

# LSI Journal

The Lutheran Science Institute

October-December, 2012



## **The Place of Reason in Defending the Christian Faith**

- \* Atheists and the Design Argument**
- \* Secularists Try to Explain Away God**

**LUTHERAN SCIENCE INSTITUTE, INC.**

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The Annual Meeting of the Institute is held the Saturday after Thanksgiving. At least three other meetings are held during the year at locations

selected by the president. Meetings are open to the public and announced in the LSI JOURNAL and/or on our web site.

**MEETING SCHEDULE\***

- ◆ 2nd Saturday in January, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday after Easter, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday in June, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday in October, 1:00 p.m.

\*Dates, times, and locations subject to change. Additional meetings may be scheduled. Check with the president, secretary, or editor or see our web site for verification.

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# The Place of Reason in Defending the Christian Faith

—with Ministry Ideas  
Regarding Creation/Evolution

By Mark Bergemann


(Part 2 of 4)

This article will be printed in four parts. Its total length will be condensed by nearly half, primarily through removal of many supporting quotations. The complete uncondensed article (including all 4 parts and an appendix) is available in the on-line *LSI Journal* at [www.lutheranscience.org](http://www.lutheranscience.org). The four parts are:

1. Introduction; What the Bible Teaches about Reason.
2. Scriptural Examples of Arguments from Reason.
3. Skeptics Exposed to the Gospel.
4. Ministry Considerations Regarding Creation.

Mark Bergemann, a retired electrical engineer, serves on the LSI Board of Directors. He is an evangelism leader at Good Shepherd's in West Allis, WI. Mark holds a B.S. from UW-Milwaukee.

## Part 2 – Scriptural Examples of Arguments from Reason

 Jesus and the Apostles used reason and extra-biblical sources in their apologetic:

In Lystra, the Apostle Paul is addressing unbelievers who are unfamiliar with the Bible. Valleskey describes Paul's audience as "untutored pagans."<sup>1</sup> As an introduction, or point of contact, Paul appeals to their natural knowledge of god, first by talk-

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1. David J. Valleskey, *A Portrait of Paul – Making disciples of all nations* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2002), 75.

ing about God our Creator, and then by talking about God our preserver.<sup>2</sup> Paul's witness was cut short by Jews from some nearby cities, who turned the crowd against Paul. Valleskey comments: "What we have here, then, is an approach to evangelism, preevangelism, if you will, which would have led, if the occasion had permitted, into the greater things the one true God had done for the Lystrans and all people."<sup>3</sup>

Acts 14:15-17 "Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them. In the past, he let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy."

At the Areopagus, the Apostle Paul is again addressing unbelievers who are unfamiliar with the Bible. Just as in Lystra, Paul uses an introduction or point of contact. Paul appeals to the Greek's natural knowledge of god, first by referring to their statue to the unknown god, and then by quoting from two Greek poets:<sup>4</sup>

## **Jesus and the Apostles used reason and extra-biblical sources in their apologetic.**

Acts 17:22,23,28 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. ... 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'"

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2. Valleskey, *Portrait of Paul*, 76.

3. Valleskey, *Portrait of Paul*, 76.

4. "The first quotation in verse 28 acknowledges that life is from God. It may be from the *Cretica* of the poet Epimenides (about 600 B.C.). The second quotation says essentially the same thing and appears twice in ancient Greek literature. The poet Aratus (315–240 B.C.) from Paul's homeland, Cilicia, wrote it in his *Phaenomena*. His contemporary, Cleanthes (331–233 B.C.), included it in his *Hymn to Zeus*." Richard D. Balge, *Acts – The People's Bible*, 2nd ed. (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2001), 194.

When accused of being in alliance with Satan (as opposed to driving out demons by the power of God), Jesus used an argument from reason. Jesus used the apologetic technique of showing that if his critic's position were true, it would lead to a ridiculous situation. Unbelief is in general, a logically inconsistent position.<sup>5</sup> Most Pharisees were unbelievers, and therefore needed to hear law and Gospel, but under the circumstances Jesus chose to make an argument from reason. The Pharisees were very familiar with Scripture and believed it to be God's Word, but they rejected Jesus and God's plan of salvation. (Parallel in Luke 11:14-26.)

Matthew 12:24-29 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons." Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand. If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom stand? And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your people drive them out? So then, they will be your judges. But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the

**Jesus used the apologetic technique of showing that if his critic's position were true, it would lead to a ridiculous situation**

strong man? Then he can rob his house."

Jesus used reason to turn the tables on his unbelieving critics. If the chief priests and elders an-

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5. Psalm 14: 1, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" Unbelief is in general, a logically inconsistent position. One example is relativism. Those who reject a law giver (God) believe that each individual or society decides what is right and what is wrong for themselves. Relativism in all its forms is a self-inconsistent position. If a relativist would follow her belief completely, she would be a sociopath, yet that is considered wrong by most relativists. By definition, a relativist can't complain about evil, injustice, unfairness, or about others doing something that is not right. Most relativists still complain about these things, because they hold a self-refuting and self-inconsistent position (relativism). Francis J. Beckwith and Gregory Koukl, *Relativism – Feet Firmly Planted Mid-Air* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998).

swered Jesus correctly, then they would be speaking against their own position, and if they answered in another way, they would turn the people against them.

Matthew 21:23-27 Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. "By what authority are you doing these things?" they asked. "And who gave you this authority?" Jesus replied, "I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. John's baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or from men?" They discussed it among themselves and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will ask, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' But if we say, 'From men'—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We don't know." Then he said, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

When some unbelieving Pharisees tried to trap him, Jesus answered with an argument from reason:

Matthew 22:15-22 Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. "Teacher," they said, "we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accor-

**When some  
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dance with the truth. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are. Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

Luke 20:23-26 He saw through their duplicity and said to them, "Show me a denarius. Whose portrait and inscription are on it?" "Caesar's," they replied. He said to them, "Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." They were unable to trap him in what he had said there in public. And astonished by his answer, they became silent.

In Matthew and Mark, Jesus uses an argument from reason with the Sadducees. The Sadducees believed that Scripture is God's Word, yet they were unbelievers who did not even accept that there is life after death. Jesus reasoned with them, "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Matthew 22:31-32 But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living."

Mark 12:26-27 Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account of the bush, how God said to him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!"

Jesus used reason to make an argument for allowing miracles on the Sabbath:

Luke 13:15-16 The Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or donkey from the stall and lead it out to give it water? Then should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?"

Again Jesus uses a logical argument to tell unbelieving Pharisees why it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath.

Matthew 12:9-14 Going on from that place, he went into their synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, they asked him, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" He said to them, "If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will you not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." Then he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

Jesus used a series of three logical arguments to make the point that we should trust God to provide our earthly necessities. First, since God has given us the greater gift of life and a body, He will also give the lesser gifts of food and clothes. Second, God feeds the birds, and we are more valuable than birds, so God will feed us too. Third, God clothes the flowers and grass, so He will clothe us too.

Matthew 6: 25-30 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important



than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

After His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus was the target of those who would trap him with words. Through Matthew 21 and 22 we read how Jesus often used reason to force his critics to defend their logically inconsistent positions. They could not defend their position, so they stopped using questions in an attempt to trap Jesus. We read in Matthew 22:46, “No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions.” We read a similar statement in Mark 12:34 and in Luke 20:40.

The Apostle Paul used reason when addressing the Christians in Corinth. Paul made the logical

**The Apostle Paul used reason when addressing the Christians in Corinth. Paul made the logical case that if there is no resurrection, then why should he endanger himself by preaching the Gospel? If there is no resurrection, then why not spend your days enjoying the good life?**

case that if there is no resurrection, then why should he endanger himself by preaching the Gospel? If there is no resurrection, then why not spend your days enjoying the good life? Paul quotes the Greek poet Menander: “Bad company corrupts good character.”<sup>6</sup> Paul finally reasons that we shouldn’t live like the heathen who do not know God. We know God, and our lives should reflect that.

1 Corinthians 15:30-34 And as for us, why do we endanger ourselves every hour? I die every day—I

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6. Carleton A. Toppe, *1 Corinthians – The People’s Bible*, 2nd ed. (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2002), 151.

mean that, brothers—just as surely as I glory over you in Christ Jesus our Lord. If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.” Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God—I say this to your shame.

On Pentecost, the disciples “were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” Scoffers made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.” So Peter began with an argument from reason as a lead-in to the Gospel message that followed.

Acts 2:14-15 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning!

In the ninth chapter of 1 Corinthians, Paul addresses believers by using a series of rhetorical questions, logical arguments, and illustrations from daily life. He uses these to defend his apostleship, talk about Christian freedom, and warn against falling away from

faith. Paul asks nineteen questions in this single chapter. First, Paul defends his right to a salary. He begins these seven verses with four rhetorical questions demanding a positive response. He ends with four rhetorical questions demanding a negative response. He uses illustrations from the daily life of a soldier, gardener, and shepherd. (Read 1 Corinthians 9:1-7)

Paul now quotes a Scripture passage about the proper treatment of animals and applies its general principle to the current topic. He also mentions how the OT Levites received food from worshipers’ gifts and sacrifices. (Read 1 Corinthians 9:8-14)

Paul then explains why he does not use some of his rights and freedoms and further expounds on his ministry methods. (Read 1 Corinthians 9:15-23)

Finally Paul exhorts his readers to follow his example and be faithful unto death. Paul uses several examples from athletics to make his point. (Read 1 Corinthians 9:24-27) **LSJ**

**Next — Part 3: Skeptics  
Exposed to the Gospel.**

# Atheists and the Design Argument

## Part 1

by Jeffrey Stueber



Around 1998 I had just embarked on my new “career” as a part-time Christian philosopher. After reading numerous Christian publications and obviously getting one consistent view of what I was exploring, I felt, to be taken seriously, I must explore the other side. With that fact in mind, I picked up a copy of B.C. Johnson’s *Atheist Debater’s Handbook* at a local library and decided to test my new

mental skills.<sup>1</sup>

Now, my critique of this book is important because, even today, I find praise for it. For instance, a writer on the “Skeptic’s Guide to the Universe” web site says “I bought this at Randi and Friends a couple of weeks ago and I’ll tell

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1. B.C. Johnson, *The Atheist Debater’s Handbook*, (New York, Prometheus, 1981). Page numbers for all quoted text will appear in body of my essay.

Jeff Stueber is a member of the LSI Board of Directors and a free-lance writer living in Watertown, Wisconsin. He is a member of St. John’s Ev. Lutheran Church, Watertown, Wisconsin.

you what it's fantastic! It's not a big book so it wastes no space with lengthy exposition, rhetoric or digression but gets straight to the point of annihilating theism with crushing logic, rationality and unrelenting presentation of argument and analysis.”<sup>2</sup>

Johnson's criticizes the theistic argument to/for design which often uses for evidence an accurate adjustment and assortments of parts that serve a purpose and could not have arisen by chance (such as in William Paley's example of a watch or the organization of the human eye today).

This argument arrives at its conclusion - that the eye is designed - by starting with a claim about the way we identify watches as designed objects. It argues that we must identify products of God's design by the same method we use to identify watches as designed. The only examples the theist can use are instances - such as watches - which are not thought to be designed by God. The theist's argument must begin this way because any non-hypothetical argument must proceed from what is presumed to be true. Arguments sup-



porting Divine design will be based upon examples where design is presumed. Without assuming God's existence, the only things presumed to be designed are objects not designed by God. Hence, to start with presumed examples of God's design would be to assume just what we are attempting to prove - namely, that there are such examples. There-

fore, the only reliable method available for detecting design is the one we have successfully used to detect products not designed by God. (p. 37-38)

Here was the first challenge to my faith and I had to ponder this mental retort Johnson has provided. Is it true that we can't attempt to find examples of what God

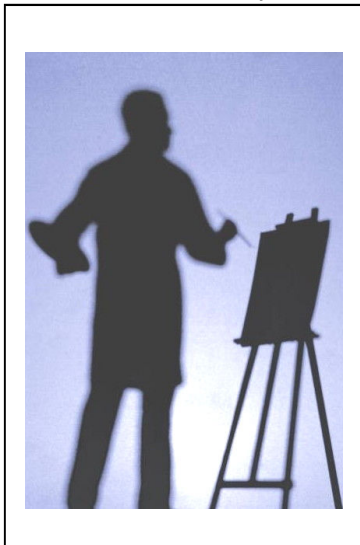
has fashioned using criteria from things not produced by God? Put differently, he proposes that if one is to discover whether *A* created (*a1*, *b1*, and *c1*), we can never, for our criteria, use items not created by *A*.

This reasoning seems faulty as far as the search for design is

2. From Dave the Drummer, <http://sguforums.com/index.php?topic=10221.0> (accessed November, 22, 2011)

done in science, particularly in searching for evidence of outer-space alien intelligence where nobody proposes that we cannot detect alien design because we only have, for our examples of design, things not created by them. Carl Sagan, for instance, spent a great deal of his life speculating about life on other

planets and, in fact, his book *Contact* – which was made into a movie – featured aliens sending prime numbers as signals.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, no one protests when we debate whether aliens helped create the Egyptian pyramids or designed crop circles. Lastly, when encountering ancient societies that have long disappeared, we do not suppose that we cannot detect their design because for our examples of design we only have items not designed by them. For instance, with Stonehenge researches never suggest we cannot discover who put the stones in that shape and why it was done because we do not have any other examples of design by them. Clearly something is wrong with Johnson's reasoning.



Christian philosopher J. P. Moreland has also pointed out flaws in Johnson's reasoning. He notes Johnson's methodology of insisting that we can only infer design by using criteria from objects we know are designed begs the question by ruling out creatures as designed even though they are at issue. Also, Johnson's

criteria are too strong and make it impossible for God to be known by man. This reasoning, if applied consistently, as I stated, makes it impossible to recognize as designed any object created by alien beings or other cultures. Lastly, Moreland says Johnson and others who argue similarly do not understand the nature of a criterion.

Our criteria for recognizing design in human artifacts may serve in many purposes but do not constitute the totality of the criteria of design in other cases.<sup>4</sup>

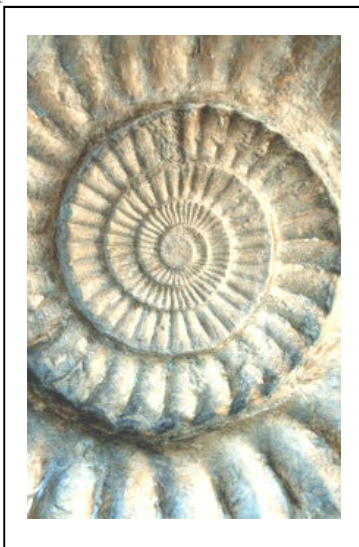
Let me expand on what

3. Carl Sagan, *Contact*, (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1985).
4. J. P. Moreland, *Scaling the Secular City*, (Grand Rapids: MI, Baker House, 1987), 68-69.

Moreland has said. The “accurate adjustment of parts” criterion is used in identifying messages as designed (as in text on parchment) and also watches but the criteria by which we identify messages or watches is not limited to that criterion alone. Similarly, this criterion is not the only one used to identify products of a divine designer.

After jumping from the “accurate adjustment of parts” criterion to one that proposes that we only recognize design in items that “differ” from nature (a method that is totally useless), Johnson continues by drawing a comparison between the eye and a whirlwind as if to suggest that

the eye is no more designed than the whirlwind. This analogy is spurious though. It is one thing to create a whirlpool or whirlwind but yet another to create DNA or an eye and a brilliant explanation of the difference is given by Sean Pitman who explains the difference between chaos and complexity. If you have air in a room and remove 10% of it, not much changes except the pressure. However, if you take away 10%



of someone’s leg, that person might suffer impairment of function (a simplistic example, but it makes the point). Humans are complex while gases in a container are not and, for that matter, neither are whirlwinds.<sup>5</sup> DNA and eyes are complex and these are among things that creationists believe are designed. Johnson

simply cannot see the differences in degree between the two. It is not just any arrangement that peaks a creationist’s interests, but specific irreducible complex arrangements.

However, some unintended events can happen without planning and that point is made by Johnson in suggest-

ing the eye is the result of unintended consequences. Johnson’s uses the example of meeting someone on a bus to demonstrate this. Surely the odds are incredibly high against meeting someone on a bus and perhaps those

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5. Sean Pitman, “Chaos and Complexity,” <http://naturalselection.0catch.com/Files/chaoscomplexity.html> Accessed November 29, 2011.

odds do not rule out such a consequence no more than they rule out the existence of the eye. Johnson forgets that the only reason one meets a person on the bus is because intelligent action was involved: two people choosing to take the bus. The meeting did not happen by random occurrence. Duane Gish mentions how this type of argument was used on him in a debate and his refutation of it.

In the exchange between Sluijser and Gish, Sluijser attacked Gish's probability argument by asserting that he had calculated the probability that Gish would be on that particular spot in the world at that particular time and, according to these calculations, it was impossible for him to be there. Gish was quick to point out that his being there was not due to random chance processes but that he was there because he had been invited and had used deliberate processes to get there. Response from the audience showed that they realized that Sluijser had strengthened Gish's probability argument by unwittingly demonstrating that random chance processes could never accomplish events that would require deliberate actions

by an intelligent being.<sup>6</sup>

Returning to Johnson, we could say that the meeting on the bus was accidental but being there was a result of intelligent planning. So, if Johnson wanted to apply this analogy to the eye, he would have to say that the eye may be an unintended conse-

quence but putting the processes in place for it to develop would require an intelligent designer or planner. So his arguments do not eliminate the need for God and actually strengthens the design argument.

Johnson again stumbles when he tells about a rock formation that spells out a phrase that says

George Washington was the first president and suggests that this message would not convey useful information if we believed that the sentence is an accidental arrangement of rocks. That is true enough, but he then suggests that



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6. Duane Gish, *Up With Creation*, (San Diego: CA, Creation-Life Publishers, 1978), 45.



if we believe the eyes gives us correct information we must believe they are designed and if they are not designed they would not give us useful information. Accidental eyes give us no more correct information than accidental sentences. However, he says, purpose is a necessary component in sentences but not in eyes – because humans must agree on what parts constitute a sentence – and hence undermines the theists' analogy between sentences and eyes. Merely because eyes give us useful information is no reason to conclude they are designed, he thinks.

However, Johnson again is wrong. First, the reason for concluding the eyes are designed is the particular arrangement of its parts, not whether or not they give us useful information. If, for example, we were to view incorrect information we would still consider them designed. Things created by an intelligent agent or unintelligent cause can relay both useful and correct or incorrect and useless information. There is no logical connection between an arrangement of parts and its ac-

curacy of information.

It's understandable why Johnson would include an attack on probability-based arguments because many theists suggest evolution is just too improbable to even generate a cell much less anything else. He mentions the eye again and states the combina-



tion of atoms that make up an eye is "only one out of billions of possible combinations" (p. 53) and therefore the eye combination is just as probable as any other combination. Therefore he concludes that it is incorrect to say that the eye is improbable because its probability is the same as any other combination. Ergo,

the eye is not that incredible after all.

I must remember that logic if I ever go to a gambling casino and decide to mess with the dice so they give me constant roles of seven (which, by the way, I have no knowledge of doing). When the head of the casino questions me if I rigged the dice, I will tell him that the combination of sevens he witnessed is not to be un-



expected because it has the same probability as any other combination, and therefore merely an inevitable result of chance.

Johnson's interpretation of the probability argument is not correct and certainly does not match the interpretation chance a casino boss would use. The casino boss would not reason as Johnson, but

instead would reason as so: "The long succession of sevens being rolled by Mr. Stueber is so improbable because there are so many successions of rolls that are *not* rolls of sevens. Therefore the probability is so much greater for rolls that are *not* sevens than for rolls that are sevens. Therefore Mr. Stueber must be rigging the dice." Thus a theist argues, "There may be one possible combination that makes an eye work, but perhaps a few million or billion may make it not work. Therefore the probability against the right combination of an eye is extremely large."

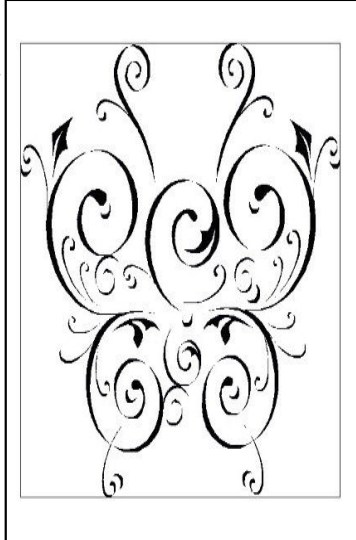
I will stop rhapsodizing on Johnson's errors here, but not without drawing intellectual blood one last time. If you re-

member, Johnson argued that we cannot use criteria for design using items not designed by that supposed designer. If Johnson is serious about this, then he should not even be able to complain about the evil which God permits in this world – a topic to which he devotes an entire chapter. He must suppose that we would not

design a world where evil was permitted, but apparently God has designed such a world. However, Johnson making such a judgment would involve him doing the very thing he said we could not do: using criteria based on what beings other than God would do. How exactly does he know what God would create anyway when all he knows is

what we would or would not create? [S]

**Next:**  
**Other Critics of Design**



**Wednesday, Sept. 19, 2012**

## Secularists Continue to Try to Explain Away God

One cosmologist suggests a godless universe is "just the way it is."



**Summary:** Science is gradually chipping away at reasons for believing in God, secularists claim. They believe the existence of humans, the Earth and the universe can now be explained by biology, astronomy, physics and other scientific domains. Scientific mysteries remain, admits Sean Carroll, a theoretical cosmologist at Cal Tech, but he thinks there is good reason for believing science will ultimately be able to explain everything so that God is no longer necessary.

"Gobs of evidence" can explain the Big Bang model of cosmology, the notion the universe expanded from a hot, dense state to its current cooler, more expansive state over "13.7 billion years." Cosmologists can model what happened immediately after the Big Bang until now although there is uncertainty regarding the split second before that. Some theologians have equated the Big Bang with the creation of the world as explained in the Bible because something, i.e. God, had to have initiated the Big Bang. However, Carroll is hopeful science will eventually do away with the need for a Big Bang

“trigger-puller.”

Carroll has explained that a goal of modern physics is to form a working theory that can describe the entire universe, from subatomic to astronomical scales within a single framework. Called “quantum gravity,” this theory would account for what happened at the moment of the Big Bang. Some versions of quantum gravity suggest the Big Bang was only a “transitional stage in an eternal universe” rather than the starting point of time, like a balloon that inflates and deflates over and over. If time had no beginning, that eliminates the need for the book of Genesis.

Other versions of quantum gravity hold that time did start at the Big Bang, but they also try to eliminate the need for God. “Nothing in the fact that there is a first moment of time, in other words, necessitates that an external something is required to bring the universe about at that moment,” Carroll wrote. Contemporary physics theories, still under development and needing testing, are capable of explaining why Big Bangs occur without supernatural input.

However, physicists have observed that many of the physical constants that define our universe are “eerily perfect” for supporting life. To get around the need for a fine-tuner of the universe, some versions of quantum gravity theory propose an infinite number of universes that make up a multiverse. Among these infinite universes, the “full range of values of all the physical constants are represented” and thus some of them could support the formation of stars, planets and life as we know it. We just happen to live in one of the lucky universes.

But some theologians counter it is far simpler to believe in God. In addition, even if cosmologists eventually manage to explain how and why the universe seems so fine-tuned for life, the question remains why there is “something” as opposed to “nothing.” But Carroll says there can be no answer to such a question. “That’s just how it is.” Carroll contends that a complete scientific explanation that accounts for everything in the universe doesn’t need an explanation in the same way specific things in the universe need to be explained.

(Photo of the Eagle Nebula, from NASA.)

To read the entire article, go to <http://www.livescience.com/23251-science-religion-god-physics.html>

**Comment:** It is hard to imagine that after reading this article anyone could doubt that that secular science can be just as much of a faith-based institution as any religious denomination — or even more so. Those scientists, as represented by Mr. Carroll, who contend the universe is possible without a Creator are so obviously engaging in wishful thinking I don't see how it can be denied.

In fact, established scientific evidence contradicts much of their theorizing and their hopes that future research will do away with God. What we know from what we can observe is that everything has a beginning and all effects have a cause. The Big Bang, if it had a beginning, had no cause, or, if you believe in that fantastic idea of a constantly inflating, deflating “balloon universe,” then the universe had no beginning. Also, contrary to the claim that the Big Bang is supported by “gobs of evidence,” there actually are gobs of reasons for opposing this theory. One online article (<http://metaresearch.org/cosmology/BB-top-30.asp>) lists not one or two, but *thirty* actual scientific problems with the Big Bang theory.

What about the multiverse? Scientific evidence allows for only one universe, not an infinite (i.e. unlimited) number of universes. There is not a shred of *scientific* evidence for an infinite number of anything. Christians often talk about “belief” in an eternity or an infinite amount of time. Why should a belief in an infinite number of universes be given more respect than a belief in an eternity governed by an eternal God?

As evidence accumulates for how fine-tuned our universe is, how complex and finely-designed even simple creatures happen to be, and how the need for a Creator to explain life seems to be increasing, secularists undoubtedly are feeling under increasing pressure to provide reasons for maintaining their faith in the nonexistence of God. This wasn't the first attempt to explain God away, by any means, and it is fair to predict it won't be the last.

Bible believers know there was a first cause for the universe and everything in it, and that first cause is our Creator God. **“By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth....For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm”** (Psalm 33:6,9).

And just as He has created our present home, He has created a fu-

ture home for all people who are following Jesus Christ in faith as their Lord and Savior. **“My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am”** (John 14:2-3).

## Questions of the Day

### Why do dogs chase their tails?

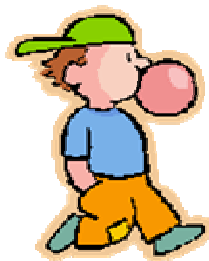
It may be just for play, but if the tail-chasing becomes excessive, it could be a sign of an obsessive-compulsive disorder that requires professional help. Playing with the dog often will put a stop to the activity.



Source: *Parade* (July 8, 2012)

### Is it potentially harmful to swallow chewing gum?

Chewing gum is not meant to be swallowed, but swallowing a piece occasionally won't normally cause major health issues. The gum will simply pass through the digestive system. However, if a large piece of barely chewed gum is swallowed by children, it could cause constipation or even intestinal blockage.



Source: *(Racine) Journal Times*

### Are stick-shift automobiles still being made?

Yes. In fact, 6.5% of all new vehicles sold since March, 2012 have been stick shift, double the rate of the past five years. Cars with manual transmissions are typically at least \$1,000 less expensive than similar autos with automatic transmissions.



Source: *Bottom Line Personal* (August 1, 2012)



# NUGGETS

## **TEN MYTHS WOMEN IN CRISIS PREGNANCIES BELIEVE**

1. Abortion will erase my problem.
2. My boyfriend will stay with me if I have an abortion.
3. Abortion is my only choice.
4. It is better to have an abortion than to bring a child into the world if I can't care for it.
5. Abortion would be easier for me emotionally than placing my child up for adoption.
6. If I have an abortion very early in my pregnancy, it won't bother me.
7. The abortion pill is easier than a surgical abortion.
8. Abortion is not physically painful.
9. Abortion is not a big deal.
10. I can always get pregnant again later.

Source: *A Sacred Trust (WELS Lutherans for Life, Metro-Milwaukee, August 2012)*

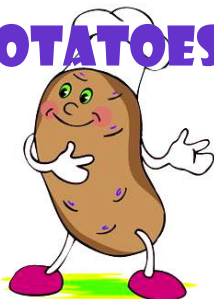
## **CHOCOLATE LOVERS, TAKE NOTE**

A study in March of 972 healthy adults discovered that people who ate chocolate frequently had a lower average body mass than those who didn't. The compounds in chocolate may have metabolic benefits that help control weight. However, more research is needed.



Source: *Consumer Reports on Health* (July, 2012)

## POTATOES



**S**ony Corporation has developed a marvelous new plastic made from vegetables instead of petroleum. Using the starch found in potatoes, this new product is just as durable and fire-resistant as traditional plastic, but it is also biodegradable.

—*Answers* (April/June, 2012)

## Circular Reasoning

"The intelligent layman has long suspected circular reasoning in the use of rocks to date fossils and fossils to date rocks. The geologist has never bothered to think of a good reply, feeling that explanations are not worth the trouble as long as the work brings results. This is supposed to be hard-headed pragmatism."

—J. E. O'Rourke, "Pragmatism versus materialism in stratigraphy". *American Journal of Science*, vol. 276, January 1976, p. 47, quoted at <http://www.creationism.org>



## BURNING CALORIES

How many calories can be burned away by exercise? Here are some examples along with **per hour** estimates:

Bicycling at 9 mph -- **390** calories

Jogging -- **490** calories

Low-impact aerobics -- **330** calories

Brisk walking -- **290** calories

Strength training -- **240** calories

Swimming laps -- **390** calories

Playing doubles tennis -- **305** calories

Elliptical training -- **340** calories



Source: *Nutrition Action* (March, 2012)



### Intelligent Design in the Real World

Secular scientists often scoff at the notion of intelligent design because that concept implies an Intelligent Designer or Creator. However, this belief doesn't extend to investigators involved in the *forensic sciences* who often must employ a practice known as *design detection*. Fire investigators, for instance, must determine if a fire accidentally started or was the work of an intelligent arsonist. —[http://www.conservapedia.com/Intelligent\\_design](http://www.conservapedia.com/Intelligent_design)



**“Since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.” Romans 1:28**

### AFTER EDEN

by Dan Lietha

106



Source: [answersingenesis.org](http://answersingenesis.org)

### REUSE ALUMINUM FOIL to..

- >Scour a barbecue grill to remove stuck-on food.
- >Sharpen dull shears and scissors by cutting through folded layers of foil a few times.
- >Reduce static cling by put a crumpled piece of foil in a dryer.
- >Keep cats and dogs out of certain areas because most don't like to walk on it.
- >Keep birds and deer away from gardens by hanging foil strips on strings.

Source: Author Jeff Yeager, quoted in *Bottom Line/Personal* (5/15/12)



## WHAT THE SECULAR MEDIA IS INTERESTED IN AT THE CREATION MUSEUM

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WHEN THE SECULAR media visit the Creation Museum to interview me, they rarely ask about biological evolution. Typically they will start by asking, "Why do you believe dinosaurs and people lived at the same time?" or "What do you believe about the age of the earth?" or even "Why do you reject science and believe God created the universe in six days only thousands of years ago?"

I believe they start this way because they know biological evolution is impossible without billions of years of history. In fact, I find that secularists are very emotionally committed to the millions and billions of years. They almost go ballistic when told the earth is only thousands of years old.

Secularists understand something few Christians seem to grasp — biological evolution is not the heart of the issue. "Millions of years" is... However, many (pastors) do not consider the age of the earth an important issue.

—Ken Ham, *Answers* (July-Sept., 2012)

### TRYING TO EAT LESS?

In a Belgian study 88 college students were offered M&M snacks to munch on while watching TV with the candy offered in three different ways—7 ounces of M&Ms in a one-cup bowl; 7 ounces of candy in a three-cup bowl, or 21 ounces in a three-cup bowl. The study found students ate twice as much candy from the two large bowls than they did from the smaller one. This research suggests it may be wise for people trying to lose weight to use smaller dishes.

Source: *Nutrition Action* (May, 2012)



## Plan New Bible Museum

According to plans, a large-scale Bible museum is scheduled to open in Washington, D.C. within four years. Cary Summers, a consultant for the Creation Museum's proposed Noah's Ark, is the chief operating officer for the museum, the final name and exact location yet to be determined. Among the Bible museum's offerings will be more than 40,000 artifacts and a re-creation of a chamber in London's Westminster Abbey where the King James Bible was prepared.—*Salt Lake City Tribune* (7/10/12)

## Poll Shows Decline in Pro-Choice Position

A new Gallup poll has recorded the smallest percentage of Americans who say they are pro-choice it has ever recorded. Just 41% of people in the May poll identified themselves as being pro-choice while 50 percent said they were "pro-life," a statistic that is also a record. In 2006 51% of Americans said they were pro-choice. However, only 20% of respondents said abortion should be illegal in all cases.—(*Racine Journal Sentinel* (5/24/12))

## Fight Smartphone Theft

Major wireless providers are cooperating to fight smartphone theft. Service providers plan to introduce a program by late 2013 that will deny service to smartphones which have been reported stolen, thus reducing their resale value. Smartphones will be enrolled automatically.—*Bottom Line Personal* (July 15, 2012)

## A Downy T. Rex?

Having discovered a giant meat-eating T. rex with a downy coat is causing scientists to alter their perception of what a Tyrannosaurus rex may have looked like. Long depicted as having scaly skin, the fierce-looking dinosaur may instead have had a soft, downy skin. The new tyrannosaur species represented by an adult and two juveniles, named *Yutyrannus huali*, was discovered by a team of Chinese and Canadian scientists—*news.yahoo.com* (4/4/12)



## Meat-Eating Orangutans

Orangutans usually are vegetarians, but researchers on occasion have observed the animals eating meat. Their prey in every case has been slow-moving animals called lorises which the apes knock out of trees and then kill for their meat. In one case, a mother orangutan was observed feeding some of the meat to her infant.—*Creation* (July-September, 2012)

## A Mammal in Danger

Lemurs have been named the world's most endangered mammal. Ninety-one percent of the 103 known lemur species are threatened, say conservationists meeting in Madagascar. Twenty-three of the species are considered "critically endangered." Lemurs belong to a group called prosimian primates, a group consisting of all primates that are not monkeys or apes.—*news.yahoo.com* (7/13/12)

## Staying Fit Can Help Preserve Memory

A study published in *Neurology* adds further evidence to the belief that staying mentally fit can preserve memory. More than 1,000 people, average age 80, who were free of dementia were evaluated every year and reported participating in mentally stimulating activities such as reading, writing letters and playing board game. "The results suggest that more frequent mental stimulation in old age leads to better cognitive function," the researchers concluded.—*Men's Health Advisor* (June, 2012)

## Chocolate Helps Men

Researchers who surveyed about 37,000 men found a probable link between chocolate consumption and the risk of a stroke. The men who ate at least a third of a cup of chocolate per week were 17% less likely to have a stroke than those who ate little chocolate. When consumed in moderation, chocolate has been shown to improve cardiovascular health, likely because of compounds called flavonoids.—*www.livescience.com* (8/30/12)

## Food and Aggression

Some foods may help cause aggression. An analysis of 945 adults published in *PLoS*, indicated people who reported eating more food with trans fat said they behaved with more aggression and less patience than people who consumed less trans fat. Trans fat is found in some baked goods, fast food and margarine.—*Consumer Reports on Health* (June, 2012)

## Organic Food Tested

Organic foods were no more nutritious and no less likely to be contaminated with certain bacteria than conventionally grown foods, according to a review of studies at Stanford School of Medicine. But organic foods were less likely to contain certain pesticide residues or harbor bacteria resistant to antibiotics. Although farming practices vary, organics are generally grown without the use of pesticides or industrial fertilizers.—*news.yahoo.com* (9/3/12)

## Vitamin D Linked to Less Prostate Cancer

Men with high blood levels of vitamin D have been found to have a lower risk of lethal prostate cancer. In a study involving 1,260 men, those with the highest vitamin D levels had a 57% lower risk of lethal prostate cancer. Only 5% of the men with prostate cancer had died by the end of the 15-year study.—*Nutrition Action* (June, 2012)

## Colonoscopy Fears

A telephone survey of 454 adults ages 50 and older in three cities uncovered the three main reasons people will avoid getting a colonoscopy. They were: fear of embarrassment; fear of pain; and the misconception the procedure could cause AIDS.—*Consumer Reports on Health* (August, 2012)

## Sleepwalking Adults

About 30% of adults sleepwalk. Depression, alcohol dependency and abuse are three leading causes for sleepwalking. Sleeping pills and antidepressants also increase the risk.—*Bottom Line Personal* (8/15/12)

## Pacemakers Safe From Airport Security Devices

People with a pacemaker or implantable cardioverter-defibrillator (ICD) are not at any great risk by walking through an airport security detector. A 2003 study found that metal detector gates are safe for people with these heart devices. This conclusion was supported by a study reported in the Nov. 1, 2011 *Annals of Internal Medicine*. Still, it is recommended that security at an airport be notified if someone is wearing one of these devices, and lingering near a metal detector is not advised. A hand search might be best.—*Cleveland Clinic Men's Health Advisor* (March, 2012)

## Russians Resurrect a "32,000-Year-Old" Fruit

Russian scientists have announced they have resurrected a "32,000-year-old" fruit that was buried in the frozen Siberian tundra. Called the campion plant, it produces white flowers. The fruits are some "30,000" years older than the Israeli date palm seeds that previously held the record for the oldest tissue to give life to healthy plants.—*Discover* (July/August, 2012)

## Home in a Missile Silo

A Denver entrepreneur is offering buyers a chance to make their home in an abandoned missile silo. Larry Hall purchased the silo from the government in 2008 for \$300,000. He plans to include an indoor spa, movie theater and general store in the 174-foot-deep hole as well as housing for up to 70 people. A selling point—the silo will be protected from enemy missile strikes.—*Discover* (June, 2012)

## Lightest Material Ever

Norwegian researchers have developed the lightest material ever made — a strong metal mesh about 25% less dense than the former record holder — a foamlike material called wispiest aerogel. A brick-sized piece of the new material would weigh less than a paper clip. The mesh's low weight and high durability make it suitable for airplane wings and shock absorbers for automobiles.—*Discover* (March, 2012)

## A Man-made Disaster

A parliamentary panel in Japan has concluded the Fukushima nuclear plant crisis was a "profoundly man-made disaster." Deficiencies in both the government and the plant operator were blamed. The now-stable six-reactor Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant was badly damaged after a March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami which led to meltdowns and the release of radioactivity. [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) (7/5/12)



The plant before the melt-

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## Onions

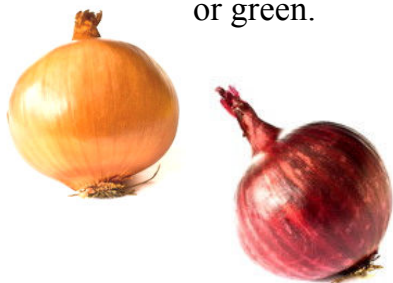
**“We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, *onions* and garlic. But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!” Numbers 11:5-6**

The people were complaining. God had freed them from slavery in Egypt, but they could only complain about the food called manna which God was giving them to eat. They could only think of all the food they had back in Egypt, food such as garlic, melons, and onions.

### **What are onions?**

Onions are plants which are commonly used for food. The root (the part of the plant that is shaped like a bulb and is found in the ground) is the part that is usually eaten?

**What are the main kinds of onions?** Onions are usually referred to by their colors—yellow, red, white or green.



A yellow onion and a red onion.

**How do cooks use onions?** Onions can be used to make onion soup, but usually they are added to other foods to improve the taste. For example, raw onions can be cut and used in salads or fried and used on meats. Onions are a popular food in many nations.

**For how long have people eaten onions?** It is thought that people have eaten onions for thousands of years, long before Jesus was born. Christopher Columbus brought onions to

America, but he found that Native Americans were already using wild onions.

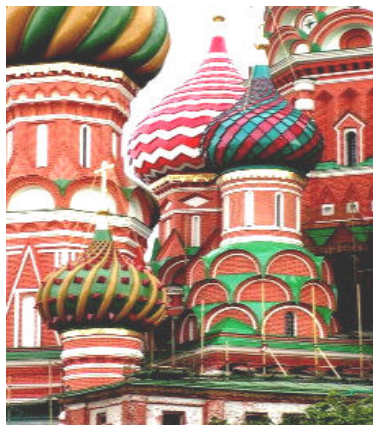
### **How are onions grown?**

While onions may be grown from seed, the usual way to grow them is to allow them to develop into small bulbs one year and then plant them and allow them to grow into fully grown bulbs the next year.

**Why does cutting an onion often cause one's eyes to water?** When cutting an onion, a chemical is often released into the air. The chemical helps protect the onion from germs and insects. But this chemical can sting our eyes and cause them to water.

Source: Wikipedia

God has given us so many gifts that we really should not complain if we don't always get the food we like. His best gift to us is our faith in Jesus which will lead us to being able to live in heaven with Him forever.



**This church in Russia has domes shaped like onions.**

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### **Activities:**

1. Do this only if you are allowed to use a sharp knife. Slice an onion. Do your eyes water? Next try wearing swimmers goggles or by slicing an onion under running water. Does that help?

2. Discover what the cells of an onion look like. With a tweezers take a small piece of the thin underside of the outer skin of an onion. Wet the piece and place it between two microscope slides. Carefully lower the scope without breaking the slides and use the small knob to fine tune the view. What do you see?



### Our Declining Genes: What Can Be Done?

**G**enetically the human race seems to be declining and declining fast. So says the April-June issue of *Creation* magazine.

*Creation* reports on the work of researchers who have looked into the mutations children have acquired from their parents.

Matthew Hurles, co-leader of the study, says they were surprised to learn that most mutations in some families come from the father, as they expected, but in other families most come unexpectedly from the mother. The researchers were also surprised to learn that children in some families can inherit ten times as many mutations as children in other families.

The scientists estimated that each one of us receives approximately 60 new mutations from the sex cells of our parents—mutations that our parents did not have in their own genomes.

So why is this bad news? Aren't mutations in the long run supposed to be the engine that drives our evolution onward and upward so that we as a species

become better and better, eventually becoming superhumans?

Common experience tells us that mutations are not generally or ever a good thing. Even in our everyday language, if someone who doesn't like us calls us a "mutant," we know it is not in any way a compliment.

There may be some mutations called "beneficial mutations" that afford an organism a minor advantage, but they usually seem to have a negative side. As one example, bacteria can mutate to make them more resistant to some antibiotics. But the mutations can also make them more vulnerable in other environments.

The truth is most mutations are at least a little bit harmful, and these mutations are adding up. Think of the long ages of such early men as Methuselah (969 years) and Adam (930 years), and compare them to current life spans. Yes, better nutrition and medicine may be helping increase life spans over the recent past, but these increases are tapering off.

While geneticists don't seem to have an answer to this situation, the Bible does. For followers of Jesus, our limited earthly life spans will turn into lives that never end in heaven. This happy message needs to get out to anyone who is worried about his/her fading genes. **LSJ**

—Warren Krug, editor

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