

# The Case for a Creator

How new scientific findings about the order in our universe provide compelling evidence of an intelligent designer.

# The Case for a Creator

- Credits & Resources:

- This basic approach based largely on the work of Richard Swinburne

- *The Existence of God*, Oxford Univ.Press.

- *The Resurrection of God Incarnate*, OUP.

- *Epistemic Justification*, OUP.

- all scholarly and difficult. Simpler:

- *Is There a God?* OUP.

# The Case for a Creator

- Excellent, easier, resources:
  - *Signs of Intelligence*, Dembski, Brazos.
  - *Reasons to Believe*, M. Murray, IVP?
  - *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*, Geisler & Turek, Crossway.

# The Case for a Creator

- Who I am:

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# The Case for a Creator

Where we're going:

1. How scientific reasoning works

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2. The evidence
  - From Physics
  - From Biology

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1. How scientific reasoning works
2. The evidence
  - From Physics
  - From Biology
3. Questions for those who doubt

# How scientific reasoning works

- Science is “theoretical”
  - It proposes *theories* to explain things.
  - We cannot *directly observe* whether a scientific theory is true or false.
- They always *go beyond* what we can observe.
  - They are *universal generalizations*.
  - They refer to *unobservable* things.

# How scientific reasoning works

- Science is “based on observation”
  - Scientists seem to *infer*,  
*from what they have observed*,  
that certain theories and hypotheses  
are (at least probably) true.

# How scientific reasoning works

- Scientists' evidence never “absolutely proves” their theories are true.
- Observable evidence can only show that a theory is *probably* true.
  - (Because the theories always go well beyond the observable evidence.)

# How scientific reasoning works

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- Two basic (mutually supporting) answers:
  1. Argument to the Best Explanation
  2. Hypothetical Reasoning

# How scientific reasoning works

1. Scientific reasoning nearly always involves **“Argument to the Best Explanation.”**
  - In science (as in everyday life) we tend to believe whatever provides *the best available explanation* of the evidence we have.
  - We tend to think that *the best available explanation* is *probably true*.

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      - (How well it fits in with what else we know.)
    2. *Simplicity*
    3. *Explanatory Power*
      - How *well* it explains (explanatory *strength*)
      - How *much* it explains (explanatory *scope*)

# How scientific reasoning works

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## **Hypothetical Reasoning.**

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(if our hypothesis were true)  
***supports*** our hypothesis.

# How scientific reasoning works

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## **Hypothetical Reasoning.**

- Considers *what we would expect*  
*if* our hypothesis were true.
- Evidence that *is not* what we would expect  
(if our hypothesis were true)  
*counts against* our hypothesis.

# How scientific reasoning works

2. Science also clearly uses

## **Hypothetical Reasoning.**

- More precisely:

- Evidence ***raises*** the probability of a claim  
*to the extent that*

the evidence is **more to be expected** (more probable)  
if the claim were true than if it were false.

- Evidence ***lowers*** the probability of a claim  
*to the extent that*

the evidence is **less** to be expected (less probable)  
if the claim were true than if it were false.

# How scientific reasoning works

2. Science also clearly uses

## **Hypothetical Reasoning.**

- How probable a claim is,  
in light of some evidence,  
is determined by:
  - A. How probable it was to start with  
(determined by its simplicity and plausibility)
  - B. And how much the evidence  
*raises or lowers* that probability

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4. The diversity and complexity of *life* on earth

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4. The diversity and complexity of *life* on earth
5. All the *beauty* in and of the universe
6. The existence and nature of *people*

# The Evidence

The apparent **Fine Tuning** of the universe:

- There are *many* factors in the universe which are *exactly* what they need to be
  - in order for the universe to be anything like this
  - and in order for it to support life.

# The Evidence

The apparent **Fine Tuning** of the universe:

- There are *many* factors in the universe which are *exactly* what they need to be
  - in order for the universe to be anything like this
  - and in order for it to support life.
- If *any* of them had been even slightly different,
  - the universe would be radically different,
  - and there would be no life.

# The Evidence

The apparent **Fine Tuning** of the universe:

- Examples of the fine tuned factors:
  - The strength of gravity
  - The forces holding atoms together
  - The speed of light
  - The masses of basic particles
  - If it all began with a Big Bang:
    - The speed of the expansion
    - The “smoothness” of the expansion

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In fact, contrary to what Darwin thought,

- Even the *simplest* single-celled organisms are *extremely complicated*.
- Life is even *more* complicated at the molecular level than it is at “macroscopic” level.

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# The Evidence

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- As a result, it's hard to see how,  
just by chance:
  1. Life could have arisen in the first place, or
  2. Living things could evolve substantially new and different basic structures
  3. (The “fossil record” also doesn't seem to be what you would expect if standard evolutionary theory were true.
    - Organisms seem to come out of nowhere.
    - And we don't find as many “transitional forms” as we would expect.)

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

1. How do you ***explain*** the ***order*** in the universe?

- Why the laws of nature hold
- The *structure* of the universe
- The way the universe is “*fine tuned*” for life
- The diversity and complexity of *life* on earth
- All the *beauty* in and of the universe
- The existence and nature of *people*

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1. How do you ***explain*** the ***order*** in the universe?
  - God would obviously provide an excellent explanation of all this order:
    1. It's "*plausible*."
      - fits in well with what else we know
        - We're familiar with persons creating things.
        - We have *other* evidence for God
          - » The Bible, personal experiences, etc.

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

1. How do you ***explain*** the ***order*** in the universe?
  - God would obviously provide an excellent explanation of all this order:
    1. It's "*plausible*."
    2. It's *simple*.
      - The concept of God is extremely simple
        - There's only one and everything else comes from God
        - All of God's basic characteristics seem to follow from this one very simple concept:
          - The Greatest Possible Being

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

1. How do you ***explain*** the ***order*** in the universe?
  - God would obviously provide an excellent explanation of all this order:
    1. It's "*plausible.*"
    2. It's *simple.*
    3. It is *explanatorily powerful.*
      - It explains *a lot.*
        - God is the ultimate cause of *everything.*
        - The Bible, personal experiences, etc.

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

1. How do you *explain* the *order* in the universe?
  - God would obviously provide an excellent explanation of all this order:
    1. It's "*plausible*."
    2. It's *simple*.
    3. It is *explanatorily powerful*.
      - It explains *a lot*.
      - It explains these things *well*.
        - These things are the sorts of things it seems likely that God would do.

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      - Chance?
- And/or
- Necessity?

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

1. How do you *explain* the *order* in the universe?
  - Is there a better alternative explanation?
    - Chance?

And/or

- Necessity? --this is very implausible
  - None of these things seem in the least bit necessary.
  - They all seem like they could have been different.
  - We have no good evidence that they are necessary.

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

1. How do you *explain* the *order* in the universe?
  - Is there a better alternative explanation?
    - Chance?
      - The probability of all this happening by chance is *extremely* low.
      - So this is an *extremely weak* explanation.

And/or

- Necessity?

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

1. How do you *explain* the *order* in the universe?
  - Is there a better alternative explanation?

No!

- There is no explanation even as good as  
“the God explanation”

(in terms of *plausibility*, *simplicity*, and  
*explanatory power*.)

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

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Yes! Massively!

- The probability of all this happening by chance, without God, is unbelievably low.
- The probability of all this happening, if God exists, is *way* higher.

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

2. Are all these things *more to be expected* assuming God, than assuming no-God?

Yes! Massively!

- Therefore,  
by the principles of hypothetical reasoning,  
all this order in the universe  
is *powerful* evidence for God.
- It raises the probability of God's existence  
*a lot.*

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

2. Are all these things *more to be expected* assuming God, than assuming no-God?

Yes! Massively!

- But how probable was God's existence to start with?
  - Fairly high:
    - because of the *simplicity* of the idea
    - and the *other evidence* (e.g., from the Bible).

# Questions for Those Who Doubt

2. Are all these things *more to be expected* assuming God, than assuming no-God?

Yes! Massively!

- So the probability of God's existence is fairly high to start with,
- and this evidence *increases* the probability *a lot*.
- So this evidence makes God's existence *highly* probable.

# The Case for a Creator

By the principles of scientific reasoning, then  
(Argument to the Best Explanation  
and Hypothetical Reasoning),  
the scientific evidence  
*strongly* supports  
the existence of God.