

# IS THERE A GOD?

<b>Nature</b>	The inherent or basic qualities of something
<b>Omnipotent</b>	The belief that God is all-powerful
<b>Omnibenevolent</b>	The belief that God is all-loving
<b>Omniscient</b>	The belief that God is all-knowing
<b>Omnipresent</b>	The belief that God is present everywhere all the time
<b>Immanent</b>	God is in the world with us.
<b>Transcendent</b>	God is beyond everything we know, and eternal
<b>Problem of evil</b>	How can an all-loving and all-powerful God coexist with evil?
<b>Religious Experience</b>	An experience which leads a person to believe in God
<b>Miracle</b>	Anything unexplainable that breaks the laws of science
<b>Soul</b>	The spiritual part of a being which lives on after death and is often believed to connect a person to God
<b>Cosmological argument</b>	The argument that the world must have a cause (starting point) as does everything within the universe.
<b>Teleological argument</b>	The world's design points towards a designer. This designer must be God

## NATURE OF GOD

Muslims & Christians would believe that God is ...	They would believe this because ...
• Omnipotent	• He created the universe and human life
• Omnibenevolent	• He forgives sins
• Omniscient	• He will judge human after they die
• Omnipresent	• He listens to prayers everywhere all at the same time
• Immanent	• He cares & protects humans
• Transcendent	• He is not restricted by time or space
• Fair	• He does not punish more than humans deserve
• Grateful	• He appreciates human sacrifices
• Eternal	• Existed before time as He created it!



### What is this unit all about?

This unit will focus on what many may consider to be the most important question in the philosophy of religion—whether or not God exists. This unit will consider whether or not the arguments put forward by theists (believers in God) is enough to prove the existence of God.



### Why is it difficult to prove the existence of God?

When someone asks if you believe in mermaids, we know exactly what it is that people do or do not believe in. This is because we can understand what a mermaid is. This is not the case with God as he is transcendent. This means that he is beyond everything that we know which would make it impossible to ever fully understand who or what God is.

THINK: Do you have to understand something to believe in it?

If you have never been to Paraguay how do you know it exists?



### What are the different lessons that I will be covering in this unit?

1. Introduction to the unit
2. Nature of God
3. Problem of evil
4. Responses to the problem of evil
5. Religious experiences
6. Miracles
7. The soul
8. Cosmological argument
9. Teleological argument
10. Conclusion of unit

GET AHEAD: Read up on the lesson titles to get ahead. Google it!

## ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE EXISTENCE OF GOD



I have believed in God all of my life and regularly pray to Him. I asked God to help me achieve a Grade 9 in my Y11 Mock Exams.

My results were handed to me last week; I received a Grade 8.

Why did God not listen to my prayers?

I have lived in poverty all of my life. If there is a God out there, He must either not care about me or be incapable of helping me.

If God can help me and chooses not to, how can He be Omnibenevolent?

If God wants to help me but cannot do so, how can He be Omnipotent?

If He is neither, why worship Him?

There is just not enough evidence to prove that God exists.

Science has the answers to our questions. As technology advances, we will learn more about the world and be able to give explanations of things that we currently do not have the answers to.

Hundreds of years ago, many humans believed that the world was created by God because there was no other explanation. Now, evidence suggests that the world is expanding and it was made by the Big Bang over millions of years!

### CHRISTIAN RESPONSE!

God is testing humans to see how humans will respond!

God is Omniscient, maybe that particular thing is not good for you at this present moment in time!

### CHRISTIAN RESPONSE!

God allows evil so that humans can start taking responsibility for themselves and for others! Suffering is bad but important lessons are learned from it.



### CHRISTIAN RESPONSE!

There is a difference between faith and belief. Faith does not require any evidence to support it, if there is evidence then it becomes a belief.

Life is a test, if God shows himself then humans would have no choice but to listen to God and follow his rules!



## Religious Experiences

KEY INFORMATION: Religious experience are experiences which lead people believe in God. Although many people doubt religious experiences, and think they are due to psychological and physiological issues, there are some cases which point towards union with a greater power.

Argument	Explanation	What could this prove?	Atheist responses
Remembered lives	Some people can recollect information from previous lives they have lived. In some cases, the accounts are so vivid and detailed that they are hard to dismiss.	The soul is meta-physical and is not proven by Science. If the soul exists and cannot be proven, then why can God not exist? This proves that there is some form of life after death	Too many people have committed fraud and lied about encounters with the dead to make anyone believe that the afterlife is real.
The paranormal	Some believe it is possible to communicate with the dead, who live in a spirit world.	If mediums are communicating with the dead then there must be some form of 'life' after death.	To prove this point, Robert Thouless, President of the Society for Psychical Research, made a coded message before he died that required a key word to decode it. He told no one the key word when he was alive and said that mediums (communicator between the living & the dead) should contact him after his death to get the key word and prove there was life after death. At least 100 mediums
Near death experience	A near death experience is a psychological event usually occurring when people are close to death or in situations of intense danger.	People involved in near-death experiences often mention seeing a 'light' and loved one that have passed away. This proves that there is an afterlife.	Life after death is simply a source of comfort to the bereaved. People feel comforted by the idea that their loved ones have gone onto a better place and are being looked after by God. However, there is with no factual evidence to support it.
Meeting loved ones	Some people sense that their loved ones are still with them, which means they must 'live on' in the afterlife. They believe that when they die, they will be able to meet their loved ones again.	If people can sense their loved ones and feel their presence then they must be alive in some form in the afterlife. Some people believe that souls that have left, and lived good lives, pray for us	
Miracles	Miracles break the laws of science. The only possible explanation for them must be that God has allowed them to happen. Many people accepted Jesus as the Son of God after he resurrected.	Jesus is the Son of God as he performed many miracles in his life. The miracles have led many to convert to Christianity. There are many miracles that have been recorded in the Bible, how can they all be false?	They believe that the resurrection of Jesus is not based on sufficiently reliable evidence to prove the existence of an afterlife. They claim that Biblical accounts contain too many contradictions to be proof.

### TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

#### Aquinas' 5<sup>th</sup> WAY

- All unintelligent living things in the world (plants, animals, body cell and organs etc.) are all moving/working in a manner which achieve the best possible results.
  - (sunflower moves to face the sun)
  - (camels can close their nostrils to stop sand/dirt)
  - (eyelids shut to clean the eye)
- An unintelligent thing cannot move without the help of an intelligent being. Aquinas gives the example of an arrow.



Scientific examples include blood moving through the veins, DNA being passed to children and many more things!



- Some HIGHLY intelligent being must exist that is directing things to their optimum state/purpose. This must be GOD.



#### IN A NUTSHELL:

- The universe is so intricate that it just cannot be here by chance
- The universe seems to have purpose, it must have been designed
- The only being powerful enough to design it must be God



Hi! I'm William Paley! I believe in God, and I think everyone should... there MUST be a way that I can prove that God exists!!



How do we know someone **designed** this watch and it hasn't just randomly appeared on Earth?

- It has a **purpose**, we can use it for a very specific reason which is to tell the time.
  - These **parts are complicated** and must have been carefully put together by the designer.
  - There are loads of parts to this watch and the **parts all work together** to achieve a goal (to tell the time)
- THEREFORE:** Who ever put this watch together must've been a really **intelligent designer!**

- The world has a **PURPOSE**. We have everything we need for survival here on Earth.
  - Everything in the world is quite **COMPLEX**. For example, without one kind of animal then others would die out, or if the sun was a bit further away then everything would die!
  - The different parts in the world, are **CONNECTED** (work together). For example, the sun produces light which works with the rain from the clouds to help plants to grow.
- THEREFORE:** Who ever put the world together must've been a really **intelligent designer!** This was **GOD!**



### COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

Thomas Aquinas is a very famous Christian philosopher who argues that the existence of God can be proven through observing the universe and its natural laws.

