



Forest Home Church

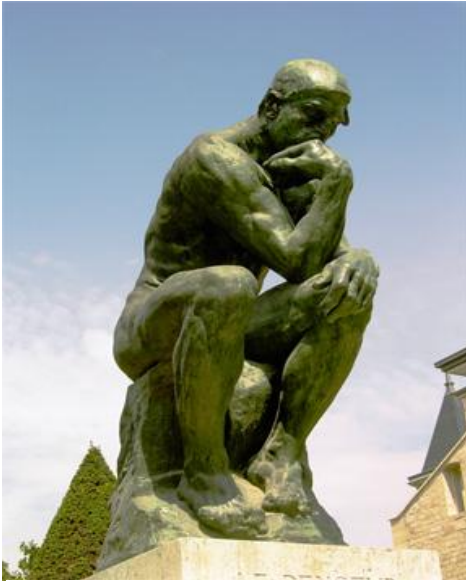
Forest Home Church
1751 Old Natchez Trace
Franklin, TN 37069

www.ForestHomeChurch.org

January 23rd, 2010

"Sharing, Loving & Exploring Life in Christ"

Send announcements, praises, and prayer requests to: newsletter@foresthomechurch.org



Seven Postcards for Christian Belief

A wise teacher challenged a class of his most talented and productive students to keep refining their thinking. "How will we know when we have done this?" asked the students. The teacher gave them this rule of thumb: When you distil your argument to the point of highest clarity, a really good argument will fit on a postcard! Although they laughed at first, the entire class without exception found the "postcard rule" among the most helpful exercises they did in college.

Of course not all issues are this simple, but there is value in being able to refine our best thoughts to their sharpest points. This is true in many areas, including when Christians give reasons why they believe what they believe. While it is certainly good to read books on the matter, it can also be helpful to consider reasons to believe in their most basic form.

All Truth is God's Truth

What follows are several basic and refined, short-but-good (in my view) reasons to believe in the Christian worldview. They are not original with me, but come from a young professor of Philosophy at Covenant College on Lookout Mountain named William C. Davis. These could be written on the back of seven different postcards. LH

- 1) The mere existence of something rather than nothing is more likely if a personal creator exists than if one does not.
- 2) The universe is orderly to a remarkable degree, and in more than one way. (Natural laws are both simple and uniform, the capacity for reproduction is pervasive, and great complexity is produced using only a very small number of elementary particles interacting according to a small number of laws.)
Any one of these features suggests that it is more likely that the universe is the product of design than that it is the product of random forces impelling purposeless particles which resulted in accidental stability.
Taken together, they are even more formidable as an argument for a designer.
- 3) Value, both moral and aesthetic, appears to be an objective feature of the world (and not merely imposed by human preferences), a fact much more likely to have been the case if God exists than if the universe is a grand accident.
- 4) Human consciousness and intelligence are more likely to be the products of a conscious and intelligent creator than of a physical universe devoid of either.
- 5) Humans have numerous features that are more easily explained by theism than by a materialistic worldview, if only because a materialistic worldview currently explains all human capacities in terms of their ability to enhance survival. Among these features are the possession of reliable faculties aimed at truth, the appreciation of beauty, and a sense of humor.
- 6) While many human activities are pursued because of their usefulness (utility), and some are valuable only in the eyes of a few people (nonobjective), there are kinds of human activity which possess objective, nonutilitarian value. Two obvious examples of this are self-sacrificial love and artistic beauty (which may be useful but don't need to be). If everything (including humanity) is the result of random, impersonal forces which encouraged only survival, then it seems highly unlikely that the process would yield organisms (humans) which recognized values like these which aren't survival conducive. But values like these are what we would expect if humans (and the human environment) were created by a personal, loving, and beauty-valuing God. God's existence is a much better explanation for the existence of nonutilitarian value than any explanation without God.
- 7) A great many people both throughout history and throughout the world have had religious experiences. These have typically included not only an awareness of a divine presence but also a qualitative change in the behavior of the one having the experience. The existence of God explains this data much more easily than conjectures about psychological disorders, mass deceptions, or fraudulent reporting.

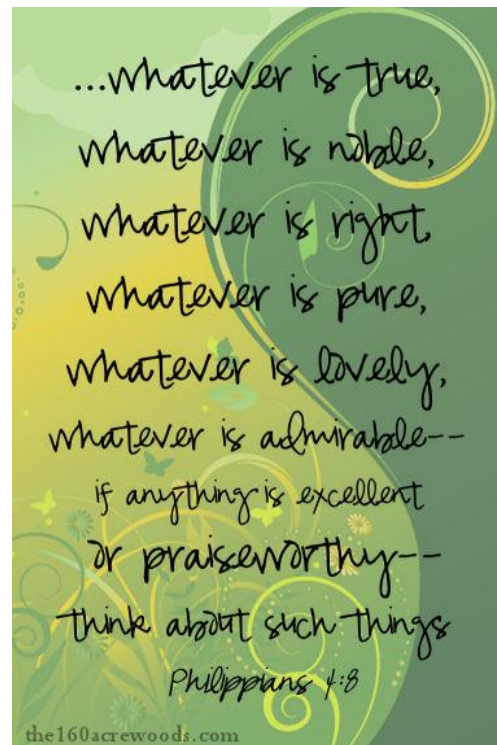
Thanks to William Davis for the above insights. Please note these are a mere beginning, for we have not yet reflected on the most profound reason for faith—Jesus Christ. Although unbelief is never without something to say in response, these short-but-good reasons show at the least we are able to give more than one reason for the hope within (1 Peter 3:15).

Quotables

John Stott on how boasting in the Lord starts at home, with our self-talk: "So in practice we should constantly be reminding ourselves who we are. We need to learn to talk to ourselves and ask ourselves questions: 'Don't you know? Don't you know the meaning of conversion and baptism? Don't you know you have been united to Christ in his death and resurrection? Don't you know that you have been enslaved to God and have committed yourself to His obedience? Don't you know these things? Don't you know who you are?' We must go on pressing ourselves with such questions, until we reply to ourselves: 'Yes, I do know who I am, a new person in Christ, and by the grace of God I shall live accordingly.'"

Walter Isaacson in his biography on Einstein: "In fact, Einstein tended to be more critical of debunkers, who seemed to lack humility or a sense of awe, than of the faithful. 'The fanatical atheists,' he wrote in a letter, 'are like slaves who are still feeling the weight of their chains which they have thrown off after hard struggle. They are creatures who — in their grudge against traditional religion as the 'opium of the masses' — cannot hear the music of the spheres.'"

"As God did not at first choose you because you were high, He will not now forsake you because you are low." John Flavel (1600s)



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THE EXTRA FOOLISH MAN BUILDS HIS HOUSE ON THE SAND, USING SAND

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW FOR THE FH ANNUAL FAMILY RETREAT ON FEBRUARY 4TH AND 5TH! Make sure you plan on being there--no matter what it takes! A time of renewing and creating friendships, a time to play and laugh, a time to grow and fellowship!

2010-2011 Calendar

EACH TUESDAY 6:30 am @ the church, Men's Ministry
 EACH WED. 5:00 pm @ the church, Women's Bible Study
 February 4-5 Annual FH Family Retreat

Prayers and Praises

- Our brothers/sisters in Africa: Jac Agak, Charles Ngoje, Jacob Randiek, and your orphan(s)
- Thanks for the joyful arrival of Danielle and Clayton's new son Wyatt
- Pregnancy of Lisa Grimenstein
- Blessing of the Lord's wisdom for our shepherds
- Grace to grow for students, teachers, & school administrators
- Thanks for some able to sell home and blessing in moving
- Thanks for Tommy's heart & faithfulness in the "Next Right Step" Ministry
- May Larry's brother continue to recover well from surgery
- Lord's presence with Kathleen's mother Doris battling cancer & grief
- God's timing and speed for Jim McAlister's writing project
- Lord's hand on the direction of our state and nation
- Light of the Lord on FH loved ones not knowing Jesus
- Health for Dawn Costello's uncle who has cancer
- Encouragement for Schumann Brewer
- Welcome Azad as a member of Forest Home
- Lord to show Himself strong in Frank's prison work
- Health for Doug's grandmother & Sam's mother
- Lord help those with chronic pain in our number
- Lord bless Colby with local Christian fellowship
- Teach us to Boast in You
- Thanks that we are given grace to repent

CLASSES AND WORSHIP SCHEDULE @ FOREST HOME:

Classes begin at 9 am. Worship begins at 10 am.

Grades and ages break down as follow:

- Pre-K – Kindergarten
- 1st grade – 4th grade
- 5th grade and up

DATE	NURSERY (Infants to 2 yrs old) During sermon only	LORD'S SUPPER PREPARATION	WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNER PREP	
Jan 23	Barbara Jenkins	Jan Christys	Jan 26	Ocie/Shannon
Jan 30	Lynne Daniel	Feb/Mar Allens	Feb 2	Pat/Karen
Feb 6	Mandy Austin	Apr/May Grimensteins	Feb 9	Sarah/Kathleen
Feb 13	Karen Costello		Feb 16	Lisa/Liz
Feb 20	D'Ann McAlister		Feb 23	Linda/Lois
Feb 27	Ronna King	(Sub-Grimensteins) See Jim G. with questions.	Mar 2	Ocie/Shannon