

Four Questions

The world is broken. Nation is at enmity against nation; ethnic group against ethnic group; racial hatred; crime is rife in every nation; theft; murders; rape; terrorism is rampant; drugs destroying lives; paedophilia; all forms of abuse we see daily everywhere; and so on – all show a very “broken” world.

Why? There’s a very simple answer to that question: It’s because our relationship with Almighty God has been broken, and this has affected our relationship with our fellow man; it too has been broken.

Adam and Eve, the first of the human race created by God, originally walked in daily fellowship with God. We read about that in the historic record of man in Genesis chapters 1-3. But sadly, as free moral agents they chose to disobey God and their sin cut them off from fellowship with God. Their failure allowed sin to begin to exert its power in human affairs and so as a result we are all born in sin, separated from fellowship with God.

Rom 5:12 ... *“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.”*

Rom 3:23 ... *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*

The result was brokenness. Broken relationship with God, and with our fellow man. That’s why there’s so much trouble and grief in the world today. Through this brokenness we have enslaved ourselves in violation of the purpose for which we were created, and the result has been a shattering of everything we were intended to be. God calls this sin. Sin is redefining God’s purpose for your life and charting your own course. According to Jesus the two greatest commandments or desires of God for us is that we love Him and love our neighbours. Sin entered and broke those relationships.

Sin is the brokenness of the soul, a wound that is deep and systemic, and pain is the symptom. If we handle it inappropriately the agony increases, and a misdiagnosis only mangles the wound and causes even more pain. It never was God’s desire that we would fall into sin and be separated from fellowship with him, but He made us free moral agents with a free will, to make choices. He loves us regardless of the choices we make, although He grieves when we fail to obey Him and make wrong choices.

Now you may say, “I don’t believe in God or anything like that. We’re at war with one another and there’s crime etc. simply because that’s just the way people are.” Or you may say, “Well I have never given thought as to why the world is broken, or whether this has to do with a God or with a relationship with God.” Well if that’s your position today, I’m glad you’re here so we can look into this matter and give it some thought and find some answers.

Everyone has their set of beliefs, ideology, faith, religion or worldview. However, because of time constraints we cannot examine and compare each religion or worldview, but one thing is certain, if one takes the time to look into the various different worldviews, especially those of the numerous religions of the world, you’ll find there is only one, the Christian worldview, which can provide consistent, coherent, and credible answers (rational and realistic answers) to life’s four essential questions, which concern:

- Origin
- Meaning
- Morality
- Destiny

What is the starting point, the meaning, and purpose of life? Who is in control, where are we going? Why are we here, and what are is our ultimate destiny? How do we get there?

Many people today think it naïve to believe in God. They say there's insufficient evidence for His existence, and, as a result, they just think Christians and their beliefs are crazy.

Today we will look at the evidence which supports the Christian worldview, and gives us a reason to believe in God and the essentials of the Christian faith which He has established, particularly the unique message of Jesus Christ. We will see that God alone gives life meaning and provides us with an eternal hope.

So please join me on this journey to uncover the truth which gives answers to our four questions, origin, meaning, morality and destiny.

Origin:

Christianity is the ONLY religion in the world which rests on the Person of its Founder. You can be a Muslim, a faithful Mohammedan, and have no concern with, or relationship with, the person of Mohammed. Or you can be a true and faithful Buddhist without knowing anything whatsoever about Buddha, let alone having a personal relationship with him. Naturalists and evolutionists have no "founder" with whom to be concerned or related. It is Christianity that stands alone and unique in that it is inextricably bound up with the person and work of Christ, it's Author and the one after whom the term "Christian" is derived. Christianity is all about a daily and meaningful relationship with Christ.

The Person and Work of Christ can, and must, be tried at the bar of reason and history, and this we will do. So this takes us to the question of our origin.

The Bible, God's Word to us, written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, commences with the words:

Gen 1:1 ... *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

John 1:1-3, 14 ... *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being ... and the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

The Bible does not attempt to prove the existence of God, rather it simply accepts the fact of God's existence. God is the eternally self-existent Supreme Being, the Originator, the Architect, and the Author of all life and everything that exists.

When we believe that God exists, we are basing our belief not on some blind hope apart from any evidence, but on an overwhelming amount of reliable evidence from God's word and God's works.

The ONLY way the world (as well as every universe and their contents) could have been created was through the work of an intelligent Supreme Being.

Now many, especially the naturalists and evolutionists, may disagree and say there is no God and that the world evolved from nothing by a series of **chance** events. Really! Just think about it logically. It defies every law of physics, thermodynamics and anything else you can think of.

In our universe we have myriads of stars and planets of different sizes, ages, and states of stability, and in the midst of our solar system is one planet, Earth, on which life exists and is sustained, and that's come about **by chance**? The distance Earth is placed from the Sun is such that it is not too hot or too cold for life to exist happily, and that's occurred **by chance**? The size of our planet is such that gravity is neither too great to crush, nor too weak so as not to be able to retain its atmosphere, and that is **by chance**? The Earth's rotational speed is neither too slow so as to cause impossible temperature variations, not too fast as to cause devastating cyclonic conditions, and that is all due to **chance**? What about the **chances** surrounding the origin of life here on planet Earth; the so-called 'primordial soup' from which everything evolved, all **by chance**? Come on, that's stupid in itself, because where did the "primordial soup" come from – something out of nothing! The evolution of all the species that exist on earth, by **chance mutations** in genetic material? Come on! There's not an ounce of credibility in that. The 'theory' of evolution is exactly that and no more, it's a 'theory' with absolutely no credible proof whatsoever from which it may be advanced from theory to reality.

The statements about evolution are simply assertions made without citing proven evidence, or where evidence is cited it does not actually prove their claim. There is no reputable scientific paper that explains a proven mechanism for how a living cell could arise from non-living molecules - a process called **abiogenesis**.

On the other hand, many published scientific findings show that **abiogenesis cannot happen**. Mutations always lead to damaged DNA, which usually results in loss of genetic information. There is no known instance where new purposeful genetic information arises, either by a natural process or through a mutation induced chemically or with radiation. Put simply, evolution is not a proven fact of science - it's a wish, a fanciful hope in the light of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, that somehow a mechanical process to describe how life arose will be discovered. Science cannot explain how we came to be here. It has no satisfactory explanation for the origin of the universe; it has no explanation in terms of proven models for how life came to exist; it has no explanation for how the laws of physics and chemistry could come to be; it has no explanation for how the massive amount of purposeful information encoded in DNA could arise; and it has no explanation for the experience of consciousness.

However, the existence of supernatural intelligence, a Creator God unconstrained by space and time, does provide a meaningful explanation for our existence.

So, it appears to be a no brainer when you look at the two options:

1. In the beginning God ... with a purpose, with intent, with design, with a revealed plan conceived in eternity past, brought the created order into being; or

2. In the beginning nothing ... no purpose, no design, from primordial soup with no preconceived plan, nothing became something and the something gradually moved up the scale of complexity until, through many chance events, the self-caused entity we call homo sapiens emerged.

The latter option has no credibility whatsoever. So our origin is found in the self-existent God, the Creator, the non-physical, intelligent, moral, and, as we read in John 1:1-3, 14, the personal first cause of the universe who, in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, revealed Himself to mankind.

The whole matter really just pivots around whether people do or do not believe in God, the eternally self-existent Supreme Being, who is the Creator and Author of life. The one who alone gives meaning to life.

To deny the existence of God is a sin against knowledge and conscience. Just listen to these words:

Rom 1:18-21 ... *"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men **who suppress the truth** in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is **evident within them**; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been **clearly seen**, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honour Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

Rom 2:14-15 ... *"For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them."*

Look at fingerprints – everyone has a unique set, no two person's fingerprints are alike. Every snowflake has an individual unique pattern, no two are alike. Look at the "inbuilt" migration patterns of birds, fish and whales. Think about the human bodies inbuilt healing mechanisms. Think about conscience – deep down you know when you're doing right or wrong. And so on. All of these point to a law written in nature and in our hearts by God the Creator.

Everyone, without exception, has within themselves a deep inner sense that God exists. The problem comes when we deny His existence and that He gives meaning to all that exists, for He is the Creator, the Originator of all things.

Ravi Zacharias, a great defender of the Christian faith, correctly states, "God has put enough into the world to make faith in Him a most reasonable thing. But He has left enough out to make it impossible to live by sheer reason or observation alone."

Let me continue with an example that may be helpful.

Example: Think of a wrist watch. It doesn't come into existence by "chance events", it is designed and manufactured (created) by a designer. Then think, for example, of the human eye. The intricacies of the eye; ability to change focus, change sensitivity to varying light conditions, ability to

rotate left and right to look in different directions, and ability to take in peripheral movements while looking straight ahead, and so on. Was the eye designed and created by a Superior Designer or something that evolved from nothing by chance? Just think of all the parts of our human bodies and their unique functions. Something from a series of chance events? Never! We are purposefully designed and created by God.

Gen 1:27 ... *"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*

Eph 1:3-4 ... *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him."*

So **our origin**, as well as all the answers to the other questions, we will find, **is in God**.

Meaning:

What gives meaning or purpose to life? Are we here for a reason greater or higher than just to eat, drink and be merry and then someday to die? Is getting educated, then getting a job and rising to be CEO of the company the aim of life. To work for years, grow old, retire, and eventually die and return to dust – is that it? How much meaning does that give to life? Why be here in the first place if that's all there is to life?

God's planned and appointed purpose for us is clearly spelt out in the scriptures; we're here for communion with the Him, friend to Friend. This God ordained purpose to life is violated by sin, and the starting point of dealing with that agony cause by sin is to understand and accept that there is meaning and purpose to life. We're not here by "chance" and without purpose or meaning, we're here by divine appointment for a purpose that was designed by the God the Creator.

God's plan was that we would be given life by Him in order to live by His life and live in fellowship with Him and with our fellow man. God is not just a "force" or something like that, yes, He is Spirit but He is manifested through the **Persons** of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. His desire and purpose for our lives is that we walk in a personal relationship, in perfect fellowship, with Him.

Other religions may offer intellectual answers to this question of meaning, but Christianity offers a Person, God Himself. Ideas cannot bring lasting meaning, comfort, or hope, only a Person can, and that Person is God. We are the creation of a personal, moral, infinite, loving God, and He provides the answer to our meaning for life.

Jesus in His prayer just prior to His crucifixion prayed to the Father:

John 17:3 ... *"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."*

Eternal life, life with real meaning, is to know God personally, and to live in the joy and favour of His presence forever.

Morality:

Can morality alone solve our brokenness? Can moral living restore our relationship with God?

In every religion except for Christianity, morality is the means of attainment. For instance, Islam says that for you to get to heaven, your good deeds have to outweigh your bad deeds. But this is where Christianity stands alone, because no amount of goodness, moral living, or good works on our part can justify us before a sovereign God. Morality alone cannot solve our problem. Our fundamental problem is not one of morals; it is a spiritual matter. It's not just that we are immoral, but that a moral life alone cannot bridge that which separates us from God. This is where Christianity differs from the moralizing religions, because Christ does not offer to make bad people good, but to make spiritually dead people alive.

The power which transforms our hearts, the power that restores us in union with God, is a power way beyond mere morality. God's grace alone does what our wills and any amount of moral living cannot accomplish.

Justice demands judgement. Love demands mercy. Only at the cross of Jesus Christ do the two meet. Only at Calvary's cross, in the crucified Christ, perfect love and perfect justice are combined and fully expressed.

Jesus Christ, God incarnate in the flesh, laid down His life on Calvary's cross in our place to pay the price for our justification before God. And now He by His grace towards us offers us an invitation to accept the free gift of eternal life, to be restored spiritually with Him so that we can once again live in the freedom and richness of a relationship with Him.

We can only be free in as much as we surrender to that which Christ has done for us, and place our trust in Him to fill the inner longing deep within us for peace with God and for eternal life. If we fail to believe in Him, if we do not surrender to Him and place our trust in Him, we will never be free; we will never have victory over sin; we will live apart from Him; we will remain broken.

It's through surrendering to Christ, and believing He has paid the price for our justification before God, and has restored us spiritually, giving us His life to live by, that we have victory over sin and are at peace with God. Only when we are at peace with God can we be at peace with ourselves, and with our fellow man.

What Christ by His grace and mercy alone has done for us mere moral living can never do.

One of the attributes of God is that He is love. In His love He had a plan and provision made before the creation of the world for us to be reinstated in fellowship with Him in the event of man making the wrong choice and falling into sin. That plan was that God the Son would become incarnate in the flesh, through the virgin birth; He would live as a man, take on the punishment for man's sin and die on the cross in our place, so that the justice of God would be satisfied. This was an act of God's mercy and grace to us. Through His resurrection and ascension, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, gave us the opportunity to have His life imparted to us so that we could be restored to fellowship with Him.

Through His obedience to be this sacrifice for us, Jesus Christ reversed the trend initiated by the first member of the human race.

Rom 5:17-19 ... *"For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous."*

John 3:16 ... *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."*

2 Cor 5:17, 21 ... *"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come ... He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."*

You might say, but I am a good person, I never do bad things, and I live a moral and upright life. I do a lot of good things, I belong to a service club that does lots of good things for our community. And so you may not see yourself as being a "sinner" in need of being saved from your "sin."

You see, it's not by living a "good" life, by doing good things, by being an upright citizen that determines whether you are a sinner or not. The fact is, you and I were born in sin, with a sin nature. You don't have to teach a child to be defiant, or to do spiteful things, or to be naughty, or to steal, or lie. Those are simply the outcome or evidence of a sinful nature.

We cannot save ourselves by good works. There's nothing we can do in and of ourselves to heal the mortal wound inflicted upon us by sin. Only God, through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, can restore us to what God originally created us to be, righteous, blameless and holy before Him. That restoration, that making us new again, is offered to us as a free gift by God. All we need to do is believe in Him and receive His forgiveness and life. We read it a moment ago:

John 3:16 ... *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."*

Eph 2:4-10 ... *"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."*

All God asks is that we believe and receive His gift of grace and be set free from sin and be made new.

Destiny:

Being at home with God is the believer's ultimate destiny. Jesus came from the Father and returned to the Father to prepare a place for you and me. That's home. That's our eternal dwelling. (Rev 21).

Conclusion:

On our journey from our origin, from creation, through to our destiny, eternal life and an eternity enjoying the presence and love of God, we see there's a story which makes sense: The narrative goes from the fact of our brokenness, our separation from a relationship with God, to a Saviour who took on our sin and the pain of separation and purchased our forgiveness and brought us the hope of His eternal presence.

I so enjoy the way Ravi Zacharias puts it, and I quote:

"Where there is the possibility of love, there has to be the reality of freedom."

"Where there is the reality of freedom, there has to be the possibility of pain."

"Where there is the reality of pain, there is the need for a Saviour."

"Where there is a Saviour, there is the possibility of redemption."

From the freedom to love, to the possibility of brokenness, to the provision of a Saviour, to the message of redemption, to our restoration – that is the story of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His redemption provided for you and for me.

Love, forgiveness, worth and worship – are all conditional on freedom. Christ came to set us free, so we could once again walk in the freedom of love, forgiveness, worth and worship. Without God, without His gracious offering of new life through Christ, none of these are possible and we remain broken.

But the Loving heavenly Father, God, stands with His arms wide open and calls to you and to me today to run into His arms of love and forgiveness and receive help, the help that will turn brokenness into wholeness.

Matt 11:28 ... *"Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."*

Rom 10:9 ... *"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."*

God offers the answer to our brokenness and gives us hope for the future: believe and receive His gift of grace and be set free from sin, be made new and enter into His purpose and future for your life.

Good book to read – "Evolution Impossible" by Dr John F Ashton

Any book written by Ravi Zecharias