

# DOES GOD EXIST?

Five Arguments for the Existence of God



# COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
2. The universe had a beginning.
3. The universe has a cause.



# WHATEVER BEGINS TO EXIST HAS A CAUSE

- Things don't pop into existence from nothing.
- Universal experience and observation indicates that everything that begins to exist was caused by something else that precedes it.



# DID THE UNIVERSE HAVE A BEGINNING?

1. For most of human history, this was unknown.
2. Atheists generally believed in an eternal universe.
3. St. Thomas Aquinas gave arguments for existence of a necessary being, called God, to explain existence of contingent beings. His arguments did not depend on whether universe began to exist.



# THE BIG BANG

1. Cosmological model for observable universe.
2. In 1927, Fr. George Lemaitre hypothesized an expanding universe that could be traced back in space and time to a single point.
3. Later, confirmed by observations of galaxies moving further apart and cosmic background radiation.
4. Universe is about 13.8 billion years old.



# WHAT KIND OF CAUSE?

1. No natural explanation can be causally prior to existence of natural world (space-time and its contents.)
2. Causal agent therefore must be outside of space and time and enormously powerful.
3. To solve problem of infinite regress, must be a being that is eternal by nature.



# FINE-TUNED UNIVERSE

1. Life in the universe can only occur if physical constants lie within a very narrow range of values.
2. These values are not themselves the result of necessity.
3. They are the result either of chance or design.
4. Probability of these values occurring by chance is near zero.
5. Therefore, they are the result of design.



# GRAVITY EXAMPLE

1. If gravitational constant was slightly smaller, universe would have expanded without formation of stars or planets.
2. If slightly larger, universe would have collapsed in on itself.





# MULTIVERSE?

1. No scientific evidence for this.
2. Universe generator itself would require fine tuning.



# ARGUMENT FROM OBJECTIVE MORALITY

1. Objective moral laws exist.
2. Objective moral laws depend on God as the reference point or law giver.
3. Therefore, God exists.



# OBJECTIVE MORALITY

1. By objective morality, we mean moral laws that universally apply irrespective of opinions of human persons.
2. It is always wrong to torture an innocent child for pleasure.
3. Our moral thought, language, and experience point to a transcendent standard of morality, even if we are mistaken about a particular moral rule.



# UTILITARIANISM

1. A moral view that deems actions right if they maximize happiness for the greatest number or people.
2. Justifies things that we know to be wrong. You can torture an innocent child if pain child experiences is outweighed by pleasure others experience.



# RESURRECTION OF JESUS

1. Historical record reveals these highly probable facts: Jesus was executed and laid in a tomb; the tomb was found empty; numerous people claimed to see Jesus alive after his death.
2. The best explanation for these facts is that Jesus actually rose from the dead, thus confirming his identity as the unique Son of God.



# RELIABILITY OF THESE FACTS

1. Reported by multiple independent sources, earliest written record being 1 Corinthians 15.
2. Women were first witnesses to empty tomb and Jesus post-resurrection. Women's testimony was not respected in Jewish society, so it is very unlikely for someone making up a story to include this detail.
3. Empty tomb confirmed by Jewish version of what happened, claiming disciples stole the body.



# CREDIBLE WITNESSES

1. Witnesses to risen Jesus were not lying. They did not gain any material benefit in founding Christianity, and all but one of the 12 apostles died rather than recant their testimony.
2. They were not given over to wish fulfillment. Jews did not expect Messiah to rise; they believed there would be a general resurrection of the just at the end of history.
3. They were not hallucinating. Risen Jesus appears to multiple people, is touched by them, and eats with them.



# CREDIBLE WITNESSES

4. Witnesses did not see Jesus who only appeared to die on cross. Romans were very good at crucifying people, confirming they were dead. Resurrection accounts not consistent with a nearly dead Jesus.





# TOP TWO REASONS FOR UNBELIEF

1. Problem of Evil. If God is all good and all powerful, why is there suffering and evil?
  - Response. Fr. Anthony “If I Were God” video.
2. Divine Hiddenness. Why isn’t God’s existence more obvious?
  - Response: Article by Matt Nelson published at Word on Fire.

