

ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

1. KALAM COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

God is the source or First Cause of the universe

Psalm 19.1: "The heavens declare the glory of God"

A. Whatever begins to exist has a cause

- i. **Intuition:** There is good reason to believe that "everything that begins to exist has a cause" is true. Namely, it coheres with our experience with reality. It appears to be a truism that something cannot come out of nothing. A painting exists because someone painted it. A car exists because someone builds it. The ocean tides ebb and flow because of the gravitational pull from the moon. Thunderstorms come into being because of specific weather patterns. Everything that begins to exist has a cause.
- ii. **Absence of evidence to the contrary:** If someone does believe that something can begin to exist without a cause then where is the evidence for it? Has there ever been a recorded case of something popping into existence spontaneously? And if this is true why don't more things come into existence? Because it appears to be true that whatever begins to exist has a cause to its existence.

B. The universe began to exist

For ages philosophers and scientists have debated whether the universe began to exist or whether it existed eternally. The second premise in this argument contends that the universe is not eternal but has a beginning point. Two arguments will support this claim, one philosophical and one scientific.

i. The Impossibility of an Actual Infinite

1. *Philosophers and mathematicians distinguish between two types of infinity: potential and actual. Imagine counting to infinity. Whatever number you count to you can always add one more. This is a potential infinity. It's in the process of becoming and never becomes a "whole set" of infinite numbers. But say you've counted every number. You have counted an actual infinity, a whole complete set of numbers. The problem is that while an actual infinite exists in theory it cannot exist in the real world. Consider the following illustration.*

2. *The world's largest library, the Library of Congress, has 36 million books. But imagine it contains an infinite number of books and there are an infinite number of red books and an infinite number of black books. For every red book, there is a black book and vice versa. If you asked the librarian how many red books they have? They'll respond an infinite amount. If you asked them how many total books they have (red and black) they'll say an infinite amount. Shouldn't the red books be a smaller number compared to the red and black books? Yes, but with an actual infinite you have as many red books as there are red and black books.*
3. *This illustration and the concept of an actual infinite cannot work in the real world, therefore, it's not possible for the universe to be eternal in the real world. It has beginning, before which it did not exist.*

ii. **The Expansion of the Universe**

1. *In 1929 Edwin Hubble used a spectroscopy to discover that some galaxies emit a redlight from them indicating that not only are they distant, but they are moving away from us. Evidence that the universe is expanding.*
2. *From Hubble's discovery and other evidence and confirmation of theories a model of the universe was posited. This model is known as the "Big Bang" theory. This theory is based on observational evidence that the universe is expanding away from us. Thus, if you rewind the video tape of the universe you would get to a point where everything in the universe: time, space, matter, energy, gravity, etc. was coalesced in an unimaginably small point. A singularity. This is the beginning of the universe.*

C. Therefore, the universe has a cause

How could we describe the first cause of the universe?

The Universe	The Cause
caused	uncaused
matter	immaterial
space	spaceless
time	timeless
dependent	independent
changing	unchanging
begins	eternal

2. TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (FINE-TUNING)

The universe is fine-tuned for life by an intelligent designer

Proverbs 3.19: "The LORD by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding he established the heavens"

Scientists have discovered that the universe is governed by a small handful of physical constants. A physical constant is a number of a certain value that is universal and unchanging. A physical constant has its numerical value not because it's assigned a value but because it's value is intrinsic. It just is.

Cosmological constant: the force that acts against gravity to cause the universe to expand

Approximate value: $\Lambda \approx 1.1 \times 10^{-52} \text{m}^{-2}$

Probability: 10^{120}

approximate number of subatomic in the observable universe: 10^{80}

number of seconds in the history of the universe: 10^{20}

A. The fine-tuning of the universe is due to either physical necessity, chance, or design

B. It is not due to physical necessity or chance

- i. **Chance:** As we've seen with the Cosmological constant itself the chances of it falling within a life-permitting range is inestimably small. If you then consider the other 2 dozen physical constants falling within their life-permitting range, it becomes clear that chance is not a reasonable explanation for the fine-tuning of the universe.
- ii. **Physical Necessity:** This explanation argues the physical constant values had to be what they were but why is that? Especially when one considers a universe without God, the birth of the universe would be truly random and happenstance. A non-life-permitting universe seems much more probable than a life-permitting universe.
- iii. **Multiverse:** Scientists and philosophers who truly understand the low probability of a life-permitting universe try to explain the fine-tuning of the universe by the existence of a multiverse. In this theory there are numerous universes that exists, and we happen to be in the right one that is life-permitting. The problem is that there is zero-evidence of a multiverse. It is pure theory.

C. Therefore, it is due to design

3. ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The very idea of God is reason for his existence

The ontological argument is credited to an 11th century theologian named Anslem of Canterbury. This argument for God came to him in a time of prayer and is found in his work called "Proslogion". Here is chapter 2 that contains the argument.

Truly there is a God, although the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.

AND so, Lord, do thou, who dost give understanding to faith, give me, so far as thou knowest it to be profitable, to understand that thou art as we believe; and that thou art that which we believe. And indeed, we believe that thou art a being than which nothing greater can be conceived. Or is there no such nature, since the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God? (Psalms xiv. 1).

But, at any rate, this very fool, when he hears of this being of which I speak --a being than which nothing greater can be conceived --understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his understanding; although he does not understand it to exist.

For, it is one thing for an object to be in the understanding, and another to understand that the object exists. When a painter first conceives of what he will afterwards perform, he has it in his understanding, but he does not yet understand it to be, because he has not yet performed it. But after he has made the painting, he both has it in his understanding, and he understands that it exists, because he has made it.

Hence, even the fool is convinced that something exists in the understanding, at least, than which nothing greater can be conceived. For, when he hears of this, he understands it. And whatever is understood, exists in the understanding. And assuredly that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, cannot exist in the understanding alone. For, suppose it exists in the understanding alone: then it can be conceived to exist in reality; which is greater.

Therefore, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, exists in the understanding alone, the very being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, is one, than which a greater can be conceived. But obviously this is impossible. Hence, there is no doubt that there exists a being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, and it exists both in the understanding and in reality.

Anselm's argument can be outlined as follows:

- A. God is the greatest conceivable being**
- B. God exists as an idea in the mind**
- C. A God that exists in the mind and in reality, is better than a God that exists in the mind only**
- D. If God exists in the mind only then we can imagine a greater being that exists than God**
- E. But we cannot imagine a being greater than God**
- F. Therefore, God exists (in reality)**

Critics of Anselm point out that what he is saying is that if you can imagine it, then it must actually exist. Anselm's original critic Guanilo responded that he believes that greatest conceivable island exists therefore, it does exist. People put forth other parodies like pizza, unicorns, etc. But the problem with this objection is that pizza, islands, and unicorns do not have definitions of greatness. What does it mean for there to be a greatest pizza or unicorn or island? Also there's no limit for what the greatest unicorn, pizza, or island could be. But there is a universal understanding of what the greatest conceivable being would be. He would be all knowing, all powerful, morally good, etc. Also the idea of God does have a limit to