

Faith & Reason Group Discussion Questions – April 10, 2026

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION 101

Big “God” Questions Revealed in Scripture

Crash Course in Logic

- Propositional [logic] – true or false statements, logical connectives
- Predicate [logic] – deals with properties, relations, quantifiers [of subjects]
- Universal [modifier] – true of “any”, “every”, “all”
- Existential [modifier] – true of “at least one”, “some”
- Deductive – conclusion valid from premises
- Inductive – conclusion cogent by statistical generalization
- Abductive – “inference to the best explanation”
- Modus ponens – affirming the antecedent (“P → Q. P true. So, Q.”)
- Modus tollens – denying the consequent (“P → Q. Q false. So, not P.”)
- “Logical” argument – establishes possibility, impossibility, necessity via deduction
- “Evidential” argument – uses induction/abduction to appraise likelihood
- “Experiential” argument – how we typically make conclusions :)

Crash Course in Philosophy of Revelation

- Philosophy of language – investigates the relationship between language, users of language, and cosmos
 - “God”-sized question: If God is beyond us, how could we know his character and will?
- Philosophy of mind – investigates the relationship between the mind, body, and cosmos (external world)
 - “God”-sized question: If God is “mind” and precedes matter, what exactly are we?
- Philosophy of time – investigates the relationship between time, space, mind, cosmos, and personal identity
 - “God”-sized question: If God is timeless and all-knowing, why did he create and act in time?

THE ARGUMENT FROM MORALITY

1. If morality is objective and absolute, God (or at least something supernatural) must exist.
2. Morality is objective and absolute.
3. Therefore, God (or at least something supernatural) must exist.

Noteworthy variations:

- Morality and practical reason must assume God (Kant)
- Conscience and certain moral actions supernatural (Newman)

“God”-sized questions

- Can there be good without God? (Genesis 3:5, 22)
- Is good arbitrary – whether originated from God, nature, or fashions of men? (Romans 2:14-15)

THE PROBLEMS OF EVIL, PAIN, SUFFERING

1. An omnipotent (all-powerful), omnibenevolent (all-good), and omniscient (all-knowing) God would NOT allow [natural, rampant, intense, pointless, avoidable] “evil/pain/suffering”
2. Yet there IS [natural, rampant, intense, pointless, avoidable] “evil/pain/suffering”
3. Therefore, such a God does not [or cannot] exist

Noteworthy variations: “Logical” problem of evil: God cannot exist, given evil, etc ... “Evidential” problem of evil: God likely does not exist, given evil, etc. ... Rebuttals: refutation vs. defense vs. theodicy (why evil?)

“God”-sized questions

- Why would God allow evil and pain? (Habakkuk 1:2-4)
- What is God doing about evil and pain? (Mark 15:34)
- Is God all-powerful and good? (Job 42:3)

THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (i.e., from existence)

1. In concept, God is a being greater than any other imaginable.
2. God exists [at least] as an idea [in the mind].
3. A being that exists as an idea and in reality is greater than a being that exists only as an idea.
4. Thus, if God exists only as an idea, then we can imagine a being greater than God (i.e., one that in fact exists).
5. But we cannot imagine something greater than God (i.e., it is a contradiction to imagine a being greater than a greatest being) ... 6. Therefore, God exists.

“God”-sized questions

- Can God be conceived by man? (Acts 17:29, 1 Corinthians 2:11)
- Who is an existent inconceivable being? (Exodus 3:13-14)
- How could such a being be known? (John 1:18, John 8:58)

THE PROBLEM OF DIVINE HIDDENNESS

1. A perfectly loving God would make himself known to all human beings; there would not be any non-resistant non-believers.
2. There ARE non-resistant non-believers (indeed there are many, variably so across geography and history).
3. Therefore, a perfectly loving God does not [or cannot] exist.

Noteworthy variations: Any non-belief (vs. reasonable, non-culpable, non-resistant); the problems of religious diversity, inconsistent revelation; even more than the problem of evil, hinges on specific theologies

“God”-sized questions

- Why would God hide himself? (Job 13:24, Job 23:8-9, Psalm 22:1-2)
- Would we receive him if he were obvious? (Luke 16:31, John 12:37-40, Romans 1:20)
- Is it loving of God to hide? (Job 42:3, Luke 24:15-16)
- Has God revealed himself? (Luke 24:31-32, John 8:58, Romans 1:19, 1 Corinthians 2:9, Hebrews 1:2)

THE ARGUMENT FROM REASON

1. No belief is rational (reasonable) if it can be fully explained by nonrational causes (i.e., naturalism)
2. If naturalism is true, [by definition] all beliefs can be fully explained by nonrational causes
3. Therefore, if naturalism is true, no belief is rational [from 1, 2]
4. We should only accept naturalism if it is a rational belief
5. Therefore, accepting naturalism is not (and cannot) be rational

Variations get to God as the source of reason if there be reason.

“God”-sized questions

- Is my reason my own or a reflection? (Psalm 139:1-4, Romans 1:19)
- Even with God, how much could I know? (1 Corinthians 13:12)
- Is reason from mind or matter? (Genesis 1:3, John 1:3, Hebrews 1:3)

DIFFICULT DIVINE ATTRIBUTES

1. If God were [omniscient], He could [know what it feels like to sin]
2. Yet God cannot [know what it feels like to sin]; that is absurd!
3. Yet if God cannot [the impossibility / know what it feels like to sin], then He is not [the attribute / omniscient]
4. Therefore God [so defined, as omniscient] is incoherent / does not / cannot exist

Examples: Immutability paradox: “Can God act in any way?”; Omnipotence paradox: “Can God make a rock he cannot lift?”; Omniscience paradox: “Can God change his mind?” Euthyphro dilemma: God’s will, or good is right?

“God”-sized questions

- Is God incoherent or inconceivable? (1 Corinthians 2:10-11)
- If inconceivable, how can he be perceived? (Romans 1:20)
- If perceivable, how can he be received? (Hebrews 1:1-3)
- Once received, how can I trust he is good? (Psalm 139:3, Job 42:3, Luke 18:19, 1 Corinthians 2:8, 13:12)