

Adam and Eve. Sin changed everything, not only for humans but for the rest of creation as well. Adam and Eve broke their relationship with God, and that affected their descendants also.

Even so, God, who loves his creation, desires that humanity be reconciled to him. The problem is that sin had separated mankind from God, something that his perfect justice cannot simply overlook and forgive. God's declared penalty for sin is death, which means separation from him forever, and that penalty must be paid. Because all have sinned, i.e., disobeyed God in some way, therefore all are subject to the infinite penalty.

The Bible tells us that God is not only perfectly just, but he is also merciful beyond our comprehension. His gracious solution was to pay the penalty himself for all of mankind. That he did by sending Jesus sacrificially to this earth to become a man—but a perfect and sinless man—in order to experience and pay sin's penalty for every man and woman.

Since there is nothing that a person can do to pay off the eternal sin debt (except to be separated from God forever), one can only accept by faith Christ's payment on his behalf. To receive by faith, and only by faith, the forgiveness of sin—at a price that cost Christ dearly—completely reconciles a person to God. All of his sins, past, present, and

future, are totally removed, having been nailed to his cross.

The Bible calls that the Gospel—the Good News.

Note: What you've just read is information that is available for anyone who has a curiosity about God. I call it a critical curiosity. Why critical? Because what God has communicated in his Word (and certainly much more than is presented above) is his solution for reconciling mankind to himself. If that's true, then it is indeed critical. In fact, it's humanity's only hope, according to the Bible.

*If you find this paper of interest, whether it raises questions or confirms some things you already believe but would like more information, you can contact me personally,*

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# A Critical Curiosity

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Curiosity is a desire to know something. Some things are worth thinking about—others, not so much.

We all have plenty to think about, much of which ends up being mind/time wasters. My proposition in these few words has to do with one's having a curiosity that is either critical—seriously critical—or that is perhaps the greatest of worthless mental exercises.

It has to do with one's curiosity about God.

Who, or what, is God?

There seems to be no shortage of ideas, opinions, and speculations about God or the gods. But buying into any of those views is usually based upon who has the best guess or which one makes the most sense.

I personally have moved beyond mere curiosity about God and am now in the realm of having been convinced by those things that *can* be known of God. Here's how I arrived at that perspective:

I was never drawn into evolutionary thinking, because in undergraduate school I studied design, which involved a great deal of problem solving. Science was never my thing, but I knew enough to recognize that the incredibly complex *information* found in DNA could never have come about by chance. That information is the building code for every living thing!

A happened-by-chance phenomenon? Forget it! Intelligent information demands an intelligent source.

What can we thus conclude about this source? Given the staggering amount of intelligent information, *omniscience* (i.e., having *all* knowledge) would seem to be necessary. So would *omnipotence* (having all power). That would be necessary to create every living thing. And since that intelligence and power must be a part of creating everything everywhere, God would also have to be *omnipresent* (everywhere at once).

Observation and reason led me to those

*thoughts* about God. They didn't, however, fill in the details. Okay, so God is intelligent, powerful, and everywhere. That was helpful insight, but it wasn't enough. I was curious about the specifics.

Here was my train of thought: If God created everything, what did he have in mind for those things he created—and particularly, human beings? Because we are intelligent creatures (most of the time) who have been created with the ability to communicate, it seems that God must have desired to communicate with his created ones. Why do I say that?

You see, there's a problem. Things that are created—even very complex beings—can still never be in the same league with their creator. God's superiority (his "*omni-ness*"), which is infinite, causes any of mankind's attempts to determine the details about him to remain merely guesswork. We are finite at best, and "finite" can never really understand "infinite." Only opinions, speculations, conjectures, theories, assumptions, and the like, result from human curiosity.

What needed to happen was for the infinite creator to communicate specific details about himself to finite humanity. Without that, mankind would be left with nothing more than mere guesses about God.

Has God communicated to mankind? That's the claim, according to the Bible. More than 4,000 times in the Old Testament alone, phrases like "Thus says

the Lord," and "The word of the Lord came" to a person. The New Testament declares that the words in the Old and the New Testament came directly from God through specially chosen individuals.

Of course, you may say, any book can make such a claim. The Bible, however, differs from other sacred books by supporting its claims through prophecy. How so?

Prophecy is found throughout the Scriptures (more than a quarter of it is predictive prophecy) as proof that God is the author. This demonstrates that God alone knows what will take place in the future, and the accuracy of those very detailed prophecies has been proven by their having been fulfilled perfectly (thus far—and with many more to come) and documented historically.

What then are some of the details that God has supplied about himself and his creation? Well, he is eternal, without beginning or end. He is a triune God, in other words, one God, but three individual persons. They are referred to as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is neither in nor a part of his creation, yet he superintends it.

Everything that God created originally was good and perfect, but that perfection changed drastically when sin entered the world through the disobedience of the first created humans,