

Learning to Explain and Defend the Faith

Family Camp at Christian Harbor Youth Camp - 2023

Event Webpage: <https://richknopp.com/familycamp-chyc/>

Richard Knopp, MA, MDiv, PhD

Director, Room For Doubt (www.roomfordoubt.com)

Professor Emeritus of Philosophy & Christian Apologetics, Lincoln Christian University

Website: www.richknopp.com

Email: rich@roomfordoubt.com

Introduction

- A. Biblical background (Deut. 6:14, 20-23; 1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 10:5).
- B. Questions and doubts.
- C. Room For Doubt resources.
- D. Cry to Jesus: "I do believe; help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24).
- E. Why I believe (even with some doubts).

I. MEANING.

- A. "Created" meaning:
 1. Meaning constructed BY us.
 2. 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:
 1. Meaning that comes TO us.
 2. Discovered meaning is what Christianity provides.

II. MORALITY.

- A. Must we believe in God to be good?
- 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. We WANT justice and morality.
- D. But without God, the foundation for justice and morality collapses.

III. MORTALITY.

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

IV. MATTER.

- A. The universe BEGAN.
- B. Different explanations for the existence of the universe.
 1. It is eternal.
 2. It caused itself (Atheist Stephen Hawking: "The universe can and will create itself from nothing.")

3. It was caused by something outside of time/space (God). (Genesis 1:1 “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”)
- C. Psalm 19:1-2 “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.”

V. LIVING MATTER (Life).

- A. The universe began JUST RIGHT.
- B. Physical facts and fine-tuning (e.g., number of electrons to protons).
- C. Atheist Fred Hoyle: “... a superintellect has monkeyed with physics ...”
 1. The chance of life starting on earth: 1 in $10^{40,000}$.
 2. The number of atoms in the visible universe: 10^{80} .
- D. The wonders of **DNA**:
 1. DNA in one human body would stretch end-to-end 34 billion miles!
 2. Information in DNA: (Bill Gates: “DNA is like a computer program but far, far more advanced than any software ever created”)
 - a. 2012 experiment: One gram of DNA could store 8,600,000 Blu-ray movies.
 - b. 2017 study: DNA could store all of the world’s data in one room.
- E. 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. The most basic claim of Christianity: God entered our space and time (John 1:1,14).
- B. Jesus Christ as the Messiah (Christ).
- C. But WHY should we believe in this Messiah? Because ...

“If I had just two minutes ...”

- A. WITHOUT God ...
- B. But WITH God ...

Relevant Resources

- Richard Knopp. *Truth About God: What Can We Know and How Can We Know It?*
- “Basic Questions.” Six-week message and discussion series with message manuscripts, adult and youth discussion guides, videos, etc. <https://roomfordoubt.com/basic-questions-curriculum>.
- “Strengthen Your Faith.” Fifteen lessons with detailed teacher outlines, student handouts, discussion questions, resource links, and more. <https://roomfordoubt.com/syf-curriculum>.
- “Why Do You Still Believe?” Animation by Room For Doubt. <https://vimeo.com/327406232>.
- “Truth about God in Nature.” Video by Rich Knopp. <https://renew.org/video/truth-about-god-in-nature/>.
- “Truth about God in Special Revelation.” Video by Rich Knopp. <https://renew.org/video/truth-about-god-in-special-revelation/>.
- Richard Knopp. “Where Will We Go Without God?” Online at <http://christianstandard.com/2014/06/where-will-we-go-without-god/>.