

Is God Really There?

by Peter Brandon

We need to be reconciled to God because sin separates us from Him, and only God Himself can reconcile us to Himself through the person of Jesus Christ.

Duration: 53:33

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:11

Topics: "Reconciliation with God", "God's Existence"

Description

Peter Brandon addresses the question 'Is God Really There?' by exploring the evidence of God's existence through creation and the need for reconciliation with Him. He emphasizes that while many believe in a divine intelligence, understanding God's true nature requires revelation, which is found in the Bible. Brandon explains that sin creates a barrier between humanity and God, but through Jesus Christ, who was both fully God and fully man, reconciliation is possible. He urges listeners to recognize their need for salvation and to accept the transformative power of being made new in Christ. Ultimately, he calls for a personal response to God's invitation for reconciliation.

Transcript

Now the subject that's been given to me is this, is God really there and what is he like? And trust that this might be a help especially to those who are seeking the Lord. For tonight we're going to read from the second of Corinthians chapter 5 and we are commence reading at verse 11. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men, because we are made manifest unto God and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

For we commend not ourselves again unto you but give you occasion to glory on our behalf. That ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance and not in heart. For whether we be beside ourselves it is to God, or whether we be sober it is for your cause, for the love of Christ constraineth us.

Because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, yea though we have known Christ after the flesh yet now henceforth know we him no more.

Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature or a new creation. All things are passed away behold all things are become new. And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus

Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.

To wit that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself not imputing their trespasses that means counting up their sins and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us we pray you in Christ's stead be reconciled to God for he hath made him to be sin for us whom knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in heaven. Now the Lord will bless to us the reading of the Bible.

Could you imagine just for one moment that we were all stranded on the desert island and we really do believe we are the only people on the island and then one morning we wake up and we see fresh footprints in the sand we examine the footprints very carefully and we discover it's a male because of the size of the footprint but we do not know what kind of person this person might be is he a friend or is he a foe. We see the footprints it tells us that there's a man around but we don't know what kind of person he is. Eventually we follow the footprints and then we come to a beautiful garden and we all say together the man's a gardener but we haven't seen him yet.

Then we get a little nosy and we go up the garden path and we look through the window and we say the man's an artist look at some of those beautiful paintings but we haven't seen him yet but the works that is left in the house indicate that he's an artist. Then one of us might be a bricklayer and say he can certainly lay these stones beautifully lay obviously no cement but the balance is almost perfect and then there's a carpenter with us and he says the woodwork is almost par excellence perfect and then we go around the back of the house and we see more. We haven't yet met the man but what he makes indicates what kind of person he is.

Now we must ask a question can we see in creation the footprints of a creator I think we can. The bible says the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth forth his handiwork what does that mean? When we look at the milky way we discover and that's the kind of sphere in which our planet is there are roughly a hundred thousand suns many of those suns bigger than our solar star and when we realize that there are galaxies and galaxies of stars in fact there are so many that we haven't yet found a telescope that can find the edge of space and when we see those great worlds all in their own orbit all moving by precision then our minds begin to say there must be an order behind all this and where there is an order there must be a creator. Then we begin to examine the earth and we begin to examine ourselves.

We look at the mystery of our own personality and it's so deep we don't even understand ourselves. We look at man and we can see that in man there's a faculty that the bible calls the pneuma the spirit and it's a faculty that must worship and then we hear within us an inarticulate groan and it's the muttering of conscience and as we examine our own complex being especially our soul our entity what do we say? The footprints of a creator in our own bodies and in our own souls but more. We begin to understand that in creation there are those vast things that are immeasurable almost and there are those small things that the naked eye never sees.

Millions upon millions of them some discovered some never discovered and then we begin to chuckle and say could all these things come from the amoeba? Could they all come from protoplasm? Surely behind all this mysterious world of the infinite there must be the footprints of God and so we say God. But now comes the next question what is God like? What is he like? Now when we look at the western world we find praise God that atheism has had a shock. 75 percent of the western world and almost 65 percent of the whole world believes in a intelligent spirit that's behind creation.

So atheism is beginning to go out of the window but the big problem now is this what is God like? Now there are some people who are intellectual and therefore they have a philosophical idea of God but he is the God no bigger than their minds. A God that they have invented. Then there are other people and they're very nice people and they are very emotional and therefore they have an emotional God therefore it's a God that they have invented through the medium of their emotions.

And then there are more primitive people and they believe that their God is the God of an image and therefore they will worship images but they are the Gods of human fabrication. Now you will agree with me dear friends if you are following the argument along this certain line that I am now proceeding that if there is a God behind the whole of creation he must be transcendent so that outside of time and space and can I use language outside the immeasurable there outside of it all there must be the eternal God that looks upon matter as a small thing. Secondly there must be an eternal God far bigger than our minds that projects himself in everything that he makes so that in the tiniest germ the glory of God is seen.

Now my dear friends this causes the mind to boggle but I want to show you now that the God that we are representing is not the God of our minds but the God of revelation. Now if we agree then that there must be a God of revelation where has he put that revelation? In the Bible and therefore in this book that gives us the revelation of God, God explains to us very carefully that in creation we begin to see the greatness of God can I use another word the infinite greatness of God and then as we look at creation we begin to see the beauty of God especially in the floral world and when we look at creation and we see the multifarious forms of life we see the profound brilliance of God but we still don't know him we're only getting flashes of him why because we see this in creation then we come a bit nearer and we begin to see the justice of God in what?

You know ladies and gentlemen the world's justice is still based upon the ten commandments and that was given three thousand years or three thousand five hundred years ago and when God gave us the ten commandments he gave the whole world once and for all a flash of his justice and when you see a glimpse of the justice of God you begin to see it as fire as a trumpet that sounds louder and louder so glorious was that mountain when God revealed himself that not even a beast could touch him the justice of God and then my dear friends there were those that were brought into the sanctuary of God and when they were brought into the sanctuary of God by divine revelation they saw the exquisite beauty of God's holiness can I put it to you like this if one flash of the glory of God's holiness came

into this room every one of us would be prostrated we little understand the glory of the almighty God now my dear friends I have given you very simply a resume of God as seen in the old testament we shall have another look at God as seen in the new testament he is the same God but he is revealed in greater detail but now can you see now that there is a problem everyone in this room tonight I feel sure believes in the existence of God 95 percent of the people here tonight would believe in the glimpses that I've given concerning the glory of God but now there comes this problem is God knowable over and over again in London and in Bedford where I live people have actually said this to me and they were perfectly honest when they said it we believe now in a divine intelligence behind creation

good we believe that the world is kept together by the atom and God controls it you believe that good but how can we human beings know him one man said to me with tears not very long ago he said if I could know that God it would be the greatest thing in the universe and that's true it would but he says I'm living in this little body here somewhere in the universe and there's a big barrier between me and God and so there is and that's why we don't know him and therefore what I want to talk about now is the need for that barrier

to be removed and so I'm going to speak on the need of reconciliation being right with God then I want to deal with the subject the person who reconciles and that is one of the most precious subjects in the world and then right at the end I want to take you all by

the hand secretly and show us the act of being reconciled to God first of all the need about 1500 years BC there was a man by the name of Betheliel and he was a brilliant artist probably one of the greatest engineers that ever lived and he was commissioned by Moses and Moses was commissioned by God to erect a mobile dwelling place for God it was called the tabernacle now that tabernacle had a mystery and I want to explain it to you it had a place called the holy place where the priest could go in a minister and then there was a beautiful veil and on the other side of that veil there was a place called the holiest of all and no priest was ever allowed to enter the idea of a priest penetrating that curtain would be completely out of this world again let me say it he was strictly

prohibited from ever entering into the holiest of all why did God put that veil there to show that there was a barrier between the human race and God and this is what the scripture says your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear now why should God be separated from us shall I tell you why because he is three times holy and you know what the word holy means separate and that means the whole character of God is full of absolute intrinsic perfection and anything that's inconsistent with that nature is separated from God beloved could I say this again if we caught a glimpse of the glory of God we should understand why there is a barrier now that is why in the scripture God comes to a conclusion and when God comes to a

conclusion it's final he's the only person that cannot make a mistake always remember this there is only one person in the whole universe that's infallible and that's the almighty God and therefore my dear friends when God makes a conclusion it's final it cannot be added to and when God made this accusation if you like when he came to this conclusion he studied the whole race from the first man to the last he knew all about the civilizations from the antediluvian right to the end of the ages he knew every single person that would ever live in this world and he made this conclusion for there is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God now what does that mean it means that we have missed the mark and instead of pleasing God we have pleased ourselves and therefore

he says the whole of the human race has fallen short of his glory then he makes another conclusion he says the scripture hath concluded all under sin now what does that mean it doesn't mean to say that we've all missed the mark but we're all under the power of sin now can I prove that to you would you allow me every single person in this room has a besetting sin a sin that you cannot control that made you some people it's bad temper some people it's lust some people it's lying some people it's irritation some people it's downright selfishness and some people perhaps it's a gossiping tongue but everyone in this room has a besetting sin that you can't handle it was that poet henison who said when he was struggling with his own besetting sin oh for a man to rise in me that a man that I am

might cease to be and he knew it in fact the greatest moralist that ever lived apart from the Lord Jesus said oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me and therefore dear friends we have discovered that we've all sinned and we've all got a power within us called the flesh which constantly sins within us and drags us down so that our sin power overcomes our willpower now God has done something that I believe is very beautiful he actually gave the world 10 commandments now here's the fact worked out by a brilliant mathematician that the average person that lives in Britain and I believe this might be the same in Australia violates the 10 commandments no less than 1 million times over a period of 30 years just

imagine going before the high bar with 1 million offenses could you say not

guilty my lord now if we violate the law of the road or any other law then when we're caught we're punished now listen to this we have broken the holy law of God and God only has one punishment and that's death you say what does that mean does it mean when we sin he puts the gun to our head and that's the end if that were the case who would be alive what then does he mean by death physical death is the separation of the soul from the body spiritual death is the separation of the sinner from God and that's why we don't understand God because we are separated because of sin now dear friends can I share with you with a broken heart the greatest tragedy of all because sin has separated us from God because God is holy and sin makes us unclean if we die in our sins we are eternally separated

from God and that is hell and that's the greatest tragedy in life and you know dear friends if you'll forgive the tremble in my voice that makes me a preacher there are nights when I walk the bed from unable to sleep because of thousands of souls perishing and that is why all of us need to be reconciled to God but then you might argue but surely God could do something to have sinners in his presence what a terrible thing that would be would you like the almighty God the very pinnacle of all holiness the source of all truth to come down into this world and bathe in the muddy pools of iniquity would that sound right some of you ladies in your kitchen there's a line of demarcation between cleanliness and uncleanness isn't that right some of you gardeners when you're doing your gardening

there's a line of demarcation between weeds and cultivation isn't that right and some of you medical men when you're operating isn't there a line of demarcation between healthful bacteria and harmful bacteria of course there is and there's a line of demarcation between God who is light and man in the darkness and if we die in our sins we're lost and that is why all of us urgently need to be made right with God but then there comes the awareness of being made right with God Isaiah was one of the greatest prophets that ever lived and on one occasion he stood upon the pulpit of wood and he said to Israel with his accusing finger I imagine woe unto Israel five times because they were an adulterous nation not long after he gave that surgical address he was in the presence of God praying and he

saw a vision of the glory of God and he saw the throne of God high and lifted up outside of time and space and then he saw the seraphim specially created intelligence made for the immediate presence of God and such was the glory of God they had to veil their faces with their wings then he heard the symphony and they said one to another in harmony holy holy holy is the Lord God of hosts the whole earth is full of his glory and the post of the door moved at the voice of him that spake and the whole house was filled with smoke poor Isaiah couldn't stand it and he fell into the dust and he said woe is me for I am undone I'm a man of unclean limbs and we would all feel like that if we got that vision ah but you say brother Peter that's the old testament what about the new testament yes there

was a man in the new testament his name was Saul of Tarsus the only man that could ever say touching the externals of the Lord blameless on the Damascus road he caught a glimpse of the Lord Jesus who was the very manifestation of God the outshining of God and when he caught a glimpse of that glorious man he said that he was the chief of sinners now dear friends can I figuratively take you by the hand and lead you right into the presence of God one day we're all going to meet him and it's far better to discover what you're like now than when you stand before the great white throne where there's no mercy amen and if God tonight through the preaching of the glory of his glorious character reveals to you the ugliness even of your smallest sins thank him because you can never be reconciled

until you know your uncleanness in the sight of God so man now needs to be reconciled and who can do it well dear friends there was no one that can do it by God there was no prophet there was no king there was no angel there was no archangel who was great enough and therefore we find here these wonderful words God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself you see God in all his grace and mercy instead of destroying the world that rightfully deserved it he intervened and he sent his son into this world now who was Jesus in this narrative we are told two things about him first of all he knew no sin think of it if we had time to go through human history we would find even the great philosophers the great kings were all marked by failure only the other day i was reading about the

confessions of 40 british prime ministers and the 40 of them although great men many of them they died with depression and failure because they were not able to keep their promises when you go through the old testament God gives us a portrait of great men such as Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and men like Moses and Joshua and all of them although great failed there was only one man who ever lived who never sinned and that was Jesus Christ and when he came into the world he was not only a sinful man but we are told in this narrative God was in Christ that meant he was co-equal with God now my dear friends may I put it to you like this for someone to come into this world to grapple with the sin of the world needed someone more than a perfect man none of us could ever contemplate the sin of

the world the enormity of it and the vulgarity of it would be too much for us and therefore if Jesus was just a perfect man a perfect man couldn't handle the sin of the world so from this narrative we learn that God was in Christ therefore he was not only a perfect man he was perfect God and therefore we have a body that's not part man part God but a body that has in it the harmony of perfect man and perfect God and that was the greatest mystery of the universe listen to the dignity of these words God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself great is the mystery of godliness God was manifest in the flesh and therefore the reconciler the Lord Jesus was firstly a perfect man secondly he was perfect God and he came to deal with the sin of the world now my dear friends can I put it to

you like this if you could jump out of your body right now and if you could get where God is and if God would show to you the sins of your life you would have such a shock you would never get over it we little realize the profusion of sin do you know the bible says the thought of foolishness is sin whatsoever is not afraid of sin he that knoweth to do good and doeth it not to him it is sin even the thought of lust that goes on in the mind that's it even bitterness that sometimes fills our heart that's it and if all our sins were accumulated and we saw them we would have a shock furthermore if God could take out our smallest sin and if we could see that smallest sin as God saw it all of us would have a tremendous shock that we would never get over now that's just an individual it's someone

dealing with the sin of the world that doesn't mean to say the sin of a generation but that means to say all the generations if you look at the word very carefully it means all the believing generations right from the time of Adam right to the time of the last man that would be born into this world the sin of the world now my dear friends if you can calculate that in a very small measure you are a genius none of us can measure the sin of the world and this is what the word of God says he was made sin for us now you will say well how can we prove those facts in the garden of Gethsemane just before Jesus Christ went to the cross he anticipated the sin of the world and when he was anticipating and plumbing the depth of the sin of the world such was the tension his sweat was bloodline and

there on bended knees he saw this massive monster this Everest of vulgarity the sin of the world and he staggered and yet he was willing to go through it so there were no surprises for the son of God on the

cross he knew it all when he was hanging on that Roman gibbet now I must speak in great reverence for three hours he suffered before men he allowed them to do their ugliest worst so that they treated him worse than an animal and he made all that hatred with father forgive them they know not what they do and then it happened from the sixth to the ninth hour in those three hours and eternity took place God brought together that infinite mess of evil the sin of the world measured its judgment and then turned all the lights of creation so that he would release to the world their darkness

and their separation and in that separation God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself the wrath of God the righteous wrath fell upon the son and for three hours he was silent and then right at the end when all the wrath of God had been completely exhausted so that every sin of a believer had been dealt with completely he let out the cry I could hardly say it tonight my God my God why hast thou forsaken and abandoned me do you know why can I point because he loved you he took your sin and bore them on the cross and then when it was all over he said finished and he simply meant this that the work was complete and therefore the Lord Jesus was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him but that's not all immediately he cried it is finished then God went to

work you can almost imagine the whole of heaven hilarious with divine and perfect joy the judgment had fallen the son had exhausted it so that now God could come to the human family and join them up to himself again and how did he illustrate it he went straight down into Herod's temple and the priests were all busy ministering and suddenly they saw the curtain being split from the top to the bottom and then they looked into the holiest to signify there was a way right into the presence of God and the door is open but more on the third day the resurrection day God went down into that dark sepulcher and in mighty power forgive my excitement but I can't say this quietly raised him from the dead he raised him from the dead in a different way in which the Lord Jesus raised Lazarus from the

dead because he died again when he raised the Lord Jesus from the dead he raised him in such a way that he would never die again and there's a man in the glory that lives in the power of an indissoluble life raised from the dead and when God raised him from the dead he was saying look I'm raising the reconciler the one that can make people right with him but there's something more than that he not only rent the curtain not only did he rent the grave but he's rent the heavens the same one that died on the cross the same one that was raised has gone through principalities and powers and there's a man in the glory that sits upon the unshakable throne and all power has been given unto him and that living Christ is the great reconciler and dear friends can I say this to you from my heart

tonight he longs to make you right with God just as you sit there now what about the reconciliation the act first of all the proof you know when you get right with God and you're really right with God in the Bible way it will transform your life this is what it says if any man being Christ is a new creation old things pass away all things become new we're going to have our 50th wedding anniversary when we're here and you know I met my wife when I was 19 or 20 and I met her in a Bible reading fell in love with her and I hadn't been with her for six months when I was being changed I used to hate a white stiff collar I used to hate dark suits I had no time for good music but would you believe it I was only with her for six months and I love the white shirt I love the dark suit in fact I

bought one at Burton's and some of you have been in the old country will know that and would you believe it I started to enjoy handles you see what caused the transformation I met my dear dear girl when you're made right with God here transform you friends and we'll see how he transforms a man in a few moments you see he puts you right in Christ we'll talk about that one night but that simply means you become a

child of God and when you're right with God and you're in communion with God and with his word the transformation takes place but then how is he going to bring that transformation through preaching and this is what the apostle says we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you we pray you in Christ's stead be you reconciled to God now what does that mean God takes up

a poor sinner he breaks him he cleanses him to use Bible language he saves him reconciles him then he gives him a gift and then he gives him a love for souls and then he gives him the ability to speak but it's all of God and this is the job of the ambassador to get alone in the sanctuary and say Lord you know everyone that's going to be there tonight I don't know give me the message of God and until he gets God's message and then he comes to the people and he says one thing thus saith the Lord and he gives you as clearly as he can this great message be reconciled to God but it's more than speech not only does that man convey the message of God as his ambassador he conveys the compassions of God the love of Christ constraineth me said the apostle do you know what that means it's got hold

of me like a malarial fever knowing therefore the terror of the Lord he had got a glimpse of the holiness of God and that had gripped him and therefore here was a man gripped by the fear of God and the love of God and when he preached it wasn't a lecture in that man's body was the compassions of God and he leaned over that platform as though God was kneeling down before those who were not reconciled pleading with them to be reconciled to God and he gave them the very feelings of God dear friends may I say this to my Christian brothers and sisters we need a new army of preachers you know I remember as a boy hearing men like Ruben Scammell, Fred Elliot, Ivory Elias and those men when they stood up and preached sometimes wept all the way through the meeting and hundreds were saved and oh

dear friends tonight I do not want to give you an icy cold sermon I want the feelings of God to be within me so that when I preach I beg with God for people to be reconciled to God oh how vital that is and then there comes a moment when the spirit works and God puts a circle all around a particular soul and he says in a meeting like this you've sinned you're guilty if you died tonight you would be lost forever Christ died for you and he wants to save you and then the act comes you take one look at the glory of God and you look at your sins and you say something like this Lord I hate sin I love your holiness I want to turn to God from this sin once and for all you're nearly there then you look at the reconciler the lovely Lord Jesus crowned with glory and honour and you remember it was

that one that bore your sins and you stretch out a figurative hand of faith and you say something like this Lord I can't pray very much but I'm just going to ask you now to forgive my sins and save me and the word of God says this whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved and in that meeting you could meet him tonight that seeking saviour the reconciler who longs to save you who died to save you wants to take you into the presence of God and plead the cause of his death and God will willingly reconcile you and there's no power that then can separate you from him it was in a meeting like this where God's spirit was moving that one man stayed behind in Ireland and it was in a large tent in Newtonards I shall never forget this and he said very nervously would you show me

please how to be saved that means to be reconciled and I was going through the scriptures showing all have sinned and he was nodding as me the wages of sin is death yes I realise I need to be saved I was showing him how the cross died on the cross for his sins and he wanted to save him and I was showing him from the scripture whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved and then he interrupted me and said Mr Brendan if you don't mind could you tell me all that afterwards I want to get saved now right now and he dropped on his knees and he called out in a loud voice Lord would you save an old

sinner like me and the Lord saved him and the Lord has blessed him could I point is there one like that tonight right now then we'll have a time of quietness and just thank the Lord

right now let us pray as we are bowed in the presence of God should there be any tonight and you see that you're separated from God because of sin you see the danger if there should be someone who sees tonight that Christ on the cross bore that sin and the judgment in his own body on that cross at Calvary and through that death God can forgive you and if you see tonight you want to turn to God from sin put your back upon a selfish life so that your life comes under the control of the Lord and you can see that there's a reconciler the Lord Jesus who was made sin for you that you might be made the righteousness of God in him then friends come just like that man did in eugene arts and in the quietness of your heart call upon him right now just give you one lovely scripture the Lord says him

that comes to me I will in no wise cast out just come and trust the Savior now to forgive you and cleanse you

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