DOES GOD EXIST?

A couple had two little boys, ages seven and nine, who were always getting into trouble. If any mischief occurred in their town, their two young sons were probably involved in it. The parents were at their wit's end as to what to do about this behavior. They heard that there was a church down the street with a pastor who had been successful in disciplining other children, so they arranged to have him talk to their kids. The pastor asked to see the boys individually, so the seven-year-old was taken to the church first. The pastor sat the boy down and asked him, "Where is God?" He wanted to remind them that, no matter where they were or what they were doing that God was with them and saw them. The boy made no response, so the pastor repeated the question in an even sterner tone, "Where is God?" Again, the boy made no attempt to answer, so the clergyman raised his voice even more and said, "WHERE IS GOD?" At that, the boy bolted from the room and ran all the way home. When he got home he ran into his brothers room. His older brother asked, "What happened?" The younger brother replied, "We are in BIG trouble this time. God is missing and they think we did it!"

God is missing in the lives of a lot of people today. This is not because He has not revealed who He is, and what He is like, and what He has done and is doing. God is not dead, He is alive and well and at work all around us.

Today we are starting a series on Tough Questions and the first question that I would like to address this morning is the most basic. It is a question that I hear all the time and that many people in the world are asking. It is the question "How do you know that God exist? How can you PROVE to me that He is real?"

The simple answer to this question is that we know that God exists because he has revealed himself to us through General Revelation to all people.

Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. 3 There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

Rom 1:19-20 since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities -- his eternal power and divine nature -- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

For those demanding PROOF I cannot PROVE anything to you this morning. In a court of law you seek to prove your case through reason and witnesses. It is impossible to PROVE something absolutely, you can simply offer the available evidence and then let the facts speak for themselves. Let me offer some evidence to you this morning as to why I believe that God exists:

1. The Argument of MOVEMENT –

Natures shows us that nothing moves unless it is moved by something else. All movement requires energy to be present, a mover. So where did the energy for all movement come from?

Suppose that you were walking down the beach one day and suddenly you were hit in the back of the head by a rock. You turn around and there is a boy standing there. You ask him if he hit you with the rock but he says, "No, the rock just jumped up off the beach and hit you". Would you believe him?

You probably would not believe him because an object at rest will stay at rest until some form of energy acts upon it to move it. In other words, the rock did not just jump up off the ground. It must have been thrown or dropped from somewhere.

The universe is in motion, it contains an incredible amount of energy. So, the basic question you have to ask is, "where did all that energy come from?" If everything in the universe is moving then who first moved it?

People try to explain creation by the Big Bang. It basically says that at zero time and space infinite energy created everything that currently exists and set it in movement. They fail to explain where that infinite energy source came from.

Gen 1:3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Robert Jastrow's (a leading astronomer) wrote this in his book God and the Astronomers, "Consider the enormity of the problem. Science has proven that the universe exploded into being at a certain moment. It asks, what cause produced this effect? Who or what put the matter and energy into the Universe? Science can't answer these questions… For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."

2. The Argument of MINUTE DESIGN –

Nature shows us that the world and our bodies are incredibly complex. There is design to it. If something has design then there must have been a designer.

If I was walking down the beach and I found a digital watch lying in the sand I would not marvel at the fact that over thousands of years the natural processes of wind and waves had created such an intricate device. I would think that someone had lost their watch – their CREATED watch.

In university I took a degree in biological science and all I heard in my first year was evolution. It is easy to talk about evolution as a theory. However, the further I went in school the less evolution made sense because you begin to understand how incredibly complex the world around us really is.

Psa 139:13 For you *created* my inmost being; you *knit me* together in my mother's womb. 14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully *made*; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. 15 My frame was not hidden from you when I was *made* in the secret place. When I was *woven together* in the depths of the earth, 16 your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

Lee Strobel, in his book The Case for a Creator uses the example of bacterial flagellum. It is a small motor that moves a tail to propel the bacteria. It is 1/100,000 of an inch long but it can spin at 10,000 rpm, stop in a quarter turn and spin in the opposite direction at 10,000 rpms. It has been called one of the most sophisticated motors in the universe. Science cannot produce anything near to it. Studies have shown that 35 different parts and proteins are required for this machine to work. Remove any single part and it will not work half as well, it will not work at all. That means that all 35 parts would have had to evolved in exactly the right order at exactly the same time.

There is so much more I could say on this. I encourage you to read the or to watch the movie Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed. All around us we see the work of our creator.

VIDEO – Molecular Machines

The earth itself is perfectly designed for life that there is no way it could have just happened. Hugh Ross wrote a book entitled The Improbably planet by. In his book he talks about all of the things that had to happen so that life was possible on the planet earth. Scientist have identified 75 different finely tuned aspects of our world. Every one of them is absolutely essential for life. If any one of them were "out of tune" life could not exist on earth.

If the sun were any further from the center of the galaxy, rock planets could not form. If it were any closer, stellar density would interfere with our orbit.
If the earth were 1 degree closer to the sun, we would fry. If we were 1 degree further, we'd freeze!
If the moon was any closer or larger, the tides would destroy the coast lines. If any smaller or further away, the oceans would die from a lack of nutrient movement.
If our distance from Jupiter were any greater, asteroids and comets would pepper the earth. If we were any closer our orbit would become unstable.
If the surface gravity was any stronger, earth would retain too much ammonia and methane. If it were any weaker, earth's atmosphere would lose too much water.
If the magnetic field were any stronger, electromagnetic storms would destroy us. If any weaker, the ozone shield could not protect us from stellar and solar radiation.
If the earth's crust were any thicker, it would absorb too much of our oxygen. If it was any thinner; the volcanic and tectonic activity would make life impossible.
If the decay rate of a proton was any faster, we would die from radiation. If it was any slower, there would be insufficient matter in the in universe for life.
If the polarity of the water molecule were any greater, vaporization would not occur. If it were any smaller, ice would not float but sink, killing all life and freezing the planet!
If the earth's axis was any greater or less, the earth could not maintain a temperature that supports life.

The probability of these 75 factors occurring anywhere in the universe is beyond improbable: something in the order of 1 in a million trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion. In addition, there are a hundred billion other things that had to happen for these 75 to exist!

The odds of life happening by chance are impossibly small – like a tornado by chance creating a fully fueled 747 or a monkey sitting down and randomly typing out all the works of William Shakespeare without a single spelling mistake. Something with this much design must have had a designer.

In his book on Albert Einstein, author Walter Isaacson told of a dinner party in Berlin. People assumed that Einstein was an atheist and asked him about evolution. He said, "I am not an atheist. I have a deep feeling of faith, a deep religiosity that comes from my appreciation of the way God has made the universe. I am like a child walking into a library, and you see the books and you know somebody must have written them, and you see them ordered and you know somebody must have ordered them, and there's a sense of awe that's manifest in that. There is an order underlying everything and the more you appreciate it, the humbler you become in the face of it…" Einstein believed that the world was created based on the design he saw all around him. His theories and laws were a reflection of that order and design.

The stars are God's fingerprints. The sun is a mere smidgen of his radiance. The moon is to remind us that he doesn't sleep at night. The vastness of space proclaims the infinity of his wisdom, while the sand pebble indicates his thoroughness with the puniest details. The lion hints at his fearlessness, the bear at his power, the hawk at his keen insight. And yet those possess only a tidbit of God's omnipotence and omnipresence. Every tree points toward heaven; every bird has a song to sing; even every moment of wind goes in some direction. There is nothing chaotic about our beautiful designed world. All creation has a message to tell. It says, "Listen, there is a God. There is a God!" -- Brent D. Earles

3. The Argument of MORALITY –

As I have traveled all around the world to more than 45 different countries, I have met all kinds of different people and what I have found is that all people are all basically the same. We may look different and have different customs and backgrounds but basically we all have the same conscience and moral code. We all have the same sense of right and wrong. If God does not exist then how do you explain that? Who put this moral compass in us so that we feel guilt when we do certain things?

If we are just the product of natural selection and we evolved from apes then why do we all have the same sense of right and wrong? Why are there moral absolutes in the world today? Why don't people basically just live like animals without any real sense of right and wrong except survival of the fittest? If it feels good then do it without any regard for who you may hurt along the way.

A man wrote: "Dear Abby, I am in love and I am having an affair with two different women other than my wife. I love my wife but I love these other women too. Please tell me what to do, but don't give me any of that morality stuff." Signed: Too much love for only one." In this case Abby's answer was classic. She wrote: "Dear Too much love for only one. The only difference between humans and animals is morality. Please write to a veterinarian."

The reason there are moral absolutes is that we were all created in God's image. Within each one of us is hardwired a sense of right and wrong based upon God's absolutes. This image has been tainted and scarred by sin but it still remains.

One of the questions we will be looking at in 2 weeks is this, "If God is real, why is there so much evil in the world?" As soon as you say that there is evil in the world, you must also say that there is such a thing as good. When you assume that there is good, you must also assume that there are moral absolutes, that there is a moral law the determines the difference between good and evil. If you believe that there is a moral law, then you must also believe that there is a moral Law Giver. In asking the question you are proving the thing that you are trying to disprove. To put it another way, If there is no moral Law Giver, than there is no moral law. If there's no moral law, then there is no such thing as good. If there is no good than there is no evil, so what is your question?

4. The Argument of MIRACLES –

Have you ever witnessed a real miracle? Have you experienced something supernatural that cannot be explained by modern science and the natural world? I have many times. I have seen people who were prayed for and were instantly and miraculously healed. I have seen people delivered from demonic powers. All around us there are stories about miracles and supernatural things that have taken place. If God does not exist, then how do you explain that?

Mar 2:9 Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins ..." He said to the paralytic, 11 I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home. 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

I believe that one of the problems with the North American church is that, for all it's great love for the Word of God, it has lost it's experience of the Power of God. It is no wonder that Atheism is flourishing in North America and Europe but not so much in Africa or South America. The reason is that these other churches understand the supernatural.

Paul talked about the church;

2Ti 3:5 having a form of godliness but denying its power.

The bible tells us that there is more to life than just the natural world that we see around us. With all the supernatural stuff in the world we see that there must be something all around us in a realm that we do not fully understand.

A boy came home from Sunday School having been taught the biblical story of the crossing of the Red Sea. His mom asked him what he had learned in class, and he told her: "The Israelites got out of Egypt, but Pharaoh and his army chased them. They got to the Red Sea and they couldn't cross it. The Egyptian army was getting closer. So Moses got on his walkie-talkie, the Israeli air force bombed the Egyptians, and the Israeli navy built a pontoon bridge so the people could cross." Mom was a little shocked. "Is that the way they taught you the story?" "Well, no, but if I told you the way they told it to us, you'd never believe it!"

5. The Argument of MY LIFE –

The reality is that God is still changing lives today. He changed mine and I have seen Him change the lives of so many others during my 31 years in ministry. Jesus is as real to me as any person. Perhaps the greatest proof that God exists is the simple fact that we have experienced his touch in our lives. You can debate theology and science all you like but you cannot debate a testimony.

I said at the beginning that I cannot PROVE to you that God exists. I cannot prove that God is here with us anymore than I can prove to you that someone is standing outside that closed door right now. I can reason with you and offer evidence as to why I think that there is a person out there but ultimately the only way that you can know for sure is to go outside and look for yourself. Then you will KNOW the truth. Why? You will know it because you have experienced it. I cannot PROVE to you that God exists but you can find out for yourself that He is there. Simply open the door and look for yourself

This is the basis for all scientific study. You form a hypothesis and then you do an experiment to prove or disprove it. You cannot answer the question until you do the experiment. The Bible says:

Rev 3:20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

If you are here this morning seeking proof for the existence of God then may I suggest to you that you simply do the experiment. I have tried to offer as much evidence as I could. Now you need to decide if you will act on that evidence.

Perhaps you came here this morning saying "show me and then I'll believe." Perhaps you have that backward. Maybe God is saying to you this morning "believe and then I will show you". Do the experiment. Invite Jesus into your heart today.

Let me end today with Pascal's Wager. More than 400 years ago, a French Philosopher and Mathematician named Blaise Pascal suggested that even if the existence of God could not be determined through reason, a rational person should wager as though God exists, because living life accordingly has everything to gain, and nothing to lose. He said that there are two possible mistakes that you can make in life. The first is believing in a God that does not exist. The second is not believing in a God who does exist. The second mistake is far greater than the first because of the consequences. Because of the infinite penalty in store for those who commit it, it should be avoided at all cost.