

Belief in God



Over the last year or so the question of God's existence has been very much in the public domain. Books by Richard Dawkins, atheist advertisements on buses and the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin have contributed in bringing this question to the fore. You may also have noticed that 'does God exist?' is the slogan on current Alpha course advertisements. This question is age old and has never been resolved to the satisfaction of all. Atheists will say that science has to prove something before it becomes fact. On this basis if you can't prove God exists then the chances are he doesn't. Believers though will counter that just because you can't find the needle in the haystack it doesn't mean that it isn't there.

Agnostics focus on other questions (the main one being suffering) that lead us to question the nature of God. The uncertainty of who God is and what He's like lead many to conclude that they should be open-minded as to whether He exists or not. So why do I believe that God exists? It is not because He can be proven scientifically or rationally nor is it because I have all the answers to the great questions such as why there is suffering. The primary reason for my belief was for me not a matter of the mind but one of the heart. I like many others just felt somewhere deep down that this is how things are. Most people pray, including I'm told, some who would say they are atheists! It seems that somewhere inside, humans instinctively have the tendency believe, an observation verified by a survey carried out for the BBC in which most said they believed in some sort of God. Other surveys carried out over the last two decades have shown that in Britain today there is an increasing interest in spiritual matters. And now people have access to many religions and philosophies through which they can explore meaning to that interest.

I guess I started going to Church to check out my intuition and also on the basis that if there is a God I would be best placed to be on good terms with Him. The Church seemed the logical place to go at the time; had I lived in another land or culture I would probably have gone to the predominant faith of that culture to find that meaning.

After 20 years of exploring the Christian faith I can now say that I'm more certain of God's existence, beyond that of simple instinct. I hold that view, only because of Jesus. I've concluded that this man who claimed not only to know God but that He was one with God could actually be trusted. The evidence we have of His life, death and resurrection, for me at least, back His claims entirely. One of the reasons why I think the Alpha course is so effective is that it outlines clearly the weighty evidence for the case of Jesus. Many who doubt Jesus have never actually examined the New Testament evidence. Another reason Alpha is effective is that it enables people to experience God. When we feel God's presence we

know He is real. And this has been the sealing of the deal for me. When I've taken risks based on what others might call blind faith, I've found that I've never been let down. When I have to rely on supernatural resources and those resources become available my only conclusion is that Jesus is real, God is real and He is on my case.

Steve