

DOES GOD EXIST?

***A nonprofit effort
to convince mankind
that God is real and
the Bible is His Word.***

**Fourth Quarter 2019
Volume 46 Number 4**



***WHY IS FAITH IN GOD
NECESSARY?***

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WHY IS FAITH IN GOD NECESSARY?

Many of our readers will likely see our theme for this quarter as nonsense. Those who do not believe in God will likely say, “It isn’t, and I don’t need that crutch.” Those who are devout Christians will say, “To go to heaven—isn’t that obvious?” On a practical level, I would suggest that there are some much more tangible values that faith in God brings to us. There are some good reasons why we all need to nurture and develop a meaningful faith in God because of these values.

Faith in God Gives Purpose to Life.

The atheistic belief system is challenged by these significant questions:

Why are we here?

Why do I exist?

Why is there something instead of nothing?

Is my life important enough to justify my existence?

Prominent atheists have written books on these subjects. The lesson of history has been that gaining material things and extensive wealth does not produce life-fulfilling satisfaction. The wealthiest people among us have not found wealth to be fulfilling or satisfying.

Perhaps the best description of the frustration of having everything and still being unfulfilled is Ecclesiastes 1–4. Solomon devotes these four chapters to spelling out why wealth is meaningless:

Meaningless! Meaningless! ... Utterly meaningless. Everything is meaningless. What do people gain from all their labors at which he toils under the sun? (verses 1-3).

He then lists all the things someone might do to find satisfaction and meaning in life—pleasures, wisdom, food, drink, friends, etc. He concludes that it is all meaningless.

Contrast that description with Paul who in Philippians 4:11–13



writes: "... I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength." Paul knew he had a purpose in living,

and as he approached the end of life, he knew he had fulfilled that purpose: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7). Ephesians 6:12 tells us that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil" Knowing we have a major role to play in the great cosmic struggle between good and evil means we all have a purpose for existing. Our faith in God gives us a role to play in this great war which gives meaning to our lives.

Faith in God Gives a Fixed Standard by Which One Can Make Moral Judgments.

In Judges 17:6, we read, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit." As you continue reading in that story, you see the consequences of not having a fixed code of behavior by which to live. In recent years atheists and skeptics have written book after book attempting to suggest how a person who does not believe in God can be moral.

"Survival of the fittest" is not a set of rules that work in organizing society. The role of religion in any culture is to provide a fixed standard of conduct by which men and women can live. The Ten Commandments provided a fixed basis of behavior that could be enforced, was easy to understand, and was written so it could be followed. In the later books of the Old Testament (Leviticus and

Deuteronomy), God's moral laws were expanded and enlarged to deal with applying the Ten Commandments to various situations.

The real root of morality is not in the written commands, but how a person's heart reacts to those commands. Jesus Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5–7, gave a basis for eliminating wrong behavior. When I was an atheist, I read the Sermon on the Mount and marveled at how wise it was. I saw that if it were followed, Earth would be at peace and the things that divide humanity would be gone. No atheist plan for morality works because those plans are based

on selfish values that promote the individual over all others. If belief in God is universal in a population, a fixed moral code and a basis for judgment are possible. In the courts of law in early America, witnesses were told to place their hand on a Bible and asked,



“Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help you God?” Society accepted the fact that universal faith in God would prevent a perversion of testimony. Perjury had significant punishments attached to it. As faith in God has left our political system, lying has become acceptable, even by our leaders.

Faith in God Gives a Basis for Enduring or Solving Problems That Are Bigger Than We Are.

Every twelve-step program that I know of contains some version of “learn to look to a higher power.” There are large numbers of people who have overcome addiction, drugs, alcohol abuse, hatred, and fear by learning to look to a higher power. The significant emotional and mental problems that people in our culture struggle with have been eliminated or greatly reduced for some people by programs with spiritual connections.

In recent years, the primary method of treating individuals without spiritual management has been to use drugs. Faith in God gives a proven technique to make meaningful changes in the lives of addicted people.

**Visit the Clayton Museum of
Ancient History at York College**

Faith in God Reduces Fear, Both in Life's Problems and in Death.

Atheists have long maintained that faith in God is due to fear of death. There is undoubtedly some truth to that charge, but the question remains; what does atheism have to offer people who know

they are terminal? I have seen a large number of people die. Those who have faith in God are fearful for those they are leaving behind and they fear pain, but they are not fearful about death. As the father of a child with multiple physical and mental disabilities, I have seen how faith in God enables one to deal with the heartbreak of an incapacitated child.

Vocal atheists such as Richard Dawkins have offered the atheist solution of abortion for a child that has a congenital problem. Atheists, like Peter Singer, the Ira W. Decamp Professor of Bioethics at Princeton, have suggested euthanizing all mentally challenged children or children with extreme disabilities to save money.

Faith in God allows compassionate care with love as the solution to human weaknesses and disabilities. The selfishness of "survival of the fittest" does not allow that to be done.

Faith in God Provides a Basis for the Existence of All Kinds of Beauty.

Why is there gorgeous color in places where no one will ever see it? There are many situations where great beauty exists, and yet the presence of that beauty threatens the survival of the plant or animal that possesses it. Atheist scholars in recent years have written articles and books trying to explain beauty, but evolutionary explanations frequently fail.

Claiming that beauty is to attract mates, fails because in some cases the animal is color blind. The vivid colors of some tropical birds make them more visible than they would be with drab colors actually threatening their survival.





Beauty in inanimate objects has no biological implications and applies uniquely to human appreciation. It is our creation in the image of God that allows us to create beauty in the arts. The faith in God of artists and musicians has led to the world's most beautiful music in every style from classical to black spirituals.

If you believe in God, then you believe in a being who created beauty for us to enjoy. We not only admire beauty, but we create it in art, music, poetry, and prose. Our spiritual nature, our soul, allows this incredible portrayal of the hand of God. Jesus referred to it when he compared the lily of the field with Solomon's most beautiful attire (see Matthew 6:26–30).

Conclusion

Think what kind of world it would be if every influence of faith in God were removed. What would be the effect on art, music, laws, and the compassionate treatment of human needs? Religion has sometimes been used to justify evil things such as racial conflict and gender abuse. Atheism is a man-made religion, and man-made religions do not have a positive influence. Things like the Crusades and the Ku Klux Klan are man-made religions based on hate and ignorance and not expressions of faith in God.

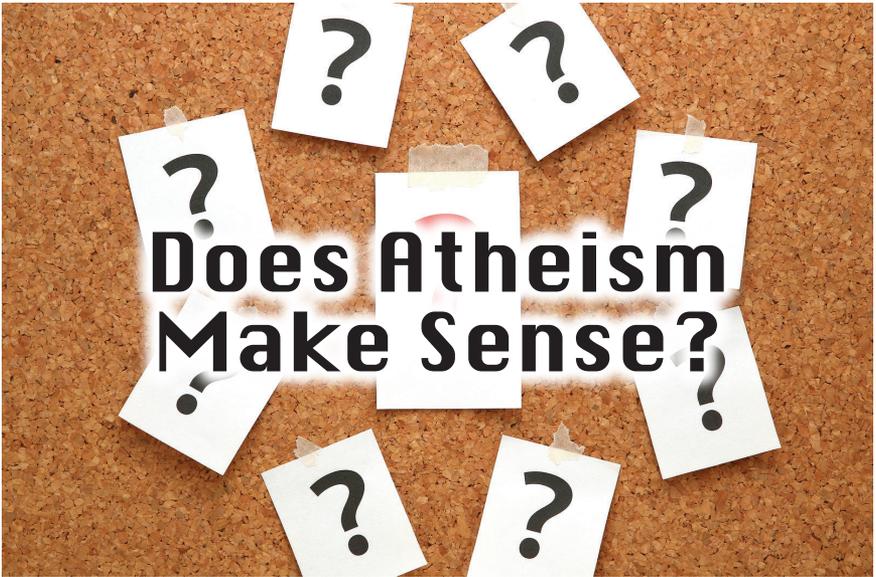
In Christianity, we see pure faith in God expressed in the logical, compassionate, rational teachings of Jesus Christ, which are essential to the kind of existence we all desire. The alternative to that faith is the anarchy and chaos we see in the world today. The survival of humanity depends on faith in the one true God expressed in John 1:1–14: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. ... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”

—John N. Clayton

Have

FAITH

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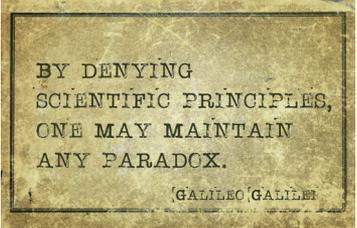
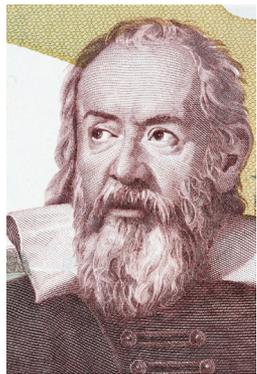


One of the most frequently asked questions in my lectureships concerns whether there really is such a thing as an atheist. Are there reasons why atheism makes sense? Somehow, many people seem to believe that there is no such thing as a real atheist. We hear catchy sayings like “There are no atheists in foxholes.” That suggests atheists are actually hypocrites who, for various reasons, pretend not to believe in God even though they do.

Having been an atheist for many years, I know that such suggestions are not valid. Many people genuinely believe that there is no God. There can be various reasons for a person denying the existence of God. We want to share three of them with you from our own experience:

REASON 1. The lesson of history has been that religion has consistently opposed science and human advancement. As we look back to Galileo, Copernicus, Pasteur, and virtually every great scientist of the past, we can see religionists opposing their ideas. History tells the stories of scientists who

were persecuted because their theories conflicted with the traditional religious views of the day. Even today, reli-

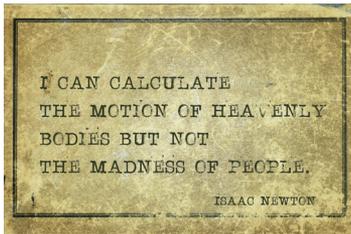
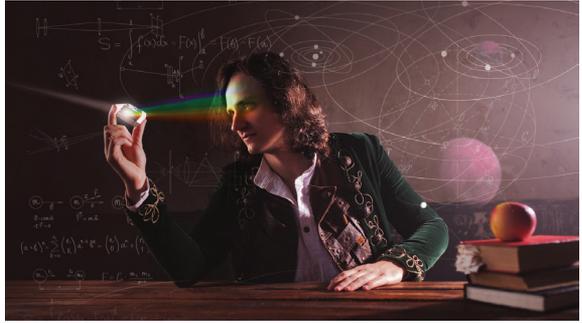


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gious opposition frequently works to stop scientific advancement. A percentage of college-educated atheists are atheists because they view religion as a stumbling block to human progress. For them, that is why atheism makes sense.

RESPONSE. In the past religion has, at times, blocked science when men followed tradition, not the Bible. Even today, however, we have Christians who oppose science because of traditional beliefs or because of human religious teaching. The atheist certainly has a valid complaint here. The only problem with his argument is a failure of atheists to realize where modern science started and that it cannot stand alone.

First, look at where modern science started. It began with the recognition that if God conceived the creation, it must display intelligence with logical and understandable order and design. If we believe that nature is a product of blind, random chance, then we would expect it to be random and chaotic and incapable of being understood. Science began when humans realized that the creation and its design could be understood and studied.



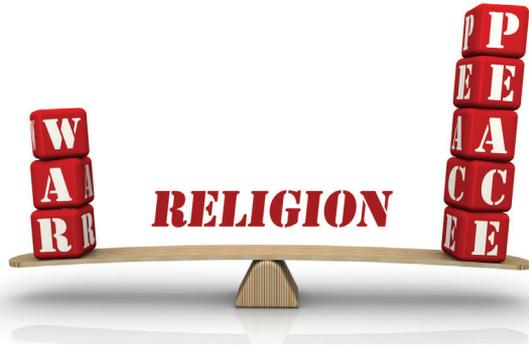
Secondly, what we mean by “science can’t stand alone” is that it cannot determine the uses humans should make of its discoveries. Many times religious concerns about the moral implications of a scientific discovery are construed as attempts to stop science when they are actually an attempt to give science

intelligent and productive direction.

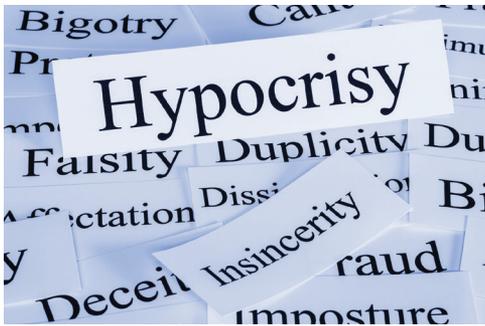
ADVICE. We who believe in God need to make sure that if we oppose a scientific effort, our opposition is based on Christian principles from the Bible and not on tradition. We also need to be sure that we do not rely on pseudo-science and false science to back up our efforts to reach the skeptic. We must urge ourselves and others to think and examine, not accept and follow.

REASON 2. Some argue that religion causes nothing but trouble, hostility, suffering, and discord. History is full of religious wars.

We could point out the Crusades, more recent conflicts in Northern Ireland, and in much of the Middle East spilling over into terrorism in the United States and western countries. Examine the internal problems of religious groups, including hypocrisy, bickering, hostility, and abuse. Look at the prominent religious leaders who are guilty of immoral actions. Look at the money raked in by glib, fast-talking con-artists who build religious empires for their own pocket. They exploit the very people they pretend to help. In simple terms, religion does not seem to work.



RESPONSE. Who among those of us who wear the name “Christian” would want to deny all of those charges? We can cry out that these are human errors and not God’s. However, if faith in God does not work for us, how can atheists rationally believe it is going to work for them? Today the body of Christ is afflicted



with people who claim to be Christians while they single out other Christians to attack as they display anything but a Christian attitude.

What the atheist is missing in this argument is that hypocrisy is not solely a function of religion. You find hypocrisy at work and on the golf course. There has only been one person who ever lived who was entirely free of hypocrisy, and he was the Son of God. Because one atheist was a murderer, can we legitimately say that all atheists are murderers? All humans fall short of what they should be. The most fundamental difference between atheism and Christianity is that Christianity recognizes that fact and functions in spite of it. Atheism relies on humanism which tries to deny the existence of sin while pointing out the sins of religion.

ADVICE. Those of us who wear the name “Christian” need to do a better job of pointing people to Christ and the Bible rather than to preachers and buildings. As long as we are “preacher-oriented”

and “building bound,” we will continue to reinforce the arguments of the atheists. When we convince people about Christ and the truth of the Bible, the errors of humans will not be relevant. We must live out the faith we claim to have so that others can see Christ in us. Only then can we show them that following Christ brings real peace.

REASON 3. Christianity does not work. If there is a God, why does he not act when things get rough? Why do even the best Christians find themselves afflicted with disease and loss and even death? Why do so many Christians experience nervous breakdowns, broken marriages, hostile children, alcohol and drug problems, and all of the other bad things which are a part of the world today? One man recently wrote to me, “Christianity only works for those who would do okay without it.” Another wrote, “The only thing I can see in prayer is its therapeutic value. Certainly, Christians who are physically afflicted do not have a better survival rate than afflicted atheists.” A third said, “I do not know of any Christian man in my community that does more good, is more generous, or is more successful than my neighbor, who is an atheist. If God is real and Christianity is really worth anything, why is that true?”



RESPONSE. This challenge goes to where most Christians live. Can our friends tell any difference between us as Christians and our neighbors who are not? There are two major problems here. The first is that erroneous claims by some religionists have fouled the air. Some who wear the name Christian convey to the world the idea that Christians have diplomatic immunity from all problems. They preach what some call a “health and wealth gospel.” They teach that no person who is a real Christian will ever be sick or fail.

The truth is that God never gave Christians diplomatic immunity from problems. The emphasis on present-day miracles and the use of television to promote the claims of “faith healers” have given atheists much to criticize. Atheists, and even many believers, do not understand the advantages a Christian enjoys. When the Word of God says things like, “Ask and it will be given to you, Seek and you will find;” it is not speaking of physical and material things. God has not promised that Christians will have health, wealth, and freedom from problems. What he has promised is that he will bless those things we

do to serve him. There is no greater joy, fulfillment, satisfaction, or thrill than to see God work through us to accomplish something we could not possibly do alone.

In dealing with infidelity in a mate, the difference between an atheist and a Christian is that Christians can rebuild the marriage. The difference between the two in dealing with an alcohol or other drug problem is that the Christian can overcome it with God's help. In dealing with death or tragedy, the Christian can cope and go on and continue to have a fulfilling life. In dealing with failure, the Christian can be secure and confident that it does not affect our eternal destiny.



ADVICE. We must convey to the world around us that when Christ lives in us, and we are spirit-filled people, we are not walking around two feet off the ground behaving as mystics.



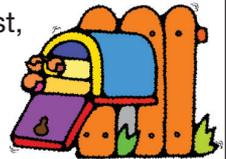
We Christians need to let the world know how much of a positive change God has made in our lives. Too often non-Christians view the church as a group of somber, unhappy, irrational, mystical, illogical, unintelligent, hypocritical

people who are out of touch with reality. This third reason why atheism makes sense is one that we can easily disprove as we can laugh, love, enjoy life, and logically and rationally defend our faith.

—JNC

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A Brief History of Liberal, Missouri

by Jim Mettenbrink

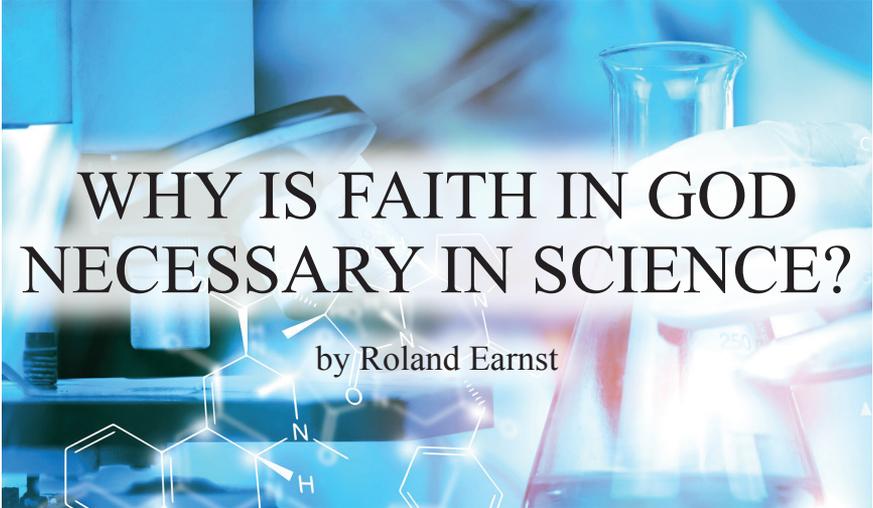
Freedom of religion guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment was alive and well in the 19th century as evidenced by the conflict and confrontations between atheism and Christianity. Robert Owen (atheist) and Alexander Campbell (Christian) debated in 1829. A "freethought" movement began around 1850. Charles Darwin's book, *On the Origin of Species* was published in 1859. The years 1875 to 1914 were known as "The Golden Age of Freethought." Robert Ingersoll, the foremost leader of this movement, was known as the "great agnostic."

George Walser, a lawyer and an avid follower of Ingersoll, set out to form a freethinker's haven. In 1880, he bought 2,000 acres of land to establish Liberal, Missouri. It was to be an atheist utopia where there would be no God, no hell, no churches, and no saloons. He said Christianity and the Bible were "superstition" and the crude reasoning of primitive humans.

People who moved to Liberal signed an agreement promising not to hold religious services on their property. Within a year, William Waggoner bought land adjacent to Liberal and invited believers in Jesus to move there. In response, Walser put a barbed wire fence around Liberal and charged that Waggoner intended to induce the "immigration of Christians who would be strong enough to outnumber the Liberals and defeat the enterprise." At the Liberal train station, he posted a sign that Christians were not welcome. The battle began.

Some people bought homes and began holding worship services to God. Walser would interrupt them, and he even put a stop to this practice after he proved to a court that the services were being held on properties he still partly owned. So the believers then bought land next to Liberal and moved more than a dozen houses from Liberal. In competition, Walser reserved Sunday evenings for debates and speeches at the Universal Mental Liberty Hall. Evolution versus creationism was the favorite subject.

Walser founded Free Thought University in 1886 with courses that were "untrammelled by Bible, creed, or isms." The first saloon was built in 1887, and the churches came in 1889. Walser gave up on his atheist dream and sold his Liberty Hall to the Methodist church. Walser himself eventually became a believer and wrote a book, *The Life and Teachings of Jesus*, in 1909. Excerpts of that book were read at his funeral in 1910. Today, Darwin Street and Ingersoll Street remind Liberal, Missouri, of its failed atheist heritage.



WHY IS FAITH IN GOD NECESSARY IN SCIENCE?

by Roland Earnst

A constant theme of our message at **Does God Exist?** is that science and faith are friends, not enemies. We have also expressed that both science and faith are necessary. Most people realize that science is essential because it has given us modern conveniences and medical marvels. But why is faith in God necessary in science?

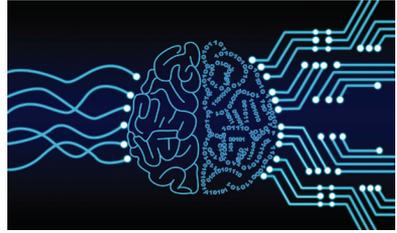
When we think of the many things that technology has given us from guns and explosives to computers and robotics and from a simple telephone to a modern smart-phone, we see a pattern. Every new technology has the potential to bring great benefits or great harm. The difference is not in the technology, but in the people who use it. More specifically, it is in the worldview of those who use it.

Some believe that humans are the ultimate arbiter of right and wrong, good and bad. Others believe in absolute right and wrong because they believe in an ultimate judge who has set the standard. Those in the first group believe that humans are merely the product of chance evolution from life that originated by accident from non-living materials. Ultimately they believe those non-living materials came into existence out of nothing, for no purpose, without intelligent direction. They believe that “survival of the fittest” is the ultimate basis for all that is taking place among living things, including humans. In their view there is no God to answer to and therefore no arbiter of right and wrong beyond what each individual decides.

On the other hand, some believe in God as the ultimate source of life. They believe that each person is created in the image of God and is therefore of infinite worth. Furthermore, each of us is answerable for our actions to a loving God who expects us to treat each person with the respect they deserve. The two worldviews make all the difference in science. Let us consider just two areas.

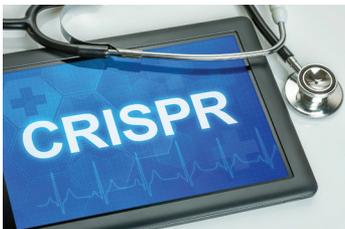
MEDICAL SCIENCE

Imagine what it would be like if science could put mesh implants inside our brains that could prevent or correct neurological problems such as Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s disease. What if it could preserve our mental faculties as we age or allow us to overcome addictions? In the journal *Nature Biotechnology*, a team of Harvard Medical School faculty members described just that. Dr. Shaun Patel called it “the merging of human cognition with machines.”¹ It could also make it possible for a paraplegic person to control robotic limbs with their thoughts. The implant would collect data and create a map of the brain. The map could be used to stimulate the brain to correct for any neurological issues. Billionaire entrepreneur Elon Musk (SpaceX and Tesla vehicles) has a company called Neuralink. He claims to have a brain implant device that could be ready for clinical trials by the end of 2020.² Implants into the brains of macaque monkeys have already allowed them to control robotic arms. We could be on the verge of amazing medical breakthroughs. Or perhaps we are about to see science fiction come to life in a tragic way.



Inverse.com reported that brain implants “could change humanity forever.”³ The technology could allow scientists to look into a person’s most intimate thoughts. If a corporation or government entity could access this information, they could punish someone for their opinions or secrets. We now have so-called “hate crimes” when someone acts out against a person with a different skin color or sexual orientation. What if the government could examine your thoughts and punish you for hate crimes before you act out? What if someone could hack your brain and take control of your thoughts and actions? What about downloading the contents of a person’s brain into a computer that would think the person’s thoughts giving that person immortality, at least partially? If the experts are correct, we are on the verge of turning science fiction into reality.

Medical science has developed a gene-editing tool called CRISPR, which we have reported on before.⁴ The goal of editing genes with CRISPR is supposedly to find a way to correct genetic defects. However, it could also be used to create designer babies. Genetically modified human embryos can develop into gene-modified humans who will pass on the genetic changes to their offspring.



Although this may offer hope for eliminating genetic defects, it could also create nightmare scenarios. What if medical science manipulates the DNA of our children to produce super-humans? Beyond the implications of Frankenstein-like creatures, there is the troubling aspect of DNA editing to select the sex, physical features, and even intelligence of an unborn child. So far, that is illegal in the United States, but not in other countries such as China. Christians should be concerned about where this may lead. Do humans have the right to play God with our DNA? What could be the result of “off-target” mistakes? What about the ethics of creating human embryos for experimentation and then destroying them? Do the possible breakthroughs in the elimination of genetic diseases outweigh the dangers? What about the moral cost to our society as we go down this road?



One thing you can be sure of is that humans will be creating genetically modified human embryos. If it does not happen in the United States, it will happen in other countries. You can also be sure that there will be some scientists who will do so with less than pure motives. In Mary Shelley’s classic book telling about a scientist’s desire to create a new species, Victor Frankenstein said, “A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs.”

The power to become a god creating new species of humans can overpower pure motives as it did with Victor Frankenstein. The outcome could be even more tragic than it was in the novel. Many people have become concerned about genetically modified organisms (GMO) in food. How much more should we be concerned about genetically modified humans (GMH)? In medical science, we need the worldview that recognizes the existence of God.

COMPUTER SCIENCE

Why then is faith in God necessary in computer science? The answer is obvious. Computer science has become tied to medical science and every other area of our daily lives. We already see the consequences of technology used in the “survival of the fittest” mode. Stanford University is the epicenter of technology breakthroughs in what is known as California’s Silicon Valley. Many of the leaders in technology got their start at Stanford. One of them was Elizabeth Holmes. In 2003 she founded a blood-testing company on the “survival of the fittest” concept that market domination is the highest

goal. Theranos grew to be a \$10 billion giant in 2013–2014 until whistle-blowers alerted government agencies that it was doctoring lab results and putting patients in danger. After cheating many people, the company folded in 2018.⁵

Theranos is no more, but there are thousands of other companies that got their start at Stanford and Silicon Valley. Two Stanford Ph.D. students, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, built Google as a research project. Today Google is the worldwide source of information on anything and everything. As Scott Galloway wrote in *Esquire* magazine: “As more and more people become alienated from traditional religion, we look to Google as our immediate, all-knowing oracle of answers from trivial to profound. Google is our modern-day god.”⁶ Google has a 92 percent share of the Internet search market, which is worth more than \$90 billion.⁶ It also owns YouTube and the Android operating system.

In September 2019, the Federal Trade Commission and the New York Attorney General fined Google and YouTube \$170 million for secretly harvesting personal data about minors without their parents’



consent. They gathered the information from the searches the children made and the videos they watched and used it to direct advertisements to them. The New York Attorney General said: “Google and YouTube knowingly and illegally monitored, tracked, and served targeted ads to young children just to keep advertising dollars rolling in.”

That was after an earlier incident in 2015 when Google misused the Chromebook computers they provided to schools in their “Apps for Education” program.⁷ Google had signed an agreement not to collect, use, or share personal information of students except for strictly educational purposes without parental permission. Google did not get that permission, and school districts required the students to use the Chromebooks. In that case, Google admitted to scanning student e-mails to “compile keywords for advertising” on sites the students visited.⁸

If you think that computer science and the technology it has given us are not crucial to our culture, think again. Just try taking away a young person’s smartphone, tablet, or computer. Businesses and governments depend on computers for every phase of their operation. All forms of communication today depend on computers, as do our electricity and water supplies. Computer science has given us many modern conveniences, but it has also given us ransomware and hackers who live by the “survival of the fittest” mentality.

ALL AREAS OF SCIENCE

The list of ways that scientific technology has benefited human existence is growing every day. Unfortunately, the list of ways technology can be misused for the enrichment of the few while harming others is also increasing. If humans are only the product of blind chance with no more value than an earthworm or a rock, and if this life is all there is, why not grab all you can, while you can? It is time for the leaders in the application of science to realize that they are not the final arbiters of right and wrong. It is only when science accepts the truth of the value of every human being that it can genuinely lead to human thriving.

In computer science, medical science, or any other scientific field, scientists need to be guided by biblical values and faith in God. When God sets the moral standards, we know there are absolute values. When we know that God created us in his image, then we realize each life is precious. We also know that there is something



of higher value than money and power. To achieve its maximum good, science needs faith to guide it. Albert Einstein was right when he said, “Science without religion is lame.” True science is a friend of faith, and faith is a friend

of science.

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SCIENTISTS AND GOD

Editor's Note: Atheists attempt to suggest that scientists are intelligent people who have rejected faith and do not believe in God. The fact is that some of the most productive scientists who have ever lived were believers in God. We share some of their thoughts with you in this column.

JAMES TOUR
(1959-)

T. T. and W. F. Chao Professor of Chemistry,
Professor of Materials Science and NanoEngineering,
and Professor of Computer Science at Rice University

“God seems to have set nature as a clue, not a solution, to keep us yearning for him. And if someday we do understand the mechanisms for these macroevolutionary changes, and also the processes that led to the origin of first life, it will not lessen God. As with all discoveries, like when the genetic code in the double-stranded DNA was discovered, they will serve to underscore the magnanimity of God.”



“As a scientist and a Christian (Messianic Jew), I am unsure of many things in both science and faith. But my many questions are not fundamental to my salvation. Salvation is based upon the finished work of Jesus Christ (Yeshua the Messiah), my confession in him as Savior and my belief in his physical resurrection from the dead. Indeed, the physical resurrection is an atypical

example where God works beyond the normally observed physical laws of science in order to accomplish his purposes. Therefore it's called a miracle. And thanks be to God for his indescribable gift.”

—<https://www.jmtour.com/personal-topics/evolution-creation/>

You can read more about James Tour and read his challenging essays on his website at <https://www.jmtour.com>. Our thanks to Roger Jay for alerting us to this excellent material.

Cynthia's Corner

FAITH AND MARRIAGE



This year, John and I celebrated our 10th anniversary. The time has flown as we have traveled all over the country and to three other countries. We have seen spectacular natural wonders, visited many of our national parks, and experienced together the awesome beauty and diversity of God's creation. I wish I had kept a travel journal! I do have some amazing pictures and some wonderful memories.

But, it almost did not happen. Our marriage was a big leap of faith for both of us. We met when John spoke to my local congregation in Grand Junction, Colorado. I was impressed with his approach to the question of faith and science being compatible and symbiotic. As far back as I can remember, I believed in God. I went to church on Sundays, but I did not read the Bible. I heard bits of it on Sundays. I was "baptized" (sprinkled) to "join the church" when I was about 12. I never questioned God's existence. When I was older, I listened to Billy Graham and "prayed Jesus into my heart" many times.

When my two children were young, I started going to Bible studies because a Christian woman knocked on my door and invited me. Soon I began attending a Church of Christ and understood the gospel for the first time. In 1977 I was baptized (immersed) into Christ, fully obeying Romans 6.

So John and I came to Christ very differently, but we had lost our life partners. God had to convince both of us that marrying each other was consistent with his will. We started e-mailing, with spiritual questions which evolved into personal ones, which resulted in phone calls. I flew out to visit him and his congregation, where I saw his ministry and involvement with the local church firsthand. I could see that his ministry was all-consuming, but that he needed someone to love and to love him.

I felt strongly that God had chosen me to be his wife, and we knew each other only a short time before we married. I can tell all Christians looking to marry, "Let God choose your partner!" The Bible tells us to "marry in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14). We must look at the heart, character, and fruit of a potential mate's life and NOT focus on outward appearance and sexual attraction. Love and commitment produce the best love life, period.

Faith has been the cornerstone of our relationship from the beginning and throughout the ten years of living together, working together, and loving each other unconditionally.

—Cynthia Clayton

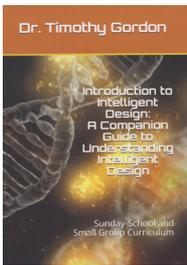
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The books that are reviewed in the Book Reviews section are not available through us, but can be obtained from a local bookstore or through many online bookstores.

Introduction to Intelligent Design

by Timothy Gordon, Independently published, © 2019,
58 pages, \$7.99 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-1095462645



The subtitle of this book is “A Companion Guide to Understanding Intelligent Design” because it is a study guide for the book reviewed on the next page.

Scientific articles mention the fine-tuning of the cosmos with increasing frequency. The basic concept is that the conditions of the universe are precisely set for human life. The variables that affect the presence and sustainability of life are so precise that even slight variations would result in an inhospitable world. In

this new book, Dr. Timothy Gordon explains the concept very well by giving three examples “of cosmic fine-tuning.

1. If the force of gravity were slightly larger, stars would be too hot and burn too rapidly, making conditions for life inhospitable. If too small, no heavy elements would be produced.
2. The initial expansion of the Big Bang had to be fine-tuned to a precision of one in 10^{55} to form planets, stars, solar systems, and galaxies.
3. There are 19 universal constants that must be perfectly tuned to make the universe habitable.

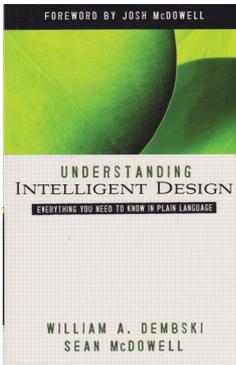
Assigning a probability (N) to the fine-tuning of these constants would be larger than the number of elementary particles in the universe” (page 43).

You will see many secular writers talking about the fine-tuning of the cosmos but not explaining how this fine-tuning could happen without an intelligence to do the tuning. This is another powerful argument for the existence of God as the creator.

We recommend Dr. Gordon’s book. It is formatted for Sunday-school and small group study and is available in paperback and Kindle editions.

Understanding Intelligent Design

by William Dembski & Sean McDowell, Harvest House Publishers, © 2008,
233 pages, \$14.99 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-0-7369-2442-9



“Darwinism has run its course. Design is now revolutionizing the way we see the world, much as Darwinism did more than a century ago.” That statement near the end of the book (page 172) is perhaps the best one-sentence summary of this book. For more than 50 years, the **Does God Exist?** ministry has pointed out the evidence that there is design in the creation. The Bible makes it clear that we can know there is a God through the things he has made (Romans 1:20), that we can see wisdom in the creation (Proverbs 8), and that the “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (Psalm 19:1). We can all understand these statements as can any child.

As America has veered off into atheism, science has promoted naturalism as good science while claiming that all other views should not be considered. Many reputable scientists have rebelled against these anti-religious views. We have presented some of the rebels in this journal, including John Lennox, Henry Schaefer, Alister McGrath, Gerald Schroeder, Michael Behe, and Francis Collins. Perhaps the most vocal and most published of these is William Dembski, who authored this book with Sean McDowell.

This is the best book we have seen on Intelligent Design. McDowell’s presence makes the book easy to read and understand. Dembski is very thorough, technical, and knowledgeable. The first two chapters show the bias in the academic community. Much of mainstream science refuses to consider evidence that clearly shows the assumptions of naturalism are false. The book contains quotes from atheists, evolutionists, naturalists, and media people documenting the closed-minded nature of the academic scientific world today. The last three pages of the book encourage the reader to get active in forming intelligent design promotion groups locally and nationally.

This book promotes the concept of design well, shows the weaknesses of Darwinism, and answers a vast percentage of atheist challenges. It is not so technically loaded that you get lost in the explanations, so high school students should be able to read and understand it. It has a useful index and five appendices with resources and supplements. There are also guides available for class use (see our book review on the previous page). We recommend this book very highly.

DANDY DESIGNS

Necks Too Impossible



Skeletal remains of the *Barosaurus* show that its head would have towered fifty feet (more than 15 meters) above the ground. No one denies the size of the animal. The problems come when we start looking at its anatomy.

The animal with the longest neck today is the giraffe.

To get blood to its brain, a giraffe has a systolic blood pressure (mmHg) as high as 350. For humans, anything over 140 is considered high. To create that much pressure, the giraffe's heart weighs about 25 pounds (11.3 kilograms). A human heart weighs about 11 ounces (310 grams). For a *Barosaurus*, the heart would have to weigh tons. Also, the blood vessels would have to be extraordinarily thick. It is difficult to believe that such conditions are possible.

Years ago, some scientists proposed that *Barosaurus* had eight hearts. They suggested a heart like ours pumped blood from the body to the lungs and back. Then they suggested a complicated series of seven other single-chamber hearts. One would be above the primary one with one-way valves to boost the blood into the neck. Above the second heart, the artery would divide into two branches. Three hearts along each branch would pump the blood to the next heart until it reached the brain. This arrangement would reduce the dinosaur blood pressure so that the systolic pressure would max out at about 180.

This proposal will always remain as just another imaginative idea because there may never be any way to test it. Each heart's pressure would have to be critically adjusted to move the blood to the next level. If the blood pressure went too high, it would damage the delicate valves of the next heart. If the animal ran, each heart would have to speed up, but not at the same rate.

The point is that the anatomical complexity and the number of critical parameters required would make this dinosaur's blood pressure system virtually impossible to happen by chance. They can better be explained by design.

Romantic Getaway Inside a Sponge



The Venus' flower basket (*Euplectella aspergillum*) is a deep ocean sponge with fascinating properties and an unusual symbiotic relationship with a pair of crustaceans. We call it a romantic get-away inside a sponge.

The Venus' flower basket is classified as a glass sponge because its body is made of silica, which is chemically the same as glass. The silica fibers are woven together to make a hollow, cylindrical vase-like structure. The fibers form a fine mesh which is rigid and strong enough to survive deep underwater.

Glassy fibers thin as a human hair but more flexible and sturdier than human-made optical fibers attach the sponge to the ocean floor. The sponge forms the fibers at ocean temperatures while human-made glass fibers require high-temperature furnaces to melt the glass. Human-made fibers are brittle while the sponge's fibers are more flexible. Scientists are studying these sponges to find ways to make better fiber-optic cables.

The Venus' flower basket lights its fibers using bioluminescence to attract prey. Even more interesting to us is the relationship these sponges have with some crustaceans called *Stenopodidea*. The Venus' flower basket holds captive two of these small shrimp-like creatures, one male and one female, inside the sponge's hollow mesh tube. The captive creatures clean the flower basket by eating the tiny organisms attracted by the sponge's light and consume any waste the sponge leaves. The sponge provides the crustaceans with protection from predators.

As the crustaceans spawn, their offspring are small enough to escape from the basket and find their own sponge-home where they grow until they are trapped. Because a pair of crustaceans spend their lives together inside the sponge, Asian cultures sometimes use a dried Venus' flower basket as a wedding gift to symbolize "till death do us part."

The Venus' flower basket and the crustaceans benefit each other by mutual cooperation, which we call symbiosis. One more thing, the bioluminescence comes from bacteria that the sponge collects. This amazing three-way partnership occurs deep under the ocean where humans have only recently explored. We think this romantic get-away inside a sponge is another evidence of divine design, not chance mutations.

News and Notes

STAY UP-TO-DATE ON NEWS AND NOTES. The stories in News and Notes are condensed from articles previously published on our website www.DoesGodExist.today. You can use the QR codes with each of these articles to see the original posts for more details and references. There are also many other interesting and informative articles on that website each day. We encourage you to follow us daily on “Does God Exist? Today.” On that website, you can also subscribe to our free weekly e-mail update. We call it “The Best of the Week from DOES GOD EXIST?” It contains links to the most popular of our posts on DGE? Today and our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/evidence4god](https://www.facebook.com/evidence4god)).

NEW INTEREST IN EXORCISM. In 1973, movie theaters were showing *The Exorcist* adapted from the novel by William Peter Blatty. There seems to be a new interest in exorcism because people have found they can use it to make a lot of money. A stage play based on Blatty’s novel has debuted in Los Angeles and London and is scheduled to go on tour. Meanwhile, the Vatican has opened its course on exorcism to members of Christian denominations which have included Lutherans, Anglicans, Greek Orthodox, and Pentecostals.

Those who study the Bible in-depth will find that there are clear statements that Jesus overcame all forces not from God and that these things would cease (see Zechariah 13:2; 1 Corinthians 13:8–10; Colossians 2:15; and 1 John 3:8). First Corinthians 10:13 says that everything that happens to us is a common experience of humanity. Demon possession requiring an exorcism is clearly not a common experience. James 4:7 tells us that we simply need to resist Satan, and he will flee from us.

Those who minimize this new interest in exorcism as a by-product of Catholic tradition need to understand that interest in the occult has grown. People write off the popularity of Harry Potter as an entertainment fantasy, but the number of people involved in the occult is huge. Requests for exorcisms in Indianapolis reported by the Archdiocese of Indianapolis exceeded 1700, and in Italy the number is more than 500,000 per year.

This false use of religion is as old as religion itself. In 1 Samuel 28, Saul goes to a woman who ran a séance to try to get advice for a battle. To the woman’s horror, the real deal (Samuel) shows up as a miracle. In Acts 19:13–16, a group of vagabond Jews try to use exorcism as part of their act, and the results are catastrophic. In Jesus’ day, exorcisms had a spiritual purpose to show the power of God over even those who were in spiritual trouble. Today, that purpose does not exist. As 1 Corinthians 10:13 tells us, Satan cannot attack us on a level that we cannot resist and overcome.



Source: “The New Wave of Exorcism,” by Stuart Vyse, *Skeptical Inquirer*, September/October 2019

NATURAL BALANCE. Among the design features built into the creation is that of avoiding over-eating of plants by herbivores or over-predation of herbivores by carnivores. Sometimes there are surprising ways of keeping balance in nature.

Did you know, for example, that bears help control the production of caterpillars? The Yellowstone National Park staff reports

that Yellowstone bears in August eat an astonishing 40,000 moths a day. The moths are migrating from grasslands over the mountains in Yellowstone, and they are actually above the timberline. This allows the bears to climb up and get easy nutrition as they prepare for hibernation in the coming winter. From an ecological standpoint, it limits how many caterpillars are produced, preserving plants for many animals in nearby grasslands.



Science continues to learn about how many factors are involved in keeping the balance of any ecosystem. The design of all ecosystems is so intricate that knowing how many checks and balances are required is almost impossible. Humans frequently have upset nature’s balance with catastrophic results. Who would have thought that bears above the timberline in Yellowstone National Park would make a massive contribution to the ecology of nearby grasslands? Keeping balance in nature requires God’s intelligent planning and design.

Source: <https://www.yellowstonepark.com/things-to-do/bears-eat-moths-in-august>



GALLUP POLL ON EVOLUTION. Here is a summary of the results from the latest Gallup poll on evolution conducted in June of 2019:

40% of those in the survey said they believed that “God created human beings pretty much in their present form at one time within the last 10,000 years or so.”

33% said they believed that “human beings have developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life, but God guided this process.”

22% said they believed that “human beings have developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life, but God had no part in this process.”

Atheists have pointed out that the 40% group were associated with lower educational levels, Protestantism, and weekly church attendance. The message the atheists are putting out is that those who believe in God are poorly educated recluses who hide in their church buildings and refuse to look at the evidence.

The Young Earth view that humans have been unchanged in the physical history on this planet is not held by most of the major



Protestant denominations. Assuming that the 40% represented all those who attend church weekly is a very bad assumption. The phrase “less advanced forms of life” is so ambiguous that we do not know whether they are talking about an amoeba or *Homo erectus*. The report includes a graph of the changes

to the way these questions have been answered since 1952. Whether the changes are because people have more facts or because the media have indoctrinated them is open to debate.

The **Does God Exist?** ministry is an effort to show that science and faith are friends and not enemies. We do not represent any denomination and try to be open to all kinds of evidence — scientific and biblical. We have materials at all educational levels, and our college-level correspondence course is available on our doesgodexist.org website. You can watch our video series covering questions of creation and God on our doesgodexist.tv website. All of these materials are free.



Source: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/261680/americans-believe-creationism.aspx>

YOU ARE A SPACESHIP. We have often referred to the excellent website apod.nasa.gov which daily features the “Astronomy Picture of the Day.” The August 18, 2019, post had an artistic rendition of a human with a star-filled background titled “Human as



Spaceship.” The opening line of the explanation is, “You are a spaceship soaring through the universe.”

The point of the presentation is that as we soar through the universe, we are not alone. We are the captains of our ships, our human bodies, because we are not a singular living organism.

There are a massive number of separate organisms that exist inside our bodies that do specific things for us. They help digest food, fight disease and infection, and carry vital materials on a liquid highway (your bloodstream) from one end of your body to the other. These organisms are the crew of your spaceship. They are bacteria, fungi, and archaea, and they actually outnumber your own cells. Science still does not know what many of those organisms do, but they have their own DNA, and together they make up the human microbiome.

God’s creation of the human body is not like the process of building a machine. To build a machine you would put together pre-manufactured parts in a prescribed way. To build a working and living human body requires a host of communities which do the jobs they were designed to do in ways that science is just beginning to understand. David said it best in Psalm 139:14: “... I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful.”



ABORTION INCONSISTENCIES. On August 2, 2019, a 29-year-old woman in Anderson, Indiana, was shot in the head by her boyfriend. She was 21 weeks pregnant, and her twins died before she did. The boyfriend was charged with the murder of his girlfriend, and two counts of murder/feticide for killing the twins. The dictionary defines feticide as the destroying of a fetus or the causing of an abortion. In Indiana, knowingly or intentionally killing a fetus in any developmental stage is murder. In some states, a baby can be put to death at the time of birth.

The inconsistency of abortion issues is very obvious. It is compounded by the refusal to deal with the evidence and the facts of conception and birth. You cannot defend the position that the fetus is an extension of the mother’s body. Morning sickness is because the woman’s body knows that the baby is a foreign entity.

When the sperm meets the egg, an individual is formed with a unique genome. Before birth, the unborn child is aware of much of what is going on in the world outside the mother’s body. There are other options available to a woman who has a baby inside her that she does not want to raise. As the father of three adopted children, I know the joy that any



child can bring to those couples who want to be parents but are unable to do so for medical reasons.

Following God's Word in marriage, sex, and family would solve the inconsistency of abortion issues. When we fail to follow God's instructions, compounding the damage by a violent, destructive solution is not wise.

FIREARMS ISSUE. In 1968 the number of deaths due to firearms in the United States was roughly 24,000. In 2017 the number of fatalities was roughly 40,000. In almost 50 years, there has been a dramatic increase that no one can deny. That leads to people placing blame for gun violence. What else has changed in those 50 years?

Some say that mental illness is the cause of the increase. I would suggest that we have always had the mentally ill with us. Some say that gun availability is the cause of this, but access to guns is much more restricted today than it was 50 years ago. So when placing blame for gun violence, we cannot completely point to those factors.

The one thing that has changed in the same time period is our country's fundamental faith in God. When you read our historical documents, you see a basic declaration of the importance of living by God's principles. Even though my father was an atheist, he grew up with a father who was a minister, and he believed and lived by the basic teachings of the Bible. In the last 50 years, we have been saturated with the doctrine propagated by the media and the educational establishment that humans are just animals. Along with that, goes the belief in survival of the fittest as the basic rule by which we should live. In the animal world, you generally do not see the notion that the less fit should be cared for and looked after by those who are fit. Everything from abortion to euthanasia is radically affected by what we believe about the worth of a human being. If educated leaders in the secular world want to eliminate those they see as unfit, how can we expect a mentally ill person not to embrace the same idea? The problem is how they identify the unfit.

“We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves” (Romans 15:1). That is a principle of Christianity and should be applied to both spiritual and physical weakness. In Matthew 25, when Jesus describes the basis of judgment by God, he said, “I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, ... I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick ... in prison and you came to visit me.” It is only when a person accepts the biblical concept that ALL human beings are created in the image of God, and therefore, ALL human life is sacred, that we can hope to see a change.



Thank you for your support during the past year. We pray that 2020 will be a great year for you and your family.

*John and Cynthia Clayton
Roland Earnst
Linda Glover
Karl Marcussen*

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Signed—Karl H. Marcussen, Managing Editor, October 9, 2019

This journal is a part of a program of service titled Does God Exist? The purpose of the program is to provide thinking, seeking people with scientific evidence that God does exist and that the Bible is His Word. It is our conviction that all men can logically and rationally believe in God. In addition to this bimonthly journal, the Does God Exist? program offers DVDs and video tapes, CDs and audio tapes, courses, books, and other materials. These materials are offered on a loan basis or at our cost. We also are more than willing to correspond with you and answer any specific question(s) you might have. If you would like further information on borrowing or purchasing these materials, we would be glad to send it to you. Check the boxes below to describe what you would like and mail it to us. We will get it right out to you.

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