

Call to Obedience #487  
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## God Is His Own Apologist

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What is an apologist? An apologist is a defender of the faith. For this discussion we shall bring in Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem:

*Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God,  
But only he who sees takes off his shoes;  
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.*

From the viewpoint of Mrs. Browning, it is as simple as this: we either see God and take off our shoes or we pluck blackberries. In other words: if the earth is crammed with heaven, why do we need apologists? Has God made Himself so ambiguous that He needs our help to prove His existence? If we question God's existence, how much more do we have reason to question our own? As it is, from early on, the science of "apologetics" began to flourish to attempt to prove what needs no further proof: 1) That there is a God; 2) That this God needs our protection; and 3) That Christianity must be made intellectually acceptable to the world.

But before we get into this great subject matter of apologetics, let us first look for some traces of God's opinion on the matter in the history of Israel. Remember, Uzzah was instantly slain when he put his hand on the ark when the oxen stumbled (2 Sam. 6:4-7; Num. 4:15; Ex. 25:10-14). God does not need man's support. Later on, Peter, forgetting history, took his sword to defend Jesus against the temple guards who came to arrest Him. Although Peter did not get killed, he was greatly embarrassed when he saw that his Master could throw everyone onto their backs without bloodshed—by just speaking a few words (John 18:4-11). God is not an endangered species; and if you think you need to fight for Him, let it be with the sword of the Spirit and not with the sword of the flesh. But always remember that God does not mind looking like a loser over and over again, and neither should we. The Christian does not need to look into the world's mirror each morning refreshing his cosmetics to see if he still makes a good impression upon it. Rather, it is by being ...*led as a lamb to the slaughter...* (Isa. 53:7) that he miraculously wins his battles.

Yes, “Earth’s crammed with heaven” means that if God would put more of heaven into earth, the earth could explode. Because earth is full of heaven, earth testifies of heaven everywhere, all the time: *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world* (Ps. 19:1-4).

“Earth’s crammed with heaven.” We are blind to reality. We are living in a smidgen of it. Let me give you a hint. Do you know that right now you are an astronaut being hurled about the sun at 65,000 mph and around the axis of the earth at 1,000 mph? Do you know that the people living near the equator are extended out into space, sideways from this planet, with only their feet holding them onto the earth, and the people in South Africa are standing upside down compared to those living in Iceland? Do you know that you have some 30 trillion (that is “30” followed by twelve zeros) cells breathing, feeding, digesting, synthesizing, excreting and protecting you from disease, all for your well-being? On top of this, within each of these cells, you have 100 trillion atoms which never run out of energy because God, the “first cause,” never runs out of energy. Can’t you see that this takes a considerable Mastermind to keep this all in order throughout His infinite universe?

**The question should not be: “Where is God and what is He doing?” but “Where is He not and what are you doing?”** So, as you should be able to see, this is what science (the harmonious, dependable working together of laws) is all about. The Christian has no trouble with science. God created it. Essentially, science is God’s ID for humankind. It is God’s first publication of Himself, written with inerrancy and humming its symphony as it moves effortlessly throughout the ages. Yes, and by the way, where else do you think music came from? Getting deeper into it, everything you see through the microscope and the telescope says, “yea and amen,” and anyone who disrupts its music shall soon be cast out of the concert hall of His divine presence, forever. Do not let this happen to you.

Yet, let us go beyond science, beyond that which is naturally perceived by our five senses, to see what else is at our disposal to know not only that there is a universal God, but to know also that there is a personal God. No one is born an atheist. When God formed man out of the ground with His own hands and breathed a living soul into him, He did not put the slightest trace of atheism into him. He made man in *His own image* and *His likeness*. He put

that which is of Him into us. Consequently, there is no such thing as a born atheist. That made Paul say when he happened to be passing through the intellectual center of the former Greek world, Mars Hill: *so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us* (Acts 17:27). Man longs for his Creator. Paul also describes us as having this innate, supernatural knowledge of the living God in Romans 1:18-23, and he does not hesitate to call those who suppress it, fools. Further, notice Paul's second quote at Mars Hill: *for in him we live and move and have our being* (Acts 17:28). That means that man is immersed in the evidence that God is.

Is it any wonder then with man rejecting the external evidence and the witness of the Holy Spirit that the psalmist says: *The fool has said in his heart, There is no God...* (Ps. 14:1)? Thus, **the question of the existence of both a universal and a personal God is not an intellectual problem but a problem of the heart.** The intellectual objections are only smoke screens covering up a reprobate, rebellious heart which says: *...I will not have this man to reign over me* (Luke 19:14).

For 44 years, Communists have tried to teach Eastern Europeans the nonexistence of God. Yet, they could not erase the new evidence that opened the skies to them each morning with the sun's glory triumphantly arising in the east. Now Moscow, the former headquarters of atheism, has about 2,000 churches and 200 more being planned, and with that, the controversy is no longer about the existence of God but whether we allow people to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Every experiment done to promote atheism has failed. It is rooted in darkness and has no viable future. It has no noble purpose and nothing to offer that would cheer the human heart. It has no beauty, no songs in the night, and it faints in the time of battle. It has no anchor or moral compass. It cannot light candles nor provide the experience of forgiveness of sins. It has no resting place; it cannot heal wounds or comfort the broken hearted, nor can it enter into the world of miracles. Again, atheism does not belong in the universe any more than a fish belongs on land. It is empty and negative and adds only darkness wherever it raises its head.

Hence, to know God personally means that we do not only need to be born in God as a fish is born in water, but we must also be born of God as Jesus said that we must be *...born of water and Spirit* (John 3:5). Our hearts must become humble cradles into which God can birth His Son. It is here where all supernatural graces sprout and flourish as we become stewards of

the knowledge of the Holy. From here, in the twinkling of an eye, we take a pivotal leap from ignorance to understanding as the Bible says: *By faith we understand that the worlds were framed [created] by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible* (Heb. 11:3). Beautiful. When we come to faith, we suddenly understand everything from the creation story to Moses' rod turning into a serpent, to God raining bread out of heaven and to Jesus' birth of a virgin. At that point, our God also becomes our Abba (Father). Unfortunately, proud, brilliant minds frequently find it difficult to stoop that low to replace reason with childlike faith, causing Jesus to say: *I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes* (Matt. 11:25). This is the very reason why Jesus did not send His disciples to intellectual strongholds but to the highways and hedges ...*To preach the gospel to the poor; ...to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed* (Luke 4:18).

To equip us to do this, He has given us the Holy Spirit to convince and ...*convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment* (John 16:8). When He dwells in us and works through us, we see the unholy becoming holy, the crooked becoming straight, the blind receiving their sight and the empty becoming tabernacles of the living God. Thus, the first picture of the first Christians was that though they were unlearned men, they showed prominent signs ...*that they had been with Jesus* (Acts 4:13). And it is indeed our identity with Jesus, and not our brilliance of mind that will continue to change the world as Jonathan Edwards, the father of the Great American Awakening, remarked by saying: "Rhetoric has never won a man to Christ, it is the Spirit of God who has to do it." Or as Zechariah says: *Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit says the LORD of hosts* (Zech. 4:6). Remember Uzzah; remember Peter; remember Christ. Life is about more than plucking blackberries—it is about God and God alone.

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