
Lesson 2 — INTELLIGENT DESIGN



“For You formed my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Your works, and I know this very well. ”

[Psalm 139:13-14]

Our Creator and God is the only necessary being. Everything else that exists is contingent upon God. He generally has revealed himself to mankind through the beauty, complexity, and order of the material universe He has created. There are many important things about God’s character and divine power that can be discovered through observing the natural world around us. Every honest observer is fully aware that God exists and is by nature without excuse.

And although general revelation has its limitations, it provides a clear case for intelligent design, which logically leads us to the conclusion that there must be an “Intelligent Designer.” If there is intelligence behind the creation of our universe, then that means that there is a mind. If there is a mind, then that means there is a personality. If there is a “Person” behind the creation of our universe, then that “Person” would by definition be the Creator God.

Since the Biblical narrative presumes to identify and introduce God the Creator to humankind, then the claims of Biblical creation must at least be taken into consideration as a legitimate explanation of the origin of our universe. As we learned in the last lesson, atheism is pure absurdity at its core. Only theism is logical. This lesson will attempt to build on the logical conclusion of God’s existence and provide many other valid reasons for His existence.

The Uncaused First Cause — The Cosmological Argument

One classical argument for the existence of God is the cosmological argument of cause and effect, made popular by St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274 A.D.). Aquinas observed that everything in the universe is in motion and constantly is changing and that every object in motion (effect) must have a mover (cause) that caused it to move.

Aquinas observed that nothing can be the cause of itself, as this would mean that it would have had to exist before it existed. This would be a logical impossibility. Aquinas rejected an

infinite series of causes and believed that there must have been a first, uncaused, cause. This first cause started the chain of causes that have caused all other events to happen. This first cause by necessity was God — the Prime Mover. Every cause and reaction in the universe can be traced back to God, who by necessity is uncaused and uncreated. God transcends space and time of the material universe and therefore can account for initiating everything that exists.

“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]

Interestingly enough, when Albert Einstein later developed his groundbreaking theories of classical and general relativity at the turn of the 20th Century, he confirmed Aquinas’ cosmological argument by conceding that the universe did indeed have a beginning and that everything in the universe is in perpetual motion. Even when an object is “at rest,” it still is moving both at the atomic level and the cosmic level. Earth itself, after all, is moving right now at a mere 66,660 mph around the Sun!

Atheists, or naturalists, must claim that the universe somehow created itself or that nothing created everything. Not only are both of these options logically absurd but also mathematically impossible. Since the universe most certainly had a finite beginning and could not have caused itself to exist, then the logical conclusion is that God the “Prime Mover” and “First Cause” set everything in motion.

Furthermore, Einstein’s theory of general relativity proved that all the matter, space and energy in the known universe came into existence at precisely the same “time” in the past, meaning the very fabric of the material universe is somehow interconnected and interdependent. If the science and math can be tested and trusted, then how does it align with the Biblical account of creation?

You may be surprised to discover that God covered all this in the very first verse!

*In the beginning (**time**), God created (**energy**) the heavens (**space**) and the earth (**matter**) ...*

The Bible also confirms that God created the universe “*ex nihilo*” — out of nothing — meaning that there were no preexisting materials necessary for God to work with. He supernaturally generated everything in the universe by the word of His power [Hebrews 11:3].

Beauty and Design — The Teleological Argument

Everywhere we look, we observe direct evidence of intelligent design. Airplanes in flight, metropolitan skylines, freeway systems in motion, machine assembly lines, and smart digital devices. Everything we use in our man-made world first had to be conceived, designed, developed, engineered and constructed with careful thought and precision.

No logical human being would ever claim that the complex systems, technologies, and machines in our world randomly evolved by chance without intentional, intelligent design. Frankly, it is impossible for complex systems to evolve over time because all the working components necessary for function must be in place from the beginning. Removing just one mechanical component from an airplane, for example, would prevent that plane from taking flight. This is known as **irreducible complexity**, and it is one of the great proofs of design in our world.

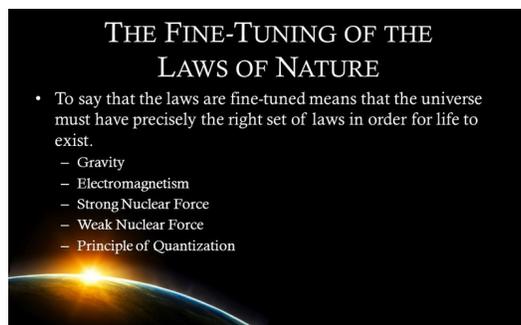
Not only do we intuitively recognize design in our world, but also we logically connect an intelligent mind with order, symmetry, complexity and beauty. Intelligent design necessitates and intelligent designer. This is the teleological argument for God's existence, and it applies to the natural world as well.

If man-made machines and complex systems clearly come from an intelligent mind, then it only stands to reason that the complex mechanisms we observe in the natural world also originated by intelligent design. The flight of the hummingbird. The efficiency of photosynthesis. The complexity of the human eye. The intricate functions of a living cell.

The designed systems we observe in nature actually are more complex and efficient than anything we observe in the man-made world. Man has never been able to replicate God's creative beauty and brilliance and never will.

Fine Tuning of the Universe — The Anthropic Principle

The more scientists have studied the mathematical constants that govern our universe, the more evident it has become that our world has been fine tuned to support and sustain life on earth. This is called the anthropic principle. The following constants are optimal for life.



- ❖ Just right amount of oxygen in air
- ❖ Speed of Light
- ❖ Tilt of the Earth
- ❖ Earth's distance from sun
- ❖ Expansion rate of the universe
- ❖ Position of Jupiter to protect earth

Information Theory and the Origin of Life

When Watson and Crick first discovered the double helix structure of DNA in 1953, they were astonished to find an intelligently coded system of information behind the building blocks of life, yet even they had no idea of the true complexity of DNA. Now that the human genome has been mapped and molecular biologists have a better understanding of DNA, an entirely new scientific discipline has been created — Information Theory.

In short, every single living cell has been pre-programmed with an invisible, digitally encoded language that determines every necessary function for life to exist. Just like computer programmers must write digital code for advanced software in operating systems, DNA is the necessary information within the nucleus of each cell that programs it to operate. All coherent language must derive from an intelligent mind. Every book has an author. The following quote from Dr. Jonathan Sarfati provides some perspective.

"[T]here is enough information capacity in a single human cell to store the Encyclopaedia Britannica, all 30 volumes of it, three or four times over...Putting it another way, while we think that our new 40 gigabyte hard drives are advanced technology, a pinhead of DNA could hold 100 million times more information." [Sarfati, J., *Origin of life: instability of building blocks*, *Journal of Creation* 13(2):124–127, 1999.]

Q & A

- ❖ Which argument for God's existence is most compelling? Why?

- ❖ In what ways has the church failed to challenge believers to think critically and love God with all their "minds?"

- ❖ Read 1 Peter 3:14-16. What is our responsibility as believers when dealing with a skeptical world? Why is it important that Christians are able to speak intelligently and logically about their faith in this "scientific" age?