

Put God to the Test

by Shane Idleman

Shane Idleman explores the relationship between faith and science, encouraging believers to test God's promises and the evidence of creation.

Duration: 47:17

Scripture: Deuteronomy 30:19, Psalm 14:1, Isaiah 53:5, John 3:16, Romans 8:16, Romans 10:9, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:8-9, Hebrews 11:3, 1 Peter 1:3

Topics: "Creation Science", "Gods Love"

Description

This sermon delves into the evidence for creation, the harmony between science and faith, and the transformative power of a relationship with God. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the depth of God's love and the significance of the sacrifice of Jesus. The speaker addresses common questions and challenges regarding faith, morality, and the concept of hell, providing insightful explanations rooted in Scripture and historical evidence.

Transcript

I've got so much to say this evening, but I want to just give a brief introduction. I've narrowed everything down, so it's not going to be a long message. But the reason why we want to put something like this together is not just for those who are here, but to reach out.

This reaches out internationally and nationally, and to give people a different angle, a different side of the creation debate. We want to give people answers, and not just be confused about different things. But I want to clarify two things first.

Number one, testing God is not a good thing in the context of testing His patience. The whole idea of putting this together was many times throughout the Bible, God says, taste and see that I am good. Test Me and I will show you that I am faithful.

The book of Malachi talks about testing God in the area of finances. So in the good sense of, okay, Lord, You show me, let me test what Your Word says against what we see. It's a good thing.

God will always pass that test. And I'm also not here to disprove science. Okay, there's a lot of rumors going out there that, come here this guy disproves science.

No, that's not going to happen. What I'm wanting to do is show you that science and faith can be married. They actually go together.

And what a lot of, especially the younger generation forgets, if you research scientists, many, many years ago, hundreds of years ago, men such as Copernicus, Collins, Kepler, Galileo, Bacon, Pascal, Newton, Pasteur, do they sound familiar? They all believed in a Creator. That's why they wanted to get into science, to better understand their Creator. Here's the key I really want you to take away from this.

Science answers how? Science answers how something happened. Faith answers why it happened. Now, I was just reading a good book this week, and I put down this example, I don't remember the author's name, but I want to give them credit on this analogy, and it's perfect for what we're talking about.

He talked about baking a cake. Have you ever baked a cake? Let's just use that imagery for a minute. If I bake a cake, I can get a nutritionist to come and tell me what's in the cake, right? And it's not going to be good, right? Partially hydrogenated oils, food coloring, that's a different message though, we'll focus on science.

So the nutritionist is going to tell you what's in it. The chemist might come and tell you the chemical makeup of the cake. I might even be able to get a mathematician to come and tell me the numbers that work in order to keep this big cake from falling over.

But if I were to ask all of them, why was the cake made? What would they tell me? We don't know. We don't know why it was made. So see, that's why science and faith are married.

Science tells us how something has happened. It's very good. I encourage you to educate yourself in the area of science.

But faith tells us why something happened. And I'm going to use, I don't know how many of you were at the debate here in March, a couple of quotes. I want to use them again this time.

I'm not in a rush, trying to be limited by the time clock. But Stephen Meyer said something that I don't think many people embraced or quite understood. He has a PhD, and he's from Cambridge University.

A PhD from Cambridge University. He said that most biologists who specialize in origin of life research now reject chance as a possible explanation for the origin of the information in the DNA. Most biologists who specialize in origin of life now reject chance as being a contributing factor.

They reject that. So now somebody up here like me comes up, and we say the same thing, but we're stupid. We're ignorant.

Oh my gosh, I can't believe you believe this. Well, men, great men and women of times gone past believe that there is a creator because they see the evidence. But I must clarify first what I mean by science.

Because many of you are thinking one thing, I'm thinking something different maybe. But I researched this on Berkeley, on their website, different other secular scientist organizations. The definition, I tried to take everything and simplify it.

Science attempts to explain through logic, through consistency, and through a systematic investigation of data using experiments to arrive at a well-tested explanation. So science uses logic, right? What makes sense? We are given, I believe, God-given logic for a reason. To use our minds, use this thing that God

has given us.

So we have logic, consistency. Does it happen? Is it going to be consistent? And a systematic investigation of the information they have. Take gravity, for example.

If you jump off a building, what's going to happen? You're going to fall. Logic. OK, this is not a good idea, right? Watermelon, a feather.

It's consistent. It's logical. It makes sense.

We're investigating it. That's how we came up. You can't see gravity.

How did they come up with the law of gravity? By testing this whole format here. Logic, consistency, and investigation. And that's what I want to do tonight and put God's word to the test.

Science asks two questions. What would we expect? And does the explanation match what we observe? Good questions, right? What would we expect? I'm going to drop a watermelon off the building. What do I expect? And I do it, it explodes.

Then does the explanation match what we observe? Here's the interesting thing about evolution. We've never, ever observed evolution. It's a theory.

Charles Darwin said, I think this is how life developed. I think this is how it happened. We've never seen.

You don't go to the ocean. Is that fish almost a frog? And they're transitioning there. And honestly, I'm not trying to poke fun or anything.

I have respect for people that disagree. But we don't see this process. Now, what do they do? Time then becomes the magic wand.

Bippity boopity bop, right? We'll just add billions of years on it and then it can happen. So you just put a whole bunch of years on it and it can happen. But that doesn't make sense logically.

Consistently, we don't see it. There's no way to investigate the data. So there's three areas I will put to the test.

And you can start writing down the Q&A questions on these areas if you'd like, or other areas if you want. Just don't talk about Trump and the National Anthem and politics, right? Any other questions open? Creation evidence. Let's put creation evidence.

What I mean by that is there is evidence for creation, right? A friend of mine hasn't been here in a couple years. He drove through the valley. He said, Shane, what in the world are those solar panels out on the west side? I mean, have you seen that? Would I say, you know what? I have no idea.

One day, they just started, and here they are. We just don't know. So see, the creation itself is evidence.

Nobody would say this theater just came together. How much more the universe and the gift of life, all that just coming together is not logical. It does not make sense from a scientific standpoint even.

We have never seen something come from nothing. We've never seen something come from nothing. And explosions, they say a big bang or something happened, and explosions never create order.

If anything explodes, it's not going to create perfect order and perfect harmony. It actually goes against that. So logic, come on, let's use logic, and we see that these things just are not possible.

So now what we do is we compare it to the Bible, Romans 1.20. For since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, me and you, His eternal power and Godhead so that we are without excuse. This is amazing. God says, listen, the creation of the world, for since the creation of the world, His invisible attributes are clearly seen.

That's why no matter where you go across this globe, people have a moral compass. It's clear that something did this. So we are without excuse because of that living testament of creation.

And people say, why doesn't God just show me? Why doesn't God just show me, right? Why this mystical thing? I have a feeling if God showed up as a million mile high God, and we'd say, oh, look at that. Listen to me, right? We'd say, oh, NASA's playing a trick on us. Right up there with we didn't go to the moon and the world is flat, right? And George Bush took down the Twin Towers.

And all these conspiracies. No, that's NASA. They're shooting some beam up there that's fooling us.

No matter how God revealed Himself, we believe in His Son. They still don't believe. So we have to be careful in this area because there is proof.

Who put these chairs together? I mean, think about what we're discussing. Hebrews 11.3, by faith. By faith, we understand that the universe was formed at God's command.

Here's where it gets interesting. People, they'll say, that's just blind faith. You're an idiot.

It's not blind faith because I'm having faith in what I see. I see. Have you ever studied the sun, the temperature? 93 million miles away.

10,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Everything's just right. The moon, the stars, the gravitational pull, life, conception, birth, the morality.

All these things, see, I see this and I have faith and trust in the Creator. It's not blind faith. It's supported by what we see.

So the scientific questions. What would we expect? Does the biblical explanation of creation match what we observe? Yes, it does. And I'm actually in a month or so going to be starting a series entitled In the Beginning to show, in the book of Genesis, to show many of these things.

A quote I read in March I want to read again. Anthony Flew, have any of you heard of him? Well, before Hawkins and Dawkins and all these famous atheists, this man was the world's most famous atheist. Here's what he said.

In 2004, he left atheism. He said, the integrated complexity of life itself, which is far more complex than the physical universe, can only be explained in terms of an intelligent design. He left atheism.

And I just listed all those. I had actually two pages of all the scientists, PhDs who believe in a Creator. It just grows and grows and grows.

So it's not some narrow-minded, ignorant group of people that are believing something. It is scientists, it is Christians that acknowledge what the Bible says. So we don't check our brains at the door.

We see the consistency and we see the logic of a Creator. See, using the same things as science, logically, somebody put this here, and we see consistently that His Word is true. I want to take a minute and show you a picture of a stained glass window in St. Peter's Church, if we can get that up.

Stained glass window, double helix of your DNA. That is in your body. Creator created the stained glass window.

But that just happened? Just came about on its own? That's in your DNA. At the molecular level in your body, that's what the Creator did. It screams Creator.

Let me show you, last time I was rushed on this too, but I want to go back and give you a few Bible references that confirm science. And I'm going to throw a challenge out there to you. And I threw it out there in March.

I've thrown it out before. Show me one Scripture in the Bible that is wrong from a scientific viewpoint. Biological viewpoint.

One Scripture. Don't Google it. Just think.

We're watching to see if you get it on your phones. Because see, the Bible is consistent. It confirms what science already teaches.

For example, Job said that the earth free floats in space. And Isaiah said that the earth is a spear. Right? But this is in a time when they believed that it was held up by a turtle.

Or by a god. But this passage was written, Isaiah was probably 2,700 years ago. Hebrews talks about tiny unseen particles that appear in the creation of life.

That would be nuts to say something, tiny unseen particles that appear in the creation of life. We don't even see it. But now, you know what the smallest thing they measure is? A quark, right? It's called a quark.

It's 43 billion billionths of a centimeter. They really can't even see it. When I was looking into this, they actually get these going at the speed of light and run them into each other.

And then the little streaks that they make, that's how they measure what they are. What about in Leviticus? It says to wash with running water to prevent disease. In 1850, a man saved many lives with three words.

Wash your hands. Doctors were going straight from the morgue to the delivery room. With these.

Women were dying. People are already going to tweet and Facebook a whole bunch of stuff on this anyway. But, I think it was astronomical numbers of children dying there in the hospitals.

And the guy said, wash your hands. The Bible teaches it. Getting rid of disease.

Psalms 8 talks about the paths of the sea. Now, thousands of years ago, what is he talking about? The paths of the sea. That makes no sense.

Well, in 1855, Matthew Marey wrote the first textbook on modern oceanography. Why did he do this? In his words, Psalm 8 stuck in my mind. Whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.

He saw that. He studied it. He found it.

What about Genesis? Our bodies are made from the earth. Sharing 28 base and trace elements with the earth. That's why people say we're just stars.

We're stardust. We have that we share that. And you look to the Bible account.

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And they became a living soul. That word soul is nephesh in the Hebrew language.

They became a living person. God breathed into them the breath of life. So to say our body shares many of the same chemicals in the soil, this says this is why God... Now, if you're like me, you're going, unbelievable.

Unbelievable. But I'm not as concerned about the questions I have about the Bible. I'm more concerned about the things I do know.

The nature of God and the character of God. So here's a few more. Think about this.

Jeremiah. The stars are innumerable. Do you know they mocked that for many years? The stars are innumerable.

Kepler, a scientist, Kepler, guesstimated there was 1,005. See, science is changing to catch up. 1,000 stars.

Oh, good guess. Do you have any clue how many there are now? I mean, the number is astronomical. The Bible is full of errors.

Have you heard that? The Bible is full of errors, yet nobody wants to provide the errors because that becomes an excuse so I don't have to obey what it says. That's the reason people say it. It's full of excuses so I don't have to listen to it.

No, it's actually not. And I challenge you to think of one and bring it up at the question and answer. Now, everything I just read in the Bible, all these Scriptures that reference creation, compare this to what they used to do say in ancient Egypt.

Have you heard of bloodletting? You had a disease? Let's cut you open. Let the blood drain out. How about trepanation? They would bore holes in your skull to get rid of the evil spirits.

One of my favorites is animal dung ointments. Mom, I just cut my arm. Hey, run out to the grass, grab the dog stuff, and bring it in.

Or corpse medicine. They would take parts of dead bodies and make a medicine for people. See, they're off the wall.

They're trying. The man is lost without God. But the Bible stands the test of time historically, archaeologically, prophetically, scientifically.

And we're not throwing our brains out the door and believing some fallacy. This is confirmed by science. Now, the biggie, the flood test.

The flood that people mock. Well, do you know you can test that? What would we expect? Does the explanation match what we observe? We'd expect the fossil record to match the biblical account, would we not? Fossil record. Most, even atheists will agree that something cataclysmic happened.

I mean, just millions of fossils are just buried. And in order to generate a fossil, you have to be buried quickly in order for the tissue and the muscle, that'll eventually leave it at some point. But the skeletal remains begin to dig into the sedimentary rock.

They begin to lay in there and then when you explore and open that rock, you see the fossils. You see the imprint of that animal. And it has to happen very quickly.

So the majority of fossils are all mixed together with no transitional form. This proves creation. What I mean by transitional form, you'll hear that a lot.

You find fossils of just about everything. But you don't see a half frog and a half bird. You don't see a bird that almost became a fish.

Or you don't see anything transitioning. You see the animal in their complete fossilized form. There's nothing transitioning in the evolutionary process.

And something that many people that believe in evolution do not want to do is look at the Cambrian explosion. The Cambrian layer, there's a layer underneath the Cambrian layer. It's called the Precambrian layer.

There's only microorganisms found in fossils. But then they have the Cambrian layer that atheists, scientists, have looked at this and converted. There's got to be something to this because you see this massive explosion of life all in the fossil record.

Where did it come from? There's no beginning stages and middle and they're building up. It's just this entire layer. It's called Cambria because they found this discovery in the Welsh people in Wales.

And then in China, it has the biggest one of this massive amount of animals that have died. Quickly. So, see, it's not checking brains at the door.

You don't have to feel like an idiot. This is all substantiated by science. Darwin in 1859.

Charles Darwin who wrote Origin of the Species said, if it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous successive slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down. What he's saying, if you can prove, and he wrote this 150 years ago, or so, 160 years ago, I believe. If you can prove that any complex organ like me or a fish or anything, if you can prove that it can't develop over time through little variations, you know, a single cell, and then it becomes more, and then it becomes more.

If you can prove that, then my whole theory would fall apart. You didn't know 150 years later, we would still not be able to do that. We don't see that.

We can't prove that. It's a theory in crisis. This is all... Well, I don't even want to get started on that.

Let me get back on track. We see that a cataclysmic event occurred where things died rapidly. The flood.

Why are seashells found on Mount Everest? Did you know that? Seashells on Mount Everest or in the Grand Canyon. It's everywhere. It gives evidence to a worldwide flood.

The Grand Canyon's limestone layer contains tens of millions of fossils with nearly one in seven fossil being vertical. These were buried rapidly. Now, let me just give you a few quotes from scientists while I'm on this topic.

Alan Sadege, if I pronounce it wrong, I apologize. He was the winner of the Crawford Prize in Astronomy. Might know what he's saying, right? I find it quite improbable that such order came out of chaos.

There has to be some organizing principle. Exactly. God to me is a mystery, but it is the explanation for the miracle of existence.

Why there is something instead of nothing. Arno Penzias. He's a Nobel Prize.

He won a Nobel Prize in Physics. Astronomy leads us to a unique event. A universe which was created out of nothing.

One with the very delicate balance needed to provide exactly the conditions required to permit life. And one which has an underlying, one might say supernatural plan. These are PhDs.

These are scientists. Nobel Prize in Physics. Here's the irony.

We have the answers that make sense. Logic. And scientists in all areas confirm it, yet we appear foolish.

But others say that something came from nothing, illogical, and they appear intellectual. It's a twisting of all of this. So why the difference? Why some scientists this, why some scientists don't believe that? In my opinion, some are open and teachable.

Others have so much hatred towards God that they'll find any reason to denounce Him. That's the truth. That's why there's a huge split in this area.

That scripture I quoted before, it upsets some people, but you know, known for that I guess. Psalm 14.1, the fool says in his heart, there is no God. Basically here, the fool means lacking good sense.

So a person who lacks good sense looks at things, makes a logical assessment, and says there's no God. That is foolish. Richard Dawkins, it is absolutely safe to say that if you meet somebody who claims not to believe in evolution, that person is ignorant, stupid, or insane.

So much for civil dialogue. So that is the creation evidence in a nutshell, which leads me to the next point, the moral evidence. This is huge.

The moral evidence. See, no matter where you go across the globe, every society has good and evil. They have a hero.

They have a villain. The morality is written somehow in our DNA. Somehow, we know that there is a good, there is an evil.

There is something. No matter where you go. So what, as they say, if you have a moral law, you have to have a moral law giver.

Somebody has to give that moral law. And I read a quote last time from Francis Collins. He is one of the top geneticists and he's the head of the Human Genome Project.

This project is a massive study of the DNA structure and mapping out the DNA. He might know something on this topic, right? He said, I had started this journey of intellectual exploration to confirm my atheism. That now lay in ruins as the argument from the moral law forced me to admit the plausibility of the God hypothesis.

These are top guys in their field. So here the why is answered. Science answers how.

Here the why is answered. Faith and morality answer many deep questions of the heart. We understand evil.

It explains suffering. Why am I here is answered. See, science doesn't answer those.

Why am I here? Why evil? Why suffering? How could a good God, you fill in the blank. It doesn't answer any of that. Science just says how.

But this is where the why is answered. Again, if there are moral laws, then there is a moral law giver. Deuteronomy 30, 19 says, this day I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing.

Choose life that you may live. It's given that choice of morality. And it's interesting on this issue of morality, morality, truth, let's just say truth, is not flexible.

Truth is not flexible. It doesn't bend. It's not relative.

It's not, you know, somebody comes and pushes me off the stage, you know, that's wrong. Well, it's not wrong for me. What's wrong for me might not be wrong for you.

Relative, everything changes. No, truth is not relative. Truth is not flexible.

Try pulling that on gravity. Boy, that law of gravity sure is rigid. I'm tired of that two plus two equaling four.

That is just so exclusive, so narrow-minded. I can't believe that you all go for that. See, truth by definition is exclusive.

It has to be. Truth is restrictive. It has to be.

So logic, consistency, and a systematic investigation of moral data proves that there is a Creator because of the moral, you look at the consistency. You look at the Genesis 3, the temptation and fall of man. Man was given the opportunity to listen to God.

Man disobeyed. Man fell into sin. That sin has permeated all aspects of our life.

That makes sense. That's why we're dying spiritually. That's why we're dying physically.

See, it all lines up with Scripture. It confirms the data. See, why do we check our brains at the door when it comes to this? Logically, consistently, throughout Scripture, we see this confirmed.

Rejecting God has nothing to do with facts, but everything to do with the fact that we don't want there to be a God. And I would just encourage you this evening. That's one of the reasons I came here is to just lovingly challenge is somebody mad at God? Why don't they want there to be a God? That's why a message of love has become a message of hate.

That's exactly why a message of love has become a message of hate. 2 Timothy 3, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. When you hold the line and you hold to truth, you hold to morality, the culture will mock you.

Come live in my shoes for a week. You'll see exactly what I'm talking about. They'll mock you.

They'll disdain you. They hate you. Because you're standing for what God says is right.

So we look at these things. And you have to think of something. There's something, I don't remember where I saw it in a philosophy study maybe.

Something can be uncaused, self-caused, or caused by another. So uncaused means nothing caused it. Self-caused means I caused it, created myself, but that's impossible.

So you can't have those two. The only other option is somebody else caused the creation of the universe. Somebody else caused the creation of humanity.

So that's the creation evidence. And then we have the moral evidence. So see, scientifically, logically, it makes sense.

And then you take the third element to really drive the point home. And that is the internal heart evidence. This is my passion in this area.

Have you ever thought about that for a minute? Billions have been transformed by the message of the Gospel. The message of the Bible has transformed billions of lives. Any scientist that would see those results would look at those results with interest, not disdain.

They would consider that. Look at these lives that have been changed. Here's the problem.

This might help some people this evening. Here's where the rubber meets the road. This is where you'll hear words like hypocrisy.

Have you ever heard that word? Have you ever been called that? See, people can have a knowledge of God, right? They have the knowledge of God, but they don't have, and they have the morality. So, okay, yeah, I believe in God, and I'm a, ready? Good person. So I have the morality.

So they have both of those, but they've never been changed by the power of God. They don't have a relationship with them. With God.

Or the person that has morality knows of creation, and they also have been changed from the inside out. They have a relationship with God. And they're doing good.

They're doing good for a year, and then somebody sees them get angry. Ah, see, hypocrite. No, that's a struggler.

That's a person who struggles. The Bible says we have inside of us the flesh and the spirit, and this is warring against each other, and our choices are never free from that conflict. So see, it confirms the Scripture.

I see this battle within. I read the Bible. It confirms the Scripture.

But that's the difference, too, between just throwing it out there. Christianity, because you're thinking, what about all the other religions? All the other religions have creation. They believe in some type of higher power, some type of God, and they have a code of morality to reach that God, but they lack the relationship.

They don't have, it's a relationship, God. That's the difference. All other religions say do, do, do.

Christianity says done, done, done by the finished work of Christ on the cross. That's the difference. And then we experience God when we repent of our sin, when we're born again.

We experience God. And so you can't take that out of the equation because it lines up with Scripture. I liken it to a time when I told my daughter not to touch the hot oven, right? She believed it was hot, but it wasn't until she touched it that she knew it was hot.

See, that's where many people live. They live in that I know there's got to be a Creator, and I try to be a good person, but they miss the relational aspect of God. So when we look at the Bible, what would we expect? Does the explanation match what we observe? Well, 2 Corinthians 5.17, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. So when a person believes and they're filled with God's Spirit, they read the Bible and they go, yes, that's what happened to me.

This tremendous burden of sin and guilt and shame has been removed. That's what it's talking about. I can relate to that.

See, so you have the internal evidence that confirms Scripture. Romans 10.9, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. See, this isn't theoretical.

I'm sorry, I've got a lot of terms in my mind. This isn't just theoretical pie in the sky. This is people.

Why in the world do you think I'm here? I mean, we're not charging anything. We spent a lot of money. I'm getting berated all over Facebook.

For what reason? Why? Do I enjoy this? We have to use a P.O. box? My kids think I might get hurt tonight? You think I enjoy that? The reason is His Word is in my heart like a burning fire. It's shed up in my bones. I'm weary of holding it back and I cannot.

And I only say that to encourage you because you can't have a relationship with Christ. I was a prodigal son. I was in all kinds of partying.

I was going way away from God and He brought me home. He changed my life. He changed my heart.

So see, when I read Scripture like this, it leaps out. It confirms. It confirms what's going on in my heart.

Romans 8.16, the Spirit Himself bears witness to our spirit that we are God's children. The witness of God's Spirit bears witness with my spirit that I am a child of God and you are too as well if you know God. This answers the why.

This answers the why. We've been changed and transformed. So you see where I'm getting here, right? You have the creation evidence.

I have the morality evidence. We have a moral compass. And now, I've been changed from the inside out.

Everything Scripture says I've experienced. So it goes to validate the creation of us and the Creator creating us. It matches what we observe.

This is the greatest confirmation. Now let me just leave you with some thoughts here. I think most of us struggle, and I have a heart for atheists or agnostics or those who struggle with certain sins.

I struggle. I mean, we're all there. And I think the frustration is we struggle and we get sometimes angry or upset because we don't have all the answers.

Type A male wants all the answers, don't you? Why, when, how, and for what reason? For example, the concept of hell. Well, it's hard to understand. But I don't denounce God because of it.

I know in my limited understanding, here's something. This blew my mind a while back when I heard this. Let's assume that we know 1% of all there is to know in the universe.

That leaves 99% that we don't know. Are you willing to bank eternity on that? Are you willing to bank what happens from here on out on that? Richard Dawkins said something thought-provoking. He's a well-known atheist right now.

He abhors Christians. He makes that clear. He said, the idea that God could only forgive our sins by having His Son tortured to death as a scapegoat is surely, from an objective point of view, a deeply unpleasant idea.

If God wanted to forgive us of our sins, why didn't He just forgive them? Why did He have to have His Son tortured? That's a good question, isn't it? I would ask that question. Here's the big difference. I can either use this question to excuse my rebellion, or I can thank God for saving me from my rebellion.

See, it's not the question. It's the heart behind the question. It's not the question.

Good question. It's the heart. Because this man and many others don't want the answer.

God Himself could come and explain it and they would deny it because the heart is hard. So that's the first point. I'm going to answer this in a minute.

Are you open for the answer? Are you open for the answer? See, here's the thing, if God doesn't exist, why would an atheist ask that question? Why even talk about that if He doesn't exist? So if He does exist, then that answer has enormous ramifications, does it not? If He does exist, that answer has enormous ramifications. Something you must know. Just about every culture back in Jesus' time, Jewish historians, Josephus for example, Greek historians, Roman historians, Christian historians, all attested to the fact that Jesus Christ died upon the cross.

Muslims, I believe, don't believe He died that somehow it was faked or something. But most historians, secular historians, say yeah, there was a man attested to great works. He died on the cross.

What do you do with that evidence? What do you do with that? Because it happened. It happened and as we all know, if the body was stolen, the disciples would not be killed for something that was a lie. Obviously, they experienced the truth.

So let's answer his question for a minute. Why couldn't a judge simply forgive a murder? Why couldn't a judge simply forgive a murder? Here's why. The price has to be paid.

A price has to be paid. Without the shedding of blood, there is what? No remission of sin. A law is not a law without a punishment and the punishment is determined by the severity of the crime.

That's why it costs Him. Because of the severity of the crime, we put Christ on the cross. The sin of man put Him on the cross.

Romans 8.3, for what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did, sending His own Son. Here's the reason why, Mr. Dawkins, anyone else. Good works will not cut it.

Good works won't cut it. Only the blood of an all-sufficient Savior, only God Himself could pay the ultimate penalty for our sin. He bore our sins in His body on the cross.

But here's the thing, I have that same question. Why? Why, God? But did you know Jesus had a challenge with this as well? Right before He was to be executed, He was in the garden, sweating massively. And He said, Father, if there's any other way.

Jesus Himself said, Father, if there's any other way, take this cup from Me. What He meant by that is the cup is the wrath and indignation of God poured out on humanity. See, what Dawkins doesn't realize is Christ took my place.

He said, Father, if there's any other way, take this cup. It's almost as if God said, no, Son, there's no other way. There's no other way.

And He was hanging on that cross, a cross that historians testify to. He said, Father, my God, my God, why have You forsaken Me? The one time where the Father and the Son were separated because He absorbed the wrath of God. He absorbed our sin on the cross.

And when that was finished, He said, it is finished. Rome celebrated. Hell was open in Champaign.

The Jewish leaders finally were done with this. Uh-oh. Uh-oh.

But then it records, the ground shook. The night became dark. Even the strong Roman soldiers, they said, truly, this was the Son of God.

Folks, you have to deal with that. You have to answer that. He willingly gave up His life.

He willingly gave up His life. You see, God is love. It's not a concept.

It's an all-consuming passion. It's not a principle. It's a relationship.

It's not a Scripture to be quoted, but a truth so powerful that millions, billions have been set free. Think about this for a minute. If what I'm saying is true, right? Just play with me for a minute here.

If what I'm saying is true, and a person experiences this freedom and this relationship with God, wouldn't they shout it from the rooftops? Wouldn't they proclaim it? It might someday cost them their lives. Yeah, but wouldn't they proclaim it? I remember a man who was being sentenced to death. He was walking down death row.

And the priest was reading last rites and talking about eternity and hell. And the man stopped him. He said, you know what? If I believed what you believed about hell, I would cross all of Europe on my knees to tell one person.

See, that's the dynamic you have to come to grips with. If a person has truly been changed, would they not share it with others? We'll go tell people about a great movie. But when it comes to God, we don't want to say anything.

I mean, think about it. Amazing grace. How sweet the sound.

That saved a wretch like me. I was lost, but now I'm found. I was blind, but now I see.

See, that song comes alive. The Scripture comes alive. Lord, I was lost and dead without You.

And now this wonderful experience of being filled with God's Spirit, the blinders are lifted. See, it has nothing to do with the bad becoming good. It has everything to do with the dead becoming living and knowing their Creator.

That's the message of the Gospel. So with the creation evidence, with the morality evidence, with the internal evidence. Now you might not be able to bank on the internal evidence if you don't know God.

But back to this theme of putting God to the test. I just want to make sure you're not putting God to the test in the wrong way. To test His patience.

See, this is a dichotomy. It's difficult to understand. But God loved us so much that He sent His Son to pay that price.

And that when a person is separated from God eternally, they choose it. God does not send them there. Man sends themselves there.

They say, I don't want God. I'm rejecting God. That's the whole concept of eternal punishment and being separated from Him.

So this concept of God is two things. Number one, He's not this mean, angry God. He's a God that loves enough to die for you.

But on the other hand, here's what I'm concerned about too. In many churches of America, pastors should be ashamed of themselves. He's not a doting grandfather.

He's not a cosmic ball of love. And we put love on everything. No, it's love and truth married.

So that's my encouragement for you this evening. That's what I want to spark in your heart is to look at the internal evidence, look at the moral evidence, look at the creation evidence. And we're going to play a

quick video and I'm going to come back up for the Q&A.

And if you need to run to the rest of them, you can. But I want many of you just to reflect on where you're at with God. Do you truly know Him? Or do you only know about Him? Remember back to my daughter.

She believed it was hot, but she didn't experience it until she reached out and made that decision. And that's why I'm here. That's why this message will go out.

It's because we want people to know there is hope. It's not ignorant to believe that God created you, that God loves you enough to send His Son. But the thing that we don't understand is love is the greatest treasure ever given.

But with that comes the ability to exercise our will. How can a person truly love if they don't have the ability to exercise that love? If God made us into robots, you have to love me, right? That's not love. So with the greatest gift of love comes the greatest threat of evil and rejecting that love.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/CvDFxW0GlaQ.mp4>
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