



Why Worship God? by Joe Sixpack

Personally, I think there are two things *all* Christians should be able to prove—especially Protestants. Our separated brethren claim strict adherence to the Bible as the end-all-be-all of divine revelation, believing it to be the “inspired” word of God, yet none of them know how to *prove* the Bible is inspired. Well, I think they should have to prove that. Catholics too, for that matter. That is something we will cover in a future column. There is yet another thing all Christians should be able to prove...*especially us*.

Perhaps one of the most puzzling things for me about most modern Christians is, they worship Someone they cannot prove. Obviously they all believe in God, but they can't *prove* His existence. What kind of sense does that make? Why worship a Being you can't prove exists? It's like believing in the Tooth Fairy.

The question is, can God's existence be proven? Well, not with empirical scientific evidence...yet. However, His existence most certainly can be proven through the use of logic and right reason. So let's delve right into it!

Many people rely on the “Big Bang” theory to pooh-pooh God's existence. They claim that there was just this huge explosion and when it cooled we had the universe. Silly, but true. These scientifically inclined people even deny the principles of the science they worship with such a theory. One of the laws of physics tells us that every movement—an explosion, which leads to the universe, solar system, earth, plant life, animal life, humans—must have a “first mover”. How can a huge explosion from nothing happen without a first mover; that is, a cause? The Big Bang theory can make sense, but only if there is a first mover, and the only possible first mover is God. So in reality, the Big Bang theory actually *proves* the existence of God. This argument (and what follows) is the argument by design.

We can see from creation that all could only exist by the power of an infinitely wise, all-powerful, self-existing Being. He is a logical God who has created a logically functioning universe. Look at the food chain. The smallest microscopic organism is food for the next largest organism, is food for the next largest organism, is food for the next largest organism, and so on. Eventually it becomes food for man, the highest form of natural creation. When we eat a pork chop or chicken leg and digest it, the process begins all over again.

Look at the trees. Trees “inhale” carbon dioxide and “exhale” oxygen. We inhale oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. The trees can't live without us, and we can't live without the trees. What a logical God!

My favorite argument, though, is more elementary and more satisfying to me Joe Sixpacks. Due to our lack of space, we will simply concede certain things as true here, as they are quickly and easily proven with a few minutes spent on Google.

It is a historical fact that the books of the Old Testament are ancient Hebrew literature. We're not saying they're inspired or even true, for the sake of this argument. We're merely stating they are ancient Hebrew literature.

The second fact is that Jesus of Nazareth is a real, historical person. We're not saying anything about him at this point except that he truly existed in Israel 2,000 years ago. Some scoffers would say the only proof we have of his existence are the four Gospels, but that simply isn't true. There are four secular historians of the time who attest to Jesus' existence: Pliny, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Flavius Josephus. Pliny, Tacitus and Suetonius were pagans and certainly no friends of Christianity, so their written record is reliable. Flavius Josephus was a Jew and Roman Citizen and he was also no friend of Jesus of Nazareth. So we actually have eight sources to prove Jesus was a true historical person: Pliny, Tacitus, Suetonius, Flavius Josephus, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Now for the argument.

The Old Testament, the ancient Hebrew literature, is filled with prophecies about the coming of a messiah, the earliest reference being in Genesis, then Jeremiah, Isaiah, the Psalms, etc. If we were to take all those prophecies and list them on paper, we could then go to our historical sources mentioned above to find that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled all those prophecies. Does that prove Jesus is the messiah? No, not at all. It only proves that he fulfilled the prophecies, but three types of people could have done that: either a bad man, a mad man, or...the messiah.

Could Jesus have been a bad man? Could he awaken one day and decided that if he convinced the people he was truly the messiah he could gain wealth and power? Yes, but that argument won't float. Why? Because the prophecies also tell us the messiah had to die. What bad man (criminal) is willing to die just to prove a point, especially after gathering his following? None, of course. Therefore, Jesus could not have been a bad man.

Could he have been a mad man, a crazy person? Could a crazy guy wake up one day thinking he was hearing the voice of God telling him he is the messiah and he should begin fulfilling the prophecies? Certainly he could, and a mad man would even be willing to die, but that argument won't pan out either. A mad man simply isn't capable of remaining consistent long enough to pull off such a thing as Jesus did. Psychologists have studied Jesus since the beginning of their science in the 19th century, and they universally agree he was certainly consistent. They may not like what he taught, but they most certainly agree he was consistent. Therefore, Jesus could not have been a mad man.

That only leaves us with the third man, the man who is what he says he is...the messiah. Jesus claims not only to be the messiah, but he actually claims to be God! And He makes this claim repeatedly (cf. Jn. 10:24-31). My personal favorite of his claims to divinity is found in John 8:58 when He said, "Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was, *I am*". This is the same phrase God used to describe Himself in Exodus 3:14, and I urge you to read these two passages and their context. So if Jesus couldn't have been a bad man, and if He couldn't have been a mad man, and He must be who He says He is, and He claims to be God, therefore God must exist!

Now you can defend God's existence to anyone you talk to. Most people say they don't discuss controversial subjects. I agree; neither do I. So I never discuss organized sports and soap operas. Religion, however, deals with matters of *truth*, and truth can never be controversial. And that, my friends, is the reason for this column; so you can know What We Believe...Why We Believe It.

Got a question? Go to JoeSixpackAnswers.com.