

LESSON 2: THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Instruction for Faith Educators

For Basic Level / Age 7	:	Cover points 1 to 5
For Intermediate Level / Age 10	:	Cover points 1 to 6
For Advanced Level / Age 13	:	Cover points 1 to 9

Revision from previous lesson:

In the previous lesson, you were given an introduction to the journey that your Catechism would take you through. You were told that the Christian story is a long story with a beautiful beginning, a tragedy, a climax, and a triumphant ending. With that, we begin the story now!

Current lesson:

1. We can “make sense” of God’s existence through our own observations of how nature works and using the power of our reasoning (also known as common sense).

Nature demonstrates a certain intelligent design. Everything that we can observe around us shows that it has a purpose for its existence. Because these things have a purpose for their existence, we believe that they were created by Someone intelligent.

2. Take your pencil or your watch, for example. If someone told you that these objects were not made by someone and that they existed by accident, would you believe him? Certainly not. Because these objects are “intelligent” in nature, meaning that they have a purpose or use, which means that they were made by someone to function in a particular way. In the same way, the universe has a super-intelligent design. Those people who choose to believe that there is no God, and that the universe came to exist randomly, do not make good sense.

Professor John Lennox, a Christian apologist from Oxford University, once asked his colleagues who did not believe in God, “Would you believe me if I told you that the supercomputers in your laboratory came to exist randomly even though they have such great processing capabilities? Would you believe me if I told you that nobody made them? If not, then why should you believe that the universe, which is an even more intelligent design than the supercomputers in your laboratory, was not created by Somebody and that it came to exist randomly?”

3. And yet, there are scientists who seem to believe that the entire universe came to exist by a sheer random phenomenon, such as the Big Bang, and then by millions and billions of years of evolution as a result of the survival of the fittest.

At the same time, many scientists estimate the odds against the chance of generating life through random interaction of matter, even given every benefit of the doubt, to be 10 to the 119,850th power (10 with 119,850 zeros after it). This strongly endorses the scientific conclusion that life was not random chance; there was a Supreme Creator.



Scientists also tell us that from the beginning of creation, the universe has been expanding and continues to expand at a faster rate than we can imagine. This simply means that God exists, and that He is still creating!

4. Go look for a subject in nature and examine it, e.g. a leaf or flower, an animal, an insect, etc. Consider how this subject is an “intelligent” being with a purpose, and how it could not possibly have existed by accident. In fact, you too were made beautifully and with a purpose! And therefore, your existence on earth was not by accident!
5. During the time of the ancient Greek philosophers, it was taught that even if the Creator could not be known in a personal way, people could reach this Creator if they set themselves on a path of truth, beauty, and goodness (called the Transcendentals), because all truth, beauty, and goodness points to Him who is the Ultimate Truth, Ultimate Beauty, and Ultimate Goodness. Therefore, people who are always searching for what is true, what is good, and what is beautiful will eventually discover Who truth, beauty, and goodness come from: God. This is because He is the Originator of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.
6. Saint Thomas Aquinas (13th-Century Church Father and Doctor of the Church) believed that the existence of God could be proven in five ways:
 - A) observing movement in the world as proof of God being the “Immovable Mover”. Every moving thing in existence needs a mover, but there must be a Mover who himself is an Unmoved Mover. This **Unmoved Mover** is God.
 - B) observing cause and effect and identifying God as the cause of everything. For the series of causes and effects in the universe, there must have been a First Cause who was himself uncaused. God is the **Uncaused Cause** or the **First Cause**.
 - C) observing that the existence of everything is contingent on something else. But to account for all existence, there must be a Necessary Being upon whom the existence of everything else is contingent. God is that **Necessary Being**.
 - D) observing that there exists gradations in things, for example, more noble and less noble, more true or less true. The existence of such gradations implies the existence of an Absolute Being as a datum for all these relative gradations. That **Absolute Being** is God.
 - E) observing that the behaviour of things in the world implies a **Grand Designer** or architect, who is God.
7. There is an increasing number of militant atheists today, that is, people who deny that God exists and insist that it is stupid for people to believe in such a divine entity. They also insist that if God exists, then His existence must be proven scientifically. This demand is unreasonable because of the limitations of scientific methodology. Science can only deal with the existence of matter, whereas God is spirit. Also, given that God’s existence far surpasses the human ability to prove supernatural realities, using our inferior methods to prove God’s existence makes our efforts ridiculous. If God could be proven through a microscope and some chemical concoctions, He could not possibly be God!

8. Based on sociological research, 84 percent of the world's population still identify themselves as being people who believe in the existence of the Divine. Asia-Pacific is the most populous as well as the most religious region of the world. Religion is declining only in Western Europe and North America, but it is growing elsewhere. Sociological research shows that the world is expected to become more, and not less, religious in time to come. This is because humanity innately knows that there is a Creator and seeks relationship with this Creator, whatever their various conceptions of Him may be.
9. The ultimate way in which people can know God most personally is by *encountering Him*. Logic and reasoning aid our understanding of Him, but they do not help us to truly know Him the way He is to be known.



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