

WHY IS THERE SOMETHING — RATHER THAN — NOTHING?

7
Seven
Questions

The
STORY



Sermon Study Guide 3/5/17 www.thestory.church fb/ig @thestoryhouston, @pastorerichuffman

Guiding Questions for Chapter Groups, Family or Solo Study:

Have you ever doubted the existence of God? What evidence, experiences, or circumstances have led you to doubt God's existence?

What role does MYSTERY play in your faith? What mysteries about life, the universe, or our very existence are most intriguing to you?

What do critics of theism (belief in God) mean when they say Christians and other theists worship a "god of the gaps"?

How do you think Christians can avoid the tendency to worship a god of the gaps?

nothing rather than nothing?

Can you relate at all with my struggle with the "Two Voices"?

Do you ever have the "First Voice" in your ear?

What does it say about big questions like "Why is there something rather than nothing?"

Believe it or not, there's actually a *First Voice* in the Bible. Ecclesiastes can be hard to understand because it doesn't always fall right in line with the rest of Scripture. The author (King Solomon) was clearly jaded when he wrote it (See Ecclesiastes passage on the right). What does it tell you that the people who pieced the Bible together made room for a book so full of pessimism, skepticism, and doubt?

Do you also have that "Second Voice"? When was the last time you remember hearing it? What does your Second Voice have to say about mystery and doubt?

Scripture and Quotes:

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created human beings in his image; in the image of God he created them. Male and female he created them"

Jeremiah 10:12

It is he who made the earth by his power, who established the world by his wisdom, and by his knowledge stretched out the heavens.

Ecclesiastes 1:2-3, 9

"Meaningless, meaningless! Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless! What do we gain from all our trouble? What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again. There's nothing new under the sun."

Hebrews 11:3

By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

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Today's question is really about *purpose*. What's your gut-feeling about the purpose behind the universe? More specifically, what are your thoughts about the purpose of *your existence*?

Let's make this easier - on a scale of 1 to 10, how optimistic are you about there being a purpose or plan for your existence? (Circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
We're accidents Maybe but who cares Maybe God has a plan OMG it's all true

What arguments for the existence of God do you find most compelling?

What do the Bible and Christian teaching say about the Creation and the purpose of life?

Read **Colossians 1:15-20** again. How do you think Paul and the other first Christians got from the flesh-and-blood man named Jesus, who we just spent 8 weeks getting to know, to "the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation," the foundation of our being and purpose?

What is the Bible's explanation for our existence and our purpose?

Do you agree with Eric that it remains the simplest and most elegant explanation the world has ever known? Why or why not?

Prayer:

*You have made us for Yourself, O Lord,
and our heart is restless until it finds rest in You.*
(St. Augustine, c. 400 AD)

Colossians 1:15-20

[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

"When I was an atheist my argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of *just* and *unjust*? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust? If the whole show was bad and senseless from A to Z, so to speak, why did I, who was supposed to be part of the show, find myself in such violent reaction against it? Thus in the very act of trying to prove that God did not exist - in other words, that the whole of reality was senseless - I found I was forced to assume that one part of reality - namely my idea of justice - was full of sense. If the whole universe has no meaning, we should never have found out that it has no meaning"

- CS Lewis

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