Question of the Month

Is FAITH a 4-letter word?

Two things right off the bat: (1) Yes, this is basically a rhetorical question. (2) If you are under 30 years of age, there's a good chance you don't understand the question!

The phrase "four-letter words," for those of you who don't know, refers to the bad words you're not supposed to say. You know, the swear words or curse words. The one's that if you used them, your mom would wash your mouth out with soap. (Do mom's even do that anymore? Did they ever? More rhetorical questions.)

The answer to this month's question is pretty clear-cut… No, faith is not a bad word, and it certainly isn't four letters long; it's five. I guess that's all we need to say, right? Maybe not.
Faith is often looked upon, at least by skeptics, as weakness. It's something you resort to when you don't have facts and logic on your side. It's really nothing more than wishful thinking. Furthermore, skeptics generally believe they base all their beliefs on facts, while Christians just have faith that their views are correct.

When it comes to worldviews, *everyone* has faith. Even an atheist has faith that God doesn't exist since they admittedly cannot prove that belief. So, it's not a matter of whether someone has faith, but rather, a question of how reasonable is the faith you have?

As an example, Christians have faith that "something" (i.e., God) created everything. Atheists have faith that "nothing" created everything. Both are statements of faith. Which seems more reasonable and logical? It should be obvious. The concept that "something" could create something else, is very sound reasoning supported by our own daily experiences. We see things create other things regularly. On the other hand, we've never seen "nothing" create or do anything! In addition, one of the best laws we have in science is the First Law of Thermodynamics, which indirectly states, "You can't get something from nothing!"

The Christian view cannot be ruled out by science or logic, but only as the result of a personally biased philosophical preference to not allow anything supernatural to be part of the equation. Consider the following explicit admission by Leonard Susskind, professor of theoretical physics at Stanford University:

> *Two stories are possible. The first is creationist: God made man with some purpose that involved man's ability to appreciate and worship God. Let's forget that story. The whole point of science is to avoid such stories.*

Occasionally, a skeptic might say, "Oh yeah, well if God created the universe, who created God?" Volumes could be written on this, but my main focus will be on what's implied by that question. What they are saying, in so many words, is because they believe it is difficult to explain or understand

where God came from, it is not acceptable to offer God as a solution to the question of who or what created the universe. There's a logical fallacy behind this thinking. Let me elaborate (as if you can stop me). 😊

Computers do some pretty amazing things. I'm using one right now typing this article, and you are probably using one reading it. For 12 years, I worked as a computer programmer, so I have some familiarity with how they operate. However, many people couldn't begin to tell you how they work or how they are designed and manufactured. Even so, that does not cause them to deny they exist and refuse to believe they are responsible for the many amazing things they do, such as performing advanced calculus at lightning speed, keeping satellites in orbit, and allowing you to talk to someone halfway around the world on your cell phone.

Similarly, Christians do not study the universe, then when they have trouble figuring out how it could get here on its own, resort to inventing the concept of "god" to solve all their challenging questions. On the contrary, we start with the innate knowledge that God exists, and He created the entire universe. Subsequently, when we explore the world around us, this is the most logical conclusion and makes the most sense of the evidence. Where does the innate knowledge come from? Directly from God!
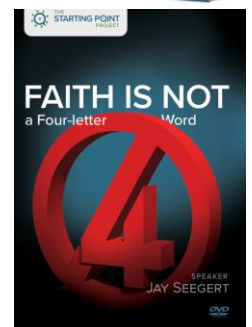
> *because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead (Romans 1:19-20).*

> *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:16).*

In addition, since we believe that God is a God of order (not chaos - 1 Corinthians 14:33), we expected to find order and regularity in His creation, and that's how science itself was birthed! Science was developed out of the Christian worldview, and most major areas of science today were founded by Bible-believing Christians! We discovered regularities in nature and formulated various laws and fields of science. All these beliefs are self-consistent within our Christian worldview.

Conversely, these beliefs (in laws of science, logic and regularities) are certainly held by atheists, but they are all completely unfounded within their worldview. There is no reason for an atheist to expect regularity or unchanging laws or order, given there is no "law giver" and no one that would sustain the universe in an orderly fashion. And what about logic? If there is no god, where did logic come from, and why should we be expected to be logical? Within the atheistic framework, there are no answers for these basic questions.

We are just scratching the surface here regarding faith, and specifically, contrasting Christian faith versus the faith of an atheist, which I sometimes respectfully call a "faithiest."

THE
STARTING POINT
PROJECT

If you are interested in delving deeper into this topic in a fun and understandable way, I would highly recommend my latest book, which was just released, entitled *Faith is Not a Four-Letter Word*. (We also have DVD and streaming video versions of this topic, but the new book goes into more detail than the videos.)

If you have any questions about this or any other issue, please don't hesitate to contact us!