

Lake Merced Church of Christ

Home Groups

Is God Really There? - Does Logic Alone Prove God?

Ice Breaker

Can you think of any times in your life or education where you learned something new that totally excited you and made you hungry to learn more? What was it? And why did it excite you so much?

Opening Prayer

Spend some time together as a group in prayer. As you pray, allow yourself to be still and focus your prayer time on the areas of your life where you see the majesty of God on display. Praise Him for His majesty!

Discussion

This week's message explored the writings and musings of Anselm of Canterbury as he contemplated why God's existence seemed so evident to him. Spend some time as a group reviewing and discussing the following questions. Make sure everyone has a chance to participate:

1. When you think of reasons you've heard for why people struggle to believe in God, what are some of the reasons that stand out most to you? Do you feel people's lack of belief is grounded more in intellectual reasons or personal reasons? In other words, why do you think people often lack faith in God?
2. How do you personally feel about the effectiveness of logic to reveal truth and falsehood in the world today? Is logic a valuable tool that you value? Or do you feel like logic has limitations? Explain.
3. Anselm of Canterbury's approach to God's existence (Ontological Argument) can be described this way: *(1) God is a being than which none greater can be imagined; (2) God exists as an idea in the mind; (3) Something that exists as an idea in the mind AND in reality is greater than only existing as an idea in the mind; (4) If God existed only as an idea in the mind, then we could imagine something greater, that is a God who exists in reality; (5) We cannot imagine something greater than God; (6) Therefore God exists.* As you slowly review those steps of reasoning, what is your immediate reaction? Do you see value in Anselm's thought process? Are you persuaded by his thinking? Do you think Anselm's thoughts matter?
4. Alvin Plantinga built upon Anselm's argument and addressed some of the concerns of Anselm's critics by incorporating words like "possible" into the language. In other words, Plantinga encouraged the reader to simply entertain whether a "Maximally Great Being" was "possible." His conclusion was that if a MGB is possible, then a MGB necessarily exists. Why do you think adding a word like "possible" can make an argument more powerful or effective? How might his argument help you talk to someone about God?
5. **Read James 2:19 as a group.** As Josh mentioned in his message, the goal when we talk to people about God is ultimately not purely about their belief; even the demons believe. The goal is that we might help someone encounter the love and mercy and peace that comes only through God. How do you think we can use truths about God to more effectively reveal the nature of a loving God to those who doubt Him?

Closing Prayer

Pray for a strengthened faith to share the reasons for the hope that you have. Encourage one another.