

“Why I Believe in a Creator”

Message 2 of 5 in the Sermon Series “Key Questions: God, Creation, Scripture, Jesus, the Resurrection”

Acts 17:22-27, Amos 4:13 | Pastor Christian Newsome

Hebrews 11:1; 6—“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen...⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

“There cannot be irrefutable proof for the existence of God, (though) many people have found strong clues for his reality—divine fingerprints—in many places.”

Tim Keller, *The Reason for God* [Riverhead: NYC, 2008]. p. 132

Acts 17:22-27—²²So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: ‘Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: “To the unknown god.” What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. ²⁴The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us...”

Divine Fingerprint #1: The outside world.

“This most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.”

Sir Isaac Newton

The “fine tuning” of the Universe and our world to support our ability to live/survive/thrive on planet earth points to intentional creation.

The Teleological Argument: [A 'Watchmaker'] William Paley 1743-1805

- a. Every design had a designer.
- b. The universe has a highly complex design.
- c. Therefore, the universe had a Designer.

"Scientists are now finding that the universe in which we live...has scores of improbable and interdependent life-supporting conditions that make it a tiny oasis in a vast and hostile universe.

These highly precise and interdependent environmental conditions (which are called 'anthropic constants') make up what is known as the 'Anthropic Principle.'...scientists have discovered that the universe—like a spacecraft—is precisely designed to create the very narrow envelope of life-supporting conditions here on earth. Any slight deviation in any one of a number of environmental and physical factors (called 'constants') would preclude us from even existing...The 'Anthropic Principle' is perhaps the most powerful argument for the existence of God...there are more than 100 very narrowly defined constants that strongly point to an intelligent Designer."

Norman Geisler & Frank Turek, *I Don't Have Faith Enough to be an Atheist*
[Crossway: Wheaton, 2004]. p. 96, 104-105

"If the gravitational force were altered by 0.0000000000000000000000000000000000000001 percent, our sun would not exist, and therefore, neither would we."

Physicist Jeffrey A. Zweerink, UCLA

"Astronomy leads us to a unique event, a universe which was created out of nothing and delicately balanced to provide exactly the conditions required to support life. In the absence of an absurdly-improbably accident, the observations of modern science seem to suggest an underlying, one might say, supernatural plan."

Nobel Laureate [co-discover of radiation afterglow] Arno Penzias

"Only a rookie who knows nothing about science would say science takes away from faith. If you really study science, it will bring you closer to God."

James Tour, Nanoscientist

Psalm 19:1-4—“The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

²Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.

³There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard.

⁴Their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.”

Isaiah 40:25-26—“To whom then will you compare me,
that I should be like him? says the Holy One.

²⁶Lift up your eyes on high and see:
who created these?”

Romans 1:20-21—“For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and
divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the
world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”

Divine Fingerprint #2: The inside world.

*“The following fact is obvious but often overlooked: no human observed the
origin of the first life. The emergence of the first life on earth was a one-time,
unrepeatable historical event. No one was present to see it—neither
evolutionists or creationists were there, and we certainly can’t travel back in
time and directly observe whether the first life was created by some kind of
intelligence or arose by natural laws from nonliving materials.”*

Geisler/Turek, p. 117

1 Peter 3:15—“but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being
prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope
that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect...”

DNA, which both stores and communicates information, has been called ‘the
language of life.’

*“Human DNA contains more organized information than the Encyclopedia
Britannica. If the full text of the encyclopedia were to arrive in computer code
from outer space, most people would regard this as proof of the existence of
extraterrestrial intelligence. But when seen in nature, it is explained as the
workings of random forces.”*

George Sim Johnson, "Did Darwin Get It Right?" [The Wall Street Journal: October 15, 1999]

"The incredible specified complexity of life becomes obvious when one considers the message found in the DNA of a one-celled amoeba (a creature so small, several hundred could be lined up in an inch). Staunch Darwinist Richard Dawkins, the professor of zoology at Oxford University, admits that the message found in just one cell nucleus of a tiny amoeba is more than all thirty volumes of the Encyclopedia Britannica combined, and the entire amoeba has as much information in its DNA as 1000 complete sets of the Encyclopedia Brittanica! In other words, if you were to spell out (the DNA code) in just one amoeba, the letters would fill 1000 complete sets (30,000 books) of an encyclopedia."

Geisler/Turek, 116

More 'Faith' than 'Facts?': Six miracles every atheist believes in	
Existence came from non-existence	Order comes from chaos
Life comes from non-life	Personal comes from the non-personal
Reason comes from non-reason	Morality comes from matter

"An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to have been satisfied to get it going."

Francis Crick (co-founder of DNA), quoted in *The Case for a Creator* [Lee Strobel, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004], p. 236

Divine Fingerprint #3: The upward world.

In Athens:

- The Greek/Roman gods were a means to an end; in Christianity, God is both the meaning and the end of our lives. Acts 17:24-27

Acts 17:24-27—"The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.²⁶ And he made from one man every

nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us...”

In Creation:

- The spiritual was created before the natural. [cf. Gn. 1:1]
- Angels were created before men. [Day 3 v. Day 6 / cf. Job 38:4-7]
- Worship of God was created before work for God. [Day 3 v. Day 6 / cf. Job 38:4-7]

The purpose of life is not to get something “from” God, it’s to get God!

“God knew that his children were designed by him to be worshippers, that they would either worship him or surrender their hearts to idols...Scripture reminds us (of this) because (those in the Bible) were just like us. It is possible for us, like Jacob, to name ourselves as God-fearers but to have collected idols along the way. An idol is anything that for a moment, a season, or a lifetime exercises the rule or control over your heart that only the Lord should have. Whatever controls your heart controls your thoughts and shapes your desires and, because it does, it controls your choices and actions. As long as sin still lives inside of us, we will struggle with idols of the heart.”

Paul David Tripp, *Everyday Gospel*, January 24/January 12

In Creation, the perfectly created but broken ‘natural’ bears witness to, sustains, and points to the broken yet restored ‘spiritual’ hope of the world: Jesus.

Amos 4:13—“For behold, he who forms the mountains and creates the wind,
and declares to man what is his thought,
who makes the morning darkness,
and treads on the heights of the earth—
the Lord, the God of hosts, is his name!”