Is There a God & Has He Spoken?

Why this series?

2 Corinthians 5:20 (ambassadors for Christ)
Jude 3
1 Peter 3:15

Review questions
Highlight upcoming topics

Ex. Berkeley- Dialogue w/ Dick Hewittson- Freedom From Religion Foundation
“You know the problem with you Christians? You just have faith!”
Common misperception of Christian faith:
Blind faith
Leap of faith

Everyone has faith. The question is, what are you putting your faith in and do you have a valid and reasonable basis for your faith?
How are we to understand faith in a true, biblical perspective?
Hebrews 11:1- Christian faith is a hope based upon confident assurance!
Ex. Trust fall
Christian faith isn’t blind, it’s not wishful thinking; it’s walking confidently in the direction the evidence leads!

And so, as we deal w/ a variety of important questions and issues in this series, our goal is to demonstrate that we have very powerful reasons to believe and to trust in God and His revelation to us! And then the question becomes will we obey?

Ex. Plane to Portland (Matt)- discussing gay marriage debate
“What does your church believe about gay marriage?”
- Do you consider yourself to be a tolerant person? Are you open-minded towards people who may think differently than you?
“I can’t believe in a God who wouldn’t want people to be happy!”
- I agree (John 10:10), but who’s the best judge of what leads to happiness and life to the full, God or us?
Ex. A parent providing rules for their child…
- You see, Matt, this whole debate boils down to 3 basic questions:
1) Is there a God?
2) Has He spoken?
3) And if so, will we obey?

Now, this is going to be a foundational claim as we go through this series…
- Every apologetic question, every theological issue, every cultural debate, and every personal choice we make must ultimately be based on these 3 fundamental questions: Is there a God?
Has He spoken?
And if so, will we obey?

Now, these aren’t just the questions for our day and age, but they’ve always been the questions… They are the fundamental questions that every person must answer.

Acts 17:22-31 - Paul provides a great model of what it looks like to be an ambassador for Christ.

Notice, Paul highlights these same 3 central truths in his presentation of the gospel: 1) There is a God; 2) He has spoken; and 3) He calls us to obey

Let’s consider each of these 3 truth claims this morning…

1) Is there a God?
Ex. Berkeley- Atheist student, “It’s impossible for you to prove the existence of God!”
- True, if by proof you mean physically observing God & experimenting with Him. You’re right. I can’t do that. However, as an Atheist, by those same standards, neither are you able to disprove the existence God!
- The fact of the matter is, it’s philosophically impossible to be an Atheist…

Again, the question is, where does the evidence lead?

In Acts 17 Paul highlights what theologians call God’s General Revelation- His self-revelation through creation. Ex. Romans 1:19-20 = God has made his existence plain to us
Illustration: George Washington Carver quote

There are many terrific arguments for the existence of God based on God’s General Revelation in creation:
- Philosophical arguments (ontological/ cosmological)
- Anthropological arguments- Ecclesiastes 3:11 (eternity in our hearts)
ex. Never been a purely Atheist society anywhere throughout history…
- Some of the best arguments for God’s existence come from the remarkable Design we see in creation… The evidence for God is literally all around us!

Psalm 19:1-4
Illustration: John Glenn quote

The Bible says that God has made his existence plain to all of us by what we see in creation… and you don’t have to be an astronaut to recognize this! God’s design can be seen all around us!
It’s no wonder Psalm 14:1 says, “It’s only the fool who would say in his heart, ‘there is no God’.”
2) Has He spoken?
Back to Acts 17, on this question Paul appeals to what theologians call God’s Special Revelation - God’s direct intervention in human history; and Paul says that God has revealed himself in a man, Jesus Christ, and given proof of this by raising him from the dead.

How many of you here know the reason why Jesus came into the world? Do you know he told us?

John 18:37 - Jesus, “for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.”

Many people today hold the view that truth is simply a matter of subjective preference or personal opinion; truth is whatever works for me.

Ex. A recent poll indicated that for every American who believes he or she is going to Hell, there are 120 who believe they’re going to Heaven.
- Nice idea, but is it true? (Matthew 7:13-14)

Truth is what matters- the way things really are- not personal opinion, or preference, or what you wish to be the case.
Illustration: Doctor/diabetes diagnosis

- Now, if there is a God, and if God has spoken & revealed truth, that changes everything. In fact, that is everything! Nothing else matters… Knowing God and His will for us would be of ultimate importance!

So, the question is, has God spoken?
Hebrews 1:1-2

2 ways God has spoken (Hebrews 1:1-2):
- The Bible (2 Peter 1: 4, 19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:16; Acts 17:30-31)

“Why believe the Bible is God’s word? Why believe Jesus is God?”
The Bible (Where does the evidence lead?):
- 66 books, 40 authors, 1500 yrs… No errors or contradictions anywhere.
- Over 2500 prophecies in the Bible, most have been fulfilled…
- Over 300 prophecies in the OT related to the coming of the Messiah, all fulfilled…
- To date there have been over 23,000 archaeological digs related to the Bible, not 1 has ever refuted the Bible’s account of history.
- Over 24,000 partial & complete NT manuscripts dating from the first 3 centuries…
- We could go on…

“What about Jesus? Why believe Jesus was really God?”
- One word, “Resurrection”. The evidence for the resurrection is overwhelming.
- Jesus was truly dead… 3 days later his tomb was empty (everyone agreed)
- Eyewitnesses (1 Cor. 15:3-8… over 1,000… Jerusalem population 40,000-80,000 = 1/40 to 1/80…)
- Rapid spread of the early church in a hostile 1st c. Jewish religious climate occupied by the Roman Empire (no religious or political gain by starting a new religion)
- Changed lives (disciples, all but 1 died a martyrs death professing Jesus)
- We could go on…

Friends, we have tremendous reasons to believe that God has spoken… Again, faith for the Christian isn’t blind. It’s walking confidently in the direction the evidence leads!

Interested in more? Josh & Sean McDowell, Feb. 27-Mar. 1 next year!

Now, the last question we need to consider & the most important… If there’s a God & if He’s spoken…

3) Will we obey?

In Acts 17:30 Paul says that God has called each of us to repent… to trust & obey!

Illustration: Scott & I fishing up north- foolishly disregarding my Navionics App’

What if there was a navigation app for life? A mapmaker who’s revealed truth and given us the path that leads to life and life to the full? Would you follow his direction? You’d be a fool not to!

There is such an app…
Listen to what God’s navigation app’ has to say about the foolish person vs. the wise. Proverbs 14 (vs. 2, 8-9, 12, 15-16, 26-27)

Friend, maybe you find yourself today drifting off course, or maybe you’ve intentionally charted a course outside of God’s boundaries… Don’t be a fool!

The Good News…
2 Chronicles 7:14

Is there a God? Has He Spoken? And if so, will we obey?
Friends, there are no more important questions for us to consider than these!
Let’s pray.