

## Questions for Lesson 21: Morality's Proof of God (Part 1)

1. Is there any logical reason for an atheist to be moral?

**Answer:** No. There is no reason. That does not mean that atheists will not be moral, but they really have no reason to be. Modern atheists like Richard Dawkins deny that such things as good and evil exist. "In a universe of blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, other people are going to get lucky, and you won't find any rhyme or reasoning to it, nor any justice. The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference. ... DNA neither knows nor cares. DNA just is. And we dance to its music." (Richard Dawkins, *River Out of Eden*, New York: Basic Books, 1995, p. 133). If this life is all there is, why not do anything we want that will give us pleasure? As long as we do not get caught, we will reach all that has meaning.

2. How will atheists answer the challenge in question 1?

**Answer:** They will say that atheists are as moral as religionists. They will also maintain that the survival of society benefits the atheists and so he or she will be moral. (It should be pointed out that inconsistencies in the lives of Christians reinforce this argument.) Data from Russia and other studies would challenge the claim, but it is their argument. Survival of society is of no real consequence to the atheists since they will not be around to enjoy it.

3. Does science cause moral decisions to be bad or good?

**Answer:** No. Science cannot determine the use to which its discoveries will be put. The moral values of those using the science determine how it is to be used. Nuclear energy can be made to provide energy for scores of people or to destroy whole cities as Hiroshima and Nagasaki demonstrated.

4. To what extent are we all affected by the values of the majority of the people around us?

**Answer:** To a huge extent. It is hard to go the speed limit when people are passing you at a high rate. Our peers affect our view of how we dress, our attitudes toward sex, the use of recreational drugs, etc. The fact is that many times those influences are bad ones. Our belief system controls what we as individuals do. Jesus calls us to be examples and leaders, not blind followers of the people around us. Read and discuss Matthew 5:13-16.

3. Give some examples of things which demonstrate the foolishness of using results as a means of making moral decisions.

**Answer:** Any car accident, any drowning, any alcohol related accident, etc.

4. How do we know that moral attitudes are the same today as they were in Jesus' time?

**Answer:** Historical and archaeological records show what conditions were in ancient times. Looking around today we see the same things going on. We cannot

excuse our moral behavior by saying that times have changed.

5. How does technology and science influence our moral decisions?

**Answer:** It changes the forms of moral corruption and increases the ways of becoming involved in damaging moral decisions. It does not change our nature.

6. How does a child's education influence moral choices and morality as a whole?

**Answer:** Classes on sex education as an example, can tell a child how to participate in moral corruption without giving ways of evaluating moral consequences. In sex education classes the emphasis is generally on avoiding an STD and avoiding a pregnancy. Sex involves a lot more than babies and STDs, and no one can ever predict all of the results of a deep personal involvement with someone else. The same thing is true of classes on values clarification, alcohol use, or any other area that gets into moral decisions.

8. What is the basic difference between the Christian and the non-Christian in making moral decisions?

**Answer:** The Christian has an absolute standard (the Bible) on which to make moral decisions. The non-Christian can only base decisions on what the current beliefs are about moral conduct.

9. Give some examples of moral decisions that have been made by public people in recent months that have obviously been made on the world's standards instead of God's Word.

**Answer:** You can use virtually any criminal case as well as decisions of government people, athletes, or entertainers. You can also use a popular movie or TV show for this.

10. What approach does the Bible take that makes it able to be used in making moral decisions, even when those decisions involve things that were not in existence in Jesus' time?

**Answer:** The Bible teaches principles instead of "thou shalt nots." Passages like 1 Corinthians 8 and 10 (see 10:31) lay down principles that can be used. This is a beautiful way of meeting the needs of people in all ages.

11. Does God create diseases like STDs, AIDS, etc., to punish the evil doer?

**Answer:** No! There are, however, scientific, logical consequences of certain acts. The diseases in question are good examples of this. The next lesson goes into other aspects of this issue.