



ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD
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Introduction

- I. Reasons for Believing in the Existence of God:
 - a. Not simply for the purpose of speaking to non-believers.
 - b. For times of unanswered prayer or temptation.
 - c. Reassurance that Christianity is a faith committed to the reasonableness of its propositions.
 - d. To get hold of concepts and let them settle in one's soul.

Making a Case for Why I am a Christian

- I. Argue for God's Existence.
 - a. Natural theology: the study of the nature and existence of God from created things and not from scripture.
 - b. Ethical monotheism:
 - i. Follows from natural theology.
 - ii. Justifies the belief that God is personal and good.
 - c. Arguments are not specific to a Christian God, but a personal God.
- II. Formulate Criteria for choosing Among World's Religions.
 - a. Formulating criteria based on personal likes and dislikes leads to:
 - i. "smörgåsbord approach," of picking and choosing religious preferences.
 - ii. A picture of God that matches the person doing the choosing.
 - iii. Never require major changes in lifestyle.
 - b. All the world's religions can not be true.
 - i. Mother Illustration: Guess what my mother looks like?
 1. Multiple answers.
 2. All cannot be true because they are contradictory.
 - c. Guidelines Needed.
 - i. Picture of God in the religion in question should harmonize with what we know about God from step one, natural revelation.
 - ii. Religion should profoundly address the human condition:
 1. The human experience of alienation from God, other people and selves.
 2. Deep sense of moral shame and guilt.

- 3. Hunger for meaning in life and afterlife.
- iii. Religion in question should have evidence of supernatural activity.
- d. Engage in devotional experiment.
 - i. See what kind of religious experiences you have as you act as if the religion is true.

Arguing for the Existence of God

- I. The Bible seems to indicate that there is something about the created world that makes God's existence evident.
 - a. There are no proofs for God's existence in the same way that $2+2=4$ is a proof.
 - b. 95% of the things believed cannot be proved conclusively.
 - 1. Breakfast example: you believe you ate breakfast but cannot prove it conclusively.
 - c. Always ask what a person means by proof when asking for proof of God's existence.
- II. Kalam Cosmological Argument:
 - a. There is a universe that exists now.
 - b. The universe either had a beginning or not.
 - i. If uncaused it sprang into existence out of pure nothing.
 - ii. If caused, it was supernaturally created by something outside of the universe. Either:
 - 1. Impersonal Creator.
 - 2. Personal Creator.
 - c. How we know the universe exists.
 - i. First argument: it is impossible to cross actual infinity.
 - 1. If the universe had no beginning, reaching the present moment would require crossing an actual infinite.
 - 2. If the universe had no beginning the present moment would have never arrived. In order to come to the present moment with a beginningless universe, it would be like jumping out of an infinitely tall bottomless pit.
 - 3. The present moment has arrived.
 - 4. Therefore the universe has a beginning.
 - ii. Second argument: second law of thermodynamics.
 - 1. The universe is running out of its useful energy and cannot be reversed.
 - 2. The universe has been running out of energy for a finite time.
 - d. What it would mean to say the universe is uncaused:

- i. The entire universe of space, time and matter hopped into existence with nothing causing it.
 - ii. There is no example of anything coming into existence out of nothing with no reason.
 - iii. When events take place, there is good reason to believe there is a cause.
- e. If everything must have a cause, what caused God?
 - i. Everything that comes into existence has a cause.
 - ii. God is not the sort of thing that comes into existence.
 - iii. God is the uncaused, cause of everything.
 - iv. By asking what caused God, you are asking what can only be asked of things that are caused.
- f. The universe began to exist and was caused to exist by something.
 - i. Option one: whatever caused the first event was not in time and had to be timeless.
 - 1. Why existence could not be caused by a scientific event:
 - a. Whenever a piece of matter causes something to happen to another piece of matter, time is already present.
 - b. Suppose the wind blows a brick to hit glass, the cause is the wind and the effect is the breaking glass. Both the cause and effect are in time.
 - 2. Whatever caused the beginning of events had to be outside of time and have the power of spontaneous choice.
- g. Two different kinds of explanation to reach conclusion about creation of the universe.
 - i. Scientific explanation by law.
 - 1. If we wanted to explain why the moon is where it is today as opposed to yesterday, we could plug the location of the moon into the laws of motion, you could explain where it is today.
 - ii. Personal explanation.
 - 1. Cite a person's ability and intention.
 - a. Example: why is the dinner table the way it is?
 - b. A person has the ability to arrange the table the way it is and the desire to make it look a certain way. Both ability and intention.
 - iii. Order Exists.
 - 1. Example: atoms are specifically ordered objects.
 - 2. Science cannot explain the origin of order, because scientific explanation presupposes order before it can explain anything.

3. Science can only explain order by assuming other examples of order.
 4. Therefore, there is no scientific explanation for the existence of order in the universe.
- iv. Order can be explain via personal explanation.
1. We regularly experience the fact that persons create order.
 2. Given there is no scientific explanation, no reason to leave the existence of order as a brute fact, reason leads us to believe that an intelligent being has created order.
- v. Fine-tuning as means of explaining the creation of the universe.
1. The constants of nature are delicately balanced, being either larger or smaller there could be no life in the universe.
 2. There must have been a designer to assign these numbers specifically so life could exist.
 - a. The multiple worlds' response: 1) there exist right now an infinite number of parallel universes. 2) Each real universe cannot interact with each other physically. 3) Each universe has different masses of protons, different electrons, etc. 4) The only one we are going to end up in is the one that has the correct balance of constants.
 - b. Reasons against multiple world response: 1) No practical reason to believe in simultaneously existing, multiple worlds. 2) Can be seen as an attempt to avoid theism.
- vi. Information in DNA as means of explaining creation of the universe.
1. Must draw distinction between something that is random, ordered, and something that has information.
 - a. If random, then no structure.
 - b. If order, then very simple, takes few instructions to produce, and parts are prior to the whole.
 - c. If information, then requires large number of specific instructions, and the whole is prior to the parts.
 - i. Example: John loves Mary.
 2. A DNA molecule contains a vast amount of information that fits under the 'information' category.
 - a. Only an intelligent mind is behind things in the 'information' category.
 3. The design argument does not clearly demonstrate monotheism or Christian monotheism.

- a. If you have to choose between polytheism and monotheism, monotheism works because of its simplicity.
- b. Appealing to the Kalaam argument, you are left with a being that precedes creation. From the design argument you are left with the specifics of that creator being one with volition, intelligence, and good.

III. The Moral Argument: the idea that there is objective morality and the best explanation is the existence of a moral law giver.

- a. Objective morality is real.
 - i. In response to a moral relativist: 1) Use example of morally universal circumstance to prove objective morality. 2) Find out what the person cares about, relativise it and see what happens.
- b. The existence of morality is better explained by the existence of God than by saying morality is just there.
 - i. Moral truths (it is wrong to steal, it is wrong to murder, etc.) have imperative force behind them.
 - 1. The imperative force is best explained if there is a commander rather than as objective truths.
 - 2. Moral law produces guilt and shame when violated. This feeling is more than guilt in the face of society. It is hard to feel guilt in the face of an abstract principle with no person behind it.
 - 3. Why is it that human beings have value and equal value at that?
 - a. Painting example: if a house caught fire you would save a painting over a piece of trash because they are not equal.
 - b. Justice says equals ought to be treated equally and unequal ought to be treated unequally.
 - c. People have to have something in common to be equal and it can not be trivial.
 - d. If there is not an idea of being created in the image of God, there is no reason to have social equality.