

Sources and Books on Truth:

Anselm, *Truth, Freedom, and Evil*

Aquinas, Thomas, *On Truth*

Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*

Barna, George, *What Americans Believe* (Regal Books)

Beckwith, Francis and Gregory Koukle. *Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-air*

Geisler, Norman L. and Paul D. Feinberg, *Introduction to Philosophy: A Christian Perspective* (Baker)

_____, and Ronald Brooks, *Come Let Us Reason* (Baker)

J.F. Harris, *Against Relativism*

Kreeft, Peter, and Ronald Tacelli, *Handbook of Christian Apologetics* (IVP)

Lewis, C.S., *The Abolition of Man*

Plato, *Protagoras*

Wells, D., *God in the Wastelands: No Place for Truth*

The Existence of God⁹

Step 2: Theistic Apologetics

The heart of any Christian apologetic system will most likely be interested in defending the truth claims that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Bible is the Word of God. However, before establishing these important tenants of the Faith, one must establish the existence of God. For it would make no sense to confirm acts of God (miracles), the Son of God, and the Bible as the Word of God unless there is a God who can act, can have a Son, and who can speak a Word in the first place.

Establishing a theistic worldview as the first priority will also allow for a correct interpretation of the facts that will be presented later under the heading of “evidential apologetics.”

Therefore, this study will be divided into two sections as follows:

1. Establishing the Existence of God
 - a. Cosmological Argument
 - b. Teleological Argument
 - c. Moral Argument
2. Examining and Evaluating Worldviews
 - a. Theism
 - b. Atheism
 - c. Deism
 - d. Pantheism
 - e. Polytheism
 - f. Panentheism
 - g. Finite godism

⁹ This section is from notes from Apologetic Evangelism Class at CCBC Joseph Holden Fall 2004.

I. Establishing the Existence of God

A. The Importance of the Matter

1. If no God, then Christianity is false (see 1 Cor 15:12-19)
2. If no God, we cannot witness about the Son of God, miracles of God, and the Word of God (Hebrews 11:6)

The Existence of God (Hebrews 11:6; Acts 17:22-34)

A. Cosmological argument (reasons from effect to a *First Cause*)

Genesis 1:1

Hebrews 3:4

1. Whatever begins to exist has been caused by another.¹⁰

There are only three possibilities of origins:

a. *uncaused*=

b. *self-caused*=

c. *caused by another*=

2. The Universe began to Exist¹¹ (provide evidence)

Expanding Universe: Edwin Hubble discovered the Expanding Universe in 1929, which shows that galaxies are moving away from each other at high rates of speed. Logically and mathematically, if one would reverse the expansion it would eventually reach infinite density (i.e. nothing).¹² It shows the universe had a beginning and has not been eternally expanding.

¹⁰ This first premise is an inductive *illustration* of a deductive self-evident truth (i.e. law of causality) which says “every effect must have a cause.” Further, “self existence” is undeniable.

¹¹ For an elaboration of scientific evidences see Fred Hereen, *Show Me God*.

¹² Scientist, Hugh Ross, and Alan Guth, say that “if the expansion rate [of the universe] were slightly slower, the whole universe would have recollapsed before any solar type stars could have settled into a stable burning phase. If the universe were expanding slightly more rapidly, no galaxies (and hence no stars) would have condensed from the general expansion. How critical is this expansion rate? According to Alan Guth, it must be fine tuned to an accuracy of one part in 10 to the 55th power” (that is, 10 with 55 zeroes following). (Ross, Hugh, *The Fingerprint of God* (Orange, CA: Promise Publishing, 1991), 124.

Big Bang: “The universe began from a state of infinite density. . . Space and time were created in that event and so was all matter in the universe.” (J. Richard Gott III, James Gunn, David Schramm, and Beatrice Tinsley, “Will the Universe Expand Forever?,” *Scientific American*, March 1976, 65). If the universe had a beginning then it must have a cause of its beginning.

Atheist Anthony Kenny asserts: “According to the Big Bang Theory, the whole matter of the universe began to exist at a particular time in the remote past. A proponent of such a theory, at least if he is an atheist, must believe that the matter of the universe came from nothing by nothing.”

Fireball radiation: Jastrow says, “No explanation other than the Big Bang has been found for the fireball radiation. The clincher, which has convinced almost the last doubting Thomas, is that the radiation discovered by Penzias and Wilson has exactly the the pattern of wavelengths expected for the light and the heat produced in a great explosion. At the present time, the Big Bang Theory has no competitors.” (*God and the Astronomers*, 1978, p.15)

Cosmic Background Explorer (COBE): In 1989, NASA launched the COBE satellite in order to validate the fireball radiation Penzias and Wilson had discovered. If the universe had a beginning, scientist should expect to see ripples (or variations) in the temperature of the radiation. These “ripples” would allow galaxies to form by providing an environment for matter to congregate due to gravitational force. In 1992, when director George Smoot announced the COBE findings, said “If you’re religious, it’s like looking at God.” COBE photography discovered the following which is consistent with a universe that had a beginning:

1. Ripples needed for galaxies to form (universe not eternal)

2. The ripples were precisely tuned (one part in 100,000) to allow just enough matter to form galaxies. Any difference in precision none of the galaxies would have formed.¹³

Robert Jastrow says, “Now we see how the astronomical evidence leads to a biblical view of the origin of the world. The details differ, but the essential elements in the astronomical and biblical accounts of Genesis are the same: the chain of events leading to man commenced suddenly and sharply at a definite moment in time, in a flash of light and energy. Some scientists are unhappy with the idea that the world began in this way.”¹⁴

Second Law of Thermodynamics: States “that the amount of usable energy in a closed system is running down.” The scientific name for this process is called “entropy.” If the universe was infinite, the earth would never run out of energy and be at a state of equilibrium. An infinite universe would have an infinite amount of usable energy, but our earth is running out of usable energy.

Psalms 102:25-27 Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish but You will endure; Yes, they will grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will have no end. (cf. Hebrews 1:10-12). The Bible is consistent with the 2nd law of thermodynamics.

The First Law of Thermodynamics - Many often use the First Law of Thermodynamics which says “Actual Energy is neither created nor destroyed, it remains constant” to prove an infinite universe. The law

¹³ For more information on the COBE findings see lambda.gsfc.nasa.gov/product/cobe/

¹⁴ Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers* (New York: Norton, 1978), 14.

should be stated more accurately as “the amount of actual energy in the universe remains constant so far as we can observe.” This revised statement is now based on observation and not philosophy since it now makes no pronouncement of whether something can come to be and cease to be. (philosophy vs. science)

General Theory of Relativity: Einstein’s theory provides another piece of evidence demonstrating the universe had a beginning. It reveals that time, space, and matter must have had a beginning, since they are correlative, meaning they cannot exist alone, each must be present (exist) simultaneously. Thus, if matter came into being from nothing, so did time and space, implying that they are finite and not eternal

Jastrow’s Summary - Robert Jastrow, NASA scientist and agnostic, says, “Science has proven that the universe exploded in to being at a certain moment. . . . Was the universe created out of nothing, or was it gathered out of preexisting materials? And science cannot answer these questions, because, according to the astronomers, in the first moments of its existence the universe was compressed to an extraordinary degree, and consumed by heat and fire beyond human imagination. . . . The scientist’s pursuit of the past ends in the moment of creation. . . . For the scientist who has lived by faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.” (God and the Astronomers, p. 114-16)

3. Therefore, the universe was caused to exist by another¹⁵ ***(conclusion)***

¹⁵ Some would object to identifying this “cause” as infinite since both the major and minor premise appear to speak of a “finite” cause. Thus, how can the conclusion end with an *infinite* cause if it wasn’t first in the premises – (four term fallacy?). The answer to this can be seen in the fact that the cause in the premises and conclusion neither means finite or infinite causes *per se*, but rather a sufficient condition for the existence of something else that could be *either* a finite or infinite kind of cause. In this case, it happens to refer to an infinite cause by implication and conclusion since there must be a ground of being that itself is not caused.

3. Therefore, the universe was caused to exist by another

Another way of presenting this argument is

- 1) Every effect has a cause
- 2) The universe is an effect
- 3) Therefore, the universe needs a cause

This cause (God) must be:

- a. *Uncaused-*** because “self-caused” is impossible (can’t pull oneself up by your own bootstraps) and “caused by another” would lead to an infinite regress of causes which in that case today never would have arrived. (Gen 1:1)
- b. *Supernatural-*** because it brought into existence the whole natural order.
- c. *Eternal-*** Since it takes one outside the temporal world to create time, or else the cause itself would be temporal would temporal
- d. *Immutable-*** IF the first cause is eternal (i.e. outside of time), then it cannot change since change is measured by time in “befores” and “afters”. However, the first cause does not have any “befores” or “afters”, it always was. (Mal 3:6)
- e. *All-Powerful-*** power is what can effect change in something. It must have All-power to bring something from nothing.
- f. *All Knowing-*** A first cause that could bring to be sustainable life must know all about biology, science, mathematics, physics, geology, chemistry, ect.

Thus the cause concluded here is an *un-caused* (via negativa) kind of cause. See N.L.Geisler and Winfried Corduan, *Philosophy of Religion*, 200-201.

g. One God- There cannot be more than one infinite, All-perfect God. (Because to differ by nothing is not to differ at all, hence, all is one. And to differ by something implies a lack since one God would have and the other lack)

h. Not Composed of Parts (body)- Parts imply composition, and composition implies a composer. Besides, each “part” would lack the perfection of the other parts.

B. Teleological Argument (reasons from *design* to a *Designer*)

Psalm 19:1-6

Romans 1:19-21

1. Design implies a designer

- a. If one sees the words, “Goodyear makes the best tires” written in the sky, would it be reasonable to believe the winds and clouds formed it? No.
- b. The greater design, the greater the designer (Ex. Bees make bee hives not skyscrapers)
- c. Analogy implies that the cause is similar to the effect (Acts 17: 28-29)

2. The universe manifests design

This is true from experience:

- a. Watches imply _____
- b. Paintings imply _____
- c. Buildings imply _____

Provide evidence:

- a. DNA possesses intelligent information called “specified complexity.”
- b. Universe structured and operates in an orderly fashion

- c. A personal computer vs. human brain
- d. The camera lens vs. human eye
- e. Irreducible Complexity (see Michael Behe, *Darwin's Black Box*)

Richard Dawkins asserts that “there is enough information capacity in a single human cell to store the Encyclopedia Britannica, all 30 volumes of it, three or four times over....There is enough storage capacity in the DNA in a single lilly seed or a single salamander sperm to store the Encyclopedia Britannica 60 times over. Some species of the unjustly called “primitive” amoebas have as much information in their DNA as 1,000 Encyclopedia Britannica.”¹⁶

3. Therefore, there must be a Designer of the universe

Just as it would be unreasonable to assume that a computer and camera did not have an intelligent cause, so also would it be unreasonable to assume man's intelligence did not have an intelligent cause.

C. Moral Argument (reasons from moral Law to moral *Law Giver*)

Romans 2:14-15

1. Moral Law implies a Moral Law Giver

2. There is Moral Law (undeniable, they use moral laws to say “no morals”)

This is true from experience:

- a. Does law arise without law givers? No
- b. Are prescriptions given without a prescriber? No

¹⁶ Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker: Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe Without Design* (New York: Norton, 1986, 1987, 1996), 116. See Michele Behe, *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York: The Free Press, 1996); Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*; Stephen Jay Gould, *The Panda's Thumb* (New York: Norton, 1982), 182.

Provide evidence:

- a. To deny absolutes is self-defeating
- b. Does the moral relativist “value” his right to hold his opinion? Does he think that everyone should have that freedom or right just himself?
- c. Why are governmental laws of morality similar or identical if there are no moral absolutes?
- d. Ask the relativist whether he thinks torturing babies for fun, murder, and rape is right for all people.
- e. Even if the moral relativist denies morals with his words, he affirms them in his actions. They expect to be treated with dignity, respect, courtesy, and fairness by all.
- f. Authors of the *Declaration of Independence* said that all men are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable moral rights- to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness

3. Therefore, a Moral Lawgiver exists

Note: These three arguments used in conjunction with each other demonstrate 1) a *first* cause 2) an *intelligent* first cause and 3) an intelligent and *moral* first cause. This cause Christians call “God”, the God of the Bible.

Other arguments for the existence of God

1. Anselm – (1033-1109) Ontological Argument: (*Proslogion*, Ch. 2)

- a. God is by definition that than which nothing greater can be conceived
- b. It is greater to exist in reality than to exist only in the mind
- c. Therefore, God must exist in reality. If He didn’t exist, he wouldn’t be the greatest possible.

2. Aquinas – (1224-1274) ST I.2.3, Five Ways:

- a. Motion
- b. Efficient Cause
- c. Contingency and Necessity
- d. Degrees and Perfections
- e. Design to Designer

3. Anthropological argument

- a. Man is an intelligent being
- b. Only intelligence can produce the intelligent
- c. Therefore, an intelligent being created man

4. Biological argument

- a. Life is a highly complex organism
- b. Highly complex information results from an intelligent cause
- c. Therefore, there is an intelligent creator

5. Value argument

- a. Value judgements are impossible without values
- b. Value implies a value-giver
- c. Therefore, a value-giver exists

Answering some objectives

1. If “everything” needs a cause, then so does God
 - a. No, only every “finite” being or event needs a cause, God is infinite. In other words, everything that has a *beginning* needs a cause.
 - b. To deny this would be to deny the principles of causality (ask for an example where a finite didn’t need a cause)
2. Logic and reason cannot be used when speaking of God

- a. This statement is self-defeating (contradictory) since it uses logic and reason to speak about God
 - b. This is equivalent to saying “I can’t speak a word in English.”
3. The Cosmological, teleological, and moral arguments make God subject to man’s logic
- a. No, it doesn’t, it’s not man’s logic. Man did not *determine* logic, he *discovered* it. If one determines truth he *creates* it, but if one discovers truth, he *finds* it.
 - b. It is not God Himself who is subjected to our logic, it is our *statements about* God that must be subjected to logic.
 - c. We can test statements about God with logic because it is not a standard outside of Himself. Logic flows from God’s very nature (Jn 1:1) (see II Tim 2:13; Heb 8:18; Mal 3:6)
4. Should we subject our reason to revelation or revelation to our reason?
- a. Reason is prior to revelation in the order of *knowing* (epistemologically), but revelation is prior to reason in the order of *being* (ontologically, it always was a revelation from God and didn’t *become* one when we discovered it). In other words, reason is used to *discover* revelation, once this question has been settled, the revelation becomes our standard and guides our reason. At this point, reason takes its place *under* revelation.
 - b. It is important to distinguish between the use of reason to *discover whether* something is a revelation and the use of rationalism to *determine what* in the Bible is revelation.