



BIGGER  
QUESTIONS

# WHY DO WE EXPLORE SPACE?

REFLECTING ON 50 YEARS  
SINCE THE MOON LANDING

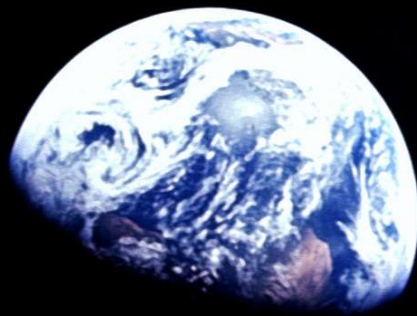


CITY BIBLE  
FORUM

IN  
THE  
BEGINNING  
GOD

...

?





For thousands of years, humanity has been shaped by the vast cosmos above. Neil Armstrong's "Giant leap for mankind" realised the imagination of ancient mariners, mathematicians, priests and even farmers. Why is space the stuff dreams are made of? What have we learned about ourselves and our place in the universe since 1969? Where to next? Join our guests as we take you on a journey of imagination, reality, and 300 million kilometres.



**Dr Jonathan Clarke** is a geologist and the President of The Mars Society, Australia and is also a fellow and director of ISCAST - Christians in science and technology.



**Dr Dianne McGrath's** background is Environmental Engineering, currently researching food waste and sustainability, and one of the 'Mars 100' international candidates for the MarsOne human settlement program.



**Dr James Murray** is president of the Mount Burnett Observatory, former astrophysicist, and senior program manager at Astronomy Australia Ltd.



William Anders, Apollo 8

*"We are now approaching lunar sunrise, and for all the people back on Earth, the crew of Apollo 8 has a message that we would like to send to you.*

*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

*And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

*And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness."*

James Lovell, Apollo 8

*"And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.*

*And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.*

*And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.*

*And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day."*

Frank Borman, Apollo 8

*"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.*

*And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called the Seas: and God saw that it was good.*

*And from the crew of Apollo 8, we close with good night, good luck, a Merry Christmas – and God bless all of you, all of you on the good Earth"*

What do you make of the Bible being quoted on the Apollo 8 mission?

Why is the idea of space so often connected with the idea of God?

## Why do we explore space?

*Some say that we should stop exploring space, that the cost in human lives is too great. But Columbia's crew would not have wanted that. We are a curious species, always wanting to know what is over the next hill, around the next corner, on the next island. And we have been that way for thousands of years.*

*Stuart Arkinson, Writer*

*What everyone in the astronaut corps shares in common is not gender or ethnic background, but motivation, perseverance, and desire - the desire to participate in a voyage of discovery.*

*Ellen Ochoa, Astronaut*

*It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out.*

*Proverbs 25:2*

Historians claim God, gold and glory as motivations for European colonial expansion. In what way do you think these apply to space exploration?

Why do we explore space?

## The only home we've ever known...

*There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known.*

*Carl Sagan, Cosomologist*

*And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

*Genesis 1:28*

What one word comes to mind as you look at 'Earthrise' overleaf?

Given this is the only home we have ever known, why is this world such a mess?

## Who are we? Do we matter?

*We are just an advanced breed of monkeys on a minor planet of a very average star. But we can understand the Universe. That makes us something very special.*

*Stephen Hawking, Theoretical Physicist*

*So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them.*

*Genesis 1:27*

In the vastness of space, Earth is the only known planet with life. In light of this, how does this make you feel?

Is there anything special about human life?

## Is there something greater?

*Some say God is living there [in space].  
I was looking around very attentively,  
but I did not see anyone there. I did not  
detect either angels or gods.....*

*Gherman Titov, Cosmonaut*

*Even today the most jaded city dweller  
can be unexpectedly moved upon  
encountering a clear night sky studded  
with thousands of twinkling stars. When  
it happens to me after all these years it  
still takes my breath away.*

*Carl Sagan, Cosmologist*

*The heavens declare the glory of God,  
and the sky above proclaims his  
handiwork.*

*Psalm 19:1*

Why are we moved by the stars?

Is the glory of the universe increased or decreased by  
the idea of God?



## Keep exploring

- Subscribe to the Bigger Questions podcast: Ep. 106: Do the Heavens declare the glory of God?, feat. NASA scientist Dr. Jennifer Wiseman
- Small Steps, Giant Leaps podcast, NASA
- StarTalk podcast, Neil deGrasse Tyson
- Watch This Space podcast, NASA
- Earthrise, Youtube
- A Man on the Moon: The Voyages of the Apollo Astronauts, Andrew Chaikin
- How we'll live on Mars, Stephen Petranek, TED
- Pale Blue Dot: A Vision for the Human Future in Space, Carl Sagan
- Red Mars Trilogy, Kim Stanley Robinson
- The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Douglas Adams
- The Space Trilogy, C.S Lewis

For more information on space and space exploration, please visit:

Bigger Questions	<a href="http://biggerquestions.org">biggerquestions.org</a>
NASA	<a href="http://nasa.gov">nasa.gov</a>
SpaceX	<a href="http://spacex.com">spacex.com</a>
MarsOne	<a href="http://mars-one.com">mars-one.com</a>
Mount Burnett Observatory	<a href="http://mtburnettobservatory.org">mtburnettobservatory.org</a>
Dianne McGrath	<a href="http://diannemcgrath.com.au">diannemcgrath.com.au</a>
Universe Today	<a href="http://universetoday.com">universetoday.com</a>

"Why do we Explore Space" was hosted by City Bible Forum, an organisation that creates spaces and opportunities to explore the bigger questions of life, faith and culture.

If you liked this series, also see:

"How can we learn to have better conversations about God?"