

SESSION 4:

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

“If God doesn’t exist, so much of life—so much of what we already assume in the way we function—becomes more mysterious and inexplicable.” –Gavin Ortlund.

I. THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The cosmological argument is an argument from _____.

FIRST PREMISE: WHATEVER BEGINS TO EXIST HAS A CAUSE.

When discussing the cause of anything, you begin with only two choices: something or nothing.

If something was nonexistent, and at some point in time came into existence, it must have a _____ for its existence _____ of itself.

SECOND PREMISE: THE UNIVERSE BEGAN TO EXIST.

Modern science has provided much evidence that the universe has not always existed.

- The Second Law of Thermodynamics
 - This law indicates that the universe is running out of usable _____.
 - If the universe has always existed, it would have run out of energy by now.
- The Expansion of the Universe
 - Edwin Hubble discovered that distant galaxies display a “redshift,” indicating that the universe is expanding.
 - If we “_____” that expansion, we could trace the beginning of the universe to a point in a finite past.

Almost everyone now believes that the universe, and time itself, had a beginning at the Big Bang.”

– Stephen Hawking and Roger Penrose

“With the proof now in place, cosmologists can no longer hide behind the possibility of a past-eternal universe. There is now no escape, they have to face the problem of a cosmic beginning.”

– Alexander Vilenkin

CONCLUSION: THEREFORE, THE UNIVERSE HAS A CAUSE.

Through deductive reasoning, this conclusion follows with logical _____.

Furthermore, reason would dictate that the cause must be _____, meaning it must be:

- spaceless, timeless, and immaterial
- unimaginably powerful
- personal

“Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.” Isaiah 40:26

II. THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The teleological argument is an argument from _____.

FIRST PREMISE: COMPLEXITY ENTAILS A DESIGNER.

The complexity of an object or system suggests a _____ for that object or system.

The purpose an object or system has is fulfilled by way of _____.

The design of an object or system happens when an external, intentional _____ acts upon it.

Complexity → Purpose → Design → Designer

SECOND PREMISE: THE UNIVERSE IS IMMENSELY COMPLEX.

Modern science has provided much evidence, demonstrating the complexity of the universe.

IRREDUCIBLE COMPLEXITY

Microbiology has identified _____ that are fundamental to life and depend upon multiple simultaneously functional parts.

- The bacterial flagellum depends on a paddle, a rotor, and a motor, none of which would be able to or need to develop without the other two.
- DNA depends on functional proteins, but the likelihood of such proteins forming by chance are one in 10^{164} . (However, there are only 3.28×10^{80} particles in the universe.)

The likelihood of any of these systems coming into existence by _____ is practically impossible.

THE ANTHROPIC PRINCIPLE

Astrophysics has observed that the universe seems to be “_____” to contain life, being governed by a set of physical constants that if altered by the smallest degree would render life impossible.

In his book, *Just Six Numbers*, Martin Rees discusses the Cosmological Constant, which is the measurement of energy density in the vacuum of space (“what holds gravity back”).

This number cannot change by more than one part in 10^{53} ; if it does the universe would either collapse or expand too rapidly.

CONCLUSION: THEREFORE, THE UNIVERSE HAS A DESIGNER.

Through inductive reasoning, this conclusion follows with extremely high _____.

Furthermore, the argument implies that the more complex something is, the more impressive its designer must be.

“The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.”

-Psalm 19:1

III. THE TRANSCENDENTAL ARGUMENT

The transcendental argument is a family of arguments from _____.

The main idea is that we all share certain experiences that seem to be grounded in something beyond our subjective opinions.

But when we consider what is required for us to have such experiences, we conclude that there must be a transcendent being responsible for them.

THE ARGUMENT FROM REASON

Premise 1: We all assume objective laws of _____ that do not depend on our observation of them.

Premise 2: These laws of logic demand a transcendent _____, a thinking being in which logic is grounded.

Conclusion: The laws of logic are _____ in God.

C.S. Lewis communicated it this way:

“Supposing there was no intelligence behind the universe, no creative mind. In that case, nobody designed my brain for the purpose of thinking...But, if so, how can I trust my own thinking to be true?...But if I can't trust my own thinking, of course I can't trust the arguments leading to Atheism, and therefore have no reason to be an Atheist, or anything else. Unless I believe in God, I cannot believe in thought: so I can never use thought to disbelieve in God.”

THE ARGUMENT FROM MORALITY

Premise 1: We all assume objective moral _____ that do not depend on our observation of them.

Premise 2: These norms of morality demand a transcendent standard, a moral being in which morality is grounded.

Conclusion: The norms of morality are grounded in God.

C.S. Lewis communicated it this way:

“My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he has some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I called it unjust? ...Of course I could have given up my idea of justice by saying it was nothing but a private idea of my own. But if I did that, then my argument against God collapsed too—for the argument depended on saying that the world was really unjust, not simply that it did not happen to please my fancies... Consequently atheism turns out to be too simple... [I]f there were no light in the universe and therefore no creatures with eyes, we should never know it was dark. Dark would be a word without meaning.”

CONCLUSION: TRANSCENDENTALS REQUIRE THE TRANSCENDENT.

Simply put, if logic and morality exist, then God exists. Logic and morality exist. Therefore, God exists.

Through abductive reasoning, this conclusion follows as inference to the best _____.