

12.21.2022 SHOW NOTES:

THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE CREATOR'S EXISTENCE

Always Be Ready Apologetics

A Logical Argument for the Creator's Existence

By Charlie H. Campbell

A 2014 Pew Religious Landscape survey reports that only 3.1% of the US population are atheists. Agnostics came in at 4%. Most people believe God exists. Why? Is it reasonable to believe God exists? Yes. Allow me to lay out a logical argument for God's existence. I jotted down the premises to this argument back in the late 1990s as I listened to Norman Geisler, the renowned Christian philosopher, debate an atheist on a university campus. I found the logic to be quite compelling. And it seemed to me that the university students did as well. Here's the argument. The comments on the premises are mine.

1. Something exists.

This is *undeniably* true. Anyone who would *deny* the truth of this first premise would have to *exist* in order to deny it.

2. Nothing does not produce something.

One of the oldest laws of science is *Ex nihilo nihil fit* ("Out of nothing, nothing comes"). It seems patently obvious to most of us that nothing cannot do something. Nothing cannot see, smell, act, think, let alone create something. Nothing is literally "no thing." No thing does not have the power to do anything. Even David Hume, one of the most zealous skeptics of Christianity ever, agreed to the truth of this second premise. He said, "I never asserted so absurd a proposition as that anything might arise without a cause." ([Source](#))

So, if the first two premises are true (something exists, and nothing does not produce something), then a rather astounding conclusion logically follows...

3. Something or someone must have always existed.

Why? To have brought into existence the “something” that exists now (in premise one). Nothing does not produce something.

Skeptic: “Couldn’t there have been a time billions of years ago when there was just nothing?”

Me: No. If there ever was a time that absolutely nothing existed, nothing would exist now (because nothing does not produce something). But something *does* exist now (premise one). Therefore, there was never a time that absolutely nothing existed.

So, we’ve safely arrived at point three: Something or someone must have *always* existed.

Let’s continue...

4. The universe has not always existed.

Numerous evidences from the field of astronomy have led cosmologists to conclude that the universe *began* to exist. Two of the evidences are...

A. The motion of the galaxies

Prior to the 1920s, scientists had assumed that the universe as a whole was static (stationary). But in 1929 an astonishing thing happened. An American astronomer named Edwin Hubble discovered that the light from distant galaxies appeared to be redder than it should. The startling conclusion to which Hubble was led was that the light is redder because the universe is growing apart; it is expanding!

When the source of incoming light is moving away from an object the light that you see is shifted toward the red end of the spectrum. The light of the galaxies was redder because they are moving away from us. But here is the interesting part: Hubble not only showed that the universe is expanding, but that it is expanding in all directions. Scientists have concluded that the galaxies in the universe are not stationary but are expanding further and further away from each other from what appears to be some stationary point.

Imagine that I was to draw a bunch of dots on a balloon that represented galaxies and then blow up the balloon. If you were to suck the air back out, or let’s say rewind the film, go back in time—what would happen? The dots would converge,

i.e., get closer to one another. The same is true with our universe. If you go back in time scientists say that the stars would converge into a singular space, where they exploded into being.

This explosion or beginning of the universe is often referred to as “the Big Bang.” Christians and Jews call it [Genesis 1:1](#) (“In the *beginning*, God created the heavens and the earth”).

B. The Second Law of Thermodynamics

The Second Law of Thermodynamics is one of the best, most established laws in all of science. In fact, there is no recorded experiment in the history of science that contradicts it. It states that the amount of useable energy in any closed system (which the universe is) is decreasing. In other words, the useable energy in the universe is dying out like the batteries in a flashlight.

Scientists acknowledge that the sun cannot burn forever, and that even our galaxy itself will one day, if left to itself, burn up and die out. So, we reason that if the Second Law of Thermodynamics is true for all closed systems, then it is true for the universe as a whole. The universe according to the atheist is a gigantic closed system, since to them it is all there is and there is nothing outside it. This means that the universe is currently running out of useable energy.

If it is running out of useable energy, then it cannot be eternal, for a finite amount of energy (no matter how large the quantity) could never have brought the universe through an eternity of time.

Imagine stumbling upon a lit flashlight. Curious about how long it has been on, you do a little investigation. Through your investigation, you discover that the batteries are going downhill. They are running out of energy. You turn to a scientist standing nearby and ask him: “How long do you think the flashlight’s been burning?” What if he was to tell you, “It’s always been on. It’s been lit like this and burning like this forever.” Would you believe that? Of course not. There’s a problem with that isn’t there?

Batteries with a finite amount of energy (seen in the fact that they are steadily running out of energy) could never have kept the light burning for an eternal amount of time. It would have run out of batteries trillions of years ago! So it is with

the universe. The amount of useable energy is steadily decreasing, thus proving it impossible that it has been burning for all eternity.

So, the motion of the galaxies, the Second Law of Thermodynamics, and other discoveries like the background radiation echo discovered by Penzias and Wilson, have led astronomers to conclude that the universe has not always existed.

Now, if these premises are all true:

1. Something exists
2. Nothing does not produce something
3. Something or someone must have always existed
4. The universe has not always existed

...then a conclusion can be validly drawn:

5. There must be an eternal power beyond the universe that caused the universe to come into existence.

Do you think this is a sound argument thus far? I believe it is! The whole argument could come crashing down, if even just one of the premises could be proven to be false. (Causing the argument to crash wouldn't prove that God doesn't exist, it would just prove that the argument is not valid.) But let's take it a bit further.

6. Intelligent life exists in the universe.

This seems self-evident. Anyone who would disagree and say, "There is *not* intelligent life in the universe," would prove there *is* intelligent life in the universe—at least enough intelligence to piece together those eight words. To understand any of this article (even if you disagree with some of it) would also prove that this sixth premise is true, for it has taken a great degree of intelligence to understand the hundreds of combinations of syllables I have used. So this premise is undeniably true as well.

Let's take the argument further...

7. It takes an intelligent living being to create an intelligent living being.

How could a material, inanimate, unintelligent, unconscious force produce an intelligent, living, breathing being? It takes a living, intelligent being to create a living, intelligent being. Non-life does not produce life. You could leave the barren side of a mountain exposed to wind, rain, the forces of nature, chance and millions of years of time and you would never get a Mount Rushmore, let alone a living, breathing human being with 206 bones, 640 muscles, and hearts that beat over 100,000 times a day.

8. Therefore there must be an intelligent, living, eternal power, beyond the universe, that created the universe.

That intelligent, living, eternal power, beyond the universe who created the universe is God.

Now, of course I haven't proved that this intelligent creator is the God of the Bible. I seek to do that elsewhere. See my articles wherein I discuss the [evidence for the God of the Bible](#), the [evidence for the reliability of the Bible](#), and the [evidence for the life of Jesus Christ](#).

SixDay Science

Planck's logical argument for God

Posted by [Sarah Salviander](#)

Modern atheists like to paint a picture of Christianity as inherently anti-intellectual. It's a powerful way to dissuade people from faith, particularly young people, and I'm sorry to say it worked on me when I was a young atheist. However, once I started to emerge from the intellectual fog of atheism, all it took was a little research to discover that this view of Christianity simply isn't true. In fact, it's quite the opposite.

The list of Christian intellectuals throughout history is impressively long and populated by people who were giants in their respective fields. For instance, it was Isaac Newton, and his predecessor Galileo, who transformed the field of physics from a quasi-scientific undertaking into a powerful evidence-based enterprise that depends on observation and experiment.

Another revolutionary in science, German physicist, Max Planck, is widely regarded as the father of quantum mechanics. Planck was also a committed and passionate Christian who commented on his faith in the context of his scientific work. Some of his better known quotes have graced the pages of this blog, but some of the lesser known quotes remain obscured from the English-speaking world. The following quote, from a lecture delivered to his fellow scientists, is inexplicably one of the latter.

Gentlemen, as a physicist, the whole of whose life is one of sober science, the dedicated research of matter, surely I am free from any suspicion of holding any illusions.

And so I say this after my explorations of the atom: there is no matter as such.

All matter evolves and there is only one force, which causes everything from the oscillation of atoms, up to the smallest solar system of the universe [the atom] to hold together. Since there exists in the whole universe neither an intelligent force nor an eternal force, and humanity has not succeeded in discovering any long-awaited cause of perpetual motion—so we must hypothesize a deliberate

intelligent spirit behind this force. This spirit is the foundation of all matter. A visible but not corruptible matter is real, true, authentic, because matter without the spirit cannot be—but the invisible, immortal Spirit is the reality! Also since a spirit cannot exist by itself, but every spirit belongs to an entity, we are forced to assume that there exist spiritual beings. However, since spirit beings cannot come into being by themselves, but must be created, so I am not shy to designate this mysterious creator, as him, whom all civilizations of the earth have called in earlier millennia: God! In this, the physicist, in dealing with the subject matter of the will, must travel from the kingdom of the substance to the realm of the Spirit. And so that is our task in the end, and we must place our research in the hands of philosophy.

Planck methodically deduced from his work on the nature of matter that God exists. Decades later, scientists realized that the logical inference from the big bang is that the realm of the supernatural must exist. It is not the Christian who believes, but the atheist who denies this, who is anti-intellectual.

The original quote can be found in the journal, Lebendige Erde, No 3/84 p 133. I gratefully acknowledge G.P. Orris, who translated this passage by request.

Kineti L'Tziyon קנאתי לציון

The Two Greatest Logical Arguments for God's Existence

by judah gabriel himango

Summary: [William Lane Craig](#), a leading defender of belief in God, says the most persuasive arguments for God's existence are the **Cosmological Argument** and the **Moral Argument**. What are they? I explain below.



There is perhaps no greater living defender of faith than [William Lane Craig](#). A trained expert in both philosophy and debate, he's amplified the logical arguments for God's existence in the public sphere: debating leading atheists, speaking at hundreds of universities, influencing millions of students, authoring dozens of books, most recently [On Guard: Defending Your Faith with Reason and Precision](#).

Craig sat down for an [hour-long interview](#) with Ben Shapiro, an Orthodox Jew and prominent young political conservative:

At [7:59](#), Shapiro asks Craig what he thinks is the most convincing proof of God's existence. In it, Craig explains the Cosmological Argument:

Shapiro: What in your opinion is the most reasonable proof of God? What have you found to be the most convincing proof of God's existence?

Craig: I think those are 2 questions. For me, my favorite argument for the existence of God, the one I find most compelling, is a version of the Cosmological Argument which goes like this:

1. **Whatever begins to exist has a cause.** (Something can't just come into being from nothing.)
2. **The universe began to exist.** (We have both good philosophical and scientific evidence for the finitude of the past.)
3. **Therefore, the universe has a cause.**

When you do a conceptual analysis of what it is to be a cause of the universe, you arrive at a being which is an uncaused, beginningless, timeless, spaceless, enormously powerful, personal creator of the universe.

For anyone who's followed Craig over the years, this answer was no surprise: he's *the* leading proponent of the [Kalam Cosmological argument](#), as defined above.

I want to examine that argument a bit and the usual objections to it before we move on to the 2nd argument.

Cosmological Argument part 1:

Whatever begins to exist has a cause

This first assertion, called the Causal Principle, is empirically true: everything we see in nature has a cause to its existence. That tree exists because of a seed. The seed exists because the parent tree has DNA that instructs it to build seeds and release them. And so on. Ditto for inorganic matter like roads, rocks, stars, planets, and so.

The common atheist objection to this first step is, "*Then what caused God?*" If everything has a cause, then God has a cause; we haven't solved anything. (There would have to be a thing or being which created God, and a being which created that being, and ...)

Shapiro plays devil's advocate and [uses this exact objection at 10:11](#):

Shapiro: The [atheist biologist and author] Richard Dawkins comeback – the one you hear most frequently with regard to the finitude of time and the idea that everything has a cause – is, "Ok, well then, what caused God?"

Craig: It's important to state the first premise correctly, Ben. It's not "Everything has a cause." It is, "Everything that *begins to exist* has a cause." Something cannot

come into being without a cause. But if something is eternal, never began to exist, there's no need for a cause. So that objection to the argument is simply based on a misunderstanding of the first premise.

The problem with this objection is it's a *misstatement of the premise*. The premise isn't "Everything has a cause." The premise is "Everything that begins to exist has a cause."

This is an important nuance: everything *that begins to exist* has a cause. The corollary to this is the truism, "*Things that are eternal do not have a beginning.*" Thus, eternal things don't necessarily have a cause.

And for the first half of the 20th century, scientists believed *the universe itself* was that eternal thing. That is, until [scientific evidence arose during the 1960s showing that the universe definitely began to exist](#); it had a beginning. More on that in the next step.

A more sophisticated objection: "*Why must we believe everything which begins to exist has a cause?*"

One answer is, because that is what we observe in every circumstance and every measure of the natural world. We observe that there exists a cause for everything that comes into existence in the natural world. Science is the study and observation of the natural world; if we can't theorize an idea which is observably true 100% of the time, then all our theories must be thrown out for lack of certainty.

Proponents of this objection rely on an earlier argument from 18th century philosopher David Hume that says "*Effects without causes can be conceived in the human mind, and that which is conceivable in the mind is possible in the real world.*"

But proponents of this objection often overlook that Hume himself agreed with the Causal Principle, stating in a letter in 1754, "*But allow me to tell you that I never asserted so absurd a Proposition as that anything might arise without a cause.*"

From everything we observe in the natural world, everything that has a beginning has a cause for its beginning.

Cosmological Argument part 2:

The universe began to exist

The atheist physicist Stephen Hawking called this the most remarkable discovery of 20th century cosmology:

All the evidence seems to indicate that the universe has not existed forever, but that it had a beginning, about 15 billion years ago. This is probably the most remarkable discovery of modern cosmology. Yet it is now taken for granted.

-Stephen Hawking, physicist



For the early part of the 1900s, scientists believed the universe must be eternal. If it's eternal, it had no beginning. And if it had no beginning, it had no cause for its existence. *Problem solved!*

But not all scientists were convinced. In the early 20th century, scientists theorized that if the universe did have a beginning, we'd see some evidence for that in the form [cosmic microwave background radiation](#); an audible echo of the instant of creation.

And in 1964, American astronomers Robert Wilson and Arno Penzias discovered a faint background noise in the space between stars and galaxies. This was later confirmed as electromagnetic relic radiation, a corroboration of the instant the universe began. This discovery, for which Wilson and Penzias received Nobel prizes, overturned science's understanding of the universe's finitude.

Today, modern science affirms the universe had a beginning; this is well-accepted and not at all controversial.

Philosophically, it's also on solid ground. Craig elaborates the problems with an eternal universe [at 10:56](#):

Shapiro: Must we posit an eternal being? Or could we just have an infinity of regressive causes?

Craig: That's the 2nd premise: the universe began to exist. There are deep philosophical problems with the idea of an infinite past. For example, how did we get to today if you had to go through an infinite number of prior events one at a time? That would be like trying to count down all the negative numbers one at a time ending at zero; an absurd task.

Moreover, we have remarkable scientific evidence from the Big Bang expansion of the universe, and the thermodynamic properties of the universe, which suggest the universe cannot be infinite in the past, but must have had a beginning around 13.8 billion years ago.

So I think that 2nd premise is very powerfully supported both philosophically and scientifically.

Cosmological Argument part 3:

Therefore, the universe has a cause

Step 1 was an assertion based on observable reality: anything that has a beginning has a cause. Step 2 was a statement of scientific fact: the universe has a beginning. Step 3, the final step, arrives at a conclusion based on the previous 2 steps: since the universe had a beginning, and since everything that begins to exist has a cause, then the universe has a cause.

Since the universe can't cause itself, the thing that caused it must be outside of the universe: **immaterial**.

Time, we believe, is a property of the universe. So the thing that caused the universe must be outside of time; **timeless and eternal**.

Timeless and eternal things don't necessarily have a cause (see step 1). Thus, the thing that caused the universe must be **uncaused**.

Finally, whatever caused the universe to come into existence had to produce all the energy we now witness in the universe, for all of history. From the excitement of molecular particles to the eventual planets spinning in motion and stars bursting into flames: the thing that caused the universe must be **extraordinarily powerful**.

Cosmologists and philosophers are left with a remarkable question: what immaterial, timeless, eternal, uncaused, and extraordinarily powerful thing could create the universe?

The Moral Argument

Craig says the Cosmological Argument is his favorite and most compelling to him personally. But he says the argument that is most persuasive to students he speaks with is the Moral Argument for God's existence. Craig [explains at 9:00](#):

Craig: I find that with university students [the Cosmological Argument] is not the most convincing argument. You can ignore philosophical arguments for the finitude of the past, or even scientific evidence for the beginning of the universe. But the argument they find the most compelling is what I call the Moral Argument. It goes like this:

1. **If God does not exist, then objective moral values and duties do not exist.** (That is to say, in the absence of God, everything becomes socio-culturally relative.)
2. **Objective moral values and duties do exist.** (There are some moral absolutes, some objective values and duties.)
3. **Therefore, God exists.**

This is an argument which is impossible to ignore because everyday you get up, you answer by how you treat other people, whether you regard them as having intrinsic moral value, or whether they're mere means to be used for your ends.

The Moral Argument says that if God doesn't exist, we should not see any absolute or objective moral values; it's purely relative. What's bad for you may be good for another: relative morality.

But, because we do see objective, absolute moral values in the world, objective morality exists, and if objective morality exists, then God exists.

Craig says this argument tends to hold more weight with most people, especially university students, because doing good (moral absolute good) is something every person grapples with each day.

One common objection to this argument is the idea that primitive moral values (e.g. protection of kin) are seen in other mammals, and therefore must be programmed in biologically; no God needed.

[At 11:53](#), Shapiro raises this objection:

Shapiro: The other argument, the Moral Argument, in contravention of that: [there is] an argument made by [leading atheists] Dawkins, Harris, and evolutionary biologist Brett Weinstein that there is a certain sense of morality that is innate to mammals that you see even in species that are not our own. A sense of primitive altruism, a sense of kinship protection, for example. So is it possible that morality is embedded on a very basic level in behavior of mammals beyond the idea of an objection morality that we think about and enact? That it's just embedded in the natural code?

Craig: This response [to the Moral Argument] is almost a textbook example of the genetic fallacy. The genetic fallacy is trying to invalidate a point of view by showing how that point of view came to be held. Even if evolution and social conditioning has programmed into us a certain set of moral beliefs, that does nothing to show that those beliefs are false. Indeed if moral values are gradually discovered rather than gradually invented, then our gradual and fallible apprehension of the moral realm no more undermines the objectivity of that realm than our gradual, fallible comprehension of the physical world undermines the objectivity of the physical realm.

In the absence of some defeater, it seems to me that we're perfectly within our rights in believing that there is an objective realm of moral values and duties, just as we're within our rights in believing there is a world of physical objects around us.

It's worth clarifying: by "objective" morality, we mean something that is true, regardless of circumstance or the person uttering it. For example, "rape is immoral" is a statement of absolute morality; there's not a case where rape is could be moral for you, but immoral for another. It's always absolutely wrong (a sin) to do so.

Craig's response in a nutshell is that when atheists claim there is no objective morality because we see primitive morality programmed into intelligent mammals, it does nothing to invalidate the claim of objective morality. Craig is saying that

even if objective morality is gradually discovered by humans, or even shared on some level with mammals, objective morality still exists.

Humanity's gradual discovery – rather than invention – of objective morality doesn't invalidate objective morality. (By the same measure, says Craig, our gradual discovery of objective morality is just as valid as our gradual discovery of the natural world.) Even if some morality is pre-programmed biologically, that doesn't invalidate the reality of objective morality.

(An anecdotal aside: preaching from Romans at my local Messianic congregation this year, I argued precisely this: that there is programmed into every human being basic morality. I believe the Apostle Paul makes that case in Romans 1. That basic or primitive morality comes biologically packaged doesn't invalidate the existence of objective morality.)

Recap

Craig argues these two are the most persuasive logical arguments for God's existence:

The Cosmological Argument	The Moral Argument
1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause.	1. If God does not exist, objective moral values do not exist.
2. The universe began to exist.	2. Objective moral values do exist.
3. Therefore, the universe has a cause.	3. Therefore, God exists.

I personally find the Cosmological Argument most convincing, because step 1 is empirically true, step 2 is scientifically true, and step 3 is a logical conclusion from those assertions.

(Meanwhile, I find the moral argument more based in emotion and perception, even though it is likely true that without a moral root – God – then morality cannot be objective or absolute.)

Are these compelling arguments to you, fine reader?

EVOLUTION NEWS

Aquinas' Fifth Way: The Proof from Specification

[Michael Egnor](#) October 22, 2019

Editor's note: See also, "[Introducing Aquinas' Five Ways](#)," by Michael Egnor. For Dr. Egnor's previous posts in this series on Aquinas' Five Ways, see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#). For more on Thomas Aquinas, intelligent design, and evolution, see the website [Aquinas.Design](#).

Aquinas' Fifth Way is the proof of God's existence that is easiest to grasp in everyday life. The order of nature points to a Mind that gives it order. This obvious order is the substrate for all natural science — after all, without natural order, scientific study of nature would be an exercise in futility. And the natural order is the framework for everyday life. We could not take a breath unless our lungs and nerves worked consistently, and unless oxygen had the chemical properties that it has. Order in nature is ubiquitous. We have become so accustomed to it that we fail to notice how remarkable it is.

That this natural order points to God is obvious. But what are the characteristics of this order? In living things, ID theorists describe this order as specified complexity. Specified complexity means that a pattern has substantial independently specified information (specification) that has a low probability of occurrence by chance (complexity). Aquinas would agree that such specified complexity points to a designer, but he understands natural order in a way that is rather different from the understanding of many ID theorists.

Specification Rather than Complexity

For Aquinas, it is the *specification*, rather than the complexity, that is at the heart of the Fifth Way. Aquinas understands specification in an Aristotelian sense: as final cause (teleology). The Fifth Way is often called the proof from Final Cause, or the Teleological proof.

Final cause is fundamental to Aristotelian-Thomistic metaphysics. One may ask: “What is the cause of a thing?” St. Thomas answers that to completely understand a cause in nature, we really must know four causes:

Material cause: the matter out of which something is made. The material cause of a statue is the block of marble from which it is carved.

Efficient cause: the agent that gets the cause started. The efficient cause of a statue is the sculptor.

Formal cause: the structure of the system that is caused. The formal cause of a statue is the shape of the statue.

Final cause: the end or purpose for the cause. The final cause of a statue is the purpose in the mind of the sculptor — to use the statue to decorate a garden, for example.

In nature, final causes and formal causes often overlap. The formal cause of an acorn growing into an oak tree is the form of the oak tree, which is also the final cause of the growth of the acorn — the end or telos of the growth of the acorn is the form of the oak tree it will become.

The Cause of Causes

The four causes have reciprocal relations. Material cause and formal cause work together, in the sense that form provides structure to matter. Efficient cause and final cause work together, in the sense of a push-pull relationship. An efficient cause “pushes” while a final cause “pulls” simultaneously. Efficient causes *point* to ends — regular causes in nature tend to specific outcomes. When you strike a match (efficient cause), it bursts into flame (final cause). Efficient causation is incomprehensible without final cause: regular cause-and-effect in nature is directional, in the sense that cause is consistently from one specific state to another specific state. It makes no sense to speak of “cause from” unless we also speak of “cause to.” Causes have beginnings and ends.

For St. Thomas (following Aristotle), final cause is particularly important, because it provides direction to natural causes. Final cause is the essential principle by which causes in nature happen. We moderns tend to ignore final causes—we think in terms of cause as a “push” — efficient cause, rather than cause that “pulls” — final

cause. For St. Thomas, it is the pull of final cause that is fundamental to the regularity of nature. Final cause is the cause of causes.

With this in mind, let's look at the proof from the Fifth Way. St. Thomas notes that causes in nature are more or less consistent. Causation is the actualization of potentiality, and causation follows patterns. Things fall down, not up. Cold weather causes water to freeze, not boil. Acorns become oaks, but oaks don't become acorns. Aquinas notes that the final cause of an acorn is in some sense in the acorn itself: that is, in order for an acorn to reliably grow into an oak tree, the form of the oak tree must have some sort of existence while the acorn is still an acorn. A process of change can't point to an end unless the end pre-exists in some sense. But how can an oak tree "exist" when it is merely an acorn?

The Form of the Oak Tree

What exists is the form of the oak tree. The form of the oak tree can exist in two ways. It can exist in an object as a substantial form — that is, the form can exist in the oak tree itself. This is the way forms ordinarily exist in objects.

A form can also exist in an intentional sense — that is, the form can exist in the *mind* of a person who thinks about it. When I know an oak tree, the form of that oak tree is in my mind as well as in the oak tree. That is, in fact, how I know it. My mind grasps its form.

For change to occur in nature, the form of the end-state of the change must in some way exist prior to the completion of the change. Otherwise, the change would have no direction — colloquially, the acorn wouldn't "know" what to grow into.

But of course most things in nature — and all inanimate things — don't "know" anything. An electron doesn't know quantum mechanics, but it moves in strict accordance with quantum mechanical laws. A rock knows nothing of Newton's law of gravity, but it falls in strict accordance with Newton's law. A plant knows nothing about photosynthesis, but it does it very well every day with an expertise exceeding that of the best chemist.

Since the form of the final state of a process of change can't be *in* the thing being changed — the acorn is not yet the oak tree — and change routinely occurs in things that have no mind to look forward to the final state, *where* is the form of the final state of change in nature?

Aquinas asserts that the form of the final state — the telos or final cause — must therefore be in the Mind of a Superintelligence that directs natural change. That is what all men call God.

So you can see that in the Thomistic Fifth Way, it is the *specification* of change, not its complexity, that is at the heart of the matter. It's reminiscent of the quip about a dog that can recite Shakespeare. It's not that the mutt knows Shakespeare that's remarkable; it's remarkable that he can talk at all. What's remarkable in nature is not so much that nature follows complex patterns, but that it follows any pattern at all. Any pattern in nature, even the simplest, cries out for explanation, and it is the fact of natural patterns that is the starting point of the Fifth Way.

From the Thomistic perspective, even the most simple natural process — a leaf falling to the ground — is proof of God's existence. The fall of the leaf is specified prior to the fall — leaves fall to the ground, rather than doing any of countless other things a natural object might do (like burst into flame or grow a tail). This specification — this telos — requires a Mind in which the fallen state of the leaf is conceived prior to the actual fall of the leaf. Change in nature requires a Mind to look ahead and direct it. Complexity (or simplicity) of the change is irrelevant.

It is the consistent directedness of change in nature that points to God. Atheists, with much handwaving and dubious science, claim to explain biological complexity by Darwinian stories. Yet, even on its own terms, Darwinism fails. Adaptation by “natural selection” may account on some level for the fixation of a particular phenotype in a population, but it offers no explanation for the fundamental fact of teleology in nature. In fact, *Darwinian theory depends on teleology in nature*. If natural causes were not consistent and mostly directed, there would be no consistency to evolution at all. There is no evolution in chaos. Without teleology, “chance and necessity” would be all chance and no necessity, and therefore no evolution.

Explaining Chance

Actually, atheists can't explain chance either. Chance is the accidental conjunction of teleological processes. A car accident may be by chance, but it necessarily occurs in a matrix of purpose and teleology — the cars move in accordance with laws of physics, the road was constructed according to plans, the cars are driven purposefully by drivers, etc. There can be no chance unless there is a system of

regularity in which chance can occur. Chance by itself can't happen — it is, by definition, the accidental conjunction of teleological processes. Both “chance” and “necessity” point to God. Pure chance, without a framework of regularity, is unintelligible.

From the perspective of the Fifth Way, necessity permeates nature. But it is specification, rather than the complexity, that characterizes necessity and points to God's existence. The specification need not be complex. The simplest motion of an inanimate object — a raindrop falling to the ground — is proof of God's existence.

No Mere Watchmaker

Teleology is foresight, the ability of a natural process to proceed to an end not yet realized. Yet the end must be realized, in some real sense, for final cause to be a cause. The foresight inherent in teleology is in God's Mind, and it is via His manifest foresight in teleology that we see Him at work all around us.

This rules out the God of deism. The God of the Fifth Way is no watchmaker who winds up the world and walks away. He is at work ceaselessly and everywhere. The evidence for a Designer is as clear in the most simple inanimate process as it is in the most complex living organism. The elegant intricate complexity of cellular metabolism is certainly a *manifestation* of God's glory — the beauty of biological processes is breath-taking. But the *proof* of His existence is in every movement in nature — in every detail of cellular metabolism, of course, but also in every raindrop and in every blown grain of dust.

GOT QUESTIONS?

What is the Ontological argument for the existence of God?

The ontological argument for the existence of God is one of the few arguments originating in logic rather than observation. [Teleological](#) and [cosmological](#) arguments, for instance, demonstrate how the existence of God best explains apparent design in nature and the nature of causality, respectively. In contrast, the ontological argument relies on pure reasoning. The argument has both strengths and weaknesses. Few consider the ontological argument convincing, even among Christian believers. Carefully considering it does, however, lead to ideas that strongly support the existence of God.

The ontological argument has been phrased in many ways. The most well-known comes from [Anselm](#) in the eleventh century. The core of Anselm's position is that God is "a being than which no greater can be conceived." According to Anselm, existing is "greater than" not existing; therefore, God must exist as the "greatest" thing of which one can conceive. In somewhat plainer language, Anselm suggested that God is the "best" thing possible, and to exist is "better" than to not exist; therefore, God must exist.

Those who encounter the ontological argument for the first time typically react in one of two ways. For some, it's abstract enough that it makes no sense. Most others find it unconvincing, whether or not they can articulate a specific reason. A few people find it compelling, perhaps after long study, but this is not a common response. Even those who reject it, however, have a difficult time explaining exactly why it is wrong.

The main drawback of the ontological argument is logical: it's not clear how concepts such as "greatness" and "existence" apply in a purely logical setting. It would be circular and illogical to simply say, "God by definition exists; therefore, He exists." Still, adding the stipulation that God is the "greatest possible" being doesn't seem to do much to break that circle. Further, problems such as the [liar's paradox](#) prove that logic can form irrelevant loops: statements that are self-contained and not meaningful in reality.

Most who reject ontological arguments do so for that reason, even if they can't articulate why. It simply "feels" wrong; our rational instincts react against the idea of simply defining something to exist. For most people, non-believers in particular, the ontological argument carries little impact.

And yet the ontological argument has not completely faded and disappeared. In part, that's because, the more closely one tries to define its terms, the more the biblical God emerges. Two points summarize why this is the case: the [attributes of God](#) and the concept of objective truth.

Efforts to debunk the ontological argument sometimes apply it to a different object or idea to show the structure is absurd. A common example is to posit a "perfect island": since existing would be "more perfect" than not existing, this island must exist somewhere. That's clearly not true, in practice, but not for the reasons the skeptic assumes. The problem there is that the term *island* itself expresses limits. Anything called an "island" must be finite and limited. Sooner or later, ideas like "perfection" or "greatness" contradict the requirements of calling something an "island."

God, however, does have the ability to fully meet the definition of an "absolutely great" or "absolutely perfect" thing. That's because all God's attributes are [equally perfect](#). An island can't be omniscient, by definition, but God can be—and only because He is also omnipotent and omnipresent. If we stretch the definition of *island* so it can become as "perfect" as anything can be, it winds up becoming all-powerful, all-wise, and all-present—which means it would be God. In an effort to debunk the ontological argument, one winds up repeating it: the greatest conceivable thing must exist, by definition.

The other reason the ontological argument clings to life is the idea of [objective truth](#). Concepts such as power, knowledge, goodness, and so forth assume there is some standard by which to judge those ideas. We don't measure distances or weights against "infinite distance" or "infinite weight," since infinity doesn't literally exist and, even if it did, there's no way to measure something against infinity. Yet we instinctively realize that things like power and morality are real and make sense only in respect to some absolute standard. Claiming otherwise is self-defeating: "subjective morality" is virtually a contradiction in terms. We're inevitably pressed to recognize the existence of absolute benchmarks for those ideas.

Notice, however, what that statement entails. If there is an absolute measure of goodness, then—forgive the awkward grammar—the “most good” thing must exist. The same is true of power, knowledge, etc. Once again, this turns into a re-statement of the ontological argument: there must be something in existence than which no greater or more perfect thing can be conceived. That we have standards for morality, etc., suggests something very close to the premises of the ontological argument. It also implies there is only one being for whom the argument would work, anyway: one being ultimately perfect in every possible way—and that being would be God.

The ontological argument is neither as powerful nor as useless as extreme views might suggest. It has little practical value, especially for skeptics or non-believers. Like [Pascal's Wager](#), the ontological argument sometimes gets a bad rap: it's not simplistically arguing that “conceiving” of something is sufficient to make it real. However, the more one tries to untangle it, the more the ontological argument digs in and refuses to be disproved.

It's much easier to say, “The ontological argument doesn't work for me,” than it is to say, “The ontological argument is false because—.” It's an interesting example of [arguments for God's existence](#), and an important one, even if it's not held in high regard by many people.

" There is no evidence of God ". Really?

That's one of the arguments most frequently brought forward by unbelievers. What they, however, want to say is: There is no evidence that points (in his view) to God. The problem is the lens and a priori assumption someone adopts, and what someone wishes to be true. The evidence is for all of us the same. The observable world. The tool to make rational conclusions, too: Our mind. The conclusion we make on how everything came to be, depends on the interpretation of the evidence and reality. While some are gullible towards the claim that natural mechanisms created everything, the theist is incredulous towards that view.

The theist is incredulous towards the claim that :

Ignorance about origins is justified. The universe exists without beginning or was made from nothing. Randomness produced cosmological and biochemical fine-tuning. Chaos produced order. Non-life produced life. Matter produced codes, and instructional blueprints, signalling, and information transmission networks. Computers, computer networks, molecular machines, assembly lines, and high-tech factory parks, consciousness, and objective moral values.

NATURALISM VS THEISM	Theist	Atheist
The probability that there is a God(s)/Creator(s) is extremely high (close to 100%)	Correct	False
Highest being: God	Correct	False
Strong Atheism is a religion	Correct	False
There are basically just two worldviews: Theism, and Naturalism	Correct	False
Creationism tops naturalism in explanation power in basically all relevant fields of origins	Correct	False
Design in nature can be detected, recognized, and scientifically tested	Correct	False
There is no justification to exclude Creationism/ Intelligent design a priori as possible explanation of origins by science	Correct	False
The physical universe had a cause	Correct	False
The physical laws , and the physical universe are interdependent	Correct	False
The fine-tuning of the universe, fundamental forces, and the earth, are best explained by design	Correct	False
Gas does not clump to create stars	Correct	False
Random unguided self-organisation of matter (chance) is impossible	Correct	False
The stability of the solar system could not emerge by chance	Correct	False
The basic building blocks of life cannot emerge randomly on a prebiotic earth	Correct	False
Abiogenesis is impossible	Correct	False
Life could not emerge in a gradual, stepwise fashion through chemical evolution	Correct	False
Biological Cells are irreducibly complex	Correct	False
Biological Cells are a park of millions of interconnected High-Tech factories full of machines	Correct	False
High-tech factories, machines, and complex production lines have always an intelligent origin	Correct	False
The mind comes before matter	Correct	False
Matter cannot produce conscience	Correct	False
The mind and the brain are separable	Correct	False
Codes, information, ciphers have always mental origin	Correct	False
High-tech factories, machines, and complex production lines have always an intelligent origin	Correct	False
Computers and a web of billions of computers interconnected by trillions of connections cannot emerge by random unguided processes (human brain: 200 billion neurons, 15 trillion synapses, which are like all computers interconnected through the www)	Correct	False
Creator of Life, and Biodiversity: God	Correct	False
Empiricism - Scientism is not the only path to truth. Science, philosophy, and theology, is.	Correct	False
Darwin, Dawkins, Krauss, Harris, Dennet, Nietzsche propagate a false worldview	Correct	False
Evolution does not explain the origin of organismal complexity, body plans and phenotype,	Correct	False
Life has meaning and value	Correct	False
Objective moral values exist	Correct	False
There is life after physical death	Correct	False
God will judge sin	Correct	False
God revealed himself through the bible (Christians and Jews only)	Correct	False
Christ is God incarnate (Christians and only)	Correct	False
Christ made miracles and ressurected (Christians and only)	Correct	False
Christ came to redeem humanity from sin and eternal death (Christians and only)	Correct	False