

Is God Really There?

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[0 : 00] Is God really there? It seems a weird question to ask after I've just prayed to Him, but is He really there?

Is there really anyone on the other end? Or is the whole thing, the whole God thing, just made up by humans to make us feel better?

You might have that question nagging at the back of your mind. Maybe you've had it for a long time, but you've never wanted to share it with anyone. Is He really there? How do I know?

And really, no matter who you are, whether you believe in God, or whether you're skeptical, or whether you don't believe in God, that question, is God really there, is probably the most important question you can have an answer for or ask in your life.

Because the answer that you hold in your mind to that question will determine how you live. It'll affect everything else in your life.

[1 : 05] How you live, what you live for, will all actually be affected by whether or not you believe that there's a God somewhere there. It's going to change how you live, depending on how you answer that question.

And I hope that this morning I can help you. I can give you some information to answer that question for yourself. Not just because I say so, or because anybody else says so, but that you can answer that question knowledgeably for yourself.

That's what I hope to achieve this morning. Now, of course, back in the day, in the ancient world, it was assumed that there was a God or gods. People would have never come to a talk like this. They would have said, of course, of course there's God, of course there's God. This is the only way to explain everything, right? And so, in the ancient world, pretty much belief in the divine was assumed, but not anymore.

These days, it's different. With science able to explain so much, religion, as renowned atheist Richard Dawkins says, has now been superseded by science as a way of explaining our world.

[2 : 18] We don't need religion and faith anymore, he would claim. And that's why today, believing in God is kind of in secular society, seen as something that's, you know, quaint, like good for you, if that's what you believe.

A little bit weird, oh, you still believe in a big imaginary friend in the sky. Okay, well, good for you, that's nice. It's kind of, in secular society today, believing in God is almost seen by, you know, maybe the people in the office and stuff, as believing in Father Christmas.

Like, yeah, it was nice to believe in when you were a kid, but surely you've grown up. Well, that's why Psalm 19, what Dylan read for us earlier, is such a surprising piece of Scripture.

Because if we read it carefully, what it's claiming, what the Psalm is claiming, is that not only is God actually real, but that it's the very science that we think gives us reason not to believe in God, that actually points us right to Him, if we let it.

And that's what we're going to look at this morning, how science actually points to God. Now, what is science? Well, you may not have studied science, unless, you know, maybe back in school was the last time you thought of science.

[3 : 47] It seems very complicated, science, as a field of study, but actually, at the end of the day, it's pretty simple. Science is really just nothing more than observing the world around us, just very closely.

It's the observation of the physical world and observing how things work. That's what science is, whether it's physics or chemistry or any other form of science. It's observing how things around us work and what they are.

And this Psalm in front of us claims that when we do that properly, when we observe the world around us properly, we can't help but see God behind what we observe.

So, we see in the first few verses, let me read them again. The heavens, the cosmos, declares the glory of God. The expanse, you know, the world around us proclaims the work of His hands.

Day after day, they pour out speech. Night after night, they communicate knowledge. Okay, so what that's saying is that the natural world around us, the cosmos, the world that we see, is talking to us when we look at it, when we do science, when we observe it.

[5 : 05] When we study it, it is proclaiming. It is literally shouting out that it has been designed this way. When we study it.

Whether it's studying astronomy and looking at the precise order of the stars and the planets and the moons and how perfectly they have, for thousands of years, helped humans to predict seasons, to keep track of months and days and years, like a giant clock and calendar in the sky for humanity from millennia to millennia that is more accurate than any chronometer that humans have ever been able to design.

Or whether we look at the intricacy in the design of a flower or an insect or our own bodies. Actually, if you take time to study the human body, it is an amazing machine.

Beyond what any human could design, much as Elon Musk and others are trying. If you just look at the human body, it's an amazing piece of machinery. Consider, for example, your ear.

So I heard a talk by someone who had done their PhD. Literally, their PhD was, Why having two ears is better than one? But they studied the workings of the inner ear.

[6 : 37] And he said, this guy who studied the workings of the ear, he said that once you do that, you can't deny that it's been so intricately designed.

For example, did you know there's a membrane in your ear that if you stretch it out, it's made of a very special material that is stiff on the one side, very stiff, and then very floppy on the other side. And the purpose of which is to, the stiff side captures high frequency sounds, and the floppy side captures low frequency sounds. So this guy says, that because of that in your inner ear, whenever someone talks to you, it's like a whole piano is being played in your ear.

And this whole range of frequencies you can hear, just because of the design of that little membrane. Or consider the eye, your eye, which, if you look at the making of, the structure of the eye, it is so complex.

There is so many things that have to go right at the same time for your eye to work. The photosensitive cells, and the nerves, and there's just so much, and the little, the little, I don't even know, half of the stuff, most of the stuff, that makes up the eye.

[7 : 54] But one thing I did read about this week, was, was your cornea, which is the window that your eye looks out of. The only reason you can see anything, is because you've got this, this piece of completely transparent flesh, in front of your eyeball, that, that takes in everything.

This window, this, this cornea. And scientists have been boggled, by how transparent, this material is. And apparently, the only way, it can be so transparent, is because of, these, these fibers, that make up, the cornea.

So, I quote, there's a highly organized structure, of corneal fibers, which require a network, of complicated chemical pumps, to make sure, there is exactly, the right water content, in the cornea, at any given moment.

Your body is constantly pumping, the right, and maintaining the right water content, in your cornea, so that you can, see things. And that's why, of course, when someone dies, their eyes cloud over, because those pumps, stop working.

And it's the same, when you look at so many other parts, of our body. It requires, so much complex design, for anything, to work, properly. And so, you see, the more you do science, the more you actually, observe of the world, and of ourselves, the more, not the less, you see, the designer, behind it.

[9 : 23] And that explains, of course, why, most of history's, leading scientists, also believed in God. God. You may not know that. Science in modern textbooks, won't tell you that.

But, I mean, someone like Isaac Newton, wrote more about God, than he wrote about science. And so here, just to list a few, scientists, who believe in God, and who their science, has strengthened that faith.

Francis Collins, who was instrumental, in mapping the human genome. Of course, Sir Isaac Newton, who's considered, by many, to be the greatest scientist, who's ever lived, who came up with, the modern understanding, of physics.

Francis Bacon, who established, the scientific method. Johannes Kepler, who worked out, the laws of planetary motion. Robert Boyle, who is one of the most, important figures, in chemistry.

See, these scientists, believed in God. And because of, because of men like this, it's because of them, that we understand science. We understand why things, work the way they do.

[10:28] It's because of men like this, we have planes, and computers, and microwaves, and you can, heat up your food quickly. And all of the stuff we can do, and you can WhatsApp your friend, all of that is because of, these scientists.

But, these guys, the more they did science, the more they, they believed, in the God, without whom, none of it would work. Science, points to God.

That's what the Psalm, is teaching us. And yet, there's a problem. The problem is that, other scientists, see no God, in it.

In fact, they see the very, opposite. The conclusion, some other scientists, come to, is that, all of this, came about, through random chance. And they, they have these, very complex theories, about how random chance, could have, made all this.

And so, we've got to ask the question, why? Why do, why does science, point to God, for some people, but point away, for others? If it's so obvious, like the Psalm, is claiming it is, why do so many people, not see that?

[11:36] That's a question, we have to ask ourselves. Well, part of the reason, is what the Psalm, goes on, to tell us. And what it, goes on to tell us, about the natural world, and it's in verse 3.

Let me read it for you. It says, about the natural world, there is no speech, there are no words, their voice is not heard.

Which is a very weird thing, to say, after just saying verse 2, day after day, they pour forth speech. And, just before saying verse 3, their message has gone out, to the whole earth.

Their words have gone, to the end of the world. And yet, here in the middle, in verse 3, it says, there is no speech, there are no words, their voice is not heard. It seems to contradict itself, doesn't it?

When it says, in one hand, creation shouts out, it speaks, but on the other hand, there are no words, and their voice is not heard. What does it mean? Well, I think what it means, is, while creation, while the natural world, gives us all the evidence, for God, that we actually need, it also doesn't say anything, to us about that evidence.

[12:51] It doesn't interpret it for us. It just presents it to us, but it doesn't interpret it for us. That's up to us. And the truth is, that humans, always tend to interpret, evidence they get, based on, what we already think is true.

Whether we like to think, you know, we're very objective, we're actually not. It's known, that we will, different people, will interpret the same evidence, in different ways, depending on what we've already decided, is true.

There's a story, to illustrate it, you may have heard it before. A man goes to the doctor, and, comes into his room, and the doctor says, what seems to be the problem, sir?

And he says, I'm dead. And the doctor, looks at him weirdly, and says, sorry, say that again, well doctor, I am dead. I'm convinced I'm dead. And so, the doctor, says, well sir, I can assure you, you're not dead.

No, I am, doctor. I'm very dead, I can assure you. And so, the doctor knows, that this man, is obviously deluded, and so he thinks, for a moment, of how he can prove, to this man, that he's not dead.

[14:09] Because he can't help him, unless he helps him, to see that he's not dead. So, so he says to him, sir, do dead men bleed? And, and the man thinks, for a moment, and he says, no, no, dead men don't bleed.

So the doctor says, give him your hand. Gives him his hand, takes it, before he knows what's happening, he takes a needle, and he pricks it. Ow! Why did you do that, doctor? And the doctor sits back, with a smile on his face, and says, look at your finger.

He looks at his finger, and he sees blood, coming from it, and his eyes widen. The doctor's very, satisfied with himself. And the man looks at the finger, and he looks up at the doctor, and he says, wow, what do you know?

Dead men do bleed. You see, in the same way, people look at the design, of creation, which is evident, in front of them, and some conclude, well, there's obviously, a designer, behind it. But others, conclude, huh, what do you know? Evolution can create, the appearance of design. You see, we always, we always interpret, the evidence, based on, what we've already decided.

[15 : 23] And that is why, science, great as it is, will never be enough, to answer the question, about God. It's why we need, more than science, if we're going to answer, that most important question, in our lives.

Science can only take us, so far. And that is exactly, what the psalm, goes on to reveal to us, by moving, in the first half, of the psalm, from God's works, to the second half, of the psalm, which talks about, God's words.

And that's what, I want us to see, now. And I'll read from verse 7. Listen to how it talks, about God's words. It says, the instruction of the Lord, is perfect, renewing one's life.

The testimony of the Lord, is trustworthy, making the inexperienced, wise. The precepts, of the Lord are right, making the heart, glad. The command of the Lord, is radiant, making the eyes, light up.

All these good things, that the word of God, does for us, that science can't. Albert Einstein, you may have heard of him, famously said, science, without religion, is lame.

[16 : 45] I don't think he meant, the modern term of lame. But what he meant by that, is, science by itself, doesn't take us anywhere.

it can tell us, what is here, but it can't tell us, why it's here. For that, we need, God to speak. That's what, Einstein himself, saw.

And, this psalm, claims that, that's exactly, what's happened. God has spoken. And he's spoken, in the Bible. This, scripture, that he's revealed, through apostles and prophets, over the ages.

So, right from the beginning, this psalm, claims that, God has given us, not just, creation, but he's given us, both his works of creation, and, his words, at the same time.

God is not a silent God. He has made amazing things, but he's also, at the same time, given us, words, and it's the words, that he's given us, that interpret, the works, that we see around us.

[17 : 52] So, one, speaker, on Psalm 19, actually, put it really well. He said, the words of God, are like the subtitles, when we, look at creation.

The subtitles. You know, the subtitles, in a movie. So, maybe you're watching something, on Netflix, and you realize, oh, it's a foreign film. But it looks really interesting, so you carry on watching it.

But they're talking a language, you don't understand. So, you don't know, what the story is. You don't know, who the characters are. You don't know, what's going on. Until, of course, you realize, oh, there's this little option, at the bottom, you can turn on, subtitles.

And then you see, an English translation. It's amazing, of what they're saying. And then, and then you rewind, and you start watching again, and you can, you can understand the story now.

You can understand, what the characters are saying. This, this movie, that seemed, nonsensical to you before, now makes sense, because of, the subtitles. Well, it's the same, with God's word.

[18 : 50] This, here, this is the subtitles, for our lives. Right? We look around, and the world doesn't make sense. We, we read this, and it does. Suddenly, it starts to make, sense, of the world, of the world we see.

And the more we read this, the more we let it, interpret the world around us, the more undeniable, it becomes, that God is behind it all.

It's obvious, once we turn on the subtitles. C.S. Lewis, the great Christian writer, put it this way. He said, I believe in Christianity, as I believe that the sun has risen.

Not only because I see it, but because by it, I see everything else. See, God's word, allows us, to see the truth, of the world around us.

But what that means for you, is that if you choose, to ignore God's word, in your life, if it doesn't play, a feature in your life, then you know, what you're doing.

[20 : 03] You're choosing, to switch off the subtitles, that God has given, to make sense of creation, and to make sense, of your life. Now, why would you do that?

Don't you want to understand the movie? Don't you want to understand your life? Why turn off the subtitles? And yet, so many people have done that. So many people turn off the subtitles, and ignore God's word.

And then, of course, they claim, well, we can't know anything, about these questions. Science can't prove anything. We don't really know, anything about what we're doing here.

The movie doesn't make sense. It's because you turned off the subtitles. Of course, it doesn't make sense. If you don't read God's word, which is given to interpret it. And that, you see why it's such an unhelpful thing, not to come to church, and not to read God's word, and not to listen to it.

To ignore God's word, is the most unhelpful thing, you can do for your life. Not only because, the word makes sense, of the world around you, and your life, but, as we go on to see in the psalm, the word of God, does something, that science can never do for you.

[21 : 26] Science can tell you, about the world you live in. The word of God, can tell you how to live, in it. Science can't do that for you. Science can't tell you, the right way to live.

Right? That's why the word, can do something, science can never do. And that's why, the psalmist, goes on in verse 10, to say this, about God's words.

They are more, desirable than gold, than an abundance, of pure gold, and sweeter than honey, dripping, from a honeycomb. Now, gold and honey.

Gold was, kind of in that day, the most valuable material, that existed, and honey, was the most, pleasurable food, you could eat, in the Middle East. And, so he's, he's basically saying, he's thinking of the most, valuable thing, and the greatest pleasure.

Now, imagine, you've got that option, right? Right now. You've got, you've got an option, of either you can have, a whole bunch of money, that you won't have to ever, worry about finances again, in your bank account, right now.

[22 : 31] And, you can have all the pleasures, that this world can offer. Or, you can have the Bible. That's your choice. What would you choose?

It's a hard one. Well, this Psalm says, choose the Bible. Choose God's words. Why? Why? Why is that more valuable, than all the money, you could ever have, in your bank account?

Well, look at verse 11. It says, in addition, your servant is warned, by them. And, in keeping them, there is abundant, reward. So, there's two things, that the word of God, the words of God, do for us, when we read them, according to this verse.

First, they warn us. Science can't warn you, about what's wrong. But, the word of God, warns us. It doesn't just, explain the world, but it explains, what is wrong with the world, and what is wrong with us. It reveals, the reality of sin.

[23 : 37] It reveals, that we have a broken relationship, with our creator. And by the way, that's why so many people, choose to turn off the subtitles, and not read this. Because they don't want to hear, what it says about themselves.

That's why, they turn off the subtitles. Because it tells us, what's wrong. It tells us, what's wrong with us, and especially in today's world, people don't want to hear, what's wrong. That's offensive.

Don't tell me, there's anything wrong with me. How dare you? And so, they turn off the subtitles. But that's what the word does, if we let it speak. It warns us. But secondly, when we are willing to hear, it also, it says, in keeping them, there is abundant reward.

It rewards us, when we read it. By, by showing us, how what is wrong, can be made right. That's, God's word doesn't just reveal, what is wrong, it also shows us, God's plan to make it right.

And that is why, the psalmist goes on, in verse 12, to say, who perceives, his unintentional sins, even the sins, we don't know about, even the ways, that we resist God, that we don't realize.

[24 : 50] And then he says, cleanse me. Once he started, reading God's word, he realizes, he needs to be cleansed. Cleanse me, from our hidden faults. And that's what the Bible, reading God's word, has revealed to him.

His need to be cleansed. But it's, it's that same Bible, which shows us, how we can, be cleansed, if we're willing to admit, that we need it. Because you know, what this word does?

You know what God's word, is always meant to do, right from the beginning. Ultimately, this word takes us, to Jesus Christ.

The whole thing, if you read it properly, is pointing, to Jesus Christ. Because he is the only way, to be made clean, from our sins, to be made cleansed, from what is wrong with us, because he is the only one, who died, for the sins of others, so that we can find, the God that creation, is pointing to. And that is why, I want to read to you, from John 14, what he tells his disciples. He's got this Q&A; session, one night, with his disciples, and they're starting to ask him, all these deep questions, all the really big questions, of life.

[26 : 08] Anyway, I'm going to read to you, John 14, verse 6 to 10, or from verse 5, Thomas, one of his disciples, says, how can we know the way, to God?

And so, he answers, verse 6, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes, to the Father, except through me. If you know me, you will also know my Father.

From now on, you do know him, and have seen him. Lord, said Philip, still doesn't get it, show us the Father, and that's enough for us.

Jesus, said to him, have I been among you, all this time, and you, you do not know me, Philip? The one who has seen me, has seen the Father.

How can you say, show us the Father, don't you believe, that I am in the Father? And the Father is in me. You might be, with Philip here.

[27 : 14] Show me God, that will be enough for me. Is he really there? Well yes, creation, proclaims it every day, but, much more, than what creation, can tell us, we know that he's there, because he came here, so that we can know him, face to face.

That's what Jesus is saying here. That's the ultimate way, we know God is there. Because he made himself known to us. And so the real question, is not, is he there?

The real question for you this morning is, are you willing to see him? Because the greatest thing, that you can know, in your entire life, the, the source of greatest joy, and happiness, you could ever have, is to know, God, to know, to really know, your creator, who made you, and who made all that is.

The greatest knowledge, you could ever have, is to know him. And, Jesus came, to this world, so that you can, so that, you can really know God, that you can enter into, not an imaginary, but a real relationship, with your creator.

Jesus did everything, to make that possible for you, no matter, who you are, because God, wants you to know him, because you were made, to know him. And through Jesus, you can, know him.

[28 : 52] But only, if you're willing, to turn on the subtitles, and listen to this. Are you?

Are you willing, to turn on the subtitles, in your life? Are you willing, to come back, this month, and hear more, of the words, that will make sense, of your life, and the world, you live in?

Or are you going, to keep the subtitles off, and ignore this, this word? Please don't. I, appeal to you, don't, leave the subtitles off.

Please, if you, if you do anything else, just put them on, listen to, this word, because, it's this word, that will do, what Psalm 19, says it will do.

It's this word, that will renew, your life. It's this word, that will make, the inexperienced, wise. It's, it's this word, that will make, your eyes light up.

[30 : 02] And it's this word, that will warn you, and that will, greatly reward you. And it's this word, that will allow you, to find, and to know, your God, who, the whole of creation, every day, is, silently, screaming out, for you to know.

Will you do that? Will you turn on the subtitles? Let's pray. Oh Lord, you have made, a beautiful world, and we realize, through reading your word, that it's, every day, your world is, is screaming out, for us to know you.

We thank you, for Jesus, who came to this world, so that we can know you. And Lord, we pray that you will help us, to, to take your word, seriously in our lives, no matter who we are.

Lord, help us to keep the subtitles on. Lord, help us to, prioritize, your word, that makes sense of our lives, but more so, the one that points to Jesus, who brings us to you, in real relationship, that we can know you, our creator.

Give us a desire, to do that. Give us a desire, Lord, to seek, and to know you, above all other things, so that we can find, true life, and, true happiness in that. We pray, in Jesus name.

[31 : 34] Amen.