

Series: I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist

Lesson 2: "There was a Beginning to All Things!"

***Announcements, encouragement to invite people and opening prayer.**



Connect: an opportunity for people to immediately interact and connect with each other; icebreaker/attention getters. **Icebreaker:** What do you tell someone who says that they cannot believe in a creator who was not created? He or it had to come from some point in time?

Transition: You see atheism is a faith that there was a nothing that became something at some point in time. Of course, now you are back to the problem with time being an eternal idea. Where did we come from? That brings us to the bottom line we want to build upon.

Bottom Line: If you don't know where you came from, why are you here and what does your life really matter?

LESSON PLAN

Establish the need for this study: There was a beginning to all things and even an atheist has to admit that. Now the point we want to explore is what was this beginning? I think we will find that it takes far too much blind faith to be an atheist. In fact, to not have faith is to make a choice to refuse to investigate the evidence. That's like picking some random person up off the street and declaring them guilty or innocent because a case needs solved. Just grab an idea and make a decision.

Read Isaiah 22:12-13

1. What did God call upon His people to do?

Sackcloth was a dark coarse cloth made from goat hair. Those acts were a sign of brokenness before God.

2. How were their actions an insult to God?

Question: How do Christians sometimes take a fatalist approach when they are overwhelmed?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:32



Series: I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist

Lesson 2: *"There was a Beginning to All Things!"*

3. Notice that Paul is using Isaiah's words about God's rebuke on Israel's unfaithfulness. What point is Paul trying to make with this argument on the resurrection of Jesus?

Question: If people don't believe in a Creator and in an afterlife, the resurrection of the dead in Christ, then what is the point of being good? How could goodness or a lack of it matter if all of life is headed toward a final distinction?

The 2nd Law of Thermal Dynamics states that all matter, all the universe is a fixed amount of energy that is slowly dissipating. The universe and all that is in it will one day just burn out. If that is true, then good and evil are completely irrelevant. Do you see how meaningless and even stupid it would be to live life as a moral and ethical atheist?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

4. What was the major truth Paul is telling the Christians to latch on to?
5. Who did Jesus appear to after Peter and the 12?

Question: It is recorded that every apostle except John suffered a martyr's death. Why would so many disciples, who were in hiding when Jesus died, live out the rest of their days willing to die for the name of Christ? What significance should that be to your faith?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19

6. Why would Paul say we are to be pitied above more than all men if Christ didn't raise from the dead?

Read 1 Corinthians 15:20-32

7. Once those who accept Christ as Lord, Creator and Savior have been gathered, what will Jesus then do?



Series: I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist

Lesson 2: *"There was a Beginning to All Things!"*

Question: There are people who refuse to believe in God because there is evil in the world. They cannot believe there was this wonderful Creator who would allow evil on earth. How could you use this information to help someone understand why evil exists?

What did Paul mean by those who were being baptized for the dead? Obviously, it is clearly taught that baptism has no meaning without the individual pledging a good conscience toward God. Baptism only has power when someone accepts the Scriptural teachings on Christ and declares Him Lord of their life. No one can do that on behalf of another, alive or dead. Therefore, there must be another explanation. The Apostles taught that baptism was an act of dying to self and being raised from the dead to a new life in Christ. The symbolism is pointing out that if the dead are not raised to life, if there is no resurrection what is the point of dying in baptism? It's meaningless if there is no death and resurrection in Christ.

So, the point is argued in Corinthians that life is meaningless if we do not understand where we came from, who created us and who it is that recreated us for His glory! Now let's get a closer look at the source of our beginning and our new beginning.

Read Hebrews 1:1-14

8. What were the 2 processes God used to communicate with us?

Many people miss the fact that God reveals that in the past, Old Testament times, He brought the voice of God through the prophets using various ways, dreams, visions, direct conversations like with Moses. At the time of Christ God now spoke directly through His Son, Jesus to us.

9. Who made the universe?

10. List on the board as many truths about Jesus being the Creator of all like as you can find in this passage.

Teleological Argument (Design Argument):

1. Every design had a designer. (*Even a pair of moccasins had someone cut out a design.*)
2. The universe has highly complex design. (*The universe and life is far more complex than a simple pair of moccasins that requires a designer.*)

Series: I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist

Lesson 2: *"There was a Beginning to All Things!"*

3. Therefore, the universe had a Designer. (*If something as simple as a pair of moccasins requires a designer, cells, DNA, and living beings must have a Designer.*)

"Only a rookie who knows nothing about science would say science takes away from faith. If you really study science, it will bring you closer to God." —James Tour, Nanoscientist (science that deals with atoms and molecules, seeing deeper into the cells of life.)

5 Truths about life:

1. **Oxygen level** – Oxygen level on earth is 21%. At 25% fires would spontaneously erupt and we would burn up. At 15% human beings would suffocate and die.
2. **Atmospheric Transparency** – If earth's atmosphere were less transparent, not enough solar radiation would reach the earth's surface. This would mean little vitamin D, a lack of sunshine for plant growth for food, health conditions, etc. If it were more transparent, we would be blasted with far too much solar radiation. Skin cancer would be rampant, crops burned up, we would end up barren and desolate, water evaporating, etc.
3. **Moon-Earth Gravitational Interaction** – If greater interaction between the earth and moon, tidal effects on the oceans, atmosphere, and the time of the earth's rotation would be too severe for life to exist. If interaction were less, the change in earth's orbit would cause climate instabilities that would destroy life on earth.
4. **Carbon Dioxide Level** – If higher CO₂ level, there would be a runaway greenhouse effect and we would all burn alive. If it were lower, plants would not be able to maintain photosynthesis and we would suffocate from lack of oxygen.
5. **Gravity** – If our gravity on earth was altered by not .01 percent, but 36 more 0's in front of that 1 hundredth, whatever that means, then our sun would not exist and neither would we. That is precision that neither man nor chance can produce!

Other Truths:

1. If Jupiter were not in its current orbit, the earth would be bombarded with space material. It acting like a cosmic vacuum cleaner for earth.
2. If the thickness of earth's crust were greater, too much oxygen would be transferred to the crust to support life. If thinner, it would be volcanoes and earthquakes all the time.
3. If the rotation of the earth took longer than 24 hours, temperatures between night and day would be too great. If shorter, wind speeds would be too great.



Series: I Don't Have Enough Faith to be an Atheist

Lesson 2: *"There was a Beginning to All Things!"*

4. The speed of light is 186,282 miles per second. If it were varied even slightly life on earth could not exist.
5. The earth stays at a 23 degree tilt. If altered slightly, surface temperatures on earth would be too extreme for life.
6. If the atmospheric discharge from lightening rate were greater the fires would be devastating for life on earth. If they were less, there would be too little nitrogen in the soil for growing food.
7. Even earthquakes are essential for life. The seismic activity provides critical nutrients from the ocean floor and river run off to sustain life.

Closing – Prayer of thankfulness for the wisdom of God and His creative powers that He not only used to create and sustain life, but for His creation of a chance to live forever outside this life!