



8

How Do I Know God Exists?

Key Themes

- God is the only eternal being.
- God's existence makes sense of the entire universe.

Key Passages

- Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:13–14; Romans 1:20

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain that only God can be eternal and exist outside of time.
- Associate the order in the universe to the existence of God.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

page 5

Students will practice placing all the books of the New Testament in order.



Studying God's Word

page 5

God, the only eternal being, makes sense of the entire universe. The orderly creation points to a Creator.



Activity 1: No Beginning and No Ending

page 7

Students will trace a line with no beginning and no ending to show that God always was and always will be.



Activity 2: Big Bang—Sense or Nonsense?

page 10

Students will make their own “big bang” with LEGO® bricks, puzzle pieces, or model pieces to see if something orderly can come from a big bang.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO



COME ON IN

- If you did not do this last week, print and cut the Books of the New Testament cards for every 3–5 students from the Resource DVD-ROM, Lesson 2. Store in envelopes or other container.



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.



NO BEGINNING AND NO ENDING

- Print one No Beginning and No Ending sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.



BIG BANG—SENSE OR NONSENSE?

- Bring in some LEGO® bricks, a jigsaw puzzle, and/or model pieces. Children will be shaking up the box and making their own “big bang” by dumping the pieces out to see if they can get an orderly creation from chaos.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- Books of the New Testament cards—one set for each group of 3–5 students

- Student Take Home Sheets
- Cell phone, watch, or some form of technology

- No Beginning and No Ending sheet for each student.
- Pencils or crayons

- LEGO® bricks, a jigsaw puzzle, and/or model pieces
- Box with a lid



Memory Verse

Psalms 119:89–90 Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides.

► **Pace your lesson!** You can use the provided clocks to indicate the time each section should be completed to keep the lesson on schedule. While teaching, you can compare your anticipated times with the actual time and shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

As you prepare to approach this very important lesson, read and reflect on the following Scriptures: Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:13–15; Romans 1:18–21; Psalm 19:1–6.

“How do I know God exists?” This is a question that has been and will be debated as long as sinners occupy the earth. First of all, as Christians who walk by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7), we do not need to prove the existence of God. The Bible says that we accept God by faith—that we *believe* that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him (Hebrews 11:6). Because the Bible is our basis for all we believe, we believe in God as presented in the Bible.

God’s Word begins with the proclamation that He and He alone existed from eternity past: “In the beginning God . . .” (Genesis 1:1). If He had wanted to prove Himself to the world in a way our minds could grasp, He could have done that. God saw no need to explain further. Belief in Him as the one true God comes by faith and trust in Him and His Word.

Genesis 1 continues to describe this God who spoke the entire universe into existence. The order we see in creation—from the stars, solar systems, animal and plant life, to the natural laws of gravity, motion, and thermodynamics—gives evidence of an omnipotent Creator. There is no other explanation. The universe is not a result of random chance. It was created by one who was not created. There had to be someone who never came into being. There had to be a Creator. God—the one true God—is that Creator, who was and is and is to come (Revelation 4:8).

As we look to the Scriptures, we see that God described Himself to Moses as “I AM WHO I AM,” which essentially means: *the one who is and will be* (Exodus 3:13–14). The eternal, self-existent nature of God is revealed through His Word and simply assumed. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit John again records that the Lord is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8). What more do we need? This describes the only, holy, omnipotent, omniscient God of the universe—who was and is and always will be. He is not bound by time as we know it. He created time in the beginning (Genesis 1:1).

God in His mercy has also specifically revealed Himself through His incredible creation. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His

handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). And the Apostle Paul tells us that since the creation of the world, God’s invisible attributes have been seen through creation, revealing His eternal power and Godhead—leaving those who do not believe in Him without excuse (Romans 1:18–21). God does indeed exist. His existence is confirmed in Scripture and through His creation—and the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven against all who suppress the truth of His existence in unrighteousness.

APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Look around you; what do you see? An amazingly designed universe—from the single cell to the vast and immeasurable solar system. And yet the debate for a Creator of such things rages. We can rest in God’s Word, “In the beginning God . . .” (Genesis 1:1). We know that if something exists, it was somehow created into being. And as Christians we know who that Creator was. But what of folks who state there was no Creator—it all began with a bang, a very “big bang,” one that allegedly occurred billions of years ago in one tiny speck of mass and energy, a speck that would one day become everything we see today?

This story of the big bang originated with an attempt to completely discount the Bible and its account of our Creator God. Christians who buy into it need to understand the atheistic beginnings of this secular story and why it cannot be “added” to the biblical account of Genesis 1 without destroying the Bible’s integrity.

From a practical standpoint, have you ever blown something up and then observed the pieces re-assembling into a complex . . . anything? No, when buildings are demolished they pretty much end up in a heap of debris with no order or design. And yet, the big bang proposed by some has produced intricate life and more. In fact, this notion claims that out of a random explosion and expansion of matter billions of years ago, life in its complexity and beauty—from the human body to the ant, from the wonder of the solar system to the universe beyond—has been organized and arranged into the complex world we live in today by nothing more than random, natural processes.

But, we know that the very existence of design, order, natural laws, and principles in the universe demands that there was a Creator—an Organizer, a Designer—not a big bang. That Creator can only be the one true Creator God. The only one who has declared Himself the Creator (Genesis 1), and the only one who

proclaims that He Himself is sustaining the universe—personally maintaining life and upholding all things by the word of His power (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3). This Creator, our God, is truly worthy to receive glory and honor and power—for He created all things, and by His will they exist and were created (Revelation 4:11)!

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The serpent asked, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” (Genesis 3:1). And when Adam and Eve succumbed to this deception, that’s when sin, deceit, pride, evil, hatred, death, and suffering entered the world. From the very beginning, people have wanted to be their own gods—and Satan is the primary encourager of this. The God of the Bible demands obedience, reverence, and accountability. God will one day judge the world in righteousness (Psalm 96:13).

Those who believe God’s Word know this to be true—we believe God exists. However, many doubt the very existence of God. These atheists boldly turn from the greatest commandment—“You shall have no other gods before Me” (Exodus 20:3)—to pursue the imaginings of their own minds. Our culture has been shaped by these people who claim there is no God. We’ll look at a few of them here.

Charles Darwin, the father of evolution, although not a proclaimed atheist, was influenced immensely by his atheist grandfather Erasmus. Darwin’s idea of evolution has changed the course of human history and is one of the greatest attacks on the Word of God in our modern time.

Karl Marx, referred to by some as the greatest thinker in all of history, once stated that religion is the opiate of the masses—impotence of the human mind to deal with occurrences it cannot understand.

Sigmund Freud, considered by some as psychology’s most famous figure, believed that religion was nothing more than an expression of underlying psychological neuroses and distress.

More recently, Madalyn Murray O’Hair was instrumental in removing prayer from the public schools in 1963. She believed that religion has caused more misery to all of mankind in every stage of human history than any other single idea.

And today we have those who are referred to as the “new atheists”—men such as Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris—and they are aggressively going after your children, your liberties, and your faith! Dawkins, a scientist and an active leader in this movement, believes that one of the things wrong with religion is that it teaches us to be satisfied with answers which are not answers at all. These men and others have accused Christians of “child abuse” for teaching their children the Bible and passing on their faith.

The worldview of these atheists is dangerous to our culture. However, as Christians we are confident in the promises of the Word of God. We must not lose heart. We must be committed to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and enthused about keeping God on His throne as Sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all (Colossians 1:17). God has assured us that His Word is settled forever and His faithfulness will endure to all generations (Psalm 119:89–90).

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Dear God, I cannot begin to convey the message of this lesson without your help. How do I know you exist? It is by faith alone that you have opened my eyes to see and my ears to hear the truth, power, beauty, and wonder of who you are. Your creation screams out for all to notice that you are the omnipotent one—but without the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, we cannot begin to comprehend any of it. Lord, give me wisdom as I try to convey to these precious children that you truly do exist. Open their eyes to your truth—just as you have opened mine. Help them to walk by faith in who you are and not by sight. Allow them to see you clearly—and to one day grasp the love and grace you poured out through the gospel of our redeemer Jesus Christ. Thank you, Lord, for this amazing privilege.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- Provide envelopes containing Books of the New Testament cards for groups of 3–5 students. Students are to place the books in the proper order. They can use the Books of the Bible poster or their own Bibles to confirm the right order.

If time allows, have them do it a second time without looking at the poster or their Bible.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

? Does anyone know the first four words in the whole Bible? Let's take a look. What book of the Bible would that be in? *Have children open their Bibles to the very beginning. Genesis.*

? And what are the first four words? *"In the beginning, God . . ."*

That's correct. They are the first words in the first verse of the first chapter of the first book of the first Testament in the Bible! Please turn to that reference in your Bibles. Let's read the whole verse together. *Read the verse as a class.*

Genesis 1:1

EXAMINE THE WORD

Since these are the very first words of the Bible, they tell the very first hours of the world's history.

Ok. Now let's ask some of these questions as we look at Genesis 1:1.

? What questions do we ask when we observe God's Word? *Refer to the Bible Study poster. Who, what, when, where, why.*



Observe the Text

- ? Who was there in the beginning? *God.*
- ? Why is God the only one there? *Allow children to answer. Because God hadn't created anything yet.*

That's right. God was the only one. This is the beginning of time as we know it. This is when God started to create the universe by the power of His voice. And it was only about 6,000 years ago.

- ? So what was before this? *Allow children to answer.*

Discover the Truth

Before this—before Genesis 1:1—there was only God. He always was. God is infinite. That means He has always existed and He will always exist. He is the only eternal being. He said, "In the beginning, God . . ." and that was it. God is. God always was. God always will be. He is infinite and eternal.

Let's read the definition of eternal together from our Attributes of God poster. *Always was and always will be.*



eternal

(Refer to Attributes poster.)

READ THE WORD

Now go to the book of Exodus. That is the second book in the Bible. We're going to read a little about Moses in Exodus 3:13–14. Turn there in your Bibles. God had sent Moses to lead His children out of Egypt and into the Promised Land—a beautiful country God had prepared for them.

However, Moses was afraid to lead the people as God asked him. Moses didn't think the people would listen to him or want him to be in charge. God assured Moses that He would be with him. Yet Moses still had his doubts. Let's read together what Moses asked God and how God answered. *Allow children time to find the verse in their Bibles.*

Listen carefully and follow along with me as I read these verses. See if you can answer some questions when I'm finished. *Read the passage.*

Exodus 3:13–14

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Moses asked God a question in verse 13. I'm going to read it again. What did Moses ask God? *Reread the end of verse 13. What is your name?*
- ? What is God's answer in verse 14? *He said I AM WHO I AM and I AM has sent me to you.*

Right. God said His name is I AM. When God said this, He was saying that He is the one who is and always will be. God Himself was telling Moses that He is eternal.

- ? What does that mean when we say God is eternal? We already mentioned it. Look at our Attributes of God poster. *Always was and always will be.*

Discover the Truth

God is the only eternal one. He always was. Remember in Genesis 1:1? God was in the beginning. He is the great I AM. Something or someone had to be here before anything else came to be. There had to be someone who never had a beginning—someone who was there when creation began. That someone is the one and only true God. He is God of creation, He is the God of Moses, and He is the same God for us today. He is the same God throughout all the future ages. God exists! He is the only eternal one. He is the one that had to be before anything we know of existed.



No Beginning and No Ending

MATERIALS

- No Beginning and No Ending sheet for each student.
- Crayons or pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

Pass out the sheets and pencils. Instruct the students to start anywhere and follow the line until they get back to where they started.

- ? Is there any beginning to this line? *No.*
- ? Is there any ending to this line? *No.*
- ? Whose name is written on the paper? *God—I AM.*

This line can teach us something about God.

- ? Did God have a beginning? *No, He always was.*
- ? Will God have an ending? *No, He is eternal.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

God is eternal. That means He has always existed and He will always exist. He is the only eternal being. God has no beginning. God has no ending. He told Moses His name is I AM. That is because He always was. And in Genesis 1:1 we read, “In the beginning, God . . .” God was in the beginning. God existed before anything else we know existed.



READ THE WORD

- ? Now we are going to read one more verse from the book of Romans. Who can find the book of Romans on the Books of the Bible poster? *Have someone find Romans on the poster.*
- ? What book is before Romans? *Acts.*
- ? And what book is after Romans? *1 Corinthians.*
- ? Are these books in the Old Testament or the New Testament part of the Bible? *New Testament.*

Turn to Romans 1:20 and listen as I read. *Read verse after children have found Romans 1:20.*



EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? This verse tells us that since the creation of the world something has been clearly seen. Can anyone tell me what it is that is clearly seen? It says “His” what? *Invisible attributes.*
- ? Whose invisible attributes do you think it is talking about? *God’s.*
- ? What are attributes of God? Do we have a poster that tells us some of them? We have a list of them displayed right here in this room. *Point to the Attributes of God poster.*

Attributes are characteristics of someone. And attributes of God are things that God has, but no one else has. What are some of these attributes? *Allow children to read some of them from the poster.*

There are two attributes in particular that are mentioned in this verse. The verse talks about God’s “eternal power.”

We talked about God being eternal. This verse mentions His power, too. When we talk about all God’s power we say He is omnipotent. See the word omnipotent on the poster? It means God has all power. Let’s repeat that word. It is a great word to know. *Have the children repeat omnipotent.*

This verse says that when we look at creation, God’s power is clearly seen.

- ? What is God’s creation? *Listen for answers.*
- ? It is all the things that have been created. Can you name some things that have been created? *Let the children name many things created.*
- ? Do you see what I have here? What is it? *Show the children a watch, cell phone, or other technological item.*
- ? What can you tell me about this watch (cell phone or other)? *Listen while they tell you things about the watch: it tells time, has hands, gold, numbers, needs a battery, etc.*

That’s very good! You told me lots of things about the watch! But there is one thing no one mentioned. Do you know what it is that I know when I look at this watch?

I know that somewhere there is a watchmaker! Someone had to put all these tiny pieces together. And mold all the metal into the right shape.

That is what this verse is saying about God. When we look at creation, we know there must be a Creator!

OMNIPOTENT

(Refer to Attributes poster.)

None of these created things we mentioned a moment ago could have happened without someone creating them. And that someone is God! The eternal, all powerful God.

Suppose your father was the one who made this watch. How would you feel if I said, “Oh, no one made that watch. A bunch of pieces just shook themselves together and the watch came out!”

You would remember the work your father put into making the watch and what would you say? That’s impossible! That watch took a lot of work! It didn’t just happen!

This verse is saying that people who look around at the world should clearly see that there is a Creator. Nothing could have appeared on its own. People should look around at creation and KNOW there is a Creator God.

Discover the Truth

? God tells us in the book of Romans that there is a way that all men know that He exists. What is that? *Through His creation.*

That’s right. Look around at the creation of the world—at all the things that God has made, and we see God’s eternal power and His divine nature. Because of the very universe that God created we know that there has to be a Creator.

The universe is very orderly. It makes sense. The stars, solar system, plants, animals, the human body—everything is designed to do what it is supposed to do. It is just plain organized. And that is why when we look at it, we think of God, our Creator.

? Have any of you heard of the big bang? What do you know about that? *Allow children to answer.*

To people who don’t believe in God or His Word, the big bang is a way to explain how the universe came into existence without God. But it really doesn’t make any sense at all. Some people believe that there was just one tiny speck of something, but they don’t know where that came from. And then there was a huge explosion—a bang—and all the pieces from the bang came together perfectly to begin the creation of the universe.

We need to remember when we look around that only God could have created the universe. There is no way it was the result of a big bang. And this is exactly what God’s Word tells us in Romans 1. We know that God exists because of the amazing universe only He could have created!





Big Bang—Sense or Nonsense?

MATERIALS

- LEGO® bricks in a box or bag, a model airplane or car not assembled, a jigsaw puzzle, or some other puzzle unassembled

INSTRUCTIONS

Bring out your box or boxes of pieces. You will allow the students to shake them up well and dump them out to emulate the big bang. Will you get something orderly?

So, people think that a big bang can blow stuff up into a lot of different pieces and when the pieces come together, they will make something organized, well-designed, and orderly. Let's see about that.

I have a box of (LEGO® bricks, model parts, puzzle pieces, etc.) here. I want some of you to take turns shaking this box up real well and then dumping the pieces out. You can cause your own big bang. Let's see if the pieces fall together in a sensible way. Let's see if our pieces can make something organized from us just dumping them out.

- ? **Who wants to start?** *Allow some or all of the children to "blow up" the pieces to see if anything sensible comes out.*

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Well, it doesn't seem to be working. Even with these simple pieces, we can't get the (puzzle, LEGO® bricks, model, etc.) to come together perfectly as a result of our "big bang," can we?

I would have to say that this whole big bang theory is just not right. People who try to get us to believe this story of the big bang don't believe God's Word and they don't want others to believe it either.

But we know that God is real and that His Word is true. God is the one who put all things together in a very organized way and His Word tells us in the book of Romans that because of what we see in this amazing universe and world—we KNOW there is a God. He does exist, and He is and was and always will be.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

- ? What an exciting lesson! First we looked at Genesis 1:1. Who was "in the beginning?" *God. Show the Lesson Theme poster.*
 - ? That's right. And what did we talk about during the lesson? How is God described? *Eternal.*
 - ? And what did God create? *Everything!*
- That's right. And God's amazing creation tells us of His wisdom, His knowledge, and His power!

When we consider these things about God—that He is eternal and that He is the only eternal being—we realize that He is the one true and only God. God was not created by anyone or anything.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

If you have not already heard about the big bang, you will.

? Does the big bang make sense to you? *No!*

No, it makes no sense at all. Just like we can't even put these simple pieces in order by dumping them into a pile—neither could the universe possibly come into existence that way. *Refer to your big bang object lesson—the puzzle, LEGO® bricks, model, or whatever you used.*

So be ready with an answer if people start to tell you about the big bang. They don't want you to believe in God or His Word. God the Creator should be clear to us through His creation.

God is our Creator. There has to be someone who always was. There has to be someone who didn't have any beginning. And that someone is the one who created everything. That someone is God. God had no creator. He is, was, and always will be!



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

Psalms 119:89–90 Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides.

The passages we've studied today remind me of another great verse in Scripture, which will actually be our new memory verse for the next few weeks. *Refer to the Memory Verse poster.*

Read the verse with me.

This verse again tells us that God is eternal and that He did, in fact, establish (create) the earth. *If time allows practice saying this together a few times.*



GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for the truth of His Word.
- Thank God for His creation that proclaims His glory and His attributes.
- Pray that the Lord will open the minds of these children to the truth of His Word through Jesus Christ.

