

# Apologetics for Parents of Littles

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*First educate yourself to be able to have conversations with your kids about God, Jesus, the Bible, and science.*

## GOD

### I. What evidence is there for God's existence?

3 major arguments that provide compelling evidence for God's existence:

#### The "Who Made God?" (Cosmological) Argument

1. The universe had a beginning
2. Anything that had a beginning must have been caused by something else.
3. Therefore, the universe was caused by something else, which we call God.

This argument doesn't say everything has a cause. It says everything *that has a beginning* has a cause. In order for a cause to create a universe of space and time, that cause has to be *outside* of space and time (eternal). The original "uncaused cause."

#### The Design Argument

A designer (for example, God) must exist because the universe and living things show evidence of design by an intelligent agent.

Most famous explanation: the watchmaker analogy (William Paley 1802). If you find a watch out in a field, you would instinctively know it was designed and not just the result of natural forces. The many indications of design in the universe and life point to a designer. "If it looks designed, maybe it is!"

Design in biology: DNA is an informational code. All known codes and languages were created by an intelligence, not by chance.

Design in physics: the "fine-tuning" of the Earth and universe

Our planet is perfectly calibrated to support life. Change any of the 51 finely tuned parameters to our galaxy, solar system, and planet, and life can't exist.

- distance from the sun
- size, temperature, & type of sun
- size, axial tilt, rotation speed, moon, and composition of earth
- stability of Jupiter and Saturn

Probability of all 123 fine-tuned parameters occurring by chance:  $10^{-166}$

#### The Moral Argument

1. Moral laws ("oughts") imply a moral law giver
2. There is an objective moral law or standard
3. The best explanation for those standards is a moral law giver

The nagging itch of “ought”  
Who taught your children about “fair”?

## **II. How Could a Good God Allow Evil and Suffering?**

If God were all-good, He *would* defeat evil.  
If God were all-powerful, He *could* defeat evil.  
But evil is not defeated.  
Therefore, there is no such God.

We need to add a very important word: YET.

If God were all-good, He *would* defeat evil.  
If God were all-powerful, He *could* defeat evil.  
But evil is not YET defeated.  
Therefore, God will defeat evil.

Why didn't God create a world with perfect people who wouldn't mess things up?

He wanted people to freely choose to love Him, so He gave people the gift of choice. If people can choose to do good, they can also choose to do evil. God apparently considered that the intimacy with His people was worth the pain getting to the final place of total goodness.

## **III. How can a loving God send people to hell?**

He is not only loving, He is also just and fair. Sin and rebellion must be punished if people will not allow Jesus to take the punishment in their place.

## **IV. How can God judge people who have never even heard of Jesus?**

God has revealed Himself to all people in two ways:

1. Creation (Romans 1:19-20)
2. Conscience (Romans 2:14-15)

There are no people who are ignorant of God's existence and moral requirements. So people are without excuse (Romans 1:20)

God wants to save people more than anyone wants to be saved.

“God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” *1 Tim. 2:4*

“... not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” *2 Pet. 3:9*

God's salvation extends to all people in all times, including before Christ.

5 times in Revelation: “every nation and tribe and language and people”

God is holy and just. He will not hold people accountable for something they never heard.

## JESUS

Many young people today believe in a “Santa Claus God” who knows when we are sleeping and when we’re awake, who knows if we’ve been good for goodness’ sake, who wants us to feel good about ourselves, and will reward good people with heaven. But it’s not Christianity. There’s no Jesus to that kind of God.

Why do so many church kids end up believing in this kind of God? They lack the conviction that Jesus was (and is) actually God.

### V. Did Jesus Really Claim to be God?

1. Jesus claimed to be Yahweh. (John 8:58, “Before Abraham was, I AM.”)
2. Jesus claimed to have the same unique rights as God.  
Forgive sins (Mark 2)  
Raise and judge the dead (John 5:25-27)  
Be honored like God (John 5:23)
3. Jesus claimed to be the Messiah. (Mark 14:61-64)
4. Jesus claimed His words had as much authority as God’s words. (Matthew 5:18-19, 21-22)
5. Jesus accepted worship (from a leper, a ruler, a Canaanite woman, the mother of James and John, the disciples in the boat after He calmed the storm, a blind man, the women after the resurrection).
6. Jesus accepted prayer in His name. (John 14:13-14, 15:7, 14:6)

Jesus didn’t say the words “I am God.” But He claimed to be God in other ways.

### VI. Did Jesus Really Rise from the Dead?

1. Jesus died by crucifixion.  
The disciples would not have confused resurrection with merely swooning. When His side was pierced, out flowed blood and water. His heart had been pierced—after death.
2. His disciples believed He rose and appeared to them.  
Some have suggested the disciples lied or stole His body, but that would not explain their radical transformation. They were willing to die martyrs’ deaths because they were convinced He truly rose from the dead.

Some have suggested witnesses went to the wrong tomb. The Roman and Jewish authorities would merely have had to go to the right tomb and produce a body to quash the belief that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Some have suggested the people who saw Jesus were hallucinating. But hallucinations happen in the mind of *one* person; they're not group experiences. Hallucinations would not account for the conversion of Paul and James.

3. Church persecutor Paul was suddenly changed. The skeptic James, Jesus' brother, was suddenly changed. Only an encounter with the risen Jesus is sufficient to explain these conversions.

It's not easy to find naturalistic explanations for these facts.

## **BIBLE**

### **VII. How were the books in the Bible selected?**

Early acceptance during the lives of the Apostles  
Early acceptance by the apostolic church fathers  
Early heresies prompted church fathers to define authoritative scriptures for believers  
20 of 27 NT books were accepted from the very beginning, never in dispute.

Criteria for inclusion as scripture:

- Apostolic authority
- Antiquity (written during lives of apostles)
- Orthodoxy (theologically consistent with the apostles' faith and teaching)
- Catholicity (received by the majority of the universal church)
- Inspiration (recognized as God-breathed)

### **VIII. How Do We Know the Bible We Have Today Says what the Authors Originally Wrote?**

The reason we have a Bible at all is that the original texts were copied many times over. There are 25,000+ handwritten copies of New Testament documents, with many variations. These variations allow us to see where errors and changes (such as spelling which does not change the meaning of a word) crept into the copying. There are no variations that question essential Christian beliefs.

Concerning the Old Testament: the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered between 1949 and 1956—thousands of fragments from every book of the OT except Esther, including a complete copy of Isaiah. These fragments had been stored since 300-100 B.C. The book of Isaiah had not been changed in that entire time except for a few spelling changes. The scribes were exceedingly careful in copying God's word.

The evidence for both the Old and New Testaments shows that what we hold in our hands today is the same as what was written by the original authors.

# SCIENCE

## IX. Why do Christians Have Different Views on How and When God Created the World?

The heart of the origins battle: Is the universe the product of an intelligent mind or of undirected, completely random natural processes?

The science in the origins debate is often the dividing line between Christian faith and atheism.

3 positions: young-earth creationism, old-earth creationism, theistic evolution.

YEC: God created the earth and universe over six 24-hour days about 6,000-10,000 years ago. The age of the earth is calculated on biblical genealogies and chronologies. Noah's flood was a global event. Belief in an old earth undermines the gospel.

Old-earth creation: God created the earth and universe over a very long period of time (millions to billions of years), periodically intervening with creative acts. Flood may have been local or global. The most obvious reading of Genesis is not necessarily the right reading. Microevolution, yes; macroevolution, no.

Theistic evolution: God had to have used evolution as His means of creating.

### Resources:

Natasha Crain, *Keeping Your Kids on God's Side*, Harvest House 2016.

<http://christianmomthoughts.com/14-ways-i-teach-apologetics-to-my-5-year-olds/>

<http://mamabearapologetics.com/blog/> (“Mess with our kids . . . and we will demolish your arguments”)