

Does God Exist?

Divine Design

“Astronomy leads us to a unique event, a universe which was created out of nothing, one with the very delicate balance needed to provide exactly the right conditions required to permit life, and one which has an underlying, one might say ‘supernatural,’ plan.”

— ARNO PENZIAS

MEMORY VERSE

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. (Romans 1:20).

LET'S REVIEW WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW:

1. Does Truth Exist? Yes. It is self-defeating to deny it.
2. Does God Exist? So far, we have seen evidence that He does from:
 - a. The beginning of the universe (Cosmological Argument)

The Cosmological Argument is structured like this:

1. Everything that had a beginning had a cause.
2. The universe had a beginning.
3. Therefore the universe had a cause.

1. **The five lines of scientific evidence that the universe had a beginning are represented by the acronym SURGE. What does SURGE stand for?**

S

U

R

G

E

The Kalam Cosmological Argument is structured like this:

1. An infinite number of days has no end.
2. Today is the end day of history (history being a collection of all days).
3. Therefore, there were not an infinite number of days before today (i.e., time had a beginning).

Take the time to review those points you didn't remember. Now here is our second argument that relies on scientific evidence: The Teleological Argument

THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

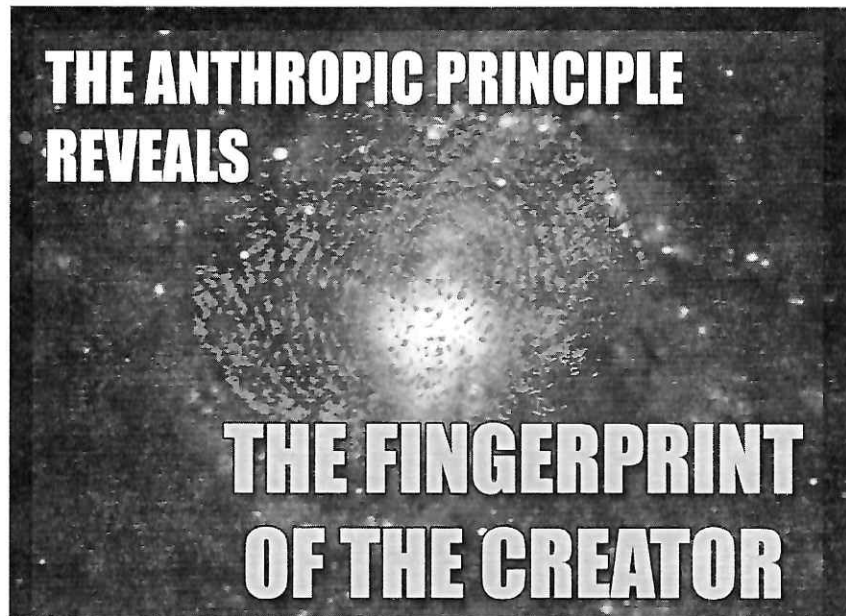
Scientific and philosophical evidence support the argument that the universe had a beginning, that the beginning was from nothing, and that it had a cause. The second supporting argument, the Teleological Argument, points to facts that show the "Big Bang" was not a random explosion, but one that was extremely fine-tuned. It also points out how our universe operates right now implies design as well.

2. State the Teleological Argument in logical form:

Even though Isaac Newton and William Paley confirmed the Teleological Argument through their scientific observations, the Bible directed us to make the same observations as proof of an "Intelligent Designer" long before either of those scientists existed.

3. Psalm 19:1 – "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands." How does this verse support the Teleological Argument?

THE ANTHROPIC PRINCIPLE: THE DESIGN IS IN THE DETAILS



The Design (or Teleological) argument for the existence of God has received more attention in recent years with the discovery of the Anthropic Principle. The Anthropic Principle is a scientific observation that the universe is precisely fine-tuned for life here on earth. Any small variation in any one of a number of factors about the initial conditions or current conditions of our universe would preclude the existence of life. It's as if there is a control room of the universe somewhere with over one hundred dials, all

set to exactly the right level for there to be a universe and life here on earth. Since many of these factors are interdependent, a minute change in any one of them would render the universe lifeless.

When you go on a trip, you probably don't think much about who designed and built the airplane. But of course your airplane was designed and built with exacting aerodynamic and engineering standards. If any one of a number of those standards were off slightly, your trip would likely end in tragedy. Likewise, the Universe appears to be designed with exacting standards. Why were the initial conditions of the Big Bang just right to allow the universe to expand and result in galaxies and planets? Why is there exactly the right amount of oxygen, nitrogen, gravity, and several other environmental factors around you? Did that fine-tuned mix of initial conditions and environmental factors just happen, or are there design, planning, and forethought behind them? If a highly designed airplane requires a designer, doesn't a highly designed universe require one?

There are actually only three possibilities for the apparent fine-tuning of the universe:

- Chance
- Physical necessity (the properties of the universe had to be this way)
- Design

The probabilities are too small to reasonably believe the fine-tuning is the result of chance—a cosmic accident. The universe could have had different physical conditions, so physical necessity is out. The most reasonable conclusion is that the fine-tuning is due to a Designer.

4. How would you describe the Anthropic Principle to someone who is not a scientist?

5. What did atheist Stephen Hawking say about the precision of the expansion rate of the universe?

YOU NEED GOD LONG BEFORE DARWIN

Many atheists claim that if Darwinism is true, there's no need for God. We'll see in the next two lessons that Darwinism does not appear to be true. However, even if it were true, that would not put God out of a job. The universe itself requires a designer. In other words, a designer is not just necessary to explain new life forms, but the existence and design of the universe itself! The universe was created with extreme precision and has been operating and maintained like a highly fine-tuned machine ever since. Someone who is extremely intelligent designed and engineered it and is maintaining its precise operation to this very moment. So atheists can claim whatever they want about evolution, but that will not negate the need for a Designer of the universe.

PROOF FOR GOD! HOW DO ATHEISTS RESPOND?

Some atheists try to counter the theistic implications of the Anthropic Principle with the Multiple Universe Theory (sometimes called the Multiverse); namely, that there are an infinite number of universes out there and we just happen to be in the one that can sustain life—it appears designed but actually is not.

We have no evidence that these other universes actually exist. But somehow that doesn't stop the atheists from insisting they are there (that sounds an awful lot like "blind faith," doesn't it?)

Of course, even if other “universes” exist, that wouldn’t disprove Christianity. A multiverse is not inconsistent with Christianity at all. Moreover, a multiverse needs an absolute beginning.

MULTIPLE UNIVERSES REQUIRE AN ABSOLUTE BEGINNING

Even proponents of the Multiple Universe Theory agree that it has problems. In 2006, agnostic cosmologist Alexander Vilenkin admitted that even if multiple universes exist, the entire collection of universes would still require an absolute beginning. In his book, *Many Worlds in One*, Vilenkin wrote, “It is said that an argument is what convinces reasonable men, and a proof is what it takes to convince even an unreasonable man. With the proof now in place, cosmologists can no longer hide behind the possibility of a past-eternal universe. There is no escape: They have to face the problem of a cosmic beginning.”

It is most rational to believe that since the universe (or universes) had a beginning, then they must have had a Beginner. So the Multiple Universe Theory, even if true, doesn’t get rid of the need for a Creator.

6. Describe a couple of the problems with the “Multiple Universe Theory” put forth by atheists.

EXPLAINING AWAY FINE TUNING

When we use the phrase “Anthropic Principle,” we mean that the universe is precisely fine-tuned for mankind to exist because a Designer made it that way. But some atheists try to explain away the design of the universe by defining the “Anthropic Principle” in another way. They say that the “Anthropic Principle” means that man has arisen because the conditions of the universe made mankind’s arrival inevitable. In other words, if the conditions of the universe were any different, we would never be here to observe them because life never would have arisen.

While it is certainly true that if the conditions were any different we wouldn't be there to observe them, that doesn't explain why the conditions of the universe are the way they are. **Why** is there a universe at all and why does it have these extremely fine-tuned conditions for life? And why were the initial conditions just right for the universe to form? You can't make some kind of cosmic evolutionary argument for initial conditions. They were simply put in at the beginning.

Atheists will claim that if there are other universes out there, we could be in the one that merely looks designed, but it really isn't. To see why this isn't the most reasonable conclusion, consider the game of poker. The chance of getting a royal flush in a game of poker is one in 649,739. Now suppose you are playing and your opponent gets a royal flush. You might think, "Wow that was a lucky hand!" But what if your opponent also gets a royal flush in the next hand, and then the hand after that, and then the hand after that? You're obviously going to charge your opponent with cheating!

Now imagine your opponent says, "Oh no, I'm not cheating! We just happen to be in the universe where I get four royal flushes in a row! And besides, you shouldn't be surprised you're observing this because if the conditions weren't right for me getting four royal flushes in a row you wouldn't be here observing it!" What would you say?

Of course if the conditions weren't right no one would be observing it. But that doesn't explain why the conditions are the way they are! What takes more faith: believing the guy was cheating or believing we're just in that one universe where your opponent gets four royal flushes in a row by chance?

There is one more wrinkle atheists attempt to put on this. Sometimes they say that another life form would have arisen had the conditions been different. Perhaps, but that faith-based assertion ignores the fact that the universe itself is fine-tuned regardless of whether or not life exists on it. In other words, if some of the initial conditions were not just like they are, there would not only be no life, there would be no universe! Chemistry wouldn't even be possible! Moreover, other possible conditions of the universe do not explain why the actual conditions are the way they are.

Remember, we are looking for the most reasonable explanation. From the Cosmological argument, we already have strong evidence for a transcendent Creator. In light of that, it is most reasonable to conclude that the fine-tuning of the universe is the result of that same Creator who got it all going in the beginning.

7. What can a building tell you about the architect? What can a book tell you about the author?

8. If there is a designer of the universe, how would knowing the designer impact you?

GOD? LOOK TO THE HEAVENS

Consider the design and scope of this enormous and fine-tuned universe. How many stars are out there? One estimate put it at about equal to the number of sand grains on all the beaches on all the earth! And the average distance between those stars in our galaxy is about 30 trillion miles. All that distance is necessary for us to exist here on earth. To put that distance in perspective, if you could fly at space-shuttle speed—about 5 miles per second—it would take you 201,450 years to complete a trip between just two of those stars in our galaxy. The heavens are truly awe-inspiring!

9. In light of these facts, why does God—according to the prophet Isaiah—say this, “To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One. “Lift your eyes and look to the heavens.” (see Isaiah 40:25-26)?

10. Read Psalm 103:11-13. How much does God love those that fear Him? How does that make you feel, and how should it affect the way you live?

11. Keeping in mind Psalm 103 and the number of stars in the universe, how high are the heavens above the earth?

12. In light of this natural revelation, is there any rational adult who does not know that God exists? Explain your answer.

“Life as we know it would be impossible if any one of several physical quantities had slightly different values.”

— Atheist Steven Weinberg

THE UNIVERSE: ORDINARY BUT AMAZING!

Long before the Anthropic Principle was discovered, C.S. Lewis, in his book, *The Screwtape Letters*, had senior demon Screwtape advise his junior demon to keep people away from God by “pressing home on him the ordinariness of things. Above all, do not attempt to use science (I mean, the real sciences) as a defense against Christianity. They will positively encourage him to think about realities he can’t touch and see. There have been sad cases among modern physicists.”

The “sad cases” to Screwtape are, of course, physicists who have been honest with the evidence they’ve seen and have become Christians. The universe is anything but ordinary. As Ariel Roth said, “God never performed a miracle to convince an atheist, because His ordinary works provide sufficient evidence.”

On a night when the sky is clear, you can easily see hundreds of stars and planets with the naked eye. These heavenly bodies continue in their motion in the universe or orbit around other bodies in the same pattern year after year. A question arises, “These stars and planets obey the laws of physics, but where did the laws of physics come from? Why are they so precise and orderly?” Not only do the existence of stars seem to require a Designer, the very laws of nature that govern them also seem to be the product of a Designer. We may not have considered this because their motion is ordinary — it happens continuously. It’s ordinary, but amazing. (By the way, if you haven’t read *The Screwtape Letters*, we highly recommend it. It is a humorous yet insightful look at fictional demons attempting to keep people from becoming believers and tempting Christians out of their belief.)

13. How has the scientific evidence we've seen so far persuaded you that things aren't so ordinary— that there is a Divine Designer behind the universe?

IT TAKES MORE FAITH TO BE AN ATHEIST!

Astrophysicist Hugh Ross has calculated the probability that the fine tuning of the initial conditions of the universe and another 100-plus conditions about our solar system would exist today for any planet in the universe by chance (i.e., without divine design): one chance in 1 with 138 zeros after it! There are only 10^{70} atoms in the entire universe (that's 1 with 70 zeros after it). In effect, there is zero chance that any planet in the universe would have the life-supporting conditions we have, unless there is an intelligent Designer behind it all.

In light of these calculations, it certainly takes more faith to be an atheist than a Christian. Instead atheists invent a theory like the Multi-Universe Theory, which appears to be a desperate attempt to avoid the obvious. In other words, it seems that the problem is not with the head of the atheists, but with their hearts. They remain unwilling to draw obvious conclusions from the scientific facts because it would point them to a "Designer" who, as we'll see, turns out to be the God of the Bible.

14. What can you do for a person who will not accept the evidence?

15. Some atheists express the same unwillingness to accept the most reasonable conclusion regarding the grounding for the laws of logic and our ability to reason itself. Read and watch the transcendental argument for God here: <http://carm.org/transcendental-argument>. Why does theism explain immaterial and absolute laws, such as the laws of logic and laws of mathematics, better than atheism?

16. Watch this fascinating debate between atheist Richard Dawkins and Christian John Lennox at <http://www.crossexamined.org/blog/?p=262> . What did you think of Lennox's argument that the rational intelligibility of the universe and our ability to reason is better explained by theism than atheism?

TOOLBOX

- Dr. Hugh Ross is an astrophysicist who heads a non-denominational, worldwide ministry dealing with apologetics, especially Bible-science issues. Visit his website at <http://www.reasons.org>
- Dr. Robin Collins is an expert on the fine-tuning argument for the existence of God. Watch this short clip of him explaining the three aspects of the argument here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plpCfXKKYLE>
- Dr. John Lennox from The University of Oxford has several excellent apologetics books. For his assessment of the Fine-tuning argument, and many others, get his very readable *God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?*