

Pointers to God:

The Existence of the Universe and Life Itself

Worldview Camp 2019 – Pine Haven Christian Assembly

Web Resources: www.worldvieweyes.org/pinehaven2019.html

Dr. Richard Knopp

Professor of Philosophy & Christian Apologetics

Program Director, Room For Doubt (www.roomfordoubt.com)

Program Director, WorldViewEyes (www.worldvieweyes.org)

Email: rknopp@lincolnchristian.edu

Lincoln Christian University

Introduction

- A. “Proofs”
- B. “Proofs” for God
- C. “Pointers” to God
- D. Compare the alternatives

I. Creation: Some Bible Passages.

- A. **Gen. 1:1-2** “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was formless and void”
- B. **Gen. 1:31** “God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.”
- C. **Gen. 2:4** “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.”
- D. **Psalms 33:6** “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host.”
- E. **Isa. 45:12** “It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it. I stretched out the heavens with My hands, And I ordained all their host.”
- F. **Matt. 19:3-4 (cf. Mk 10:6)** “Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?” And He answered and said, “Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning made them male and female,...
- G. **John 1:1-3** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.”
- H. **Colossians 1:15-17** “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”
- I. **Hebrews 11:3** “By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.”

II. The Existence of the Universe.

- A. The possibilities:
 - 1. It’s eternal.
 - 2. It’s self-generating. It caused itself.
 - 3. It’s just one of an *infinite* number of universes (multi-verse view).

E.g. **Stephen Hawking**: "Bodies such as stars or black holes cannot just appear out of nothing. But a whole universe can. . . . Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing.... Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist. It is not necessary to invoke God to light the blue touch paper and set the universe going" (*The Grand Design*, 180).

E.g. **Alex Rosenberg**: "Why is there a universe at all? No reason at all. Why is there a multiverse in which universes pop into existence for no reason at all? No reason at all! It's just another quantum event. What science and scientism tell those who hanker for more is 'Get over it!'" (*The Atheist's Guide to Reality: Enjoying Life without Illusions* (pp. 38-39).

4. It was generated by something or someone *outside* of space and time.

B. Big Bang cosmology: The universe _____ (cf. Gen 1:1).

1. The universe BEGAN (most say about 13.8 billion years ago).
2. In the 1920s, Edwin Hubble saw other galaxies and saw them moving *away* at vast speeds. This implied that, long ago, everything was at a point of "singularity."
3. The Big Bang idea was initially strongly opposed. (For some, it sounded too much like "creation.")
4. Eventually accepted.
 - a. In 1965, background radiation was unexpectedly detected that supported a Big Bang.
 - b. Since then, a Big Bang idea has received very strong supporting evidence.

"What we found is evidence for the birth of the universe.... It's like looking at God" (George Smoot, leader of the Cosmic Background Explorer project).

"For the scientist who has lived by his 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" (Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers*, p. 116).

C. A cosmological argument for God (especially see William Lane Craig and www.reasonablefaith.org).

1. Whatever begins to exist must have a cause.
2. The universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the universe had a cause.

III. The Origin of Life.

A. What does life require?

1. The right materials (20 different amino acids).
2. The right sequencing of materials (placed in the correct and usable order).
3. Information to instruct the right sequencing of materials (DNA).

B. DNA and the information for life.

1. DNA uses a 4 letter "alphabet" that are arranged in 3 billion pairs for humans.
2. 20 different amino acids are "instructed" to form each protein in an organism. (40-27,000 amino acids for necessary for just ONE protein).
3. Even "simple" organisms have many proteins (e.g. E. coli has 4,300 proteins).
4. Each human cell has DNA (which, if stretched out, would be approximately 6 feet long). By consequence, a human's DNA (with 100 trillion cells) would reach _____ BILLION miles.

5. DNA capacity:

- a. One gram of DNA can store 700 terabytes of data (equal to 14,000 50-gigabyte Blu-ray discs or 233 3TB hard drives). See <http://www.extremetech.com/extreme/134672-harvard-cracks-dna-storage-crams-700-terabytes-of-data-into-a-single-gram>.
- b. “DNA could store all of the world’s data in one room” (by Robert Service, *Science Magazine* (Mar. 2, 2017): <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2017/03/dna-could-store-all-worlds-data-one-room>).

DNA “could, in principle, store every bit of datum ever recorded by humans in a container about the size and weight of a couple of pickup trucks.”

C. Candid comments from atheists and agnostics

1. **Fred Hoyle** (agnostic/atheist):

- a. The pure chance of life starting on earth is about 1 in 10 to the 40,000th power.
- b. The number of atoms in the visible universe? 10 to the 80th power.
- c. “Panspermia”: Life was “seeded” on earth from elsewhere.

Fred Hoyle: “Life could not have originated here on the Earth. Nor does it look as though biological evolution can be explained from within an earthbound theory of life. Genes from outside the Earth are needed to drive the evolutionary process. This much can be consolidated by strictly scientific means, by experiment, observation and calculation” (*The Intelligent Universe*, 242).

2. **George Whitesides**, Professor of Chemistry, Harvard.

“Most chemists believe, as do I, that life emerged spontaneously from mixtures of molecules in the prebiotic Earth. How? I have no idea. . . . On the basis of all the chemistry that I know, it seems to me astonishingly improbable” (*Chemical & Engineering News* 85 [2007]: 12-17).

3. **Francis Crick**, co-discoverer of the DNA molecule in 1953.

“An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense . . . [the origin of life] is ‘almost a miracle.’ ...

Every time I write a paper on the origin of life, I swear I will never write another one, because there is too much speculation running after too few facts” (*Life Itself: Its Origin and Nature*, 88, 153).

IV. The “Fine-Tuning” of the Universe for Life (“Anthropic Principle”).

- A. The universe began _____.
- B. Expansion rate of universe “must be fine-tuned to an accuracy of one part in 10⁵⁵” (Hugh Ross, in Moreland’s *The Creation Hypothesis*, p. 163).
- C. Ratio of number of electrons to number of protons:
 1. Must be accurate to 1 in 10³⁷ power.
 2. Hugh Ross illustration of piling coins to the moon (see Ross, *The Creator and the Cosmos*, p. 109).
- D. Impact on scientists

Fred Hoyle (agnostic/atheist): “A common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect as monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology, and there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature.”

Stephen Hawking: “The remarkable fact is that the values of these numbers [e.g. ratio of proton to electron mass] seem to have been very finely adjusted to make possible the development of life” (*A Brief History of Time*, p. 125).

Arno Penzias (Nobel in physics): “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 conditions required to

permit life, and one which has an underlying (one might say 'supernatural') plan" (quoted in Margenau and Varghese, eds., *Cosmos, Bios, and Theos*, p. 83).

Antony Flew (at age of 81 converted from atheism to theism. He had "to go where the evidence leads"): "I think the most impressive arguments for God's existence are those that are supported by recent scientific discoveries.... I now believe that the universe was brought into existence by an infinite Intelligence. I believe that this universe's intricate laws manifest what scientists have called the Mind of God" (*There is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind*, p. 88).

E. Biblical connections (Isa 45:18; Ps 19:1-2; Rom 1:20)

Isa 45:18 "For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens, (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited)" (NASV).

Psalms 19:1-2 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.

Romans 1:20 Since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen.