

Sunday, November 26, 2017

**“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.”**  
**(1 Peter 3:15)**

There is a branch of study called “Christian Apologetics,” and this verse that I just quoted will always be invoked when you’re dealing with Christian Apologists. I used to have a visceral reaction whenever I would hear the term “apologetics” in relation to God and the Bible, because I would think “who do these people think they are? God doesn’t need to be apologized for!” When I think of an “apology,” I think of it involving shame or regret for something that I’ve done wrong. And no doubt, this is how a lot of so-called Christians react in regard to the workings of God. Just think of any display of God’s wrath (hurricanes, fires, wars, etc.), and phony Christians will be falling all over each other to tell everyone they can get their hands on that God didn’t do it. They’re ashamed. They’re embarrassed.

But there’s another meaning of “apology.” And that is what we see in this verse. The word translated as “give an answer” is the Greek word “apologia,” from which we get our word “apology” or “apologetics.” The word is used several times in the New Testament, and is most commonly translated as “defense” or “answer.” This is the type of apology that people who refer to themselves as “Apologists” are talking about. Their aim is to defend the religion against people who attack it. I don’t want to discount the value of some of the work that these people have done - they can be a great resource to help you out if you stumble upon a difficult passage, or if some blasphemmer raises a new argument that you haven’t come across before. But I would caution you here, because a lot of these guys take things way too far. Debating or proving that the Bible is true has become their whole life, and their time is spent weaving clever (and often ridiculous) arguments so they can win debates. The Internet is full of such debates. You’ll find a multitude of arguments to support almost any position, along with all the counter arguments to that argument, and the counter arguments to the counter arguments, ad infinitum. And when you’re done with that, you will have just wasted a colossal amount of time, and you’ll be at a stalemate.

The fact is, without God-given faith, nobody’s going to savingly believe this stuff. No amount of logic, reasoning, or evidence right in front of their face, will cause a person to believe. It’s quite simple: if God gives you faith, you believe; if He doesn’t, you don’t. God changes hearts; not us. We know that “all men have not faith” (2 Thessalonians 3:2), and we know Christ’s words:

**“If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” (Luke 16:31)**

So, our job is not to wrangle in a debate or win an argument. There is nothing spiritual about that. It’s not about who can win; it’s about glorifying God. Keep it Biblical, and stop when it turns into strife and becomes a matter of you showing everyone how intelligent you are and what a great debater you are. The idea is not to use some clever debate tactic to confuse an opponent – the idea is to use sound doctrine.

**“Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.” (Titus 1:9)**

As I mentioned, a lot of the work that has been done here by Apologists is valuable. But be circumspect and “believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1).

But we still have 1 Peter 3:15. We’re obligated to give an answer. The idea is, when someone asks you a reason of the hope that is in you, you should always be ready to defend that hope. For all we know, your answer might be the way that one of God’s little sheep is called. Some initial questions to answer are, what is the hope? And why do you have it? Who do you have to defend it to? How can you always be ready?

To answer the question of what the hope is and why we have it, it doesn’t get a whole lot better than John Brown’s summary of it, so I am quoting it here:

*“The Christian is confident that he who has begun the good work in him will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ; that he will preserve him from every evil work, unto his heavenly kingdom; that he will make his grace sufficient for him; that he will strengthen him with all might, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness; that he will supply all his need according to his glorious riches; that he will never leave him, never forsake him; that he will make all things work together for his good, and even his afflictions, however severe and long-continued, to work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. He hopes that Christ will be magnified in his body, whether by life or by death. And he has hope in death, hope after death. He hopes that, when his spirit becomes absent from the body, it will become present with the Lord; being with him where he is, and, beholding and sharing his glory, mingling with the innumerable company of angels, and with the spirits of the just made perfect; being before the throne of God, and serving him day and night in his temple; while he who sits on the throne dwells among them, and they hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither does the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them to the fountains of living waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their*

*eyes. His flesh also rests in hope. His hope is the hope of the resurrection to life; the blessed hope of the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He looks for Him from heaven, to change his vile body, and fashion it like unto His own glorious body. He hopes that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, this mortal shall put on immortality; that what is sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption; what is sown in dishonor, shall be raised in glory; what is sown in weakness, shall be raised in power; what is sown a natural body, shall be raised a spiritual body. He is looking for Him to come the second time without sin for his salvation; and his hope is, that when He shall appear, he shall appear with Him in glory; being like Him, seeing Him as He is. He is hoping for this manifestation of the sons of God; this adoption, the redemption of the body; and his final hope is that, body and soul, he shall forever be with the Lord.*

*Such is the hope of the Christian with regard to himself; and he cherishes the same hope in reference to all his brethren in Christ. He hopes that Christ, who loved the church, will, after having purified her by the washing of water through the word, present her to himself, as a bride adorned for her husband, a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. He hopes for a gathering together of all the faithful at the coming of the Lord; he hopes, that when the Lord descends from heaven, all the dead in Christ shall rise, all the living in Christ shall be changed, and that they shall together be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and shall together be made perfect.*

*And this hope is not groundless, no airy dream, no uncertain probability. It rests on the power, and wisdom, and faithfulness, and benignity of God, pledged in a plain, well-accredited revelation of His will. It has come to him by the word of the truth of the gospel, to understand, and believe, and love, which his mind and heart have been opened by the effectual working of the Good Spirit. He has formed these expectations not in consequence of following cunningly devised fables, but in consequence of believing that word, which brought along with it powerful demonstration, that it was not the word of man, but as it is in truth the word of God, which worketh effectually in them believing it; tranquillizing the mind, pacifying the conscience, purifying the heart, transforming the character. Thus he knows on whom he has believed, and in whom he hopes. His hope is in God. Jehovah is the hope of his people. They hope in his mercy; they hope in his word. Our Lord Jesus himself, and God, even our Father, who hath loved us, hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace.”*

So that is a good overview of the hope, and the reason for the hope. The next question is, who are we obligated to give an answer to? The verse says we’re supposed to “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh.” But like any other verse, we can’t read this verse in a vacuum. We have to read it in the light of the rest of the scripture. We’re told elsewhere things like the following:

**“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” (Matthew 7:6)**

**“But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.”  
(2 Timothy 2:23)**

**“Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.  
Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.” (Proverbs 26:4-5)**

**“Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.”  
(Proverbs 23:9)**

**“He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked *man* getteth himself a blot.” (Proverbs 9:7)**

And there are a lot of similar verses. The idea is that we need to use a little bit of discretion. We need to look at the situation on the ground and make a judgment call. There is “a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.” (Ecclesiastes 3:7). If a person approaches you in a respectful manner and calls on you to give an account for what you believe, that’s a different situation than if a caviler is mocking you and challenging you to wrangle with him in an unfruitful and unedifying debate.

We have a rather public and conspicuous testimony. As part of that, we have the privilege of going out and interacting with people on the streets, and we’re often being asked to give a reason of the hope that is in us in one way or another. All types of people engage us – atheists, agnostics, people from different religions, phony Christians, Christians who supposedly believe what they’re supposed to believe, and everything in between. Each of these might result in a different type of response (kind of like Paul being made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some – 1 Corinthians 9:22), but still, we should be prepared to give them an answer. And not just an answer, but an answer with meekness and fear. That is, remember the gravity of the subject matter and your role in giving an answer for it.

Interestingly enough, the context of our verse has to do with giving an answer in the midst of suffering afflictions for righteousness’ sake, terror and false accusations. I think we’ve experienced that. That doesn’t mean that we don’t need to answer in other situations (because it seems to be a general precept), but context is always important.

How can we always be ready? It is simply to always be meditating on and talking about the things of God. Living in fellowship with Christ. Calling on the Holy Spirit to guide us. Speaking often one to another. The minute that you turn away from that and towards the foolishness and the vanity of the world, is the minute that you will be caught unready to give an answer. If you're doing the following things, you'll be ready:

**“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.” (2 Timothy 2:15-16)**

**“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:” (2 Peter 1:10)**

**“The heart of the righteous studieth to answer.” (Proverbs 15:28)**

Quoting Brown again: *“Every Christian, when called on to give an account of his hope, is to defend it. He is to do this, first, by distinctly stating what it is; by giving a plain account of what are the objects of his hope: and this of itself, if candidly listened to, will go far to answer all the purposes of defence. But he must do more than this: he must be ready to show that what he hopes for is really promised in the Scriptures, and that these Scriptures are indeed ‘given by inspiration of God’ – an infallible and authoritative revelation of the Divine mind and will, for the regulation of the religious sentiments and conduct of mankind, and therefore a solid foundation for his hope. He must show that his hope is no mere imagination, but is founded on most certain truth; and that in performing the duties...he is acting a reasonable, the only reasonable part, and that to abandon his hope, or to do anything inconsistent with it, were to act the part of a fool and a madman. And the Christian is to do this, not only where it may be done without inconvenience or hazard, but in the face of the greatest dangers, though sure to draw down on himself ridicule, scorn, contumely, torture, death.”*

It's important for everyone claiming to be part of the body of Christ to have the knowledge to be able to give an answer, a defense. Not only is it necessary to fulfill this duty required in 1 Peter 3:15, but it's good for your own heart and wellbeing. If you're walking around in a haze unable to articulate convincingly in your own heart what you believe and why you believe it, how do you expect to give an answer when asked? I imagine that there is uneasiness and confusion in your heart, if that's the state you're in, and the remedy is meditating day and night on the word of God.

So that all lays the ground work, and now we can go through a few examples. Earlier this year, when we were preaching at President Trump's inauguration, I had an inordinate number of people ask me how I even know that God exists in the first place. One young man stepped

away from the rabble and asked, “What proof do you have that God exists?” Now, let me go down a little side trail and talk about atheists and agnostics for a minute. Of course, atheists believe that there is no God; agnostics claim that they do not know whether or not God exists, or that the existence of God is unknowable. As far as I’m concerned, an agnostic may as well be an atheist. And here’s what the scripture says about these people:

**“The fool hath said in his heart, *There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.*” (Psalm 14:1)**

And if it’s foolish to say that in your heart, imagine how foolish and impudent it is to let everyone know about it:

**“Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but *that which is* in the midst of fools is made known.” (Proverbs 14:33)**

So when you encounter someone who is saying that he doesn’t believe in God, or pretending that he just doesn’t know whether or not God exists, remember that you’re dealing with a foolish, corrupt, and abominable person. And really, those are characteristics of all fallen mankind, but particularly so in these types of people. They frequently believe that they are great bastions of reason, intellect, knowledge, wisdom, logic, sensibility, etc. (“Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” – Romans 1:22). And often, they couldn’t care less what your answer is – they are only interested in an argument or debate so they can show everyone how smart they think they are, and because they think they might be able to shake the foundations of your faith and cause you to be ashamed.

So, to this young man at Donald Trump’s inauguration, who wanted to know, “what proof do you have that God exists,” I said one word: “Creation.” He looked at me with a befuddled look and said, “What???” I said, “Creation.” He said, “That doesn’t make any sense. What are you even talking about?” So at that point, it was time for some Romans 1 and 2 goodness:

**“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed *it* unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.*”  
(Romans 1:18-20)**

**“For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law**

**written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.” (Romans 2:14-15)**

God has not provided exhaustive evidence of Himself. By that I mean He hasn't provided all the possible evidence that He could provide. Otherwise, there would be no need for faith. However, He has provided sufficient evidence of Himself, so everyone who denies and forsakes Him is without excuse. Let's be very clear about this: this isn't an issue of lack of evidence; this is an issue of rebellion. All the evidence in the world wouldn't convince someone who has already decided that he's going to rebel against God. But whether he is convinced or not, he is without excuse.

So what do these passages out of Romans 1 and 2 teach us? We learn at least the following things:

- You can't see God, but you can see the evidence of God in His creation. Even if the Bible was silent on God being our Creator, and even if a person has never even heard of the Bible, there is sufficient evidence to render that person inexcusable and condemn him for forsaking the God of heaven and engaging in idolatry and other sins against nature. Nobody is innocent.
- God is the Creator. These “things that are made” did not make themselves. “Every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.” (Hebrews 3:4). The fact that God created all things is evident from the existence of the creation. How God created all things (that is, through a mere command, He caused all things to be created out of nothing) is a matter of faith: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” (Hebrews 11:3).
- We see God's eternal nature in the things that are made. The universe had a beginning (see Genesis 1:1, and if scientists are going to be proponents of the Big Bang theory, they will also have to admit that there was a beginning – they can't have it both ways). What we observe in this universe that we live in is that something doesn't come from nothing; nevertheless, here the universe is. If there is an effect, there must have been a Cause. If there was a beginning, there must have been a Beginner. If there is a design, there must have been a Designer. If there is a creation, there must have been a Creator. And if there is a work, there must have been a Workman. The explanation is an uncaused Creator who exists outside of the universe, who is not bound by the laws of the universe, who is not restricted by time in the universe, and who therefore inhabits eternity independent of His creation (see Isaiah 57:15).

- We see God’s power in the things that are made. How can we do anything but look in awe at His vast, eternal power when we behold His creation? “Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee.” (Jeremiah 32:17). Anyone who has read the Bible will know that there is a superabundance of verses regarding the power of God when it comes to His creation and His continual sustaining of it. For example, when God appears to Job out of the whirlwind, He primarily appeals to His work as Creator and Sustainer. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psalm 19:1). “He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.” (Jeremiah 10:12). Everything from distant galaxies, down to the smallest atom or living cell, is a testimony of the power and wisdom of God.

If you’ll bear with me, I’d like to look at one fascinating example, which is the basic unit of life: the cell. Back in Charles Darwin’s day, the complexity of the cell was unknown. They thought there was some bit of complexity to it, but they really didn’t have a clue. A biologist during that time frame named Ernst Haeckel described the cell like this: a *“simple little lump of albuminous combination of carbon.”* Over a century later, in a 1998 article in the biology journal called “Cell,” the cell was described like this: *“We have always underestimated cells...The entire cell can be viewed as a factory that contains an elaborate network of interlocking assembly lines, each of which is composed of a set of large protein machines...Why do we call the large protein assemblies that underlie cell function protein machines? Precisely because, like machines invented by humans to deal efficiently with the macroscopic world, these protein assemblies contain highly coordinated moving parts.”* Since that article, technological advances have been made in scientific tools that have allowed us to delve even deeper into the cell and see what’s actually happening. The more scientists have looked into it, the more shockingly complex they realize that it is. And I can tell you that it’s even way more complex than they think it is. There are complicated, interrelated molecular machines and parts at the cellular level, including rotary motors, whip-like paddles, pumps, gatekeepers to regulate items going in and out of the cell, timing devices, ferries to carry cargo, cables and winches, chaperones (to help molecules assemble and disassemble), ball and socket mechanisms, levers, turbines, clamps, valves, ratchets, spring-loaded mechanisms, signal processors (to know when to grow, reproduce, defend itself, search for food, or self-destruct), etc. One machine even ties DNA into knots (think how complicated a machine would have to be to tie your shoelaces). And all of these machines don’t always exist – they assemble themselves as needed based on information residing in the cell. The constituent parts have to be available, they have to be just the right shape and size, and they have to have just the right mechanism to join together (so that they are held



together with just the right force - not too strong, and not too weak), so they can assemble in just the right order. And many of these machines are what has been termed “irreducibly complex,” meaning that all the parts must be present in order for it to function; otherwise, it’s worthless. It’s an amazing work of God.

- We see God’s “Godhead” (which means, in this verse, His “divine nature”). The eternal power I’ve been talking about isn’t just some impersonal, blind force that permeates everything, such that God is everything and everything is God (which is what pantheists believe). That type of foolishness leads directly to idolatry and the worship of nature and self. No! This eternal power belongs to a living, personal God, who is distinct from and supreme over His creation. In addition to some of the attributes of God that I’ve already mentioned (i.e., His eternity, omnipotence, wisdom, supremacy), we also see at least the following in His creation and the governance of His creation: His wrath, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Romans 1:18); His benevolence and longsuffering nature in providing for even wicked men (Matthew 5:44-45, 6:28-32); His omniscience because not even a sparrow falls to the ground without Him (Matthew 10:29); His glory and majesty (Psalm 19:1). “O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.” (Psalm 104:24).
- We see that human beings have an inherent morality written on their hearts, and a conscience that is constantly accusing or excusing us. Remember, God originally created man in His image (Genesis 1:26-27). After the fall, we are in Adam’s sinful image (Genesis 5:3, Psalm 51:5). However, there is still some likeness to that original image of God (Genesis 9:6, James 3:9). We’ve called that “residual rays of original light.” Being in the image of God means a lot of things, but one of the things is that we are moral creatures with the ability to reason, and we have a conscience to understand that there is a difference between right and wrong. This is distinct from brute beasts. Beasts don’t do things because they are inherently right, or because they “ought” to. That is a uniquely human thing. We understand that there is an objective standard of right and wrong – it’s written in our hearts. In our fallen states, we may pervert that standard and call good evil and evil good, but we still know that there is a standard of right and wrong. Murder, for example, is always wrong in all times and places. Adultery is always wrong in all times and places. Sodomy is always wrong in all times and places.

If we have a law written in our hearts, then there must be a Lawgiver. If I know that this or that thing is the right thing to do, and therefore I’m obliged to do it, then there must be some superior that obliges me. Otherwise, I get to decide for myself what is right and wrong, and am answerable to no one, and there is no such thing as right and wrong, other than what I have decided. But men’s consciences condemn them for their sins,

even those sins that are committed in secret that nobody knows about (including evil thoughts), because there is an instinctive dread that they will be answerable to a divine judge. It's only when they sear their conscience that they can temporarily avoid the discomfort of guilt, and they cover it up with pride or false piety or some other vanity. In their hearts, though, the wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest (Isaiah 57:20). This is why sodomites, for example, will never be satisfied with getting people to accept them as normal; their consciences are constantly accusing them, and their vain hope is that having some fleshly assurances from elsewhere will help drown out the cry of their consciences and calm the troubled sea of their hearts.

It's hard to talk about all of this without at least spending a few minutes on the theory of evolution, because that is so commonly used to oppose God's creation of the universe. What evolutionists would like to do is turn this into an issue of religion vs. science. To be very clear, there is no issue of religion vs. science – the two can cohabit quite nicely together. The issue is religion vs. science falsely so called.

**“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.” (1 Timothy 6:20)**

The word translated “science” in that verse is the Greek word “gnosis,” which simply means “knowledge.” We are talking about any so-called “knowledge” that is in opposition to what God has revealed. Real science can be just fine. As Louis Pasteur said, *“The more I study nature, the more I stand amazed at the work of the Creator”* and *“Little science takes you away from God but more of it takes you to Him.”*

Science falsely so called (sometimes called “materialism” or “naturalism” in this case), on the other hand, would have us believe that the universe and everything in it (including life itself) popped into existence and randomly assembled itself, all the while saying, “we know it looks like it was designed, but just trust us; it wasn't.” I'm not making that up. For example, Francis Crick (one of the men who won the Nobel Prize for identifying the structure of DNA) said, *“Biologists must constantly keep in mind that what they see was not designed, but rather evolved.”* The reason they must constantly keep it in mind is because any rational person, when they look at something that looks like it was intricately and wonderfully designed, would conclude that it was intricately and wonderfully designed; but we can't have biologists saying that God designed it. If somebody walked into this church and told us that this piano, for example, came to pass any other way than by someone designing and creating it, he wouldn't be considered to be some great philosopher or sage or intellect – he'd be considered to be a fool. But when it comes to the greatest, most amazing and most intricately designed creation, we have to check our brains at the door and constantly keep telling ourselves that it really wasn't designed. Do you remember all those machines that exist in cells that I talked about a

few minutes ago? The ones that have to have all of the parts perfectly assembled in order to be functional? Evolution can't explain that.

They operate in an environment where they take data and weave it into fanciful stories and ridiculous speculations, and then present that to the nation's youth and general population as undisputed facts. Please be careful about the "facts" that these scientists tell you. Evolution is unsupported by the fossil record, it isn't reproducible, and it hasn't been observed (i.e., nobody has seen one kind of organism change into a different kind of organism, although nobody disputes that there are variations within a single kind). Most importantly, it is contrary to the teachings of the scripture. Scientists who cling to it as a "fact" are desperate, so they will interpret any new data that they receive to fit their preconceived notions. That's not how "science" is supposed to work. Evolution is more of a belief system than it is a science.

In evolution, what is a "fact" today will be false tomorrow. I'll give you a couple old examples, and a recent example. In 1922, a tooth was discovered in Nebraska. The scientists who found it believed that it was a tooth belonging to an ape-like ancestor of humans and started calling him "Nebraska Man." Within months, an article appeared (complete with a full illustration) describing what this ape-man looked like, what weapons he carried, what kinds of animals lived alongside him, how he got to Nebraska, what the climate was like when he came, how he was related to modern humans, etc. A few years later, it was determined that the tooth was actually from a pig. We could call this one an honest mistake, because the guy actually believed that it was an ape tooth. But 10 years previous to this, in 1912, we have a hoax called "Piltdown Man" which was hailed as the "missing link" between apes and humans. This was taught in the schools and presented as undisputed fact for the next 41 years...until it was discovered that the fossil was a forgery. The man who claimed to have found it had deliberately combined the modified jawbone of an orangutan (plus some orangutan teeth) with a human skull. The more recent example is the so called vestigial pelvic bones in whales. For years, evolutionists have been telling us that these bones are left over from when whales used to walk on land 40 million years ago, and in a few more million years, the bones will be gone. But when they finally got around to investigating the matter, they realized that the bones are actually used by the whales during reproduction – they are not vestigial at all.

I'm telling you all this because I know that they are presenting evolution in the schools and everywhere else as if it is unquestionably true. They don't tell you any of the problems with the theory. They don't tell you about all the things that it can't explain. So always keep in mind, this is what Paul was warning Timothy to avoid – please don't be deceived and put your trust in a "science falsely so called" like evolution. It is incompatible with the Bible. You cannot simultaneously believe Genesis 2:7 ("And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.") and

believe that humans descended from other creatures. Evolution is an unreasonable thing to believe. But it's their only option, because otherwise they'd have to admit that there is a God that they will be accountable to. They think if they can remove Him from the natural universe, then they can remove Him from the moral universe and there will be no consequences. Note that Charles Darwin didn't reject Creation by God because the scientific evidence was against it...he rejected it because he couldn't stomach the idea of God doing things that he thought were mean: *"I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created parasitic wasps with the express intention of their feeding within the living bodies of Caterpillars."* And about Christianity, he said that he can *"hardly see how anyone ought to wish Christianity to be true; for if so the plain language of the text seems to show that the men who do not believe, and this would include my Father, Brother and almost all my best friends, will be everlastingly punished. And this is a damnable doctrine."*

So, with all that said, the vast majority of people today and throughout history have acknowledged that there is a God. They see Him in creation. Most of them have perverted it, and worship some strange god or gods, but they understand and believe the concept. But it's not worth a tinker's dam if you acknowledge the existence of God if you're not saved. Remember James 2:19 – "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." You'll be spending eternity in hell believing that there is one God, along with every other damned person who believes that there is one God. Next week, Lord willing, I hope to continue and focus more on His special revelation of the Bible.

I love you. Amen.