

## “Is There A God?”

The Church obviously believes that God exists. And a particular God, at that. One that has revealed himself to the world in a very specific way.

However, this God is not surprised by our skepticism, doubt, and cynicism. In fact, he expects that he will need to go to tremendous lengths to persuade each human heart that he is alive and personally involved with us all.

In the Gospels of the New Testament, we have a record of the many times Jesus confronted the religious unbelief of his family, his students, his friends, and the leaders of his day. In these conflicts, Jesus made outrageous assertions. Not only about God’s existence, but also about how he was making himself known. “Don’t you know me...? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” (*John 14:9*)

Before we look at this week’s Bible passages, reflect or discuss, “*What things in your life have convinced you to take your current stance on **God’s existence**—be that **belief or unbelief?***”

## Psalm 19

*To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.*

<sup>1</sup> The heavens declare the glory of God,  
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

<sup>2</sup> Day to day pours out speech,  
and night to night reveals knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> There is no speech, nor are there words,  
whose voice is not heard.

<sup>4</sup> Their voice goes out through all the earth,  
and their words to the end of the world.

In them he has set a tent for the sun,  
<sup>5</sup> which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,  
and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

<sup>6</sup> Its rising is from the end of the heavens,  
and its circuit to the end of them,  
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

<sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD is perfect,  
reviving the soul;

the testimony of the LORD is sure,  
making wise the simple;

<sup>8</sup> the precepts of the LORD are right,  
rejoicing the heart;

the commandment of the LORD is pure,  
enlightening the eyes;

<sup>9</sup> the fear of the LORD is clean,  
enduring forever;

the rules of the LORD are true,  
and righteous altogether.

<sup>10</sup> More to be desired are they than gold,  
even much fine gold;

sweeter also than honey  
and drippings of the honeycomb.

<sup>11</sup> Moreover, by them is your servant warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.

1. Psalm 19 was written by King David around 1000BC and its theme is how God reveals Himself. Read vv.1-6. What do these verses say about how God is known? What can be known about God from created things?
  
2. We heard in Sunday’s sermon that the enjoyment of beautiful things evokes a God-given longing in people. A deep longing that that nothing in this world can satisfy. What is something—anything-- that you find beautiful? Why is it beautiful? What does this beautiful thing tell you about the One who created all things and what you long for?
  
3. Read vv.7-11. What do these verses say about how God is known? What can be known about God from His Word?

## Romans 1:16-23

<sup>16</sup>For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup>For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith.”

<sup>18</sup>For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup>For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup>For his invisible

attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. <sup>21</sup>For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup>Claiming to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup>and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

1. Read vv.18-21. What evidence for God do we have as human beings? Why does Paul say we are “without excuse”?
2. Re-read v. 20. What does Paul say we can figure out by looking at the world? What cannot be known?
3. Read vv.21-23. What happened to human beings who reject worship of the True God?
4. What are some examples of the “images” referenced in v.23 (“idols” or “functional gods”)? What kinds of things happen when a group of people agree on idols?
5. Paul sets all of this in contrast to “the gospel... the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (vv.16-17). What is “the gospel”? What does the gospel tell us about the true God?

## Going A Step Further...

- At WEPC, we begin each worship service with a Scripture reading. We do this because we believe that God Himself has brought us together and He always has the first word in our meeting. **Read this week’s Call to Worship** from [Hebrews 1:1-3](#). This passage helps us answer the question, “Which God are we worshipping?” What do these verses tell us about who God is and what He does?
- Each week in worship we read another Bible passage to complement the sermon text. **This week’s Gospel Reading** came from [John 8:52-59](#), where **Jesus makes some important claims about God’s existence, identity and presence**. What is the significance of Jesus statement in verse 58, “before Abraham was born, I am!”? Why did the crowd seek to kill Jesus immediately afterward?
- As a part of worship **we sing songs and hymns that further amplify each Sunday’s message**. This week, we sang John Newton’s powerfully honest hymn, “[Help My Unbelief](#)”, written by Newton as a reflection on [Mark 9:24](#). In this song, [Newton identifies fear, hard-heartedness, lack of love and restlessness](#) as some of the reasons we are unable to have faith. What issues of the heart inhibit faith for you? Take time to confess the ways you struggle with unbelief, and ask God to grant repentance and faith.

Questions about this week’s study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, [kevin@wepc.org](mailto:kevin@wepc.org)  
To hear sermons and access past study guides visit [www.wepc.org/archivedsermons](http://www.wepc.org/archivedsermons)

## Sermon Notes

*This week, Steve Shelby preached on Psalm 19 & Romans 1:16-23*

- A few words about the existence of God: The God of the Bible & The God of the Gospel.
- The philosopher Alvin Plantinga believes that there are no proofs of God that will convince all rational persons. However, he believes that there are at least two or three dozen very good arguments for the existence of God.
- What about beauty? Doesn't the unfulfillable longing evoked by beauty qualify as an innate desire? We have a longing for joy, love and beauty that no amount or quality of food, sex, friendship, or success can satisfy. We want something that nothing in this world can satisfy.
- The God of the Bible: He is there; He speaks; He creates; He reveals; He is personal. So what is the problem?
- The God of the Gospel
- Jesus' self-sacrifice demonstrates decisively the seriousness with which God deals with sin. II Corinthians 5:21 says, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God". Jesus became what we are so that we might become what he is. This exchange demonstrates not only God's wrathful disposition to ward sin but also his gracious disposition toward sinners.
- The Old Testament looked forward to this & the New Testament reveals this to us.
- "Christianity is the only major religion to have at its central event the humiliation of its God." (*Bruce Shelley*)