

## Q&A: Is “right and wrong” evidence for the existence of God?

by Dave Sterrett

**H**ave you ever been in a situation in which you knew what you were about to do was wrong? Each of us has acted in ways that we knew were not right. In these moments, we knew right from wrong because a universal moral law is written on our hearts. Some people deny the existence of this law. They say morality (a standard of right and wrong) is created by individuals or cultures. While it is true that moral codes differ from one culture to the next, the differences are minor. The deep principles (prohibitions against murder, theft, lying, etc., and positive values of honesty, fidelity, and courage) are universal.

Still, people resist this truth. If someone you know says all morality is relative, try asking him if lying is wrong for all people. He may think it's no big deal to lie to others when it benefits him, but as soon as he finds that someone has lied to *him*, he is sure to be angry. Why? Because deep down he knows lying is wrong. The moral law says so.

The existence of this law points to God's existence. After all, if there is a law written on all human hearts, there must be a law writer. Hence, the moral argument for God's existence is based on the evidence of an absolute moral law that in turn gives us reason to believe in the existence of a moral law giver (God). After all, these universal laws cannot be the creation of sinful humans, all of whom belong to a specific time and place. Since the law transcends time, place, and culture, the giver of the law must transcend these conditions.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. appealed to the God-given universal moral law to explain the evil of racism:

I'm here to say to you this morning that some things are right and some things are wrong. Eternally so, absolutely so. It's wrong to hate. It always has been wrong and it always will be wrong! It's wrong in America, it's wrong in Germany, it's wrong in Russia, it's wrong in China. It was wrong in 2000 BC, and it's wrong in AD 1954. It always has been wrong . . . Some things in this universe are absolute. The God of the universe has made it so. And so long as we adopt this relative attitude toward right and wrong, we're revolting against the very laws of God himself (“Rediscovering Lost Values,” a speech delivered in Detroit, February 28, 1954).

Dr. King got it right. Morality is from God, and a revolt against morality is a revolt against God. By asking the right questions, we can prompt our non-Christian friends to admit that there is a universal standard of right and wrong. Through their admission of the moral law, we can point them to the God of the Bible, the one whose own character is the foundation of the moral law.