



I. Where do I begin?

The gospel (the good news of Jesus Christ) has been called the ‘greatest story ever told.’ Why is it the greatest? I would say, because it is about God blessing all nations. It is about good things to come - forever. In one passage it is correctly called "the everlasting gospel" (Revelation 14:6). It is God's plan for blessing all of humanity for eternity. Let us begin our study Christian essentials over the next eight lessons. I call this Christian Essentials because most Christians across denominations and nations would agree with the concepts presented in this series. As I begin, the question I have is, “Where do I begin?”

NOTES & QUOTES FROM PODCAST

A greater love story than the iconic movie “Love Story” is God’s love story for you and me. God’s love is captured in John 3:16, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” Incredible love!! Yes, God’s love for you and me surpasses every love story in literature and the film archives of Hollywood and Bollywood. Let’s look at the essentials Christians believe about ‘the beginning.’

Essential Belief 1: God created the Universe.

I start with an essential Christian belief that God created the universe. That God designed the universe with wisdom and intelligence becomes evident not only when we see the beauty of creation, but also watch the deconstruction of the scientific worldview. I wonder if you are baffled as I am to accept that such a precise and beautiful earth emerged without any purpose or reason due to a big bang and especially without a Creator. Accepting the big bang view would be equivalent to believing that a box of paints spilt over several blank pages and a book of “Dennis the Menace” cartoons were created. Any takers for this viewpoint?

Essential Belief 2: God the uncaused Being

When one talks about a “Creator” God a common question well-meaning atheists or skeptics ask is the question, “Who made God? This is a tricky question because it sneaks in the false assumption that God came from somewhere. It then asks where that somewhere might be. That question is flawed, as it is like asking, “What does yellow smell like?” Yellow is not in the category of things that smell, so the question is a flawed one.

Similarly, God is not in the same category of things that are created or caused. He simply exists. How do we know this? We know that nothing comes from nothing. So, if there were ever a time when there was absolutely nothing in existence, then nothing would have ever come into existence. But things do exist. Therefore, since there could never have been absolutely nothing, something had to have always been in existence. That ever-existing thing is what we call God.

God is the uncaused Being that caused everything else to come into existence. God is the uncreated Creator who created the universe and everything in it with intelligent design and with love and for a clear reason. This is what we will explore in the next episode.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In your personal opinion, does science explain everything about creation, or there are areas in which one needs to place faith in assumptions?
- Does the intelligent design argument of creation offer proof beyond reasonable doubt?
- Can you like the Berean Jews, diligently examine scriptural, scientific and empirical evidence and arrive at a conclusion on whether God created the universe or not ?

DID YOU KNOW?

- We're at the right distance from our Sun so that temperatures are conducive to life.
- We have the right atmospheric pressure for liquid water at our surface.
- We have the right ingredients—the right balance of heavy elements and organic molecules—for life to arise.
- We have the right amount of water so that our world has both oceans and continents.
- And life started on our world very early, sustained itself for our planet's entire history, and gave rise to us: sentient, self-aware creatures.

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- Ask questions: bystillwaters.always@gmail.com
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/JaywantMichael>

This study guide was prepared by Jaywant Michael