



***Answering the
Arguments of
Popular
Atheism***

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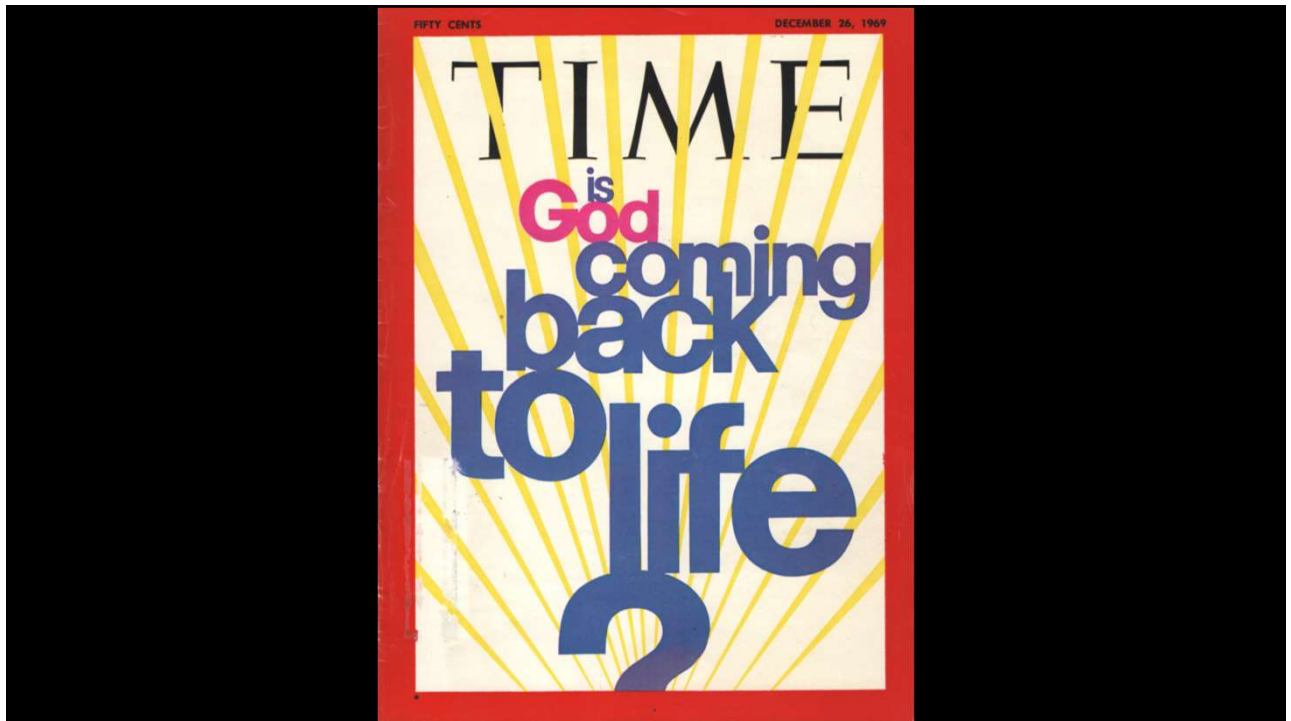


***Introductory
Comments***

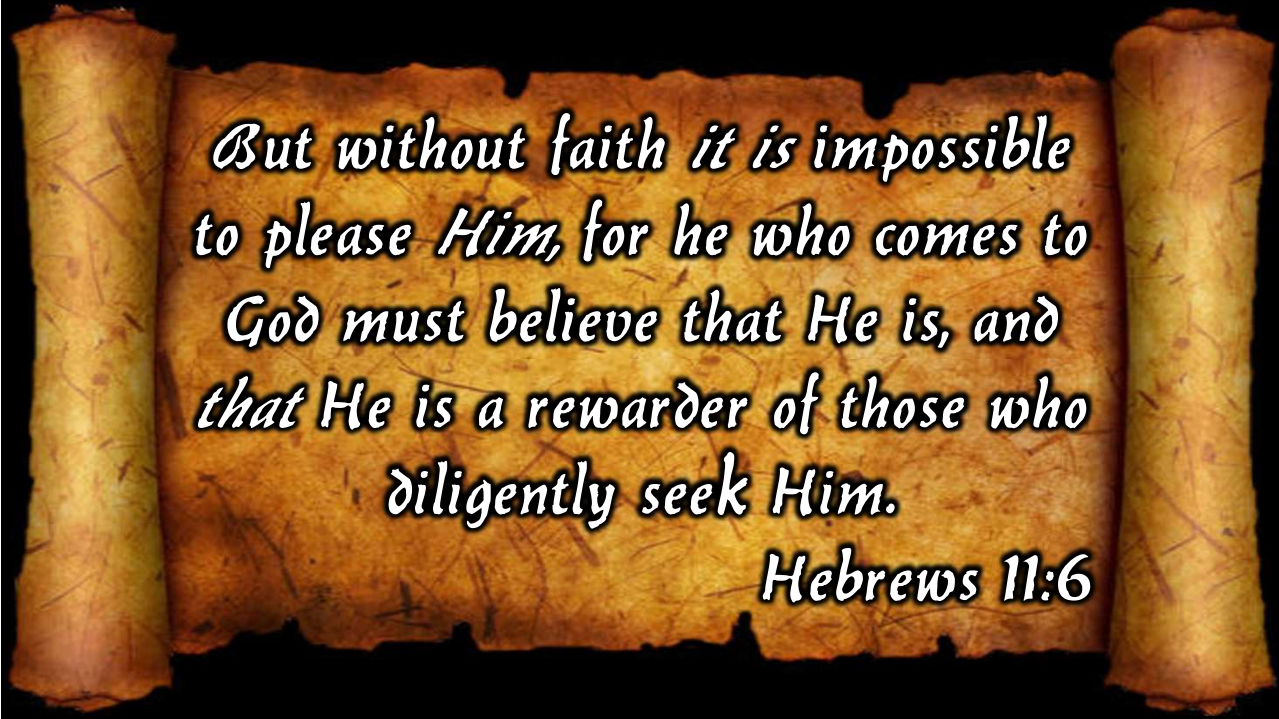
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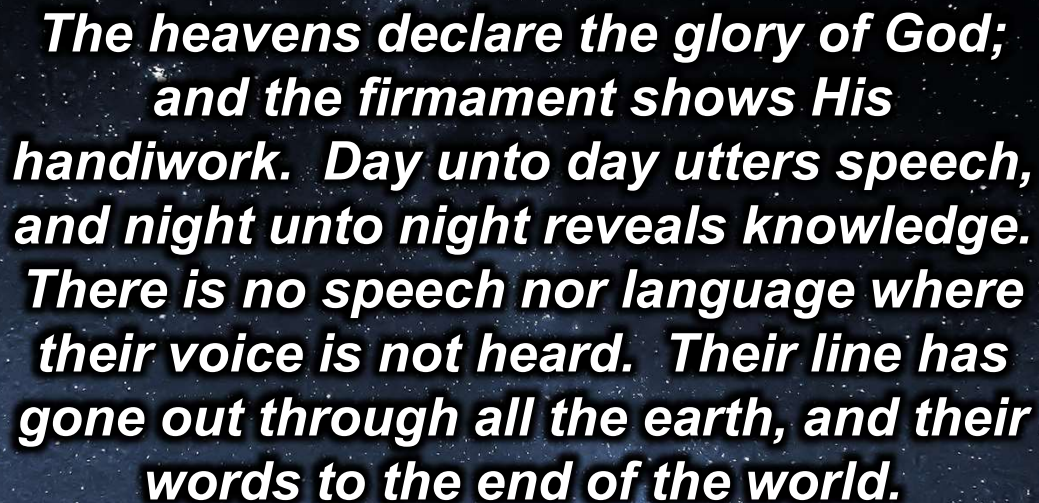
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A scroll of aged, yellowish parchment is unrolled against a black background. The text is written in a white, serif font with a black outline. The scroll is held by two wooden rollers on the left and right sides.

*But without faith it is impossible
to please Him, for he who comes to
God must believe that He is, and
that He is a rewarder of those who
diligently seek Him.*

Hebrews 11:6

5

A dark, starry night sky with a silhouetted horizon of trees and hills. The text is written in a white, bold, sans-serif font with a black outline.

***The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the firmament shows His
handiwork. Day unto day utters speech,
and night unto night reveals knowledge.
There is no speech nor language where
their voice is not heard. Their line has
gone out through all the earth, and their
words to the end of the world.***

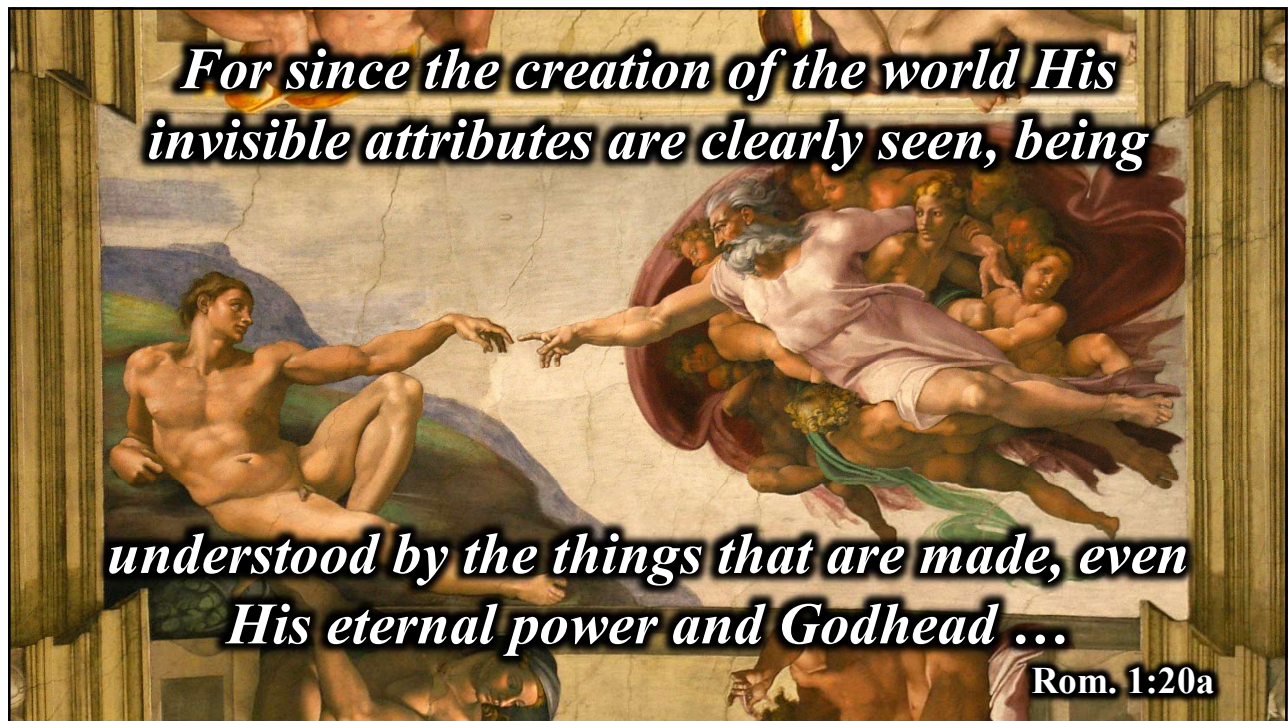
Psalm 19:1

6

***The heavens declare
His righteousness,
And all the peoples
see His glory.***

Psalm 97:6

7

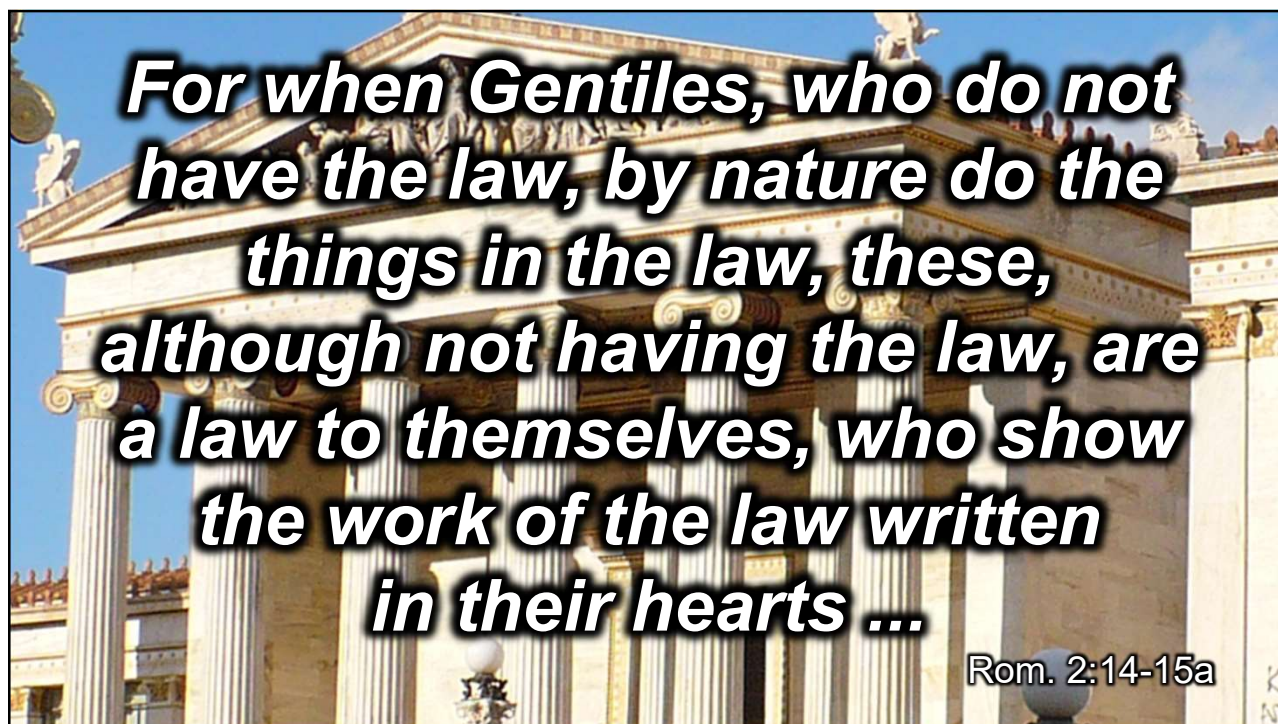


***For since the creation of the world His
invisible attributes are clearly seen, being***

***understood by the things that are made, even
His eternal power and Godhead ...***

Rom. 1:20a

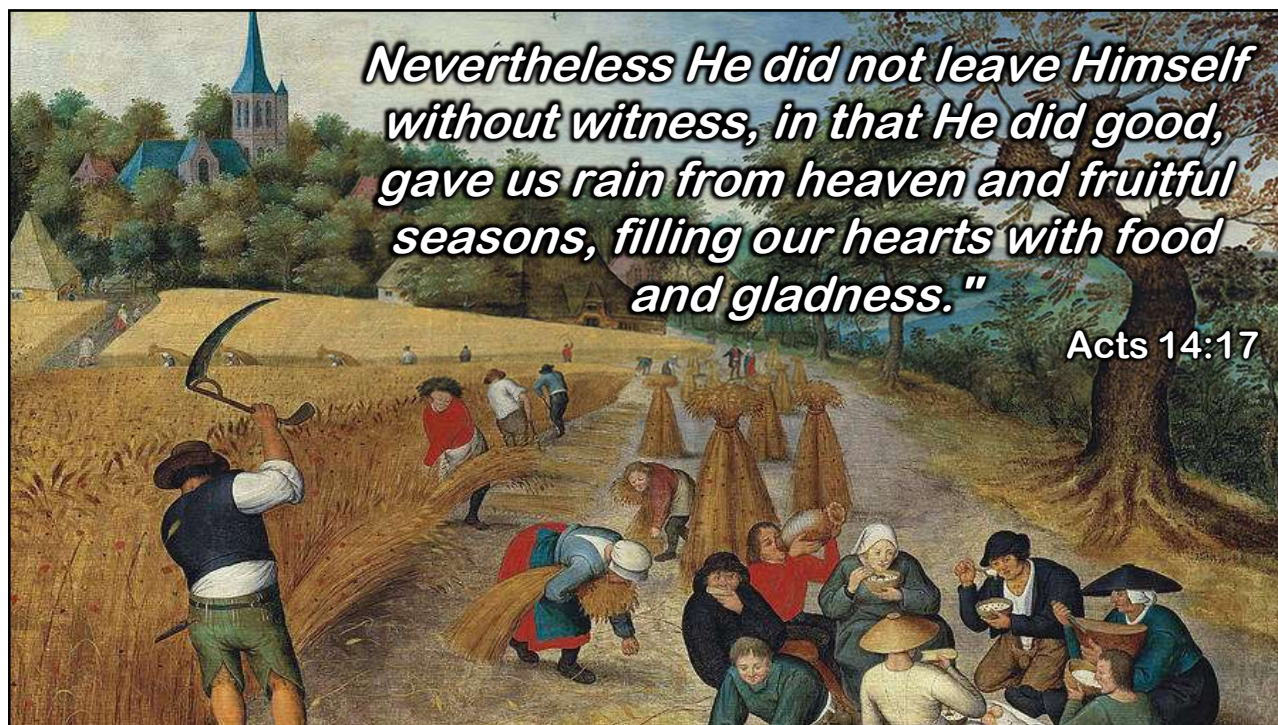
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For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts ...

Rom. 2:14-15a

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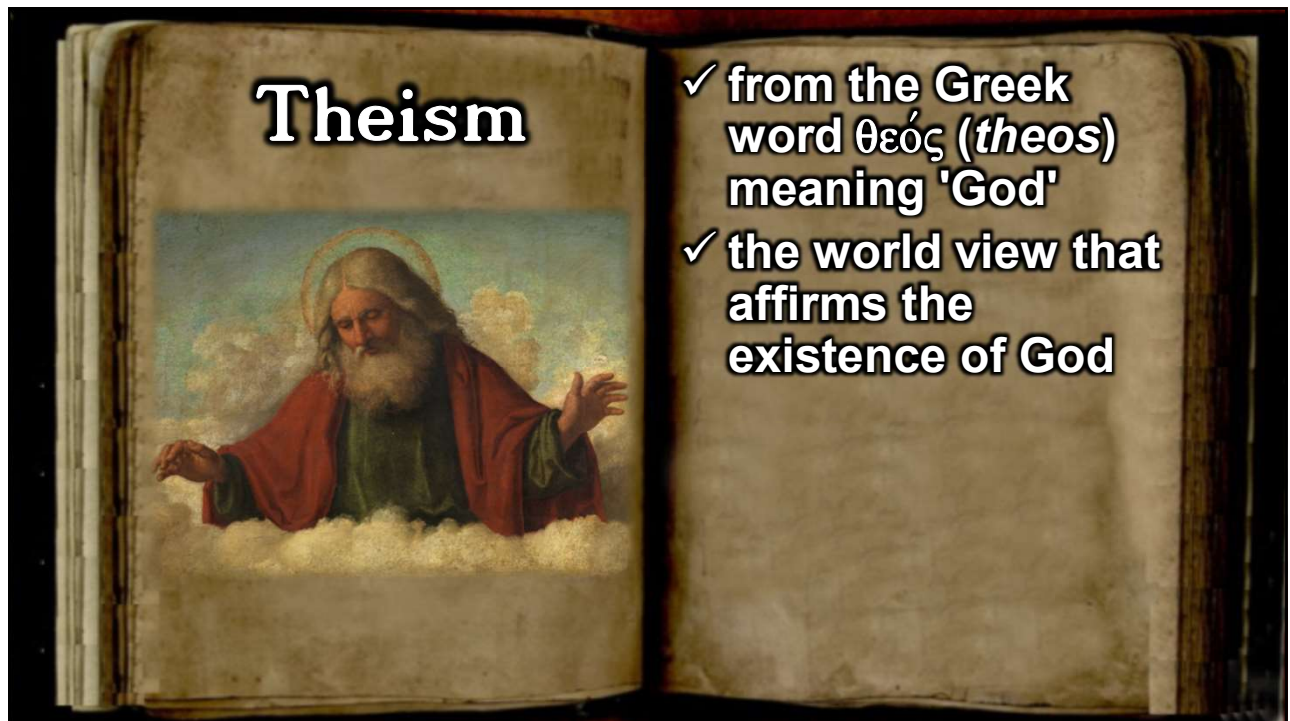
Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

Acts 14:17

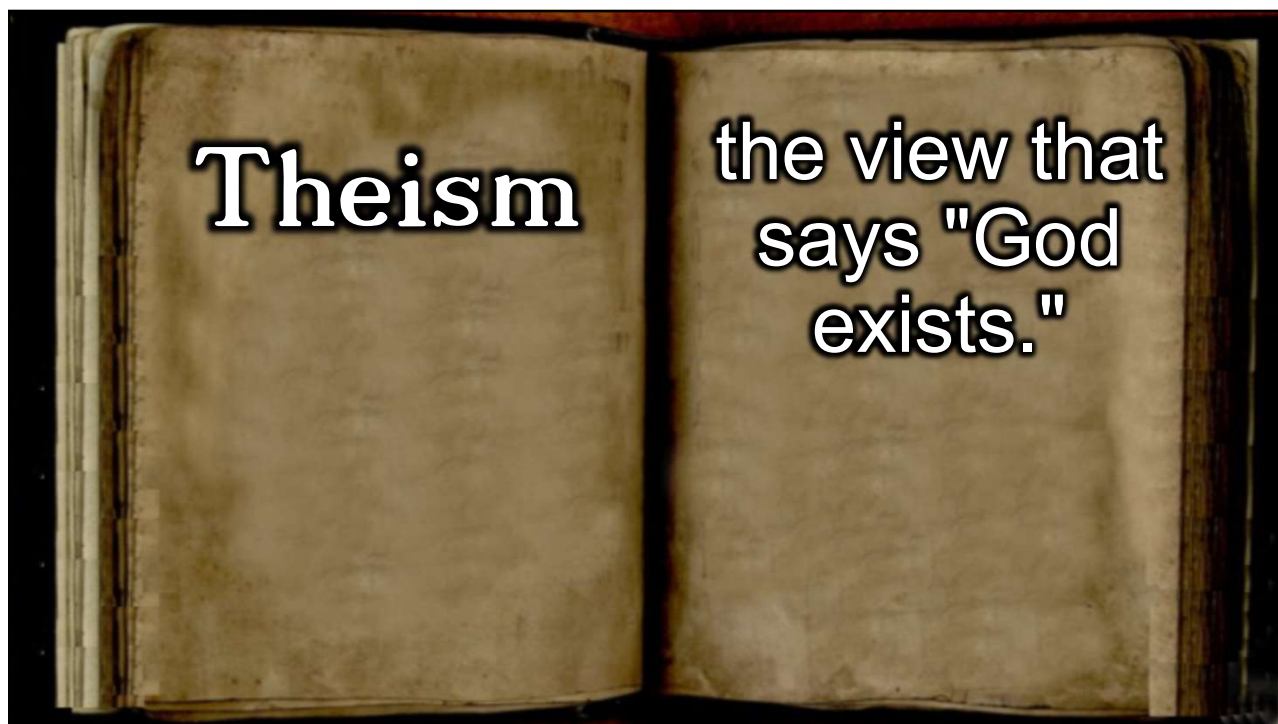
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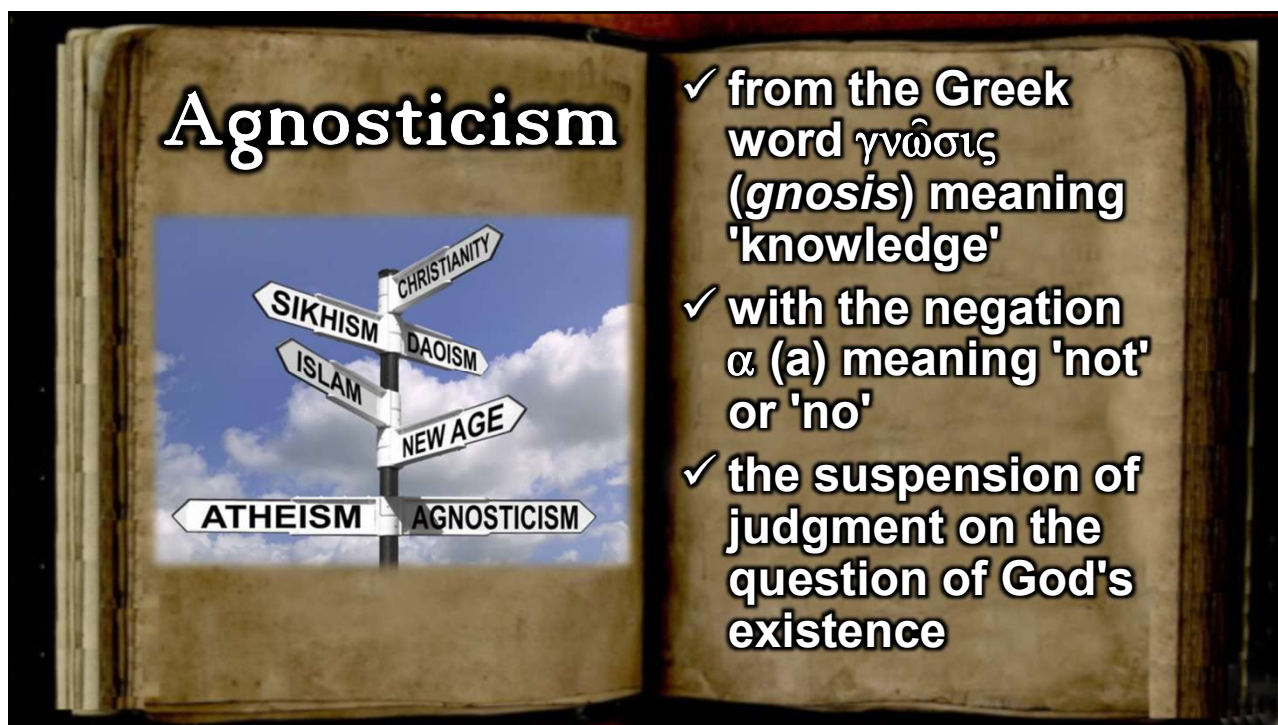
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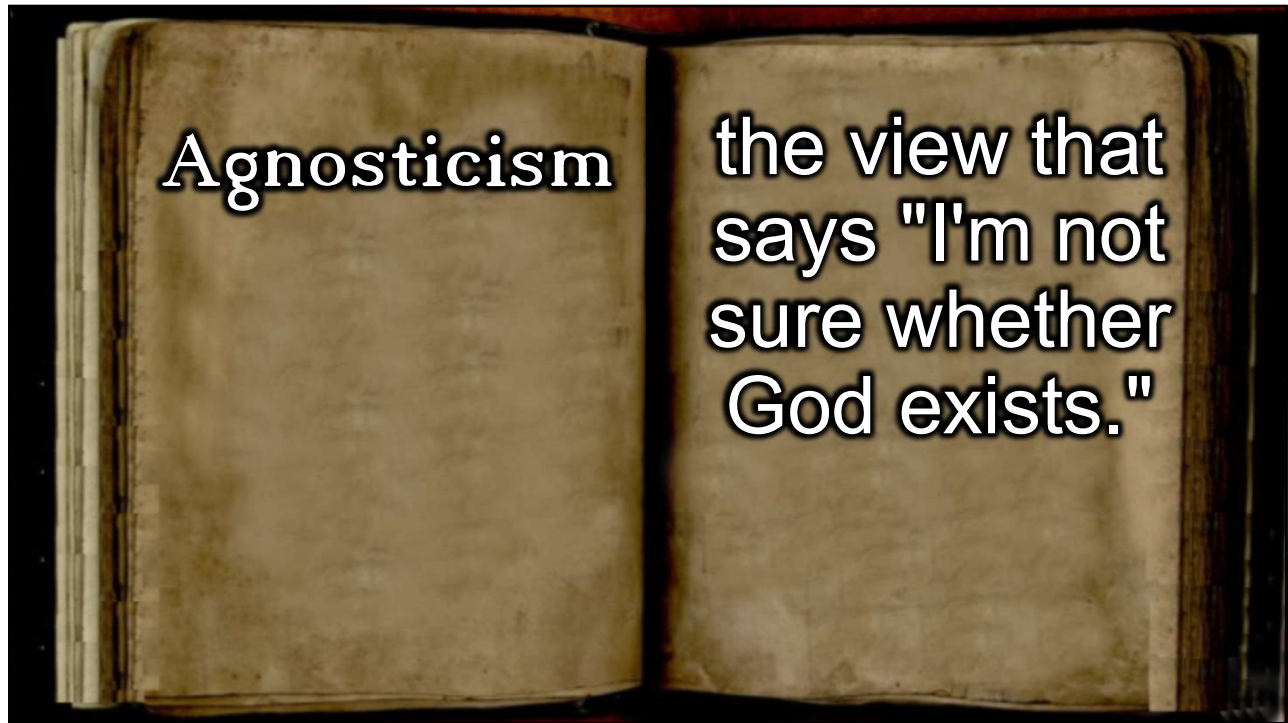
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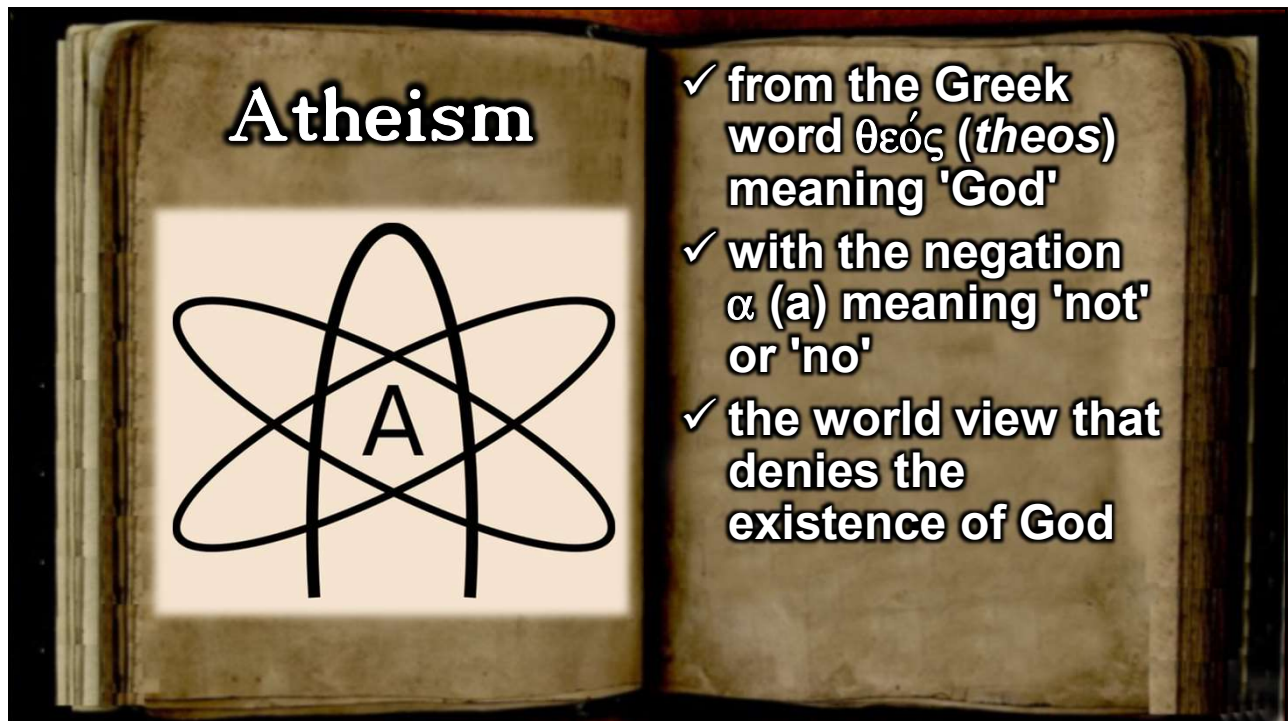
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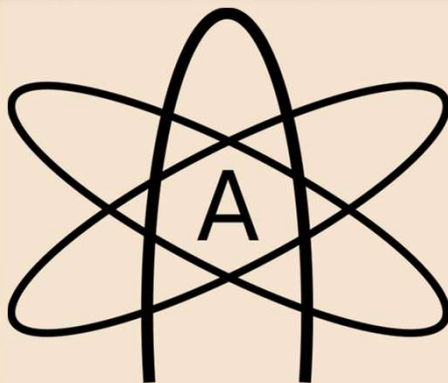
Agnosticism

the view that says "I'm not sure whether God exists."

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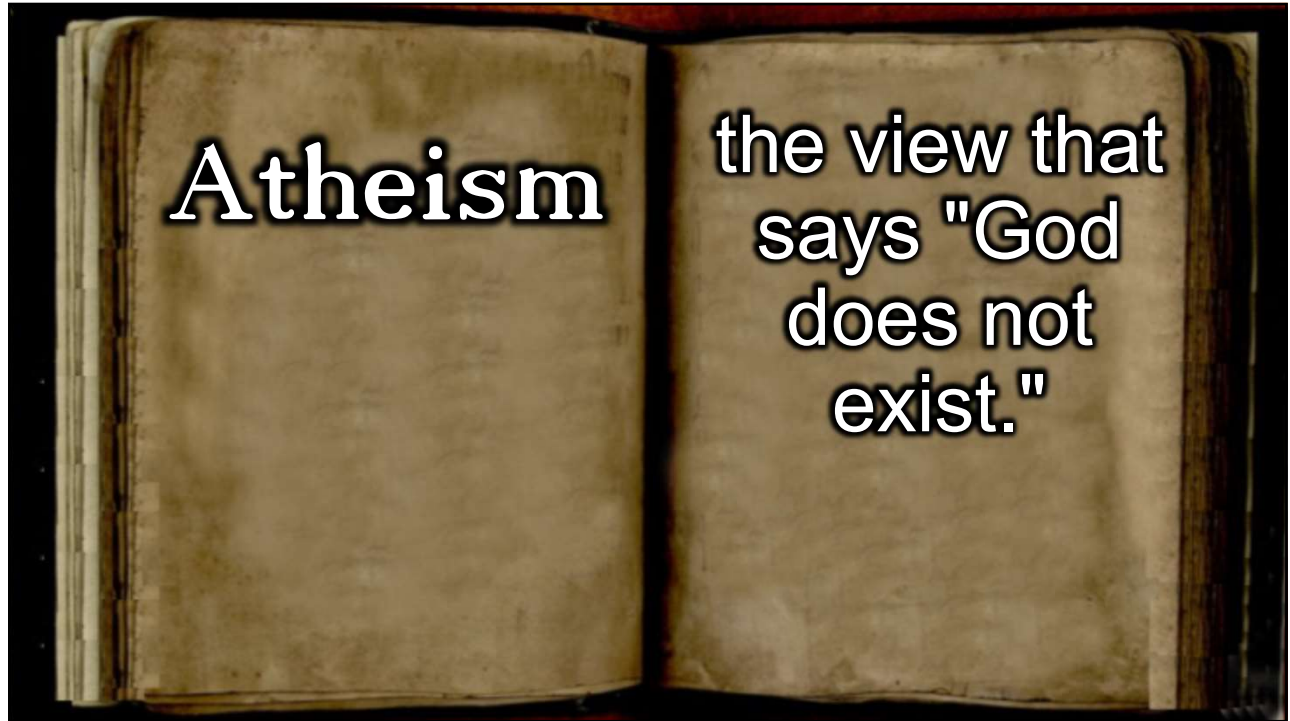


Atheism

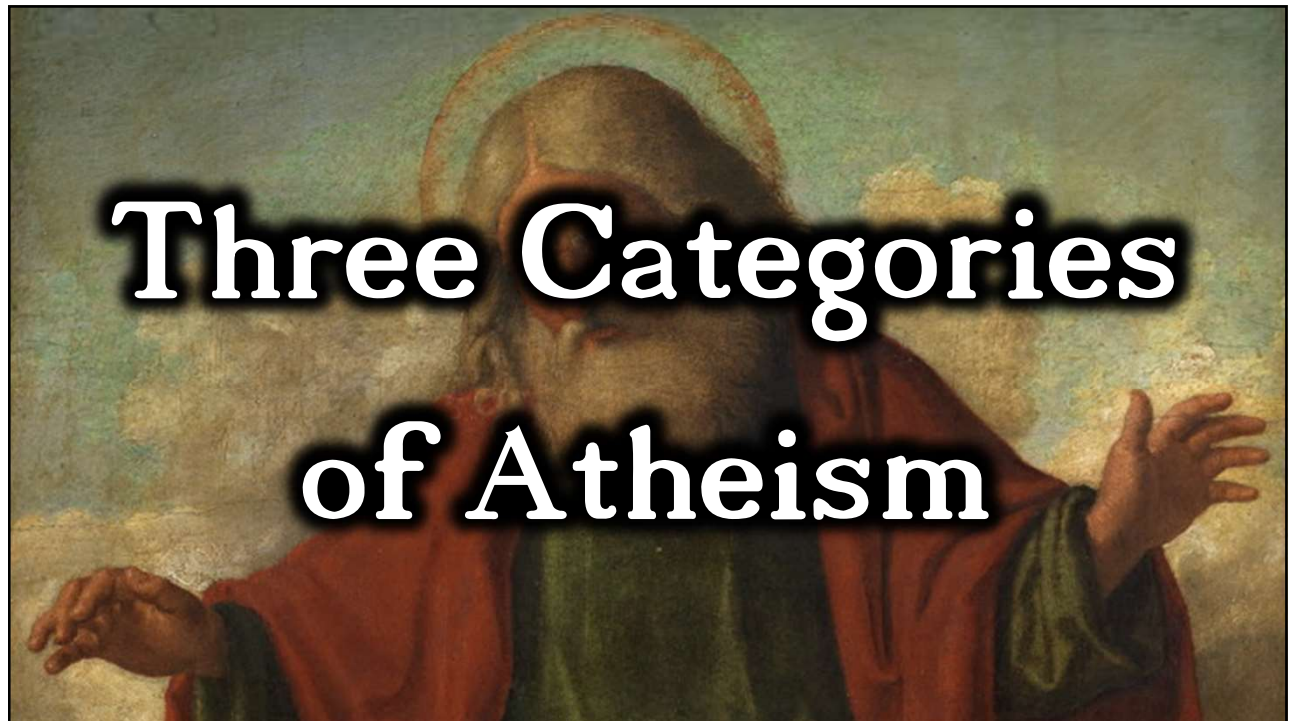


- ✓ from the Greek word θεός (*theos*) meaning 'God'
- ✓ with the negation α (*a*) meaning 'not' or 'no'
- ✓ the world view that denies the existence of God

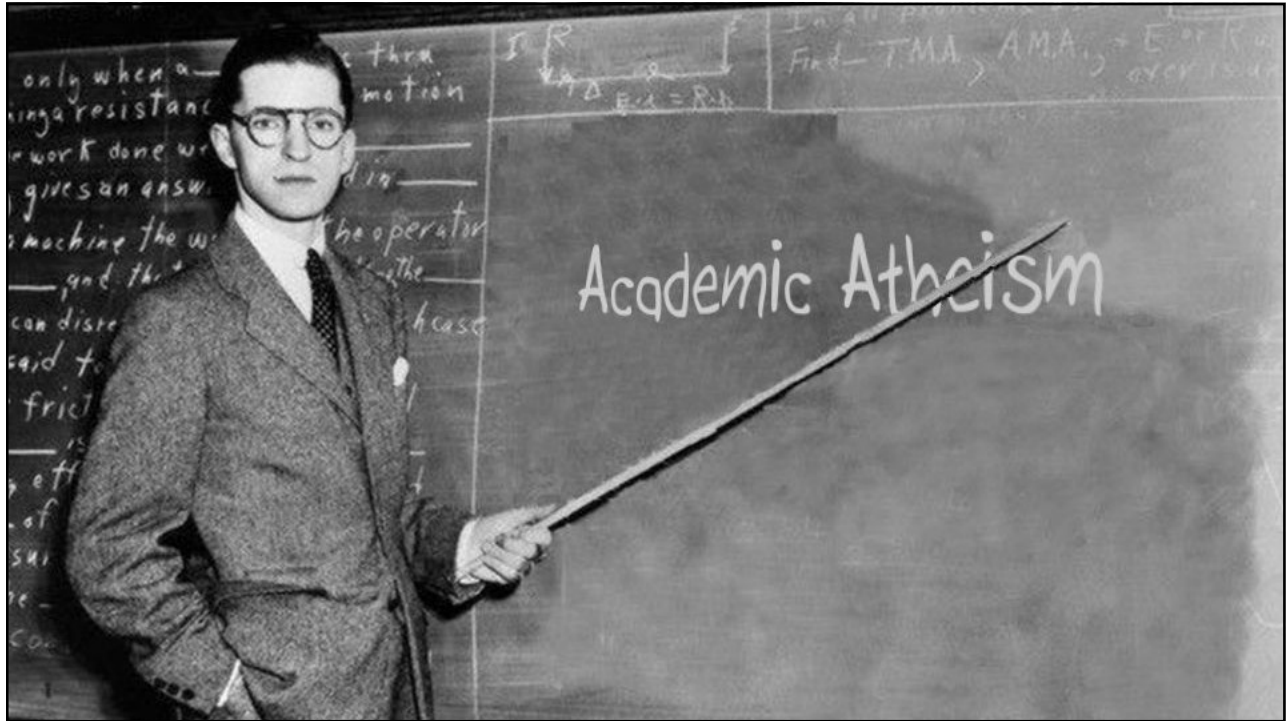
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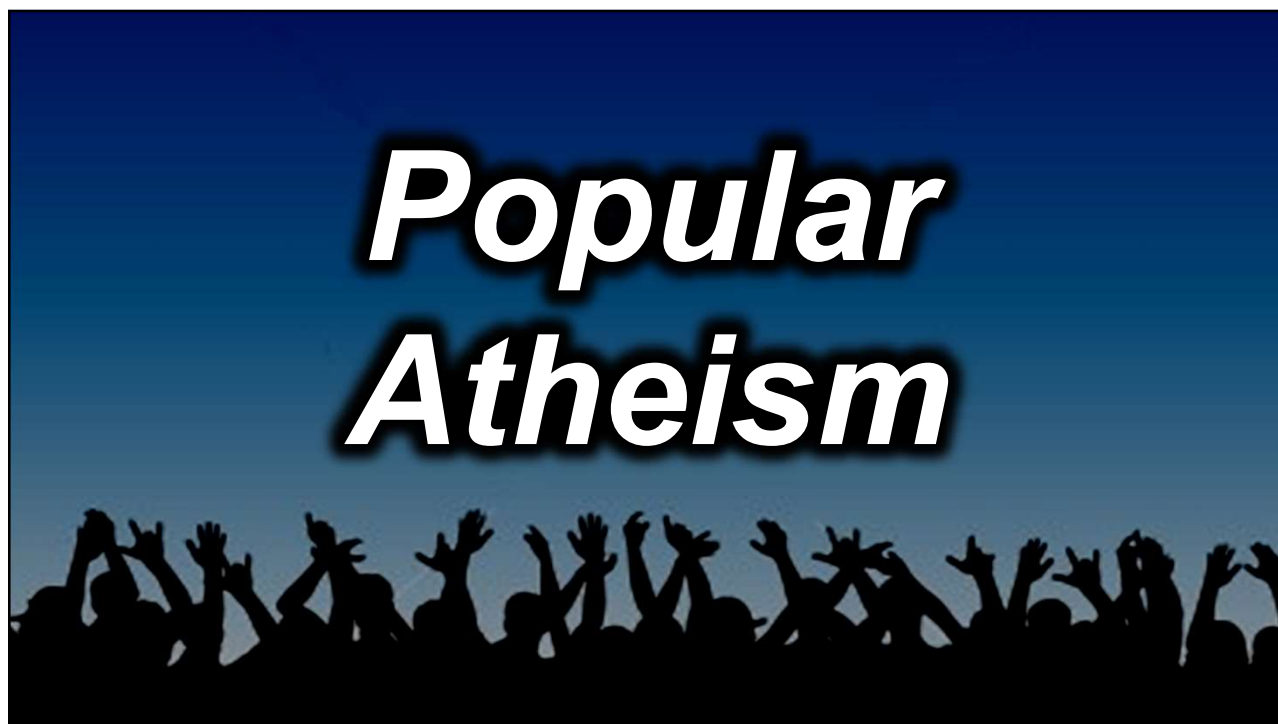
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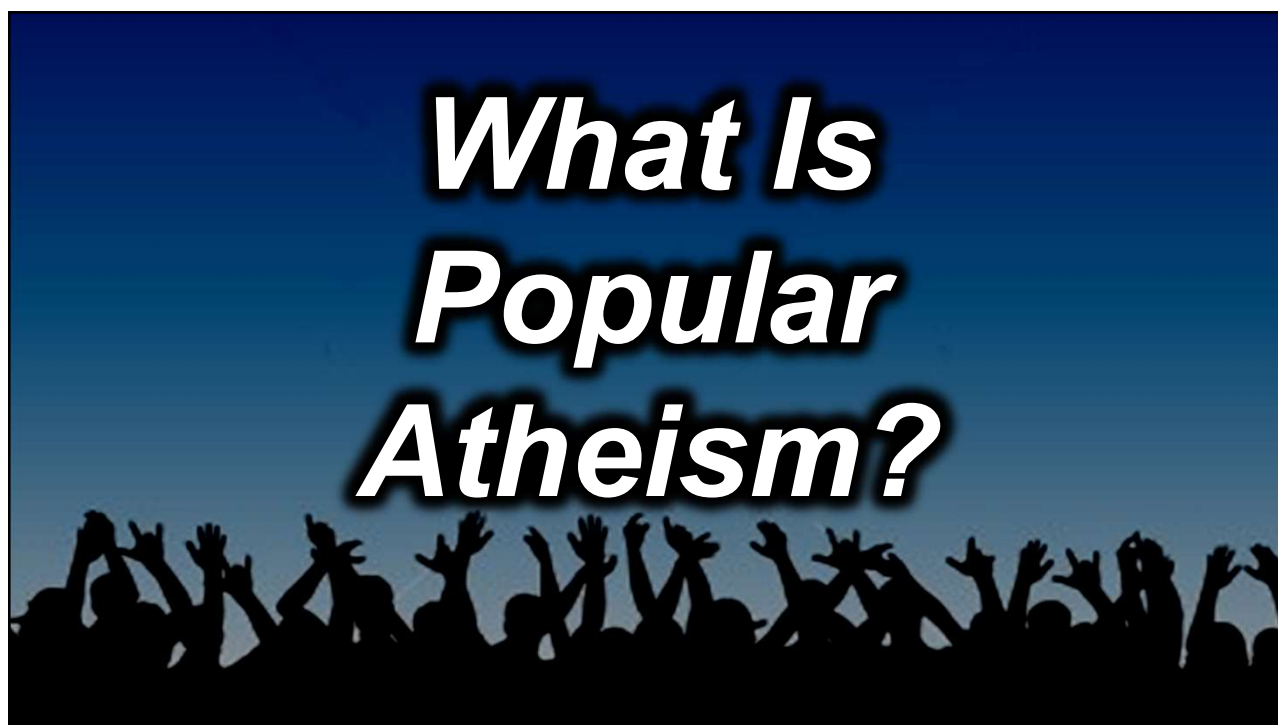
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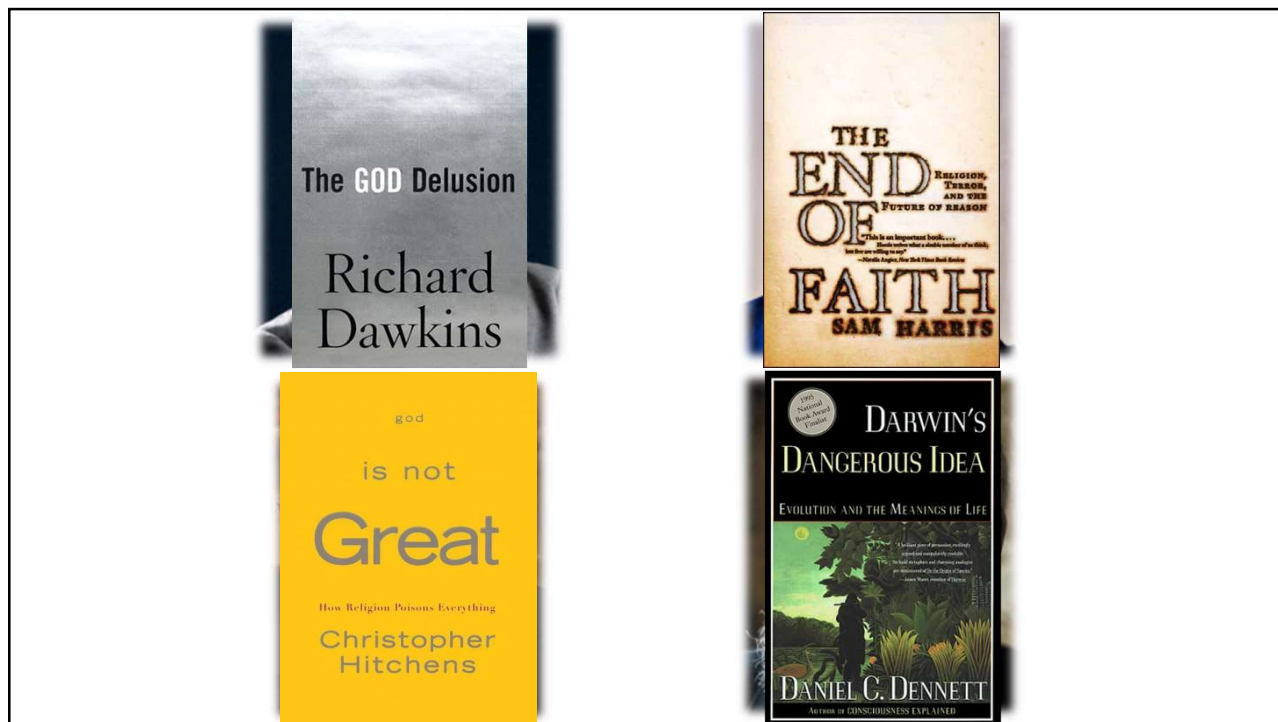
Who Are the Popular Atheists?



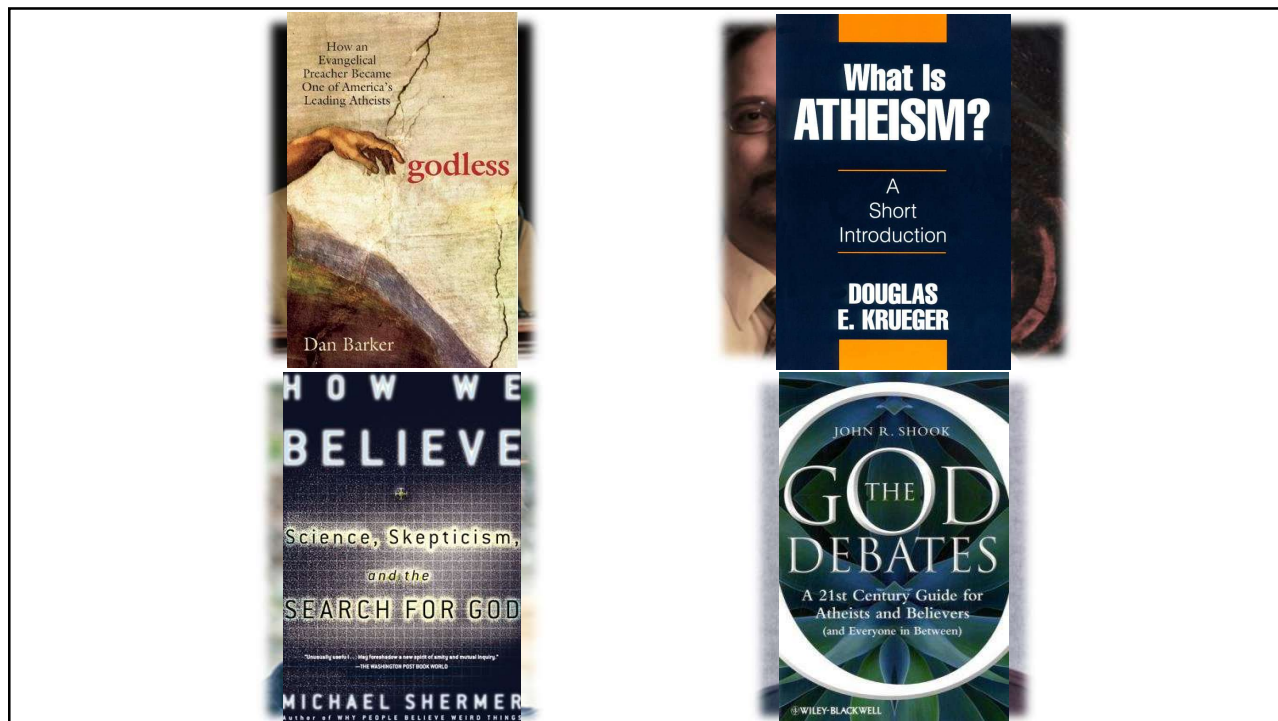
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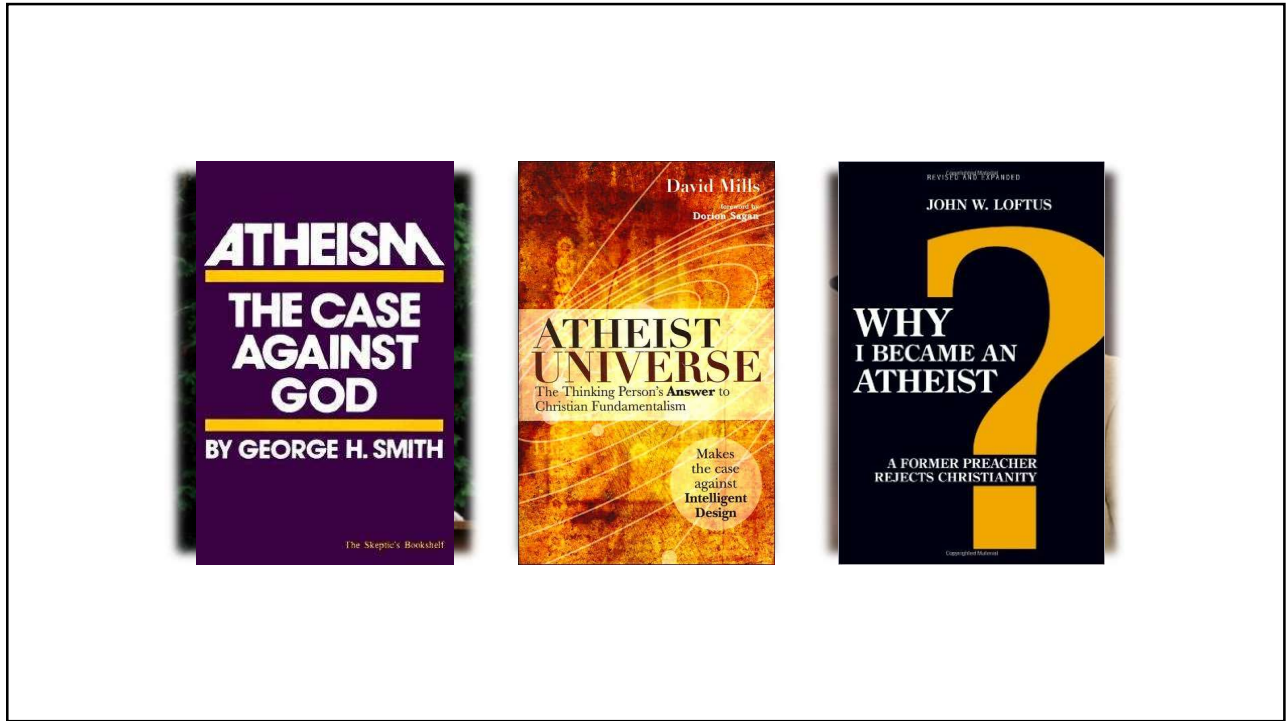
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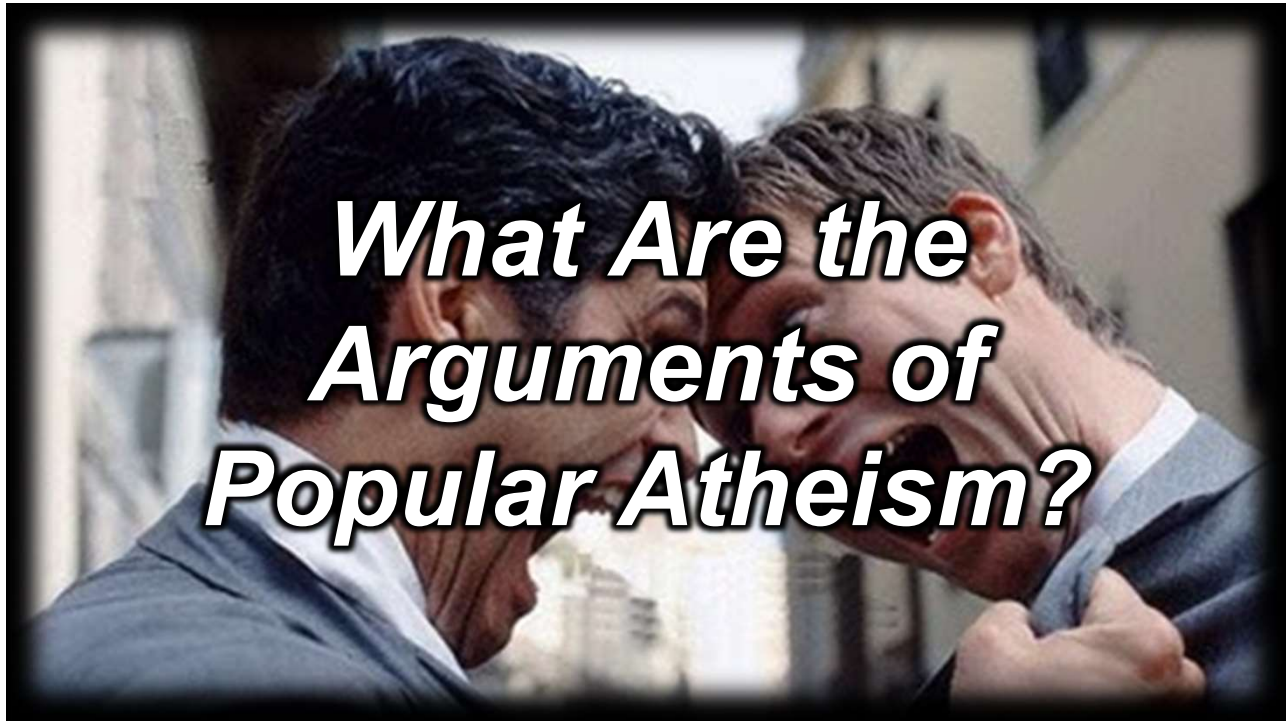
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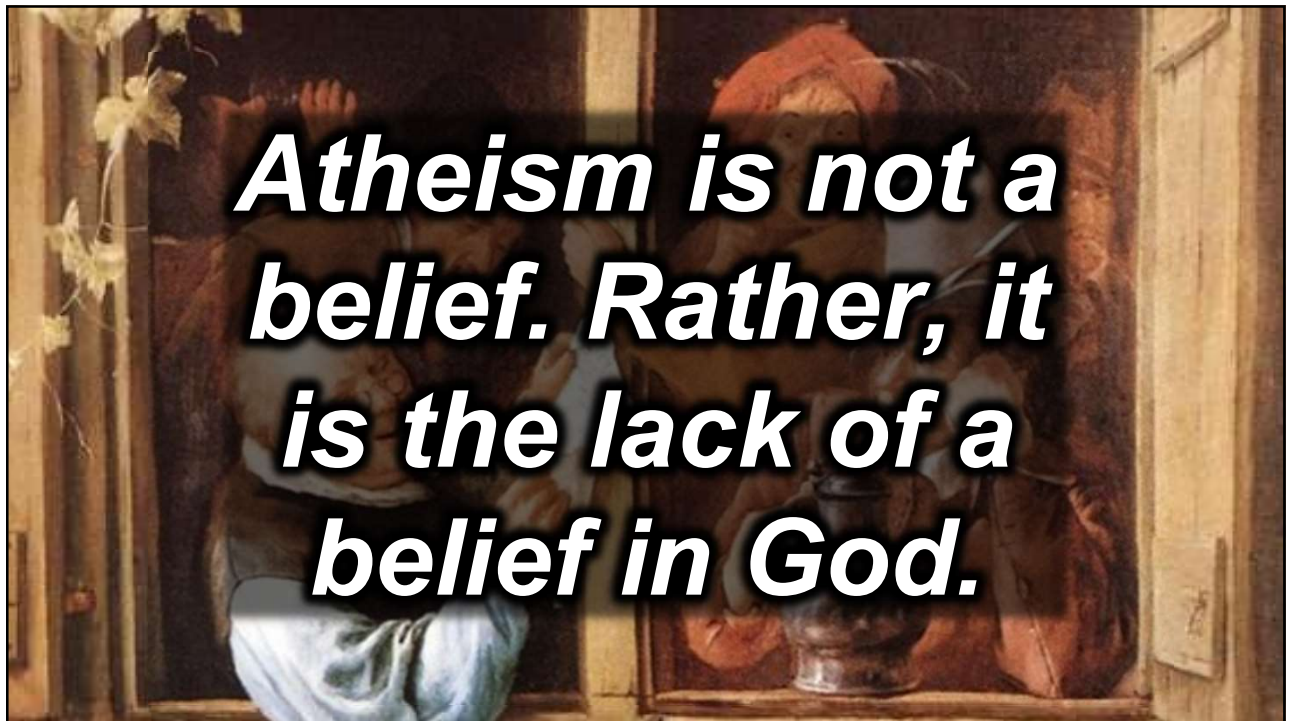


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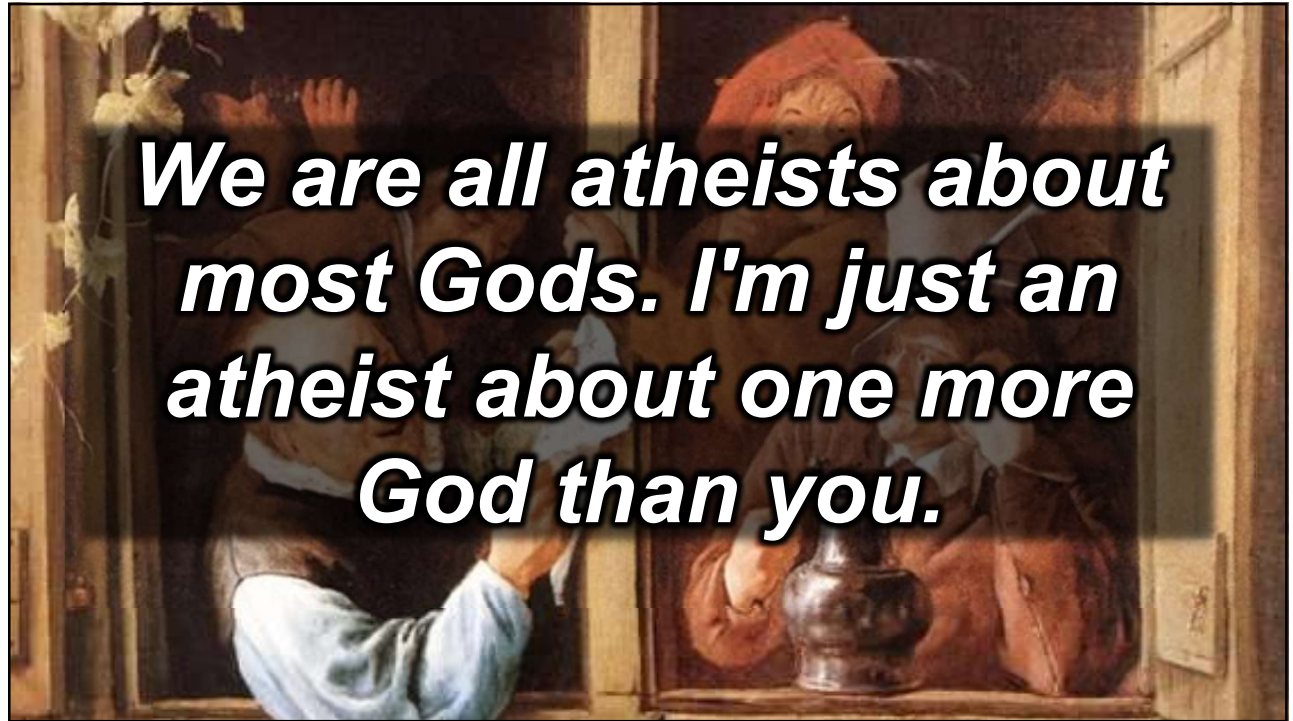
Rhetorical Arguments

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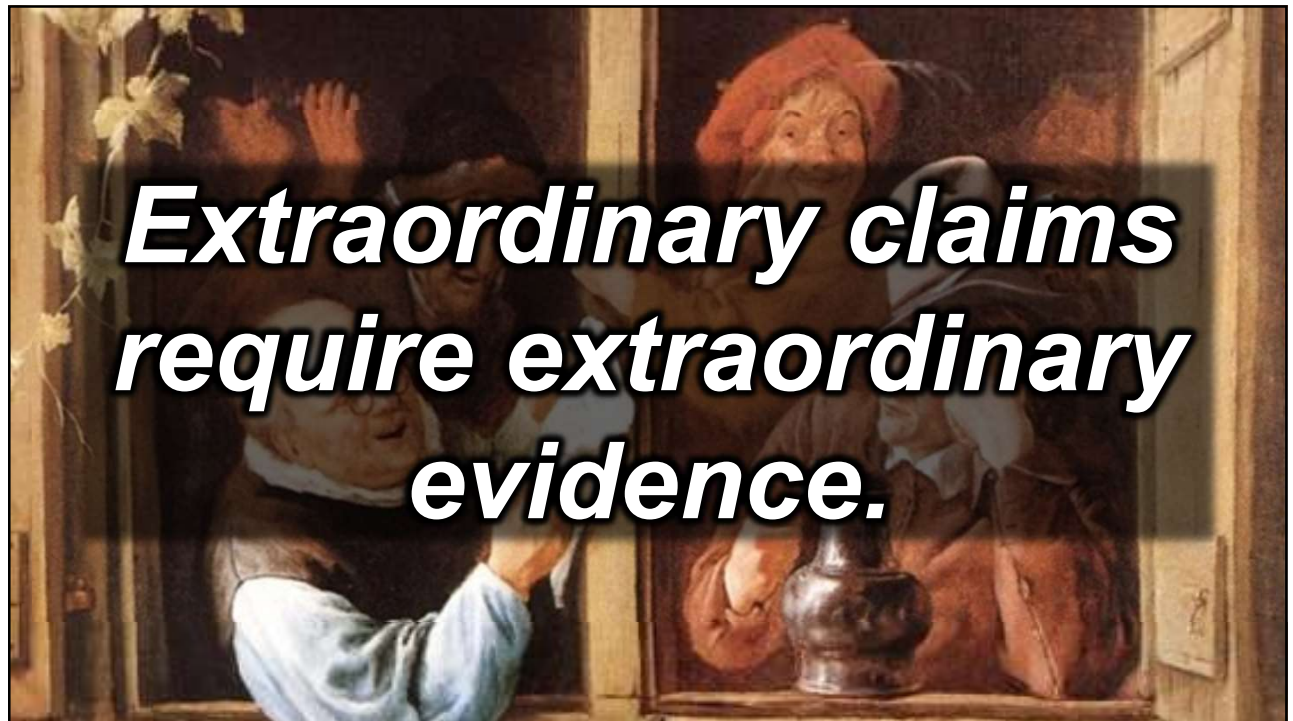
Atheism is not a belief. Rather, it is the lack of a belief in God.

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We are all atheists about most Gods. I'm just an atheist about one more God than you.

31



Extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence.

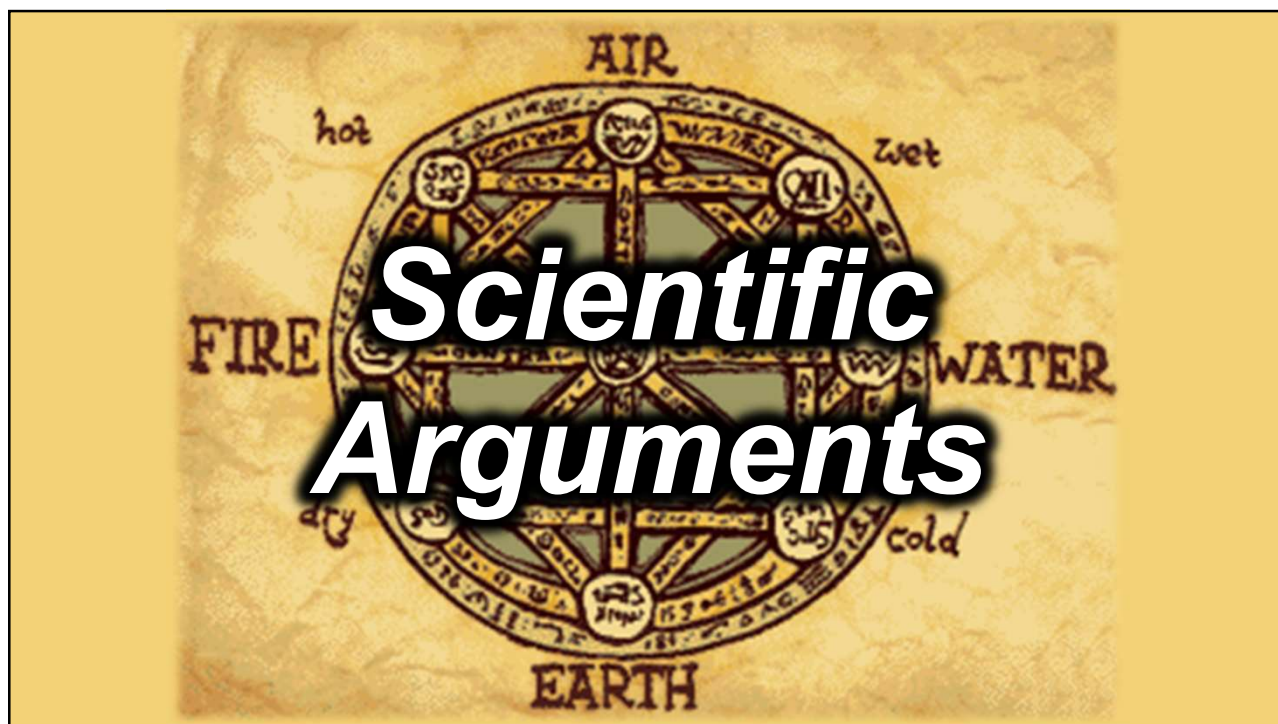
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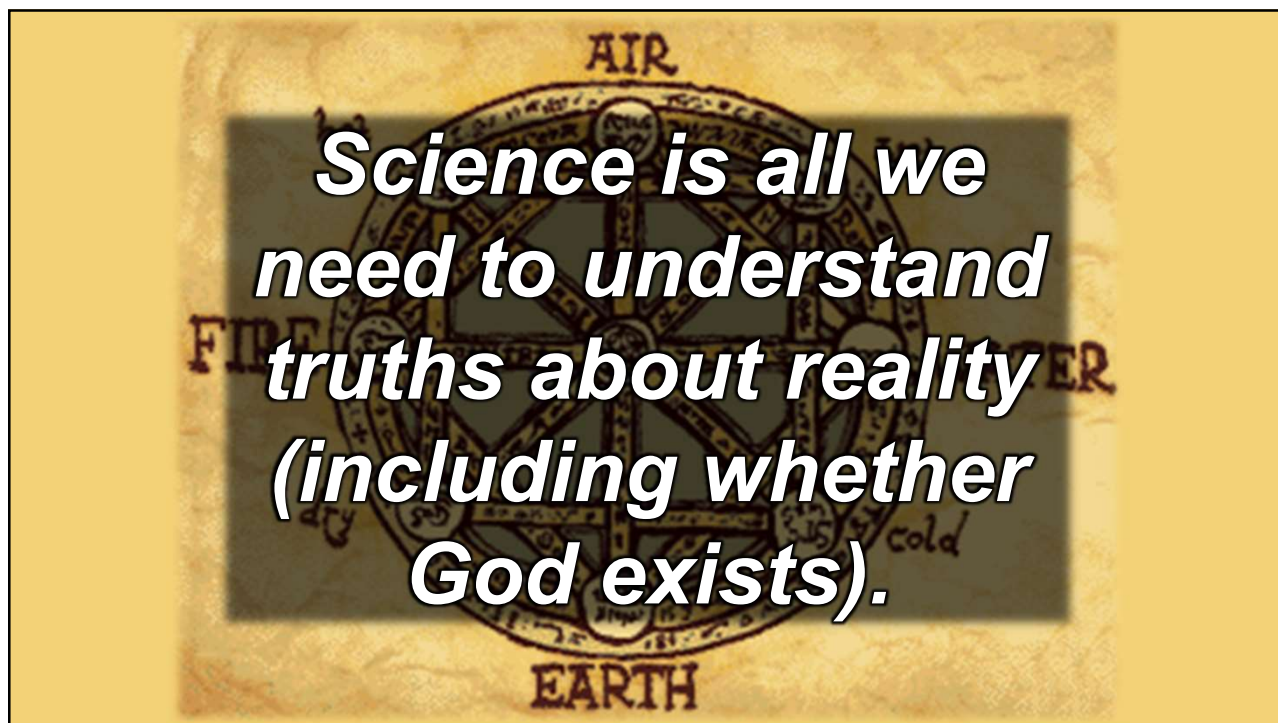
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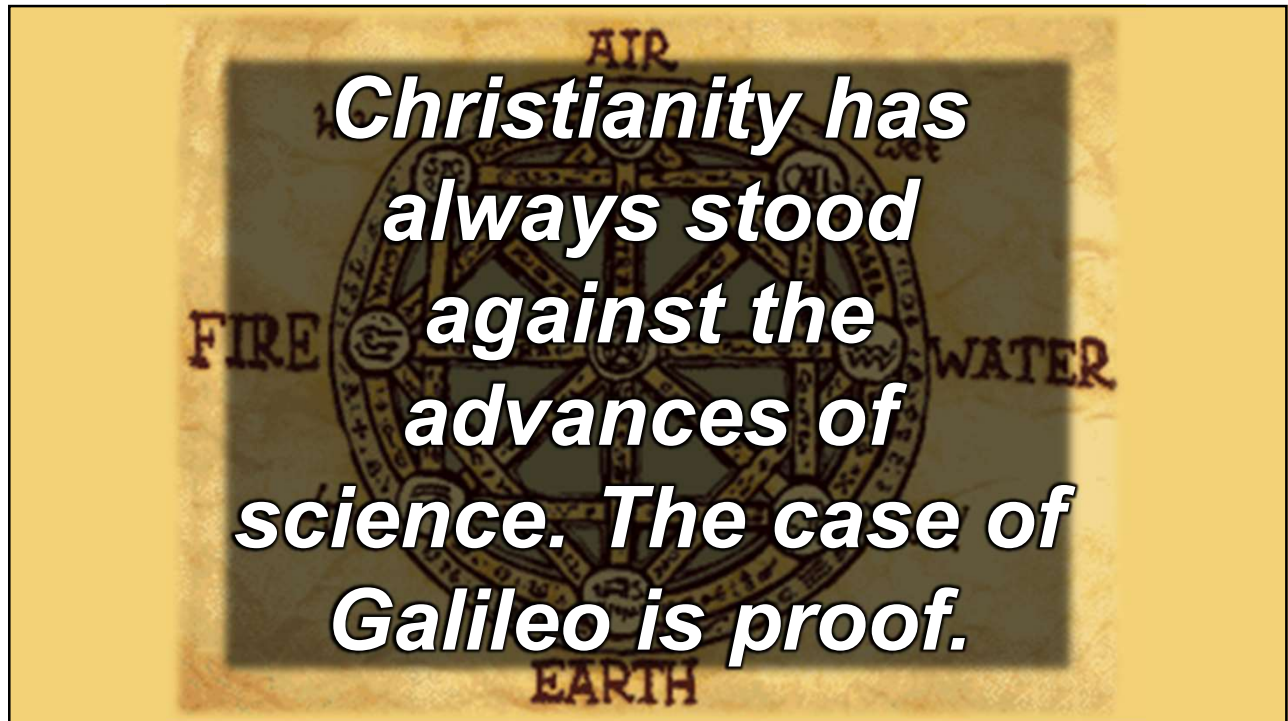
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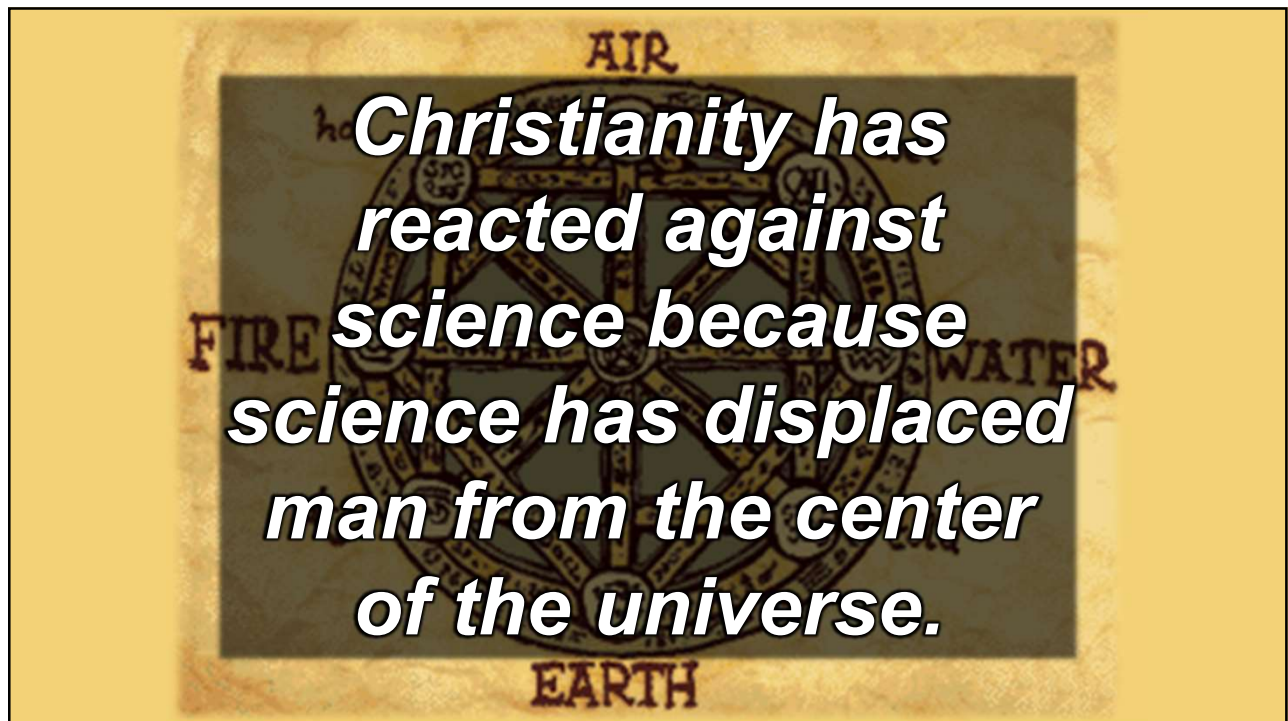
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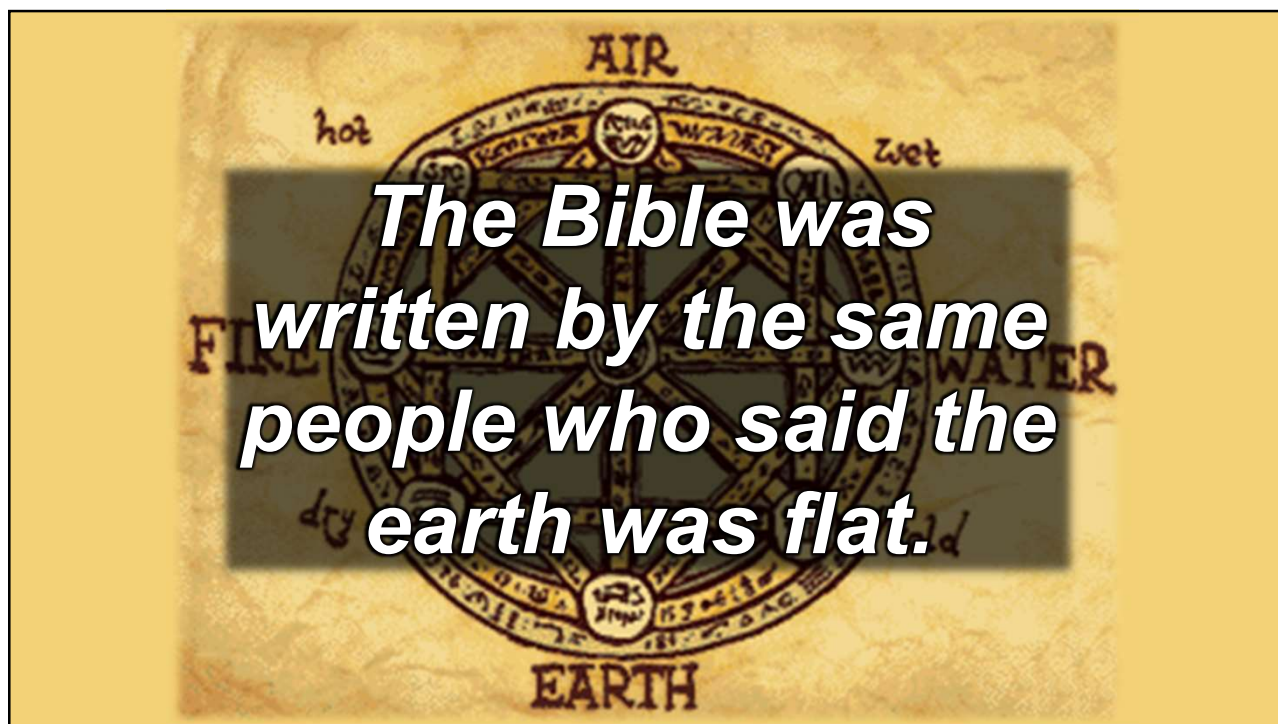
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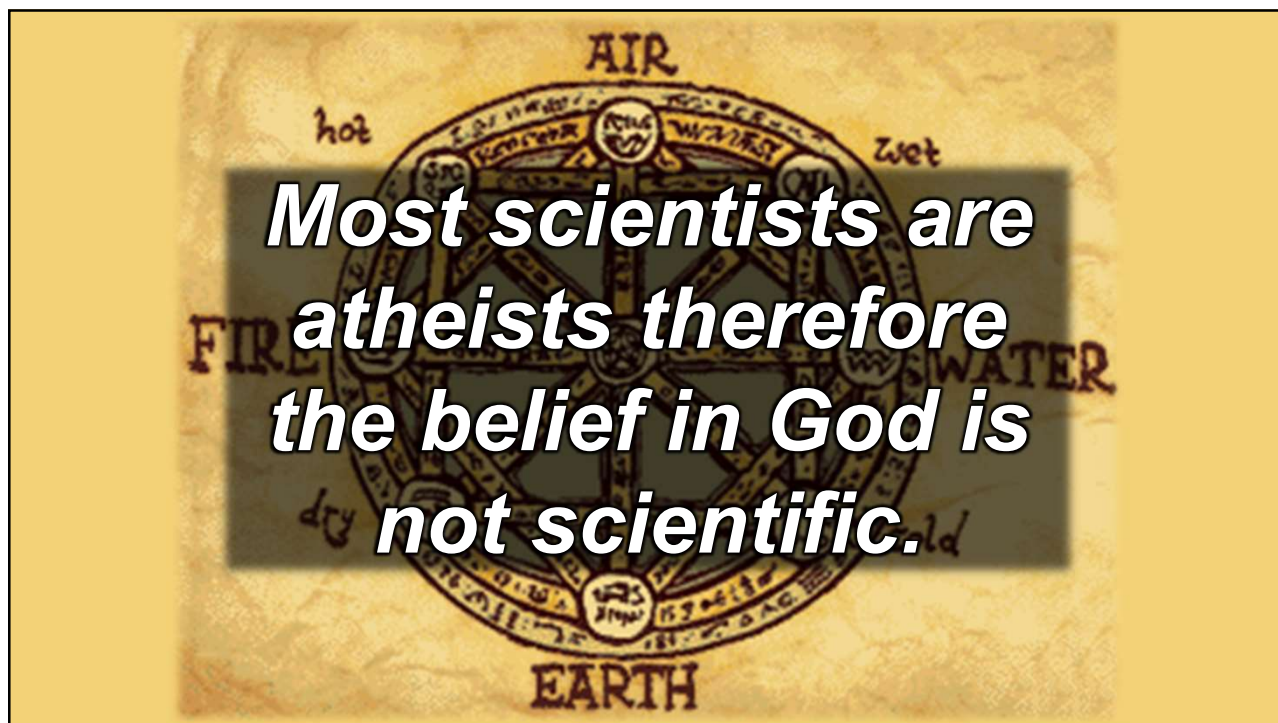
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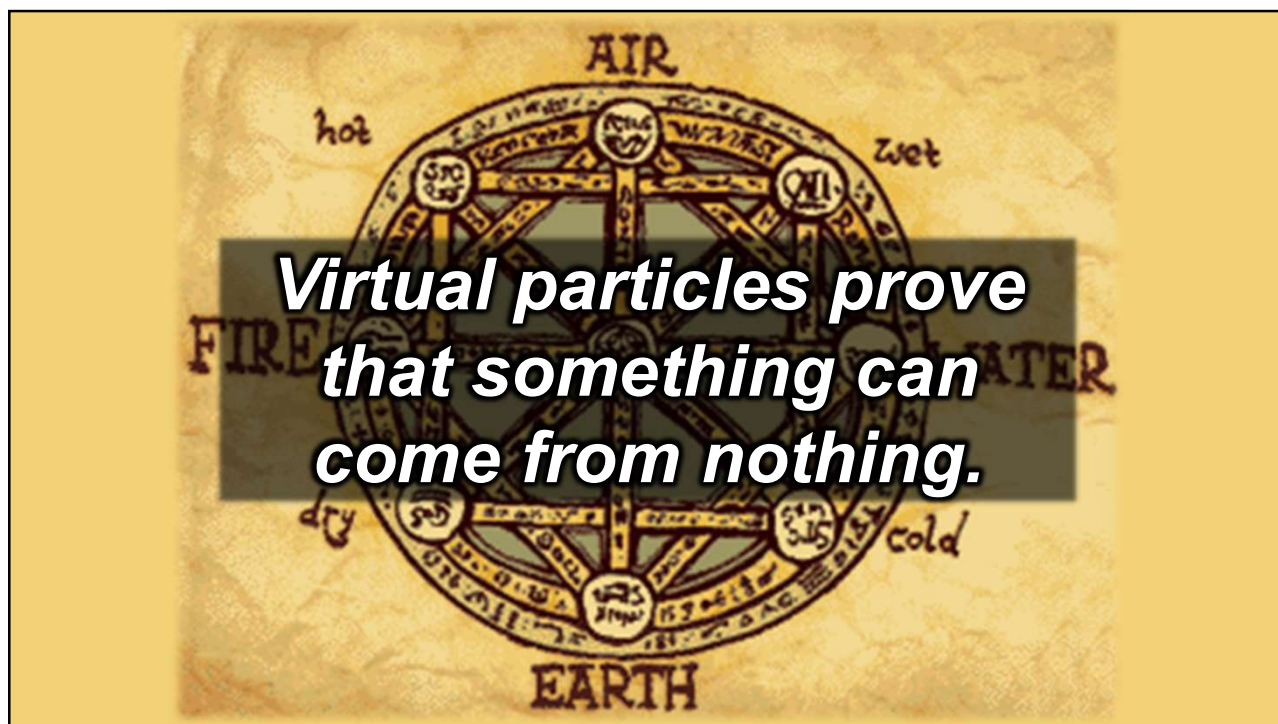
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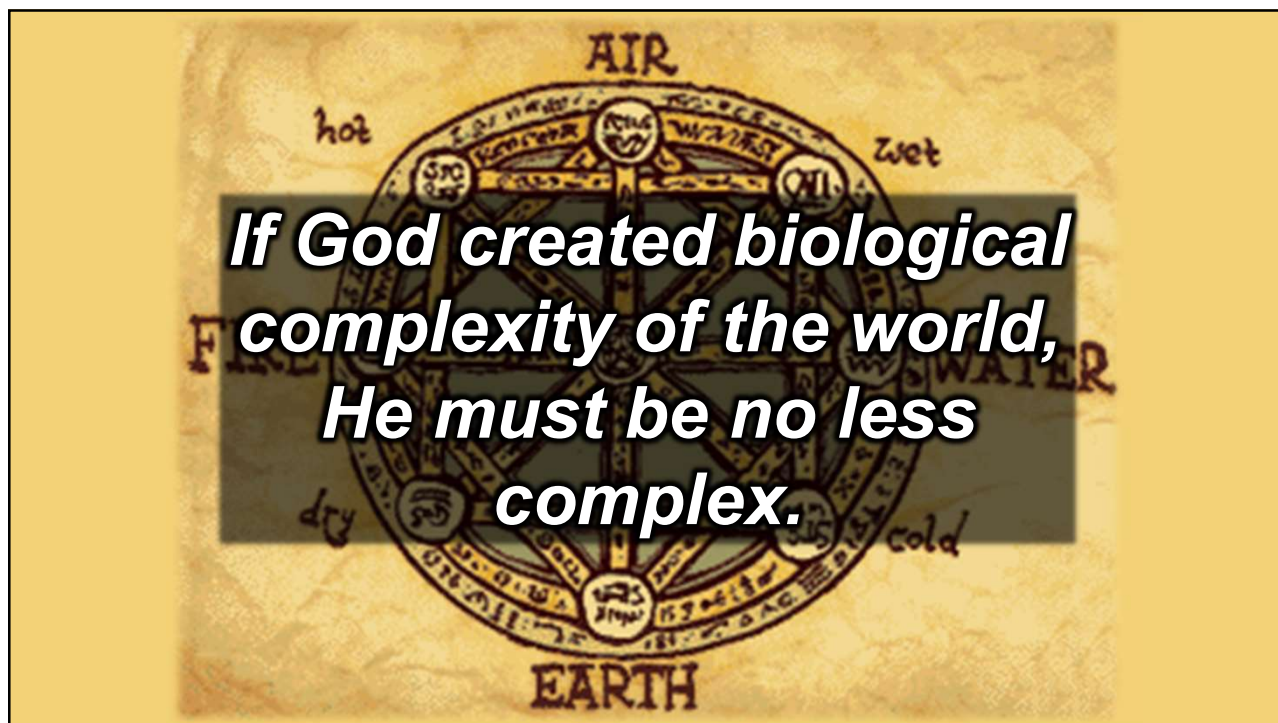
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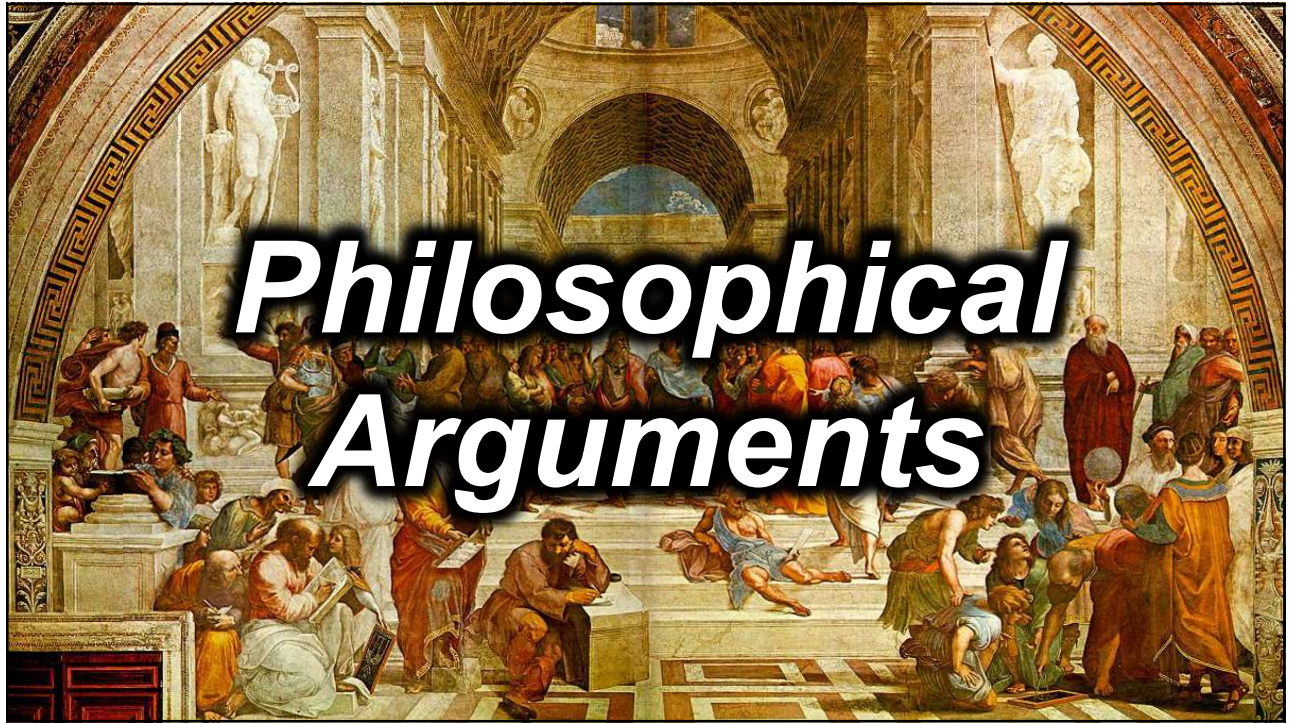
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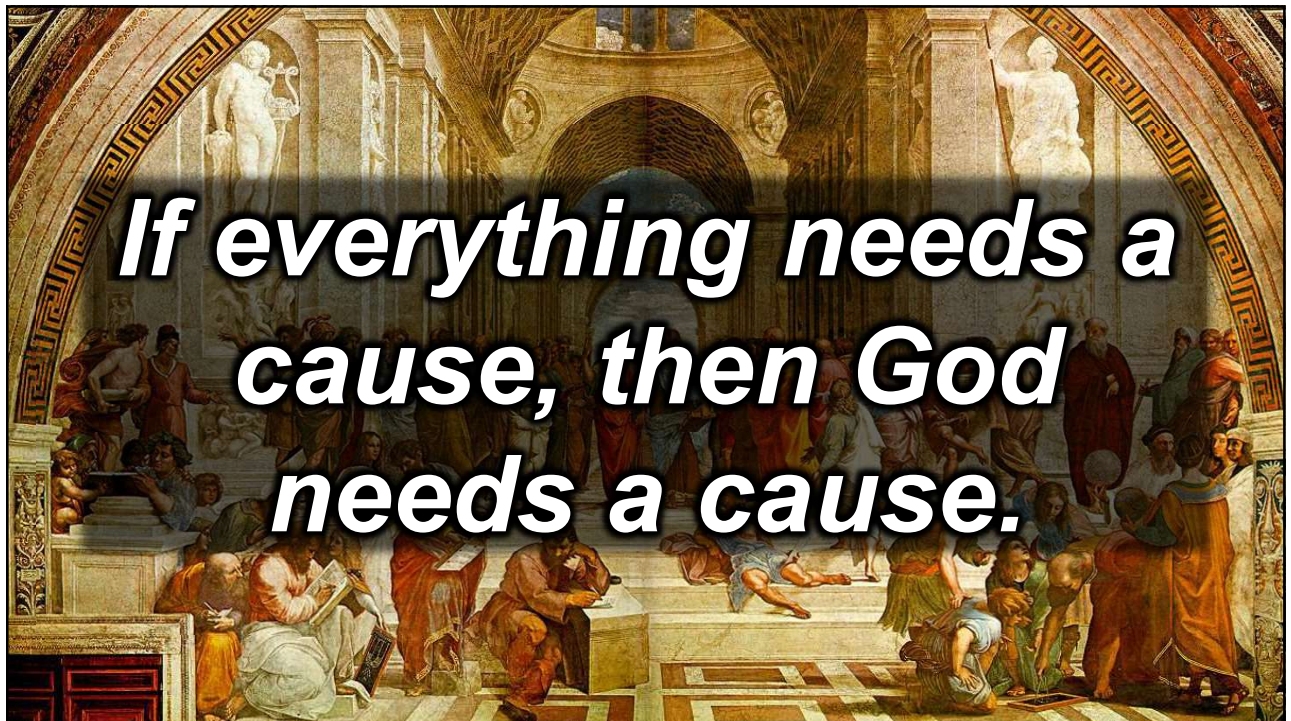
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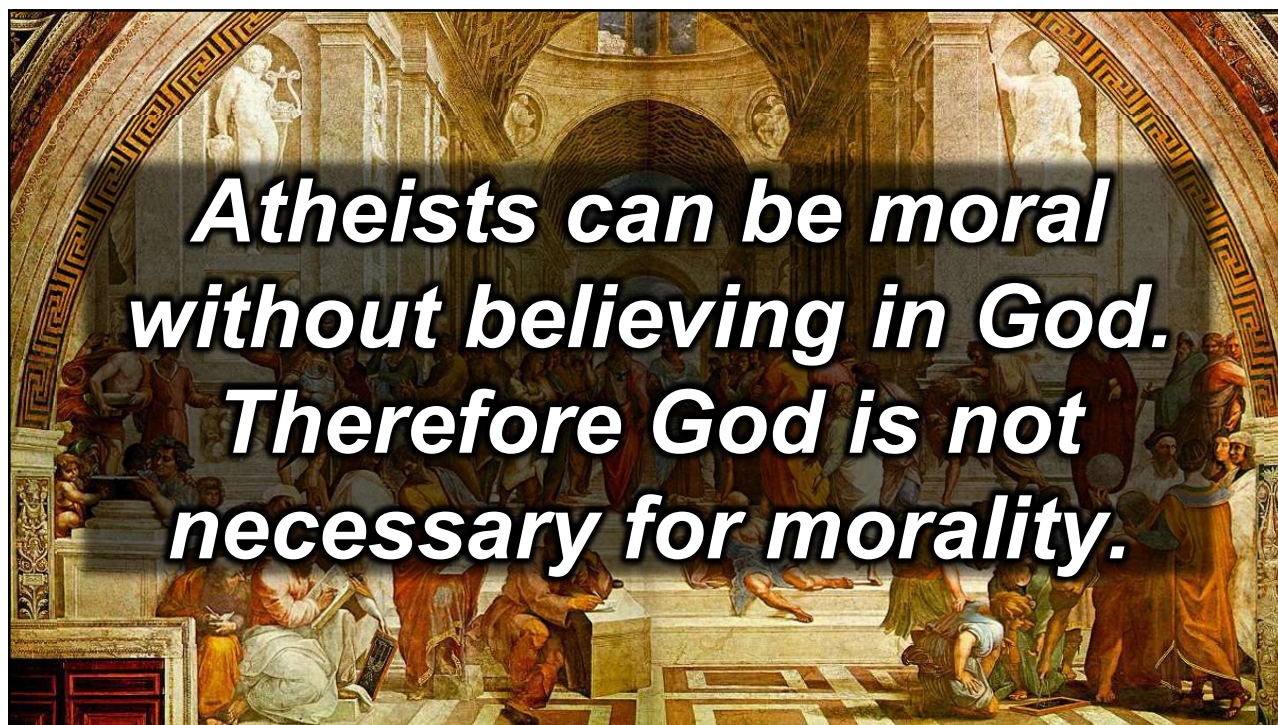
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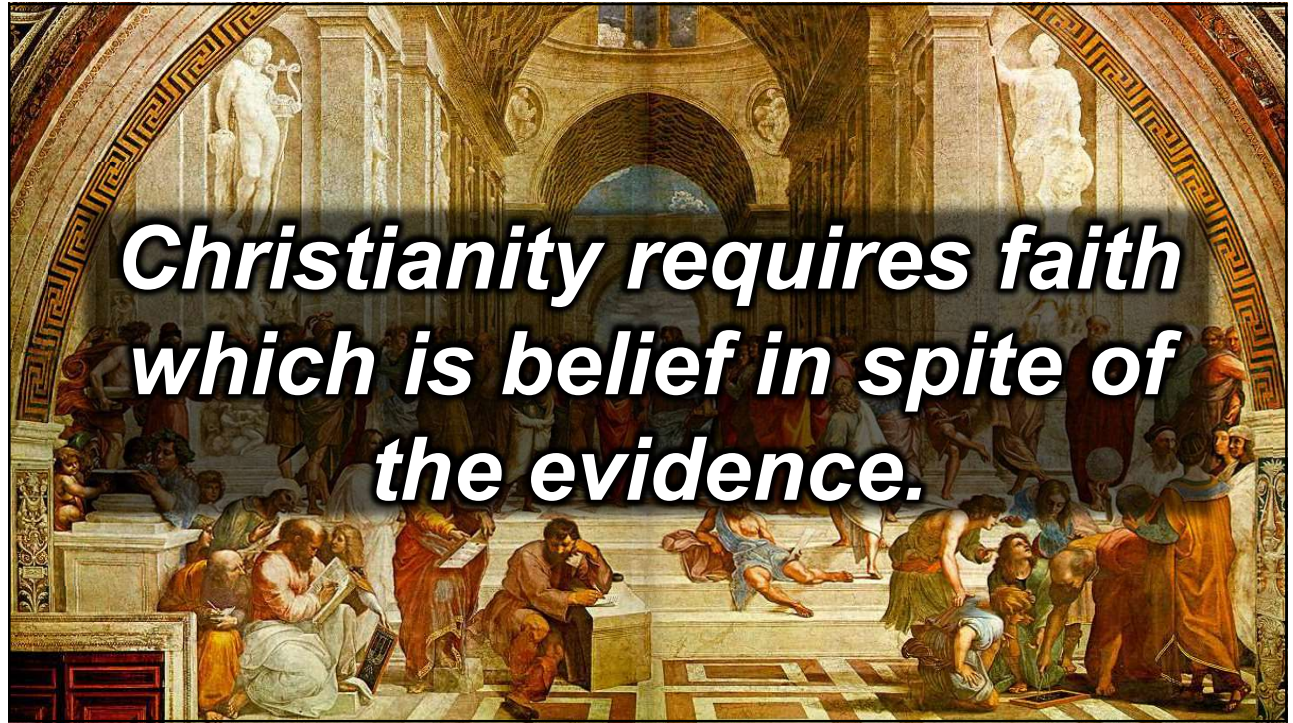
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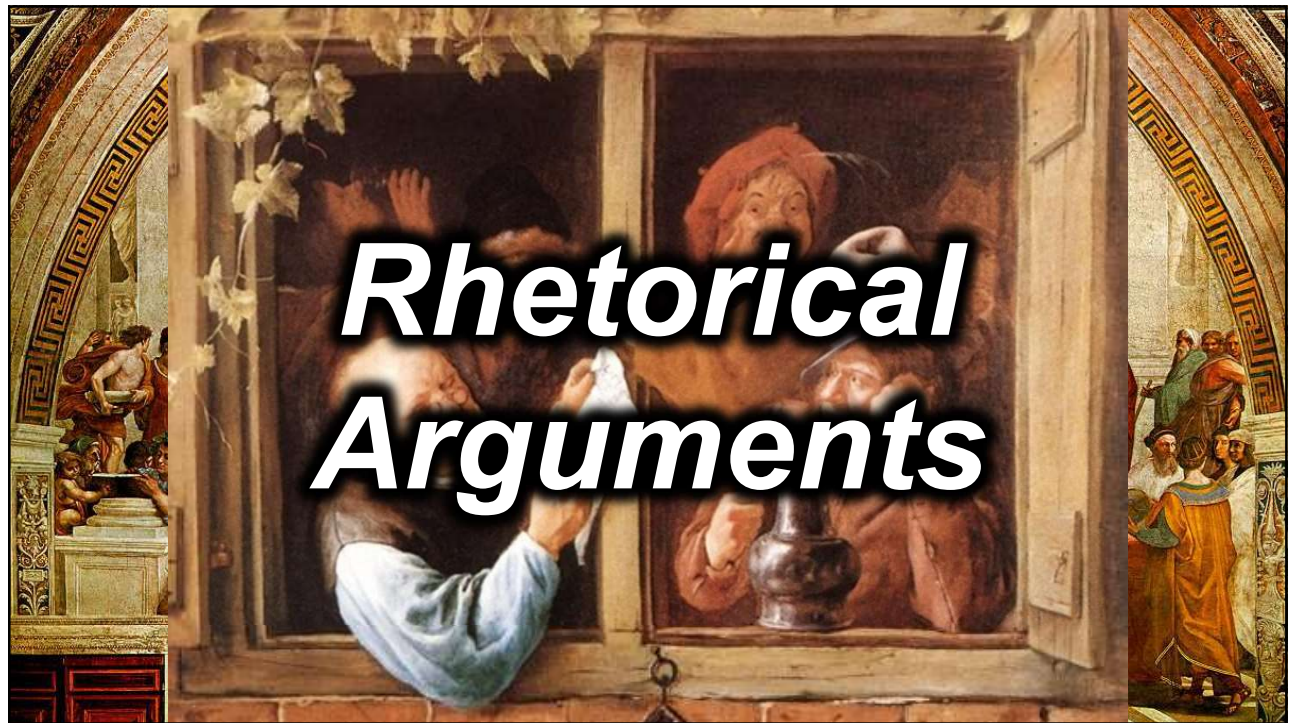
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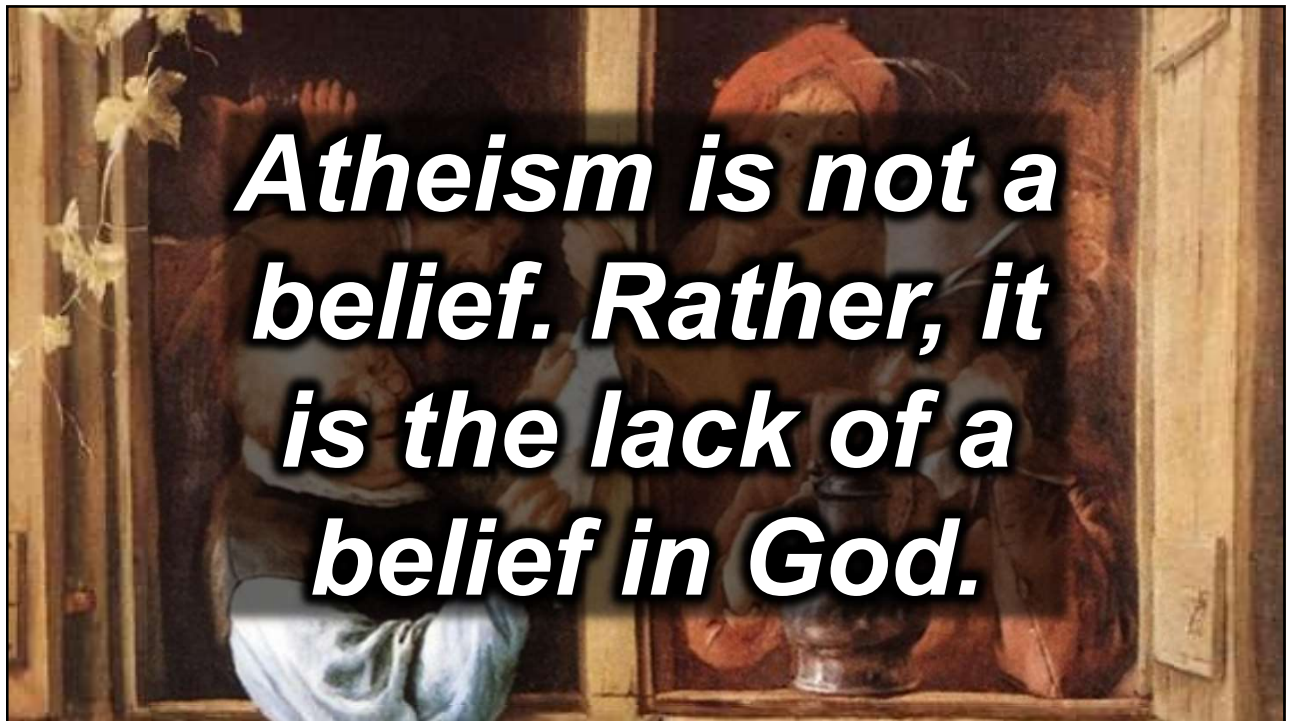
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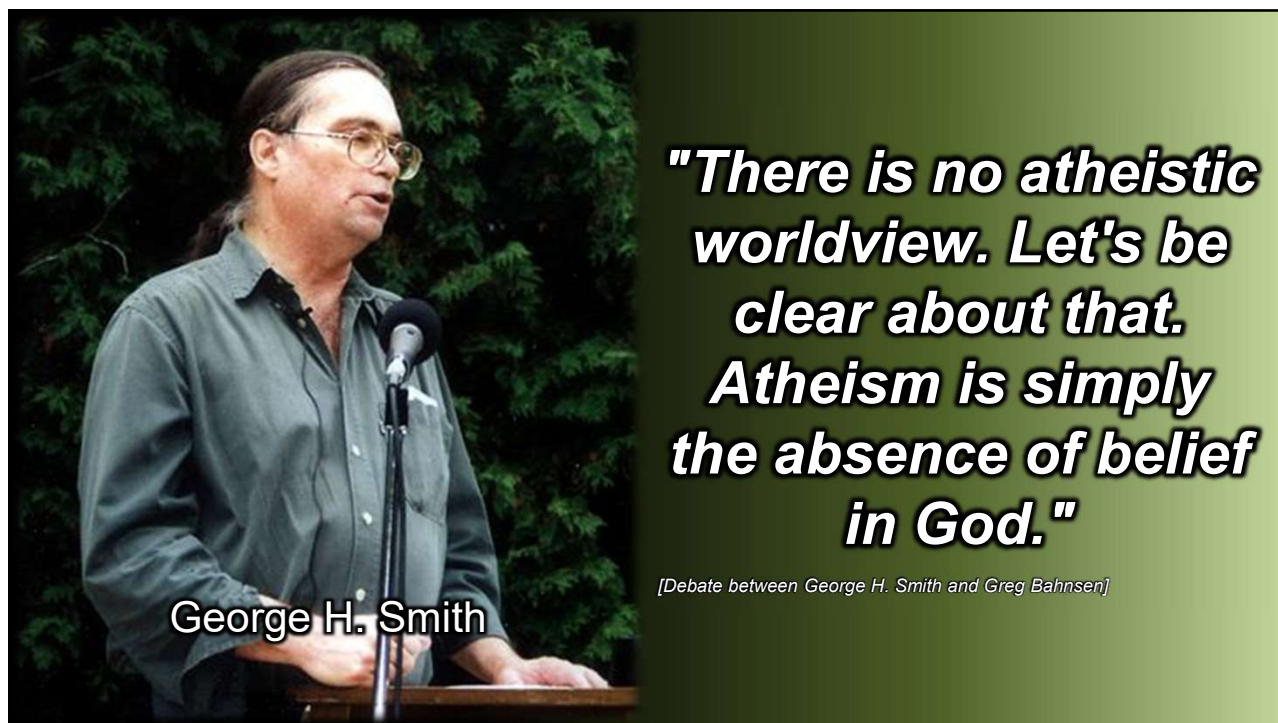
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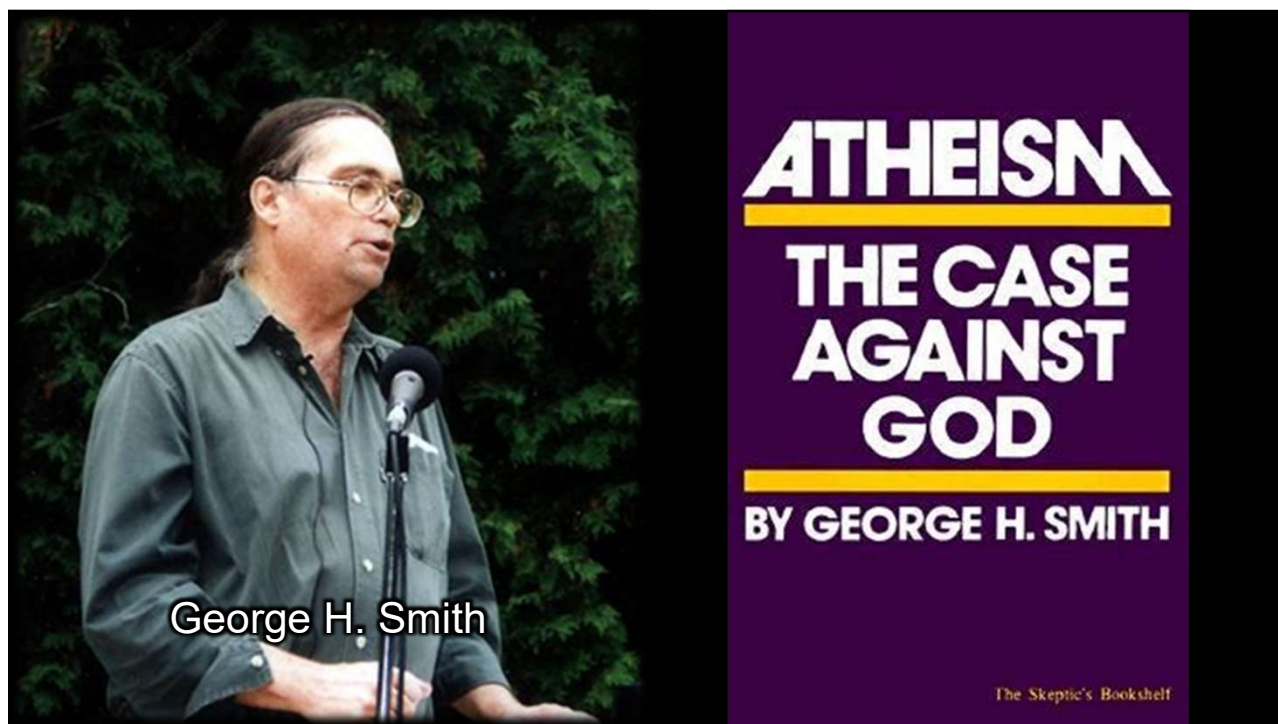
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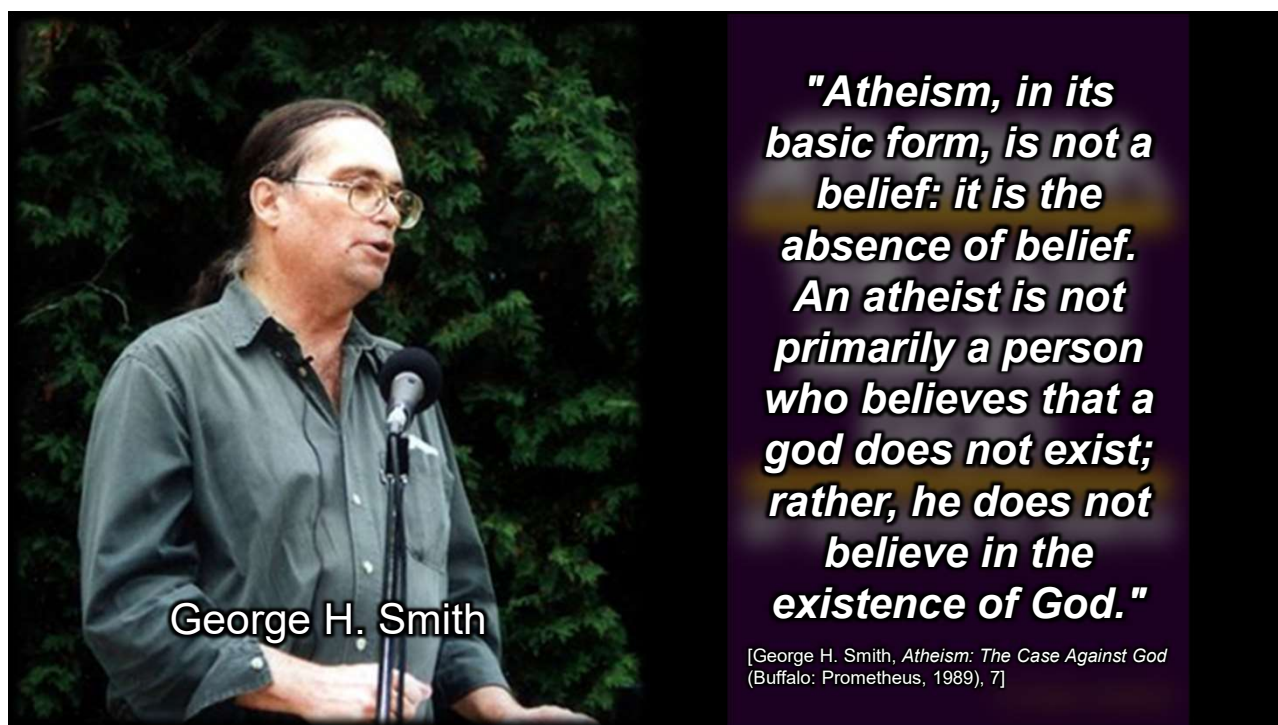
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George H. Smith

"From the mere fact that a person is an atheist, one cannot infer that this person subscribes to any particular positive belief"

[George H. Smith, *Atheism: The Case Against God* (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1989), 21]

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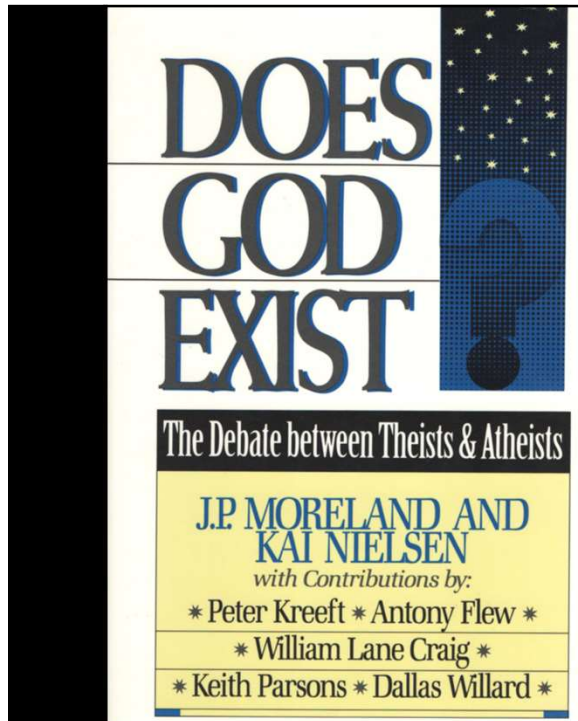
"From the mere fact that a person is an atheist, one cannot infer that this person subscribes to any particular positive belief"

[Smith, *Atheism*, 21, cf. p. 27]

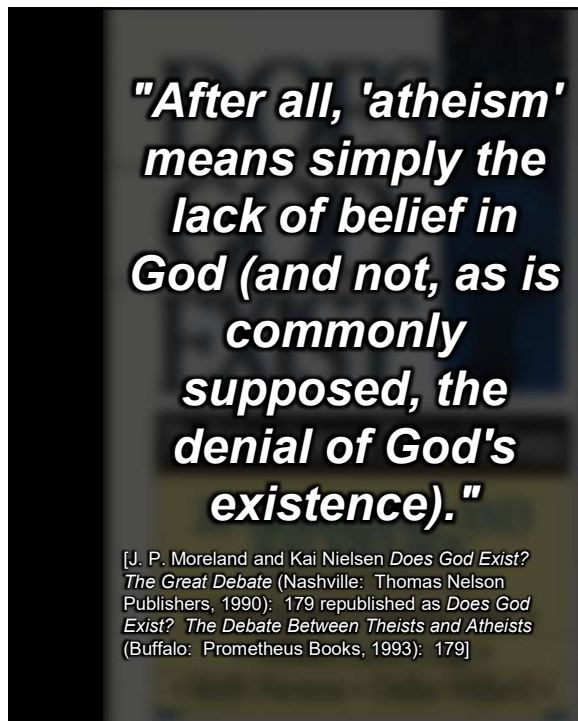
"If atheism is correct,

- *man is alone*
- *there is no god*
- *for knowledge, man must think for himself*
- *for success, man must work*
- *for happiness, man must strive to achieve it*
- *all of these are sole responsibility of man*

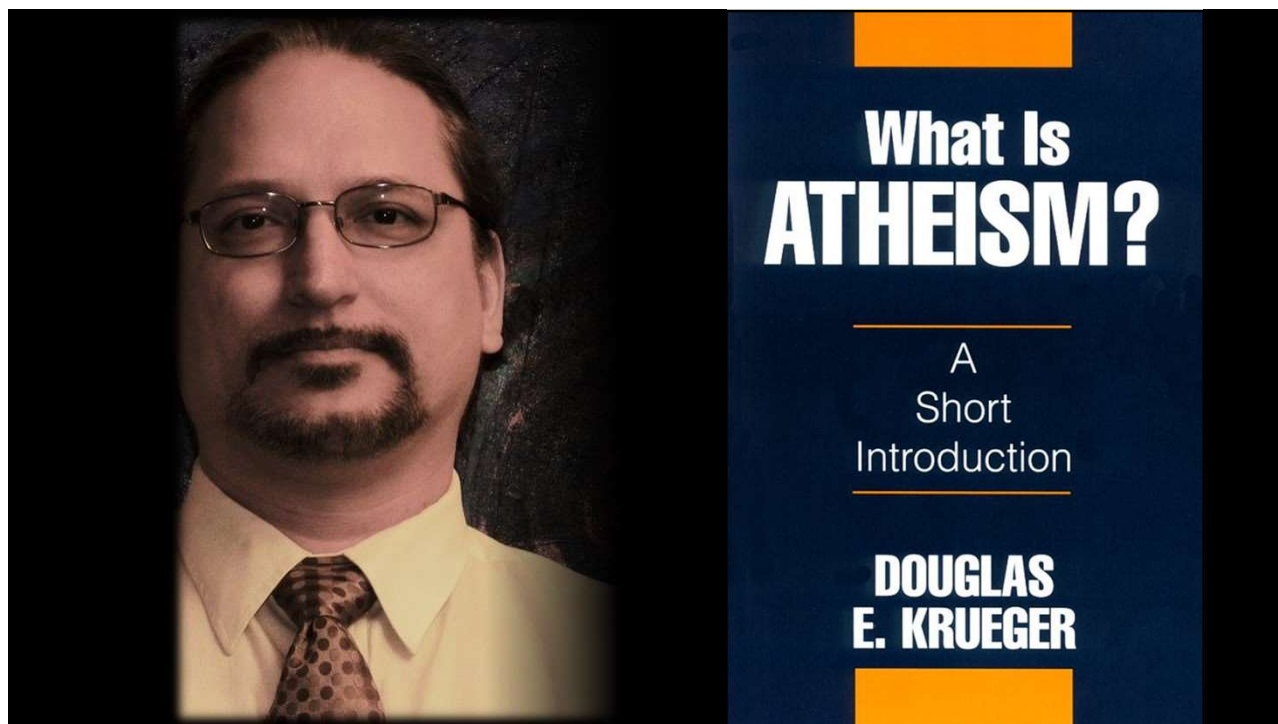
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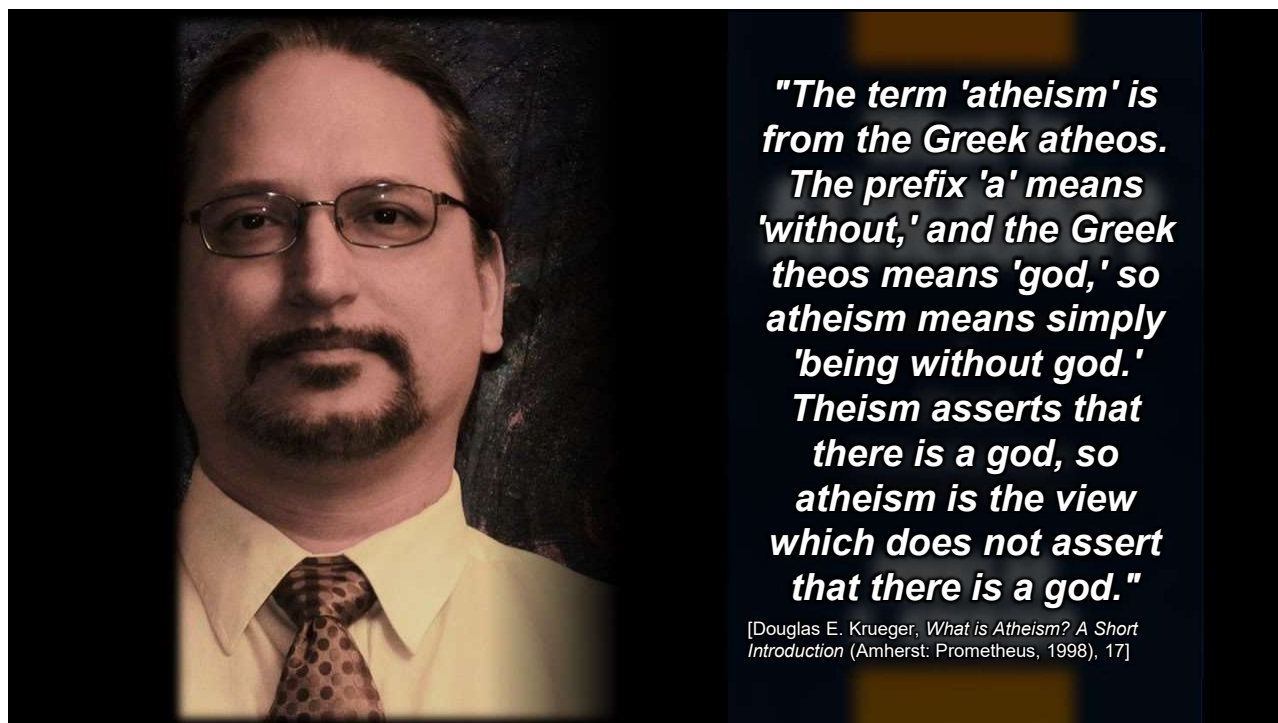
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64

"The term 'atheism' is from the Greek atheos. The prefix 'a' means 'without,' and the Greek theos means 'god,' so atheism means simply 'being without god.' Theism asserts that there is a god, so atheism is the view which does not assert that there is a god."

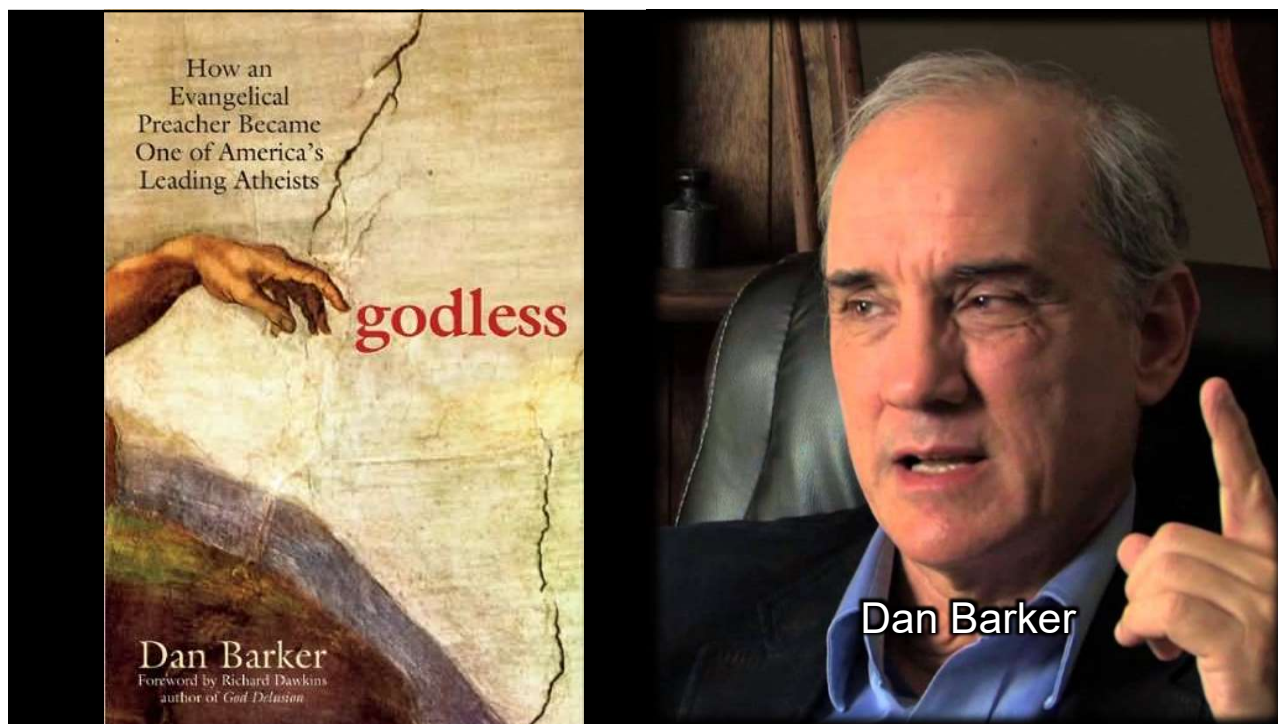
(Douglas E. Krueger, *What is Atheism? A Short Introduction* (Amherst: Prometheus, 1998), 17)

Notice that Krueger moves from the alpha negating 'god' (which would mean 'without god' or 'not-god') to the alpha negating the assertion (which means the absence of the assertion of god instead of the absence of god).

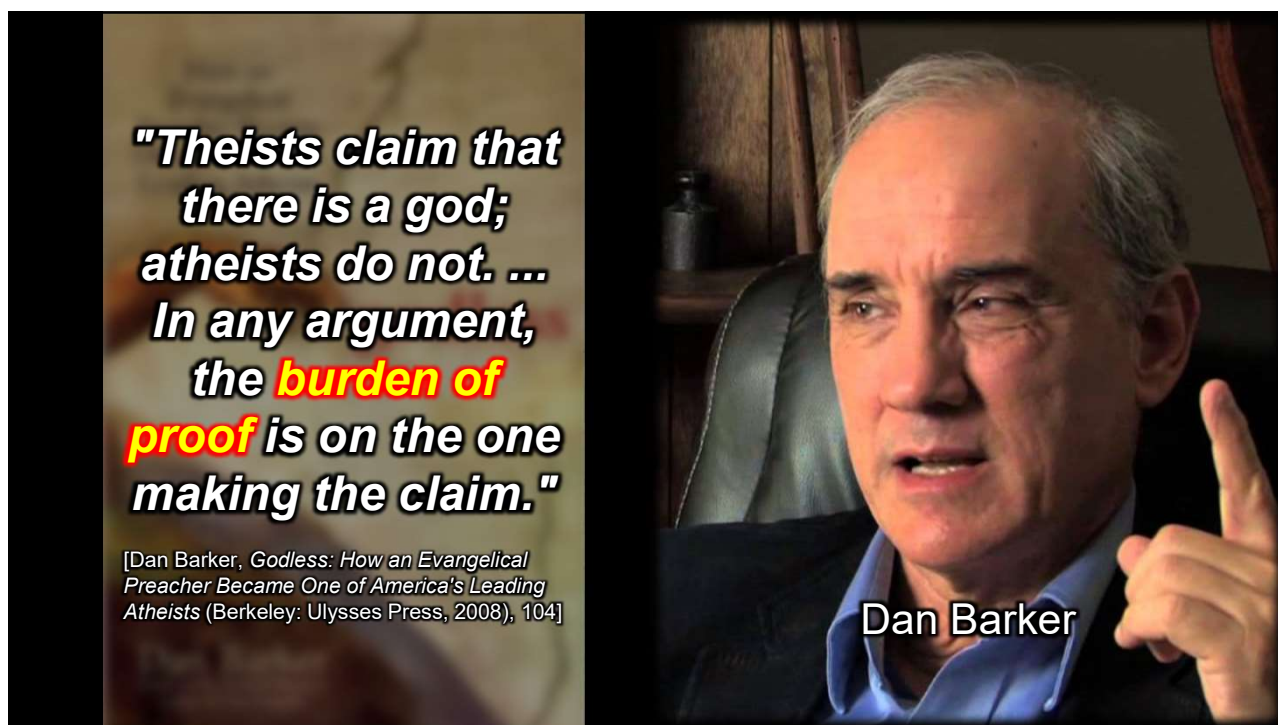
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What's at stake in the definition of atheism?

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67



68

"Theists believe in God, while atheists do not have such a belief. Many theists insist that it is the responsibility of the atheist to offer evidence justifying his lack of belief in God. But is the theist's demand rational? Must the atheist justify his lack of belief in God? Or does the burden rest with the theist?"

[B. C. Johnson, *The Atheist Debater's Handbook* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1983): 11]

The Atheist Debater's Handbook

by B. C. Johnson

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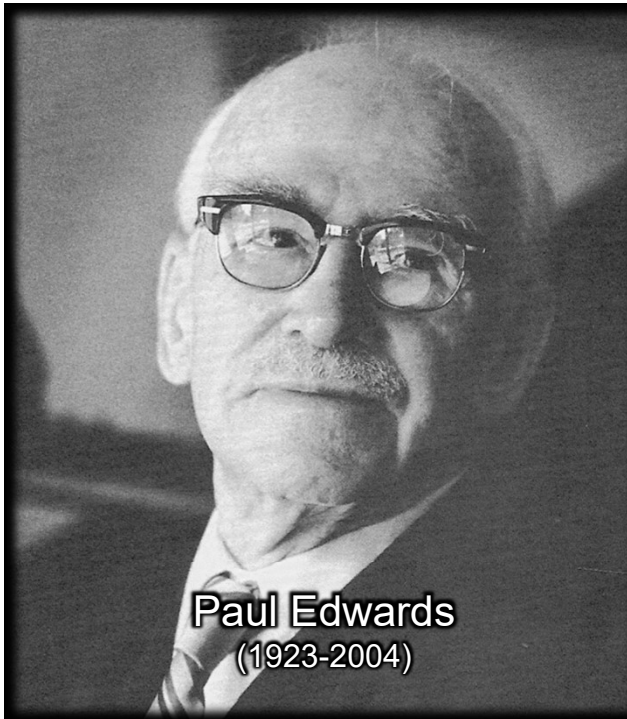


70



First, this definition conflicts with the standard academic definition of atheism.

71



Paul Edwards
(1923-2004)

"According to the most usual definition, an 'atheist' is a person who maintains that there is no God, that is, that the sentence 'God exists' expresses a false proposition."

[Paul Edwards ed. in chief, *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1967); s.v. "Atheism," p. 175.]

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"[A]theism is not to be identified with sheer unbelief.... A child who has received no religious instruction ... is not an atheist—for he is not denying any theistic claims."

[Ernest Nagel, "Philosophical Concepts of Atheism" in *Critiques of God: Making the Case Against Belief in God*, Peter A. Angeles, ed. pp. 4-5]



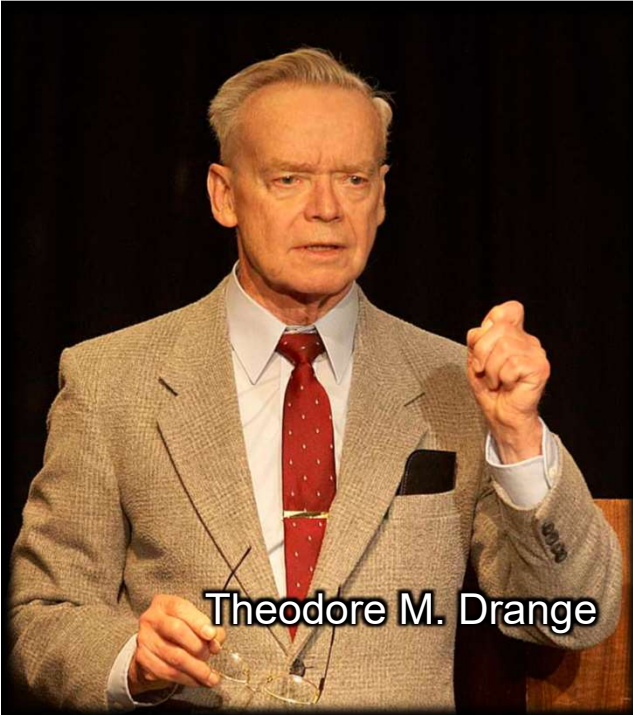
Ernest Nagel
(1901-1985)

73



Second, this definition entails an absurdity if not an outright contradiction.

74

A photograph of Theodore M. Drange, an older man with white hair, wearing a light-colored suit jacket, a white shirt, and a red tie. He is standing at a podium, gesturing with his right hand while holding glasses in his left. The background is dark.

Theodore M. Drange

"Is the proposition that God exists true or false? You are a theist if and only if you say that the proposition is true or probably true, you are an atheist if and only if you say that it is false or probably false, and you are an agnostic if and only if you understand what the proposition is, but resist giving either answer, and support your resistance by saying, 'The evidence is insufficient' (or words to that effect)."

[Theodore M. Drange "Atheism, Agnosticism, Noncognitivism," from https://infidels.org/library/modern/theodore_drange/definition.html, accessed 01/15/19]

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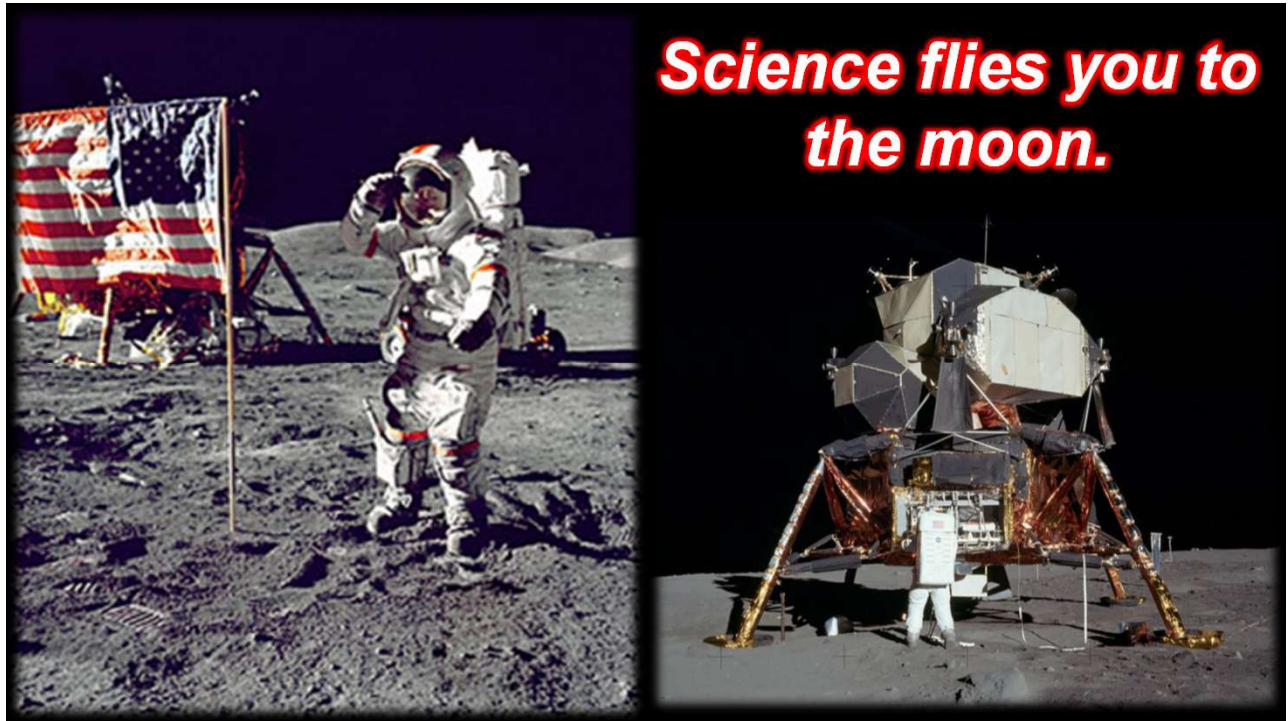
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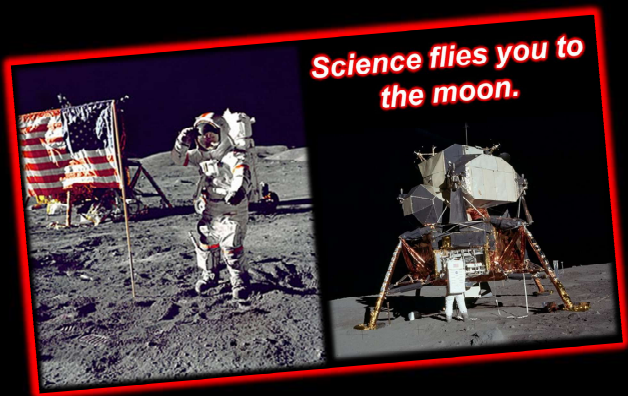
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***Religion flies you
into buildings.***



81

***Science is good.
Religion is bad.***



***Science flies you to
the moon.***



***Religion flies you
into buildings.***

82



83



84



85



86

***Government protects
the innocent and
establishes justice.***



87

***The private sector
robs and pillages
the innocent and
flouts justice.***



88

Government is good. The private sector is bad.

**Government protects
the innocent and
establishes justice.**



**The private sector
robs and pillages
the innocent and
flouts justice.**



89

**The private sector
contributes to
community
flourishing.**



**BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation**

90



91

**The private sector is good.
Government is bad.**

**The private sector
contributes to
community
flourishing.**



**BILL & MELINDA
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**Government
murders the
innocent.**



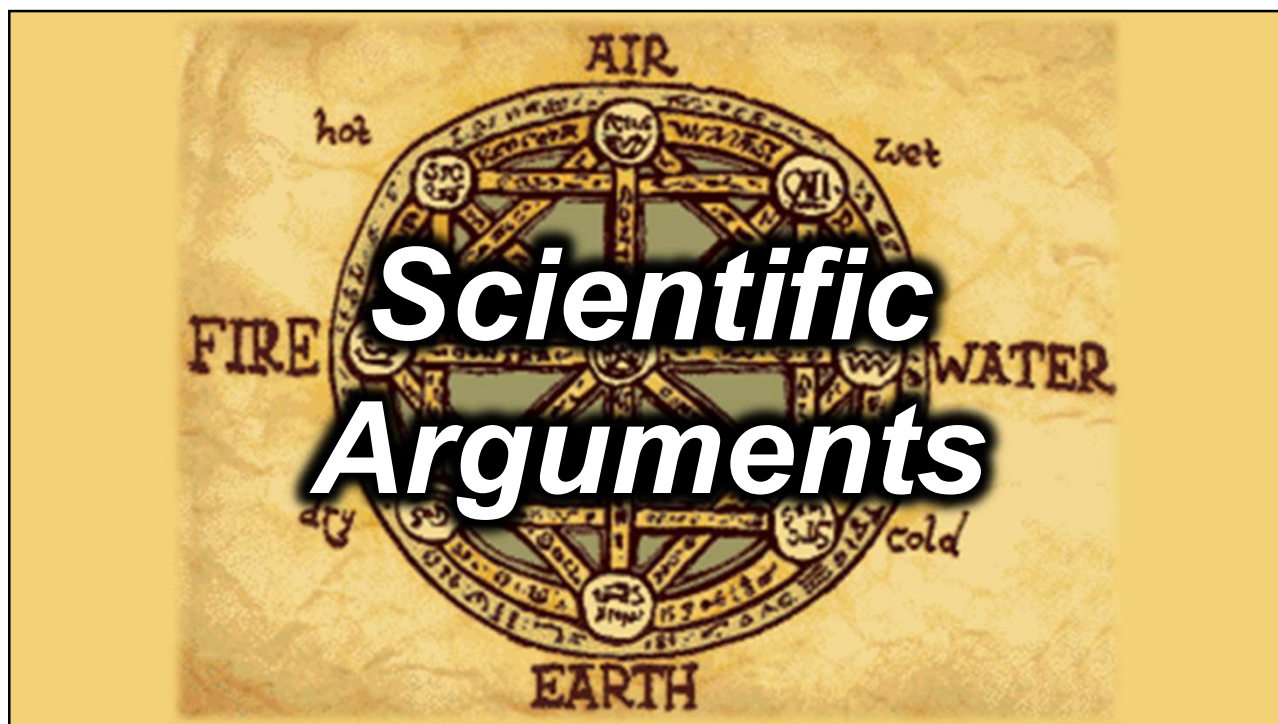
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Thus, depending on your selection of the evidence, you could argue:

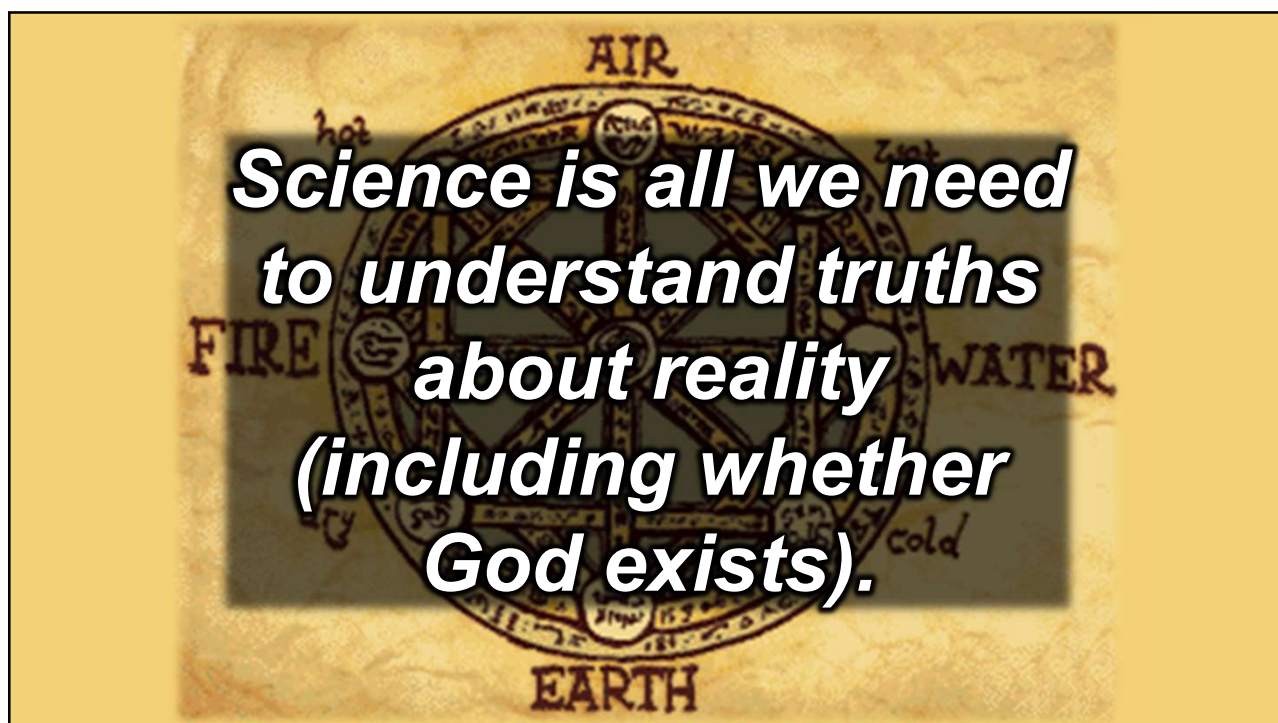
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<p>Science is good. Religion is bad.</p> <p>Science flies you to the moon.</p> <p>Religion flies you into buildings.</p>	<p>Religion is good. Science is bad.</p> <p>Religion cares for the injured, sick, and hungry.</p> <p>Science causes wide-spread death and destruction.</p>
<p>Government is good. The private sector is bad.</p> <p>Government protects the innocent and establishes justice.</p> <p>The private sector robs and pillages the innocent and flouts justice.</p>	<p>The private sector is good. Government is bad.</p> <p>The private sector contributes to community flourishing.</p> <p>BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation</p> <p>Government murders the innocent.</p>

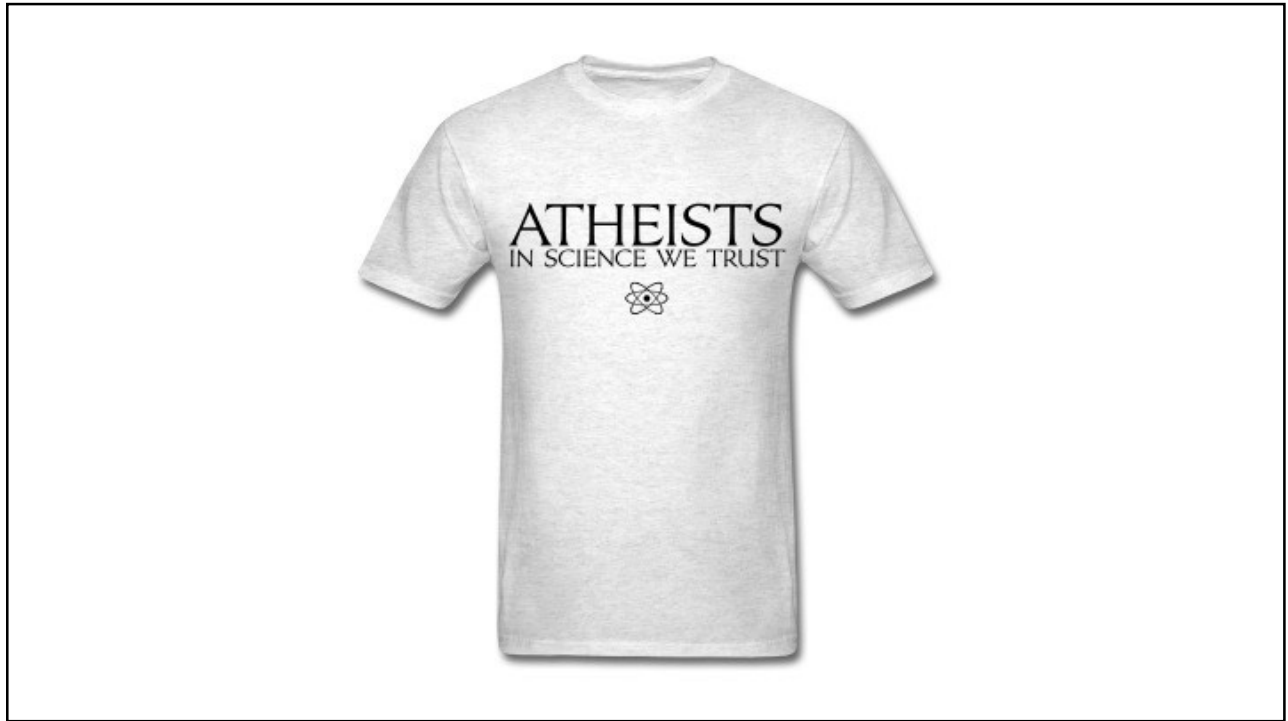
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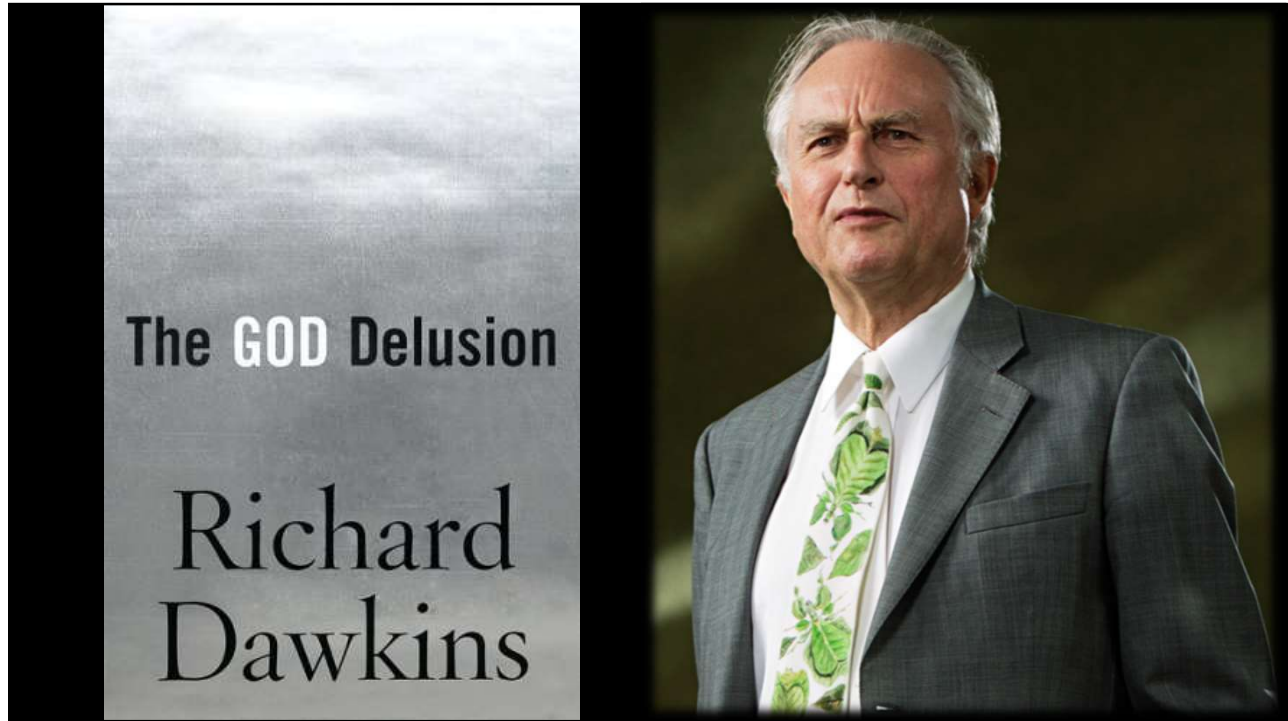
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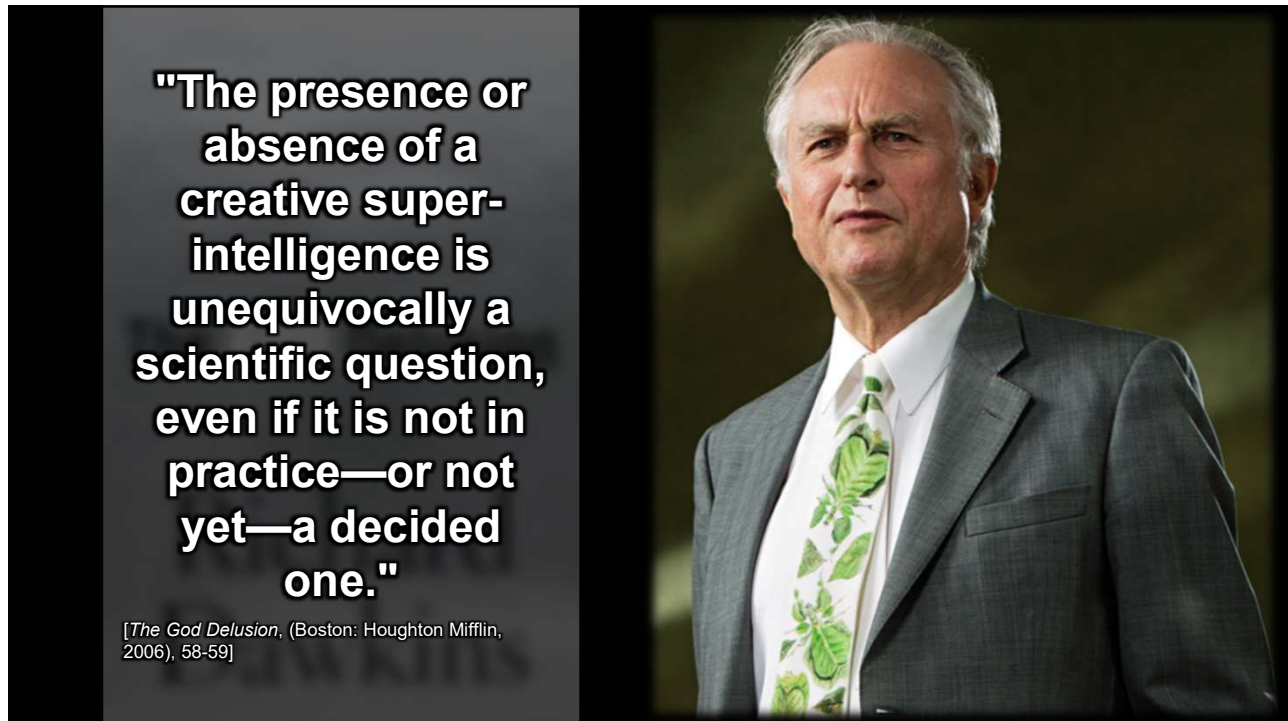
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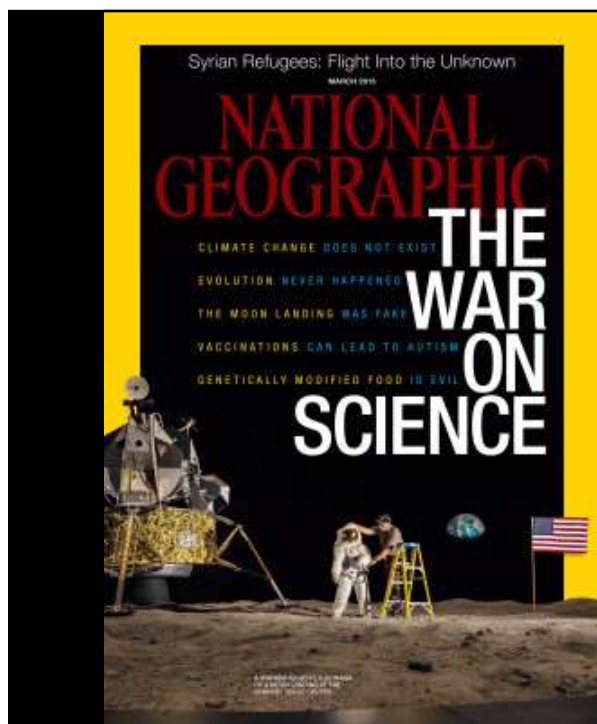
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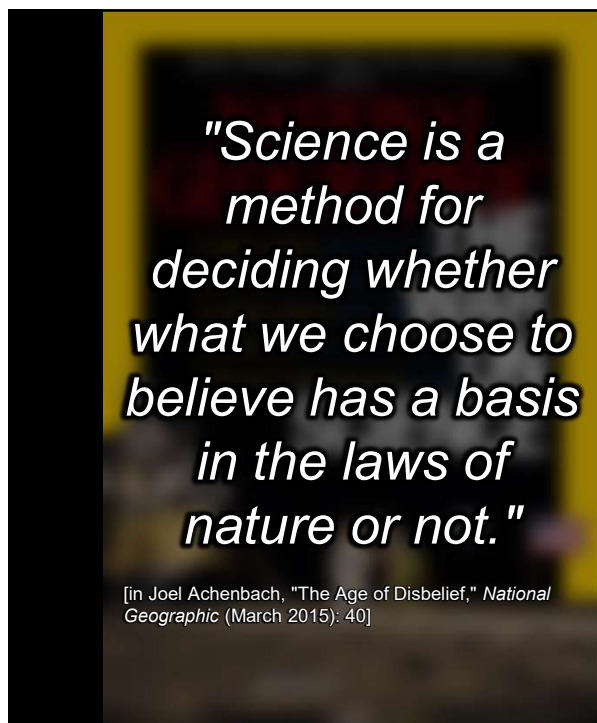


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Marcia McNutt

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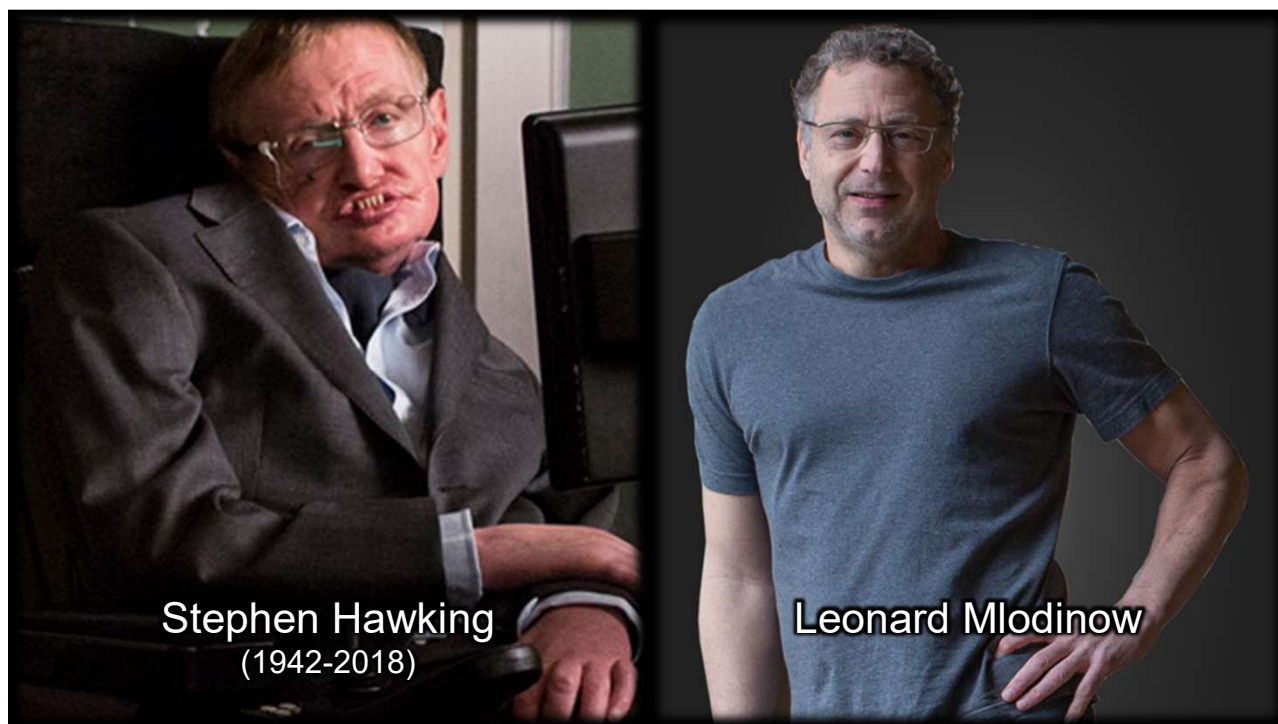


[In Joel Achenbach, "The Age of Disbelief," *National Geographic* (March 2015): 40]

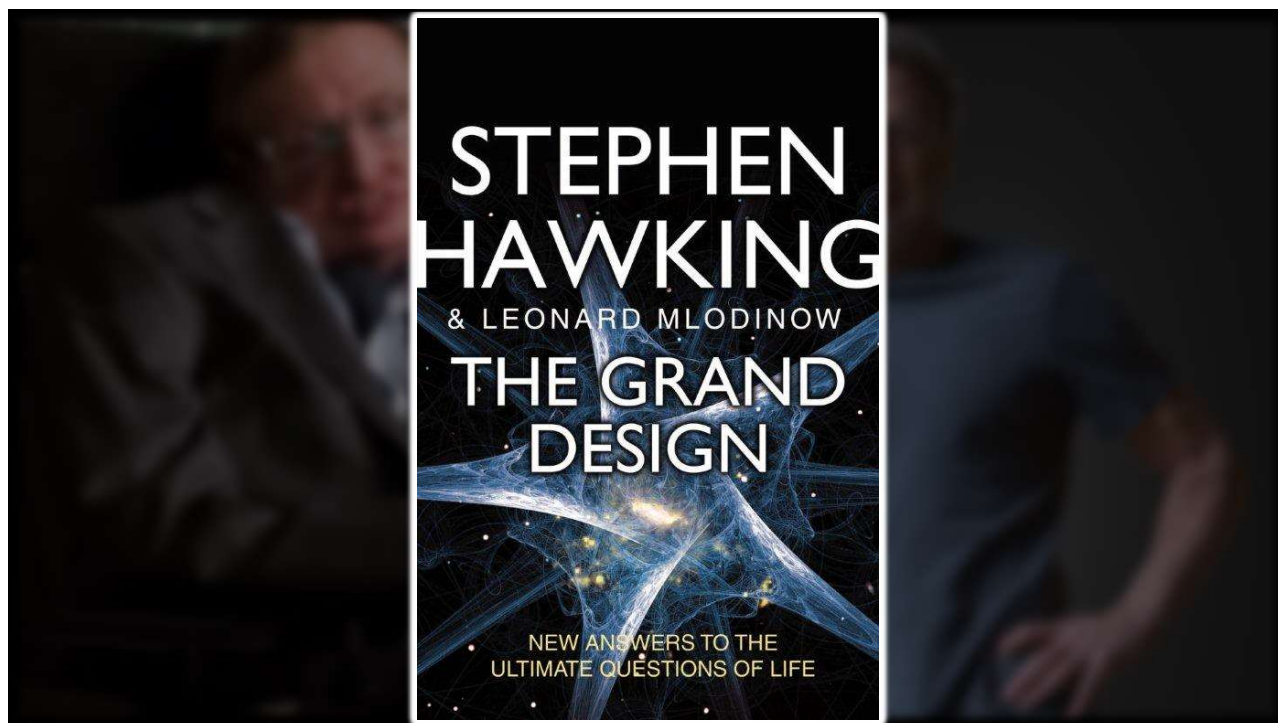


Marcia McNutt

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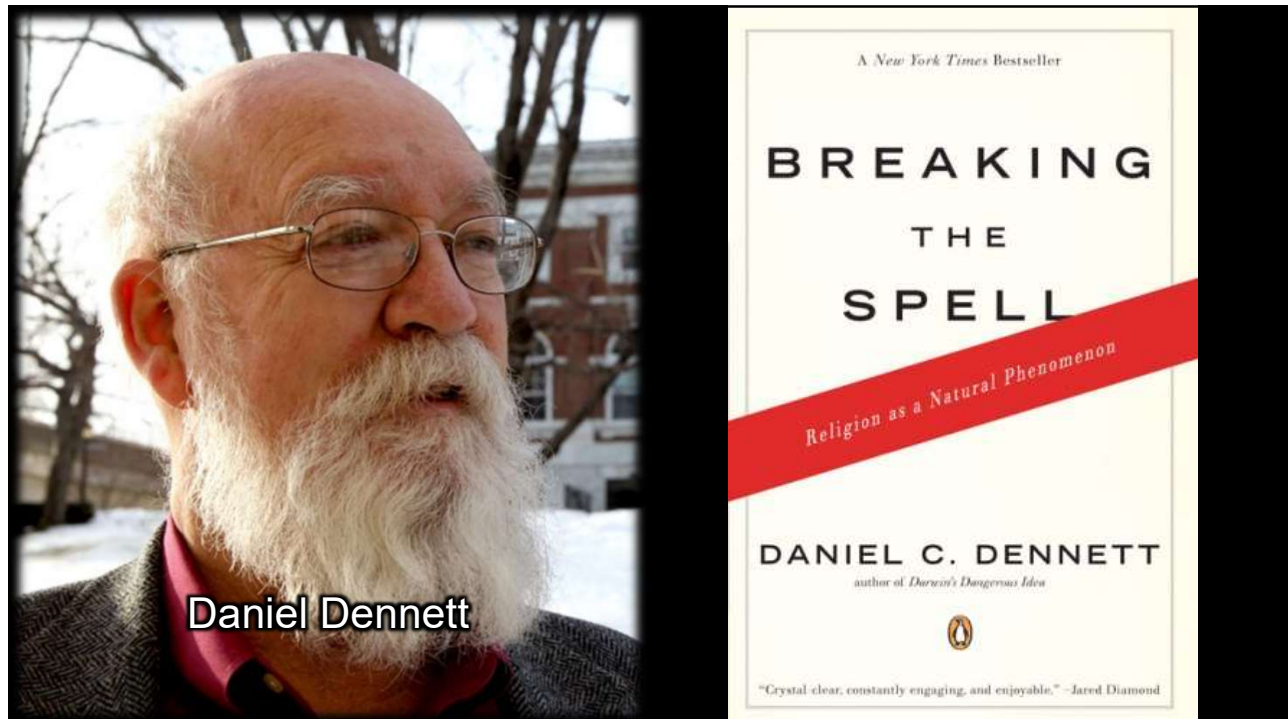


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"How can we understand the world in which we find ourselves? How does the universe behave? What is the nature of reality? Where did all this come from? Did the universe need a creator? ... Traditionally these are questions for philosophy, but philosophy is dead. Philosophy has not kept up with modern developments in science, particularly physics."

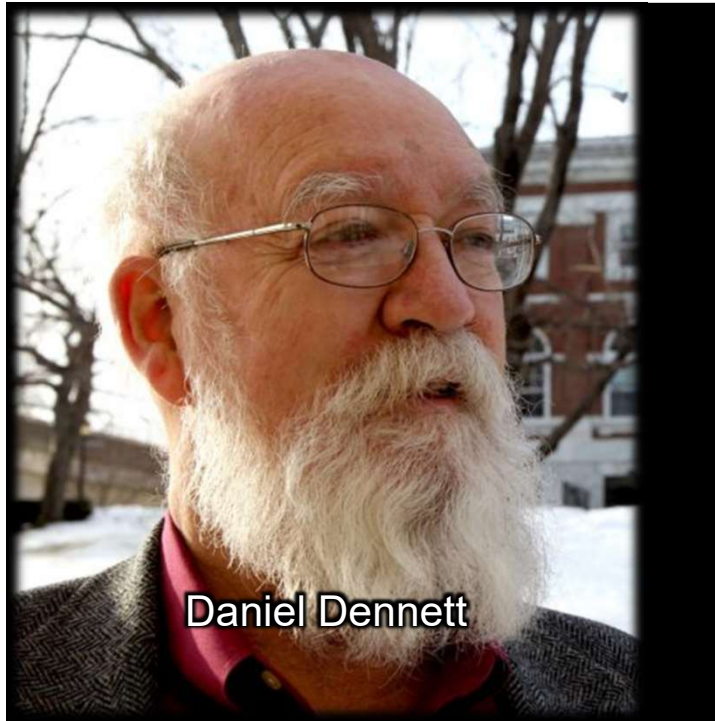
[Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, *The Grand Design* (New York: Bantam Books, 2010), 5]

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Daniel Dennett

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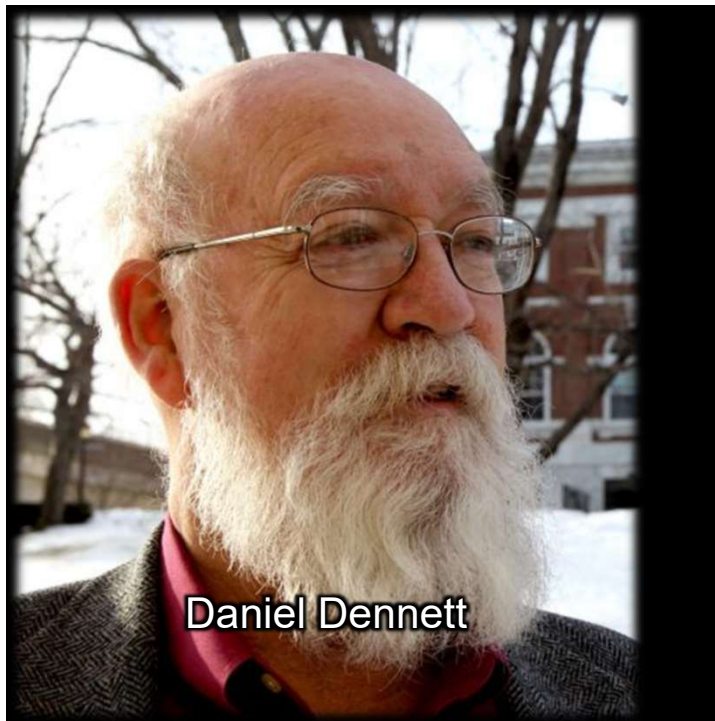


Daniel Dennett

"Science, and the technology it spawns, has been explosively practical ... —but that doesn't mean it can answer all questions or serve all needs. **Science does not have the monopoly on truth.**"

[*Breaking the Spell: Religion as a Natural Phenomenon* (New York: Penguin, 2006), 370]

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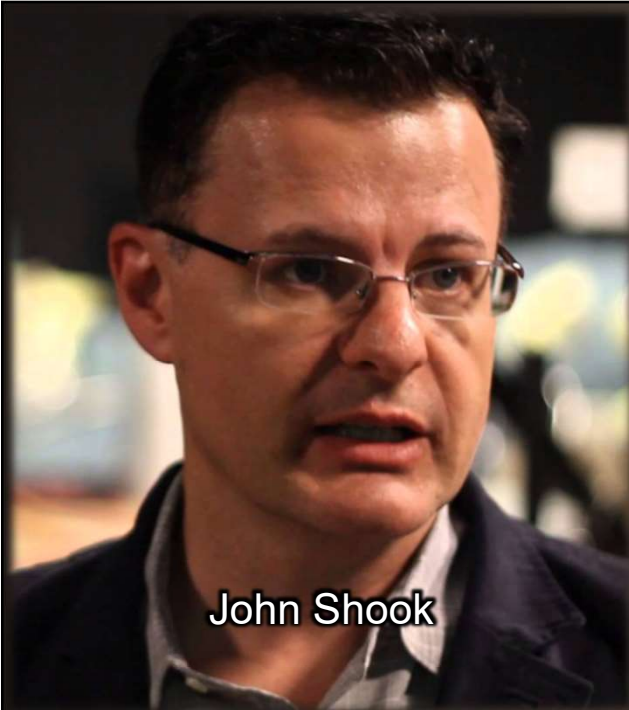


Daniel Dennett

"Perhaps some cancer cures *are* miracles. If so, **the only hope of ever demonstrating this** to a doubting world would be by **adopting the scientific method**, with its assumption of no miracles, and showing that science was utterly unable to account for the phenomena."

[*Breaking the Spell*, 26]

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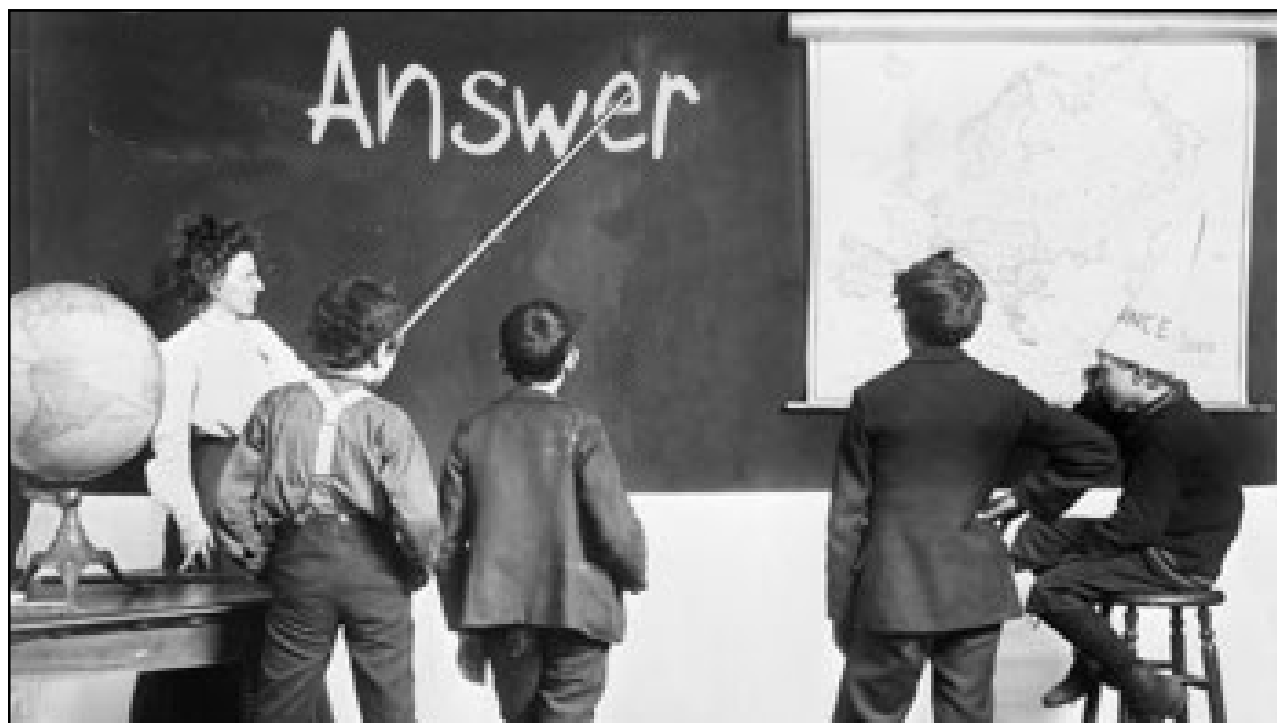


John Shook

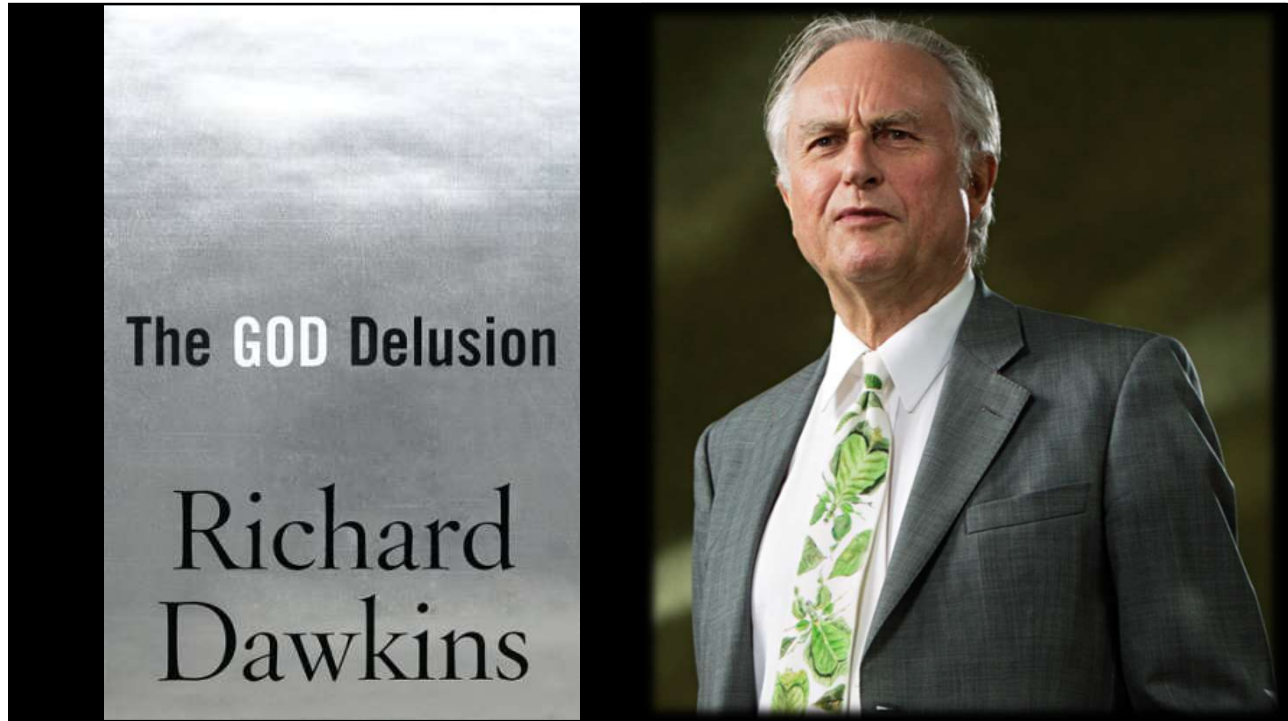
"Philosophical naturalism undertakes the responsibility for elaborating a comprehensive and coherent worldview based on experience, reason, and science, and for defending science's exclusive right to explore and theorize about all of reality."

["The Need for Naturalism in a Scientific Age" https://centerforinquiry.org/blog/the_need_for_naturalism_in_a_scientific_age/, accessed 11/02/19, emphasis added]

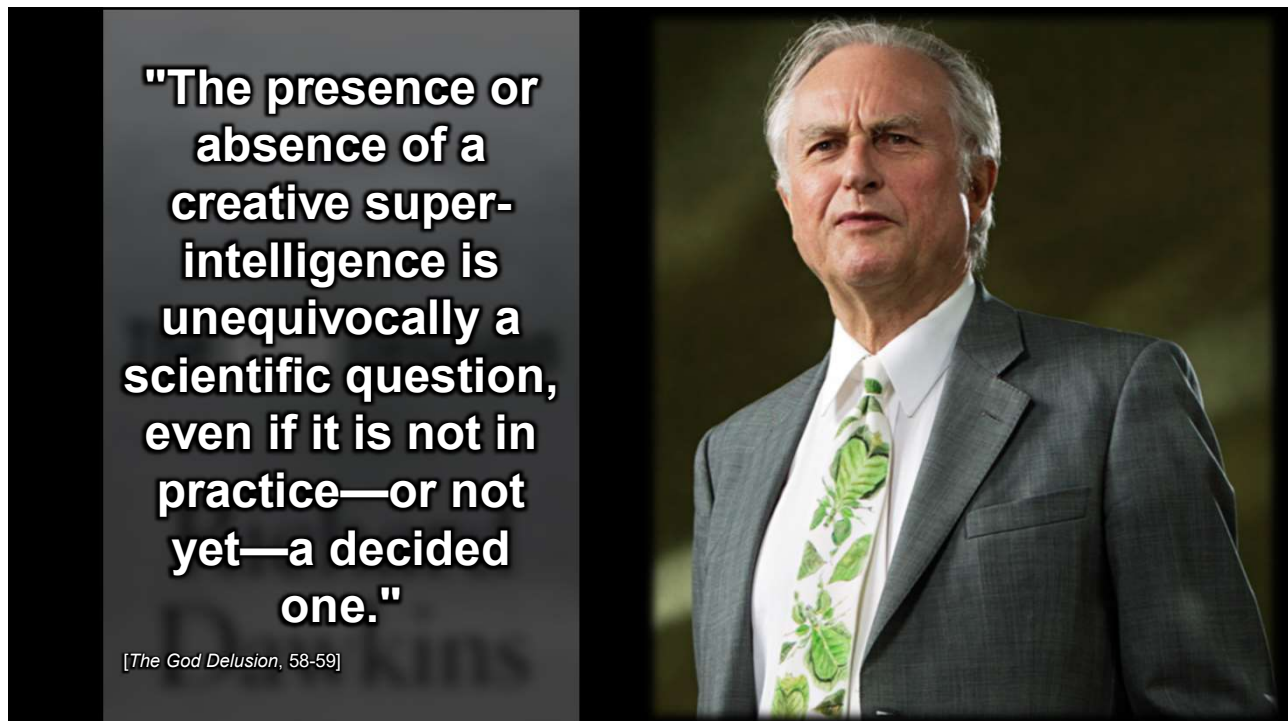
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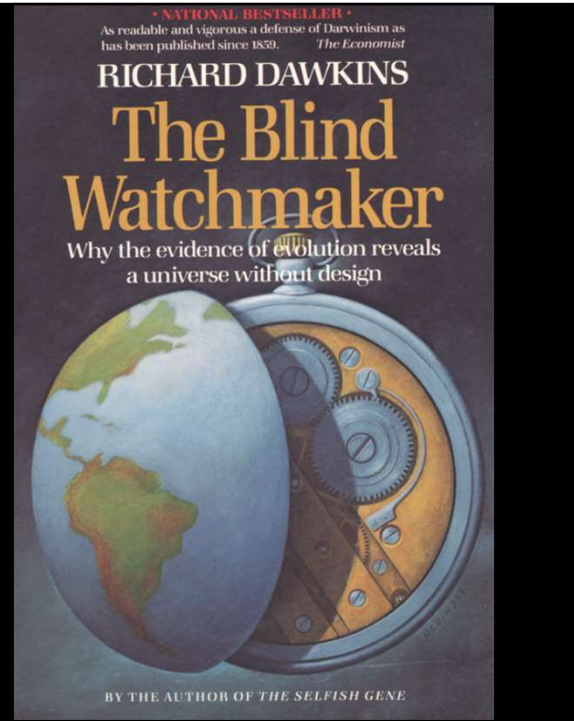
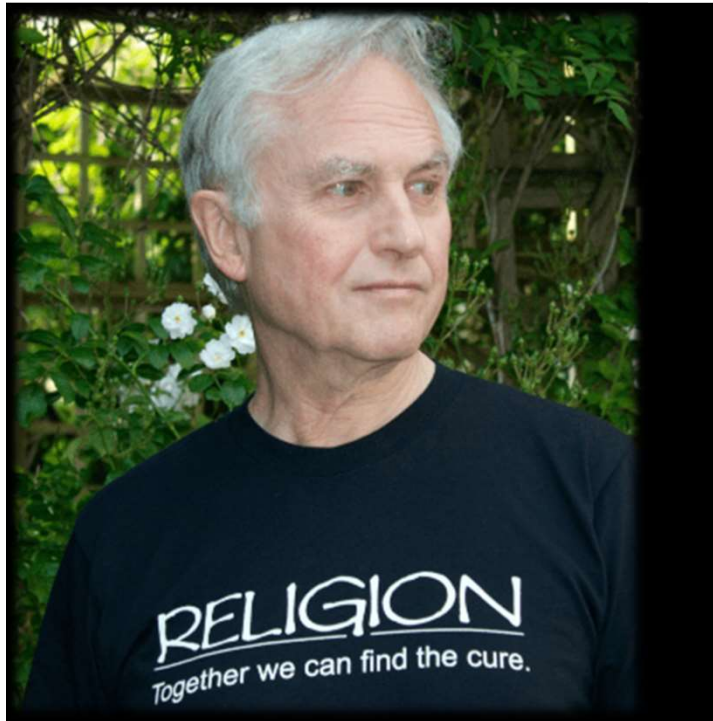
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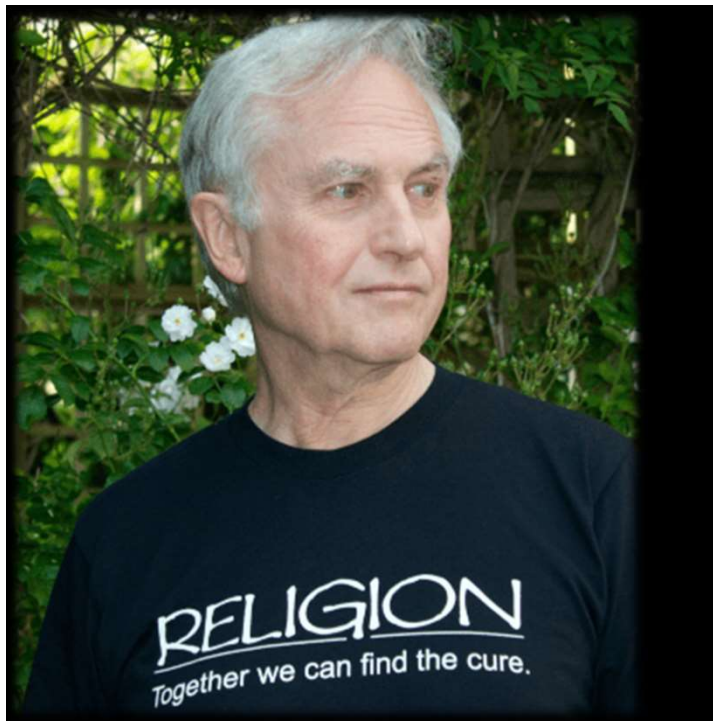
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112



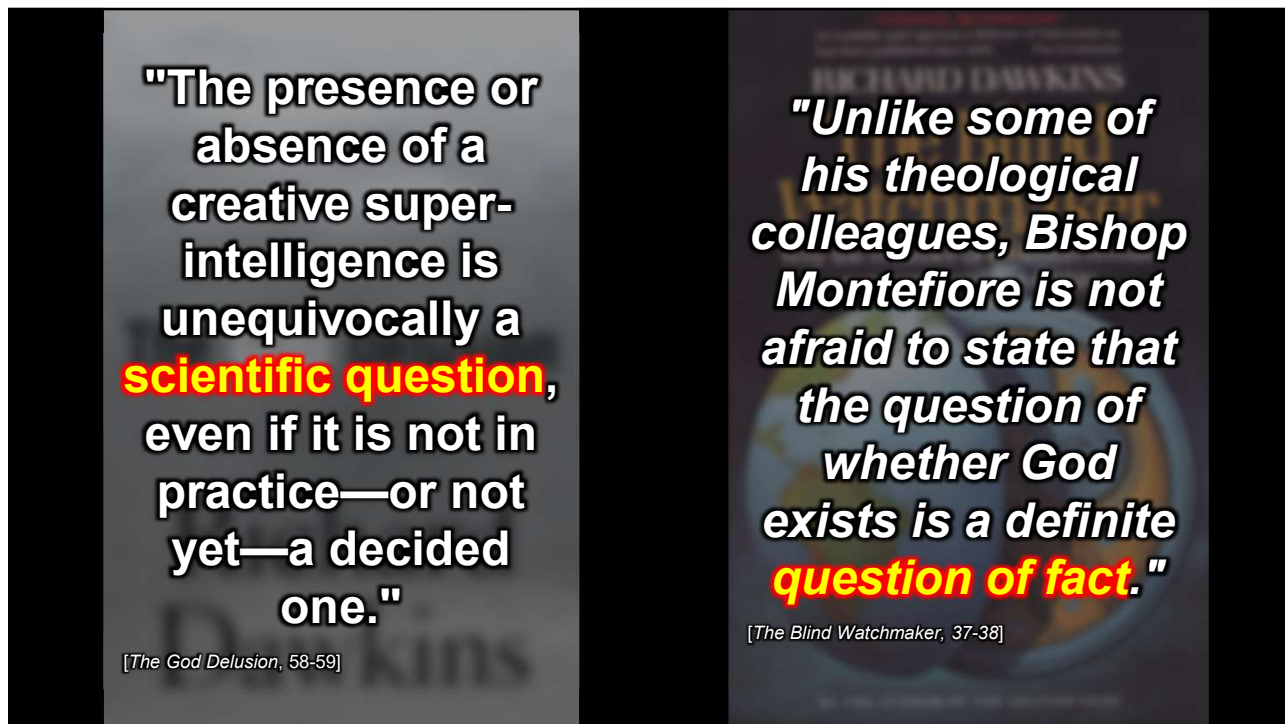
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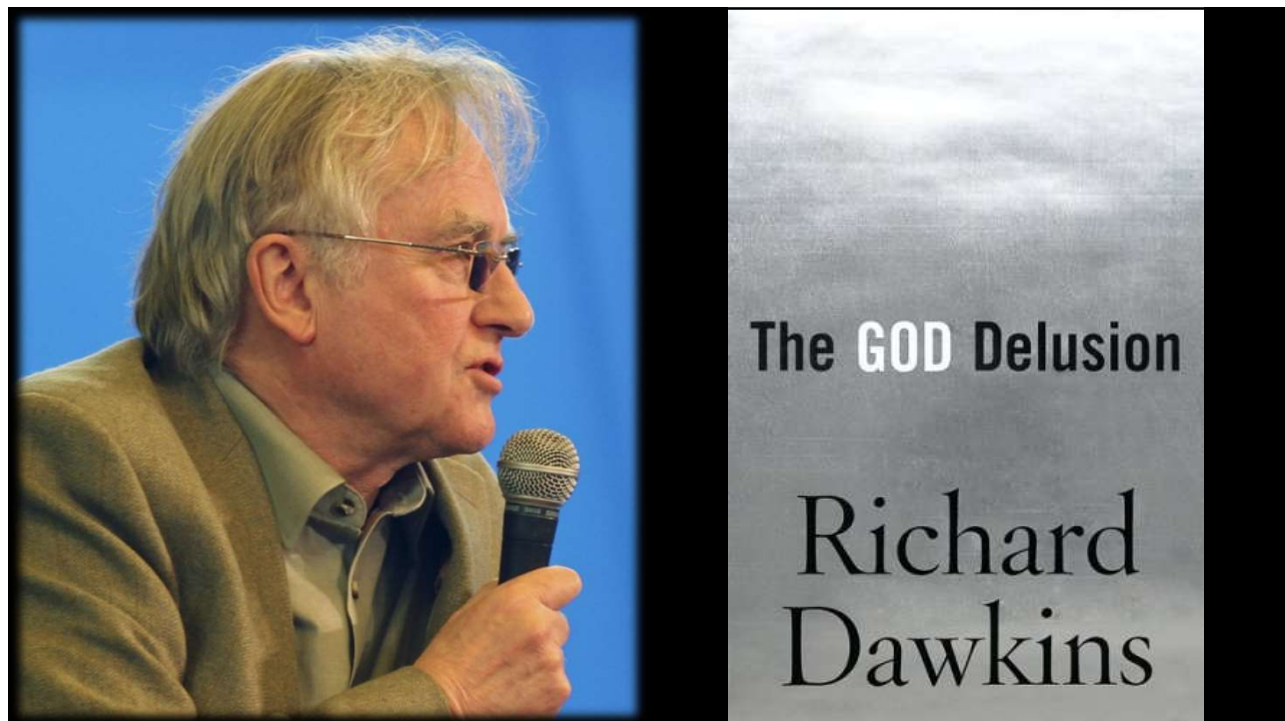
"Unlike some of his theological colleagues, Bishop Montefiore is not afraid to state that the question of whether God exists is a definite question of fact."

[The Blind Watchmaker, 37-38]

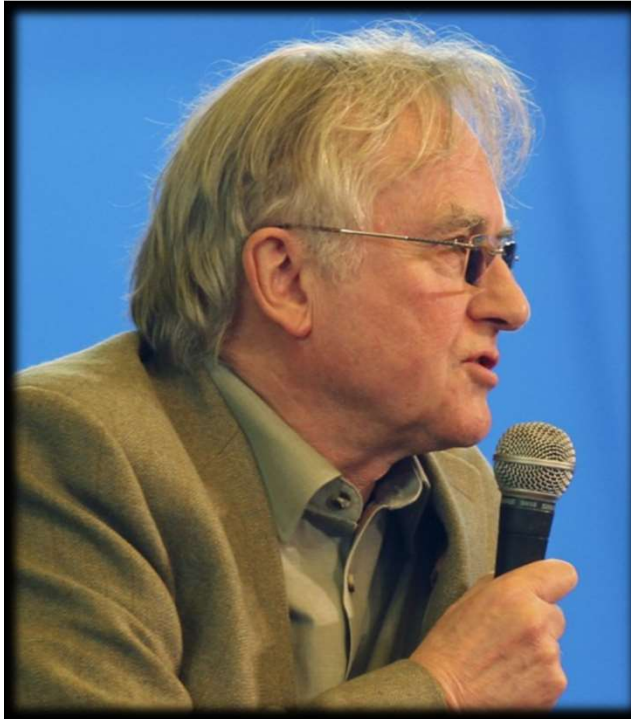
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115



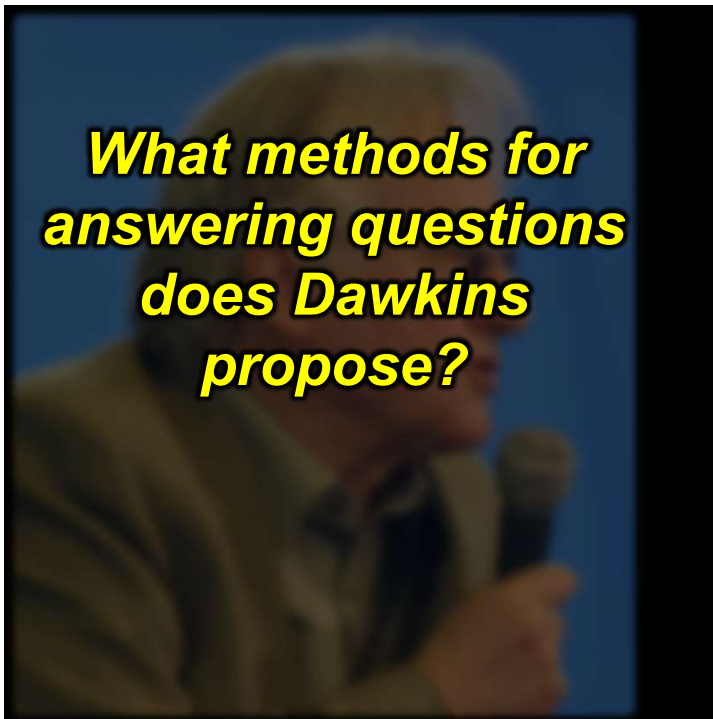
116



"There is an answer to every such question [about God and miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."

[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

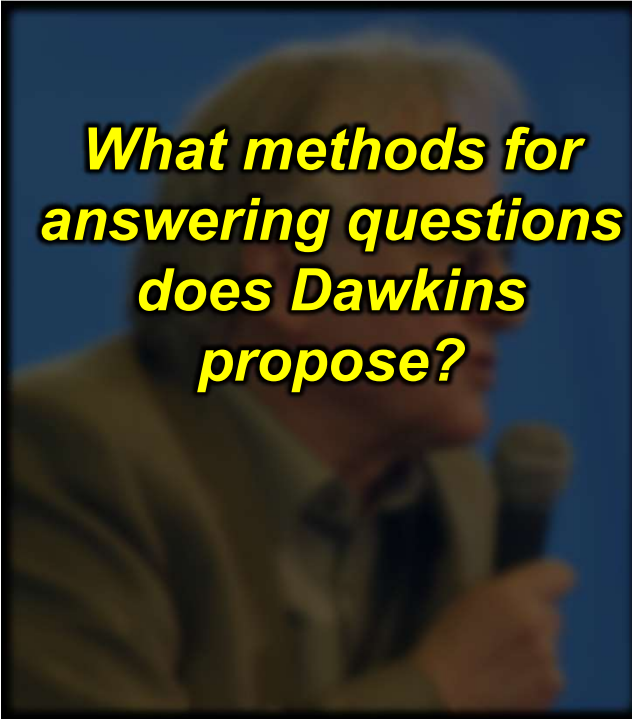
117



"There is an answer to every such question [about miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."

[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

118

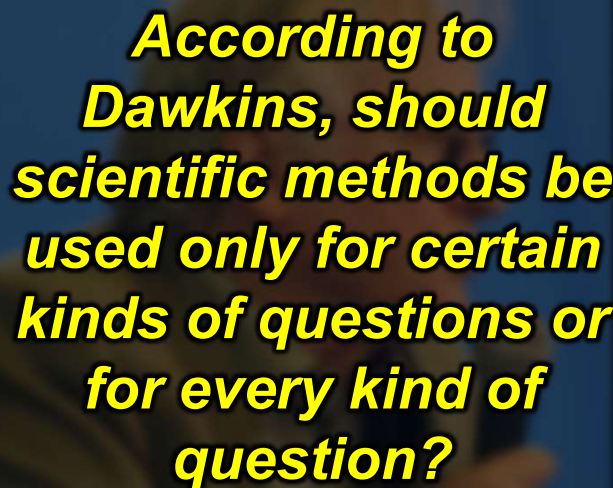


What methods for answering questions does Dawkins propose?

"There is an answer to every such question [about miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be **purely and entirely scientific methods.**"

[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

119

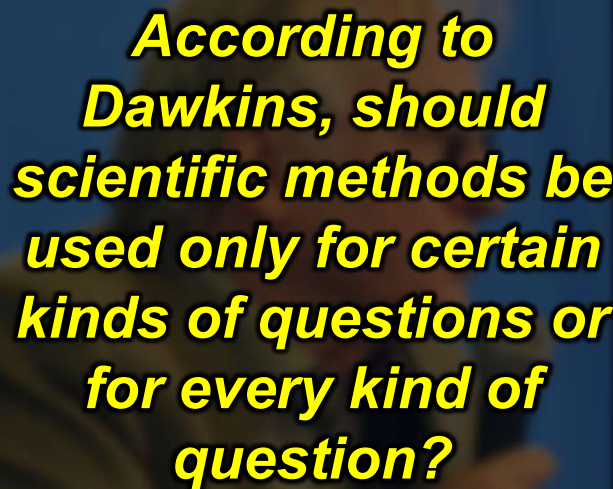


According to Dawkins, should scientific methods be used only for certain kinds of questions or for every kind of question?

"There is an answer to every such question [about miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."

[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

120

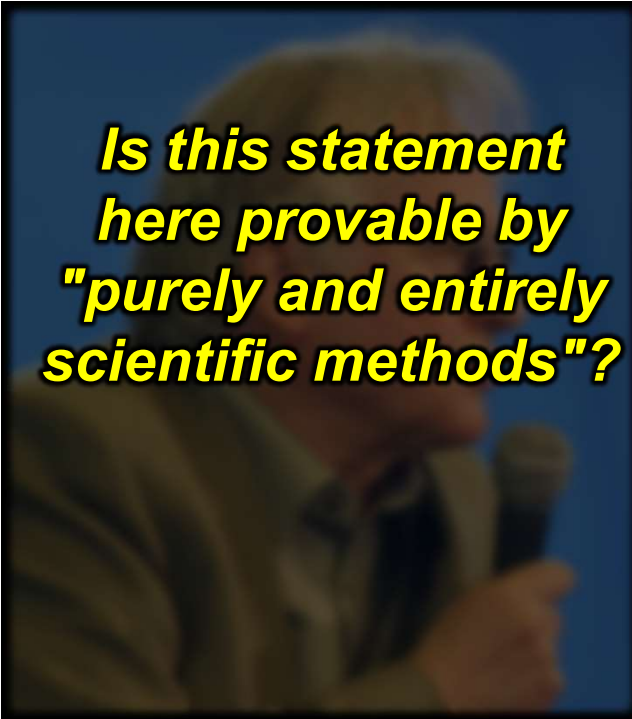


According to Dawkins, should scientific methods be used only for certain kinds of questions or for every kind of question?

"There is an answer to **every such question** [about miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."

[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

121



Is this statement here provable by "purely and entirely scientific methods"?

"There is an answer to every such question [about miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."

[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

122

Is this statement here provable by "purely and entirely scientific method"

Absolutely Not!

"There is an answer to every such question [about God and miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."

[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

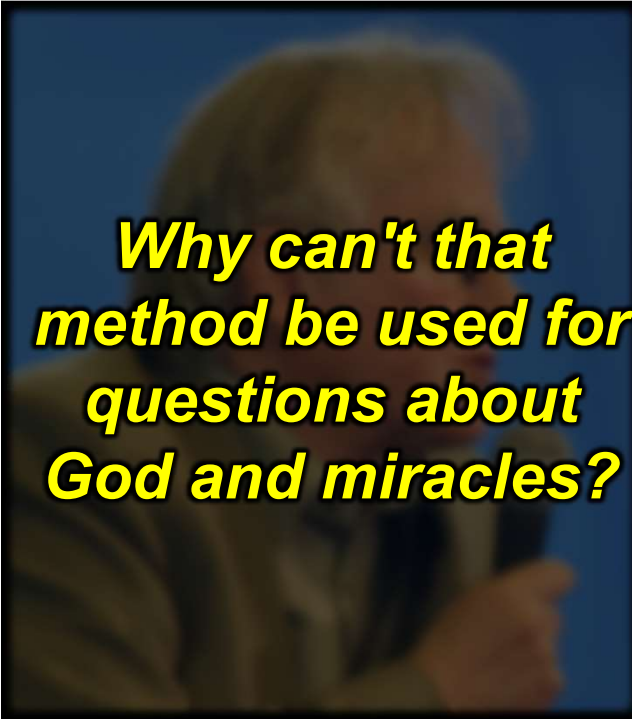
123

Since Dawkins' statement is not provable by "purely and entirely scientific methods," what kind of method must be used?

"There is an answer to every such question [about God and miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."

[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

124

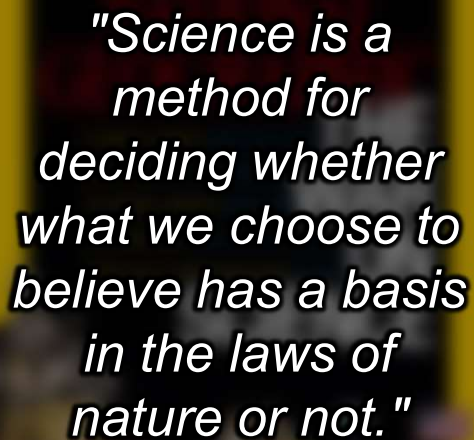


***Why can't that
method be used for
questions about
God and miracles?***

"There is an answer to every such question [about God and miracles], whether or not we can discover it in practice, and it is a strictly scientific answer. The methods we should use to settle the matter, in the unlikely event that relevant evidence ever became available, would be purely and entirely scientific methods."


[Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, 59.]

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*"Science is a
method for
deciding whether
what we choose to
believe has a basis
in the laws of
nature or not."*

[in Joel Achenbach, "The Age of Disbelief," *National Geographic* (March 2015): 40]



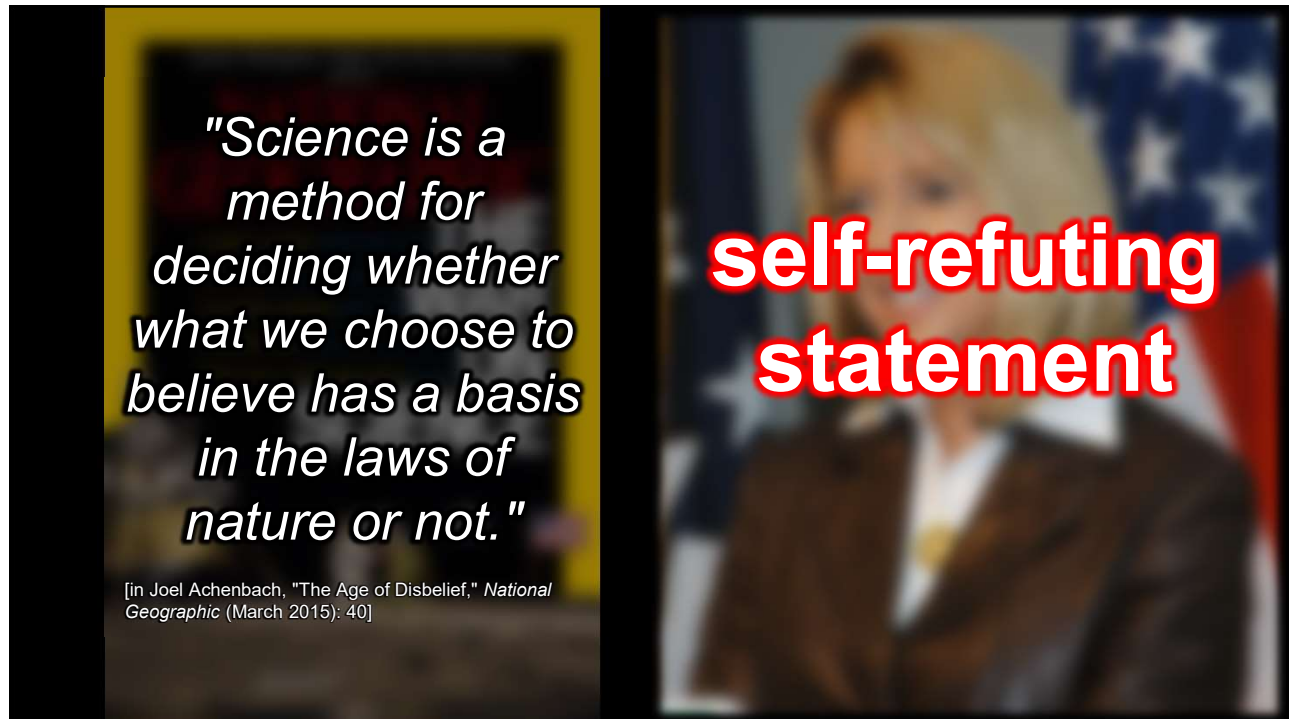
Marcia McNutt

126

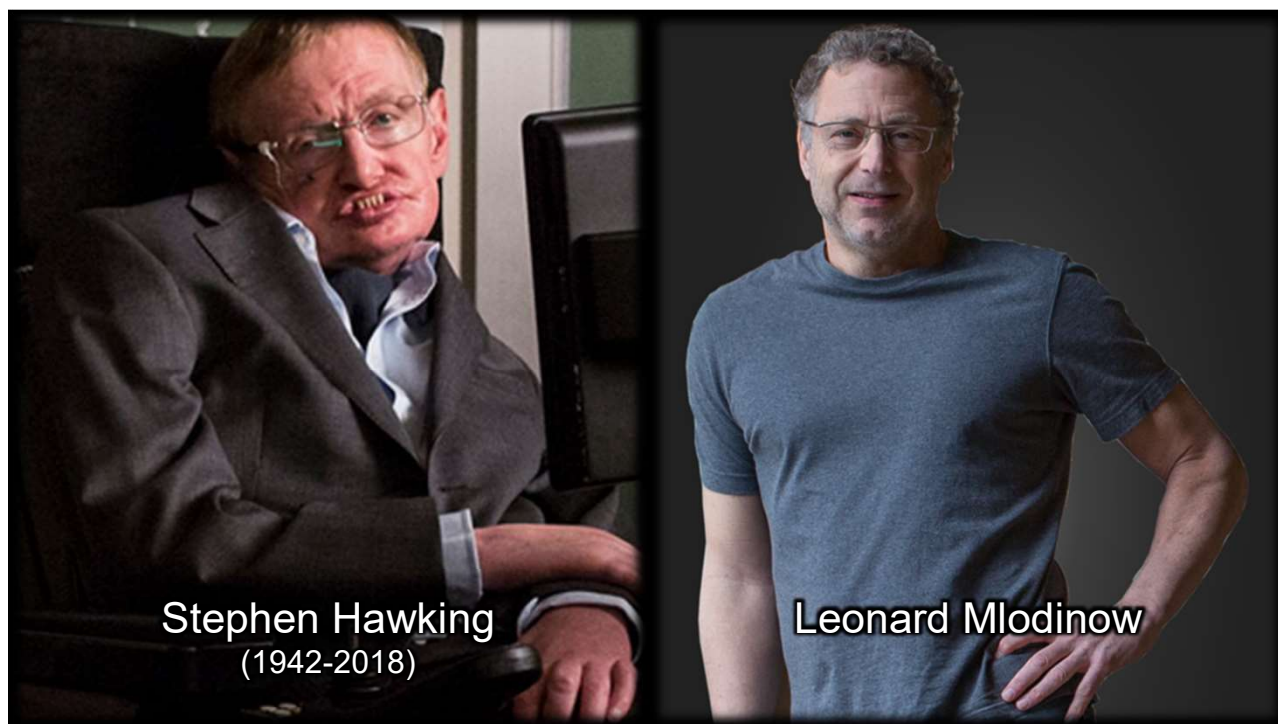
- Presumably, Marcia McNutt believes her own statement.
- If so, what **scientific method** did she use to decide whether this belief "has a basis in the laws of nature or not"?
- Further, exactly what "**laws of nature**" could possibly be the basis for this belief?



127



128

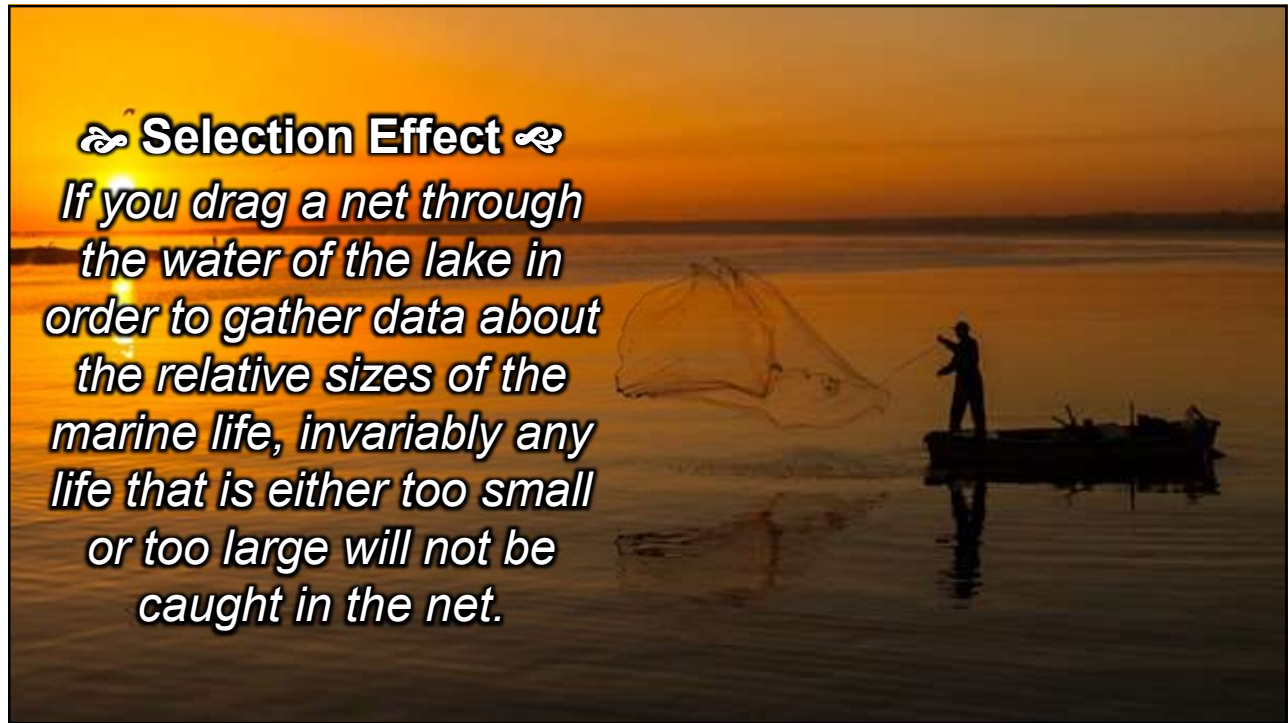


129

"How can we understand the world in which we find ourselves? How does the universe behave? What is the nature of reality? Where did all this come from? Did the universe need a creator? ... Traditionally these are questions for philosophy, but **philosophy is dead**. Philosophy has not kept up with modern developments in science, particularly physics."

[Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow, *The Grand Design* (New York: Bantam Books, 2010), 5]

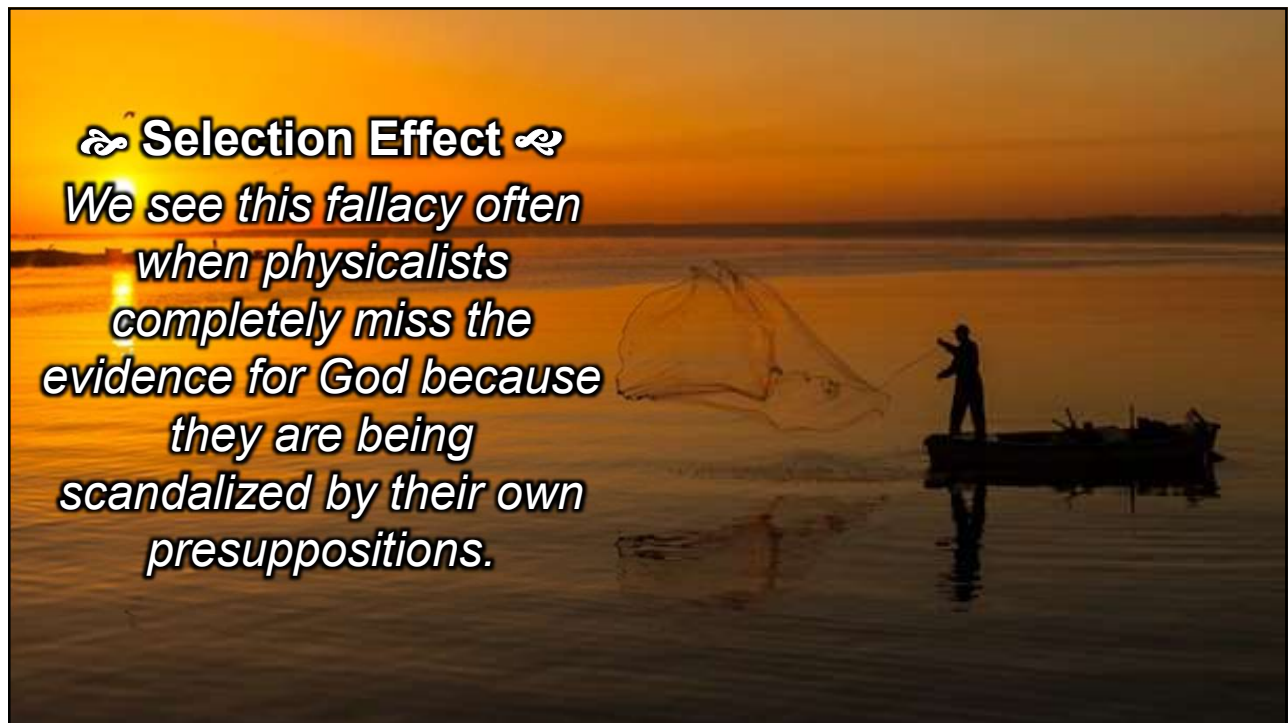
130



☞ Selection Effect ☞

If you drag a net through the water of the lake in order to gather data about the relative sizes of the marine life, invariably any life that is either too small or too large will not be caught in the net.

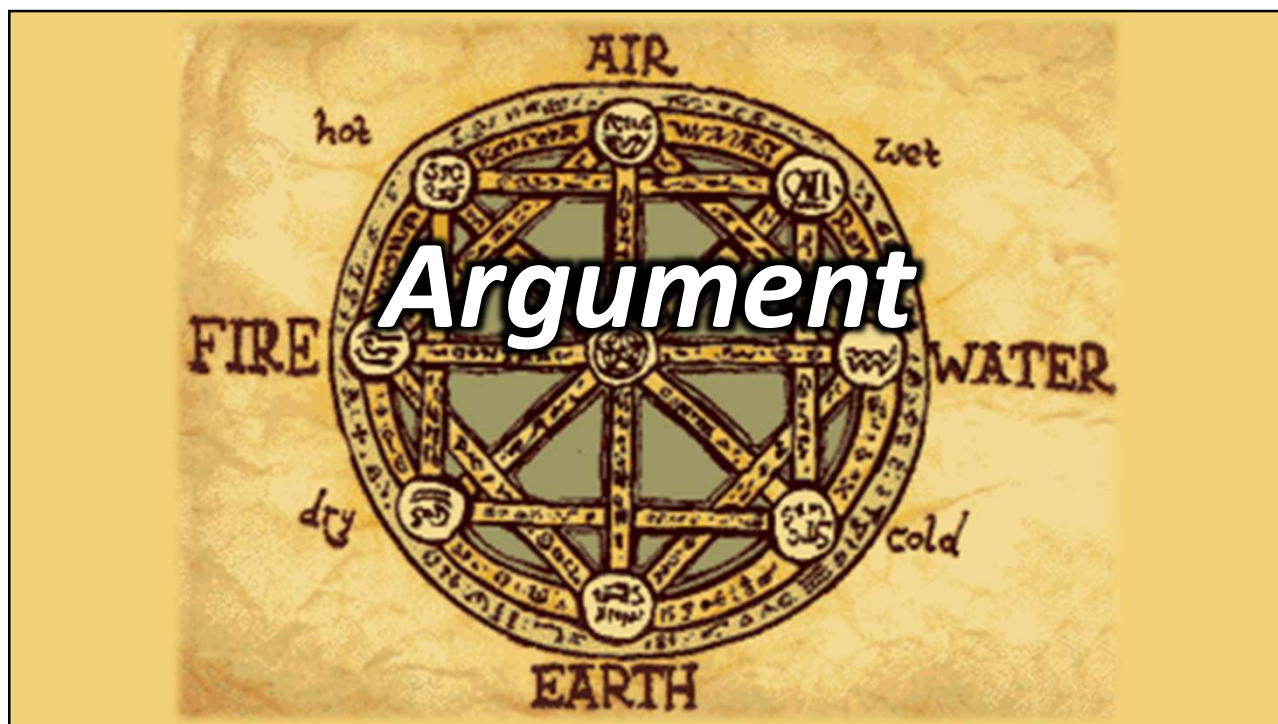
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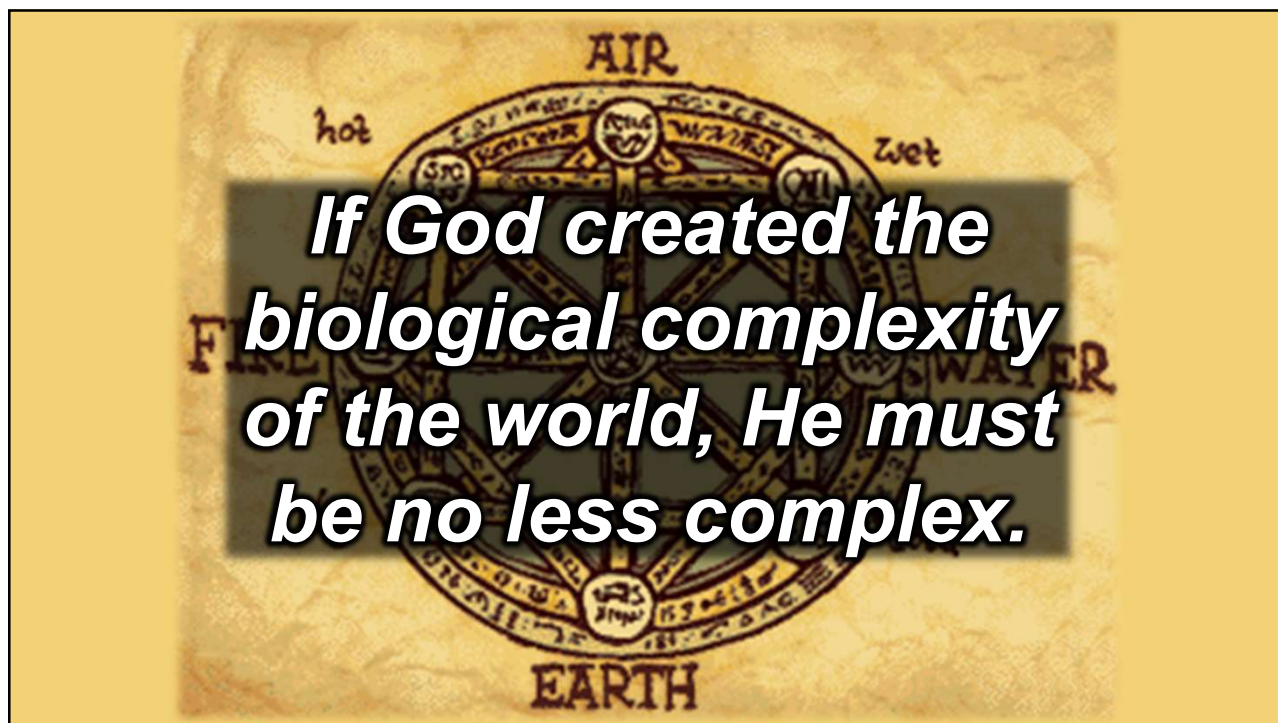
☞ Selection Effect ☞

We see this fallacy often when physicalists completely miss the evidence for God because they are being scandalized by their own presuppositions.

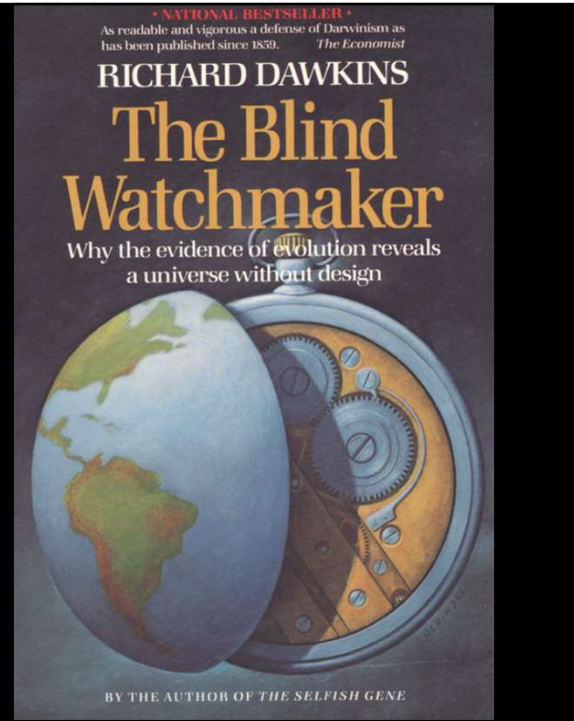
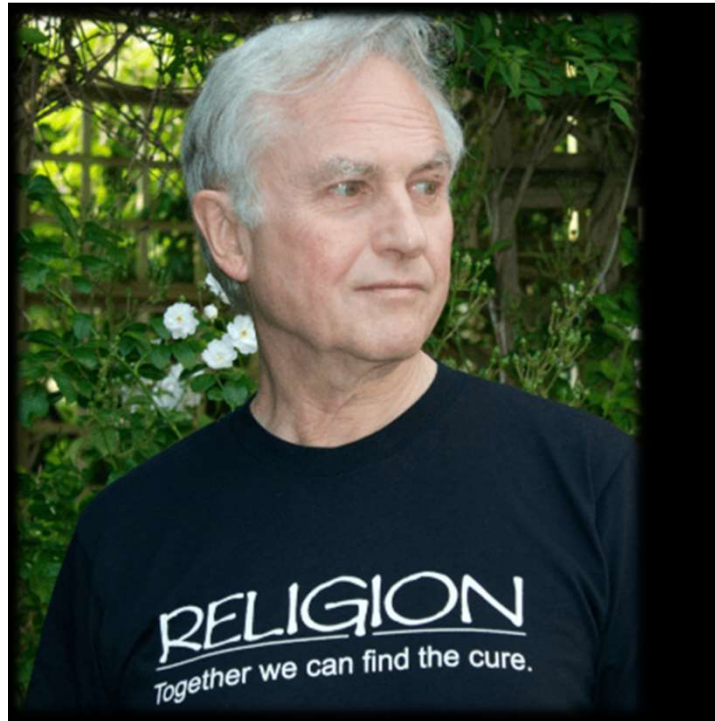
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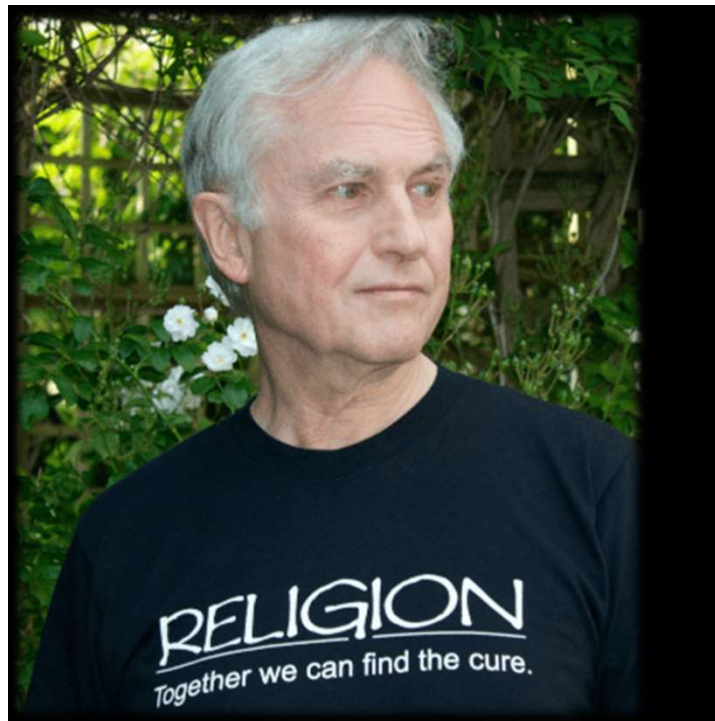
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134



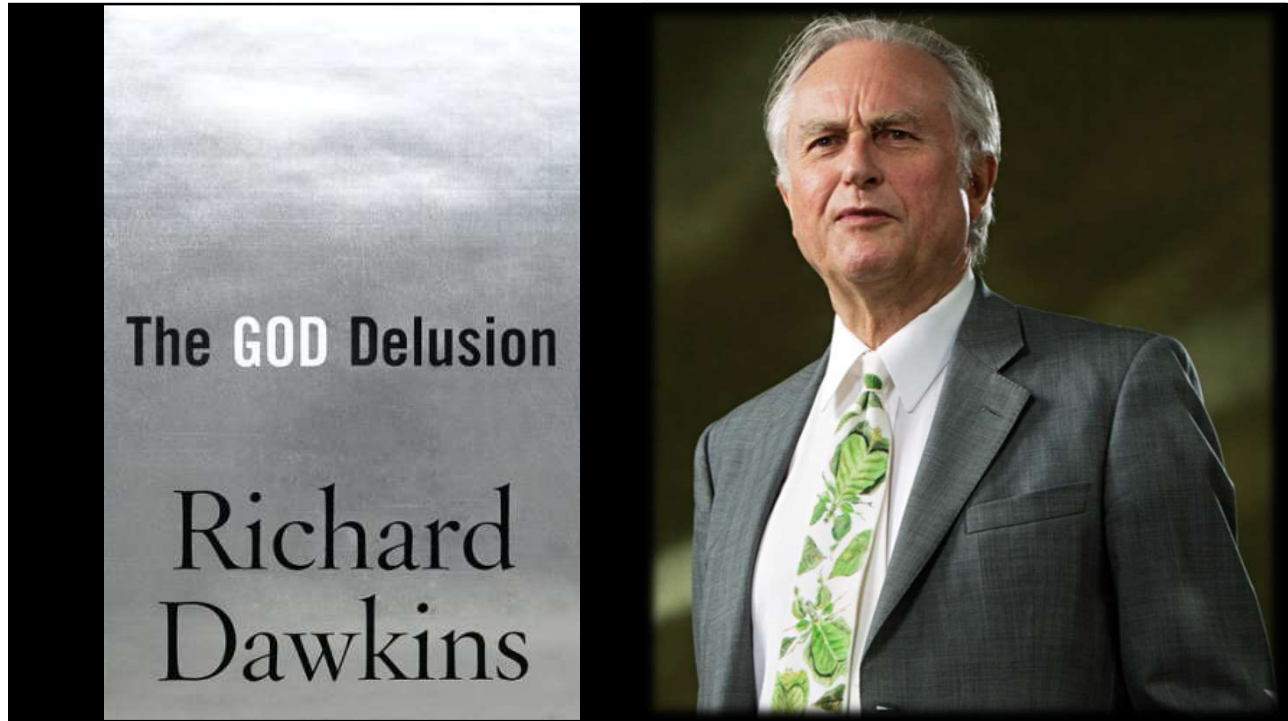
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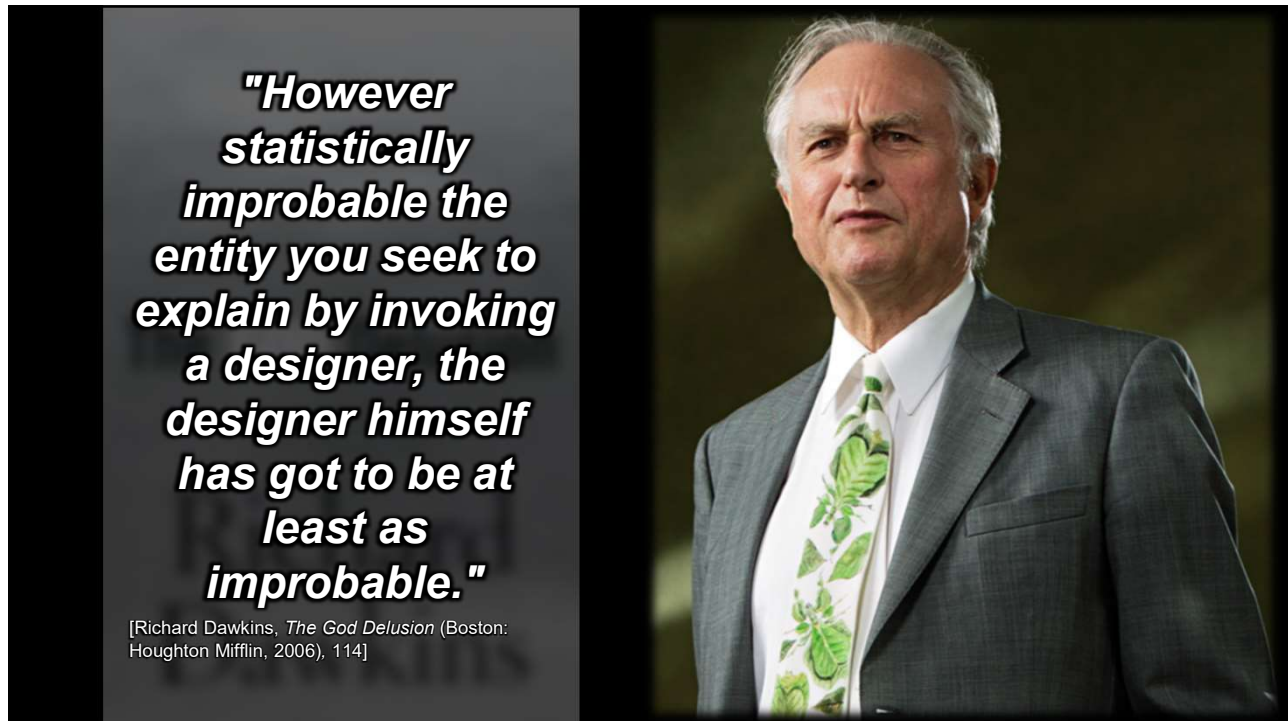
"But of course any God capable of intelligently designing something as complex as the DNA/protein replicating machine must have been at least as complex and organized as that machine itself."

[Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker: Why the Evidence of Evolution Reveals a Universe Without Design* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1987), 141]

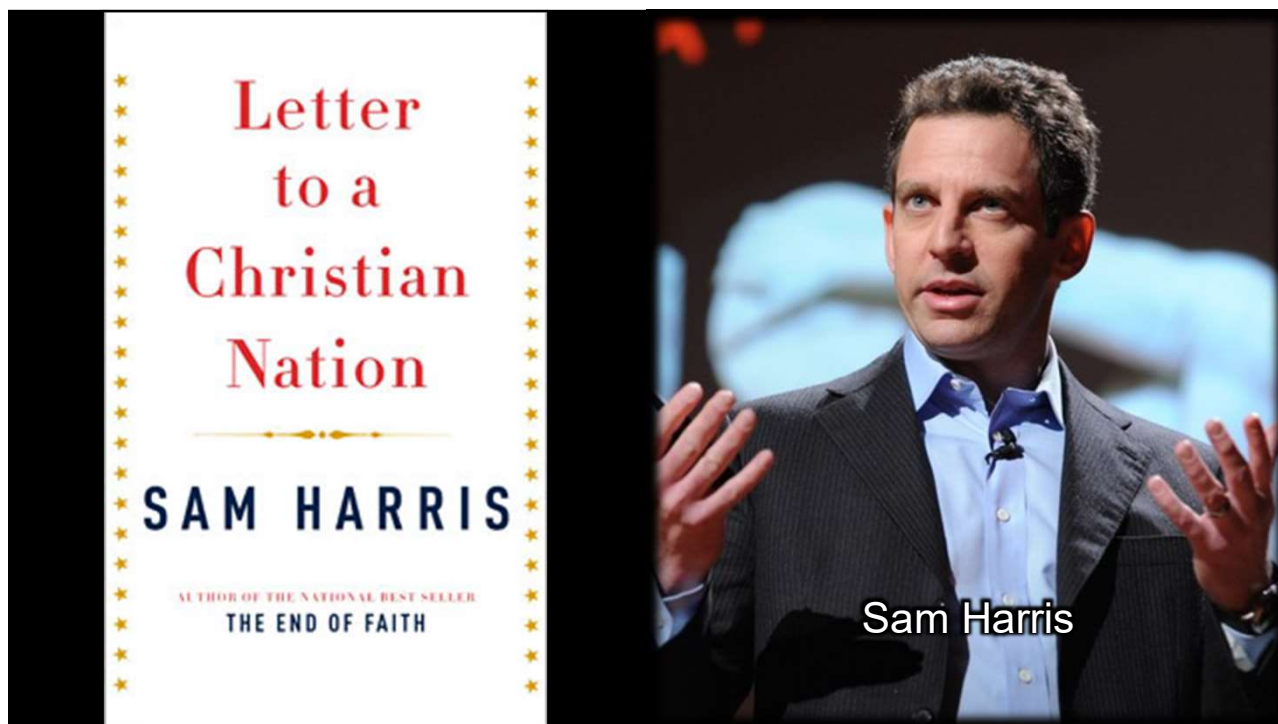
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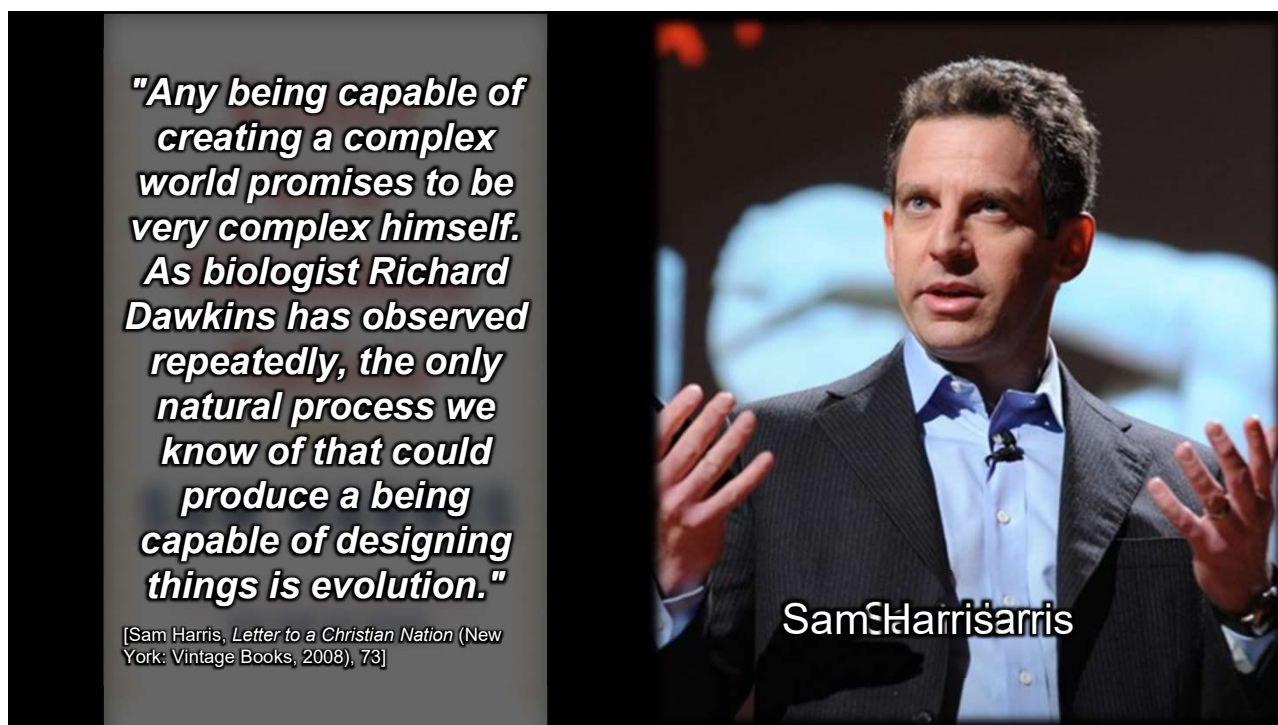
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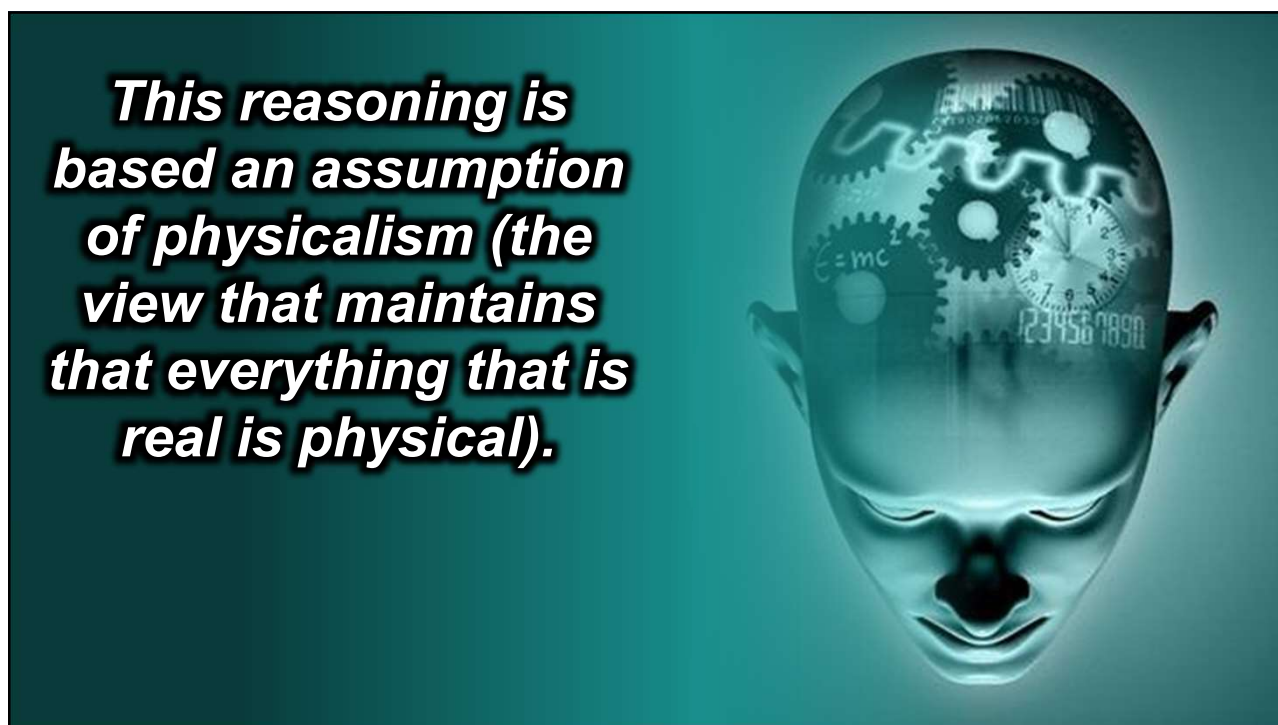
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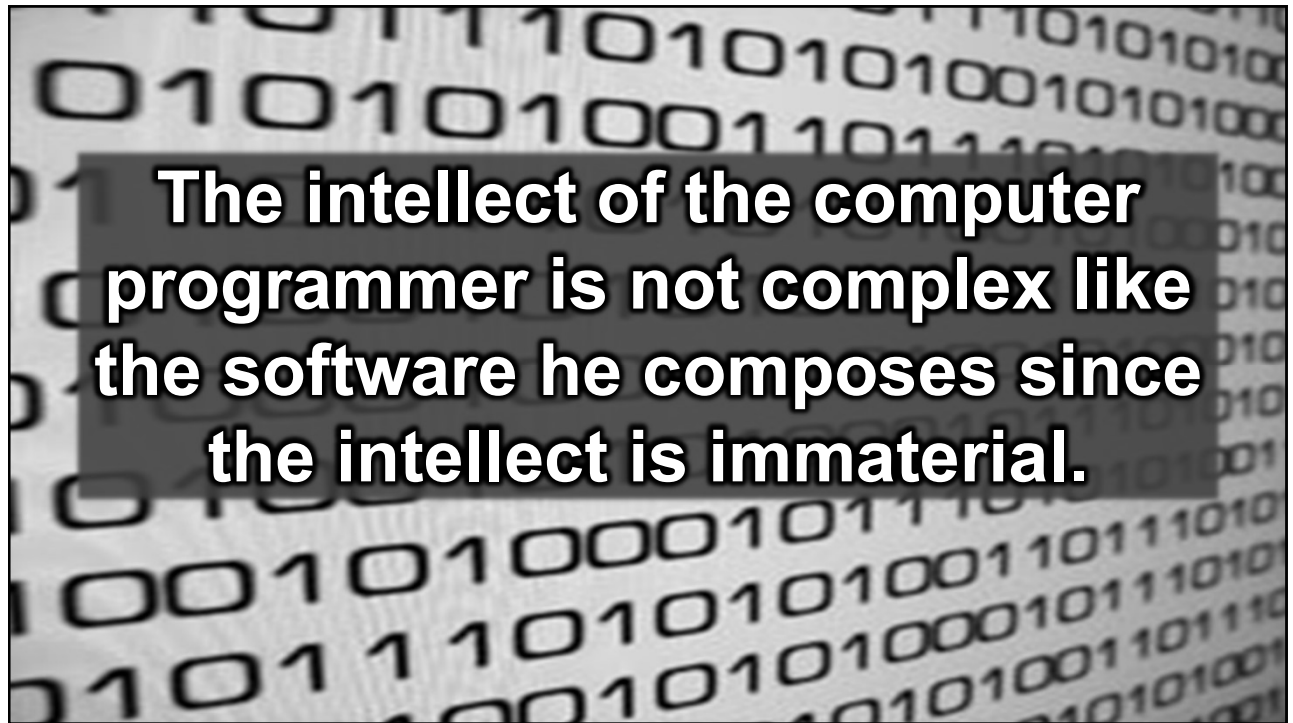
142

But there is no reason to think that minds which are capable of creating complex objects and processes must themselves be complex (i.e., composed of parts).

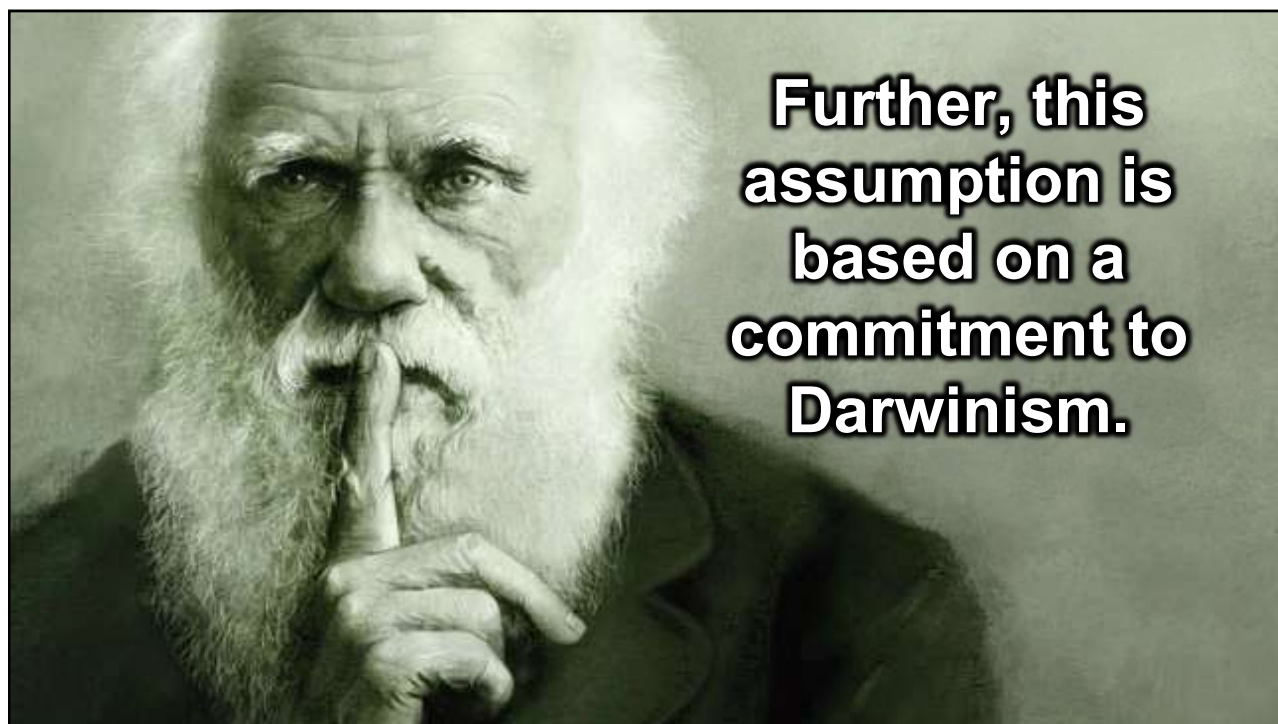


143

The intellect of the computer programmer is not complex like the software he composes since the intellect is immaterial.

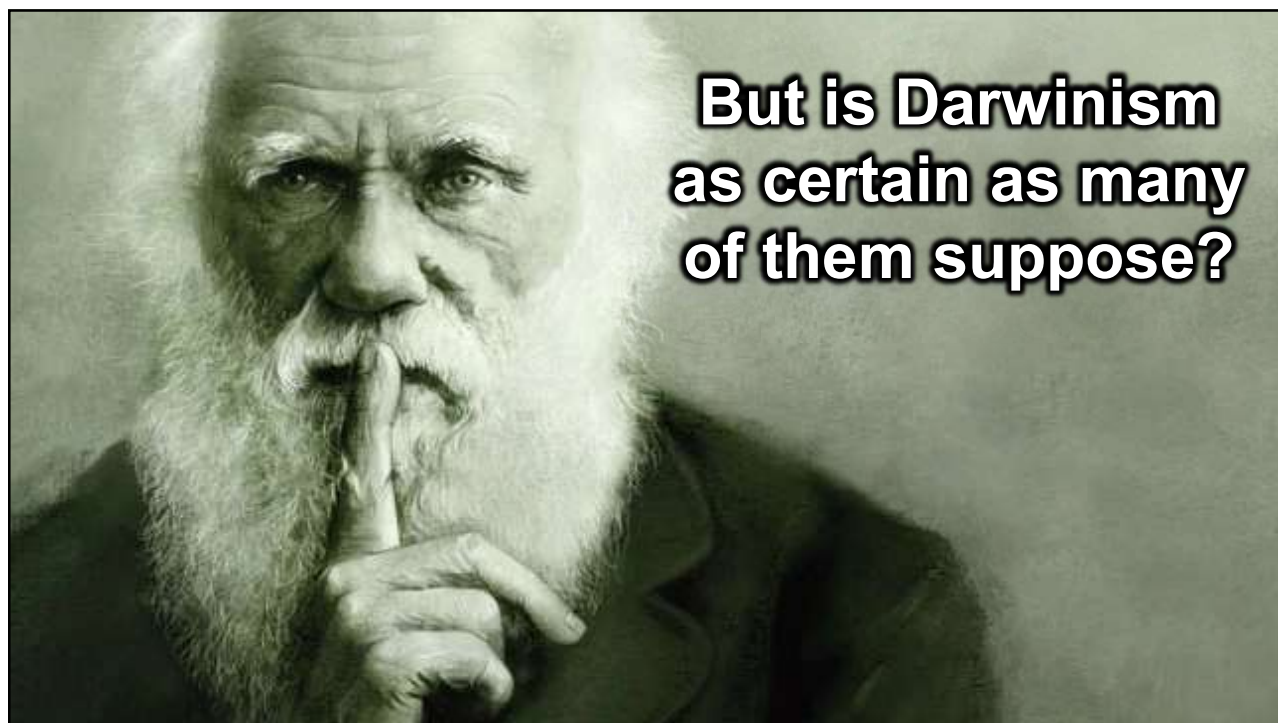


144



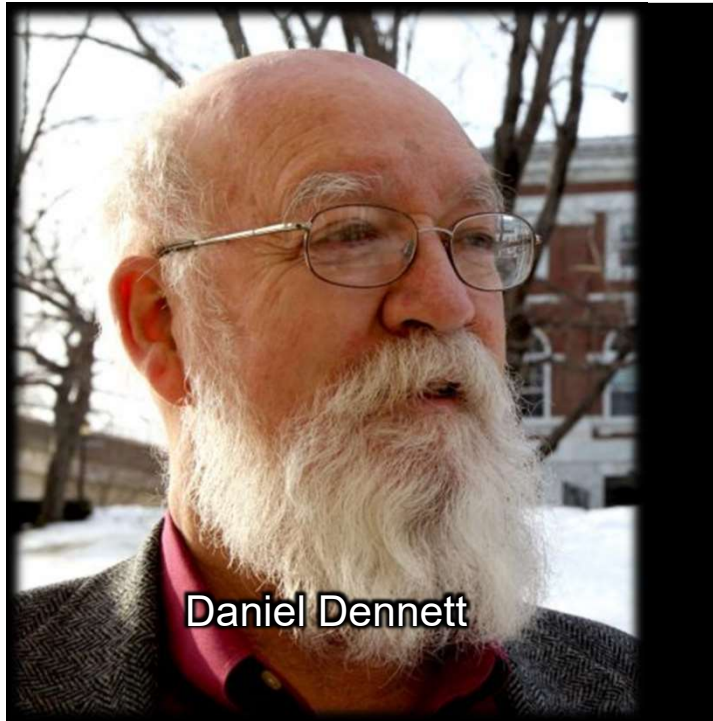
**Further, this
assumption is
based on a
commitment to
Darwinism.**

145

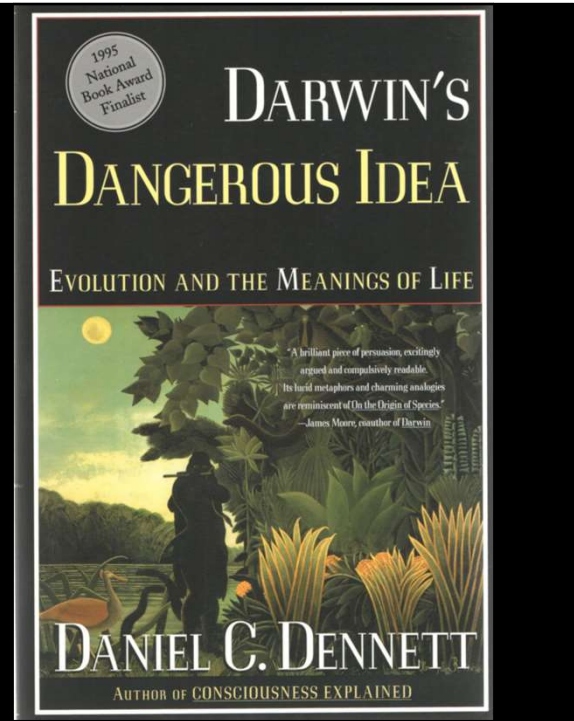


**But is Darwinism
as certain as many
of them suppose?**

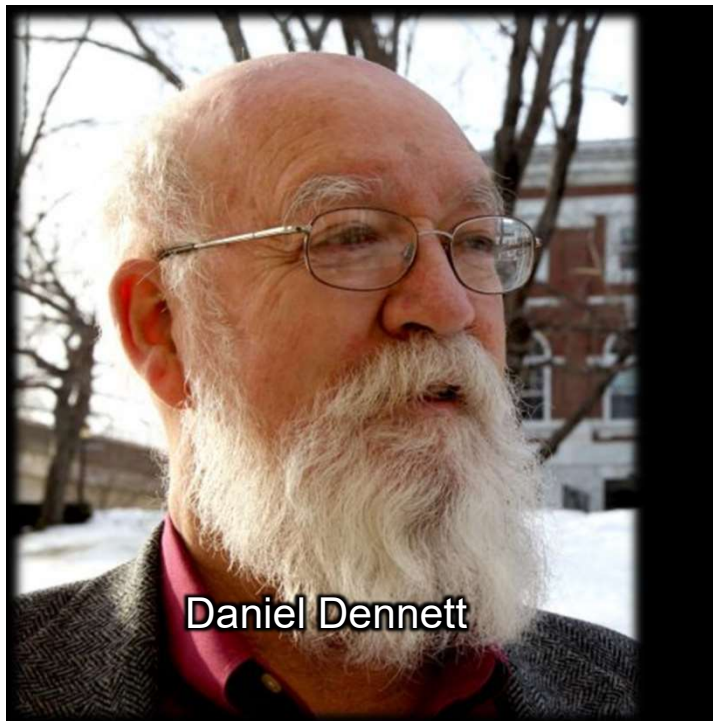
146



Daniel Dennett



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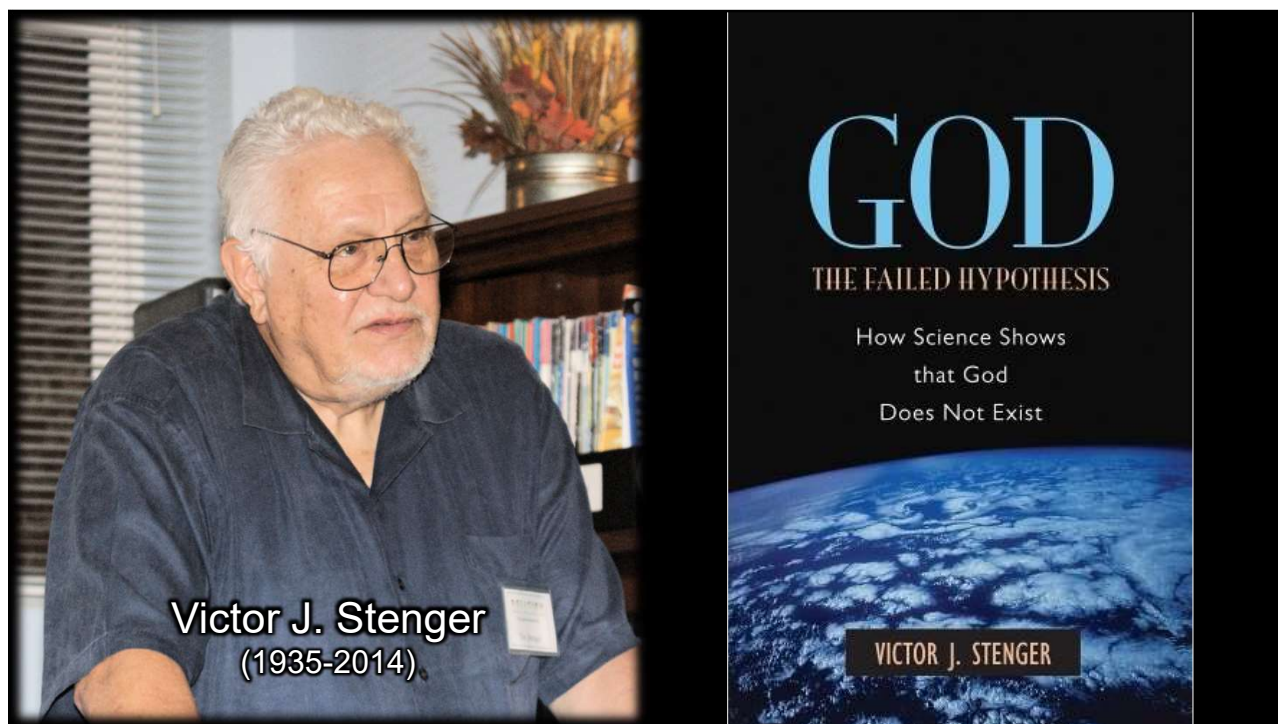


Daniel Dennett

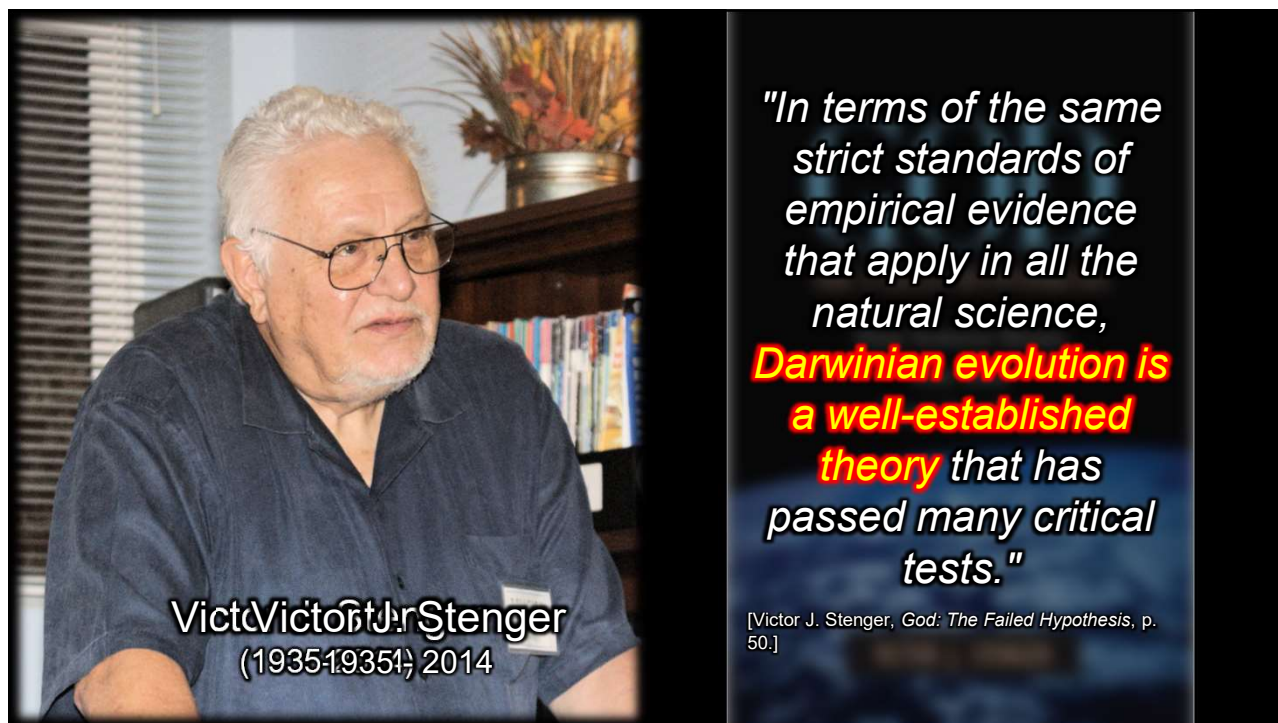
*"There are vigorous controversies swirling around in evolutionary theory, but those who feel threatened by Darwinism should not take heart from this fact. ... **The basic Darwinian idea ... is about as secure as any in science**"*

[Daniel C. Dennett, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, p. 19]

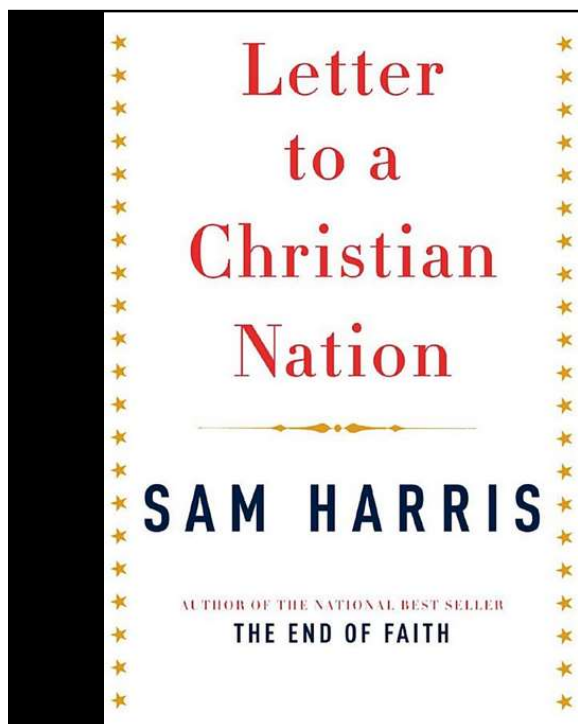
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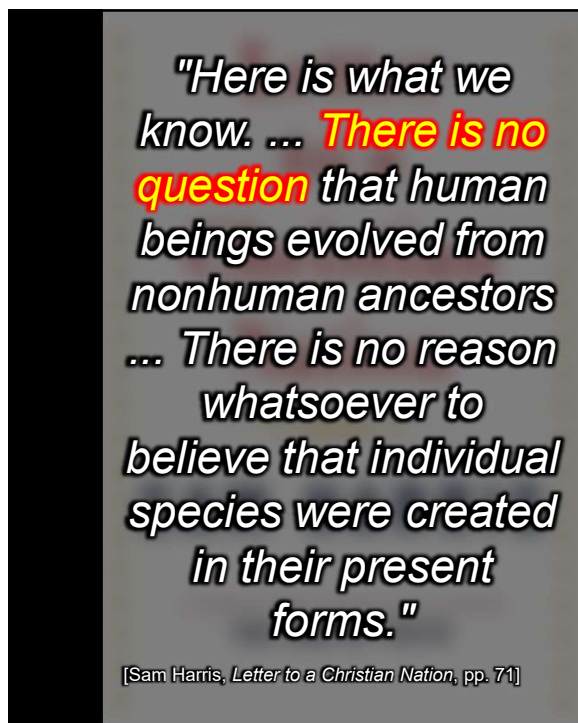
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150



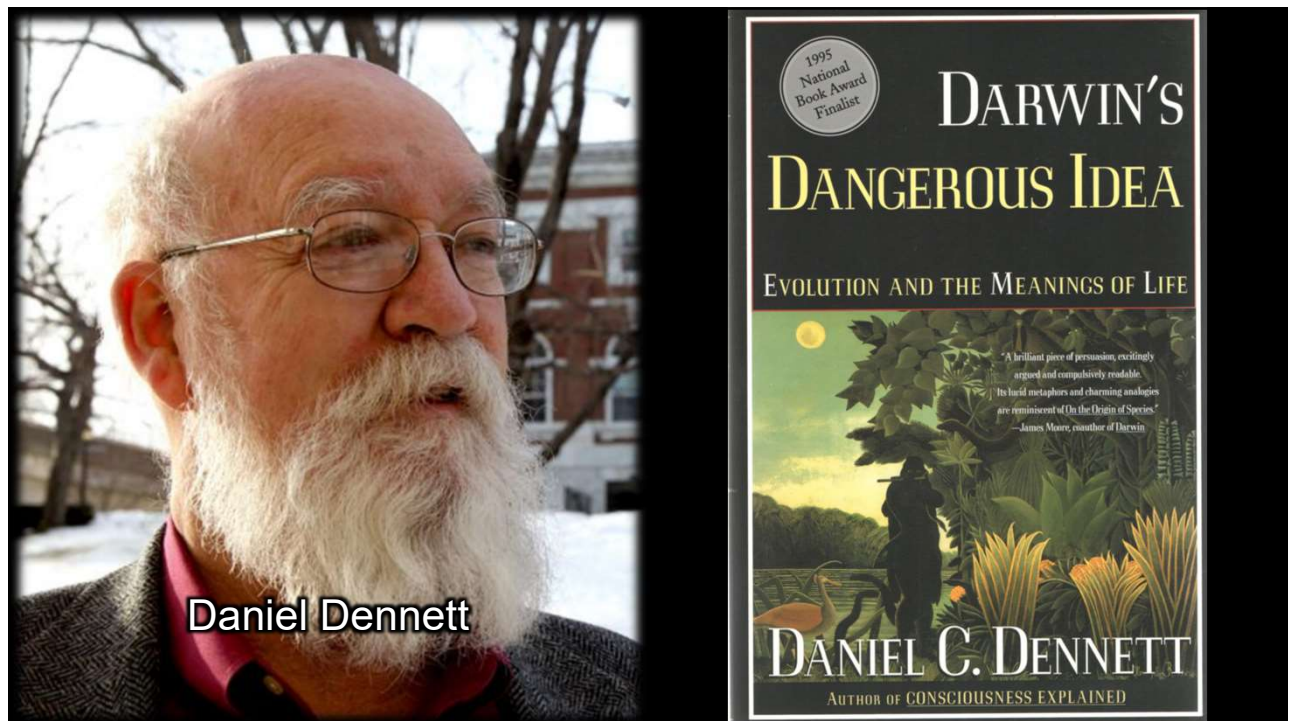
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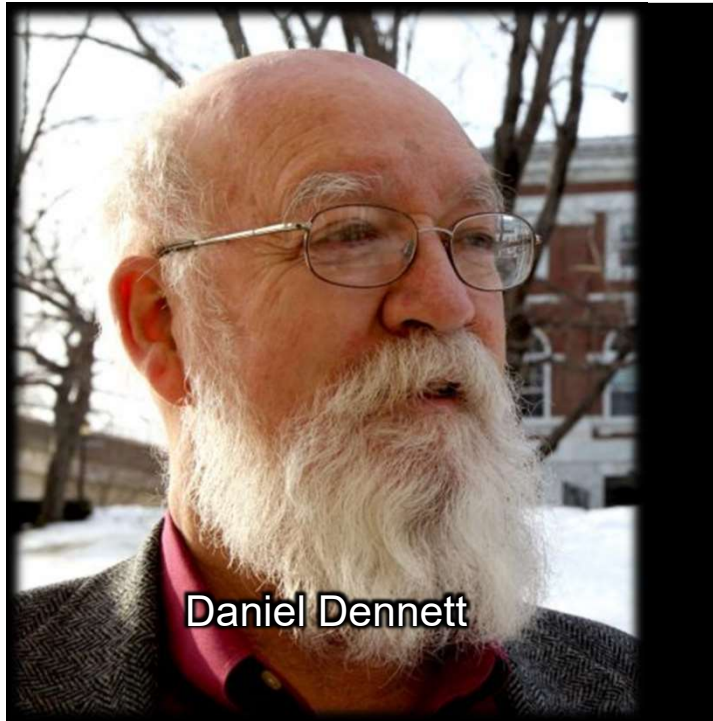
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Daniel Dennett

*"If you insist on teaching your children falsehoods—that the **Earth is flat**, that **'Man' is not a product of evolution** by natural selection—then ... we will ... describe your teachings as the spreading of falsehoods, and will attempt to demonstrate this to your children at our earliest opportunity."*

[Daniel Dennett, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea: Evolution and the Meaning of Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 519]

155

"The basic Darwinian idea . . . is about as secure as any in science ..."

Challenging evolution is on par with believing in a flat Earth.

"Darwinian evolution is a well-established theory. "

"There is no question . . ."

Challenging evolution is on par with challenging the Moon landing.

156


Is this so?

157


The screenshot shows a website with a navigation bar at the top containing links for 'About', 'Scientists', 'FAQ', 'Download', 'Resources', 'Contact', and 'Donate'. The main content area has a blue header with the text: "We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged." Below this is a video player showing a panel discussion with several participants. The video title is "Growing Number of Scientists are Skeptical of Darwinian Theory". Below the video player, there are two buttons: "Sign the List" and "Download the List". To the right of these buttons, the text reads: "There Is Scientific Dissent From Darwinism. It deserves to be heard." At the bottom of the page, there is a quote: "Scientific journals now document many scientific problems and criticisms of evolutionary theory and students need to know about these as well.... Many of the scientific criticisms of which I speak are well known by scientists in various disciplines, including the disciplines of chemistry and biochemistry, in which I have done my work." This quote is attributed to Philip A. Ball, Member National Academy of Sciences, Emeritus Dean Pugh Professor at Pennsylvania State University. At the very bottom, there is a row of small icons representing various countries and languages.

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[About](#)
[Scientists](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Download](#)
[Resources](#)
[Contact](#)
[Donate](#)


A SCIENTIFIC DISSENT
 FROM DARWINISM

“We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged.”



159

There Is Scientific Dissent From Darwinism.

It deserves to be heard.

"Scientific journals now document many scientific problems and criticisms of evolutionary theory and students need to know about these as well. ... Many of the scientific criticisms of which I speak are well known by scientists in various disciplines, including the disciplines of chemistry and biochemistry, in which I have done my work."

Philip S. Skell, Member National Academy of Sciences, Emeritus Evan Pugh Professor at Pennsylvania State University

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160

Observations

This doesn't prove that
Darwinism is false.

161

Observations

This doesn't mean that all
these signers repudiate
evolution entirely.

162

Observations

It does mean that statements such as

"The basic Darwinian idea . . . is about as secure as any in science ..."

Challenging evolution is on par with believing in a flat Earth.

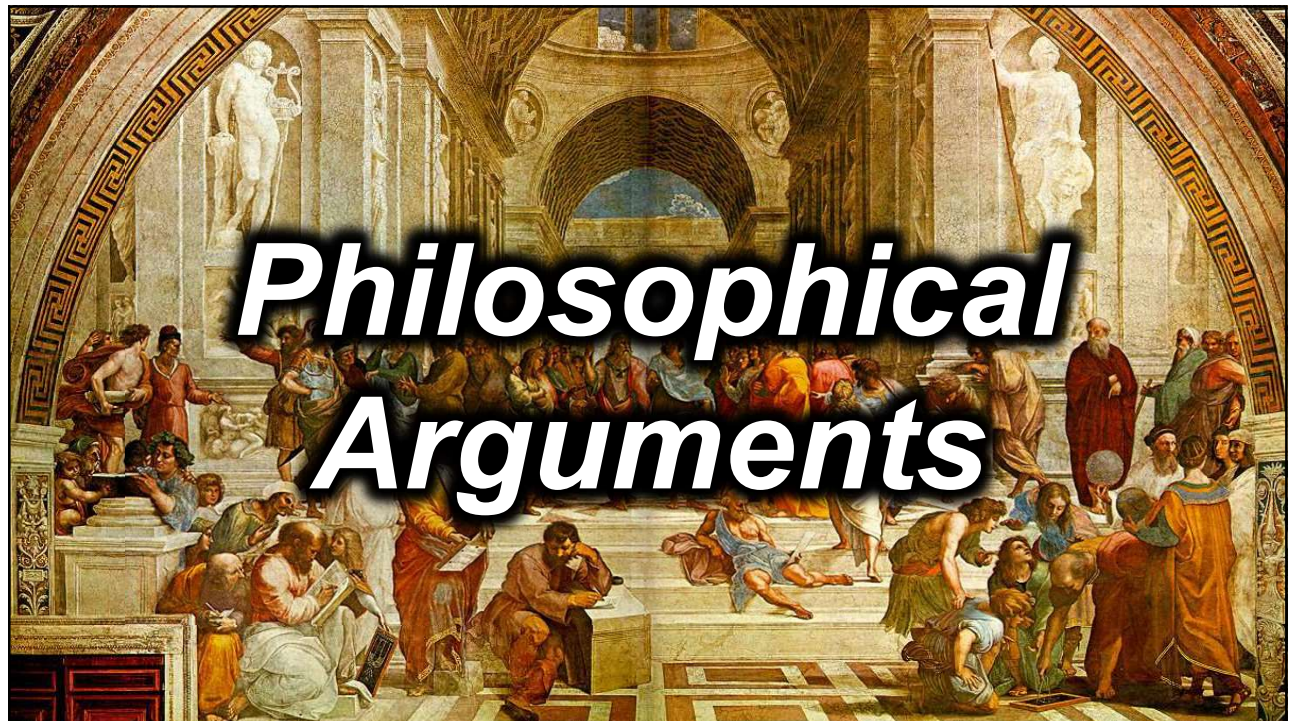
"Darwinian evolution is a well-established theory."

Challenging evolution is on par with challenging the Moon landing.

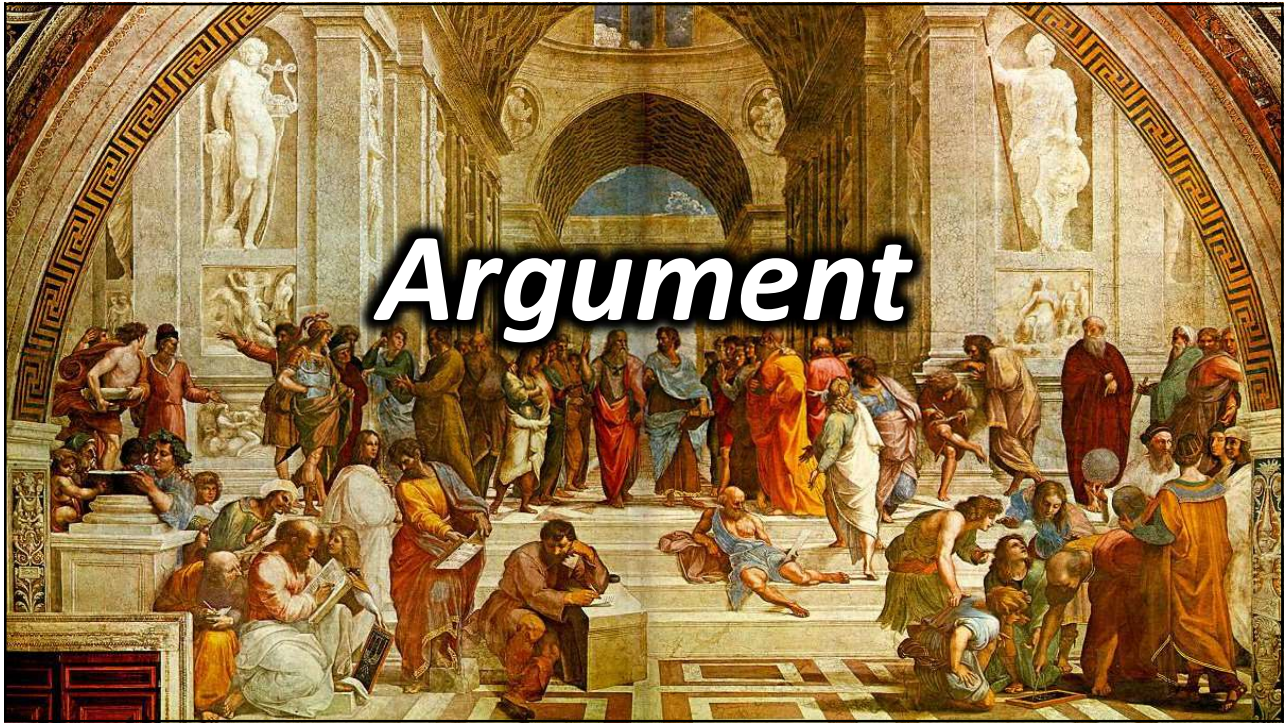
"There is no question . . ."

are unwarranted.

163

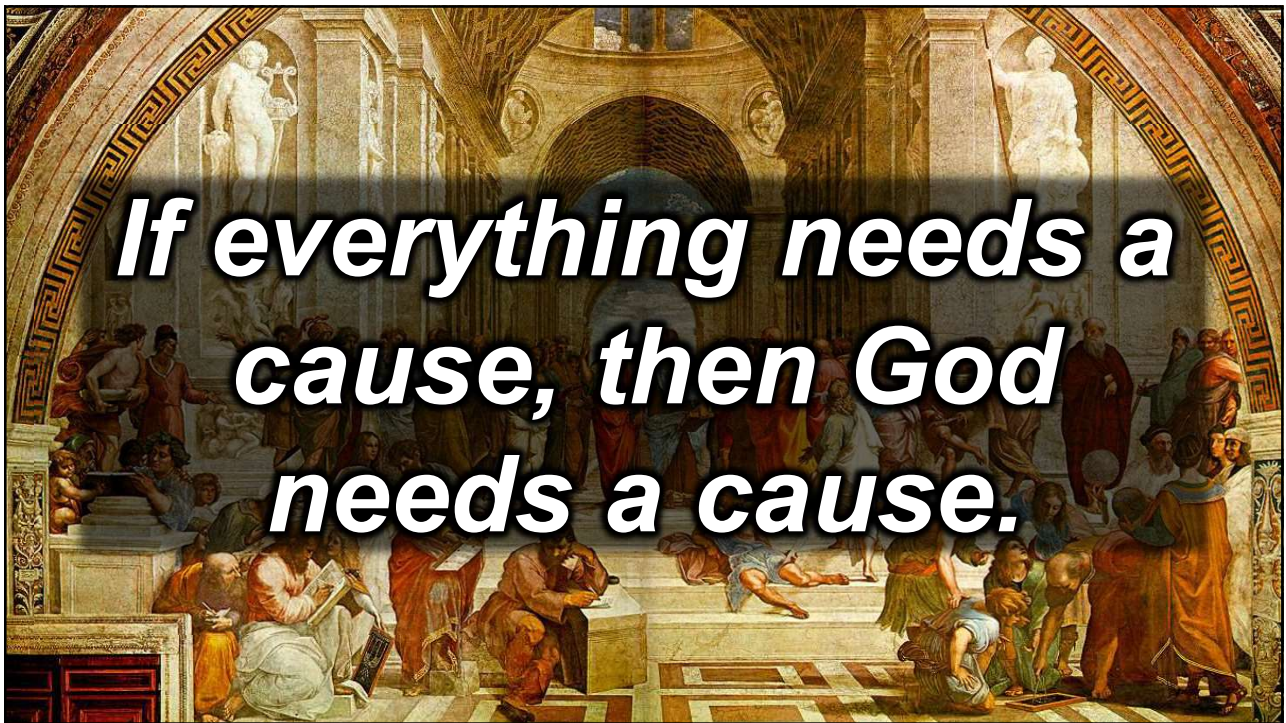


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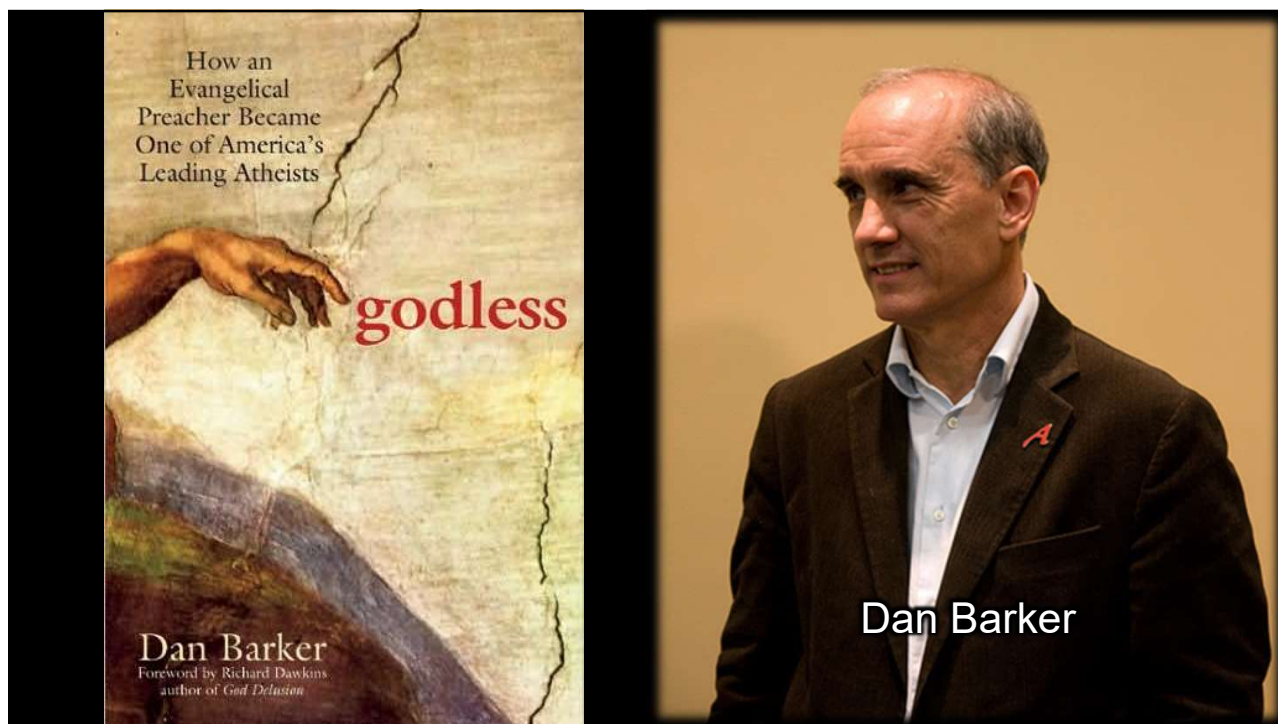
Argument

165

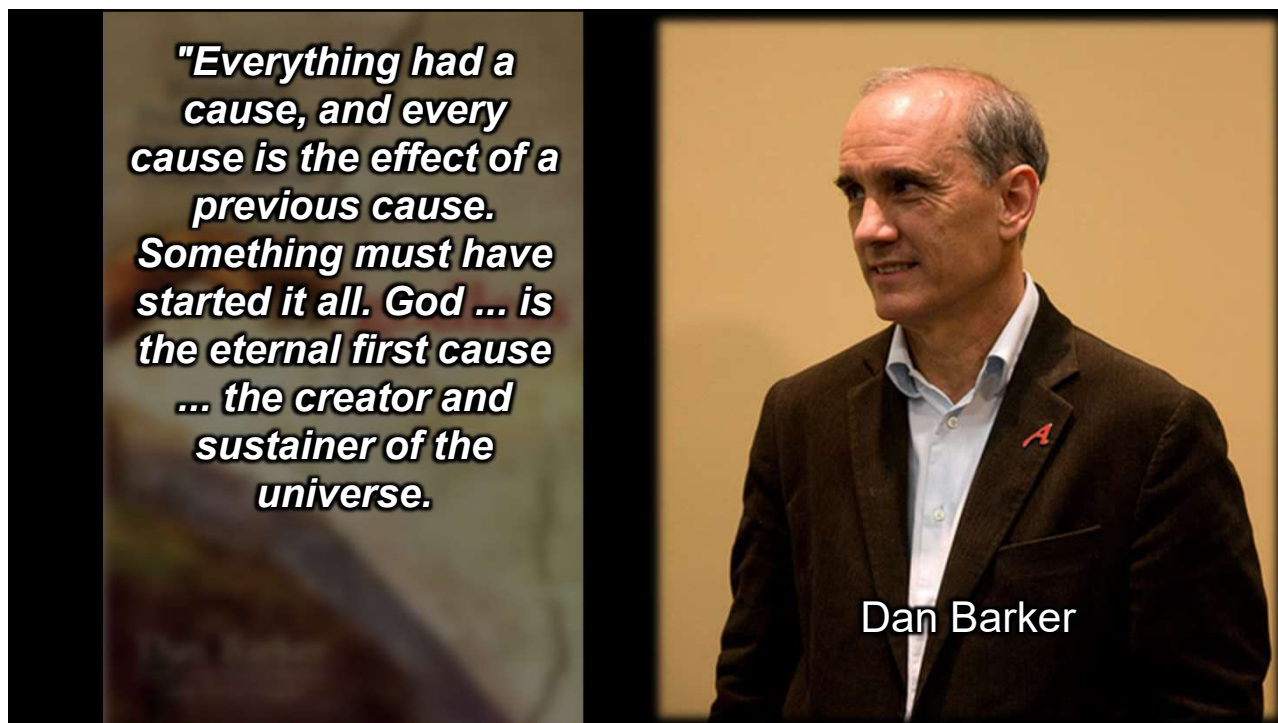


***If everything needs a
cause, then God
needs a cause.***

166



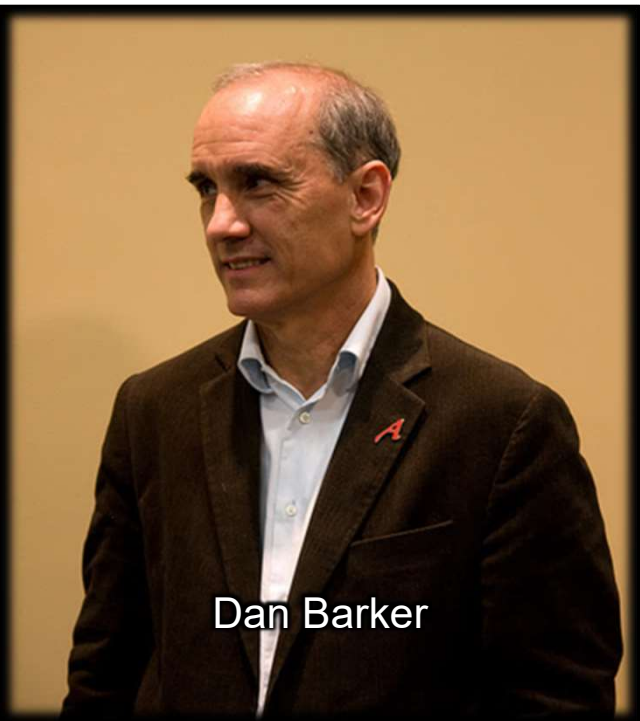
167



168


"The major premise of this argument 'everything had a cause,' is contradicted by the conclusion that 'God did not have a cause.' You can't have it both ways. If everything had to have a cause, then there could not be a first cause."

[Dan Barker, *Godless: How an Evangelical Preacher Became One of America's Leading Atheists* (Berkeley: Ulysses Press, 2008), 113-114]

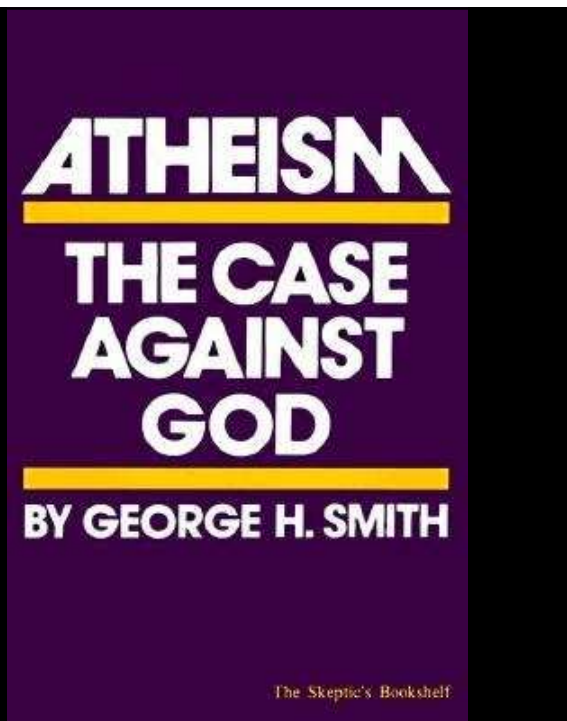


Dan Barker

169



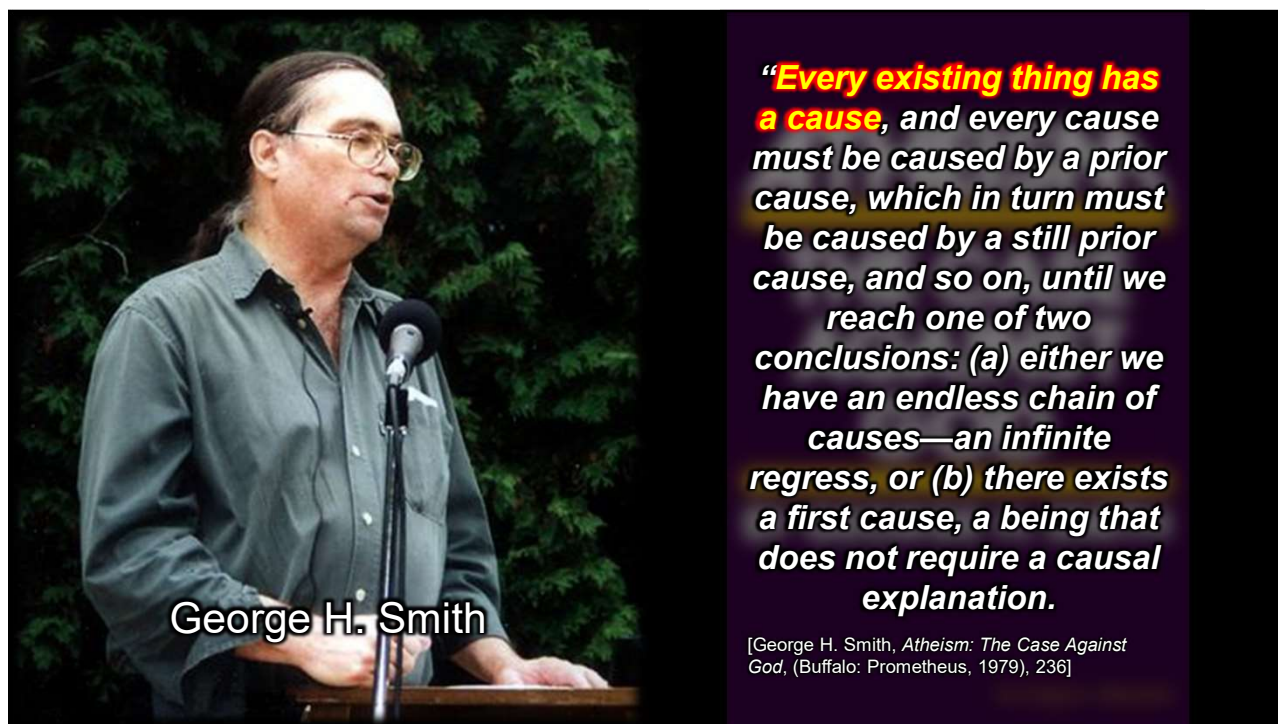
George H. Smith



ATHEISM
THE CASE AGAINST GOD
BY GEORGE H. SMITH

The Skeptic's Bookshelf

170

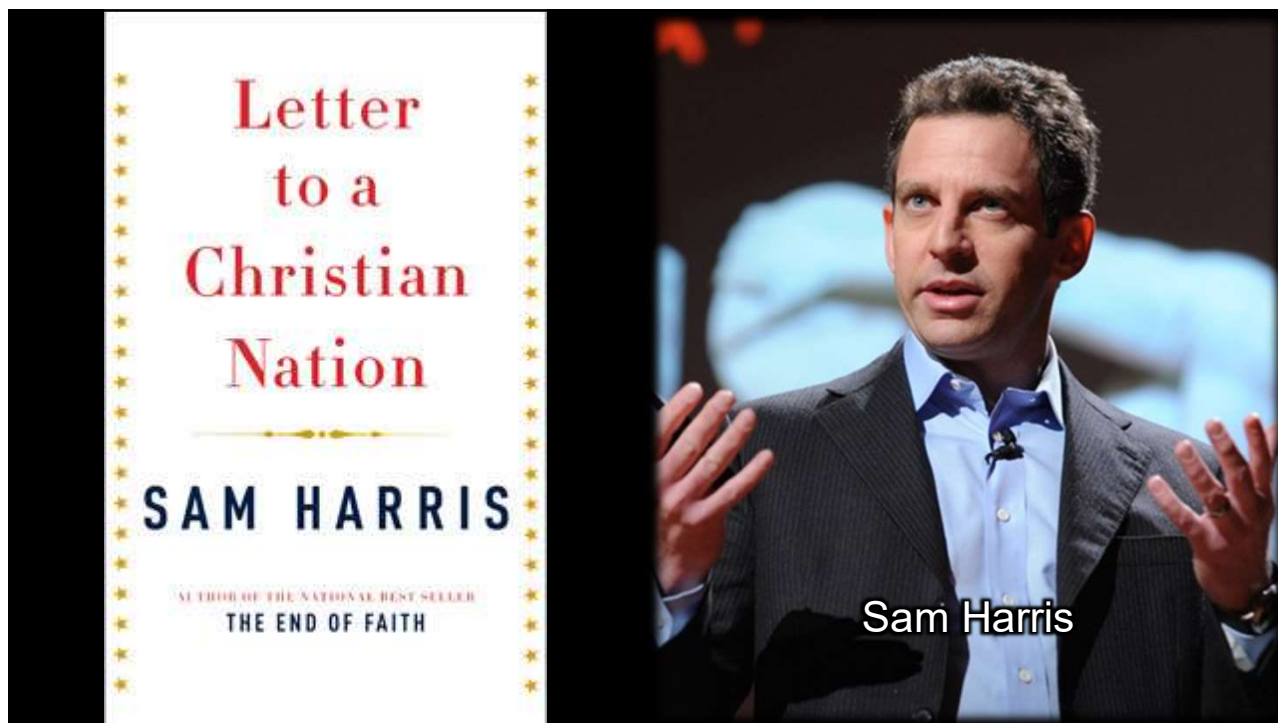


George H. Smith

“Every existing thing has a cause, and every cause must be caused by a prior cause, which in turn must be caused by a still prior cause, and so on, until we reach one of two conclusions: (a) either we have an endless chain of causes—an infinite regress, or (b) there exists a first cause, a being that does not require a causal explanation.”

[George H. Smith, *Atheism: The Case Against God*, (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1979), 236]

171



Sam Harris

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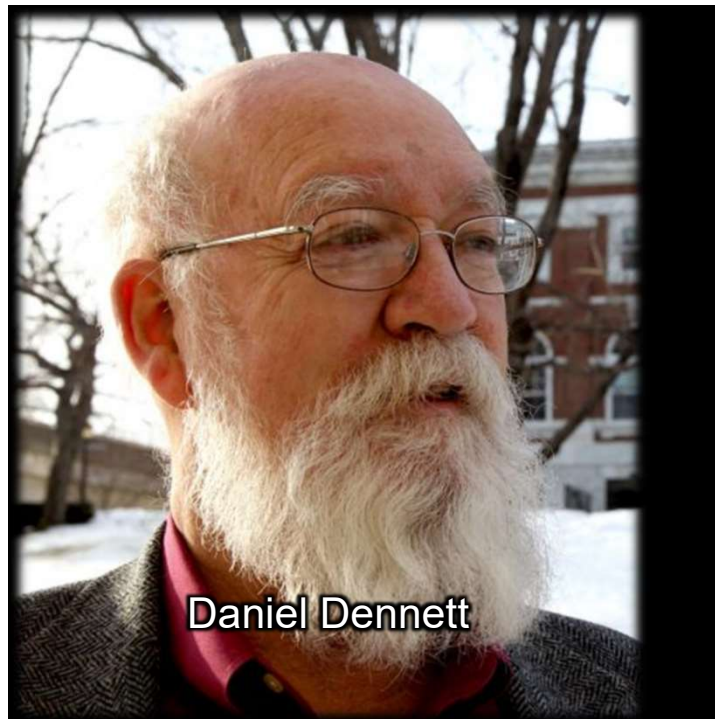
"Everything that exists has a cause; space and time exist; space and time must, therefore, have been caused by something that stands outside of space and time, and the only thing that transcends space and time, and yet retains the power to create, is God."

[Sam Harris, *Letter to a Christian Nation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 72]

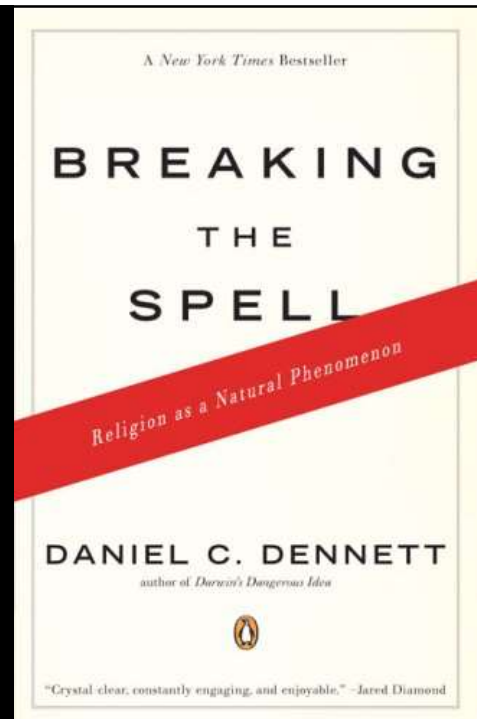


Sam Harris

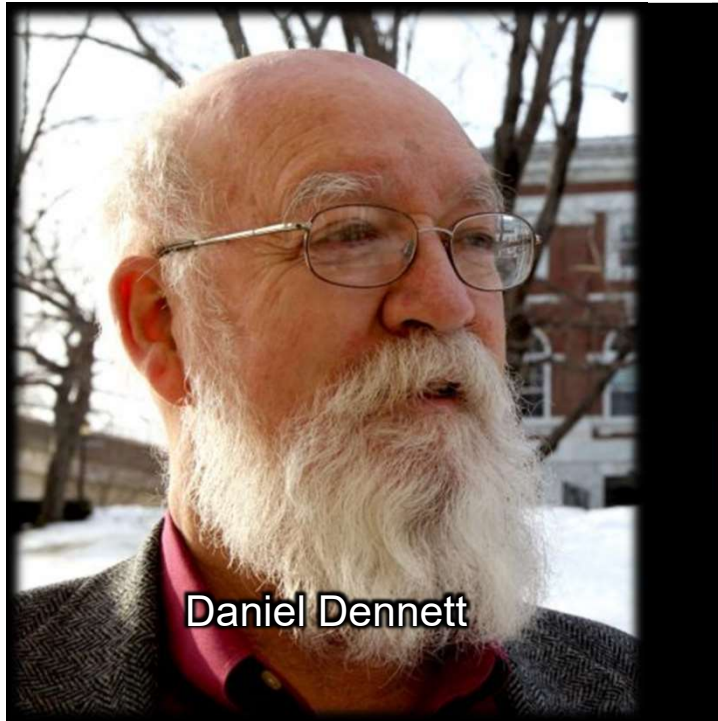
173



Daniel Dennett



174

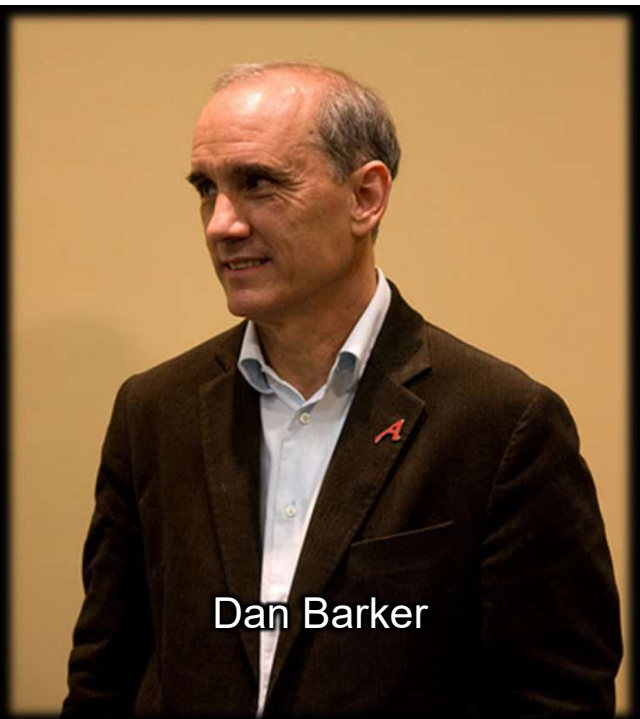
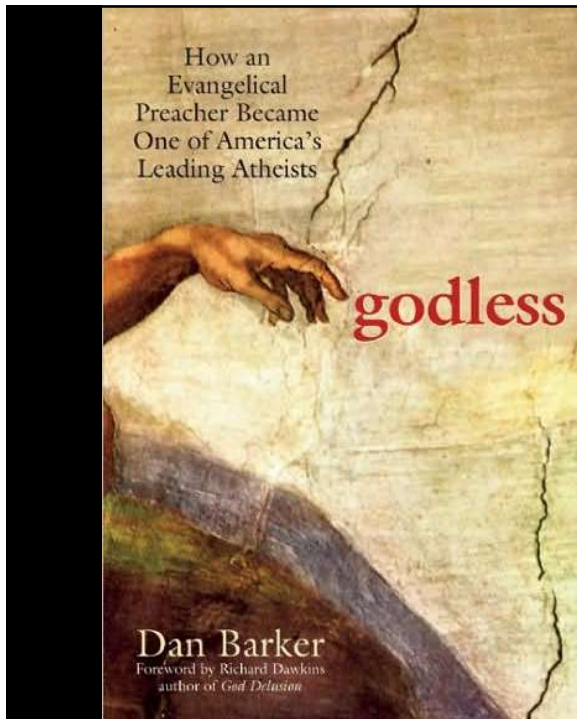


Daniel Dennett

"The Cosmological Argument, which in its simplest form states that since everything must have a cause the universe must have a cause—namely, God—doesn't stay simple for long."

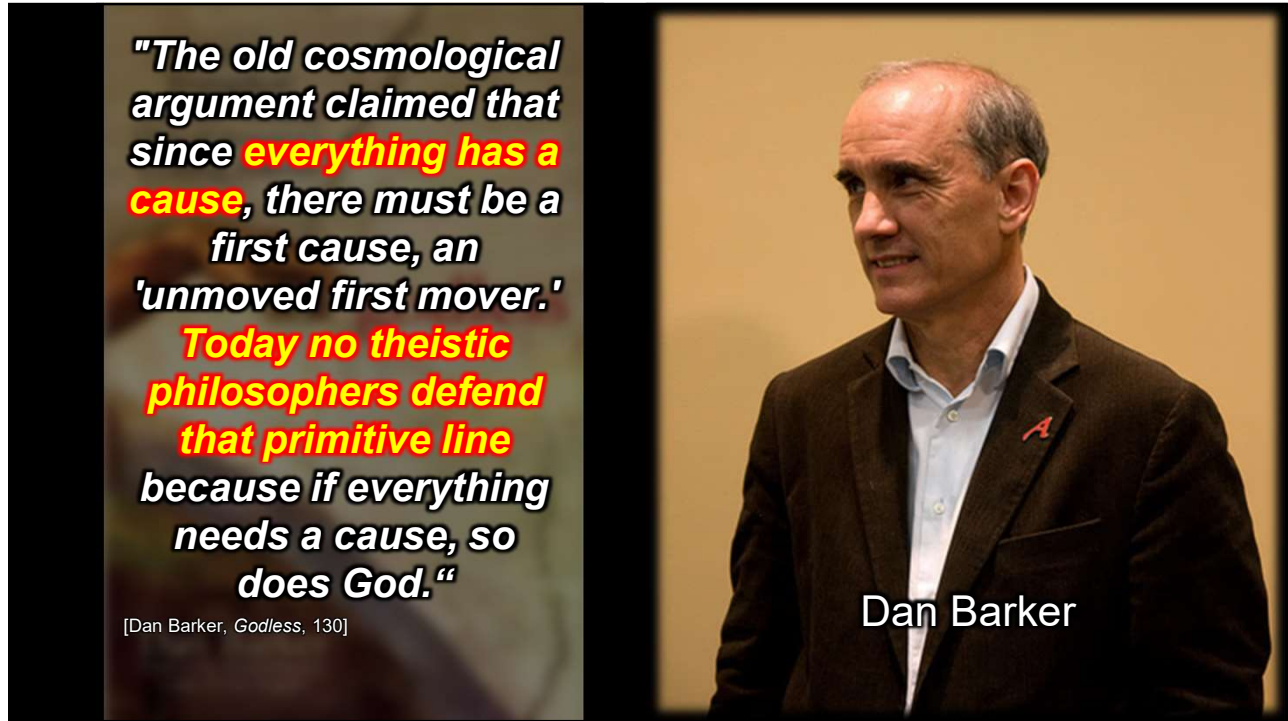
[Daniel C. Dennett, *Breaking the Spell*, (New York: Penguin Group, 2006), 242]

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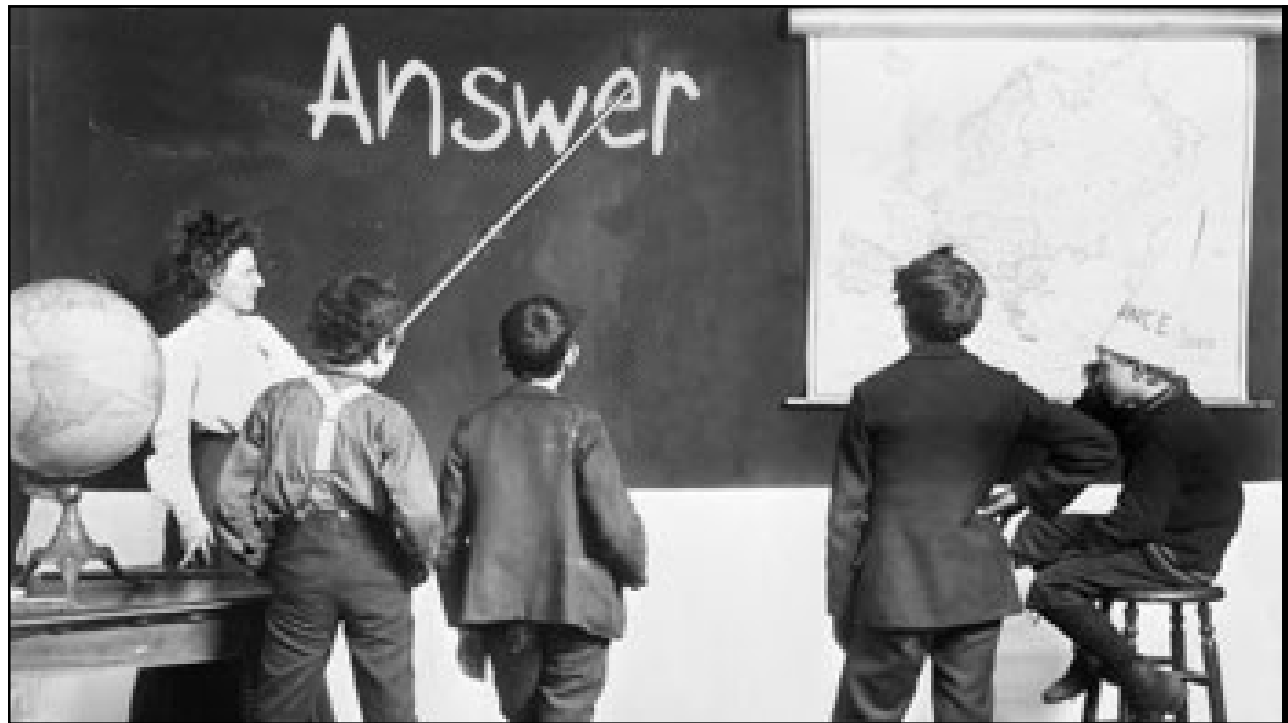


Dan Barker

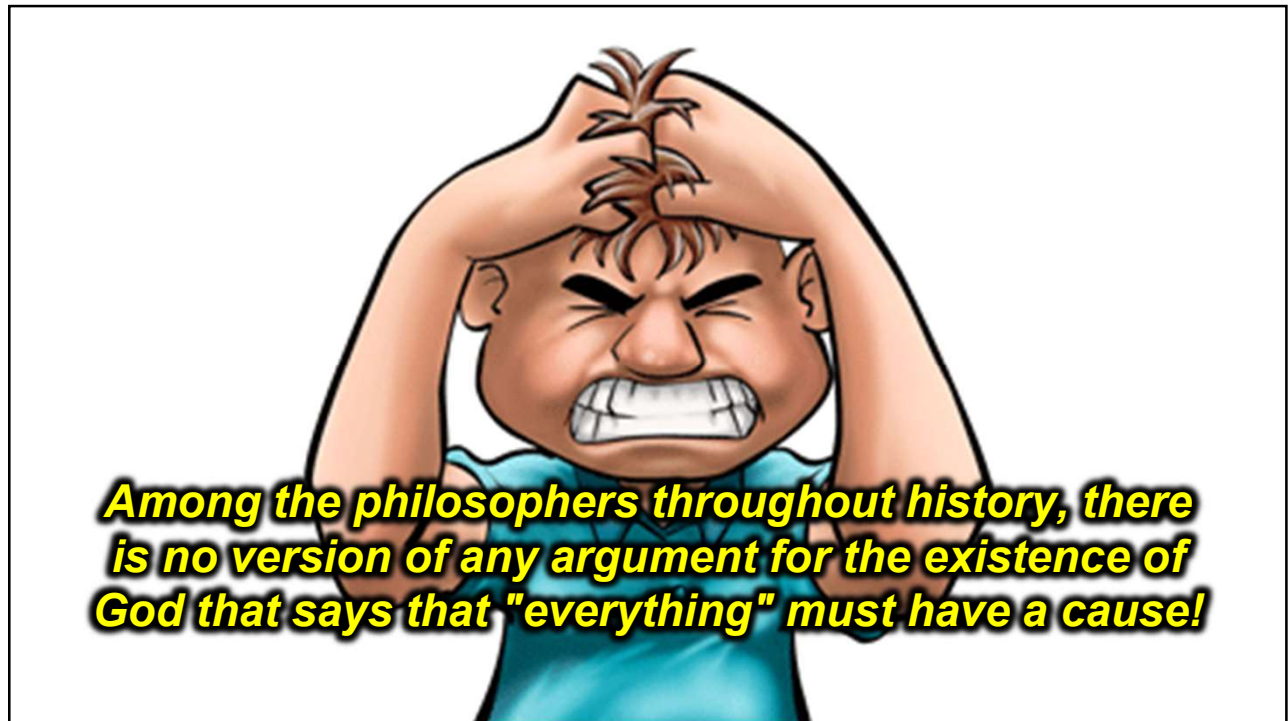
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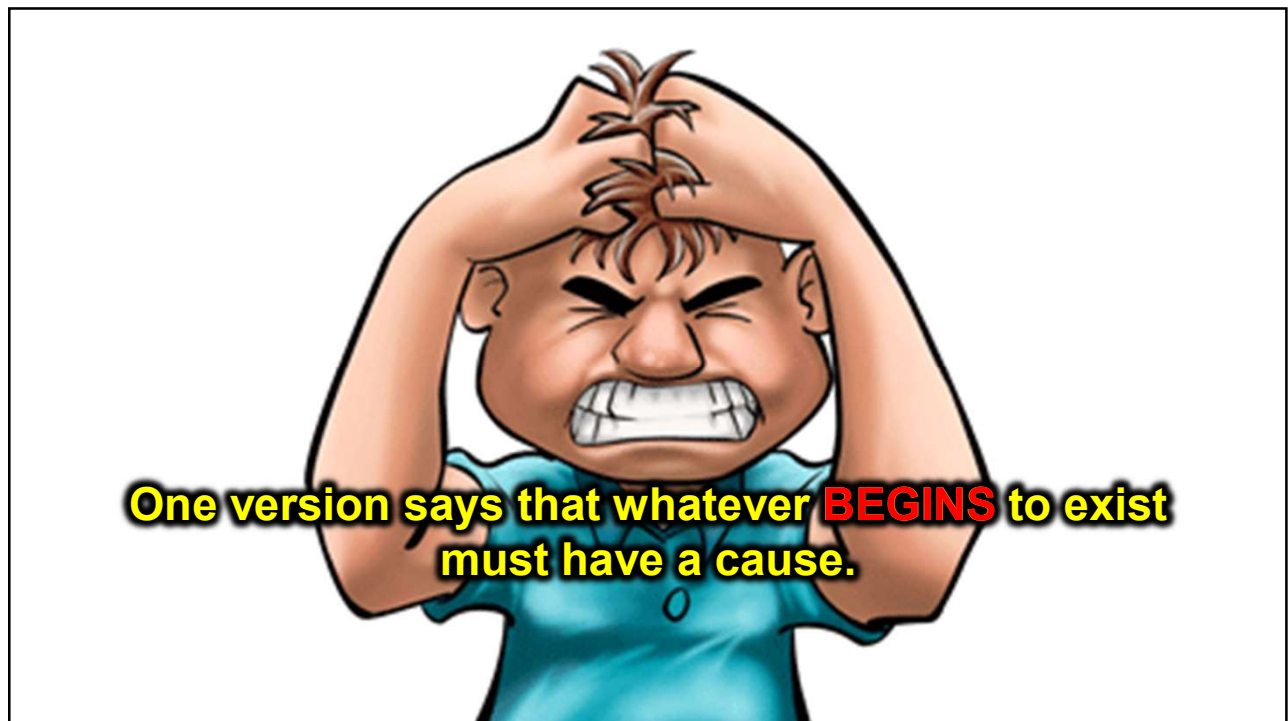
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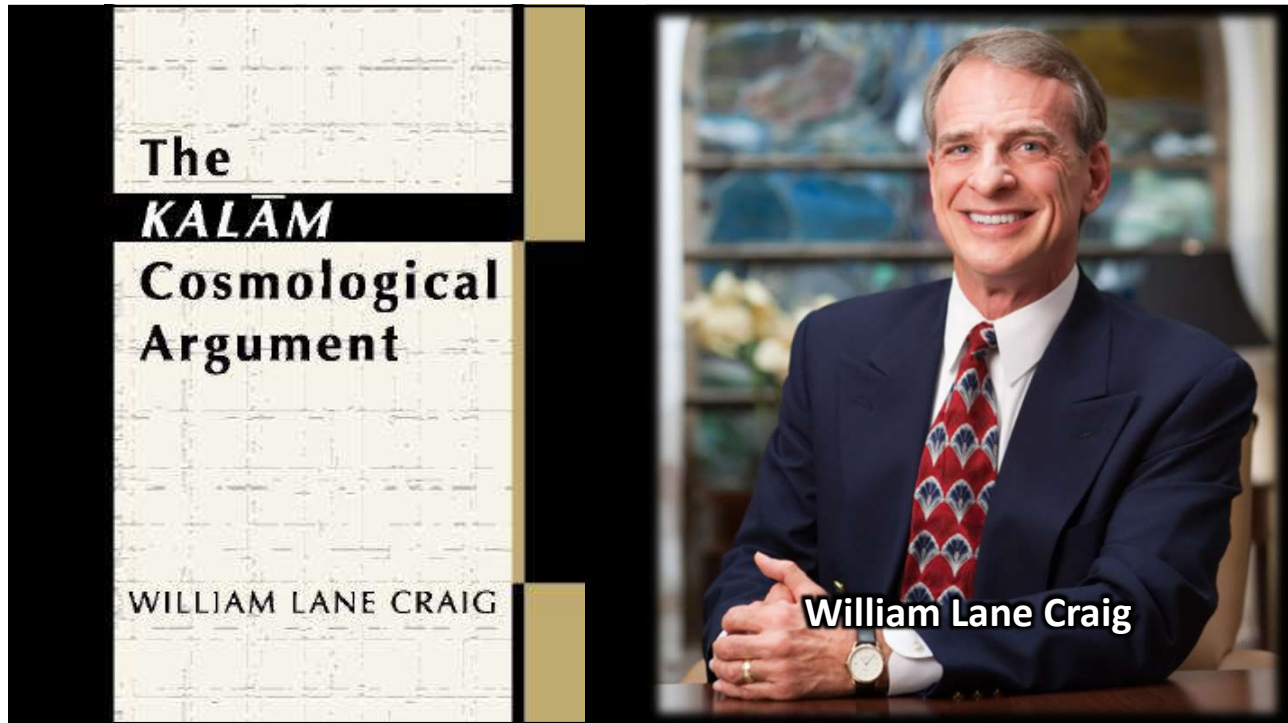
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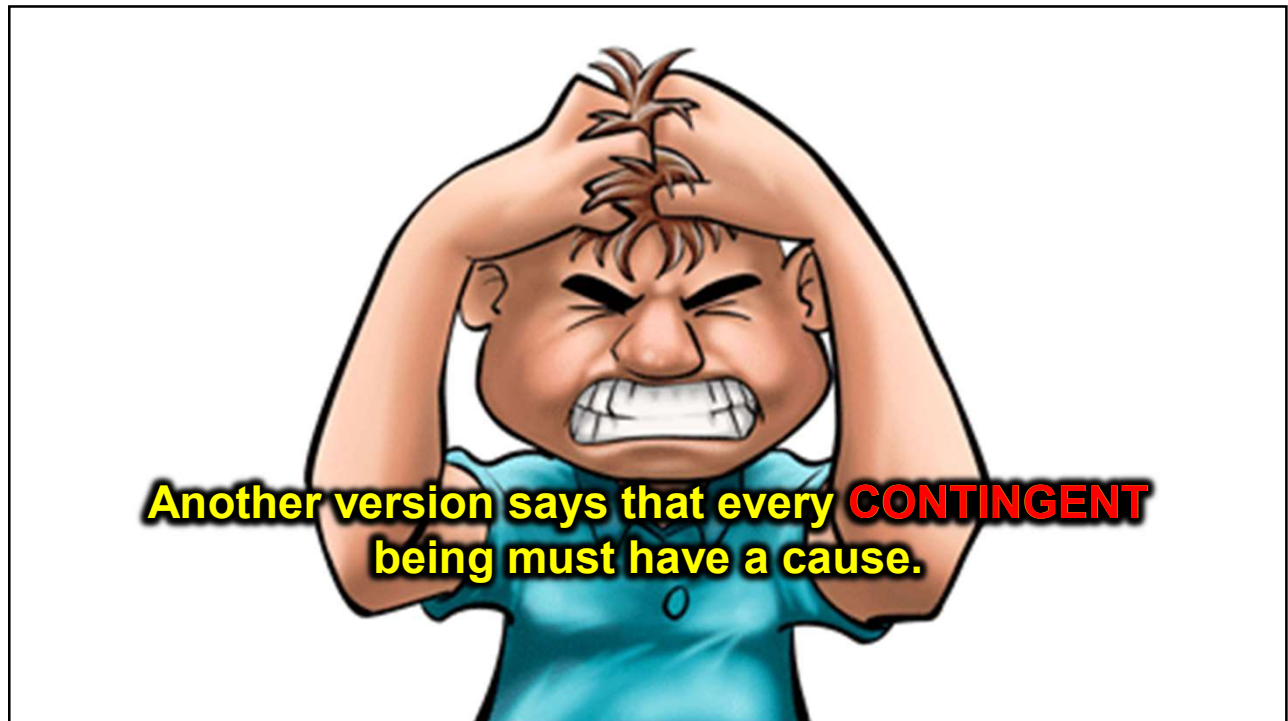
179



180



181



182



183



184

"Off the top of my head, the big one (but by no means the only one) was [Feser's] point that no respectable theologian or theistic philosopher has ever made the claim, 'everything has a cause.' Yet various new atheists have proceeded to attack that straw man of their own making.



Jeffrey Jay Lowder

185

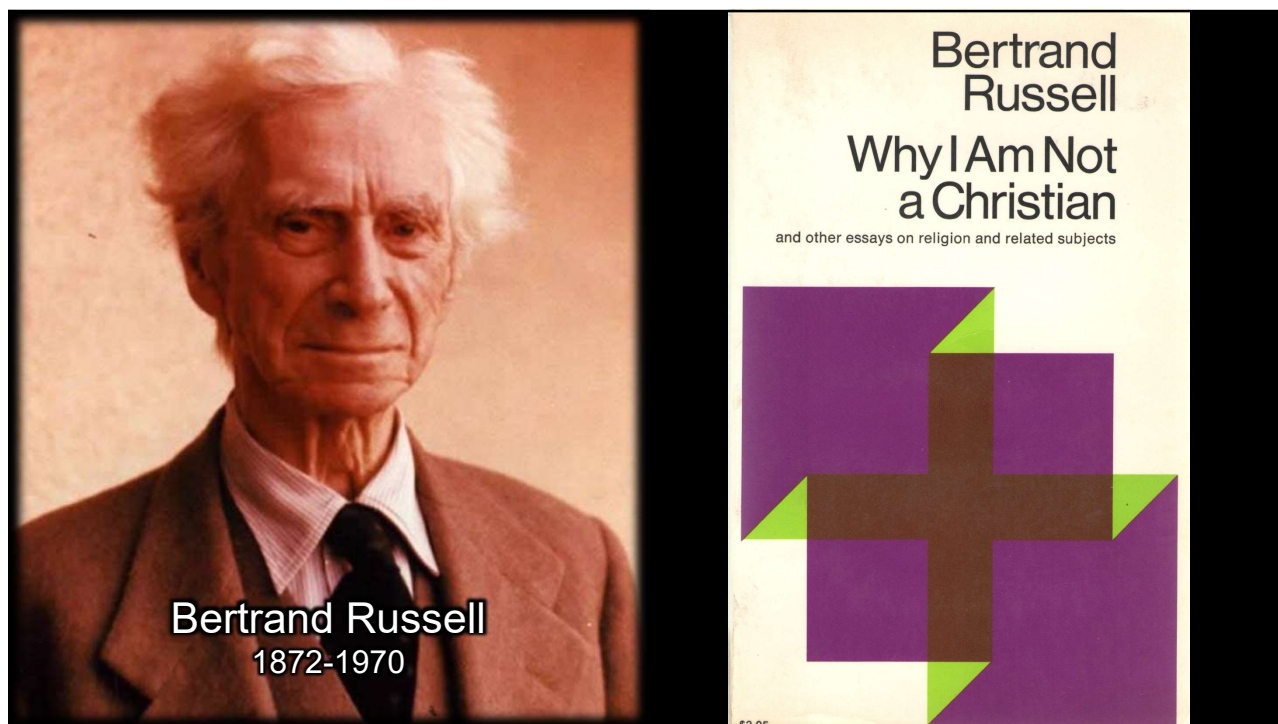
"I remember, when reading The God Delusion by Richard Dawkins, where he attacked that straw man and cringing. There are many different cosmological arguments for God's existence and none of them rely upon the stupid claim, 'everything has a cause.'"



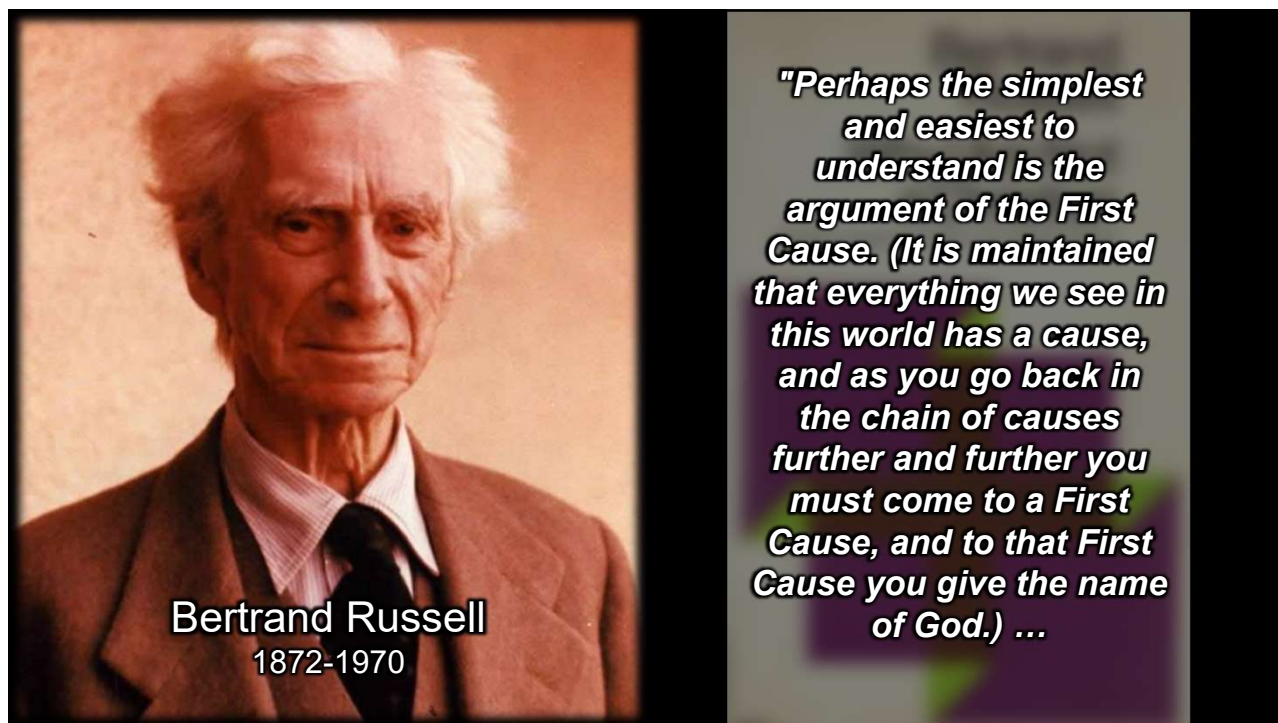
Jeffrey Jay Lowder

[<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/secularoutpost/2014/02/17/feser-insults-readers-of-www-infidels-org/#comment-1248907824>, accessed 11/07/17]

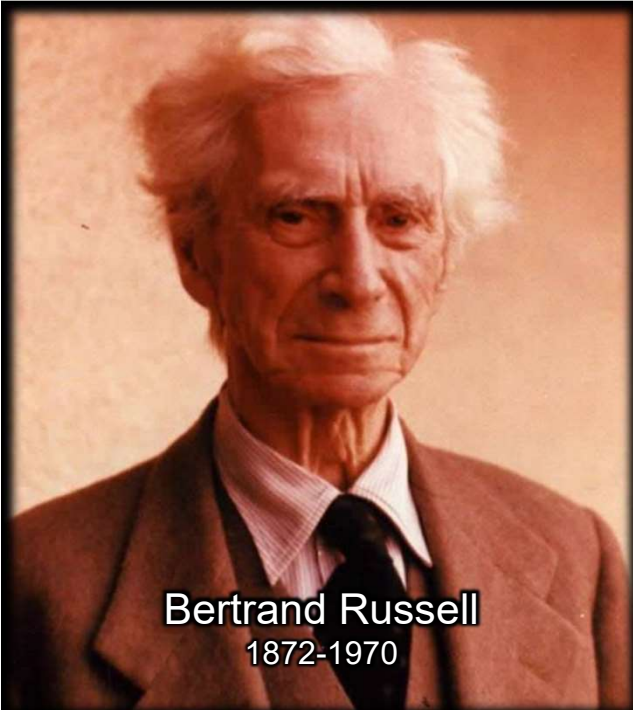
186



187



188




That very simple sentence showed me, as I still think; the fallacy in the argument of the First Cause. If **everything must have a cause, then God must have a cause."**

[Bertrand Russell, *Why I Am Not a Christian and Other Essays on Religion and Related Subjects* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), 6-7]

Bertrand Russell
1872-1970

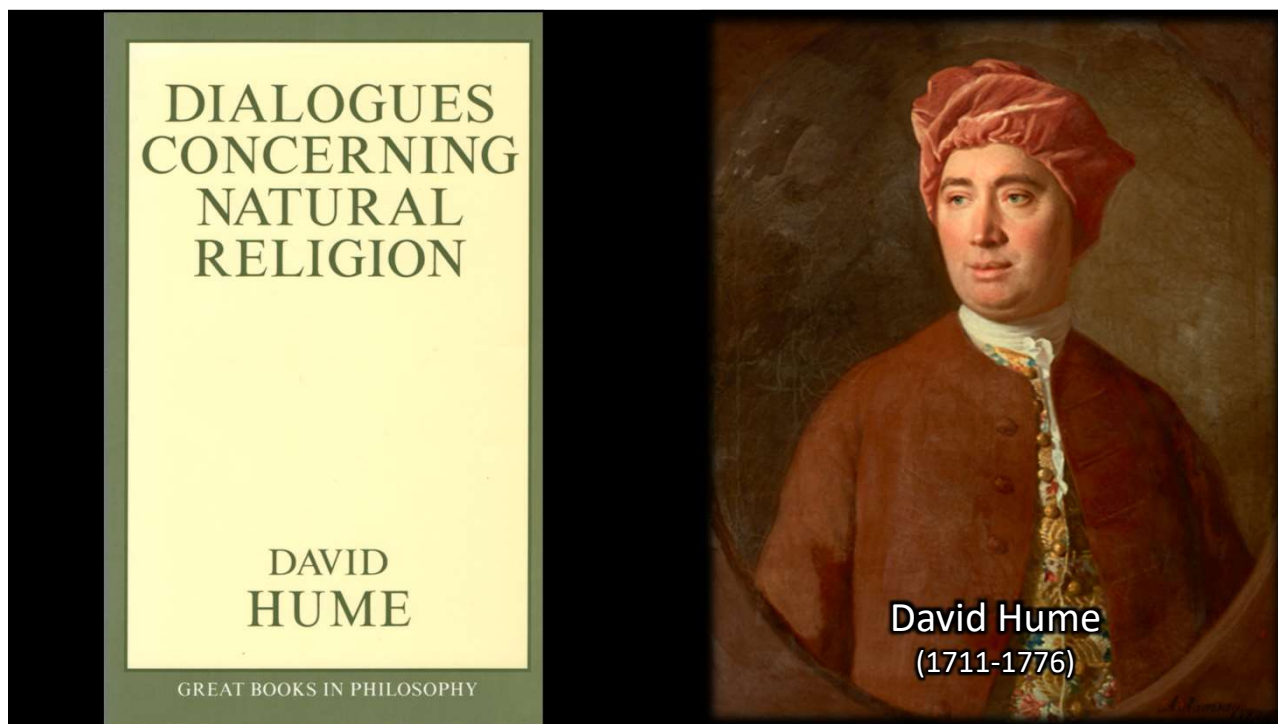
189

Perhaps these atheists are perhaps taking their cue either from the famous Scottish philosopher David Hume.

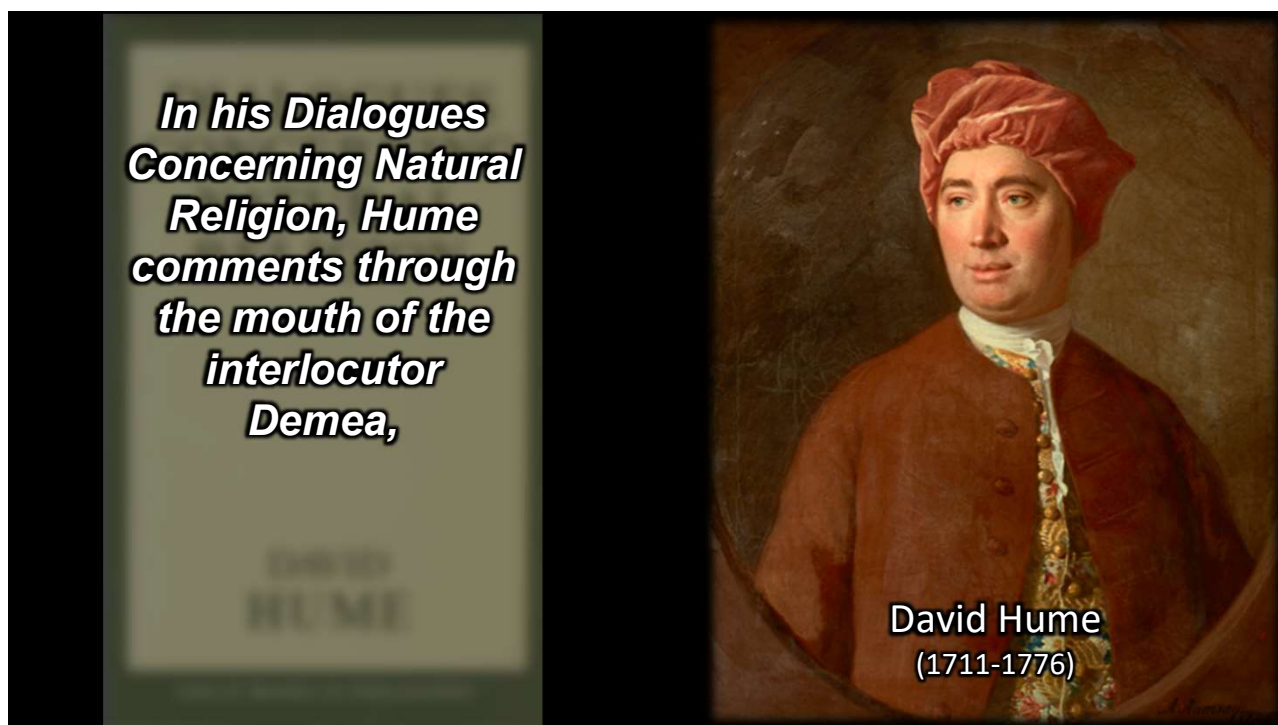


David Hume
(1711-1776)

190



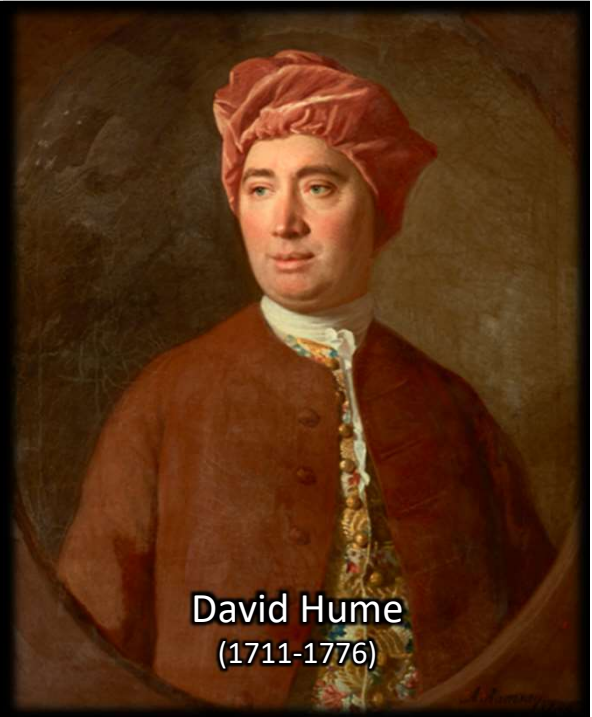
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192

"Whatever exists must have a cause or reason of its existence; it being absolutely impossible for anything to produce itself, or be the cause of its own existence."

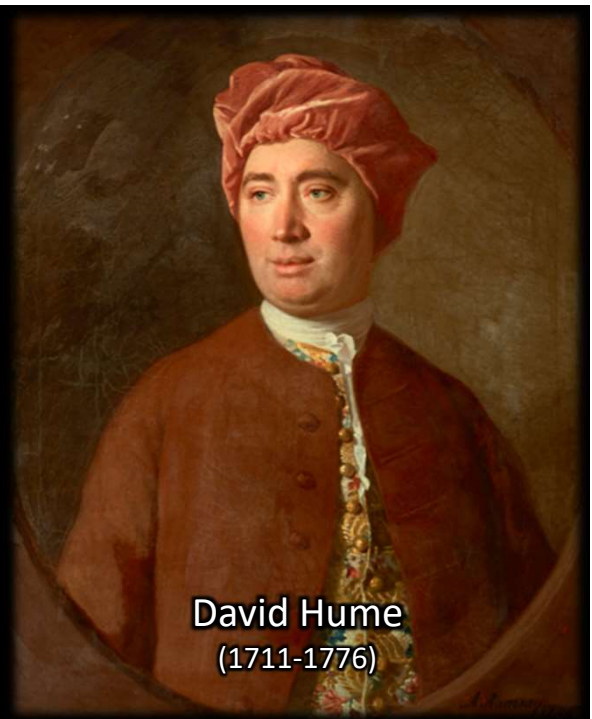
[*Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (Amherst: Prometheus, 1989), 73]



David Hume
(1711-1776)

193

In defense of Demea's original argument notice the wording:

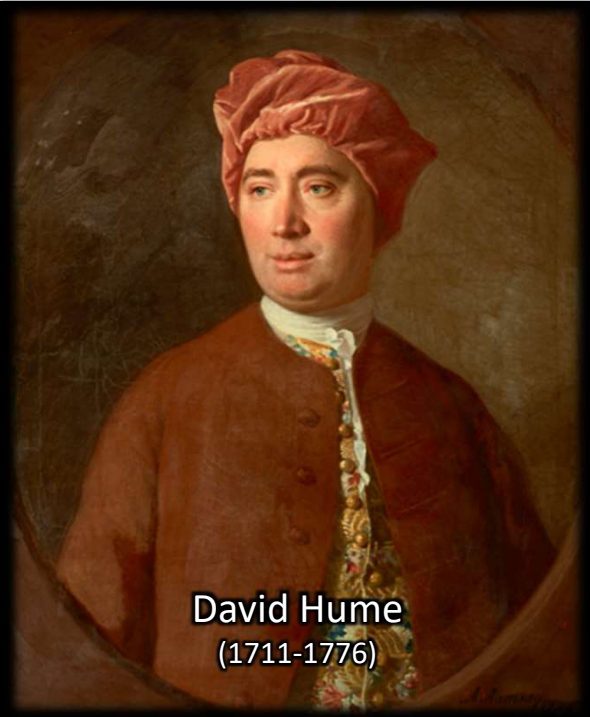


David Hume
(1711-1776)

194

"Whatever exists must have a cause or reason of its existence; it being absolutely impossible for anything to produce itself, or be the cause of its own existence."

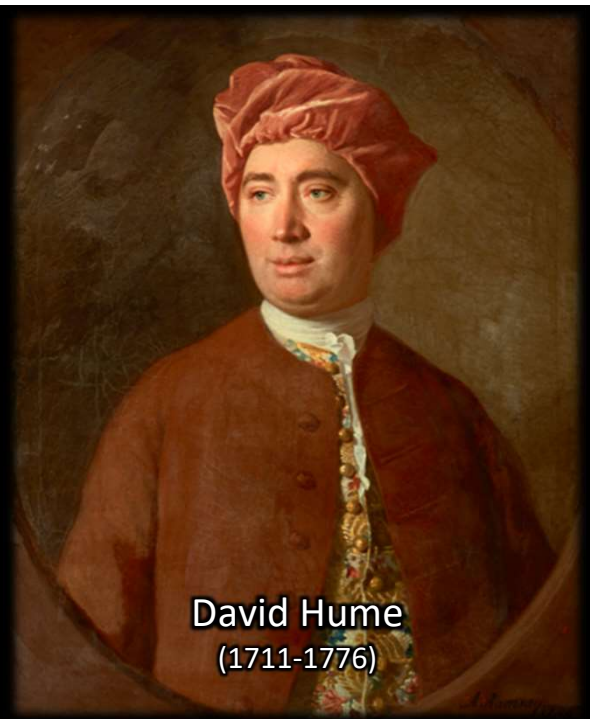
[*Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*
(Amherst: Prometheus, 1989), 73]



David Hume
(1711-1776)

195

"What was it, then, which determined Something to exist rather than Nothing, and bestowed being on a particular possibility, exclusive of the rest?"

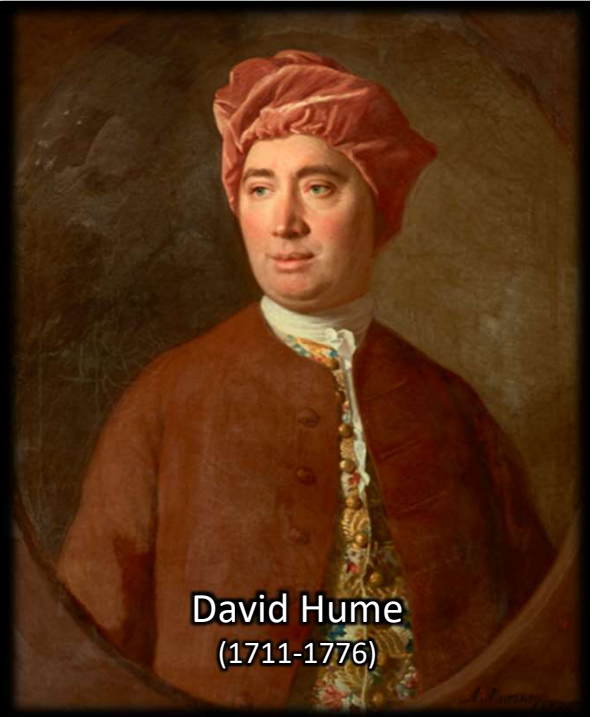


David Hume
(1711-1776)

196

***"External causes,
there are supposed
to be none. Chance
is a word without a
meaning. Was it
Nothing? But that
can never produce
any thing.***

DAVID
HUME

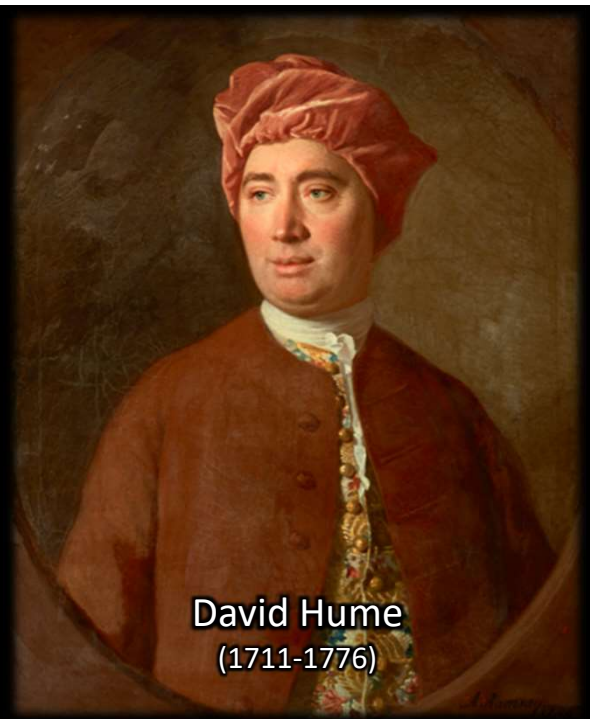


David Hume
(1711-1776)

197

***"We must, therefore,
have recourse to a
necessarily existent
Being, who carries
the REASON of his
existence in himself,***

DAVID
HUME

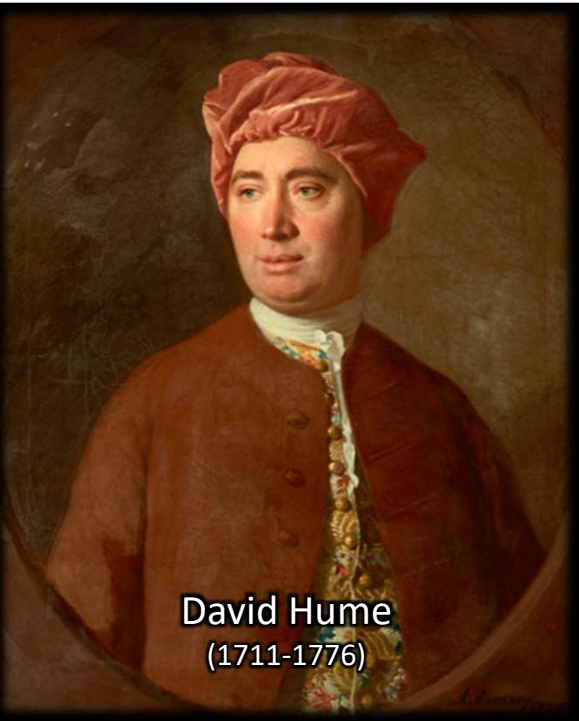


David Hume
(1711-1776)

198

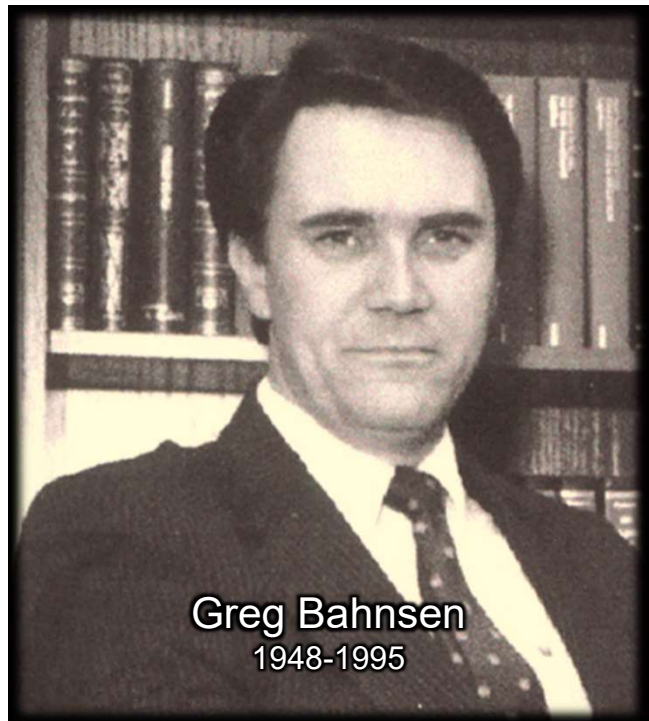
"and who cannot be supposed not to exist, without an express contradiction. There is, consequently, such a Being; that is, there is a Deity."

[Dialogues, 74]

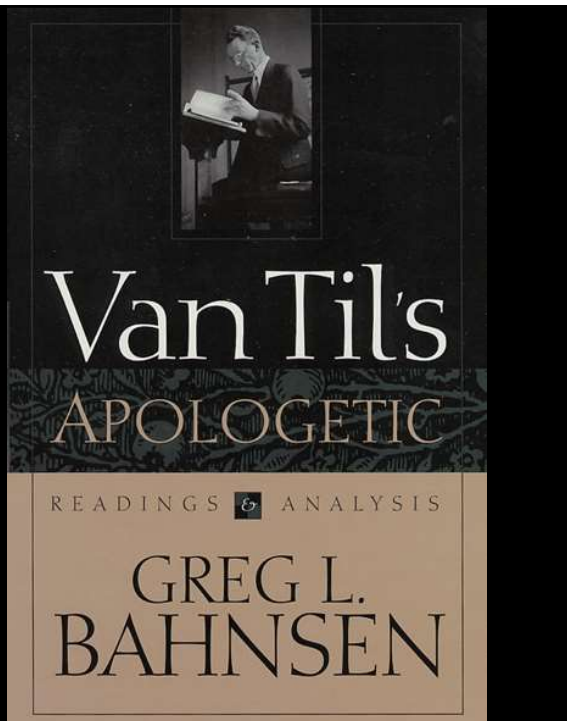


David Hume
(1711-1776)

199

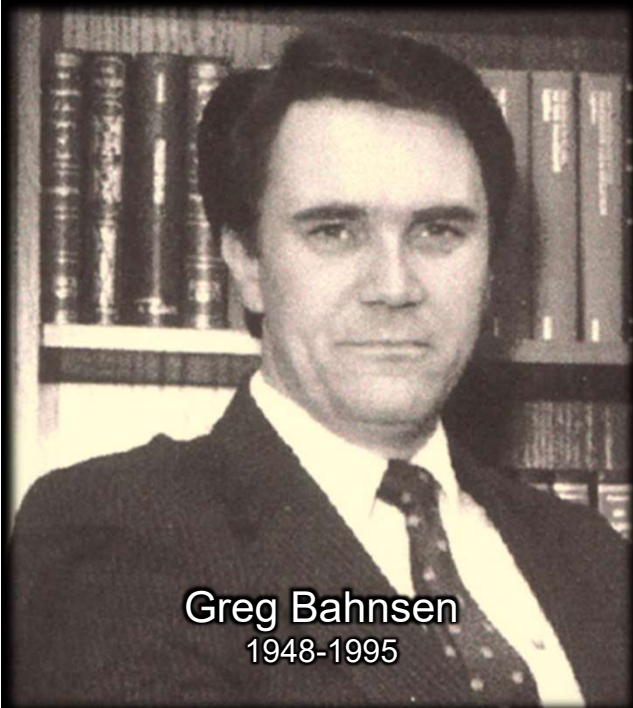


Greg Bahnsen
1948-1995



Van Til's
APOLOGETIC
READINGS & ANALYSIS
GREG L.
BAHNSEN

200

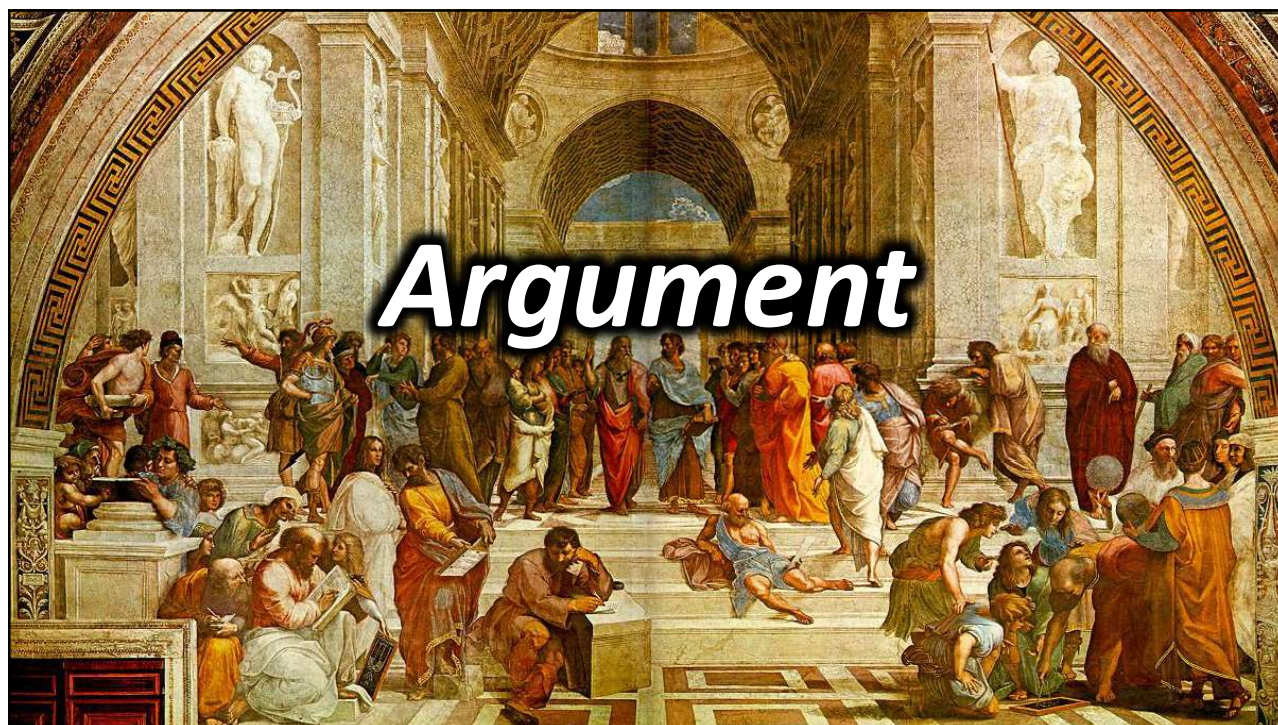


Greg Bahnsen
1948-1995

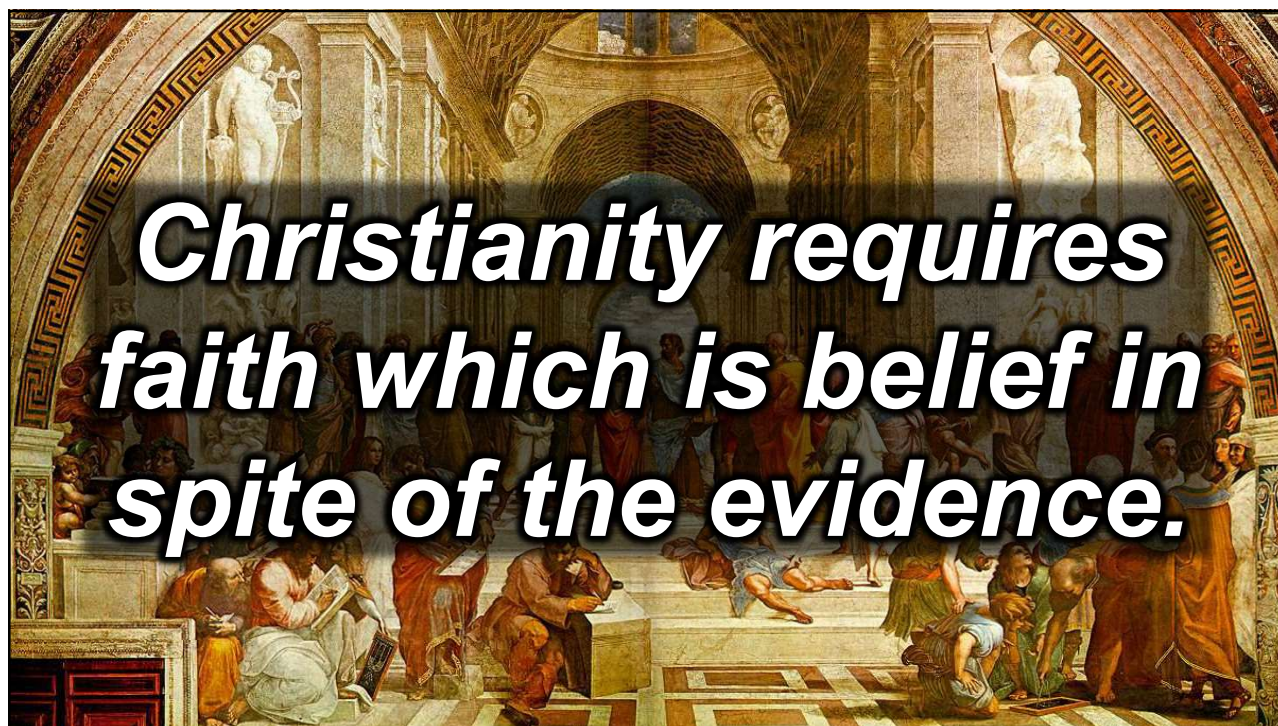
*"How should we understand the fundamental premise in the cosmological argument **'Everything has a cause'** (or 'Every object has an origin,' or, better, 'Every event has a cause')? If this is taken as a universal metaphysical principle ... then the embarrassing conclusion reached by the apologist would be that God too has a cause or origin."*

Van Til's Apologetic: Readings and Analysis
(Phillipsburg: P&R, 1998), 617-618, emphasis in original)

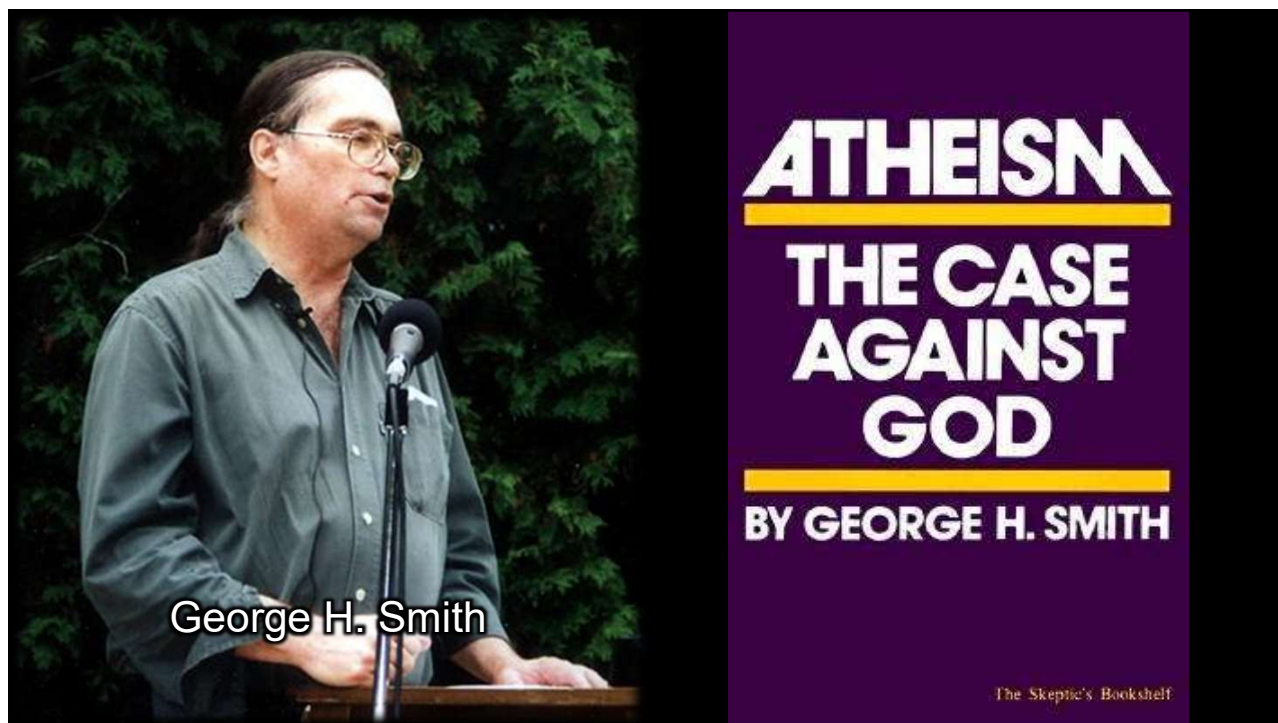
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202

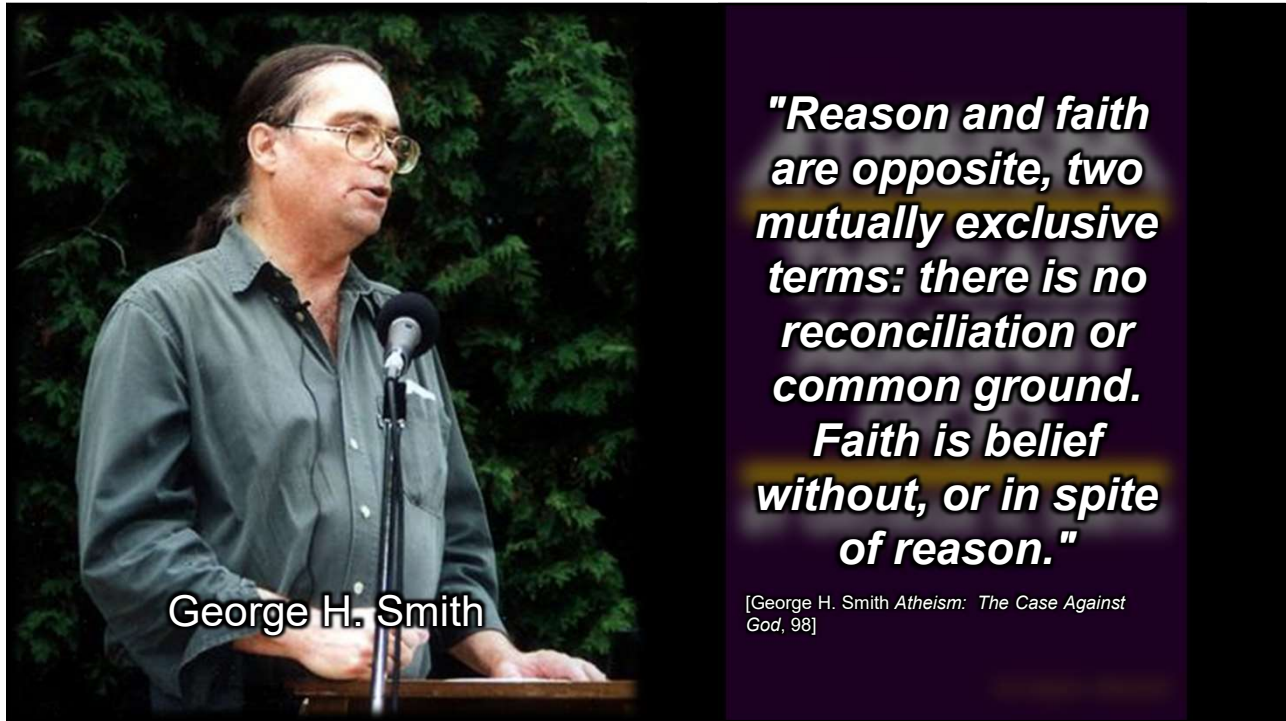


203



George H. Smith

204

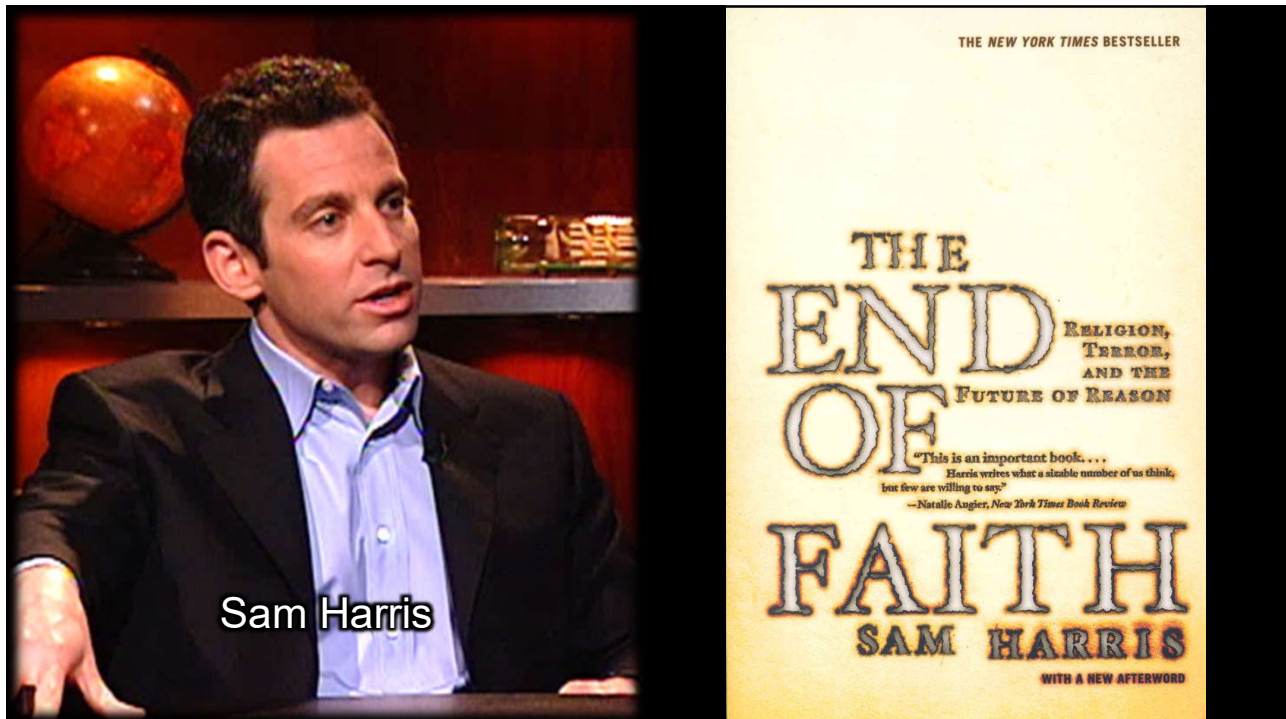


George H. Smith

"Reason and faith are opposite, two mutually exclusive terms: there is no reconciliation or common ground. Faith is belief without, or in spite of reason."

[George H. Smith *Atheism: The Case Against God*, 98]

205



Sam Harris

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

THE
END OF
FAITH

RELIGION,
TERROR,
AND THE
FUTURE OF REASON

"This is an important book. . . .
Harris writes what a sizable number of us think,
but few are willing to say."
—Natalie Angier, *New York Times Book Review*

SAM HARRIS

WITH A NEW AFTERWORD

206



Sam Harris

"Religious faith is the belief in historical and metaphysical propositions without sufficient evidence."

[Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 232]

207

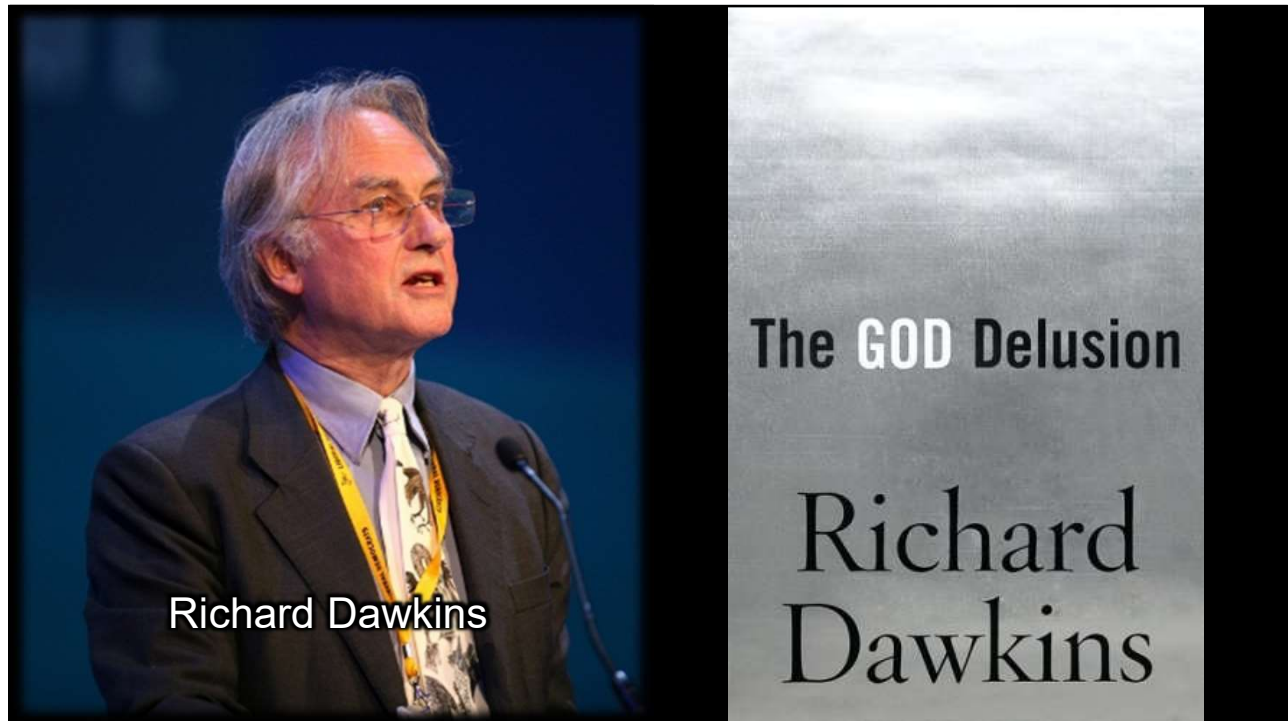


Sam Harris

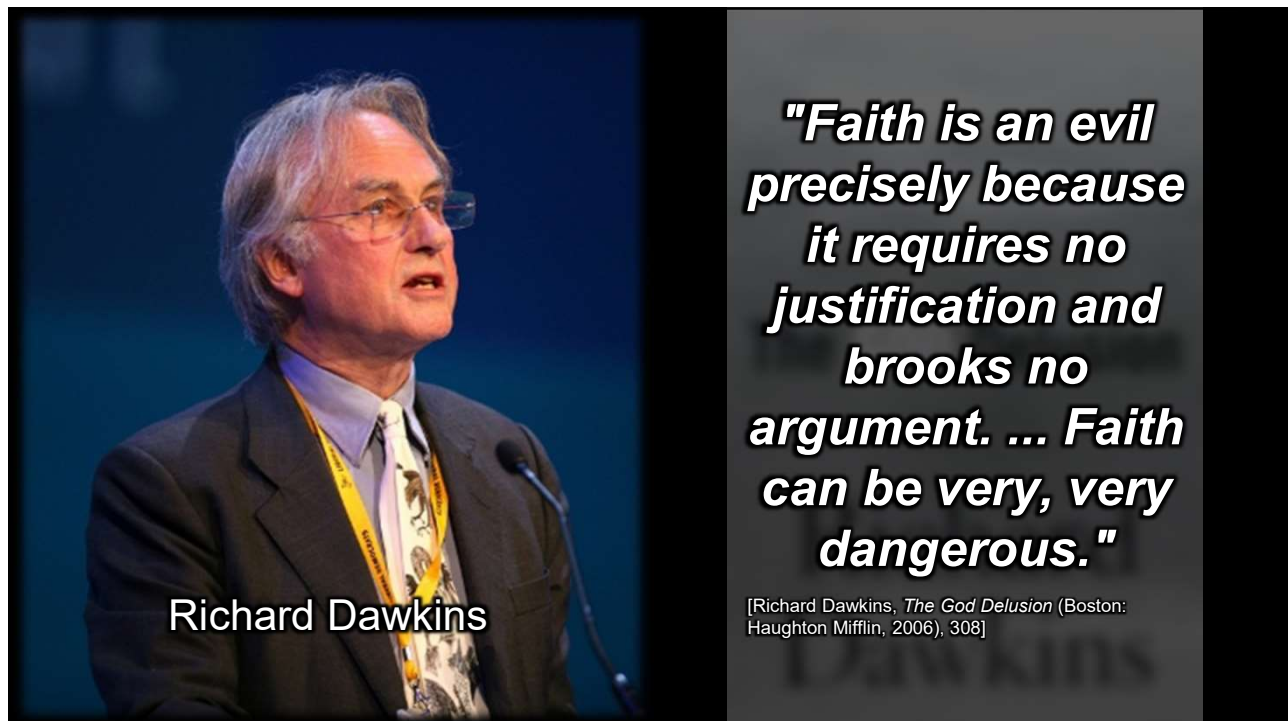
"Faith is the mortar that fills the cracks in the evidence and the gaps in the logic, and thus it is faith that keeps the whole terrible edifice of religious certainty still looming dangerously over our world."

[Sam Harris, *The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 233]

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209



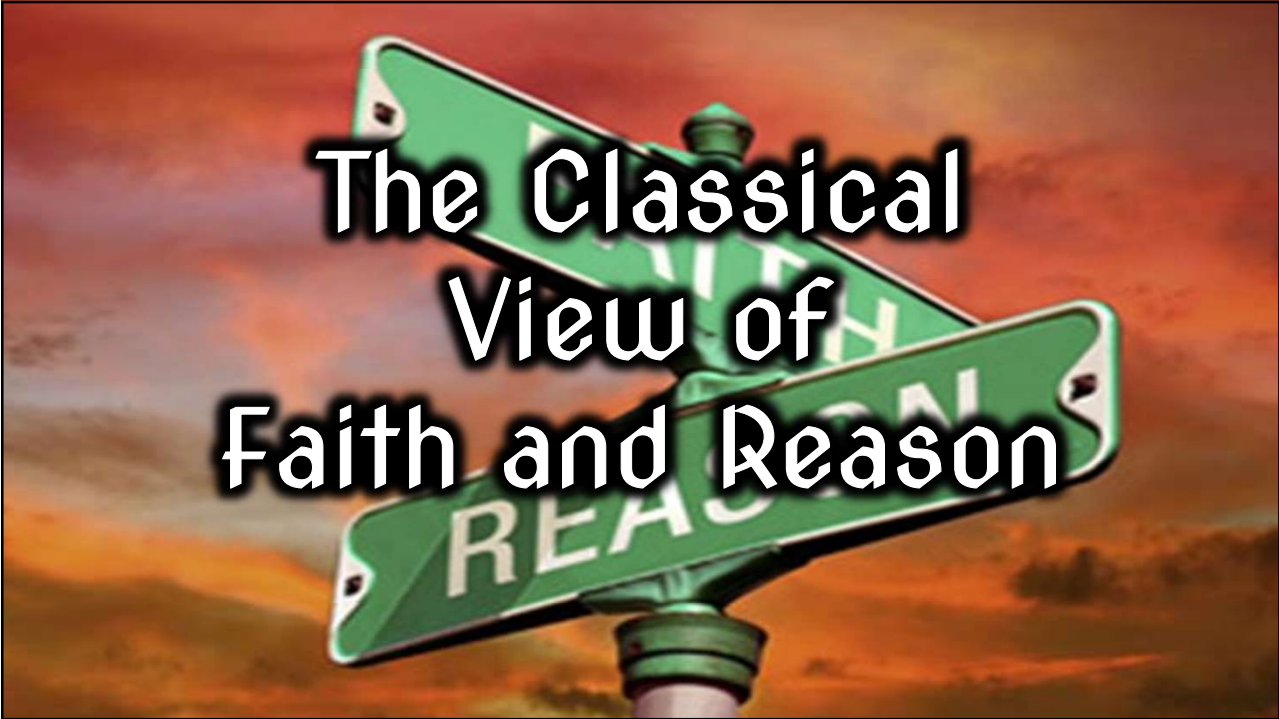
210



211

Granted, some religious people have been part of the problem. This largely due to the fact that they have misunderstood the proper relationship between faith and reason.

212



The Classical View of Faith and Reason

213

Reason	Faith
<i>Believing something on the basis of demonstration.</i>	<i>Believing something on the basis of authority.</i>

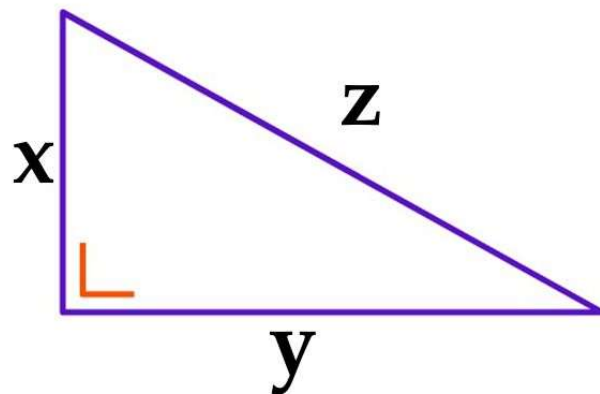
214

**Consider
Fermat's
Last Theorem.**



Pierre de Fermat
1601 - 1665

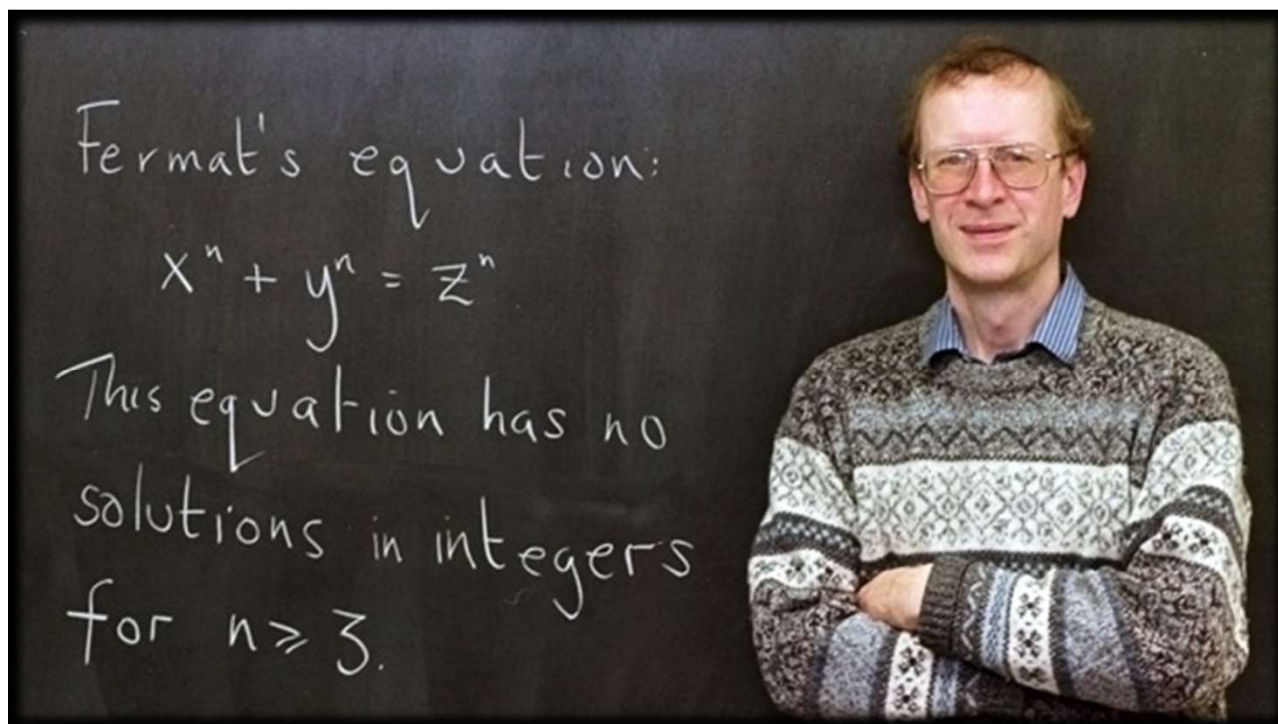
215



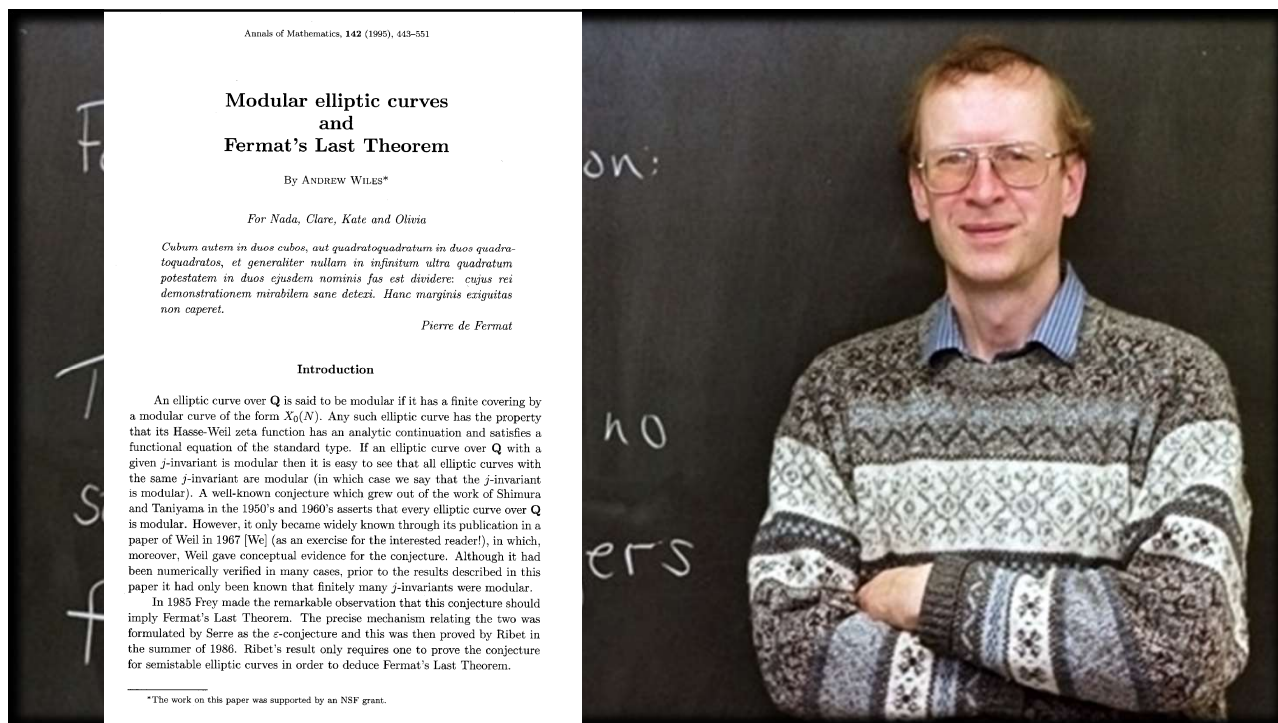
Pythagorean Theorem

$$x^2 + y^2 = z^2$$

216



217



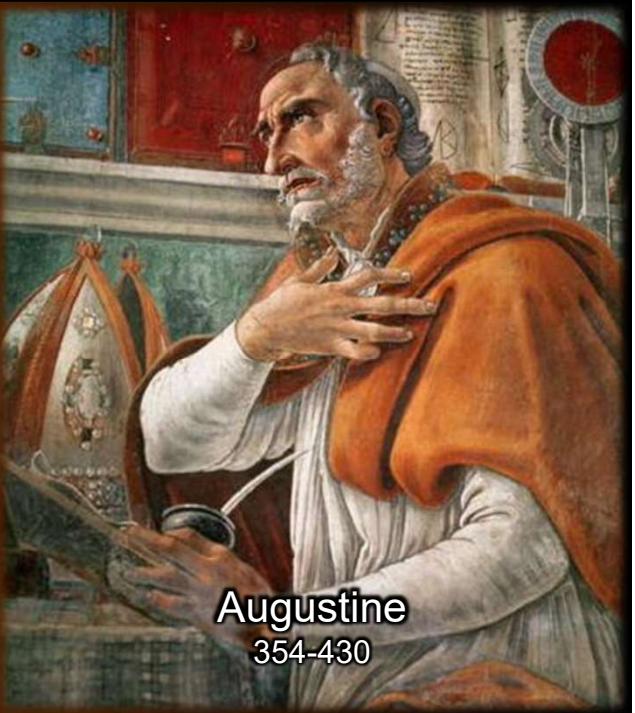
218

Reason	Faith
<p><i>Believing something on the basis of demonstration.</i></p>	<p><i>Believing something on the basis of divine authority.</i></p>

219

"For who cannot see that thinking [reason] is prior to believing [faith]? For no one believes anything unless he has first thought that it is to be believed.

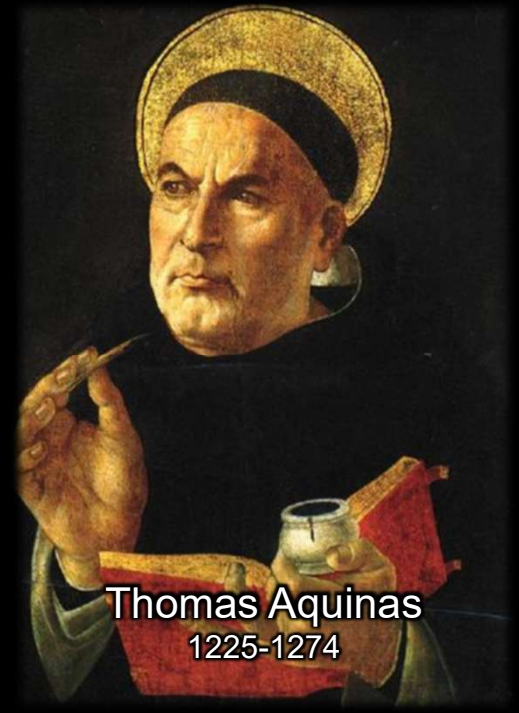
[On the Predestination of the Saints, 5, as cited in Norman L. Geisler, ed. What Augustine Says (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982), 13]



Augustine
354-430

220

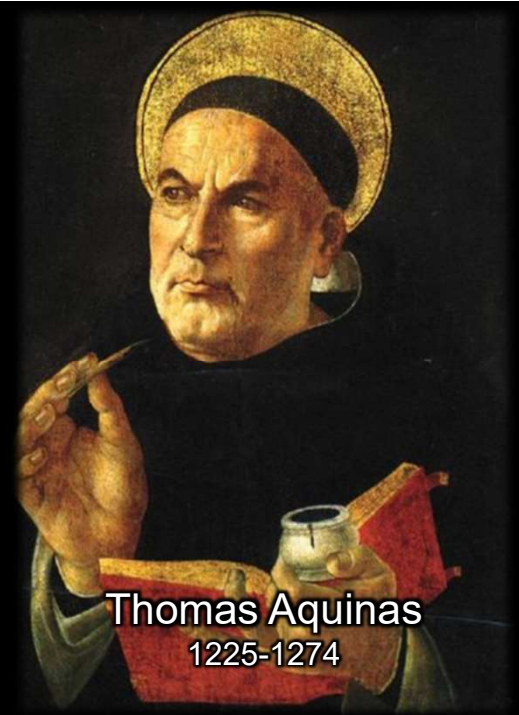
"Those things are said to be present to the understanding which do not exceed its capacity so that the gaze of understanding may be fixed on them. For a person gives assent to such things because of the witness of his own understanding and not because of someone else's testimony."



Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

221

"Those things, however, which are beyond the power of our understanding are said to be absent from the senses of the mind. Hence, our understanding cannot be fixed on them."

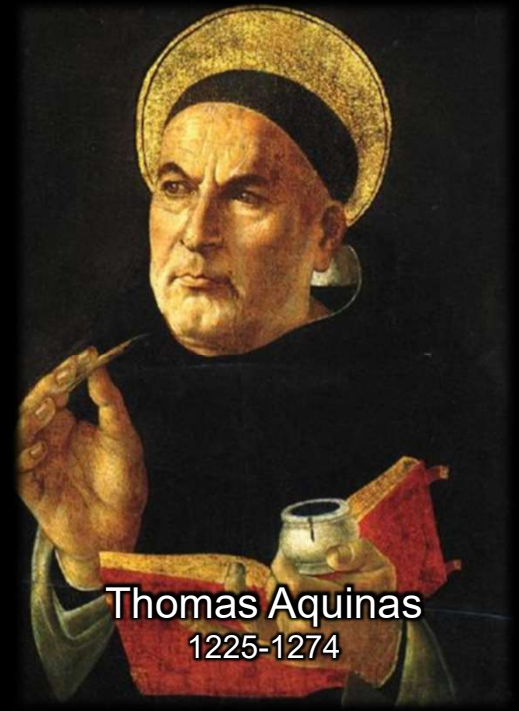


Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

222

"As a result, we cannot assent to them on our own witness, but on that of someone else. These things are properly called the objects of faith."

[*Truth*, QXIV, Art. 9, reply, trans. James V. McGlynn (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 249-250]

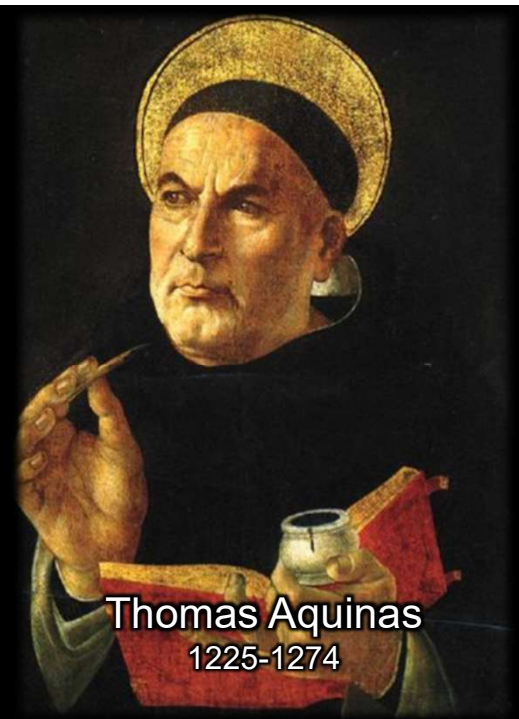


Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

223

"One who believes [i.e., has faith] gives assent to things that are proposed to him by another person, and which he himself does not see."

[*Truth*, QXIV, Art. 9, reply, trans. James V. McGlynn (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994), 249-250]

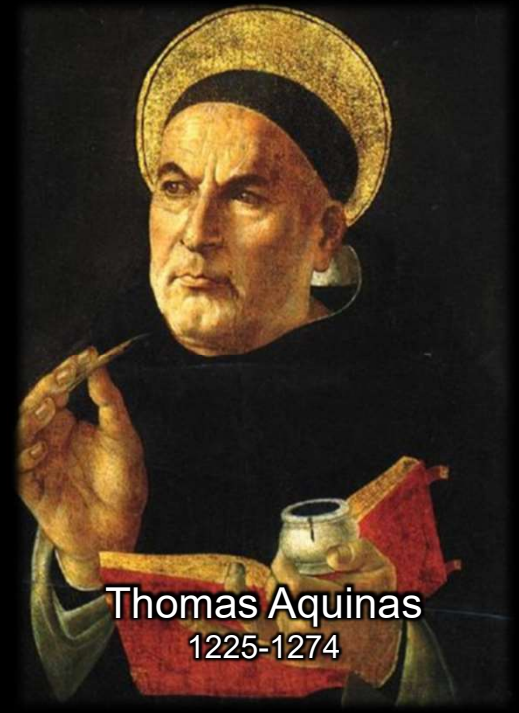


Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

224

"Since man can only know the things that he does not see himself by taking them from another who does see them, and since faith is among the things we do not see, the knowledge of the objects of faith must be handed on by one who sees them himself. Now, this one is God, Who perfectly comprehends Himself, and naturally sees His essence."

[SCG, 3, 154 [1], trans. Vernon J. Bourke, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), 239]



Thomas Aquinas
1225-1274

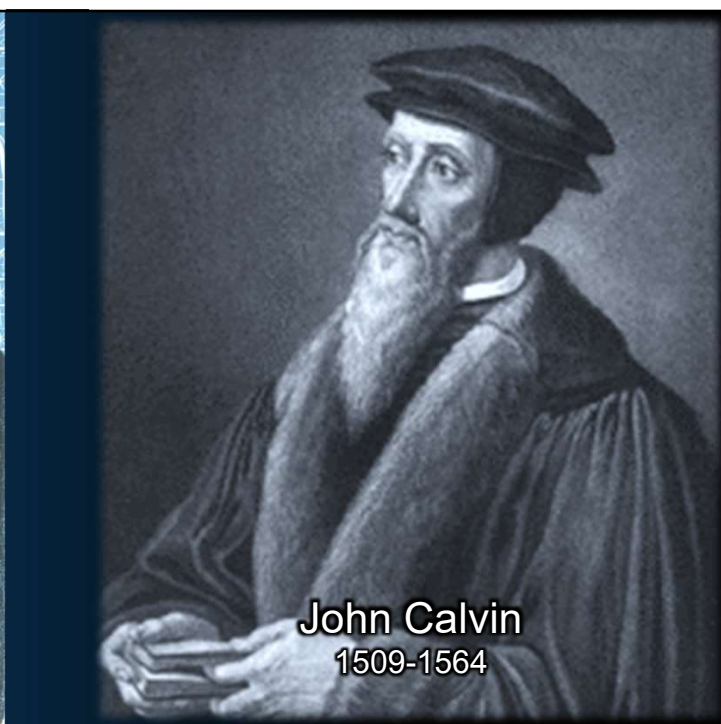
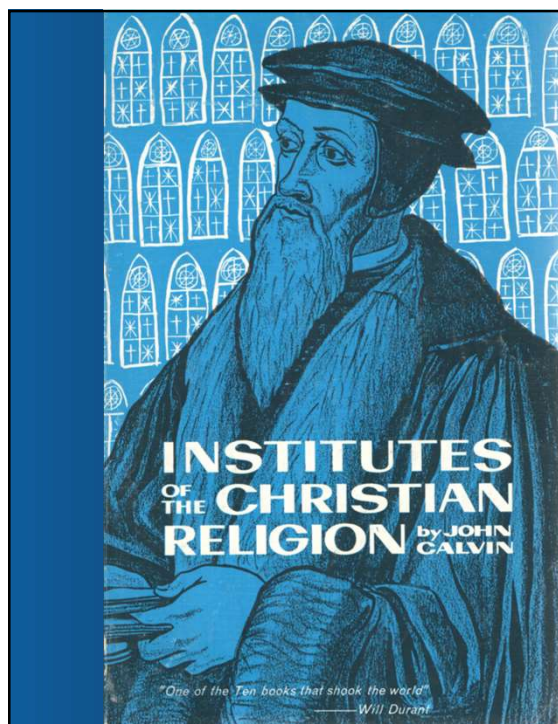
225

Catechism of the Catholic Church

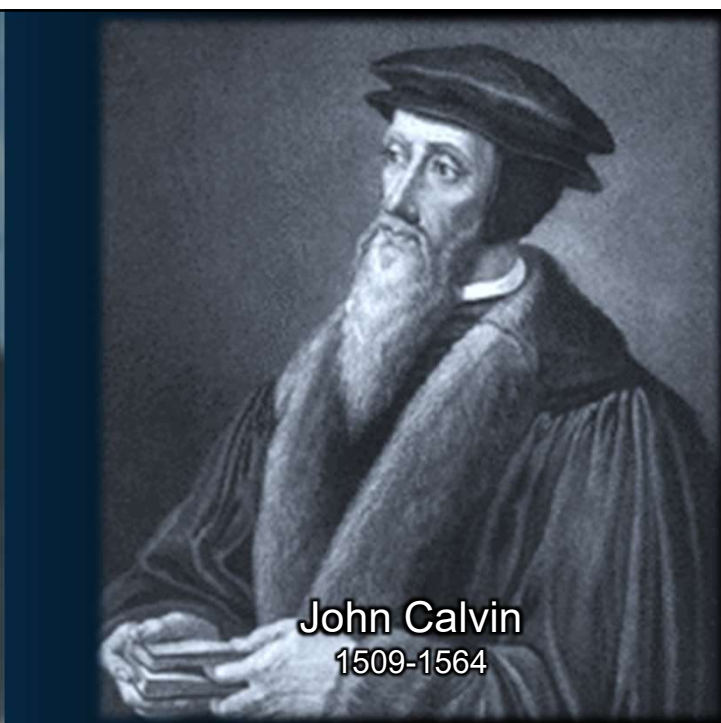
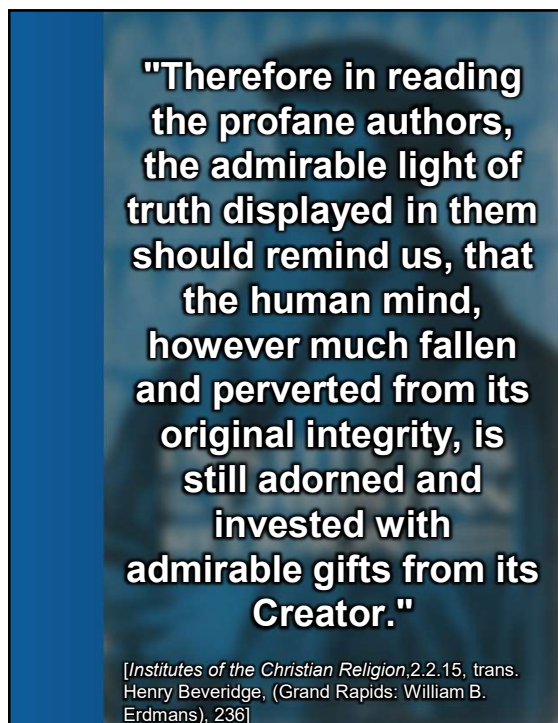
"The existence of God the Creator can be known with certainty through his works, by the light of human reason, even if this knowledge is often obscured and disfigured by error."

[Catechism of the Catholic Church, #286 (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1994), 75]

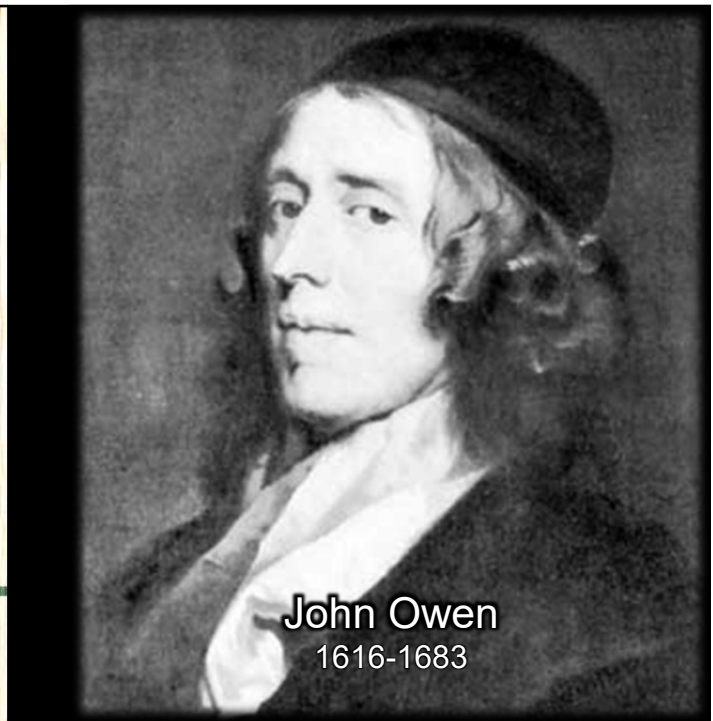
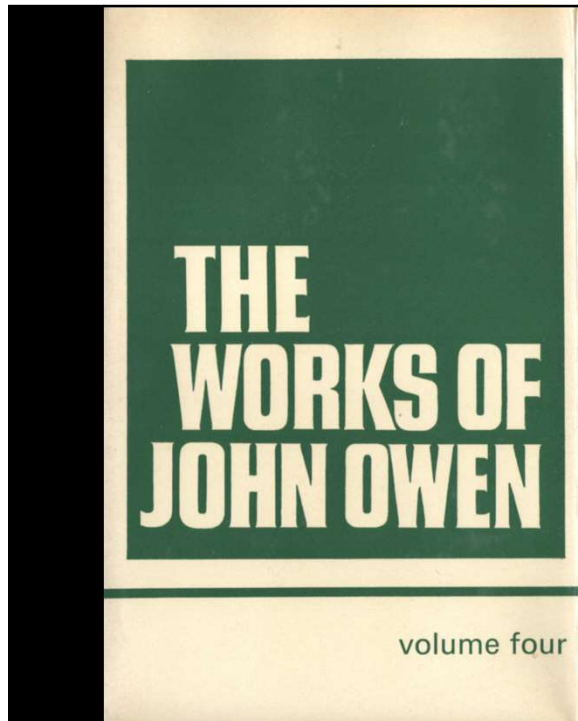
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227

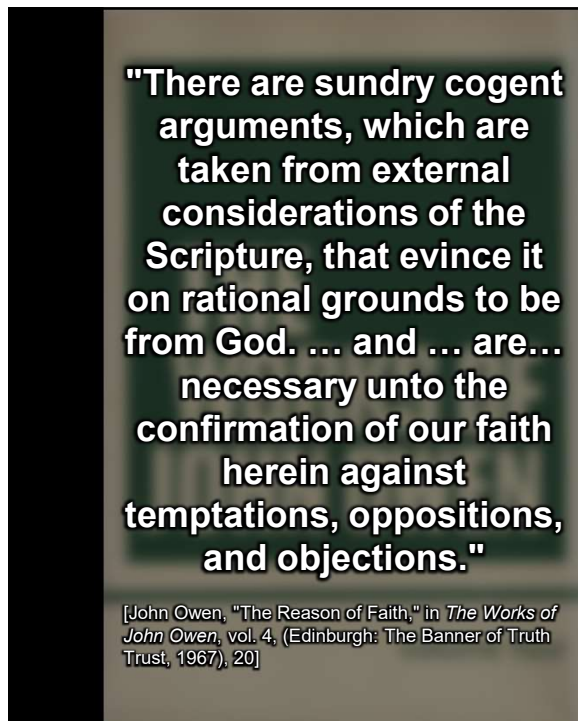


228



John Owen
1616-1683

229

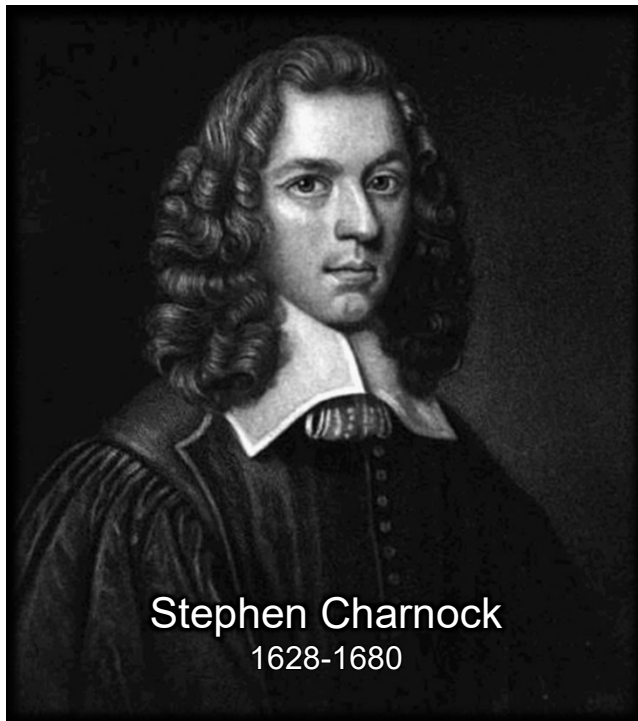


John Owen
1616-1683

230



231

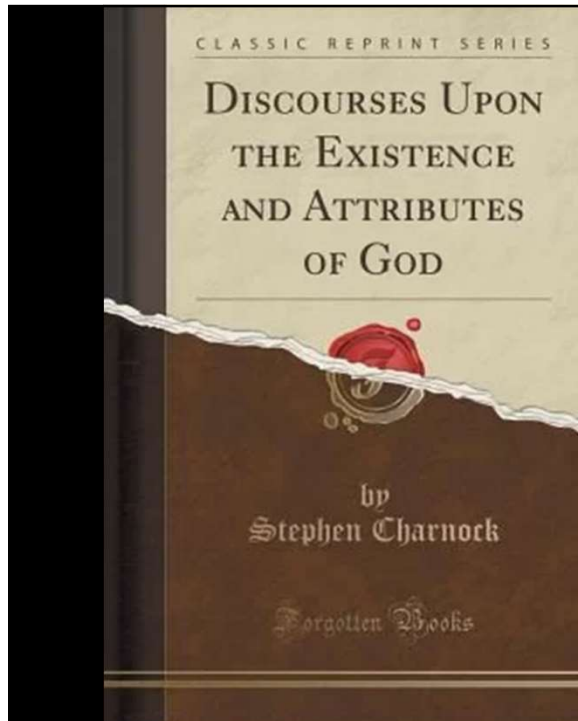


Stephen Charnock
1628-1680

**"Men that will not listen to
Scripture ... cannot easily
deny natural reason
There is a natural as well
as a revealed knowledge,
and the book of the
creatures is legible in
declaring the being of a
God"**

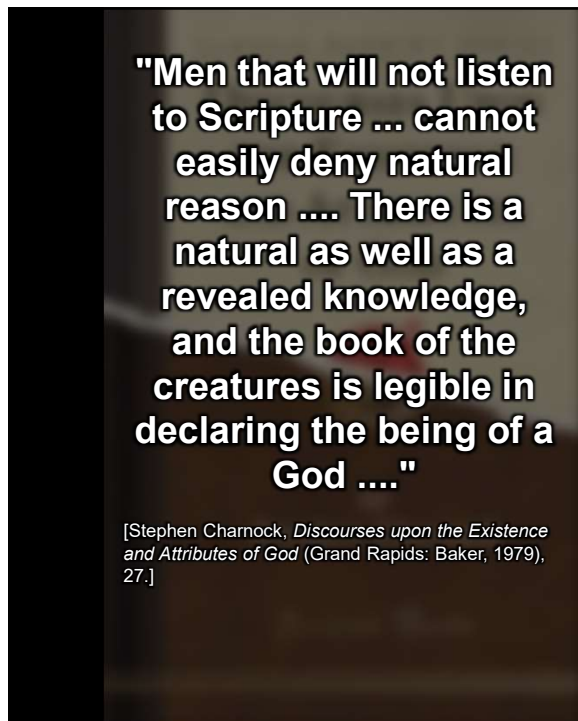
[Stephen Charnock, *Discourses upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 27.]

232



Stephen Charnock
1628-1680

233

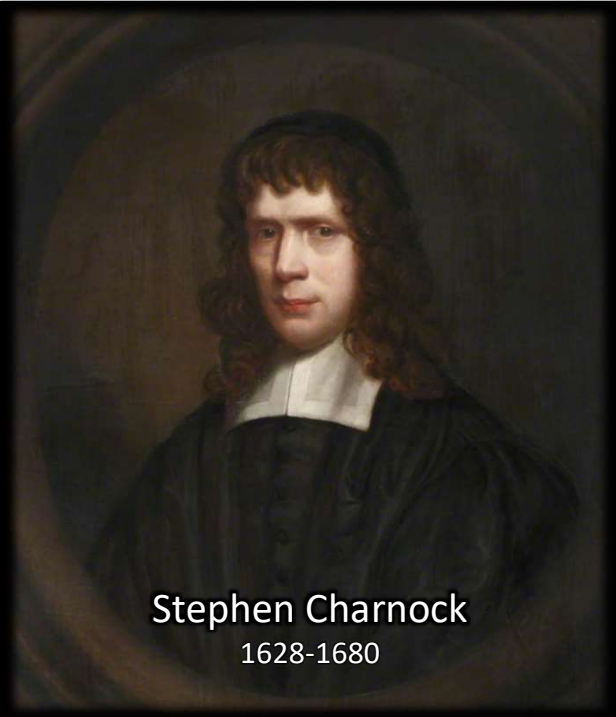


Stephen Charnock
1628-1680

234

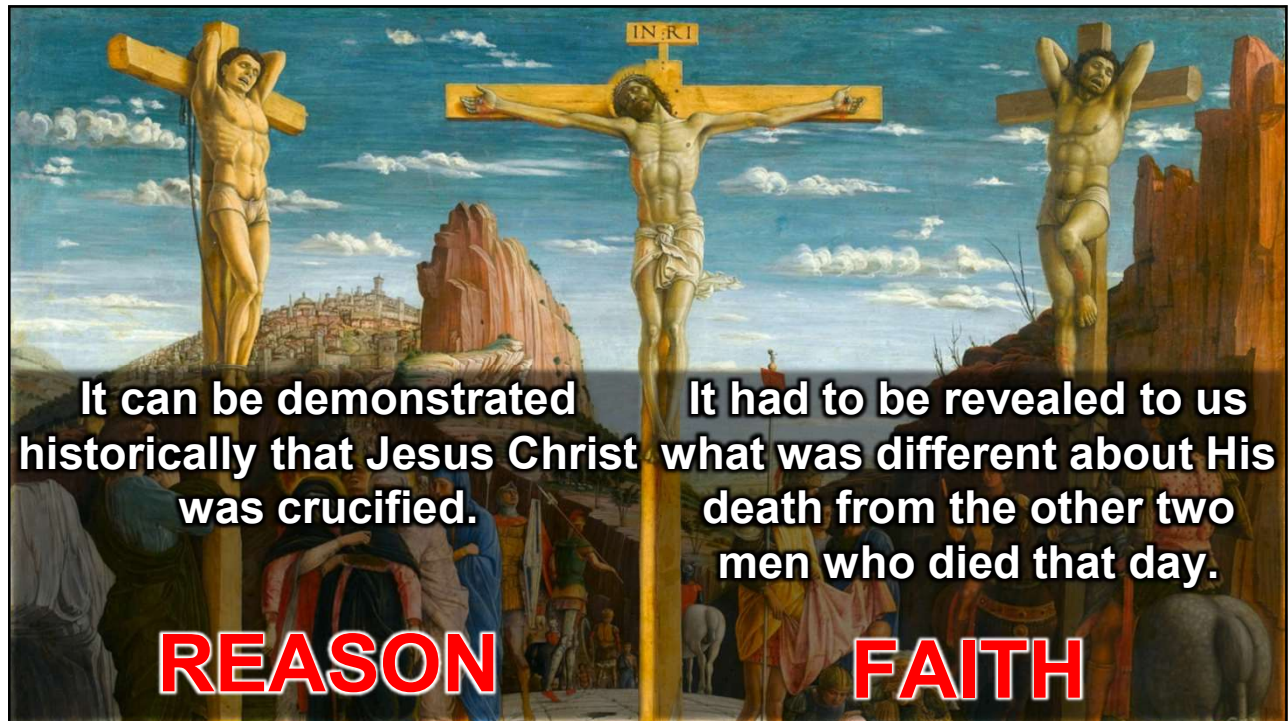
"God in regard of his existence is not only the discovery of faith, but of reason. God hath revealed not only his being, but some sparks of his eternal power and godhead in his works, as well as in his word. ... It is a discovery of our reason ... and an object of our faith ... it is an article of our faith and an article of our reason."

[Stephen Charnock, *Discourses upon the Existence and Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 27.]



Stephen Charnock
1628-1680

235



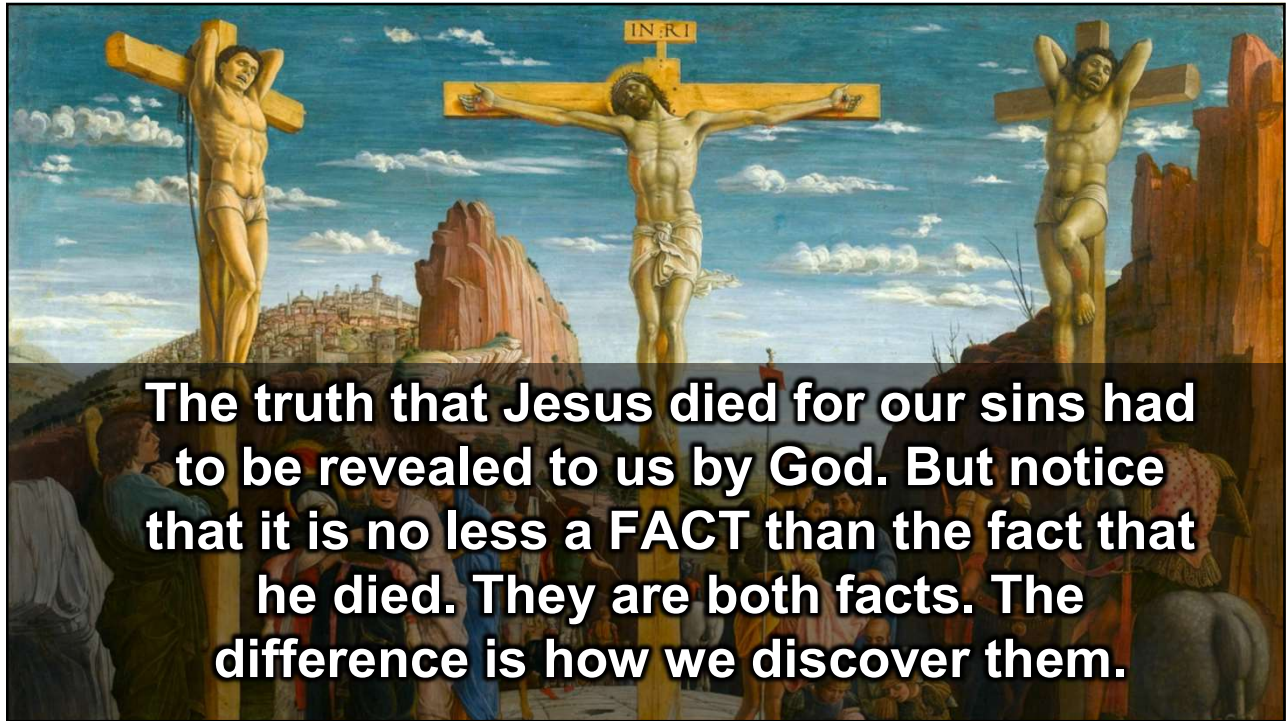
It can be demonstrated historically that Jesus Christ was crucified.

It had to be revealed to us what was different about His death from the other two men who died that day.

REASON

FAITH

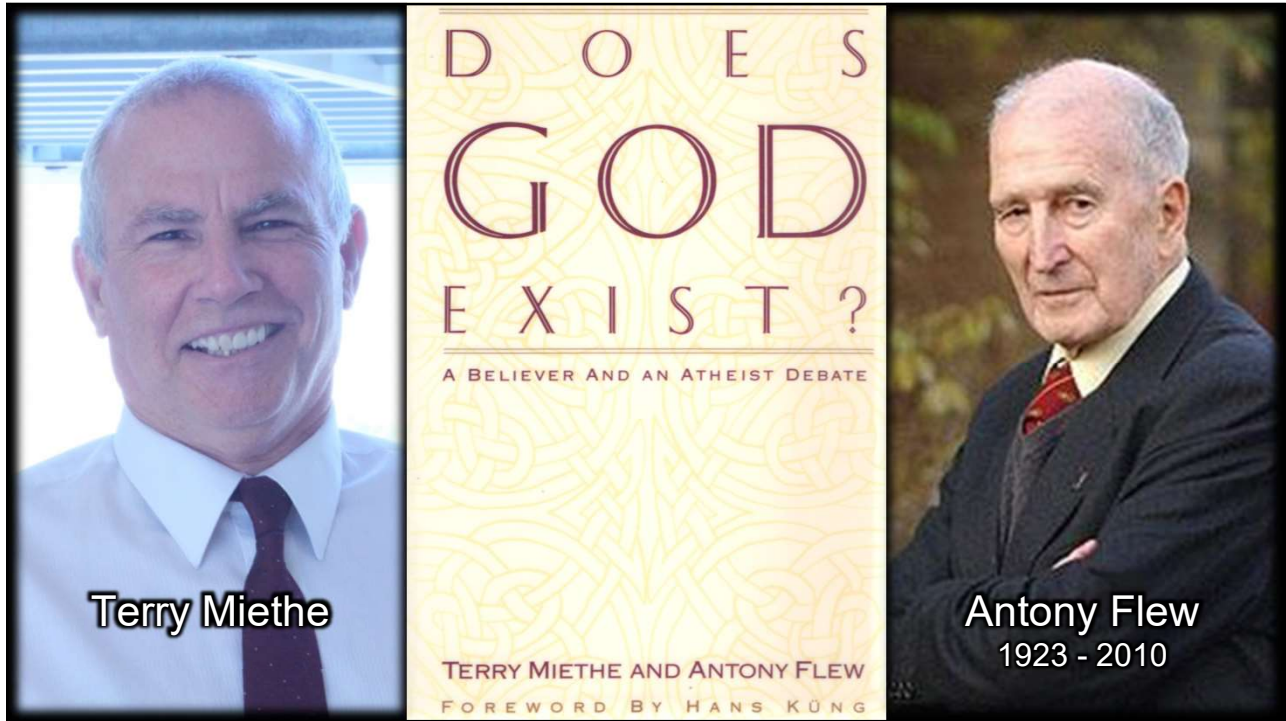
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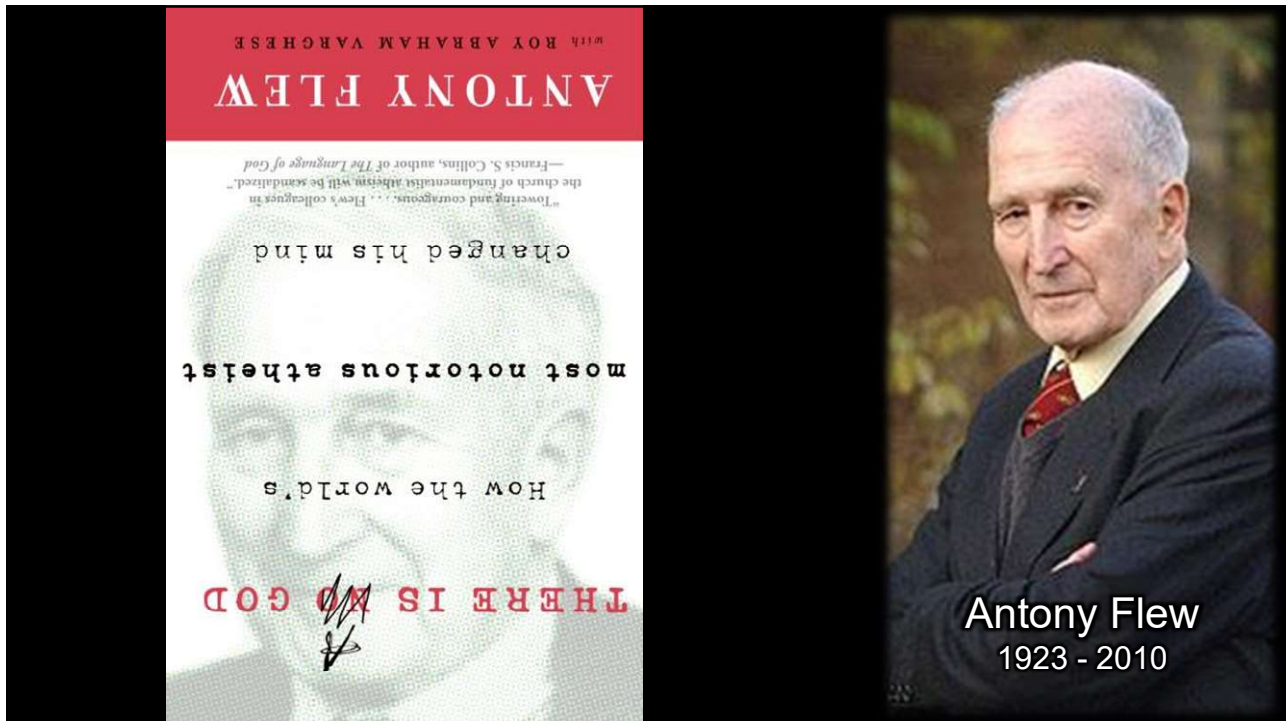
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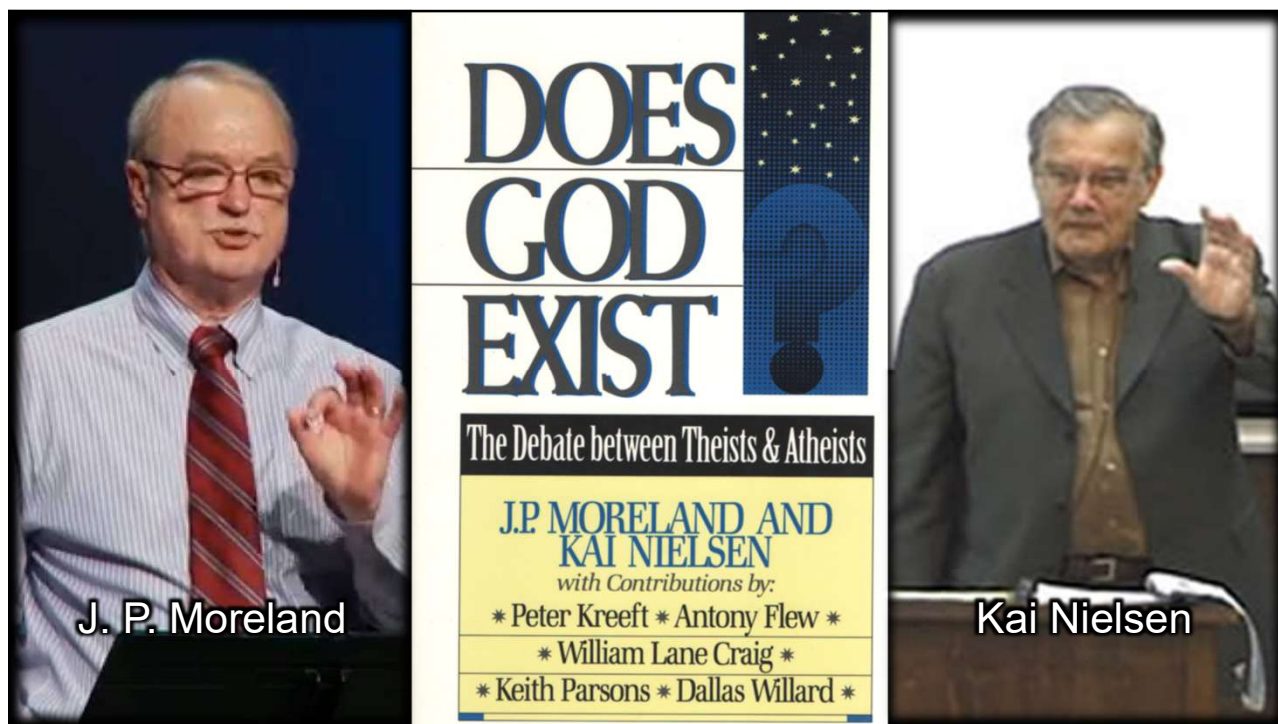
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239



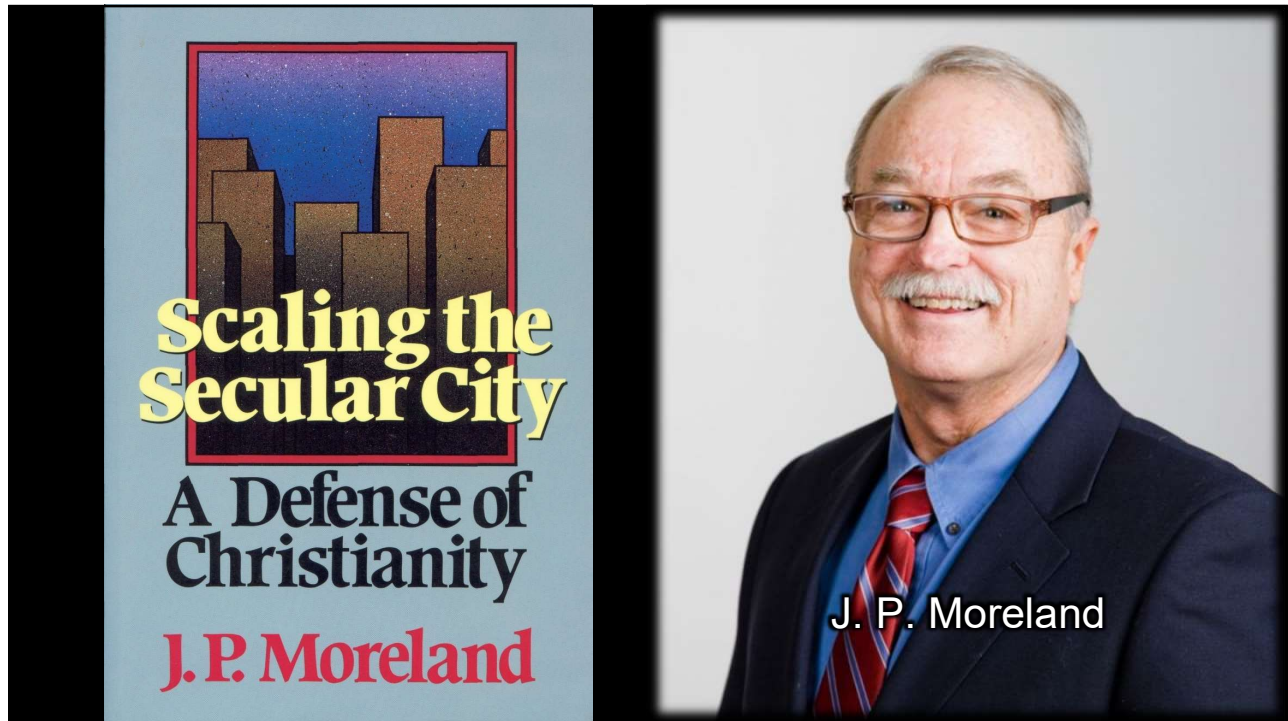
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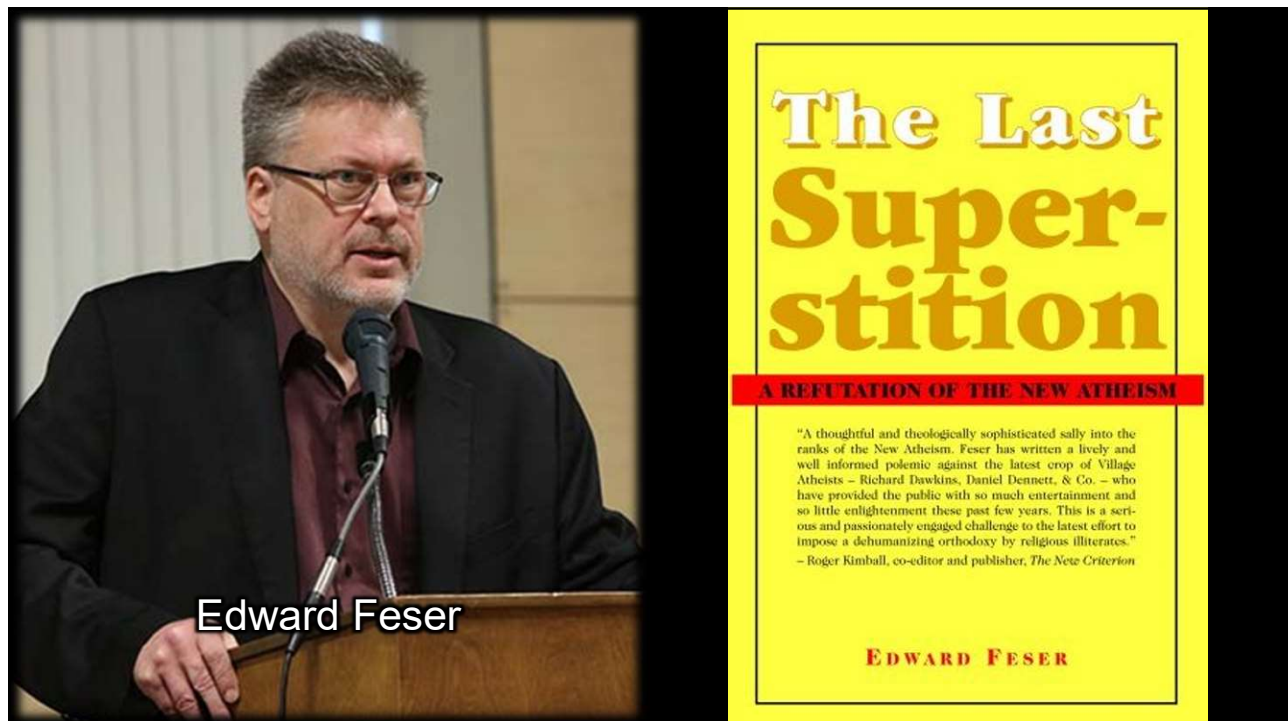
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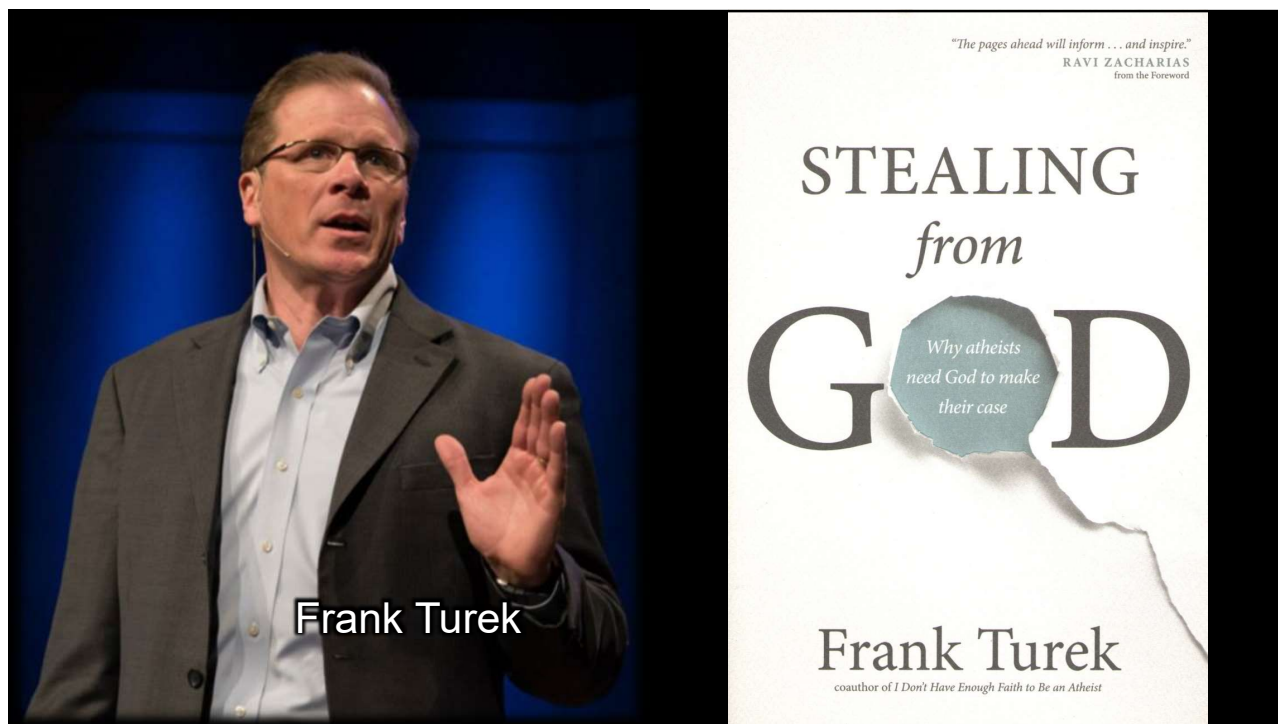
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243

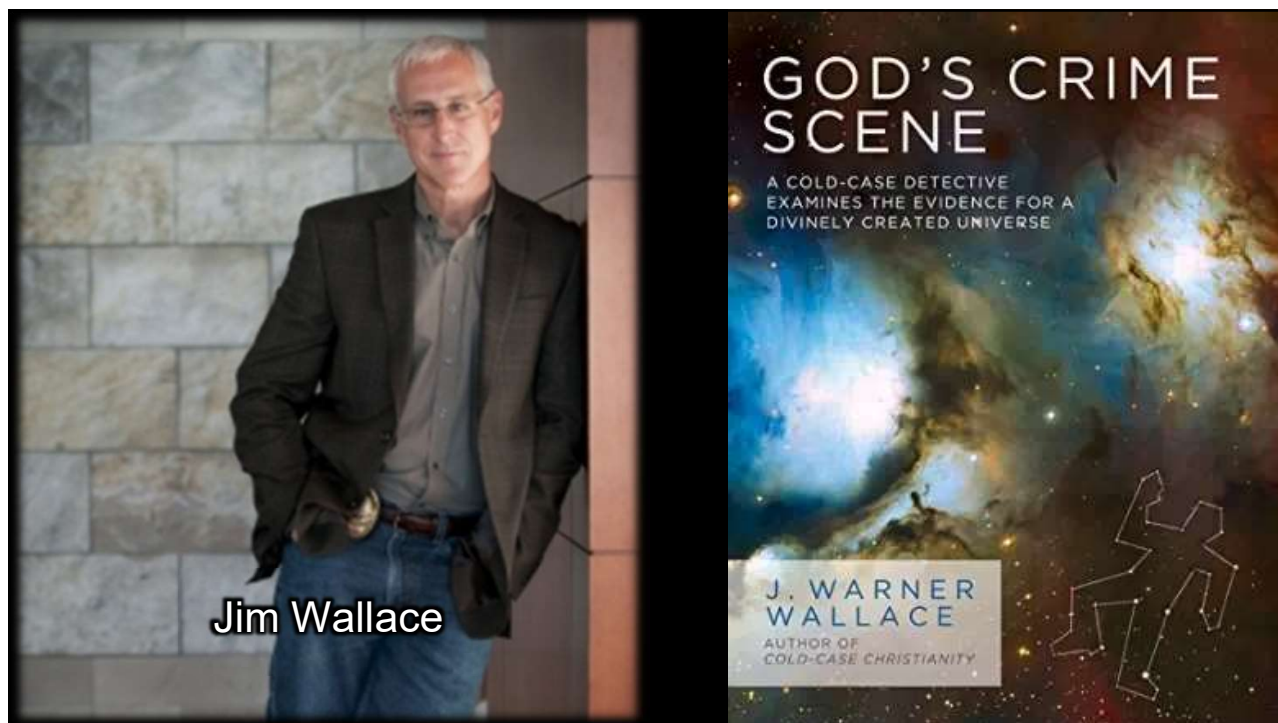


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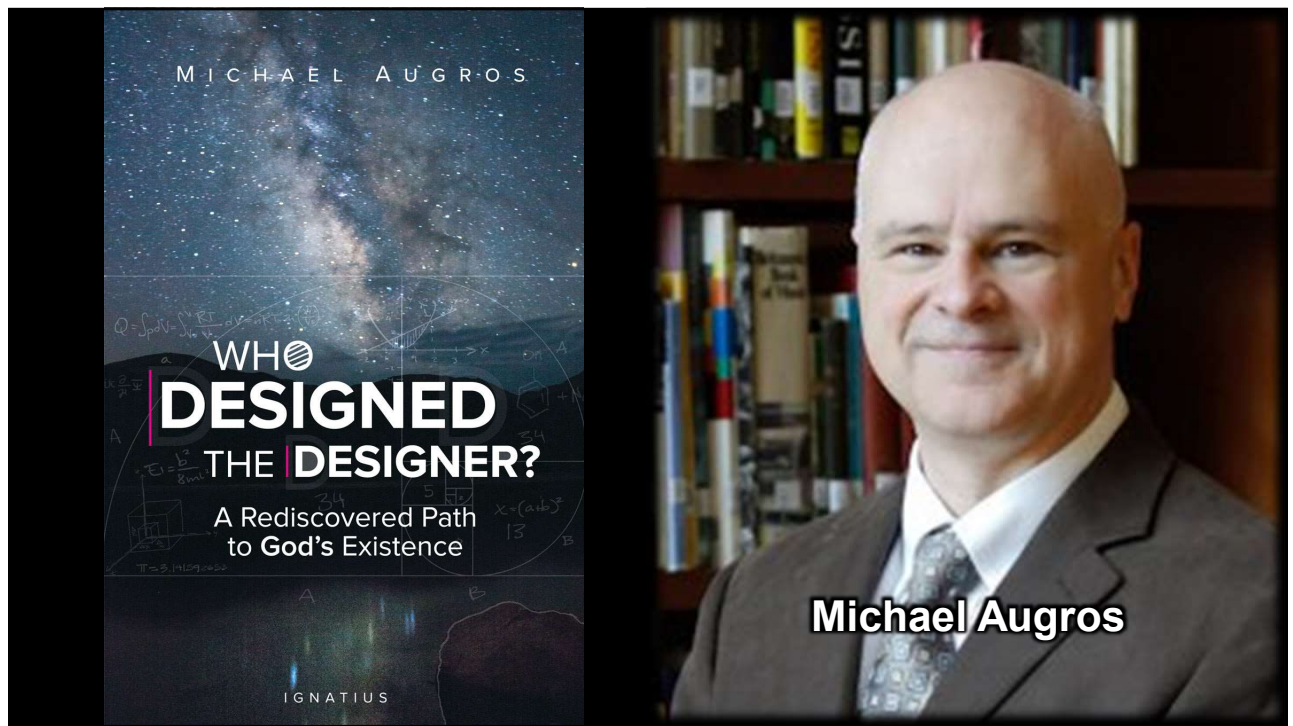
Frank Turek

245

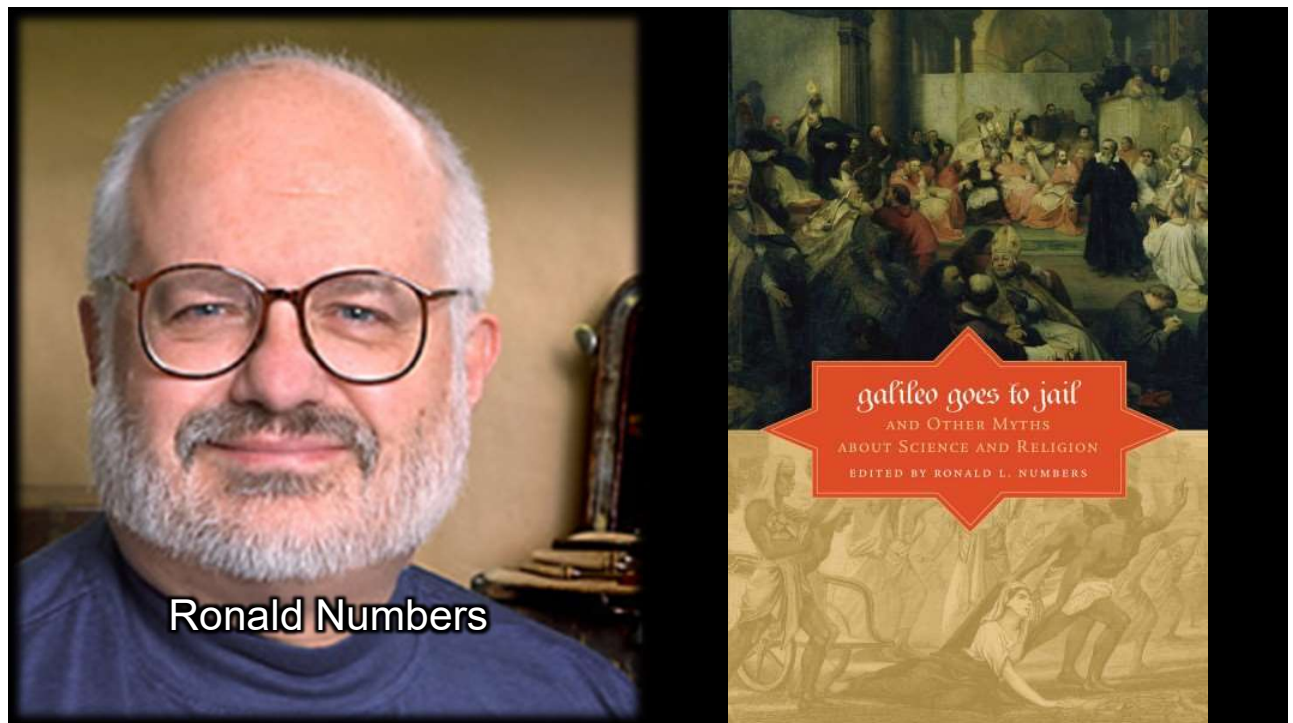


Jim Wallace

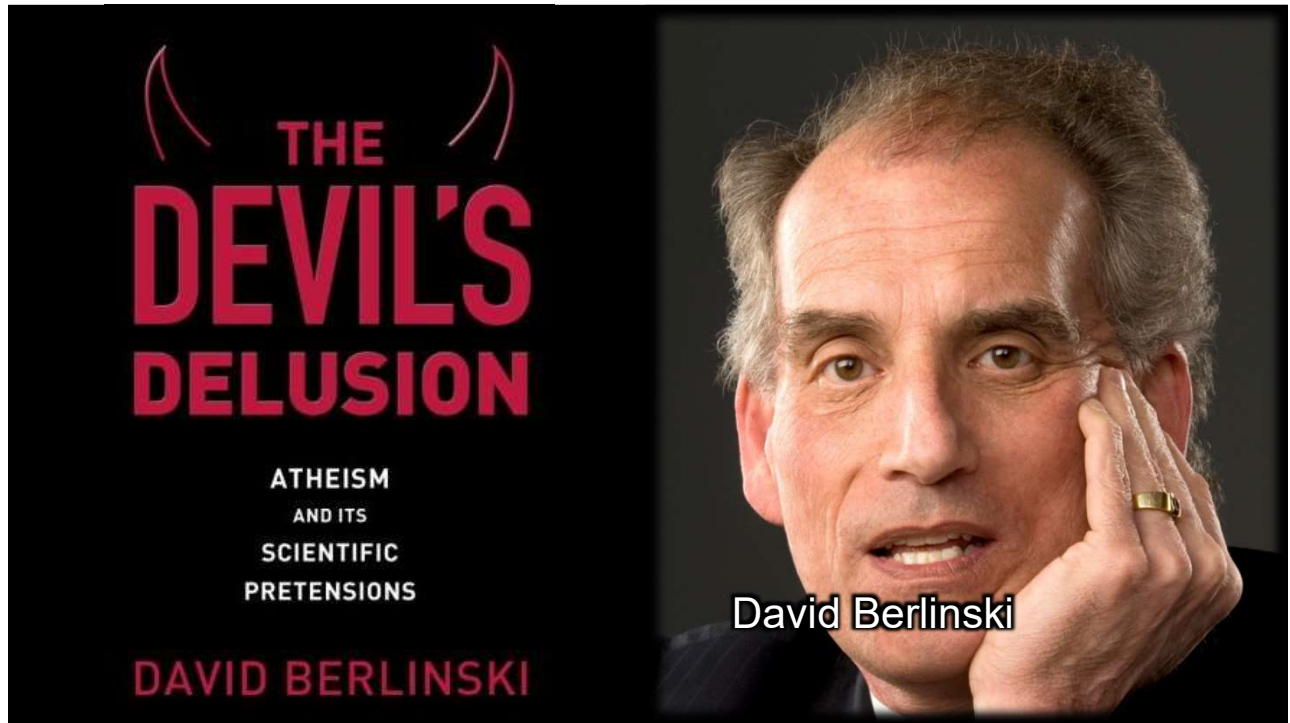
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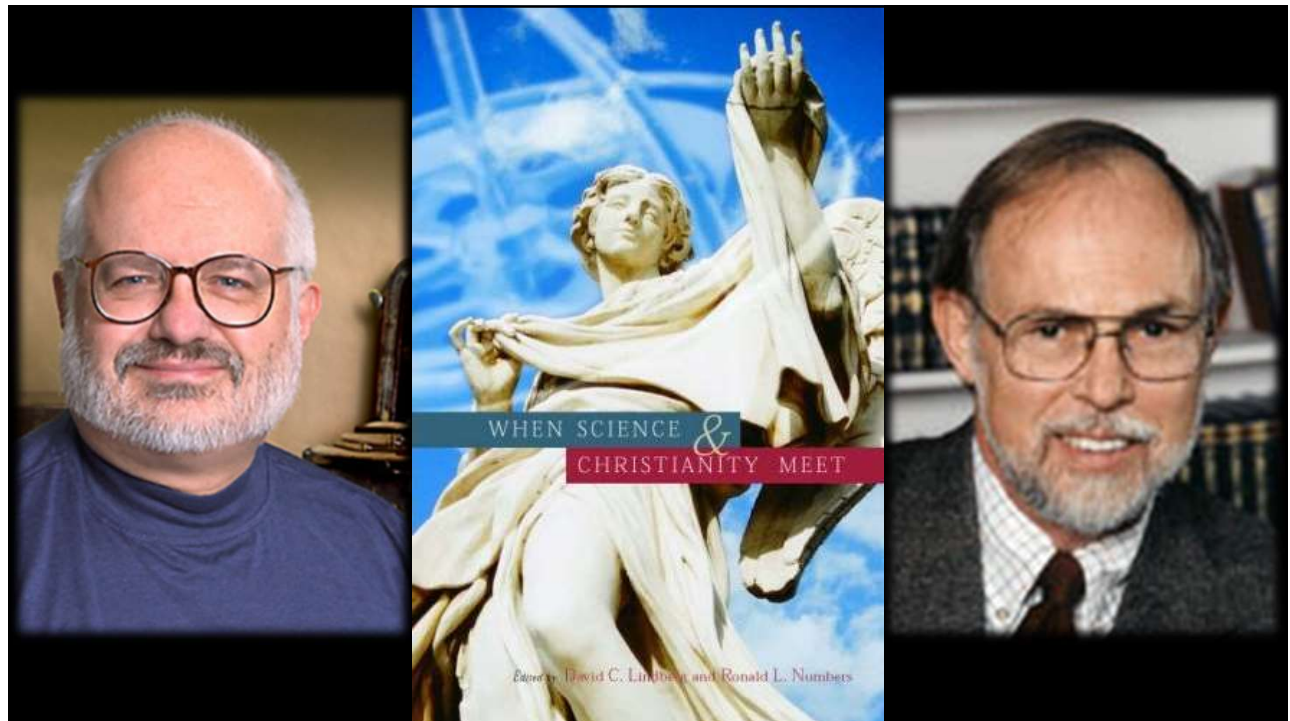
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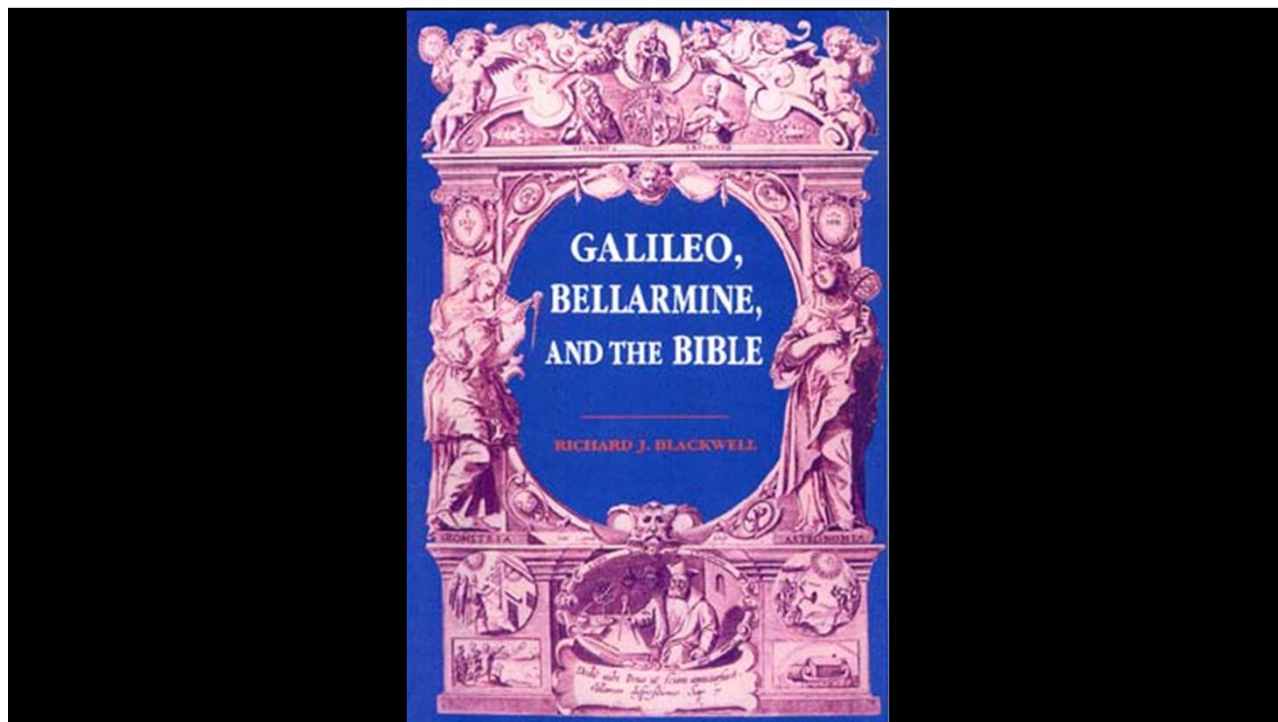
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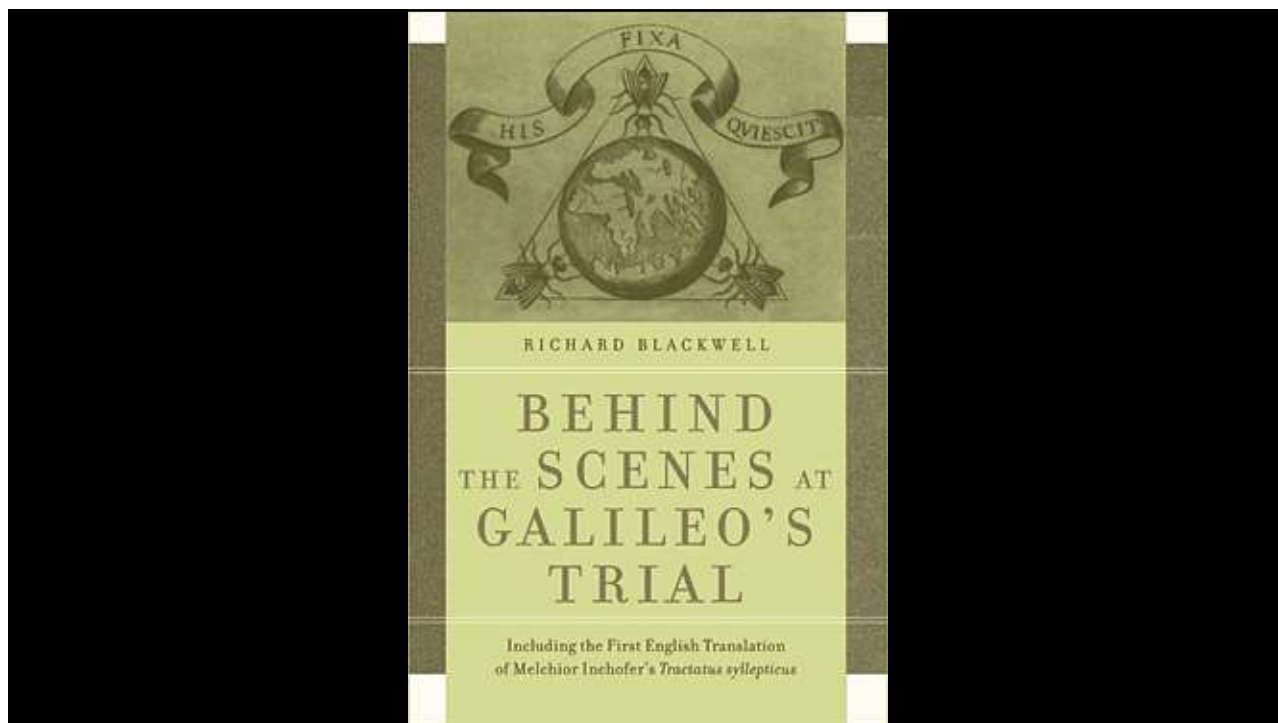
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250



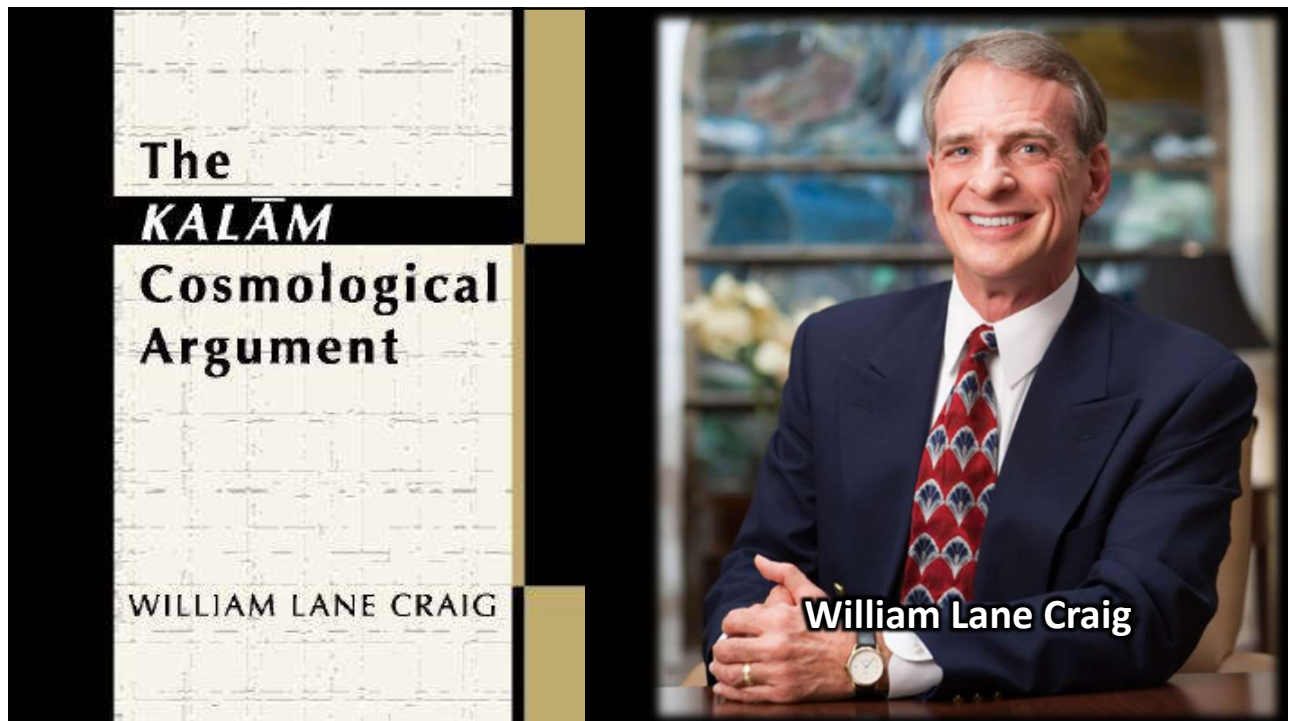
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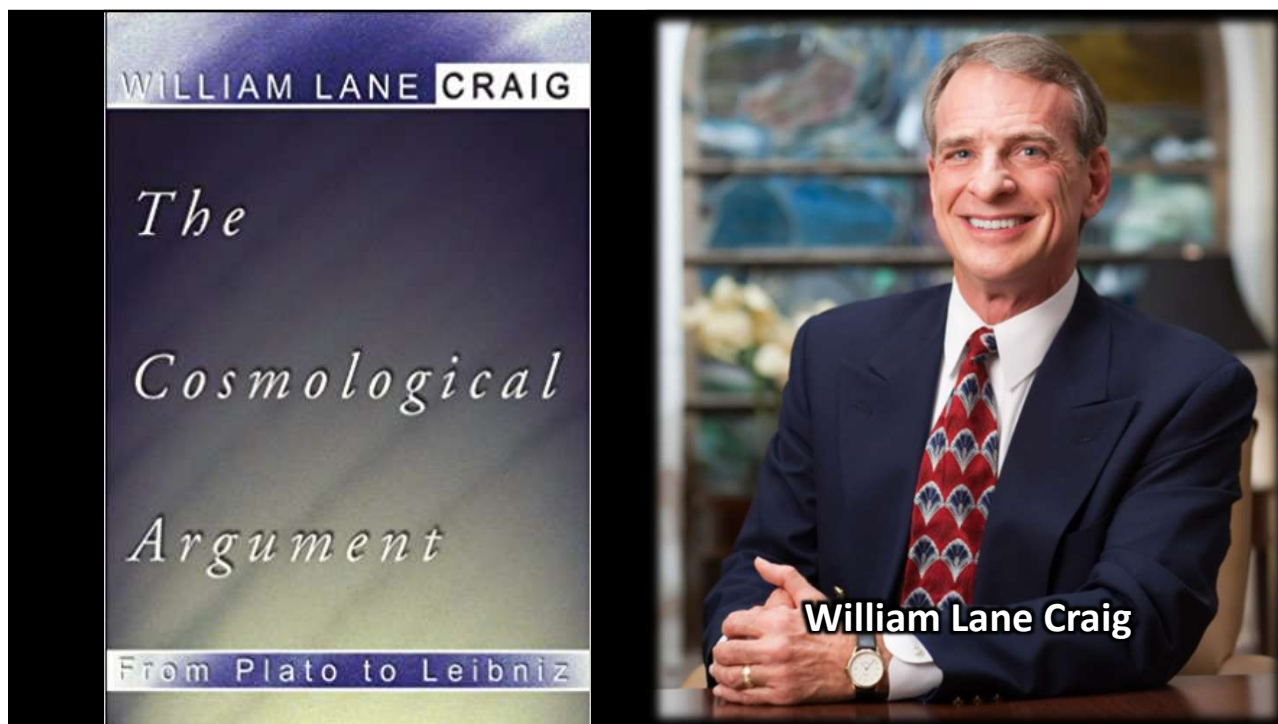
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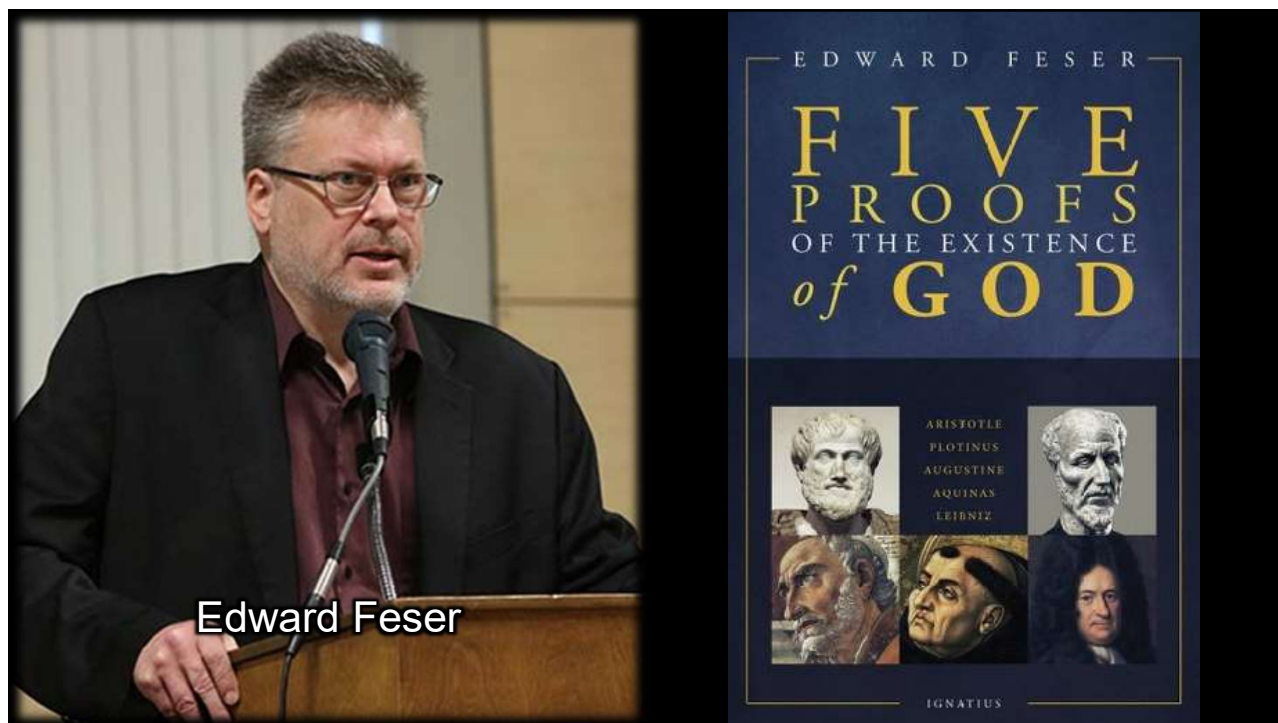
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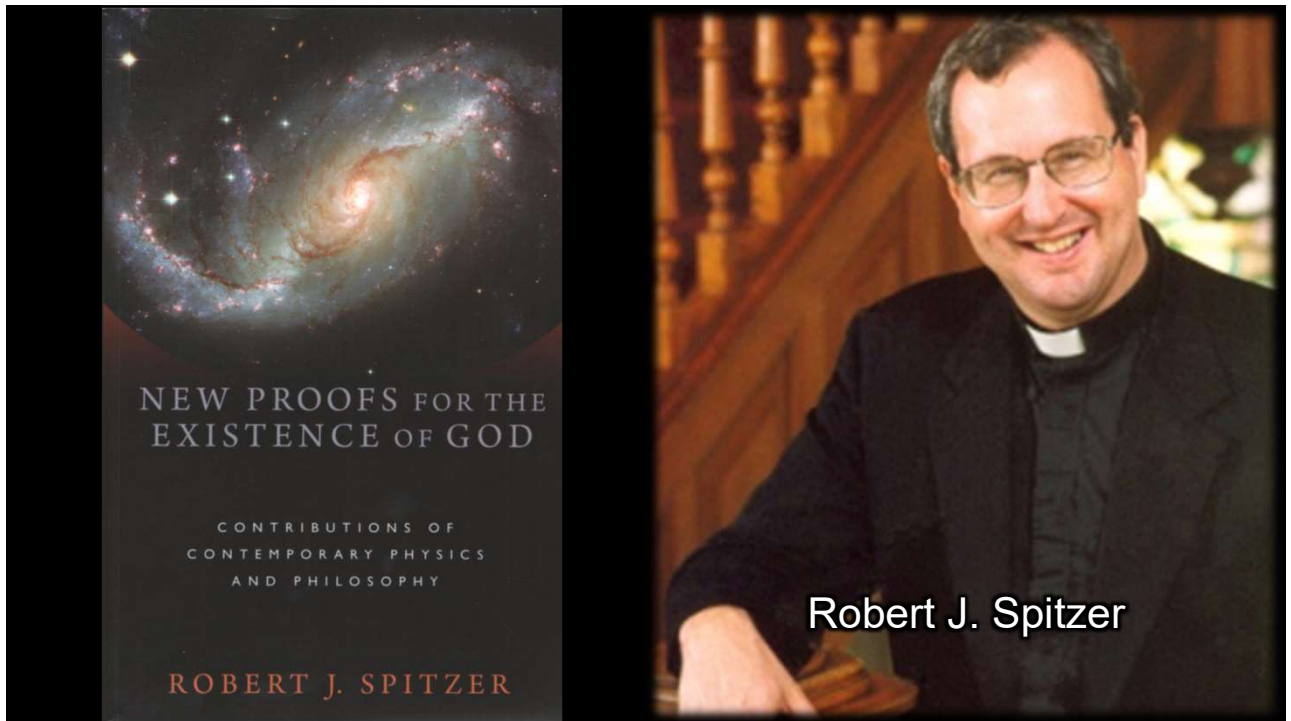
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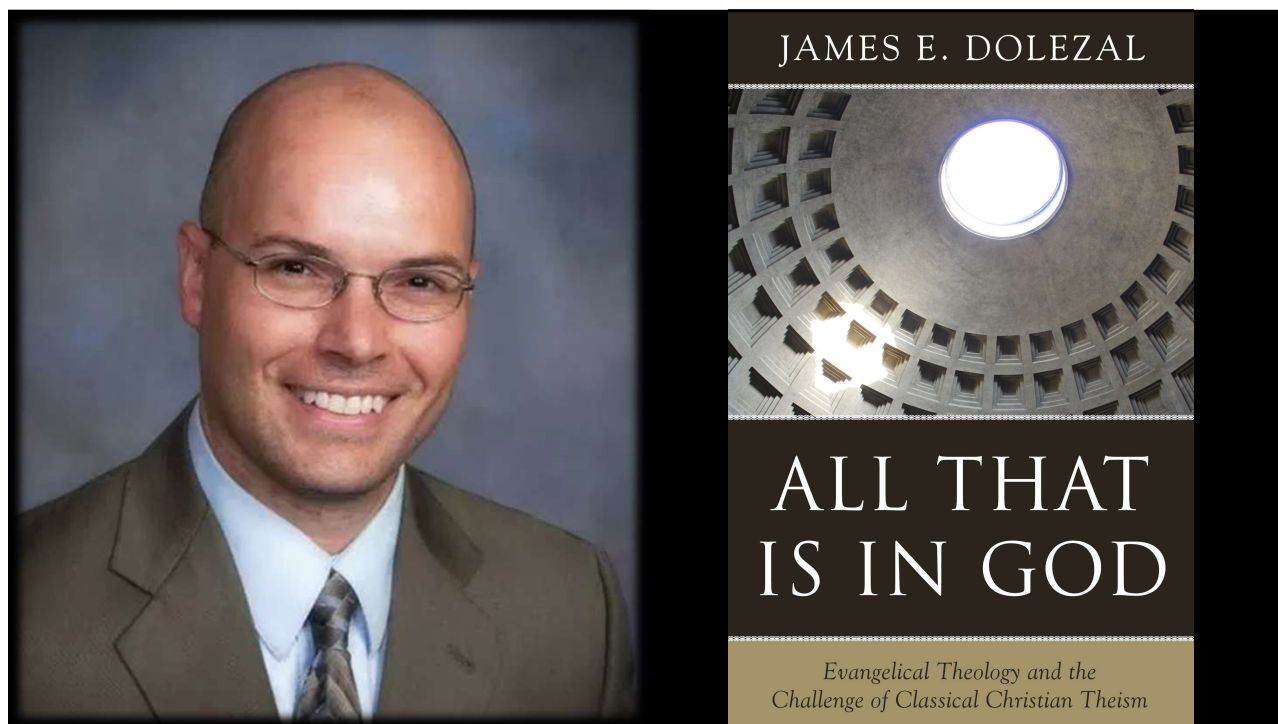
256



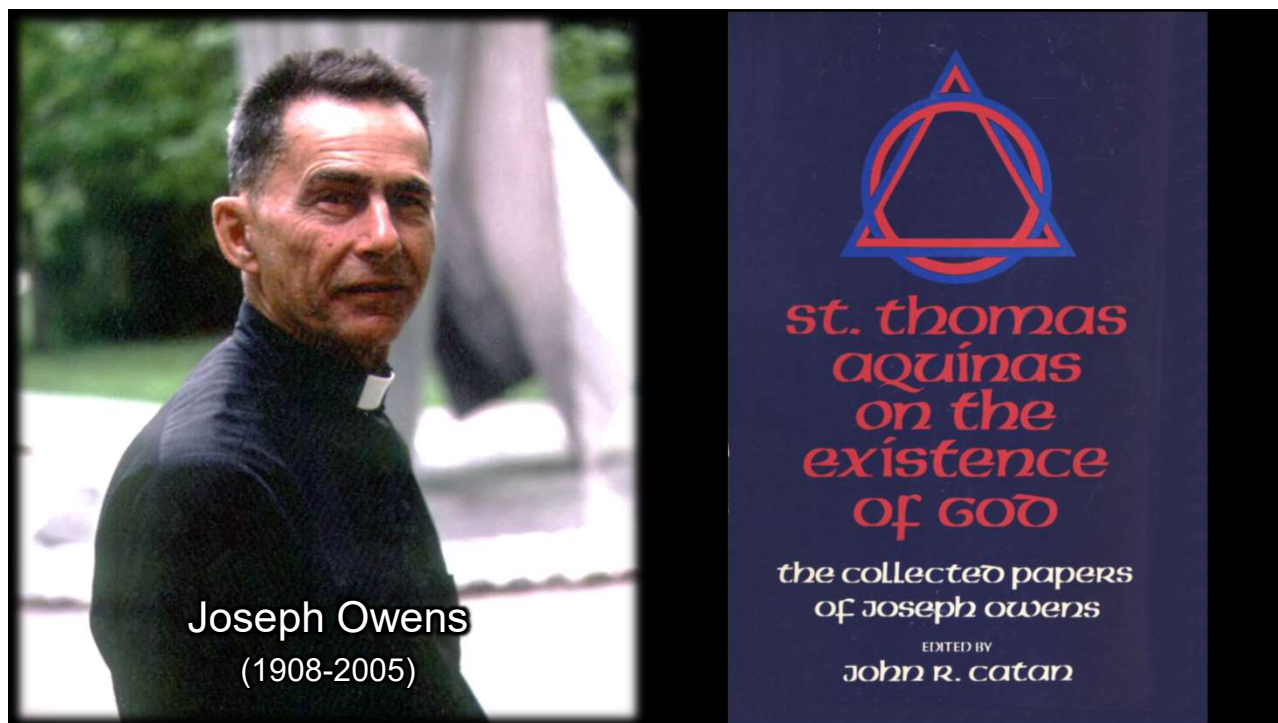
257



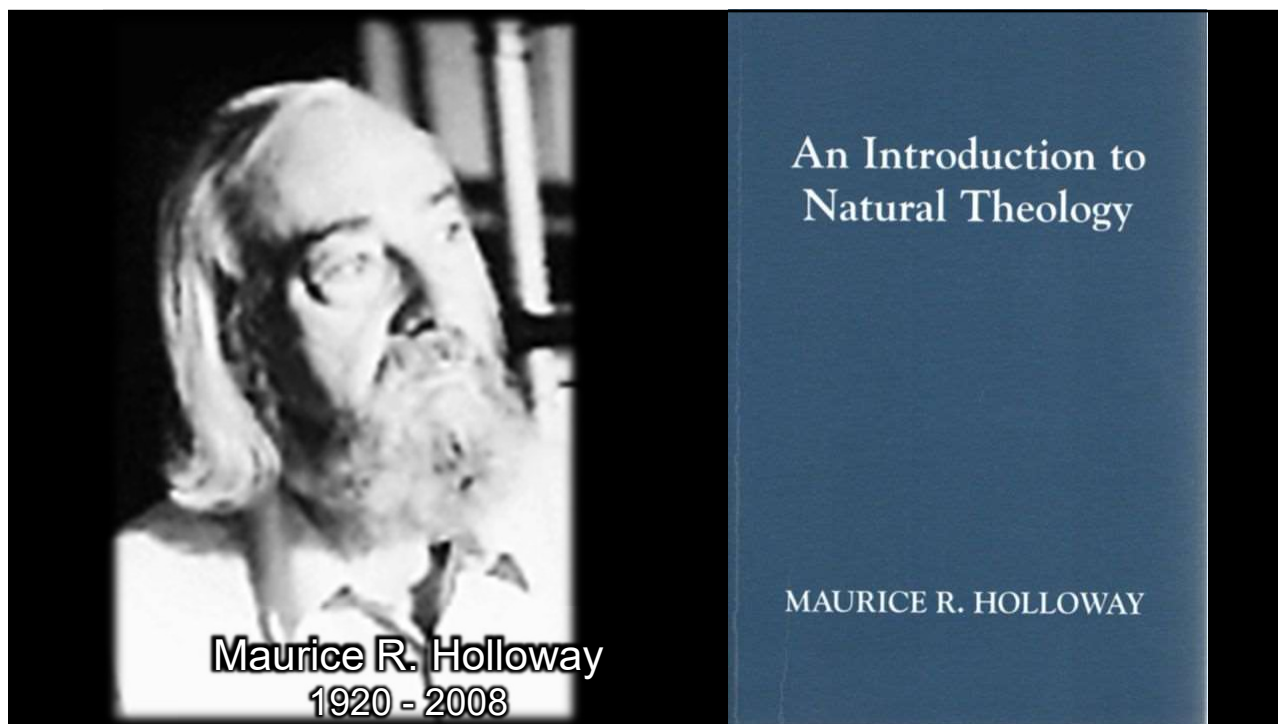
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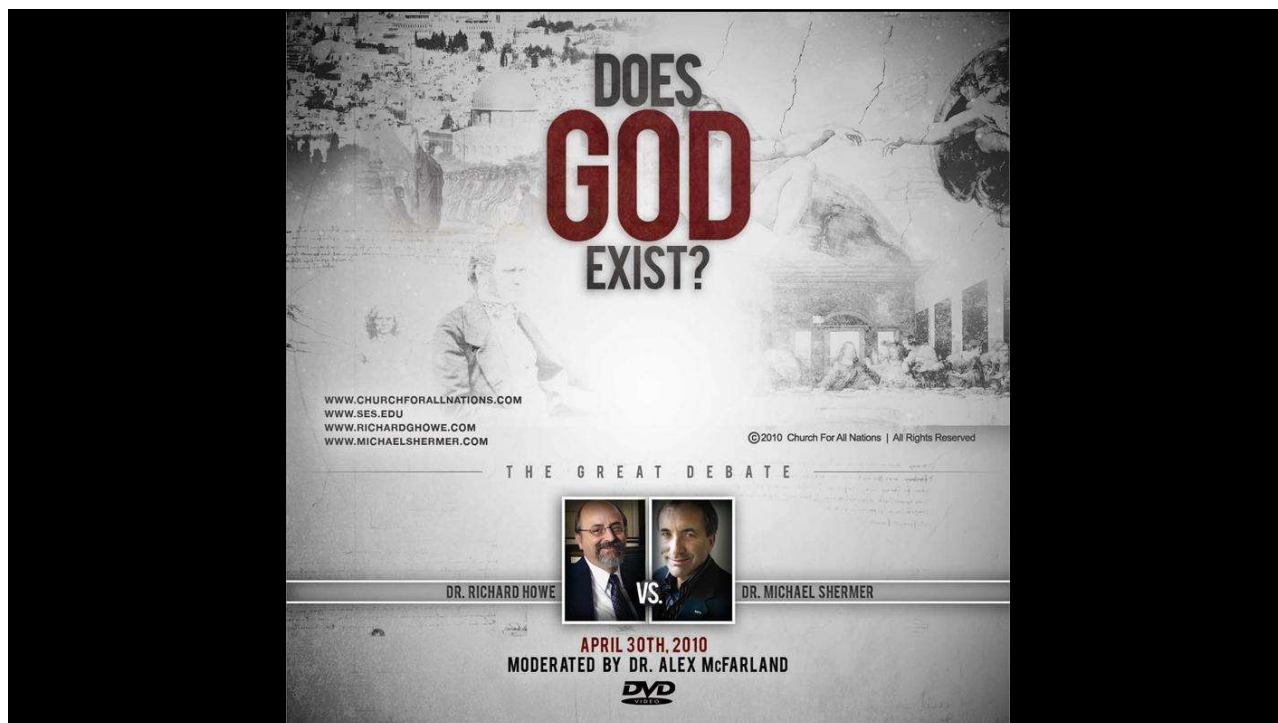
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