

Why I Believe in the Truth of Christianity

High School Mid-Winter Retreat – Lake Springfield Christian Assembly - 2023

Event Webpage: <https://richknopp.com/retreat-lsca/>

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Introduction

- A. **Acts 26:24–25** At this point Festus interrupted Paul’s defense. “You are out of your mind, Paul!” he shouted. “Your great learning is driving you insane.” “I am not insane, most excellent Festus,” Paul replied. “What I am saying is true and reasonable.” (NIV)
- B. Different worldviews: Why believe that Christianity is “true and reasonable”?
- C. Let’s compare the options.

I. MEANING.

- A. **“Created” meaning:** Meaning that is constructed BY us.
 1. Humans *create* meaning (e.g. friends, fun, media, etc.)
 2. But “created” meaning is ultimately pointless!
 3. Thomas Nagel (atheist): “There is no point to it all. It wouldn’t matter if you had never existed.”
- B. **“Discovered” meaning:** Meaning that comes TO us.
 1. It is *above* us and *beyond* us.
 2. It does not depend on our circumstance or achievement.

II. MORALITY.

- A. Must we believe in God to be good? No.
- B. But without God, why *should* we be good?
 1. Dostoevsky: “Without God in the future life ... everything is permitted.” (Ivan in *The Brothers Karamozov*)
 2. Atheist Alex Rosenberg: “Individual human life is meaningless, without purpose, and *without ultimate moral value.*” (*The Atheist Guide to Reality*)
- C. Without God, the foundation for justice and morality collapses.

III. MORTALITY.

- A. Death is inescapable.
- B. Will Provine (atheist): “We live. We die. And we’re gone.”
- C. Without God, there is no hope. (1 Thess. 4:13)

IV. MATTER.

- A. Explanations for the existence of the universe.
 1. It is eternal.
 2. It caused itself.
 3. It is just one universe among an infinite number.
 4. It was caused by something *outside* time and space (God).

- B. Atheist comments:
 1. Stephen Hawking: "... the universe can and will create itself from nothing."
 2. Alex Rosenberg: "Why is there a multiverse in which universes pop into existence for no reason at all? No reason at all!"
- C. Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."

V. LIVING MATTER.

- A. Atheist Fred Hoyle:
 1. The chance of life starting on earth: 1 in $10^{40,000}$.
 2. The number of atoms in the visible universe: 10^{80} .
 3. "A common-sense interpretation of the facts suggest that a *superintellect has monkeyed with physics ... and there are no blind forces* worth speaking about in nature." (Emphasis added.)
- B. The wonders of **DNA**:
 1. DNA in one human body would stretch end-to-end 42 billion miles!
 2. 2012 experiment: DNA can store 700 terabytes of data in one gram.
 3. 2017 study: DNA could store all of the world's data in one room.
- C. **Romans 1:20** "Since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen."

VI. The MESSIAH (Matt. 16:16 "You are the Christ ...")

- A. Plan of all Scripture
- B. Presence of God throughout human history.
- C. Prophecies.
- D. Person of Jesus Christ.
- E. Power of Jesus' resurrection
- F. Public preaching about Jesus Christ.
- G. Power of the apostles.
- H. Provision of the Holy Spirit.

Reflections:

- A. If I had TWO minutes:
 1. WITHOUT the God of Scripture ...
 2. But WITH the God of Scripture ...
- B. **John 6:67-68**
 1. Jesus: "You do not want to go away also, do you?"
 2. Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life."

Some Resources:

- A. "Why Do You Still Believe?" Video by Room For Doubt. <https://vimeo.com/327406232>.
- B. "Truth about God in Nature." Video by Rich Knopp. <https://renew.org/video/truth-about-god-in-nature/>.
- C. "Truth about God in Special Revelation." Video by Rich Knopp. <https://renew.org/video/truth-about-god-in-special-revelation/>.
- D. Richard Knopp. "Where Will We Go Without God?" Online at <http://christianstandard.com/2014/06/where-will-we-go-without-god/>.