



Does God Exist?

FaithBuilder 4 | Lesson 1 | Lord

Lesson Overview

1. Brain Builder

Can you prove the earth is a sphere?

2. Watch a Video

Watch *Is There Evidence for God?* (7min 52sec) at bitly.com/EvidenceForGod

3. Discuss

What did you learn?

4. Read

The Lord's life is the only life. His life flows in to all life forms. It is received according to the form into which it inflows.

From the Word

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. And the Word became flesh. John 1:1, 3, 14

Brain Builder

For centuries people believed the earth was flat. Even before Columbus circum-navigated the world proving that the earth was a sphere, there was abundant evidence to show that the earth was not flat.

What evidence is there *from your own experience* that proves the earth is round? Brainstorm for a minute and then turn the page to see what kinds of proofs others have used to show the earth is round.

Despite evidence, some refuse to believe the earth is round. Members of the *Flat Earth Society* are among those who continue to believe the earth is flat today.

Watch a Video

Watch *Is There Evidence for God?* online at bitly.com/EvidenceForGod (7min 52sec). (Enter bitly link in the browser bar at the top of your screen.)

Discuss

1. Why do some people say there is no evidence for God?
2. The video suggests that there is no evidence for some kinds of gods, for example gods who “partner with military organizations”. Many religions have used military power as a way of converting others to their faith. What benefits might result from this? What damage might this do?
3. Can you force others to believe what you believe?
4. Does God ever force people to believe in Him? Why or why not?
5. Do miracles like the ones in the Bible happen today? (e.g. healing the sick, bringing people back from the dead)
6. Can the amazing things modern medicine can do be considered miracles? Why or why not.
7. Can miracles force people to believe in God? (See *Miracles*, p. 2)
8. How might witnessing a miracle influence a person's faith?
9. When the disciple Thomas doubted Jesus after his resurrection, Jesus said, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed” (John 20:29). In what ways do we want to “see” God ourselves in order to believe?

Miracles

No one is reformed by miracles and signs, because they compel.... People have an internal and an external of thought. The Lord flows into people through the internal of thought into its external, and thus teaches and leads them. It is of the Lord's Divine providence that a person should act from freedom in accordance with reason. Both of these would perish in man if miracles were wrought and people were thereby driven to believe. *Divine Providence* 131

Influx

People who believe that anything happens in the natural world apart from the inflow of the spiritual world are mistaken, since natural phenomena arise and persist only from spiritual ones. Even the members of the vegetable kingdom get their power to sprout from this kind of inflow. The natural warmth of spring and summer simply disposes their seeds into their natural forms by swelling and opening them so that the inflow from the spiritual world can have its causative effect. There are two kinds of warmth, spiritual and natural. Spiritual warmth comes from heaven's sun and natural warmth from the world's sun, and that inflow and cooperation set up the effects that we see before us in the world.

Heaven and Hell 567

10. Does God “broadcast” himself, or “hide behind the scenes?”
11. People misread the signs that showed them the earth was spherical. Their experience from walking on the earth was that it was flat. What evidence do people use to prove there is no God? Are people drawing the wrong conclusions from the evidence they see?
12. Does knowing scientific facts about the wonders of the universe prove there is no God?
13. Is there any way to see the spiritual causes that lie behind the world we live in? (See *New Church Concept: Influx*, at right.)
14. Could near death experiences be evidence for God?
15. The video suggests that the feeling of love inside you, your emotions and your bonds with others are proof of God. What evidence can you see for God in the world?

Read

There is but one life—the Lord's. This life flows in and gives life both good and evil alike. To that life the forms which consist of material substance correspond, and those forms—by means of a constant inflow of the Divine—receive life in such a way that they seem to themselves to live independently. This correspondence is a correspondence of the organs of life with life itself. Yet the nature of the receiving organs determines the kind of life they have.... The nature of the life received by them depends on what they are like themselves. This may be exemplified from the natural forms on to which the light of the sun falls—the nature of the forms receiving it determines the variations of the light reflected in them. In the spiritual world the variations are spiritual, and therefore the nature of recipient forms in that world determines that of the intelligence and the wisdom they have. This is why good spirits and angels are seen as embodiments of charity themselves, while evil and hellish spirits are seen as embodiments of hatred. *Arcana Coelestia* 3484

PROVING THE EARTH IS A SPHERE

Long before people saw the earth from outer space people could observe that the earth was round. In ancient Greece Aristotle noticed that the earth cast a circular shadow on the moon during a lunar eclipse. People also observed that ships sailing out to sea became lower on the horizon before disappearing, and rose on the horizon when appearing. One method of showing that the earth is a sphere is to observe the length of the shadows cast on the ground by poles stuck in the ground at various latitudes on the earth. Shadow length varies depending on the latitude of the pole. Shadows are longer towards the poles, and shorter towards the equator. If the earth was flat, the shadows would all be the same length. Similarly, the hours of daylight vary at different latitudes. There are 12 hours of daylight all year round at the equator, and longer days than nights in summer towards the poles. (Summer and winter occur at different times of year in the northern and southern hemispheres.) Today we can also see the earth from airplanes and see the curvature of the earth.