**truth or Truth Week #4 Notes (Moral Argument and Miracles)**

Book recommendations:

Mere Christianity - C.S. Lewis

Miracles - C.S. Lewis

Miracles - Eric Metaxas

Review:

What is apologetics?

1 Peter 3:15: “....but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.”

* “defense” - apologia - reasoned statement or speech in defense of a belief
* “reason” - Logos, logic, reason, understanding

We do apologetics because the world demands it, the Bible commands it

Worldview - The lens through which you see the world; basic assumptions you make about the world. Every worldview must answer:

1. Where did we come from?
2. Who are we?
3. Why are we here?
4. How should we live?
5. Where are we going? What is our destiny

Theist - God made all

Pantheist - God is all

Atheist - No God at all

Agnostic - Someone who is unsure of the question of God

What is truth? Truth - a belief or thought that corresponds with reality. “Telling it like it is”

All truth is absolute truth, (Things are either true or they are false). Truth is discovered, not invented. Truth is rooted in reality.

**Cosmological Argument**:

1. Everything that has a beginning has a cause
2. The Universe began to exist
3. Therefore, the universe had a cause

**Teleological Argument**:

1. Every design had a designer
2. The universe is a highly complex design
3. Therefore the universe had a designer

Scientific naturalism/materialism - The doctrine that nothing exists except matter and its movements and modifications.

Science can’t explain everything. How far can science even bring us?

Bertrand Russell said, “What science cannot tell us mankind cannot know” This is not a statement of science, so if it’s true, it’s false.

Nobel Prize Winning Biologist Peter Medawar: “It’s so easy to see the limits of science. It cannot answer the questions of a child… Where am I coming from? What is the meaning of life? Where am I going to?  We need to go outside of science.”

**Argument from Desire**:

If we take an honest look at our hearts, most people find that there is a deep desire that we can’t quite find the object of.

This desire experienced not when we are miserable but when we are happy - looking at a sunset, a beautiful work of art, piece of music, a baby’s face. It’s like smelling a delicious meal that you haven’t gotten to eat yet.

These things seem to be pointing to something beyond themselves… bigger, better or more perfect.

Human desire can classified 2 categories.

1. Artificial desire: Based on something that doesn’t need to be there and varies from person to person. Based on suggestion or personal preference (advertising, fiction etc…).
2. Natural desire: Based on human nature and universal to everyone. These desires correspond to an actual object that exists that can satisfy the desire, like food, water, friendship, sex, rest, and justice. All of those desires correspond with something real. Hunger proves that food exists.

Since most people have this deep longing, If we put those two things together, we can conclude that the experience of that deep longing and object that can satisfy it must exist. It must be something that transcends our comprehension. We call this God.

“If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.” - C.S. Lewis

Einstein understood the limits of science: “You can speak of the ethical foundations of science but you cannot speak of the scientific foundations of ethics.”

**Moral argument**:

1. If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist
2. Objective moral values and duties do exist
3. Therefore God exists

Premise #1: If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist.

Objective moral values: Standards of right and wrong that are true whether or not someone believes in them or not. They are binding on all people.

You can only know if a stick is crooked if you know what a straight stick looks like. You have to have a perfect standard by which you measure imperfect.

Without a moral law giver, morality is just my opinion vs. yours.

The moral outworking of Darwinian Evolution is survival of the fittest.

“If Nature does not wish that weaker individuals should mate with the stronger, she wishes even less that a superior race should intermingle with an inferior one; because in such a case all her efforts, throughout hundreds of thousands of years, to establish an evolutionary higher stage of being, may thus be rendered futile….He would live must fight. He who does not wish to fight in this world , where permanent struggle is the law of life, has not the right to exist.” - Hitler, Mein Kampf

Only if God exists, and there is a Supreme Judge of the world who gives the law and whose very nature and character is the “straight stick” by which we can recognize the “crooked stick” can we have any concept of morality at all.

Premise #2: Objective moral values and duties do exist

“The universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference.” - Atheist Richard Dawkins

The moral law is written on our hearts. Romans 2

Societies all develop different moral standards. It’s the moral law that we can use to decide which standards of the particular society are right or wrong.

Martin Luthor King Jr.: “One has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws” and “Never forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was legal.”

It’s easy to SAY there are no objective morals but it’s very difficult if not impossible to LIVE as if there are no objective morals

Conclusion: Therefore God exists

C.S. Lewis: “[As an atheist] my argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust?”

Our arguments rule out Atheism, Agnosticism and Pantheism. This leaves Theism.

There can only be one infinite and all powerful being.

**Monotheism** - 3 religions fall under Monotheism. Judaism, Islam and Christianity.

The theistic being that most fits with our arguments has all the characteristics of the God of the Bible.

1. Judaism - Torah and Talmud
2. Christianity - Bible
3. Islam - Quran

God authenticated his message with miracles.

M**iracles**

Miracles are something unique to God, because only He can do them...He is the only being not bound to the laws of the universe.

What is the greatest miracle in the Bible? The Resurrection? Actually the resurrection is relatively minor compared to what God did in Genesis 1:1. Genesis 1:1 is probably the most important verse in the whole Bible. If it’s true, then every verse that follows it is possible….

“It’s no problem turning water into wine if you can make water out of nothing.” - Norm Geisler

Miracle- a special act of God that interrupts the normal course of events.

John Lennox on miracles: "Miracles do not violate the laws of nature. The laws of nature are our descriptions of what normally happens when nobody intervenes"

Providential events: Events that God causes indirectly, not directly, accomplished by natural laws.

Satanic signs - Satan is limited in power. Satan can play tricks and mimic miracles, but he can’t create life or raise the dead. Pharaoh’s magicians were able to imitate the first two plagues, but were unable to mimic the third which involved creating life. The magicians acknowledged this by calling it the “finger of God”. Exodus 8:19

A true miracle:

* will glorify God, and a  Satanic sign will glorify the person.
* Will cause someone to think more highly of God, worship God, be honest and promote moral behavior. A satanic sign is usually associated with immoral behavior and error.

Miracle mimics:

* Psychosomatic symptoms, sleight of hand, anomalies.

The Bible and miracles:

* There are 250 recorded miracles in the Bible. Most of these miracles occur in a very small window of history, during three distinct time periods. Specifically, the life of Moses, Elijah and Elisha, Jesus and the apostles, to confirm that the message was true. This was God’s way of authenticating His message which would end up becoming our Bible.

Of course God still does miracles. He is God and he can do a miracle whenever he wants to. But the miracles were so intense, huge and prolific during those times to serve the purpose of confirming the message.