Three Arguments for the Existence of God

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Objective: To demonstrate through sound reasoning, some of the laws of science, and recent discoveries in science, that it is rational to believe that God exists.

*Theism*: Belief in one infinite, eternal, personal God who created the universe and is active in everyday affairs.

We know that a theistic God exists because:

* The universe had a beginning (the Cosmological argument).
* The universe and life display complex design (the Teleological or Design argument).
* An objective moral law exists (the Moral argument).

1. The Cosmological Argument

1. Everything that had a beginning had a cause.
2. The universe had a beginning.
3. Therefore, the universe had a cause.

*Law of Cause and Effect*: Every material effect (anything that has a beginning) must have an adequate antecedent or simultaneous cause.

Evidence that the universe had a beginning:

* From Physics: The second law of thermodynamics tells us the universe is winding down. It is not at a steady state. If the universe had always existed since the eternal past, it would have already arrived at a “heat death.”
* From Philosophy: It is impossible to traverse an infinite number of moments. But we have arrived at the present. So time could not have stretched into the infinite past. Time must have had a beginning.

The Cosmological Argument tells us the cause of the universe must be:

* Outside the natural universe; supernatural.
* Not finite, without limits, infinite.
* Outside of time, eternal, no beginning.
* Not physical or material.
* Highly powerful.

2. The Teleological or Design Argument

1. Every design had a designer.
2. The universe has highly complex design.
3. Therefore, the universe had a designer.

Design means:

* Planning ahead.
* A highly improbable state of affairs arranged for a purpose.
* Often an assembly of many components which, as a whole, achieves a greater purpose than any of the individual parts.

Evidence for design in the universe:

*The Anthropic principle*: The principle that many physical factors or constants concerning the earth, solar system, and the universe are highly fine-tuned for the existence of life.[[1]](#footnote-1) The impossible odds of this arrangement demands an explanation.

Evidence for design in life:

* DNA: Where did all the information come from? As a book points to an author, the information in DNA points to an author of life.
* Neither natural selection nor mutations add genetic information, rather they corrupt or remove it.
* Irreducible Complexity: When many complex components must appear “on the scene” at the same time for a system to function. An illustration is the mouse trap.

The Design Argument tells us the cause of the universe must be:

* Highly intelligent.
* Purposeful.
* Thinking, conscious, personal.

3. The Moral Argument

1. Every law has a lawgiver.
2. There is an objective moral law.
3. Therefore, there must be a moral lawgiver.

Do basic moral principles of right and wrong stand objectively on their own, or are they just a matter of individual opinion?[[2]](#footnote-2)

Four arguments can be offered for the existence of an objective moral law:

1. Some moral principles are true despite anyone’s opinion.

Example: “It is wrong to torture babies to death for fun.”

If even one moral statement is objective in this way, we have objective morality.

1. We can’t make moral comparisons without a standard. Who is to say something is wrong, and on what grounds? In fact, in a society with no objective moral standard, whose opinion becomes public policy? That of the most powerful? Or with the loudest voice?
2. To deny absolute moral truth is self-defeating. When a person tells us that we shouldn’t be judgmental, aren’t they judging us? Even when a person claims that there is no objective morality, they are in fact trying to assert a kind of morality of their own.
3. We know the moral law by our *reactions*. I may think it is right to steal bread for my starving family. But if someone stole that bread from *me*, I would claim it is wrong.

The moral law is not *defined* by us, but *discovered*.

Christianity says that the Moral Law is a reflection of the very character of God.

The Moral Argument tells us that the cause of the universe must be:

* Absolutely morally pure.
* Perfectly just.
* Perfectly good.

The Cosmological, Design, and Moral arguments tell us that the cause of the universe must have the following characteristics. And we find that this is a good description of the God of the Bible.

Supernatural. "For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.'" (Isaiah 57:15).

Infinite, without limit. "Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me." (Psalm 139:7-10).

Eternal, no beginning. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God." (Psalm 90:2).

Not physical or material. "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:24).

Highly Powerful. "Behold, these are but the outskirts of his ways, and how small a whisper do we hear of him! But the thunder of his power who can understand?" (Job 26:14).

Highly Intelligent. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord." (Isaiah 55:8).

Purposeful. "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfareand not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11).

Personal. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27).

Morally Pure. “Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy." (Leviticus 19:2).

Infinitely loving. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

Infinitely just. "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne." (Psalm 89:14).

All good. "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!" (Psalm 107:1).

Conclusion: Sound reasoning, along with some of the laws of science, and recent discoveries in science, demonstrate that it is definitely reasonable and rational to believe that God exists.

1. For an excellent discussion of the Anthropic Principle, see the DVD *The Privileged Planet* produced by Illustra Media, or the book by Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay Richards *The Privileged Planet* (Washington, D.C.: Regenery Publishing, 2004). In addition, an excellent summary video on the fine tuning of the universe can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EE76nwimuT0>. Produced by William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith*, Accessed 7/10/18. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. An excellent and entertaining animated video summarizing the Moral Argument can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OxiAikEk2vU>. Produced by William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith*, Accessed 7/10/18. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)