Where's the Proof?

15 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, 16 keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. (1 Peter 3:15-16)

Intro:

What proof do you have for the existence of God? This is a common argument of those wanting to dismiss the idea of a God, especially when addressing the God of the Bible.

Why do you think the God of the Bible is attacked in such an aggressive way?

The reason is because the Bible is 100% exclusive. If its claims are correct, there are no other Gods. All Gods are not the same. Anyone who doesn’t forsake all other Gods and exclusively submit to the God of the Bible is choosing to suffer eternally in hell. This alone makes the Bible controversial, you add a central figure by the name of Jesus who claimed to be God in the flesh and it gets even more controversial.

We have already covered the overwhelming evidence that the scriptures are accurate in what they say because we have so many manuscripts dating to up to within 50 years of the originals. The fact that Jesus existed, in Rome, during the time of history claimed, is not disputed even among the most liberal of scholars and historians. Basically we know without question, the Bible says what it has always said, it is not corrupted. Jesus, the central figured existed as a literal person without any dispute. However, the claims that are in the Bible, and more specifically the claims that Jesus made are what is in question. The Bible, everything in it, and whether or not Jesus existed isn’t even a matter of faith for me. The only matter of faith is, are the claims true.

Is the Bible really the word of God?

Is the God of the Bible really the only God?

Was Jesus really God?

Did Jesus really die for my sin?

Did Jesus really rise from the grave on the third day?

Is Jesus really the only way to be saved?

These are the only questions for me that really require any faith. We will deal with these questions over the next few weeks, but ultimately, we can study, we can debate, we can refute, reprove, and rebut; however, there comes a point where we simply believe. It is at this point where the atheists, agnostics, and religious critics claim we have abandoned logic. When
approached with the concept of God, the unbeliever will usually take one or more of the following approaches to confuse the believer.

I. **Attack on creation.**

This is the reasoning behind all the different theories out there. We have covered several the last couple weeks. The Big Bang, Evolution, and several others try to explain away God and prove that the universe can exist without Him. The problem with all of these theories is none of them explain the overwhelming evidence for intelligent design. None of them can explain the fine tuning problem. How did in the entire universe, the earth end up in the perfect place, with all the right elements to be able to sustain life? None of them explain the amazing order and beautiful design of the universe. How did a completely random and unguided process produce such wonder, order, and beauty? None of them can explain the complexity of the human body. How did the nervous system, the eyeball, and the digestive system just simply happen without any guidance?

Paul’s letter to the Romans says it best, “Since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” (Romans 1:19-20)

*Psalm 19:1-2 (NIV)*

*The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.***

II. **Appeal to logic, and reason.**

The claim is that because we can’t put God in a test tube and observe Him, God cannot be proven; therefore, “faith” in a God is not logical, and is therefore irrational. The problem is neither can the non existence of God be proven with a test tube. It takes FAITH to either believe or reject the idea of God. Faith is simply putting your trust in something, or even the lack of something. Remember we studied earlier in this series that faith is not a blind leap. Faith is not the abandonment of reason, nor is it ignoring scientific, archeological, and historical discoveries. Faith in fact REQUIRES that we use reason and logic!

*Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)*

37 Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment.

Jesus told us to love the Lord with all our hearts, which is not the blood pumping organ in our chest, but our thoughts and feelings. We are to love Him emotionally, but not independently of thinking. He also said with all our souls, which is the invisible part of us. Funny thing is the Greek word used is “psuche” which is where we get the word “psyche.” It is the part of us that we are often least aware of unless we give attention to it! The Greek definition also shows our
soul is the rational portion of us because it is designed to be immortal! Lastly, Jesus says to love God with all our minds, which literally means understanding. So Jesus doesn’t imply that faith in God requires the abandonment of reason, rationale, basic understanding, or logic. He actually tells us that faith requires those things! The heart, soul, and mind are all the invisible qualities in us that help us make reasonable and rational decisions on what to place our faith in! In other words, in order to put our faith in something, we have to determine whether or not it is trustworthy. Otherwise our faith would be misplaced.

Rational thinking will actually lead to faith in a God. When we look at the design and order of the universe, and the complexity of everything in it, the rational and logical mind will conclude, something had to do this, this could not have happened without guidance. For example the first law of thermodynamics says that matter cannot be destroyed only reformed. Many atheists claim that because of this law, matter must have always existed. Since the idea of God is not desirable for them, they choose to believe matter is eternal. However, the second law of thermodynamics states that matter will not go from chaos to order if left to itself without guidance. Using reason and logic tells us that the order of the universe required guidance. If it required guidance, then that which guided it must have preexisted it. Therefore, reason and logic would lead us to a God or creator.

Psalm 14:1 (NIV)

The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no-one who does good.

Psalm 10:4 (NIV)

4 In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.

III. Ad Hominem. (Attack the man)

Jesus is the central figure in Christianity, if they can attack him by disproving His existence, or His claims, they can send a specific segment of the faith based community crashing to the ground. We will deal with the fallacies of other religious groups later on in this series. But, if the person of Jesus can be destroyed, Christianity is a farce. This subject will take up a few classes all by itself, but as I stated earlier, it is universally agreed that a man named Jesus existed in Galilee during the time of Herod, Pilate, and Augustus Caesar. The only thing that we have to ask ourselves is, were His claims true. We will cover in detail who He claimed to be, and whether it is reasonable to believe those claims.

1 Corinthians 15:13-16 (NIV)

13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. 14 And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. 15 More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. 16 For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. 17 And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.
IV. Art of Diversion.

When all else fails the unbeliever will try and divert the believer away from the facts and point to the problems of religion. They will question the justice of God, often using slavery, war, and genocide as their examples. They will also divert your attention to the fact that there are many Gods. How can we know ours is the right one? They will point out that there are atheists that are good people without the help of a God. They feel if they can turn God into an egotistical maniac, out for blood, war, and worship that they show us how foolish faith in a God is. That in reality, religion is simply a means for man to cope with the problems of the world and something to blame when things go wrong. Remember this, just because it is recorded in the Bible, or because God for a season allowed something, does not mean he approved of the behavior. Sometimes God chooses to work within the limitations His people have set up. Other times, He chooses judgment and purification. He is God and we ultimately we have no right to question why He chooses to intervene at some times, and not at others.

Isaiah 45:9 (NIV)

9 "Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker, to him who is but a potsherd among the potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, 'What are you making?' Does your work say, 'He has no hands'?

Conclusion:

To answer the question, where’s the proof? Honestly, the burden of proof is on the one that asks the question because God doesn’t need to proven. However, in light of all the mounting evidence they would be hard pressed to disprove Him. The only way to deny the reality of a God who created the universe is to commit logical suicide. When we look at the order of the universe, and how incredibly precise everything is, the skeptic has to at least take a look.

The universe is so orderly it can be perfectly predicted when every solar and lunar eclipse will occur. We can perfectly predict when comets and meteors showers will be on display and exactly where it will be seen. We can predict the planets exact point in the sky every day and set a telescope to that point and find it. There are so many evidences of intelligence in creation that it is undeniable. Everything designed has a designer.

Add all this to the enormous amount of archeological finds that have proven cities named in the Bible people once thought were fictitious (Hittites for example), people named in the Bible that were once believed to be only Biblical myths (King David), and the mountains of stones, engravings, and Biblical manuscripts dating as far back as 2nd Century B.C and suddenly, the Bible and Jesus become very convincing as well. I believe God, and the person of Jesus Christ have stood the test of time, and have proven to be worthy of our faith. My faith is in Jesus not because of the evidence, but the evidence simply confirms my faith is in the right person. Is Jesus who He claimed to be? I say without a doubt yes! We will dive further into that over the next few weeks.