

Why Believe in God?

Basics of the Faith

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Why Do We Baptize Infants?

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P U B L I S H I N G

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LIGHT OF CREATION

The second reason we believe in God is because of the light of creation outside us testifying that he exists. God has not only implanted within us the internal testimony of our conscience, but he has also given us the external testimony of all the things his hands have made, like the beauty of a sunset, the majesty of a waterfall, or the tenderness of a snowflake.

The Testimony of David

For example, in Psalm 19 the Israelite king, David, describes the creation as a preacher, constantly proclaiming its Maker: “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge” (Ps. 19:1–2). This proclamation of the glory and handiwork of God is universal to all peoples in all places of the human race. And David continues: “There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world” (Ps. 19:3–4). Of course like a preacher’s words to a congregation, the proclamation of creation to all the inhabitants of the earth must be received by faith.

The Testimony of Paul

This light of creation is exactly what Paul proclaims in the aforementioned text in Romans 1. Here he teaches that God is knowable in creation: “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them” (Rom. 1:19). He is plain or evident to us in the things we see above us, below us, and all around us. The early church father, Theophilus of Antioch (115–181), described this with the following analogy: “For as the soul in man is not seen, being invisible to men, but is perceived through the motion of the body, so God cannot indeed be seen by

human eyes, but is beheld and perceived through His providence and works.”¹⁰ In beholding the things God has made, all humanity from creation onward has testified that he is the Creator and that everything that exists is his creation. In fact, Paul asserts the positive case for God’s existence by stating the negative case of our suppression of his creation. In other words, the fact that humans create idols according to their own image is a testimony that the God who created the things represented by these idols exists. To ask it in the form of a question, where do humans get the idea to make an idol in the first place? This idea came from the knowledge God proclaims in the creation itself.

Every time we open our eyes we see the work of this Creator. What we learn about him in the work of his creation is that he is a *great and glorious* God: “The heavens declare the glory of God.” The work of creation also testifies that he is a *skillful, creative, and ingenious* God: “the sky above proclaims his handiwork” (Ps. 19:1). When we look at the heavens and all the creation around us, their work teaches us that he is a *wise* God: “O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures” (Ps. 104:24). Creation reveals that God is an *almighty* God because to create the vastness and the enormity of the universe, even as we know it, would take an infinite power beyond our imagination. In Paul’s words, the work of God in creation shows us the “eternal power” of God (Rom. 1:20). Creation reveals that God is an *eternal* God because everything that came into being at some particular point in time was made by him who was already there: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God” (Ps. 90:2).

Our Response

Let me state, again, that this reason is no mere intellectual or mental exercise. God intends that the light of his creation

should cause us to respond to him with faith and love for him. And how appropriate such a response is when we look upward and outward at creation. In recent years scientists have begun to publish research extending farther and farther into the known universe. We can view online the amazing pictures from the Hubble telescope in its Ultra Deep Field view photo. One photograph shows the deepest picture of space ever taken.¹¹ In it there are ten thousand galaxies. Sounds amazing, doesn't it? But then you learn that its perspective is like looking at a coin in front of you from seventy-four feet away, which means what exists in space is 12.7 million times more than can be seen by this photo. What should our response be to this? The light of creation should humble us in reverential awe and wonder, as the Psalmist poetically wrote.

O LORD, our Lord,
 how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory above the heavens.
.....
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
 the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of him,
 and the son of man that you care for him?
 (Ps. 8:1, 3-4)

Another of the Psalms poetically describes how the light of creation should cause us to worship and praise God:

Bless the LORD, O my soul!
 O LORD my God, you are very great!
.....
May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
 may the LORD rejoice in his works. (Ps. 104:1, 31)