanation, but let me read and interpret the Bible for myself—giving me guidance, but letting me make my own decisions about what the Bible meant.

7. Why is this approach hard to do and perhaps dangerous?
Answer: It is dangerous because people can have wacky ideas (and I did). It is hard to do because you really have to know the Word to do it. Ray Muncy knew the Bible and God intimately, and he was able to ask questions that led me to see the whole picture when I tended to isolate scriptures.
8. Why would most denominations and a lot of preachers have trouble with this approach?
Answer: If you have a creed or if you have been told, “Here is every question you will ever have to answer and here is the answer to every question you will ever have to answer,” then someone pushing you outside of what you know, are comfortable with, or anything not covered in your creed is going to be a problem.
9. What is hypocrisy and why is it an issue with atheists?
Answer: It is when someone does not practice what they preach (in simple terms). It is a problem because it suggests that the biblical system does not work.
10. What is the proper understanding about hypocrisy?
Answer: We are all guilty of it—no matter what our beliefs. Humans are free thinking moral agents with emotions, and that combination is going to cause you to make mistakes. Christians are never portrayed in the Bible as perfect, only that they strive to be perfect and have the power to be better than they could ever be without that power.

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Questions for Program 16: Why I Left Atheism (Part 2)

1. What is the difference between happiness and pleasure?

Answer: Pleasure is physical gratification, and many things in life can provide it—both wholesome and sinful. An atheist can find pleasure. Happiness has to do with peace, satisfaction, a feeling of well-being, and only comes from things that are associated with God—giving, sharing, caring, loving, tenderness, patience, etc. My experience as an atheist was that I never found these things, but they are constant and always available as a Christian.

2. How does the promise that “there will be an escape” (from temptation) get played out in the life of a Christian?

Answer: Having diversions that are wholesome, being with people who encourage you and keep you from the wrong things, God providing alternatives, being focused on God’s will for your life and ministry.

3. What things did the geology professor believe about the Bible in Clayton’s story?

Answer: (a) That the Bible gave the age of the earth (to be discussed later), (b) that the word species and kind were one in the same, (c) that the ark held every species that ever lived on the earth

4. How many times do people like the professor also totally misunderstand what the Christian system is all about?

Answer: Constantly—because all they know about is what organized religion has done and taught.

5. What advantages does a person like Clayton have over someone “raised in the Church?”
Answer: Appreciates what Christianity is all about. Can understand sin a little differently. Baptism to me was a complete burying of the old John Clayton and the raising out of the water of a totally new person. That was incredible. Someone raised in the Church and not saturated with sin might have a difficult time understanding that feeling. Will not be apathetic as easily.
6. What advantages does someone “raised in the Church” have over someone like Clayton?
Answer: Has not risked hell. Does not have the scars and knowledge of harm done to others. Has a better basic knowledge of the Bible. (I still cannot rattle off the names of the books of the Bible in order.)
7. We still need to restore New Testament Christianity. Why is this statement true?
Answer: Because division, envy, lack of love, and a variety of other problems exist, indicating that the spirit of Christianity is missing.
8. How do we go about building our own faith?
Answer: Study material like these programs. (You might mention the correspondence courses, book, audio CD/tapes, etc., that may be borrowed from us and used free of charge.) Get involved in evangelism.
9. What did Jesus mean in Matthew 12:30 and Luke 11:23 by “He that is not with me is against me. He that gathereth not with me scattereth”?
Answer: I believe He was dealing with commitment. Whatever we can do He expects us to do it.
10. Why is there so much apathy about religion in the United States today?
Answer: Lack of understanding of what Christianity can do for people. Squabbles within the Church. Emphasis on personal gratification instead of service. There are many, many factors, and most leading atheists are former preachers and leaders of fundamentalist churches.

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Questions for Program 17: Jurassic Park and Genesis

1. What is the difference between the fact of evolution and the theory of evolution?

Answer: The “fact” refers to changes that can be observed and do, in fact, occur. These are changes within a species and can be manipulated. The “theory” of evolution is the hypothesis that evolution has taken place in the past in such a way that all living things are the product of chance and are all from a common ancestor. This cannot be observed or duplicated experimentally.

2. Give some examples of factual evolutionary change from the Bible.

Answer: The fact that all people on the earth came from Adam and Eve and yet we are all different racially and otherwise. The serpent lost his legs and that loss was genetic in nature. Jacob’s manipulation of Laban’s livestock.

3. What does the word “kind” mean in the Bible?

Answer: It is from the Hebrew word *min* and is a broad word referring to groups of animals. See 1 Corinthians 15:39 for an example of how it is used. Fowl is used—not blackbird, crow, eagle, hawk, etc. Species and kind are not the same.

4. Why does the proof or disproof of evolution depend ultimately upon the fossil record?

Answer: The fossils show what actually happened historically. The biological evidence gives ideas of what might have happened, but no proof that it actually did.

5. What is a fossil?

Answer: Any evidence of life that has existed in the past, including bones, skin, tracks, waste products, etc.

6. Do fossils show that factual evolution has taken place?
Answer: Yes! Factual evolution is the concept that things can change. Fossils show horses have changed. They are all still the same kind, but change has taken place. This is not to be confused with the showing variations have taken place in living things.
7. Do fossils show that all life evolved from a single-celled organism?
Answer: No! This is actually unprovable because every step would have to be documented for literally billions of changes. The lack of truly transitional fossils further erodes confidence in this theory.
8. What basic assumption about the history of the earth is evolution based on?
Answer: Uniformitarianism—the belief that the processes currently operational upon the earth are the only ones that have ever operated. That no events like the Flood have ever taken place.
9. Why is uniformitarianism critical to evolution?
Answer: Infinite periods of gradual change cannot occur if catastrophes have been a regular part of the earth's history.
10. Give some examples of things that are believed to have happened on the earth that do not conform to uniformitarianism.
Answer: The Flood, rapid freezing of woolly mammoths, asteroid collision with the earth which may have wiped out the dinosaurs, and magnetic reversals. **Note:** Volcanoes and glaciers are not answers because they occur today.

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Questions for Program 18: The Age of Things

1. What assumptions are all scientific dating methods based upon?

Answer: Uniformitarianism—the idea that the present is the key to the past.

2. Is the assumption of uniformitarianism a good one?

Answer: No! Many things are known to have happened in the past that are not going on today, and many more are possible.

3. What is the biblical position on uniformitarianism?

Answer: The Bible teaches that every so often the earth's history has been interrupted by a catastrophic event—the Flood, the plagues in Egypt, the crucifixion of Jesus—when major changes occurred in the earth.

4. Is the age of the earth important to the message of the Bible?

Answer: No. The plan of salvation is not related to this.

5. Why have religious people wanted to suggest that the age of the earth is relatively young?

Answer: The major reason has been that modern leaders of the creationist movement in the United States have been from dispensationalism denominations. Their theology says that the history of the earth is made up of roughly 1,000-year periods ending with the Rapture, Armageddon, etc. For more on this, see Ronald L. Numbers' book *The Creationists*. Some have felt that the earth being more than 6,000 years old supported the theory of evolution in some way.

6. Is the age of the earth important to the theory of evolution?
Answer: No! Undirected, chance, opportunistic evolution could not occur in 100 billion years as we saw in the anthropic principle in program 5.
7. What assumptions have to be made to determine the age of the earth biblically?
Answer: a) That there are no undated verses in the Bible.
b) That there are no missing people in the genealogies.
c) That no historical period is missing from the Bible.
d) That genealogies are always given in the right order.
e) That the purpose of the genealogies was a chronological purpose.
8. Are there any undated verses in the Bible?
Answer: Yes! The most important of these is Genesis 1:1, which is undated and untimed. To assume it is part of the creation week, you have to assume it is a summary of the chapter. It is not written as a summary, but as a historical event. Another undated event is the length of time that Adam and Eve were in the Garden.
9. Are genealogies always complete in the Bible?
Answer: No! Even when numbers are used, there are inconsistencies. Compare Matthew 1:1–17 with Luke 3:23–38. Compare Ezra 7 with 1 Chronicles 6. These are not errors. The purpose of the passages is not to reveal chronology. It is only to show ancestry/lineage.
10. What are the basic sources of conflict between science and religion?
Answer: a) Bad science.
b) Bad theology.
c) Both of the above—which is what the history of this question has been.

DOES GOD EXIST?

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Sincerely,
John N. Clayton

Questions for Program 19: The Flood

1. What are some of the mechanisms that could have produced a flood of the kind described in the Bible?

Answer: God's miraculous intervention, magnetic reversals, an asteroid hitting the earth, the Straits of Gibraltar opening up and letting the Atlantic in, underground springs opening up, glaciers melting, or a combination of any or all of these.

2. How big would the Ark of Noah have been if it held two of each "kind"?

Answer: Not very big. Read 1 Corinthians 15:39 and notice that "kind" in the Hebrew (from the Hebrew word *min*) is not the same as species. If he had two cow-like animals, they could have produced all kinds of cattle and even buffalo, moose, elk, deer, and the like. "Kind" is a broad term.

3. There are a number of evidences that the Flood did occur. List as many as you can.

Answer: Given in the Bible; recorded in all cultural records; salinity changes in the Gulf of Mexico indicating massive additions of fresh water; known mechanisms do exist. I would not use sediment layers, since erosion and identification problems influence these. I also would not say the Ark has been found, because it has not.

4. Why can the Flood not be used to explain the formation of the Grand Canyon?

Answer: The kind of rocks found in the Canyon are never produced by a flood, and the existence of different animals at different layers denies the idea they were killed by a flood.

5. Why does the existence of huge canyons on Mount St. Helens since 1980 not prove that the Grand Canyon could have been produced in a short time?

Answer: The rocks on Mount St. Helens are volcanic rocks—soft, light weight, and easily eroded. The Grand Canyon is made up of sedimentary rocks—dense, hard, and very difficult to erode. It is like comparing warm butter and steel.

6. How else can we see evidence that the Grand Canyon and things like the Niagara dolomite were not produced by the flood?

Answer: Fossils are sorted with one kind of animal being in one layer and another kind of the same, size, density, and shape being in a different layer. A flood would make sausage out of the whole thing. Also, these are chemically precipitated rocks produced in quiet, still waters—not shale, sandstone, conglomerate, etc., which are produced in running water.

7. What is the “canopy theory”?

Answer: The theory that before the Flood, there was a cloud of material that made the earth a paradise, and that the collapse of this canopy produced the Flood. There is no evidence to support his idea, and it would not produce the paradise attributed to it, if it were true.

8. Where did Noah’s Ark end up?

Answer: According to the Bible, in the Ararats (not on Mount Ararat). Attempts to find the Ark on present-day Mount Ararat are probably misguided.

9. What is the message of the Flood account?

Answer: Man disobeyed God resulting in a catastrophe that affected all men. Only those obedient to God survived. There will be a similar destruction in the future, but not by water.

10. What is the danger of telling kids things like “the Grand Canyon was produced by the flood of Noah”?

Answer: Junior high level students can understand the evidence that shows this is not true. If the quote “preacher” is not right on this subject, how do they know he is right on any subject? If the student is convinced that the Bible does say that the flood produced the Grand Canyon, then he or she is likely to discard the whole Bible on the same basis.

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Questions for Program 20: Fossils and Genesis

1. What is the purpose of the Genesis record?

Answer: To tell us God created all things, and that we are specially created in God's image. (Not to give us specific details.)

2. What are some common errors made in comparing the biblical record with the scientific evidence?

Answer:

- a) That the Bible is a clock. (See program 18.)
- b) That the Bible is written scientifically.
- c) That the Bible is a complete detailed technical report.
- d) That evolution is a "dirty word."
- e) That true science poses a threat to the Bible.

3. What is the difference between creating something and making something?

Answer: Creating is miraculous and is from nothing. Making is natural and is not miraculous. God has used both.

4. How are the words *bara* and *asah* used in reference to man?

Answer: *Bara* is used in reference to man's soul. *Asah* is used in reference to man's body being formed of the dust of the earth. The soul is miraculously created. The body is formed from the earth—material that already exists.

5. In which verses in the Bible do we see the sun and the moon created?
Answer: Verse 1. The word *bara* is used only in verse 1. In verses 14–19, the word *asah* is used, indicating to form or to shape, but not to create. The sun is created in verse 1 and its light reaches the earth by verse 3. You could not see the sun to establish “signs, seasons, days, and years” until verses 14–19. This is taking the Bible super-literally, but the evidence supports this. We would suggest that cloud cover in the recently formed earth may have been the cause.
6. How long did it take to create the heaven and the earth.
Answer: The Bible does not say. Verse 1 could be in an instant or billions of years.
7. What are some of the human guesses that have been proposed to explain problems people have seen in the biblical record and the fossil record?
Answer:
- a) The idea that the days are God-days—not man-days and represent long periods of time.
 - b) The idea that there is a gap between verses 1 and 2 in Genesis 1.
 - c) The idea that God created the whole cosmos full-grown with the appearance of age.
 - d) The idea that verses 1 and 2 in Genesis 1 cover the prehistory of the earth and that the creation week covers man and those things he was familiar with. There are others.
8. What was the condition of the land masses early in the earth’s history according to both the Bible and the scientific evidence.
Answer: There was one land mass and one body of water. The Hebrew for place is *maqoin*, meaning a “place of standing (singular),” and the word earth is singular. Continental drift supports this. Some may wish to use Genesis 10:25 as further evidence, but it appears that this verse has reference to the Tower of Babel and not the land masses.
9. If we believe the Bible to be God’s Word, there cannot be a contradiction between the Bible and the proper understanding of the fossil record. Why not?
Answer: Because the same God who did the creating told us about it in the Bible.
10. What are the sources of conflict between science and religion?
Answer:
- a) Bad science.
 - b) Bad theology.

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Questions for Program 21: Evolution's Proof of God

1. What is the purpose of the Genesis record?
Answer: To tell us God created all things, and that we are specially created in God's image. (Not to give us specific details.)
2. What was the first living thing on the earth according to the Bible?
Answer: A plant—verse 11.
3. There is an order to the living things—a sequence. What is the first sequence?
Answer: (1) *Deshe*: tender grass, referring to moss, lichen (easily broken); (b) *Eseb*: naked seed, referring to spore-bearing plants; and *Peri*: seed within a case, trees, fruit bearers—in that order.
4. What is meant by *succession*?
Answer: That plant life begins and develops in a logical order where earlier plants provide for later ones. The same order that the Bible gives is seen by scientists. This happens when an area is scorched by a fire. God has established an order which He used during the creation week and which is still taking place today. This is a modern discovery of man, but it is clearly stated in the Genesis account. Please emphasize that sequence is the key word.
5. What is the sequence of creation of life as indicated in the Bible?
Answer: Plants (vv. 10–11, water creatures (vv. 20–21), fowl (v. 21), beasts (mammals) (v. 24), man (vv. 28–31.). Notice that many forms of life are not included in these verses including bacteria, worms, insects, reptiles, bats, platypuses, amphibians, ostrich, penguins, etc.
6. What is the sequence of the creation of life as seen in the fossil record?
Answer: Same as question 5, but many other forms are mentioned that the Bible does not discuss. Look at question 1 again.

7. The word *remes* is translated as “creeping thing” in the King James Version of the Bible. Why is it not likely that this refers to reptiles, dinosaurs, or “creepy things” (see Genesis 9:1–3)?
Answer: The Jews were told to eat *remes* in Genesis 9: 1–3. and they could not eat reptiles and most insects. The word refers to sheep, goats, etc. —things they could eat.
8. What vital hermeneutic are we using in this discussion?
Answer: That words in the original language always mean the same thing until the author clearly tells us there is an unusual meaning. This is vital or we could never understand anything in the Bible or any other writing.
9. So where are the dinosaurs in the Genesis account?
Answer: They are not. No Hebrew word in Genesis could legitimately be translated dinosaur. They were either before the week preparing the earth for man, during the week and somewhere else, or after the week. No Hebrew word in the Bible can legitimately be translated dinosaur.
10. How about leviathan and behemoth in Job?
Answer: Behemoth refers to an ungulate everywhere else that it is used in the Bible. An ungulate is an animal you can milk; I would love to see someone milk a *T. rex*. Leviathan refers to a creature of the deep ocean in Psalm 104 and other Jewish literature. These are not dinosaurs. There are animals that could fit the descriptions.
11. What is the tree of evolution?
Answer: The guess that everyone evolved by mechanical accident from a single cell to man. This model has major problems.
12. What is the forest of evolution?
Answer: Recent scientific suggestions that life started in many different places and that various groupings have developed autonomously. The Bible agrees. See 1 Corinthians 15:39; Genesis 1:20–31; and Genesis 6:19–21; 7:1–24.
13. Why is this lesson titled “Evolution’s Proof of God?”
Answer: Because there is no way that someone living at the time of Moses or even 500 years ago could have written an account that is so perfectly in agreement with the modern scientific evidence. There are things not given to us that we might like to know, but in every checkable detail, the Bible checks. There are denominational traditions that conflict with what the Bible says; but if you just look at it literally, it is 100 percent correct. John Clayton was trying to write a book as an atheist titled *All the Stupidity of the Bible* to show the Bible to be in error. He started with the Hebrew of Genesis 1–3 and never got out of it because he could find no factual errors. This ultimately led to him becoming a Christian. This cannot be a work of man; it has to have come from the God who did the creating and making.

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Questions for Program 22: God, Man, and Cavemen

1. What is the difference between the biblical and physical anthropological definition of man?

Answer: The Bible deals with spiritual characteristics while physical anthropology deals with physical attributes. The two are not really related.

2. Why is the issue of man's evolution relevant?

Answer: If the Bible is false in one area, how can we trust it in any area? Also, if man is purely a product of chance he has no soul.

3. The bone spray shown in the program was for Lucy, one of the most publicized finds of the twentieth century and one of the most complete specimens ever found. What do the bones show about her—man, monkey, or in-between?

Answer: Clearly a monkey. It is possible she could have been an erect monkey, but the major anatomical characteristics are all those of a monkey (brain size, V-shaped mandible, ratio of arm and leg bones, etc.)

4. Why was there such scientific interest in Lucy?

Answer: First of all, it was a very complete specimen. Secondly, the finder (Donald Johanson) has a theory that apes became erect and then brain size increased leading to man. If this specimen was erect, it would fit his theory. The evidence of it being a missing link was not what the issue was—it is not.

5. What do you not find in a fossil deposit of bones, and why is that important?

Answer: You do not find soft tissue, and that is important because it can make a huge difference in what something looked like—the proboscis monkey was the example in the program.

6. Why do publications like Time/Life promote materials like the chart mentioned in the program, sometimes distorting the evidence as they do so.
Answer: This sells a lot of books and makes a lot of money. Accuracy does not always seem to be a high priority in their advertising.
7. How much difference can race make in the way two people look?
Answer: A lot. Racial variations can be enormous.
8. What are the major weaknesses of the argument that man evolved from apes?
Answer: Incomplete and fragmentary evidence. Ambiguous definition of what man is. Failure to recognize that racial variations can cause enormous differences in physical characteristics.
9. What do the names ascribed to man's ancestors come from?
Answer: Where their bones were found in most cases.
10. What is a caveman?
Answer: A man who lives in a cave. This does not mean he is less than human, or retarded, or inferior in any way.

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Questions for Program 23: Demonology and Exorcism

1. Why is it so important that man's "free moral agency" not be interfered with?

Answer: God's purpose in creating man is destroyed. Man must be free to choose and to bear the consequences of his or her choices. Otherwise we become mechanical puppets with no semblance of being in God's image.

2. Why did God allow demons to exist?

Answer: First of all, to demonstrate Christ's total power over *all* forces—physical, nonphysical, and metaphysical. Secondly, it was to provide man with a choice so that the miracles of Christ would not overwhelm the people of that time and destroy their free moral agency. This is why demons are not found in the Old Testament or in today's world.

3. Is it the intent of this program to say that people cannot be controlled by Satan?

Answer: No! Only that turning oneself over to Satan is voluntary, reversible, and not the kind of phenomena that we read about in the biblical cases of demonology and exorcism.

4. What contrasts exist between the method used in exorcisms in the Bible, and those done today.

Answer:

- a) Time — instantly in Bible—hours to weeks today.
- b) Method — command vs. ritual today.
- c) Power — totally upon authority of Christ in the Bible—human credentials emphasized today.

5. What characteristics did demon-possessed people in the Bible have that are seen and understood as natural today?

- Answer:**
- a) Convulsions as seen in epilepsy.
 - b) Blindness which can be physically or psychologically caused.
 - c) Deafness which can be physically or psychologically caused.

6. What similarities are there between demonology and exorcism, and the whole question of miracles?

Answer: Both phenomena were designed to fulfill a purpose no longer valid today.

7. Was Job demon-possessed?

Answer: No! Satan afflicted Job, but Satan was never able to control what Job did. Job could have “cursed God and died” as his wife encouraged him to do.

8. What promises are we given which are incompatible with demon possession?

- Answer:**
- a) Resist the devil and he will flee (James 4:7).
 - b) God will provide a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13).
 - c) Satan is chained (Revelations 20:1, 2).
 - d) Jesus was tempted in every way as are we (Hebrews 4:15).

9. Why do people claim to be demon possessed?

Answer: In some cases, they are sincerely overwhelmed with life and its problems. In some cases, they do not want to be responsible for what they have done. In some cases, they are emotionally stampeded by others into believing that they are in need of special help.

10. Where did demons come from?

Answer: Several possibilities exist. Some claim that they are direct creations of Satan. Some feel that they are the souls of dead nonbelievers who are now agents of Satan. Some feel they are Satan’s angels cast from God’s throne during Satan’s rebellion. Several other proposals can be given. The Bible is not explicit on this one.

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Questions for Program 24: Issues of Biological Evolution

1. Why is it that the fact that all animals have lungs, stomachs, eyes, thyroid glands, pancreases, etc., is not a proof that we all evolved from an amoeba?

Answer: We are created by the same engineer who used the best physical plan for all of us. Also, we could not eat or use medicine from animals if this were not true.

2. Does not the fact that we have a 99.5 percent similarity to some apes prove that we and the apes have a common origin?

Answer: Yes, but the question is what is the origin—God or chance? Converging evolution predicts that we will have similar characteristics because we live in similar ways. What is amazing is how different humans and chimps are considering that we are so close genetically. Researchers are amazed that the genetics do not have stronger influences.

3. Why are vestigial organs not a proof we all came from an amoeba?

Answer: Because God did not equip us just to live wherever you live. What is useful in one place is not necessarily useful somewhere else on this earth. Also, the number of truly vestigial organs keeps dropping in number as we learn more about our bodies.

4. Have we not proven that nonliving materials can produce complex organic materials?

Answer: Yes. But that was never the issue. The Miller-Urey experiment is a highly designed and controlled environment that allows simple gases to produce amino acids. In nature, a comparable environment is very hard to find, and mathematical studies have shown that the probabilities of all of these steps happening by chance is prohibitive. This is another design argument like the one we used in our anthropic principle discussion earlier.

5. Is not cloning evil?

Answer: No. It could do great things for mankind, but it also could be used to do terrible things. Dynamite was invented to help build roads; and when the man who discovered it realized it would be used to hurt people, he was so mortified that he created the Nobel Peace Prize with the money he had made on it.

6. Would a cloned human being have a soul?

Answer: My response to this is yes. There is nothing that says whether we have a soul or not is determined by how we are conceived. An artificially inseminated baby is as valuable and as spiritually blessed as any other method, and that would be true of a cloned baby too. Hopefully, no one will be dumb enough to do this, but it may happen.

7. Where did Cain get his wife?

Answer: The main point here is that we make many assumptions about the biblical account that simply are not valid. God had told man to be fruitful and multiply and yet we have traditionally believed that there was no sex and no kids before the fall. There is no biblical justification for this, and Genesis 2:24 argues strongly against it. I would suggest that a population left the Garden, not just one man and one wife. Sin entered the world through one family, but then and now we are all affected by that. It is not illogical that people who had not eaten of the forbidden fruit would also be affected by the consequences—we are today as well. There is no evidence that God created other people besides Adam and Eve. Genesis 3:20 states clearly that we all came from “Mother Eve,” something supported by genetic studies. We all have a female, sex-linked mitochondrial DNA fragment which suggests that we all came from this one woman—Eve.

8. Is not the platypus an embarrassment to creationists?

Answer: We would suggest that it is more of a problem to evolutionists. Our taxonomic classification system is based on evolution, and it constantly has to be changed as new finds and new understandings are made. The tree shrew was recently changed from an insectivore to a primate because that fits evolutionary theory better. The platypus is the same kind of a problem. When it was discovered, a new order had to be invented because it did not fit existing theories. The fact remains that as time goes by the evidence gets better and better for the biblical concept of multiple origins we talked about earlier.

9. Why did God create dinosaurs?

Answer: Studies show that they were the gardeners of the ancient world. They ate the gymnosperms, allowing the plants that we need to live to grow. They provided an environment that led to all the natural resources we are dependent upon. God could have zapped these resources into existence, but if He had we would never have been able to find them. The dinosaurs were a part of that prehistory of the earth to get things ready for man. They had a vital function.

10. Should Christians go into science?

Answer: Yes! Yes! Yes! We desperately need Christians making the decisions about how cloning, nuclear discoveries, biotechnology, etc., are going to be used. People with no moral values or concept of the worth of a man cannot make these decisions without tragedy. It is encouraging that many young people today see this and are actively involved in being on the forefront of everything from the human genome project to investigations about superstrings. It is an exciting time to be alive, and the future has great potential for great things if we can just learn to get along with each other. Jesus offers the best answer to that problem too.

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Questions for Program 25: The New Atheism, the New Science, and Belief in God

1. What is the difference between the new atheism and the old atheism?

Answer: The new atheism is more aggressive and militant than the old atheism. It is challenging people directly such as in the blasphemy challenge and portrays religion as a destructive negative influence on humanity.

2. What do media publications mean when they say “Science has invalidated belief in God” or “Science has made belief in God obsolete?”

Answer: The assumption is that belief in God has only come out of ignorance—that God was invented to explain things man did not understand, and that as man gains understanding of those things God is no longer needed. Unfortunately for some people such a description is correct, but we have tried to show it is not correct in this series.

3. Was Hitler a Christian or an atheist?

Answer: It is popular to try to identify a villain as being on the other side, and both atheists and Christians have done that. Historically Hitler and other demagogues have tried to use religion to promote their ideals. There is no indication historically that Hitler was a Christian, and certainly he violated everything Christ taught. The philosophies of Nietzsche certainly were opposed to Christianity and atheistic in nature, and dominated much of Hitler’s beliefs and actions.

4. How do each of the following areas of the “new science” impact apologetics?

Answer: Quantum mechanics—gives results that seem to conflict with known laws of Newtonian Mechanics (to be discussed in program 27). Cloning—raises questions of what should be done, and whether a soul is present in people conceived by modern human technologies. The human genome—gives knowledge of the biological future of a person which may impact moral decisions (to be discussed in

programs 26 and 28). Cosmology—proposes possible cosmologies which allow chance to explain the creation of the cosmos in which we live.

5. Why is the inability to falsify a proposal invalidate it as science?

Answer: If it cannot be experimentally tested in any way, then it is a conjecture that will always remain a figment of someone's imagination. To be scientifically valid there has to be some way to test the idea.

6. Give three examples of bad science.

Answer: (a) Proposals that involve many spacial dimensions such as brane theory and string theory. There is no way to experiment in these areas. (b) Religious theories which incorporate the supernatural into their proposal. There is no way to control the variables in such proposals, much less do experiments. (c) Theories that assume things from the past that cannot be proven and are scientific in nature—miracles for example, or alien intervention in historical events. In modern times showing the affect of prayer on healing without looking at the control group and whether prayers were said in those groups.

7. Give three examples of bad theology.

Answer: (a) Limiting the way God can do things—assuming He can only function by miracles or without miracles for example. (b) Restricting the time frame in which God does things—prayer may be answered in a different time frame than we expect. (c) Not taking the Bible literally (see next question).

8. What does it mean to “take the Bible literally?”

Answer: It means to look at who wrote it, to whom it was written, why it was written, and how the people of the day would have understood what was written.

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Questions for Program 26: Bad Science

1. Why are proposals like virtual universes, parallel universes, super strings, brane theory, and the like open to criticism of not being good science.

Answer: They are proposals that cannot be tested by experiment or falsified in any way. They are philosophical exercises for which no empirical data can be provided.

2. Why is Intelligent Design not science?

Answer: Again, there is no experiment that can be conducted in each situation one can propose to test the subject being studied. This is not a method of doing science and cannot be used to cure disease or do a construction of some kind. It is a wonderful apologetic, but not a scientific method. It uses science to make its fundamental point, but it is not scientific and involved in addressing the problems afflicting mankind. (See next question.)

3. What is meant by the term “apologetic?”

Answer: Webster defines apologetic as “fit for defense or to speak in defense.”

4. What is naturalism and how is it different than evolution?

Answer: Webster defines naturalism as “a philosophical belief that the natural world is the whole of reality and that there is no supernatural or spiritual creation, value, control, or significance.” Evolution simply means an unfolding type of change without identifying what the cause of such change might be. Many evolutionists believe in God, but hold that evolution is one of God’s tools. Francis Collins the director of the Human Genome Project is perhaps the best known of these and has a book titled *The Language of God* in which he explains this belief.

5. Is “natural selection” a chance process?
Answer: No. Natural selection is one of the mechanisms given to explain neo-Darwinism, but for natural selection to work there are a wide variety of things that have to be designed and placed in a proper relationship to each other—including the genome, the environmental conditions, the type of predator involved etc.
6. Why is the ability to worship or have spiritual values not something that can reasonably be said to have evolved by neo-Darwinistic methods?
Answer: Spiritual components are frequently a liability to the individual—may threaten its survival. In addition to that, even though we see animals like the chimp that are over 90 percent like us genetically, we do not see 90 percent of the spiritual components that we know man possesses. It would seem that we should see at least some of these characteristics in our claimed nearest relatives. This is a major problem for evolutionists.
7. What are the three components of a human being, and which of these lends itself to scientific investigation?
Answer: The body, the spirit (or life force—breath), and the soul (or that part of man created in the image of God). The body and the life force can be investigated by science, but the spiritual component can not. A good comparison is an automobile. It has a body, it has a life force (the gasoline), and it can run with just those two. It cannot be driven successfully however and fulfill the purpose of its creation without a driver—involving intelligence and an understanding of purpose.
8. The famous gorilla named Koko who was trained by Penny Patterson at Stanford University has an album out now of the gorilla’s favorite songs. Why is this not a proof that animals do synthesize and create music, indicating a spiritual presence.
Answer: The songs were picked by the handlers. All Koko did was sign whether to include them on the album or not. This is not creation of music.
9. Albert Einstein said “Religion without science is lame, but science without religion is blind.” What does this mean?
Answer: Religion needs scientific information to answer questions and give a framework for its teaching. Science, however, must have religion to determine the uses to which its discoveries will be put. Will cloning be used to cure cancer or to kill millions of innocent people? The religious backgrounds of those who do the research will answer that question in time. This is also why we need bright young Christians working on the new fields of modern science, so that these tough questions can be addressed correctly and not make the same mistakes our ancestors made.

DOES GOD EXIST?

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To those who show the Does God Exist? video programs: You may wish to use the following questions and their answers as a follow-up to the programs. If questions arise which you cannot answer, send them to us, and we will provide you with an answer.

You also may wish to remind students and viewers that the above address can be used to secure more material. We have audio CDs/tapes, books, correspondence courses, and other materials which can be secured on loan or at cost to enable the students to go into these subjects in greater detail. Let us know if we can be of any further help.

Sincerely,
John N. Clayton

Questions for Program 27: Quantum Mechanics and God

1. What is quantum mechanics the study of?

Answer: Webster says “A mathematical theory in physics which starts with the assumption that energy is not infinitely divisible and deals with atomic structure and phenomena by using energy that is radiated in distinct quantities called quanta.”

2. Why is Genesis 1:1 not at odds with quantum mechanics?

Answer: Quantum mechanics deals with the very very small. It talks about what happens in the structure of the nucleus of the atom and in the way atoms work and are built. Genesis 1:1 starts with the assumption that the quantum mechanical world has done its job, and talks about how things were arranged into the big sizes—galaxies, solar systems, planets etc. Quantum mechanics and Genesis 1 are dealing with two different subjects, but properly understood they still agree.

3. What is it about light that defies common sense and led to quantum mechanics?

Answer: Light demonstrates both wave properties and particle properties. It can be broken up into colors based on frequency, but it can blast electrons out of crystals in the photoelectric effect. In addition to this, light is given off in photons, balls of energy with discrete amounts of energy in each ball. It is not a continuous slide of energy from low to high.

4. Why is quantum mechanics not at odds with Newtonian mechanics?

Answer: Take Newton’s law of gravity. This works fine for the normal universe, but in larger gravitational fields to make it work a term needs to be added which is A/r^3 and the values of A and r were added by Einstein. In extremely weak fields this still does not work, so another function needs to be added, but that equation is still being sought. Newton still works, but under

$$F=G \frac{m m^1}{r^2}$$

special conditions his equations need extra variables to get them to work more precisely (see *Science Illustrated*, September/October 2009, page 71–75).

5. What is quantum tunneling, and why does it happen with electrons and not with bowling balls?

Answer: The ability of an object to pass through a network of atoms depends upon the size of the object and how its atoms will interact with the atoms of the material through which it is passing. With large objects the size is too great to happen, but with small objects like electrons the chance is far better. This again is pointing out that quantum mechanics deals with the very small.

6. How did a ball crossing Flatland allow an object to be in two places at once?

Answer: This goes back to program 7 where we saw how a ball passing through a two-dimensional world called “Flatland” would produce a circle when the ball was truncated by the plane of Flatland. In this video we added a rubber band around the circumference and saw that if the ball came through Flatland so the rubber band was perpendicular to the plane, the rubber band would appear at the top and bottom of the ball (circle) at the same time. The point here is that while simultaneity is not possible in one dimension (Flatland in this case), it is possible for a being in a higher dimension (the rubber band in this case). If a fork came across Flatland, how the fork approached would affect what the man in Flatland sees. If it was the handle that came first he would see a point, but if the tines came first he would see points for each tine, so he would see five points if the fork had 5 tines. I suggest you show students this.

7. When there is a conflict between science and faith, there are three possible sources to the conflict—what are they?

Answer: (a) Bad science, (b) bad theology, or (c) both. Science and Bible can not conflict because the creation came from the same God who inspired the Bible. If there is a conflict man is the cause—not God.

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Sincerely,
John N. Clayton

Questions for Program 28: Bad Theology

1. Dawkins description of God shows incredible ignorance of the nature of God. What do each of these words mean, and why are they not accurately applied to God?

Jealous and Proud of It

Ethnic Cleanser

Misogynistic

Sadomasochistic

Homophobic

Answer: See the article on the next page, which gives an in-depth response to this question.

2. In the case of Jephthah in Judges 11, did God violate "Thou shalt not murder" when Jephthah sacrifices his daughter to fulfill a vow?

Answer: First of all, Jephthah was not told by God to do that. It was his choice as to what he was to vow, and he made a foolish rash vow. Secondly, judging from what the daughter grieves, it was not the taking of her life that happened, but the fact that she would never have children.

3. Give three examples of things the Bible reports that it does not endorse.

Answer: Every sin humans engage in. There are hundreds. Sampson's visiting a prostitute, David's sins with Bathsheba, Saul's disobedient visit to the witch of Endor, etc.

4. When someone says “Why didn’t God do a better job” in reference to things like hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes, etc., what point are they missing?
Answer: That these are design features of the earth that are important to our survival, and the tragic things that happen take place because of human stupidity and carelessness.

5. When someone says “Why didn’t God do a better job” in reference to things like cancer and genetic diseases, what point are they missing?
Answer: Man’s pollution and misuse of natural resources has caused a majority of these things, not God.

6. What explanation do atheists have for the problem of pain and suffering?
Answer: They do not have one, except to deny there is such a thing as evil. The atheist philosophy simply says humans experience what all animals experience, and tragedy and death have no explanation, but are part of the survival of the fittest design of the planet. See Dawkin’s statement in the article for question 1.

7. Give an example of how people tend to restrict God’s methods.
Answer: Denying He can function naturally. Demanding everything be a miracle. Not considering that the “big bang” could be a method of bringing time, space, and matter/energy into existence. Not realizing that the capacity to change allows modern agriculture and the adaption of animals to changes on a constantly changing earth.

8. Why is cloning, in vitro fertilization, etc. not a concern when considering whether someone has a soul or not.
Answer: How someone was conceived does not relate to whether they are in the image of God or not. The soul is not related to our biological creation. It is something God places uniquely in us—not a product of our gestation.

9. The example of a Spanish phrase in the DVD was related to taking the Bible literally. Juan tiene frio means what? How does this relate to bad theology?
Answer: To take the Bible literally you have to look at who wrote it, to whom, and why. How the people addressed would have understood the words is what should be looked at. This has major impact on our understanding. The ancients would have understood that the “kinds” in Genesis 1 were not species but the animals they had in their barnyards. They would have understood that the Sun was created in verse 1, not verses 14–19. Program 20 has a detailed treatment of this subject.

* * * * *

The following is an article, "Maligning God in Ignorance," by John Clayton from the *Does God Exist?* journal (January/February 2009, page 7).

God is arguably the most unpleasant character in all of fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control freak; a vindictive bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.

—Richard Dawkins

Atheists continue to flood the media and the Web with abusive and vitriolic attacks on God, the Bible, and believers — especially those of us who have chosen to produce materials available to the public supporting belief in God. The above quote from one of the heroes of modern atheism, Richard Dawkins, is typical. What is interesting is the flood of belligerent e-mails I receive from atheists simply repeating Dawkins' phrases and using whole paragraphs from his books and articles without even giving him credit. They also repeat his errors, of which the public is generally unaware.

Richard Dawkins is a brilliant biologist, and in his own field has contributed much to man's knowledge of biology. However, the ignorance he radiates when he attacks the Bible is astounding. There have even been other leading atheists who have been disturbed by some of his diatribes. In Alister McGrath's book *The Dawkins Delusion* Michael Ruse is quoted as saying that Dawkins "makes him embarrassed to be an atheist."

The quote at the top of this page provides a good opportunity to sample the misconceptions that not only Dawkins, but the general public have about the God revealed to us through the Bible. Let us examine why these words are not accurate descriptions of what the Bible portrays as the nature of God.

JEALOUS AND PROUD OF IT: There is no question that God declares himself in the Bible to be a jealous God. Passages like Exodus 20:5; 34:14; Deuteronomy 32:16, 21; 1 Kings 14:22; Psalm 78:58; 79:5; etc., make no bones about God's jealous nature. What Dawkins and most atheists fail to comprehend is the love relationship that God wants to have with those who are uniquely created in His image. In the New Testament the Bible makes a comparison between marriage and that relationship (see Matthew 25:1–13; Revelation 19:7–8; 21:2,9). God wants humans to be faithful to Him, just as we want our mate to be faithful to us in our own marriages. When God expresses jealousy it is the same kind of pain and hurt that we have or would have with an unfaithful mate. If your husband or wife left you and began a new intimate relationship with someone else, would you be jealous? Of course you would, in a very hurt and angry way. Such jealousy is not vindictive or petty as a child's jealousy might be. This is also why Israel's infatuation with other gods and pagan systems was described in the Bible as adultery (see Jeremiah 3; Ezekiel 16:15–16; Hosea 1).

ETHNIC CLEANSER: In modern times we have witnessed the horrors of ethnic cleansing in which one group of people tried to murder every person in another ethnic group due to race, language, or religious differences. Such arbitrary brutality and abuse is repulsive to civilized human beings. In an attempt to vilify God, atheists try to equate the history of the Old Testament to the tribal wars of Africa and the Middle

East of our day. To see the problem in this, we need to examine the time period of the biblical events and the lifestyle problems and their consequences.

The biblical event most commonly and accurately cited by atheists is the total annihilation of the Amalekites in 1 Samuel 15 by Saul and Samuel under the orders of God. The Israelites were told to kill and burn every living thing including the women, children, and animals. This is far more than ethnic cleansing—this is pure sterilization. When Saul saves the King and the best of the animals supposedly to sacrifice to God, he is chastised and condemned by God and the complete destruction is carried out by Samuel (1 Samuel 15:20–33).

Let us examine this incident more closely. The Israelites had incredibly strict moral and hygienic laws that they were to follow fastidiously. The charges of blood-thirsty, unforgiving, and the like by Dawkins are references to these strict laws. No one with even a marginal understanding of medicine should question these laws. Not drinking blood, quarantine, washings, and the avoiding of raw meat is not just being vindictive or being a bully—it is a wise set of hygienic laws, at a time when medical knowledge was very primitive. Those of us who have children know that they sometimes consider our rules for hygiene to be petty, but we know there are good reasons for those rules.

The Amalekites were a war-like tribe of people who practiced barbaric acts. Reading Exodus 17:8 we see that when the Israelites came out of Egypt the Amalekites denied permission for them to pass peacefully through their land. In fact they attacked an innocent and poorly defended group of people. In addition to this, the moral and hygienic practices of the Amalekites were atrocious. There were no dietary restrictions and eating blood, cannibalism, and every conceivable sexual practice including bestiality and pedophilia were commonplace. The natural product of such behavior is always an epidemic of sexually transmitted diseases and other food and blood carried maladies. These diseases would not have been confined to the adult male population, and would have even been proliferated in the animals. In today's world we are seeing a very similar situation with the HIV virus in Africa. HIV infects animals, and in fact there is considerable evidence that the virus came to man from monkeys.

The sterilization of the Amalekites and their animals was the only way to stop the lifestyle diseases that they had caused to run rampant. Modern medicine is struggling to find answers to the situation in Africa, and once again lifestyle choices make the job incredibly difficult. Imagine what it must have been like thousands of years ago with a primitive people in a harsh world.

MISOGYNISTIC: To claim that God is a woman-hater on the basis of the Bible is to ignore both the history of mankind as revealed in the Bible and the effect that the teachings of Jesus have had on modern culture. Who are the most consistently strong and morally uncompromising characters of the Old Testament? The records of Ruth, Deborah, and Hannah stand out as consistent and positive examples of what we should all be. Heroes like David are fraught with mistakes in character, morals, and judgment, but are tolerated by God because of their good hearts.

In the New Testament we see Jesus having a special but non-sexual relationship with Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus. We see Him having a unique relationship with His mother and with Mary Magdalene. Our culture is so twisted that people have tried to suggest Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene and some religious folks have tried to worship the mother of Jesus as a more compassionate route to

God. Attempting to portray God as a woman-hater when Jesus elevated women and ignoring biblical passages that declare “there is neither bond nor free, male nor female” (Galatians 3:28) are shallow and uninformed positions. It is Christianity that has broken through the heavy bias against women, and the attempts to portray women as possessions instead of persons. Women’s rights and the importance of women have been elevated by the teachings of the Bible more than any other single influence on this planet. We encourage our readers to look at two books we have reviewed in recent years that explore this area—*Under the Influence* by Alvin Schmidt and *What Has Christianity Ever Done for Us* by Jonathan Hill.

HOMOPHOBIC: The Bible does plainly teach that there are those things which God does not want us to do. Some of these are pretty non-controversial such as murder, lying, stealing, etc. In the New Testament there is an emphasis on avoiding the abuse of man’s body which is portrayed as the dwelling place of the Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:15–20). This includes a variety of things where judgment is involved, and sometimes bumps into the pleasure issues of sex, alcohol, and drugs. There are those in the religious world who have tried to twist the Bible to condone homosexuality. Even most atheists do not buy their approach which we would agree is not consistent with passages like Romans 1:24–28.

The question is whether this rejection of homosexuality constitutes homophobia, or fear of homosexuality. The same concept that we tried to develop on ethnic cleansing applies here. Homosexuality is a destructive lifestyle. As an example, consider anal sex which is a common homosexual act. The cells of the rectal area are not designed for the kind of abrasion that occurs in anal sex. In contrast, the vaginal area is lined with squamous cells which are designed for abrasion and are not likely to be torn or ripped by abrasive activity. The probability of transmitting a sexually transmitted disease in anal sex is astronomically higher as a result of this, and all statistics on HIV show higher rates among the gay population.

The use of alcohol, recreational drugs, and a variety of other practices are in the very same category. We have had numerous articles over the years opposing the use of alcohol. If we express opposition to drinking does this cause us to be classified as alcoholophobics? Is opposing recreational drugs a valid reason to charge that we are drugophobics? God’s commands in the Bible are for our well being, and trying to insinuate some sinister motive or character weakness on the part of God because of these wise restrictions is immature and misdirected.

Christians are told to love their enemies, to turn the other cheek, to go the second mile, and to live at peace with all men (Matthew 5). Pointing out the destructive nature of human choices is not abusive if it is done in the way God tells us to do it. Physically attacking or hurting someone is outside the realm of how Christians are to conduct themselves. No phobias of any kind can be laid at the door of what Jesus taught. “Perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:18).

SADOMASOCHISTIC: Dawkins’ allegation that God is sadomasochistic is also a mistake. The notion of getting sexual pleasure by hurting someone else is the exact opposite of the “one flesh” concept of the Bible. Genesis 2 concludes in verse 24 with the point, “Therefore shall a man leave his mother and father and cleave unto his wife and they shall become one flesh.” When 1 Corinthians 7:1–5 refers to husbands and wives finding sexual pleasure, the woman’s needs are presented as being equal to the man’s. The foundation principle of Christianity is serving others

and doing to them what you would have them do to you, and that is as applicable to sexual relationships as it is to any other aspect of our lives.

We do need to point out here that there are situations described historically in the Bible that tell of horrible things that people did. These descriptions are probably what Dawkins and his friends are referring to. These are cases such as one in which a gang rape occurs to the point of killing a woman (Judges 19:25–20:7). The reporting of a historic event does not mean an endorsement of that event. Humans do incredibly stupid, hurtful, violent, abusive things, and the Bible reports some of them, but that does not mean God endorses those actions. God is never portrayed in the Bible as having a sexual relationship. In fact, that violates the whole notion of what God's nature is. A person who rejects God and the way God has called us to live may practice the tragic and selfish abuse of another human being, but should we blame God for that?

The real questions that we need to ask are: "Does God really do the things Dawkins is charging Him with?" and, "Why does God tolerate things He disapproves of?" Dawkins interprets things that are done for man's benefit as bullying, being controlling, and vindictive. We would suggest that these things are to allow man to have the best in life in sexuality, in relationships, and in every other way. God has been tolerant to a fault with man, even allowing things like polygamy that were in total violation of everything God wanted man to have (see Mark 10:6–8).

When man acted against God's plan, there were consequences. The Bible tells us those consequences so that we can learn from them. Rather than learn, turn, and follow the way God has called us to, some have chosen to stand and scream abuse at God. This offers no solution to the problems of man, and reflects a lack of understanding about why we exist and how we can make this world a better place to live.