

## The Journey's Beginning

Before we begin any journey we must first have a destination. A destination consists of more than just a point beyond where we are, but must be a place that we have 1) some knowledge of, 2) a reason for wanting to attain it, and 3) a plan for getting there. The journey of traveling from who we are to God requires the same elements if we are to undertake the trek. The beginning of the journey to God requires that we know God, that we know enough about Him to undertake the arduous task of getting to Him, and that we have some reasonable expectation of getting there. Let us consider the first task.

If we are to get to God we must first believe that He exists. To the Christian that is no problem. The question of God's existence rarely appears in the minds of most believers. Sometimes the idea of God is so firmly established that doubts never more arise about His existence. Others have been so immersed in the culture of Theism that for them the question has never arisen. In any case when the believer encounters an unbeliever, he can sometimes find himself ill-equipped to present a viable case for God. God's existence appears axiomatic, and an axiom is more difficult to prove than a theory. Often the believer, after an appeal to the obvious and an allusion to some poorly expressed principles, can quickly become exasperated, even succumbing to acrimony. Without a well developed thought process, sarcasm can quickly supplant sense. When one takes time to contemplate God, he finds that He is such a profound and inscrutable being that explaining Him, notwithstanding the obvious truth of his existence, is not an easy task.

Before we look at actual proofs and reasons for believing in God, we might do well to consider some of the baggage that people may have to dispose of before any arguments can impress the doubter. Many, if not all, of the following not only interfere with a belief in God, but also interfere with obedience on the part of the believer:

- 1) Our modern age has developed inappropriate perceptions of God from the influence of childhood misconceptions, evolutionary thought, biblical misinterpretations, and the influences from a wide array of world religions and philosophies.
- 2) The advance of humanistic thought has placed man on center stage while pushing God to the side, sometimes completely off it.
- 3) A powerful desire to be free of moral responsibility and accountability often leads to a desire, more than a conviction, that God does not exist.
- 4) Poor childhood experiences often result in a rejection of authority figures.
- 5) A strong tendency to reject any idea that suggests the possibility of unpleasant consequences, such as punishment for sin, often leads to the rejection of an omnipotent God.

6) God is often a victim of human pride, arguably man's greatest failure.

7) The problem of human suffering, possibly the most difficult question to reconcile when considering the reality of God, causes some to reject Him.

There are probably other things which cause people to have doubts about God's existence, but from this list alone you can see that there are many stumbling blocks. In the coming essays we will present what we perceive as a solid and irrefutable case for the reality of God. It is only when God is firmly set in the individual mind that any sensible discussion about God's nature, the purpose of life, and the transformation of the human heart can occur. Not until His reality is grasped can the journey to Him begin.