

Chapter 9: The Doctrine of God: The Existence of God

How do we know that God exists?

A. Humanity's Inner Sense of God (141)

We know that God exists in two ways: *1) all people have an inner sense of God, and 2) we believe that the evidence that is found in Scripture and in nature.*

- 1) All persons have a deep, inner sense that God exists, they are his creatures, and he is their creator (Rom 1:21)
- 2) Sinful unbelievers actively or willfully reject some truth about God's existence that they knew. (Rom 1:19, Rom 1:25)
- 3) Sin leads people to think irrationally and to deny God's existence, and someone thinking irrationally or who has been deceived will say, "There is no God." (Psa 14:1, Psa 53:1, Psa 10:3-4)
- 4) In the life of a Christian this inner awareness of God becomes stronger and more distinct. (Rom 8:15, Eph 3:17, Joh 14:23, 1Pe 1:8)

B. Believing the Evidence in Scripture and Nature (142).

- 1) The Bible everywhere *assumes* that God exists. (Gen 1:1)
- 2) Every created thing gives evidence of God's existence. (Rom 1:20, Act 14:17, Ps. 19:1-2)
- 3) Man, in the image of God, most abundantly shows the existence of God. (Gen 1:27)
- 4) The beauty of a snowflake, the majestic power of a thunderstorm, the skill of a honeybee, the refreshing taste of cold water, the incredible abilities of the human hand—all these and thousands of other aspects of creation simply could not have come into existence apart from an all-powerful and all-wise creator.
-> *Everything* in Scripture and *everything* in nature proves clearly that God exists!
- 5) ->We are basing our belief not on blind hope apart from evidence but on *an overwhelming amount of reliable evidence from God's words and works.*

C. Traditional "Proofs" for the Existence of God (143).

- 1) The *cosmological* argument: every known thing in the universe has a cause. Therefore, the universe itself must have a cause, and the cause of such a great universe can only be God.
- 2) The *teleological* argument: (Grk. *telos*: end or goal) since the universe appears to be designed with a purpose, there must be an intelligent or purposeful God who created it to function this way.
- 3) The *ontological* argument: assumes the idea of God, defined as a being "greater than which nothing can be imagined," arguing that the characteristics of existence must belong to such a being, since it is greater to exist than not to exist.
- 4) The *moral* argument: man has a sense of right and wrong and of the need for justice to be done. Argues that there must be a God who is the source of right and wrong and who will someday mete out justice to all people.
- 5) All of these proofs are "valid": they correctly evaluate the evidence and they reason to a correct conclusion
- 6) However, they cannot compel belief or agreement from people who begin with false assumptions, or who reason incorrectly
- 7) The value of these proofs lies chiefly in overcoming some of the intellectual objections of unbelievers.

D. Only God can overcome our sin and enable us to be persuaded of his existence (144). (2Cor 4:4, 1Cor 1:21, 1Cor 2:5)