

“And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM’”(Ex 3:14)

✠ Lecture II: The Existence of God ✠

The relation of faith and reason is often discussed in terms of whether God’s existence can be proved and whether such proof would be adequate to bring a non-believer to faith. Although reason alone may not bring individuals to faith in God, believers are nonetheless able to give rational reasons for their faith in God. Our knowledge of God and the certainty of His existence comes through the personal experience of Him in our lives. Rational reasons can help us to appreciate the reality of God. It is hoped that the following reasons will enhance the faith of those who already know God and worship Him in their lives. It is also hoped that these reasons will help those who are still searching.

✠ The Three Types of Atheists:

1. **The Absolute Atheist** → This is one who denies the absolute existence of God.
2. **The Providential Atheist** → Also called a “Deist.” The term “deism” (from the Latin *deus*, ‘god’) is often used in a general sense to refer to that view of God, which maintains God’s creatorship, but denies a continuing divine involvement with, or special presence within, that creation. They deny God’s providential dealings and care for the world. It is often contrasted with “theism” (from Greek *Theos*, ‘god’), which allows for continuing divine involvement within the world.
3. **The Practical Atheist** → This is a group that does not deny the being of God, but by their actions and lifestyle, by their evil and neglect of God, they act as though there were no God. “They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work” (Titus 1:16).

→ In every atheist, there is a moral twist, “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’ They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good” (Ps 14:1). They deny God because they want freedom from any responsibility for their sins. They are like those who do not want to come to the light because their deeds are evil (Jn 3:19-20).

1. Pascal’s Wager:

Blaise Pascal (1623- 62) was a French philosopher, scientist, and mathematician who argued the existence of God in terms of a wager. He based his wager on the fact that a normal, rational person when given two possible choices will choose the one with the best chance of obtaining a reward. For instance, if someone says that your house is on fire, it could be or it could not. The cost of finding out if it is, such as looking to see if it is, is small compared to the potential loss of not bothering to look and finding it burnt down. It would be utter foolishness for you not to take that look to see if your house is on fire.

→ In the same manner, God either exists or He does not.

- If we believe in God, are faithful to Him, and He exists, we will receive eternal reward in heaven.
- If we believe in God and He does not exist, then at worst all we have lost is a few sinful pleasures.
- If we do not believe in God and He does exist, we will face eternal damnation.
- If we do not believe in God and He does not exist, then our sins will not be punished.

→ So if we bet that God exists and we were right, we win everything. In the same way, if we bet that God exists and we are wrong and He does not exist, we have lost nothing.

→ But if we bet that God does not exist and are right, then we win nothing. In the same way, if we bet that God does not exist and are wrong, then we lose everything.

✠ Would any rational gambler make a bet where he/she wins nothing and may lose everything? Therefore, the only sensible wager is the bet that God exists. With such a wager we have everything to gain and nothing to lose. Holy Scripture says, “The **fool** has said in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Ps 14:1; 53:1).

## **2. The Argument From Motion:**

The world is not static but dynamic. Rain falls from the sky, stones roll down valleys, the earth revolves around the sun, etc... But how did nature come to be in motion? Why isn't it static?

- For every motion, there is a cause. Things don't just move – they are moved.
- Each cause of motion must itself have a cause and that cause must have a cause as well.
- There must be a single unmoved cause right at the origin of the series. From this original cause of motion, all other motion is ultimately derived. This first unmoved mover is God.

## **3. The Argument From Causation of Existence:**

Common sense observation tells us that no object creates itself. In other words, some previous object had to create it. Ultimately there must have been and uncaused first cause (God) who began the chain of existence for all things. When a child comes home with a black eye, we know and believe that there had to be a cause for it and we will not accept an explanation that "it just happened." When we apply the same reasoning to the universe, we can see that, like the black eye, it did not just happen but had a cause and that cause was God.

### **→ Definition:**

The second law of thermodynamics states that the amount of energy in a system that is available to do work is decreasing. Entropy increases as available energy decreases. In other words, the purely natural tendency of things is to move toward chaos, not order, and available energy necessary for work is lost in this process. Eventually, the universe will run down and all life and motion will cease. This is the natural tendency of all things. Batteries run down, machines break, buildings crumble, roads decay, living things die, etc. Left to the natural state, all things would eventually cease to function.

- **The universe is not infinitely old because it is not in a state of entropy.**
  - a. If the universe were infinitely old, it would have reached the state of entropy long ago.
  - b. Since we are not in a state of entropy, therefore the universe must have had a beginning.
- **Because the universe has had a beginning it is not infinite in size.**
  - a. It would require an infinite amount of time to become infinite in size. Since the universe had a beginning, it has not had an infinite amount of time to expand; therefore it is finite in size.
- **All events have causes.**
  - a. There cannot be an infinite regress of events because that would mean that the universe were infinitely old. (If it were infinitely old, the universe would be in a state of entropy, which it is not and it would be infinitely large, which it is not.)
- **Since the universe is finite and had a beginning and there cannot be an infinite number of regressions of causes to bring it into existence, there must be a single uncaused cause of the universe.**
  - a. A single uncaused cause of the universe must be greater in size and duration than the universe it has brought into existence. (Otherwise, we have the uncaused cause bringing into existence something greater than or equal to itself.)
  - b. Any cause that is natural to the universe is part of the universe. (An event that is part of the universe cannot cause itself to exist. Therefore, there must be an uncaused cause outside the universe.)
  - c. An uncaused cause cannot be a natural part of the universe, which is finite. (An uncaused cause would be infinite in both space and time since it is greater than which it has caused to exist.)
- **This uncaused cause is supernatural.**
  - a. Supernatural means that it is completely 'other' than the universe. This would make the uncaused cause supernatural.
  - b. This uncaused cause is God.

#### **4. The Argument From Contingent & Necessary Objects:**

There are two types of objects in the universe: contingent beings and necessary beings. A contingent being is an object that cannot exist without a necessary being causing its existence. In other words, the world contains beings (such as human beings) that are not there as a matter of necessity. The fact that we are here needs explanation. Why are we here? What happened to bring us into existence? The existence of contingent beings ultimately necessitates a being, which must exist for all of the contingent beings to exist. This being, called a necessary being, is what we call God.

#### **5. The Argument From Human Values:**

Where do human values such as truth, goodness, and nobility come from? What causes them? There must be something that is in itself true, good, and noble which brings into being our ideas of truth, goodness, and nobility. God is the original cause of these ideas. Also for any given quality (e.g. goodness, beauty, knowledge) there must be a perfect standard by which all such qualities are measured. These perfections are contained in God. Moreover, we all know that it is right to do good and wrong to do evil. Even in a society that is materialistic and humanistic almost all people, Christians or atheist have a sense of obligation towards doing good. This sense of obligation is only logical if there is a fundamental morality (God) that transcends human existence and which has the power and right to demand moral obedience.

#### **6. The Argument From Intelligent Design:**

If you found a clock and examined the mechanism within it, you would probably think that this intricate mechanism was not the outcome of mere chance, that it had been designed. No rational person seriously believes that great art such as Michelangelo's David or Beethoven's symphonies arises as the result of a random series of hammer blows or a randomly produced sequence of notes. We simply know from experience that these beautiful creations are the result of an artist and could never come into being randomly or by chance. Now look at the universe; is it possible that such an intricate mechanism, from the orbits of planets round the sun to the cells in your fingernails could have happened by chance? Surely, this enormously complex mechanism has been designed, and the being that designed it must be God. If a person does not believe in God as the Creator, that person has to then believe that the scientific laws governing the universe are only the result of a chance occurrence. The probability of such a random occurrence actually happening is so infinitely small as to defy all reason.

- Human artifacts are products of intelligent design.
  - The universe resembles human artifacts.
  - Therefore, the universe is a product of intelligent design.
  - But the universe is complex and gigantic in comparison to human artifacts.
  - Therefore, there is a powerful and intelligent designer (God) who created the universe.
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