

Without Excuse

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Date: 30 April 2017

[0:00] In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. Genesis 1, verse 1.

In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. They see the world through these beliefs, through this system.

And it's for everyone in the world. Everyone has this way of looking at the world and their place in the world. It's their perspective. How people see and relate to what goes on around them.

How they interpret the world. It's called a world view. It's a framework that we use to try to make sense of what's going on. The nature and origin of the universe of human beings. The nature of morality and the purpose of life.

Of what happens when we die and so on. Atheists have a no God world view. No God. Strangely enough, atheism is a belief system.

[1:11] It's a light to a religion. The atheist believes that nature is all there is. That's all there is. All that we can see is all that there is. And when you take it to the ultimate, it's a bleak, pointless, meaningless, hopeless, ultimately irrational world view.

There's basically these two world views. If you boil it down, at the centre of a biblical world view is God. At the centre of an atheistic world view is nature and man.

A biblical world view has its entire focus on God. While an atheistic world view does everything to be sure that God is not a part of the world.

One acknowledges God, while the other believes there is no God. One believes that God created the universe, while the other believes that naturalistic causes brought our world into existence.

One believes that God created man, while the other believes that man came into existence through millions of years of evolution. One believes that God has given us a moral code of ethics.

[2:18] The other believes that men can establish their own code of ethics as they see fit at the time. One believes that sin is man's greatest problem, while the other believes that we're all basically born good.

But due to negative influences, people have become bad as they define it. And one believes that man's greatest problem is solved spiritually.

The other believes that man's problems are solved through government, through education, through intervention, through technology, or a variety of other means. One believes that every man and woman has a soul, while the other believes that men and women do not have a soul.

One believes that people have an eternal destiny, while the other believes that either life ends at death, that's it, or some kind of reincarnation or some fanciful thing.

Atheists cannot account for morality. Why is right, right, and wrong, wrong? Who says what is right and what is wrong?

[3:26] Atheists, they cannot account for rationality, for logic, and intelligence because their worldview will not allow them to. The only way that they can do so is to take on a Christian theistic worldview.

They've got to really go back to the Bible. The atheist's faith could be boiled down to two simple creeds. There is no God, number one.

Number two, and I hate him. That's what atheists believe. They're both God-denying and God-defying. They hate God while they deny him and they mock him.

And atheists see that life is objectively meaningless. Life has no value or purpose to the atheist. Atheists deny the evidence and the priests that are all around them.

We see in the book of Ecclesiastes, which is a philosophical look at the meaning of life. It expresses the hopelessness of life, void of God, with the constant refrain, vanity, vanity, all is vanity.

[4:31] And without God, nothing makes sense. It is meaningless. There is no reality. Life is vain without God. It's in vain. And for an atheist, there are no moral absolutes.

Life has no purpose. We're just an accident. There's no meaning to it. No value. But in stark contrast, the Bible, the biblical worldview, shows us that there is meaning.

And there is answers to the issues of life and the world. A biblical worldview gives us confidence. It gives us an assurance. It gives us answers to life's problems. And it gives us hope for the future. Here is the answer to atheism. If you turn to Romans chapter 1, we're going to spend some time there in Romans chapter 1, where Paul outlines the answer to atheism.

He contradicts atheism. And he shows what life is for. The purpose of life. Romans 1.

[5:32] Now we could read Romans 1, 2, 3, the whole book, really to get the whole full context here. But we've not got time to cover it all in one time.

But we're just going to focus on one segment here. Romans 1, from verse 18 to 28. It says from verse 18, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

Romans 1, 18. The wrath of God. God is righteously angry. I am angry. I am angry when I see the deception that grips the people I love and care about and holds them prisoner.

I'm angry. God is angry. The wrath of God. It's sick and it's sad what unbelief does to people. What it's doing to our world. And nothing grieves me more. And God, the righteous judge, is rightfully angry.

He has rightful wrath. He's holding back judgment for now, for a season, for a time. He is holy. He is righteous. He is gracious and merciful, extending pardon for this time, for this moment of time, for this Christ-rejecting world that stands guilty to have just that more time to get right.

[6:52] Meantime, it's rightly condemned and faces ultimate judgment for the penalty of its rejection of the Saviour. And the message that our Lord cries out loud and clear, flee from the wrath to come.

That's his message to us, to this world, to this planet. Loudly and clearly, he says, flee from the wrath to come. The wrath of God. We can be saved from wrath through him.

There is a time, a space to repent, to receive. And this verse tells us, verse 18, of a people who disregard the truth. They disregard it.

They deny it. When they are contrary to the truth, when they ought to receive the truth. When the rightful response to the truth of God is to receive it, to embrace it, to know him and his forgiveness of his life, of relationship with God.

And to be conscious of our duty towards him, to truly honour him for who he is. He deserves that.

Yet, the opposite happens now, where people deny the truth and it becomes a slippery slope.

[8:02] They end up doing the opposite of what the truth is telling them to do. And they lead, it leads them in a downward, hellward direction, a spiral, a downward spiral.

We'll see that as we go through this passage here. Verse 19, In effect, they deny the truth. They hold it in unrighteousness.

They mock it and scorn it. And verse 19, Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them. For God hath showed it unto them. It's manifest, it says.

Paul says, the truth is staring them full on, straight in the face, and yet they oppose it. They deny it. It's manifest. It's visible. It's evident. It's there for all to see.

The evidence is clear. And Webster defined evident as this, clear to the vision or understanding, readily perceived or apprehended. God is not hidden.

[8:59] He is not hidden. He has shown himself. It's manifest. The signs are everywhere for all to see. God is knowable. And we see the demonstration of his character, of his power in all creation.

God has shown himself in creation and within man. It's saying, that which may be known of God is manifest in them. It's manifest in them.

There is within every man a conscience. A conscience. Paul tells of that in Romans 2.15. It says in part, their conscience also bearing witness.

Their conscience is testifying to them. It's shouting aloud to them. It's testifying to them. It is witnessing to them. Their conscience is bearing witness. This reality is in the heart, the mind, the conscience, the instinctive knowledge of God.

It's in all of us. There is no true atheist. Someone who says there is no God and truly believes that. I don't believe that is so because the evidence of the existence of God is in the very nature of man.

[10:07] It's in us. It's in them. It's manifest in them. It's evident in them. The nature of man. Every man has this light in him. It says that every man has this light.

For some it might be just a little flicker but their light is in them. The light is in them. As much as they try to quell it and deny it and extinguish it, it's in man. It's manifest in them.

So no man can claim ignorance of God. God has revealed himself to this planet, to mankind and he continues to reveal himself to man. Verse 20, it goes on. For the invisible things have got 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.

They are without excuse. Creation shouts aloud of what? A creator. Creation shouts aloud. The creator has given abundant evidence.

He's saying look at the works of my hands. The world, the cosmos, describes that orderly arrangement and here refers to the order of the universe.

[11:20] The word cosmos underlies this word world and the Greeks used cosmos to refer to the universe from the fact of its perfect arrangement.

Look at the universe. Look at just the solar system, the Milky Way, the constellations, the order that is all evident. It's manifest. And the opposite of cosmos is another Greek word chaos.

Cosmos or chaos. Chaos speaks of that first state of existence, the root unformed mass out of which the universe was made. And the Greeks believed that the original state of the universe was one of chaos which is in line with the theory of evolution and the so-called Big Bang Theory which has been exploded by creationists and believing scientists though held tenaciously by many today. Chaos or cosmos? Look around you, it's cosmos, it's not chaos. It's order, it's manifest, it's evident. creation, as David cried out, the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament, the skies, they show forth his handiwork.

Anyone who's ever looked out into the glittering sky at night or the radiant sunset or sunrise has no excuse, no excuse to not believe in God.

[12:44] These things are, as Paul says, clearly seen, clearly seen. all creation is an outstretched finger pointing to God. As someone has described it, the grand design points to the great designer.

Who could contemplate the magnificence of the universe, the greatness of it, the precise design of our amazing planet? For one, think of the earth.

It's some 93 million miles just right in its distance from the sun to sustain life. It's got a 23.5 degree tilt such that the axis ensures seasonal changes.

That's why the seasons, because the earth is tilted just right. Without much of, without this tilt, much of the earth would be desert. Then we have the balance of oxygen, 21%, nitrogen, 78%, just that right balance in the air, just by happenstance, just by mere chance, just by evolution's whim and fancy.

No, because the creator has designed it to sustain life, to support life. And the ozone layer in the atmosphere, it shelters our planet from harmful ultraviolet rays from the sun.

[14:04] It speaks design. It speaks a design-or, a creator. and furthermore, that the God who created everything takes a personal interest in us as we see through his story.

His story, history, the great creator has made himself known. And here's another evidence. Think of the wonder of bees. You know, we take it for granted, those little buzzing bees that we see around about us and perhaps in your pantry you've got that jar of honey.

Someone has said that 16 ounce jar of honey exists only because tens of thousands of bees flew some 112,000 miles in a relentless pursuit of nectar and gathered from 4.5 million flowers.

Just that 16 ounce jar of honey in your pantry. And every one of those foraging bees was female.

By the time each died living all of six weeks during the honey-making season, she had flown about 500 miles in 20 days outside the hive.

And as these bees were flying themselves to death, production inside the hive continued with stupendous efficiency. The bee brings nectar to the hive carried tidally in her honey stomach. [15:21] They're greeted by a receiver bee who receives the load. And the receiver bee deposits the nectar into a cell, reduces its water content, raises its sugar level by fanning it with her wings and regurgitating it up to 200 times, killing microbes along the way.

This is the wonder of that simple honey that is in your pantry today. More bees surround this cell and others, they fan them with their wings 25,000 times or so, turning nectar into honey. And when the honey is ripe, wax specialists arrive to cap off the cells. It's a production line. It's orderly. It's evidence. It's manifest.

Every single honey pot is evidence of the creator that he has made that. And as someone commented, a beekeeper said this, every gulp of raw honey is distinct, unique, unadulterated plant flavour.

A sweet, condensed garden in your mouth. When you spread that honey on your lunchtime toast, remember this, that it's made by God. and his creative power as manifest as evidence.

[16:33] You know, an atheist has to go through life with their eyes far shut to try to shut out all the evidence that's calling for them to wake up. They're blinded to the creation that is all around them.

Our whole universe is finely tuned, the fine tuning of the universe such that there's precise strengths of four basic forces. Gravity is one, the weakest with the relative strength of one. Next strongest is the weak nuclear force that holds neutrons together inside an atom. It's 1034 times stronger than gravity. Then there's electromagnetism, the third force. It's 1000 times stronger than the weak nuclear force. And then the strong nuclear force which keeps protons together in the nucleus is 100 times stronger again. All of these forces are at work, working with different strengths and sustaining actions so that our universe is held together.

Of course, we know who ultimately holds it together. Because in him all things consist. So we see these truths are evident all around us. Think of the miraculous human body.

[17:41] Now, some of our human bodies are more miraculous than others. But the human body is miraculous, isn't it? Don't we stop and think of the heart, the average heart pumps 1000 gallons a day.

Over 55 million gallons in a lifetime. It's enough to fill 13 super tankers. It never sleeps. Beating 2.5 billion times in a lifetime.

The lungs contain 1000 miles of capillaries. And the process of exchanging oxygen for carbon dioxide is so complicated that a genetic engineer said it's more difficult to exchange oxygen for carbon dioxide than for a man shot out of a cannon to carve the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pen as he passes by.

This is something that science can't get its head around. Then we think of DNA. DNA contains about 2000 genes per chromosome. 1.8 metres of DNA are folded into each cell nucleus.

A nucleus is 6 microns long. This is like putting 30 miles of fishing line into a cherry pit. It isn't simply stuffed in. It's folded in. It's folded so perfectly.

[18:53] And to write out the information in one cell would take 300 volumes. Each volume 500 pages thick. The human body contains enough DNA that if it were stretched out it would circle the sun 260 times.

And the body uses energy efficiently. The average adult rides a bike, if they were to ride a bike for one hour at 10 miles per hour, it uses the amount of energy contained in three ounces of carbohydrate.

If a car were this efficient with gasoline, it would get 900 miles to the gallon. You're very efficient, believe it or not. So every day when you wake up, that amazing, miraculous human body that you're clothed with is a miracle and it speaks to you.

There's evidence. It's manifest in you, in creation. The word of God says, it's in a conclusion to all of that, man is without excuse.

Without excuse. Now consider some excuses for a time. You know, there was a businessman and he surveyed some executives to find what excuses they mostly heard.

[20:06] And number one was, it's not my fault. The second placed excuse was, it's someone else's fault.

Third, something else came up. Or fourth, I didn't have time or we've never done it that way before. So, excuses, excuses.

People have many, don't they? But excuses don't impress anyone, least of all God. Ronald Reagan said this, sometimes when I'm faced with an unbeliever or an atheist I'm tempted to invite him to the greatest gourmet dinner that one could ever serve.

And when we finished eating it, to ask him if he believes there's a cook. cook. It's just plain obvious, isn't it? It's evident. It's evident. It's manifest.

So, dear, sorry, sad unbeliever, you are woefully without excuse. Without excuse. Nothing can excuse your unbelief. Verse 21, we go on Romans 1.

[21:15] Verse 21, because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened.

Man without God is in darkness. He's a man groping in the dark, his very heart and mind blinded. If no God, no conscience, no truth, no light.

Since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes are clearly seen. Clearly seen. There was a story told about a man who wore a jeans and a t-shirt and a baseball cap and he went and sat by a trash can in a busy train station in Washington, D.C.

And he started to play the violin. And in the next 43 minutes he performed, six classical pieces and some 1,100 people passed him by and ignored him.

Not knowing that this man was Joshua Bell, one of the finest classical musicians in the world. And he was playing on a \$3.5 million Stradivarius violin.

[22:26] But no crowd stopped or gathered for him. And he said afterwards, it was a strange feeling that people were actually ignoring me. Ignoring me. And God knows what it feels like, to be ignored.

His evidence is all over. It's manifest. There's manifest evidence. His existence is clear for all to see in the creation, in the beauty of it, in the power of it, in the creativity, the complexity of it.

His majesty, our God. We see that the only reasonable and right response is to glorify God, to magnify and praise him.

Romans 11, 36, Paul says, for of him and through him and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

But back to Romans 1, we see verse 22, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. You know, our world's full of educated fools. Educated fools.

[23:30] They claim to be smart, to be wise, they profess wisdom, they may have letters behind their name, but they're fools nevertheless because they're missing out the plain obvious and the very beginning of wisdom is to know him.

It's an unfounded assertion to deny God. And wisdom is defined as the ability to judge correctly, to follow the best course of action based on not verse 23 of Romans 1.

and change the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds and to four-footed beasts and creeping things. The unbeliever chooses to reject the true God and they substitute something in its place, some kind of corruption, some variety, an idol.

It's saying an image, it's icon, an idol. people. It's, and you know, we see in many eastern religions where they have temples full of all these idols.

You know, they have a God for every day of their life if they wanted to in some religions because it's a substitute for the real God. And it's a, but yet in the west we have idolatry still, the worship of self.

[24:48] and the reason is because man is incurably religious. If he will not worship God, he will find or make something to worship, something, something to exchange God for, an image, whether it's himself or his own vain, unbelief or some idol or image or something they manufacture, something that takes God's place in their life, some substitute for God.

And for the professing atheists the primary spiritual problem is not intellectual because there's abundant evidence but it's moral. They want to rebel, to be autonomous, to run their own life, to be the master of their own destiny.

They will curse him while at the same time denying him. And they become discontent merely to disbelieve. They've got to blaspheme and curse him.

They won't stop at merely disbelief. they go to blasphemy. And their minds and mouths are soiled and spoiled. And their hearts get consumed in their hatred against God because they've lost all sense of reason and rightness.

And atheism, at its heart, it's diabolical. It's demonic. A foul spirit has possessed these people such that it obsesses them. While on the one hand they profess to deny God, they must go yet further and blaspheme his holy name.

[26:18] And mock Christ, the cross, the Bible, the gospel. This spirit that is in them drives them ever deeper into deeper and deeper darkness. God gave them up.

What a state to be in. What a horrific state, a dread state to find yourself in. In this accursed, damnable state of mind and heart and life.

what a hopeless existence for such a one. Woe to you if you ever get so far from God that it seems like you've reached a point of no return.

That God gives you up. God gives you over. Yet I hold out hope for you. I hold out hope for you who profess, even you who profess not to believe, that while you have breath to breathe, there is still time to repent and to seek after God.

Fact is that the God denier gravitates to a lifestyle of corruption. Unbelief leads to dishonour and uncleanness. One thing leads to another.

[27:19] No God, they say. So no sin, no law, no rules, no right, no wrong, no accountability, no consequences.

So they think. Just satisfy your animal instincts. After all, that's what we are, isn't it? We're just another creature. They've lost the fact that we're made in the image of God.

He had that ultimate design for us, his will for us. Yet atheists look on humankind as just another kind, just another kind of creature, just another animal.

So just satisfy your animal lusts, your animal instincts. things. This is the spirit that blinds the atheist. It holds him captive.

It blinds, it binds. Romans 1.25 we read on. Of these who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped and served the creature more than the creator who is blessed forever.

[28:24] Amen. So the atheist rejects the one and only entire and sure source of truth, the word of God. They deny this. They reject it. They mock and scorn it.

And they instead deify man, faulty man and humanistic thinking. People like Richard Dawkins and other fools, they follow him rather than the word of God.

And they have defiantly exchanged the truth of God for a lie, a lie by the choice of their own will. God's given them over. God's given them up.

And they've turned to a falsehood, a fabrication, a deception, a vain thing. Romans 1 26, we read on. For this cause God gave them up, again, gave them up, unto vile affections.

For even their women did change their natural use into that which is against nature. Vile affections. Vile affections.

[29:24] Sin degrades, it debases, it defiles man and it ultimately destroys him and it strips him of dignity, of peace of mind, of a clear conscience and the twisted mind of an atheist will adopt causes that are blatantly anti-God.

It's not enough for them just to deny God, to be atheists, they become anti-theists, they become hateful to God. And this sickness so degrades and defiles them that the atheist will join party to that which is most evidently wicked and warped.

They'll take home those causes that are twisted and perverted and corrupt because there's no God, they say. So no right, no wrong.

Who's to say what's sin, what's not? And in fact, his sin degenerates humanity, it degrades them. Now, same-sex marriage was legally recognised in ancient Rome before its collapse as a civilisation.

So, no God, no limits, no sense of shame. This is what the Word tells us. Will happen, did happen, will yet happen, and is happening right in our day and time.

[30:37] Verse 27, And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men, working

that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error, which is mean.

Now, the atheist sinks so low that he will lose the sense of right and wrong. Now, the Bible talks about uncleanness. I can't think of anything more unclean than what homosexuals do.

But, this defines what's moral and what's immoral. The divine precept. That is what sets the bar. That's what sets the standard to judge what is immoral.

But for the God-denier, they vainly set their own standards to suit themselves. Their moral standard is more subjective. It's more how they feel at the time. You know, I think it's right today, but I'm going to think it's wrong tomorrow.

No. It's about personal preference. What you say, what I say. Who sets the rules? Who's to say you're right and I'm wrong? Or vice versa. But God sets the rules.

[31:56] We can't argue with that. We've got to go with this. Go by the book. And I'm just being honest with you people here today. I'm not meaning to be a political, make a big political statement here or say something that's controversial for the sake of it.

But the Bible says some things that are plainly so. Plainly so. And so he sets the rules. He sets the rules. And we have laws of morality on planet Earth today because there's ultimately a law giver. He is the law giver. He set the law. He set the law here. Thankfully we're under grace now. But there's still right and wrong. There's truth and error.

There's still a standard. There's still a revelation for us. And thank God there's grace today. Amen. Thank God for grace. The laws of logic tell us there's a mind behind the universe.

Someone has made it. And we're made in his image we're told in Genesis 1. Romans 1 28. Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge God gave them over.

[33:10] A third time God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient. The Bible says a mind can become reprobate. It speaks of a loss of dignity.

It speaks of shame. It speaks of a loss of value, of worth. Many have become reprobate. so totally deceived that they can't sense it anymore.

Their conscience has got hardened and dulled. And for the atheists, without God, they think their life lived without God is without hope.

It's without excuse. And their existence is ultimately worthless and vain. Their influence becomes corrupting because they infect others with their lies and falsehood.

And they hinder the work of God. What a sad state to be. God gave them up. He gave them over to a reprobate mind. To think this way is to think that God, man, the universe are without any real significance.

[34:17] There is no right and wrong. All things are permitted. There is no evil, no good, no morals, no value. They've effectively lost their mind, morally and spiritually.

Their minds have become so darkened, so blackened, so blinded, so shut off from the light of God that they can no longer make sound judgments. No moral accountability.

No restraint. It's what it leads to. It's a downward spiral. And an atheist lives sadly in an unguided world governed by mere chance.

So they become useless effectively to God and to men. Now the Bible tells us of such a time. It says in the end times of scoffers. It tells of mockers to come in the last days.

And we see the rise of scepticism today. We see this scepticism which is a system of belief that says nothing can be known. It says truth is impossible.

[35:17] And the sceptic is quite certain he knows that no one can know anything. Which is a contradiction, isn't it? The sceptic is certain he knows that no one can know anything.

And so if it is true no one can know anything, how can he know anything? It's like saying I cannot speak a word of English. It doesn't make sense. Because scepticism is self-defeating and cannot be true.

Friends, the secularist, the godless, the no-god world view is ultimately bankrupt and hopeless. Yet Christianity offers us reasons to believe.

It's manifest, it's evident, creation, conscience, the handiwork of God. It's in the stars, it's in the skies, it's all around us.

The evidence in science, the wonder of creation, the complexity of a cell of the universe, the laws of nature, evidence, logic.

[36:30] God doesn't negate logic, he says come now, let us reason together, Isaiah 1. There's logic, it's logic, it's reasonable. God wants to reason with man.

It's reasonable to believe. There's evidence in history. We see, I was talking with Julie of late, about even the genealogies. You trace back the genealogy.

I've got a father, his name's David. I've got a grandfather, his name's Jesse. And back and back and back and back. And ultimately we come to the genealogies in Luke and Matthew.

We see the Lord Jesus there. And we trace him back, back, back, back, Adam. The historical record is another evidence.

It's evident. Eyewitnesses have given us valid gospel accounts. Eyewitnesses, such as Peter, as Paul. They've signed their testimony with their own larsidims.

[37:38] These people lived and testified and died for their testimony. It's evidence that shouts to us. And faith is a rational response, isn't it?

It's a rational response to the evidence. It's reasonable to believe. In the beginning, God. In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.

I urge you today, if you're on the fence, if you feel like you've been given over, maybe to a reprobate mind, while you've got breath, there's still time to believe.

There's still time to get right with God. There's still time to make peace with God. To know him, him to know. It's life eternal. You know, we could go on as really the context of Romans would further reveal the workings of God, of a soul, of the wages of sin, which is death, but the gift of God.

We see the grace of God unfolded here in the further chapters of Romans. We've just touched on where it begins, with the condemnation of the unbeliever, without excuse, without excuse.

[39:07] Let's stop making excuses. If we're in that camp, and let's get right with God. Get right with God. As Christ died, he rose again, he took our place, our sin, our penalty.

See, he is the only saviour, the only hope, the only gracious giver of eternal life, is Christ.

And yet he extends pardon to the guilty still, while there's still time. Let's not leave it until it's too late. Let us pray. Lord God, we thank you that all creation shouts your presence, your person.

We see the cross, and what took you there was our sin, including unbelief. And yet, Lord, even that sin can be forgiven, and you can cause us to believe, to come to our knees and crumble at your feet, and to confess, my Lord and my God, and believe.

In your saving grace, Lord, we pray each one would know that truth that is beyond compare, and know that wonderful grace of God, while we can receive it.

[40:30] In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.