

EXPLORE GOD: IS THERE A GOD?

Scriptures used: [Romans 1:20 \(NIV\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Welcome to the second week of our *Explore God* series. Today we confront a fundamental question: Is there a God? The existence of God cannot be definitely proven or unproven. But there are clues and hints that get us closer to an answer. Pastor Hurmon asked that we approach the topic with open (versus closed) doubt. Open doubt is when we are open to being convinced. Are we the byproducts of a cosmic accident, or is there a divine purpose in the creation and the existence of the world? Our very definition as human beings depends on it.

KEY POINTS

1. There are four considerations that are substantive rationales for having a conviction that God is real:
 - a. One key concept is **design** - the sense that our scientific reality seems to have a tremendous sense of order and apparent design. Albert Einstein is reported to have said, "The more I study science, the more I believe in God" (see *Science Resurrects God*, by Jim Holt in The Wall Street Journal, Dec. 24, 1997). Louis Pasteur is famous for a similar sentiment: "Little science takes you away from God but more of it takes you to Him." Various scientists such as physicist Paul Davies and analytic philosopher Antony Flew have arrived at a conviction of the reality of God through their study.
 - b. A second pointer to God is our innate **Morality** - we have an intrinsic sense of right and wrong, of fairness and injustice, which runs parallel to the belief in the existence and character of a Supreme Being. For example, see [Romans 2:14-15](#). Dr Martin Luther King Jr. expresses this sentiment powerfully: "Some things are right and some things are wrong, no matter if everybody is doing the contrary. Some things in this universe are absolute. The God of the universe has made it so."
 - c. A third pointer to God is our ability to respond to **Beauty and the sublime**. Whether it is a work of art, a transporting melody, or a breathtaking vista, we have an innate sensitivity to respond to beauty, to a permanent, eternal ideal that transcends survival, function, and temporal existence. We have this sense of appreciation because of the reality of God.
 - d. Fourth, our **personal experience** gives us a conviction of God. Pastor Hurmon told the story about the man, a total stranger, who walked up to him in his time of doubt and uncertainty, and told him with fierce intensity that a young Hurmon is called to preach. Pastor Hurmon's wife Rhonda received similar signs that led to her medical vocation. Many, if not most, people have an experience of the supernatural, moments in life when they are certain that God is real. We often discount these experiences later in life, but it doesn't mean that they aren't real and important foundations upon which to build a relationship with God.
2. This creation, our lives, are no accident. God exists and wants to be part of our lives, to work in our lives (but we must perceive it to receive it). French philosopher and mathematician Blaise Pascal is famous for saying there is a God shaped hole in every human heart. Similarly, there is a hole in God's heart that is shaped for each one of us - God longs to be in relationship with us!

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Do you believe in God right now? Have there been times in your life when you believed differently? What were the reasons why your belief in God has changed over time?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider [Romans 1:20 \(NIV\)](#). If you believe in God, what are the core reasons why you have this conviction? If you do not believe in God, what are the core reasons why you don't have this conviction? Have there been moments in your life when you experienced an experience of God that you would characterize as miraculous, supernatural, or personal? What has made it hard or easy to build a lasting relationship with God on this foundation, if you have had such an experience?
- 3) **DO** - One of the challenges to believing in God is often our experience of pain and suffering. Join us next week as we talk about how the goodness of God coexists with pain and suffering in our world.