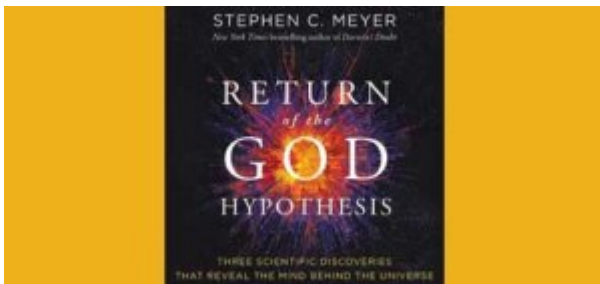


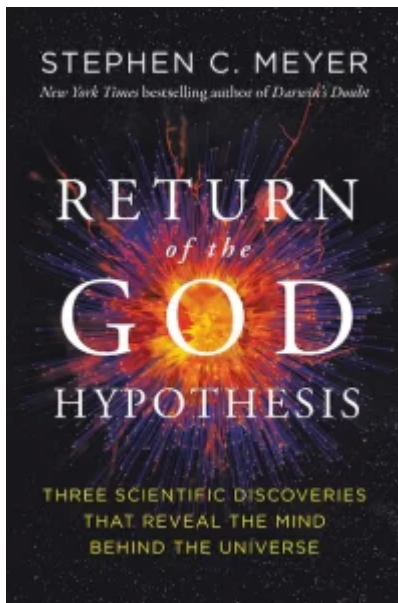
# 'Return of the God Hypothesis' for Regular People

Dr. Ray Bohlin



*Dr. Ray Bohlin provides an overview of Stephen Meyer's book Return of the God Hypothesis, looking at how recent scientific discoveries provide evidence for an intelligent creator.*

## Was There a God Hypothesis Prior to Scientific Materialism of Today?



In this article I give an overview of Stephen Meyer's ***Return of The God Hypothesis: Three Scientific Discoveries that Reveal the Mind Behind the Universe*** [\[1\]](#). The three discoveries are first, the discovery in the 20th century of the Big Bang Model for the origin of the universe, second, the continuing discovery of the extreme fine-tuning of a universe that is friendly toward life, and third, the grand amount of genetic and cellular information needed for the origin of the first life and the Cambrian Explosion, where nearly all animal phyla suddenly appear with no ancestors.

But we need to cover a little history first. Meyer's title is "Return of the God Hypothesis." This implies that there was previously an accepted "God Hypothesis" in science. Then it was lost, and the time and evidence are right for that God Hypothesis to return. Early, Meyer quotes Richard Dawkins, "The universe we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but blind pitiless indifference." [{2}](#) So according to Dawkins, science has shown God to be superfluous.



This has been the position of most scientists since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when two authors detailed a long-standing warfare between science and religion. Most of the scientific community followed along to the present day.

But Meyer goes on to document that most if not all historians of science today agree that the Christian worldview greatly influenced, some say was even necessary for, the rise of modern science. Three key Christian concepts were, first, God's ability to choose what kind of universe He wanted to create. That meant that we can't just reason what nature *should* be like, we had to *discover* it. Second, nature is intelligible. Humans, being created in the image of God, could discover how nature operates (Romans 1:18-20). And last, human fallibility. Humans are sinful; therefore, one man's conclusions about the operation of nature must be subject to review of other scientists to ensure they are accurate. Christianity is the only worldview capable of developing modern science. [{3}](#)

So, what happened? Well, the Enlightenment happened where philosophers began to think only human reason is necessary or even proper to use in discovering the nature of humanity and nature around us. In the next section, I begin to investigate the three scientific discoveries that warrant a return of the God hypothesis.

## Scientific Discovery #1: The Big Bang

The subtitle of Stephen Meyer's book, *Return of the God Hypothesis is "Three Scientific Discoveries That Reveal the Mind Behind the Universe."* Now we will look at the first of these discoveries, the Big Bang.

First, I know that some of our readers don't accept the concept of the Big Bang since they are convinced that our universe is much younger than 13.7 billion years. I understand your position, [please read my article "Christian Views of Science and Earth History at [probe.org/christian-views-of-science-and-earth-history/](http://probe.org/christian-views-of-science-and-earth-history/)] but let's look at this then as an argument you can use with an atheist to show that his own dating of the universe and the Big Bang requires a Mind.

In the early 20th century, scientists like Edwin Hubble began to observe that the universe was not static as previously accepted, but was actually expanding. It took several lines of evidence, more powerful instruments, and many astronomers and mathematicians to come to this conclusion. The novel result was thinking about running the clock backwards. If the universe is expanding now, if you go back in time the universe gets smaller and smaller. Eventually you get to a point where they say the universe was contained in a "particle" that was infinitely dense and occupied no space.

We know now the universe had a beginning. Astronomers and cosmologists had assumed the universe was static and existed for eternity. This conclusion was disturbing to some astronomers. Some rejected the Big Bang for philosophical reasons not scientific. Mathematician Sir Arthur Eddington said,

"Philosophically, the notion of a beginning is repugnant to me. . . I should like to find a genuine loophole." {4} "We [must] allow evolution an infinite time to get started." {5}

Edmund Whitaker wrote what many were thinking: "It is simpler to postulate creation ex nihilo—divine will constituting nature out of nothingness." {6}

And finally, Robert Jastrow wrote, “For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.” {7} So, God creating matter and energy out of nothing explains the Big Bang, where any naturalistic idea simply cannot explain the evidence.

## **Scientific Discovery #2: The Fine-tuning of the Universe for Life**

Let us now turn our attention to the second of the discoveries in Stephen Meyer’s book, the fine-tuning of the universe for life.

This has also been referred to as the “Goldilocks Universe,” meaning a lot of things turned out to be just right for the universe to be friendly to life. For instance, you may be aware that there are four fundamental forces in the universe: gravity, electromagnetism, and the strong and weak nuclear forces. Each of these forces is expressed as an equation that contains a unique constant, and each one could have had a range of values at the Big Bang.

Meyer reveals that the gravitational constant alone is fine-tuned to  $1/10^{35}$ —that’s one chance in 100 billion trillion trillion. The other three constants are also fine-tuned, but even further, the constants are also fine-tuned in relation to each other. This adds another number of at least 1 part in  $10^{50}$ .

Meyer had the opportunity to hear Sir John Polkinghorne at Cambridge during his doctoral work in the history and philosophy of science. Polkinghorne used an illustration of a universe generating machine with numerous dials and adjustable sliders, each representing one of the many cosmological fine-tuning parameters.

Any slight change in the dials and adjusters of these parameters would render a universe hostile to life in any form. Polkinghorne would later say in an interview that a theistic designer provided a much better explanation than any materialistic hypothesis.[{8}](#)

Later, Meyer shows that including entities such as entropy and black holes, the odds of generating a life friendly universe are in this context 1 part in 10 to the power of 1 followed by 122 zeroes.[{9}](#) It would take several lines to write this number. This is an insanely impossible number to be arrived at by chance.

Nobel-Prize-winning physicist Charles Townes said, “Intelligent design as one sees it from a scientific point of view, seems to be quite real. This is a very special universe: it’s remarkable that it came out just this way.”[{10}](#) This intelligence is perfectly consistent with the God of the Bible.

## **Scientific Discovery #3: Genetic Information for the First Cell**

In this section I’m discussing the third scientific discovery; the need for complex specified genetic information for the first cell and new groups of organisms throughout time.

In Darwin’s time, the first microscopes were being used and cells could be seen. Of course, scientists understood little of what they were seeing. Most of the cell appeared to be filled with something called protoplasm, a jelly-like substance that was thought to be easily derived from combining just a few substances. I’ve often said that if Darwin knew of the amazing complexity and the need for information storage, processing and regulation, evolution would have never been offered as a chance process.

Now we understand that the need for information to compose the first living, growing, and reproducing cell, is enormous. The first cell needed DNA to store

information, specific proteins and RNA to produce additional proteins for the cell to function, and a controlled means to copy DNA accurately.

For instance, life uses 20 different amino acids to link together to form proteins, the workhorses of the cell. The number of combinations of two amino acids is 400. A four amino acid stretch has 160,000 different combinations. A small protein of “just” 150 amino acids has  $10^{195}$  possible combinations. But how many of these could be a protein with some function? Just one in every  $10^{77}$  sequences.

But also, new groups of organisms appear suddenly throughout the fossil record. Nearly all large groups of animals, or phyla, appear in the Cambrian explosion. Animal and plant phyla rapidly diversified in at least 13 more explosions within phyla and classes into new classes, orders and families with no precursors, from flowering plants and winged insects to mammals and birds. All these explosions would require massive amounts of new genetic and developmental information.

The evidence supports the need for an intelligent designing mind to create all the needed information. Minds create information all the time. Natural processes simply can't do it.

## Do These Three Evidences Point to Theism?

The three discoveries discussed in Stephen Meyer's book, *Return of the God Hypothesis: Three Scientific Discoveries that Reveal the Mind Behind the Universe* are the Big Bang, the extreme fine-tuning of the laws of physics to provide a life-friendly universe, and the necessary complex and specified information for the origin of life and the progression of complex life-forms through the fossil record.

But where does that leave us? Do these discoveries warrant a return of the God Hypothesis? Meyer examines four different worldviews to ask, would the universe

we have, be expected by any of these worldviews? He uses a scientific approach called “the inference to the best explanation.”

So, given a universe that is not only friendly toward life but contains living organisms, which worldview would best explain this universe? He begins with scientific materialism. Materialism has no explanation for the beginning of the universe. There was no matter or energy before the beginning, so matter and energy cannot account for the beginning of the universe. Moreover, for the origin of complex specified information needed for life, naturalism has no answer. In fact, only theism posits an entity, God, that has the causal power to produce genetic information.

Let’s move to pantheism. Pantheism does not propose a personal God but an impersonal god. This “god” is one and the same with nature. Then pantheism suffers the same fate as naturalism in that the beginning can’t be explained by what doesn’t exist yet, matter and energy.

But what about theism and deism? To explain the notion of a beginning, an entity outside the universe is required. Both theism and deism propose a transcendent, intelligent agent, God. Both can explain the beginning and the fine-tuning. But what about the appearance of complex specified genetic information on the earth? Deism and many forms of theistic evolution require a front-loaded beginning: all the information for life was present at the beginning and natural laws took over from there—God did not intervene. But how was this information retained over billions of years until life arose on earth? And natural laws simply can’t produce complex specified information. Deism and theistic evolution won’t work. Only theism remains.

On pg. 298, Meyer states, “As one surveys several classes of evidence from the natural sciences—cosmology, astronomy, physics, biochemistry, molecular biology, and paleontology—the God Hypothesis emerges as an explanation with unique scope and power. Theism explains an ensemble of metaphysically

significant events in the history of the universe and life more simply, more adequately, and more comprehensively than major competing metaphysical systems.”

## Notes

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3. *The Soul of Science: Christian Faith and Natural Philosophy* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1994) by Nancy Pearcey and Charles Thaxton.
4. Arthur Eddington, “The End of the World: From the Standpoint of Mathematical Physics” *Nature*, vol. 127 (1931) p. 450.
5. Arthur S. Eddington, “On the Instability of Einstein’s Spherical World,” *Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society* 90 (May 1930): 672. Quoted in Hugh Ross, *A Matter of Days: Resolving a Creation Controversy* (Kindle Locations 484-485). RTB Press. Kindle Edition.
6. Cited in Robert Jastrow, 1978. *God and the Astronomers*. New York, W.W. Norton, p. 111-12.
7. Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers*. p. 113-114, 116.
8. *Return of the God Hypothesis*, p. 143-144.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
10. Bonnie Azab Powell, “‘Explore as Much as We Can’: Nobel Prize Winner Charles Townes on Evolution, Intelligent Design, and the Meaning of Life,” *UC Berkeley NewsCenter*, June 17, 2005, [www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2005/06/17\\_townes.shtml](http://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2005/06/17_townes.shtml). Cited in Meyer, *Return of the God Hypothesis*, p. 146.



# Atheist Myths and Scientism

Steve Cable



*Steve Cable exposes some atheist myths and the false ideology of scientism, all designed to destroy people's faith.*

## A Two-Pronged Attack Against Christianity



Atheist attacks against American Christianity are gaining more traction in our society. Their success can be readily seen in the growth of the number of American young adults who do not profess to be Christians. Tracking recent trends, around 50% of American Millennials fall in this category, with most of those identifying as atheist, agnostic or nothing in particular. More identify as nothing in particular than as atheist, but the atheist attacks certainly have a role to play in their ambivalent feelings about Christianity.

What have atheists done to create a cultural milieu that is drawing more and more young Americans away from Christianity? In this article, we will focus on

two prominent prongs of the attack against Christianity. Those prongs are:

1. Fabricating myths around the premise that Christianity and modern science are enemies of one another and have been so since the advent of modern science, and
2. Promoting the philosophy of scientism as the only way to view science.

First, the myths are an attempt to cause people to believe that the Christian church and a Christian worldview were and are anti-science. They want us to believe that the findings of science are counter to the make-believe teachings of Christianity and the Bible. They want us to look back at history and believe that the church was actively opposing and trying to suppress scientific knowledge. As Michael Keas tells us in his 2019 book *Unbelievable*, “These stories are nothing but myths. And yet some leading scientists . . . offer these stories as unassailable truth. These myths make their way into science textbooks . . . (and) enter into popular culture, whereby the myths pass as accepted wisdom.” [\[1\]](#)

However, many historians and philosophers have correctly pointed out that the Christian worldview of an orderly universe created by an involved God produced the mindset that gave birth to the scientific revolution. In his book *How the West Won*, sociologist Rodney Stark states, “Christianity was essential to the rise of science, which is why science was a purely Western phenomenon . . . science only arose in Christian Europe because only medieval Europeans believed that science was possible and desirable. And the basis of their belief was their image of God and his creation.” [\[2\]](#) In this article, we consider the key figures who propagated this myth and some of the falsified stories they have foisted upon us.

Second, they want us to accept scientism as the only valid way to view the role of science in our understanding of the universe. What is scientism? In his 2018 book *Scientism and Secularism*, professor of philosophy J. P. Moreland defines it this way: “Scientism is the view that the hard sciences provide the only genuine knowledge of reality. . . . What is crucial to scientism is . . . the thought that the

scientific is much more valuable than the non-scientific. . . . When you have competing knowledge claims from different sources, the scientific will always trump the non-scientific.”[\[3\]](#)

But scientism “is not a doctrine of science; rather it is a doctrine of philosophy . . . (In fact,) scientism distorts science.”[\[4\]](#) This philosophical doctrine came into favor among the public not because of scientific results, but rather as the result of proponents presenting it in popular ways as if it were the undisputable truth. As Moreland points out, “It is not even a friend of science but rather its enemy.”[\[5\]](#)

## Myths about Christianity and Science

Atheists want to create stories to demonstrate that Christians are and have been the enemies of scientific exploration and discovery. Why this drive to recreate the past? They want to encourage people to turn away from Christianity as an enemy of science and weaken the faith of believers.

As Michael Keas makes evident in *Unbelievable*, this thinking is not based on reality. Instead, historical myths have been created to bolster their position either as a result of ignorance of the actual history or intentional deceit. After creating these myths, they use the educational system and mass media to ingrain these myths into the thinking of the masses.

Keas specifically looks at seven myths used for this purpose which we find embedded in our textbooks and proclaimed by popular television programs. To understand the nature of these myths, let’s consider two of the ones discussed by Keas.

Many of you learned of the Dark Ages, a period of time between A.D. 500 and 1500 where textbooks have claimed that science and the arts were stifled by the control of the church which opposed scientific understanding. In truth, this view is not supported by historical evaluations of that time. As reported in Stark’s

revealing book, *How the West Won*, “Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the Dark Ages myth is that it was imposed on what was actually “one of the great innovative eras of mankind.” During this period technology was developed and put into use on a scale no civilization had previously known.[{6}](#) Keas found that this myth first appeared in textbooks in the 1800s but did not surface with an anti-Christian slant until the 1960s. Carl Sagan, and later Neal deGrasse Tyson, would help promulgate this myth on television through their *Cosmos* series.

Another myth exploded by Keas is that “Copernicus demoted humans from the privileged ‘center of the universe’ and thereby challenged religious doctrines about human importance.”[{7}](#) In fact, Copernicus as a Christian did not consider his discovery that the earth orbited the sun a demotion for earth or humans. What Copernicus saw as unveiling the mysteries of God’s creation over time began to be pictured as a great humiliation for Christians. In the 1950s some scientific writers began using the term “the Copernican principle” to refer to the idea “that the Earth is not in a central, specially favored position”[{8}](#) in the cosmos. As one Harvard professor has noted, “This is the principle of mediocrity, and Copernicus would have been shocked to find his name associated with it.”[{9}](#)

Keas also documents how this atheist strategy also pretends that many early scientists were not Christians. Johannes Kepler, known for his discovery of the three laws of planetary motion, is cited by Sagan in *Cosmos* as someone who “despaired of ever attaining salvation,”[{10}](#) implying that Kepler always felt this way. Sagan leads one to believe that in his astronomical discoveries Kepler was somehow freed from this concern. Yet from Kepler’s own writing it is very clear that he was a Christian, telling people shortly before his death that he was saved “solely by the merit of our savior Jesus Christ.” And speaking of his scientific endeavors he wrote, “God wanted us to recognize them [i.e. mathematical natural laws] by creating us after his own image so that we could share in his own thoughts.”[{11}](#)

Much of the reported relationship between science and Christianity is a myth

made up to strengthen the atheist position that science repudiates Christianity and makes it superfluous and dangerous in today's enlightened world. Nothing could be further from the truth, as a Christian worldview was foundational for the development and application of the scientific method.

## Methodological Naturalism: A Farce

What about the prevalence of scientism, a belief system claiming that the hard sciences provide the only genuine knowledge of reality?

When considered carefully, the whole concept of scientism is a farce. Why? Because as philosopher J. P. Moreland points out, "Strong scientism is a philosophical assertion that claims that philosophical assertions are neither true nor can be known; only scientific assertions can be true and known."[{12}](#) So the premise is self-refuting. They are saying that only scientific facts can be objectively true. Thus, the statement that only scientific facts can be true must be false because it is a philosophical assertion, not a scientific fact.

Another example of the faulty philosophy behind scientism comes in their insistence on adopting methodological naturalism as a criterion for science. Methodological naturalism is "the idea that, while doing science, one must seek only natural causes or explanations for scientific data."[{13}](#) This idea immediately demotes science from being the search for the truth about observable items in this universe to being the search for the most plausible natural cause no matter how implausible it may be.

Although they appear to be unsure as to whether to apply the concept uniformly to all forms of science, its proponents are sure that it definitely should be applied to the field of evolutionary science. They make the *a priori* assumption that life as we know it originated and developed by strictly impersonal, unintelligent forces. No intelligence can be allowed to enter the process in any way. This approach to trying to understand the current state of life on earth is certainly an interesting

exercise leading to a multitude of theories and untestable speculations. It is a challenging mental exercise and is valuable as such. However, scientism does not stop there. They declare that their unsupported (and I would say unsupportable) theories **must be the truth** about our origins, at least until replaced by another strictly naturalistic theory.

This approach seems to be an odd (and unfruitful) way to go after the truth due to at least three reasons. First, many other areas of science which include intelligent agents in their hypotheses are respected and their results generally accepted, common examples being archaeology and forensic science. Second, the current state of evolutionary science primarily appears to be tearing holes in prior theories, e.g. Darwinian evolution, rather than closing in on a plausible explanation. And, third, scientists are continuing to find evidence supporting a hypothesis that intelligent actions were involved in the formulation of life on earth.

If the sum of the available evidence is more directly explained by the involvement of some intelligent agent, then it would be reasonable to accept that potential explanation as the leading contender for the truth until some other answer is developed that is more closely supported by the available evidence. This is the attitude embraced by the intelligent design community. They embrace it because so much of the evidence supports it, including

1. the inability of other hypothesis to account for the first appearance of life,
2. the complexity of the simplest life forms with no chain of less complex forms leading up to them,
3. the relatively sudden appearance of all types of life forms in the fossil record,
4. the fine tuning of the parameters of the universe to support life on earth,
- and
5. the emergence of consciousness within humans.

In contrast, those supporting theistic evolution appear to do so in order to conform to the methodological naturalism of their peers. They claim to believe that God does intervene in nature through acts such as the miracles of Jesus and His resurrection. But they claim that God did not intervene in the processes leading up to the appearance of mankind on this planet. In my opinion, they take this stance not because the evidence demands it, but because methodological naturalism does not allow it. As Moreland opines, “Methodological naturalism is *one bad way* to put science and Christianity together.” [{14}](#)

## Things Science Cannot Explain / God of the Gaps

As we have seen, scientism is a philosophy that says the only real knowledge to be found is through application of the hard sciences and that no intelligence can be involved in any of our hypotheses. So, they believe hard science must be capable of explaining everything (even if it currently doesn't).

In this section we will consider some very important things that science cannot now nor ever be able to explain. In his book, *Scientism and Secularism*, J. P. Moreland lists five such things for us.

**First, the origin of the universe** cannot be explained by science. Why? Science has been able to identify that the universe most likely had a beginning point. But as Moreland points out, “Science can provide evidence that the universe had a beginning; it cannot, even in principle, explain that beginning; that is, it cannot say what caused it. . . No real thing can pop into existence from nothing.” [{15}](#) He points out three specific logical reasons science cannot address this issue:

1. A scientific explanation cannot be used to explain the universe because scientific explanations presuppose the universe.
2. Science cannot explain the origin of time and without time no explanation can be considered.

3. Coming-into-existence is not a process which can be reviewed and explained because it is an instantaneous event. Something either does or does not exist.

**Second, the origin of the fundamental laws of nature.** All scientific explanations presuppose these laws. We can conceive of a universe where these laws might be different resulting in a different reality, but we cannot explain how our universe came into being with the laws we see active around us.

**Third, the fine-tuning of the universe** to support life. As far as science is concerned the parameters of the forces within this universe can be observed but we cannot know what caused them to assume the values they do. However, in recent years it has been discovered that our universe “is a razor’s edge of precisely balanced life permitting conditions.” [{16}](#) Over one hundred parameters of this universe, such as the force of gravity, the charge of an electron, the rate of expansion of the universe, etc., must be precisely balanced or there could be no life in the universe. Science cannot answer the question of why our universe can support life.

**Fourth, the origin of consciousness.** In this context consciousness is the ability to be aware of oneself and entertain thoughts about things which are outside of oneself and possibly outside of one’s experience. From a naturalist point of view, “the appearance of mind is utterly unpredictable and inexplicable.” [{17}](#) However, God may choose to create conscious beings; beings that are capable of asking about and discovering the works of their creator.

**Fifth, the existence of moral laws.** As the late atheist philosopher Mackie admitted, the emergence of moral properties would constitute a refutation of naturalism and evidence for theism: “Moral properties constitute so odd a cluster of properties and relations that they are most unlikely to have arisen in the ordinary course of events without an all-powerful god to create them.” [{18}](#)

These five important questions can never be answered if scientism’s flawed



premise were true. However, Christian theism answers each of these questions and those answers are true if God is the real creator of the universe.

## **Integrating Christianity and Science**

Scientism claims that you cannot integrate Christianity and science. Instead, they claim all theology is nonsense and only science exists to give us the truth. As Moreland points out, “One of the effects of scientism, then, is making the ridicule of Christianity’s truth claims more common and acceptable (which is one of scientism’s goals).” [{19}](#)

If this view is clearly wrong, how should we as Christians view science and its relationship with Christianity and the Bible? First, we need to understand that the topics addressed by science are in most cases peripheral to the topics covered in the Bible. The Bible is primarily concerned with God’s efforts to restore people from their state as enemies of God back into eternal fellowship with Him.

One area of significant interaction is the question of how this universe came to exist in its current state. How one views that interaction (i.e. as adversarial or as complementary) depends on whether they are clinging to the unsupported myth of unguided evolution or to the new science of intelligent design. As Moreland states, “Science has done more to confirm the Christian God’s existence than to undermine it, and science has provided little or no evidence against belief of theism. Science has, however, raised challenges to various biblical texts, and Christians need to take those challenges seriously.” [{20}](#)

Moreland suggests there are five ways to relate issues in science and Christian philosophy. Let’s consider two of those methods. One is the complementarity model. In this model, two disciplines are addressing the same object or feature but from different, essentially non-overlapping perspectives. “Neither one purports to tell the whole story, but both make true claims about reality.” [{21}](#) This is the model used by advocates of theistic evolution who take as gospel the

latest claims of evolutionary science while saying of course God kicked off the whole process including us in His plan for the universe.

Another way to interact is called the direct interaction model. In this model, theories from theology and from science may directly interact with one another on some topic, either positively or negatively. One area might raise rational difficulties for the other. This approach has the most potential for bringing information from different fields together into a fuller picture of truth. Intelligent design is an area where this model is applied as it questions the validity of eliminating intelligence from the options considered in understanding the development of life on earth.

Since scientism swears that science is the only source of truth, even when scientists cannot agree as to what that scientific truth is, they want to discount inputs from any other source no matter how helpful. So the direct interaction model is a difficult road to take. What are the rational criteria for going against the experts? Moreland suggests there are four criteria for Christian theologians to decide to take this road.

1. Make sure there is not a reasonable interpretation of the Bible that resolves the tension.
2. There is a band of academically qualified scholars who are unified in rejecting the view held by a majority of the relevant experts. In this way, we know that there are people who are familiar with the details of the majority view, who do not believe that it is true.
3. There are good non-rational explanations for why the expert majority holds the problematic view. For historical, sociological, or theological reasons, the majority is not ready to abandon their position rather than because their evidence is overwhelming. "For example, the shift from creationism to Darwinism was primarily, though not exclusively, a shift in philosophy of science." [\[22\]](#)

Given the large amount of evidential support for a Christian worldview, any view that is counter to central components of a Christian worldview should be rejected precisely for that reason. Any view meeting the first three criteria that also attempts to undermine key parts of a Christian worldview will be overwhelmed by the significant rational support for a Christian worldview.

As followers of the God of real truth, Christians need to realize that the so-called truths being taught to justify science over theology are in fact myths and/or self-refuting statements. Every Christian needs to be able to address these fallacies in today's popular science culture. Equip your young adults with this understanding and more by attending our summer event called Mind Games Camp. More information can be found at [probe.org/mindgames](http://probe.org/mindgames).

## Notes

1. Michael Keas, *Unbelievable: 7 Myths About the History and Future of Science and Religion*, ISI Books, 2019, 2.
2. Rodney Stark, *How the West Won: The Neglected Story of the Triumph of Modernity*, ISI Books, 2014 p. 304, 315.
3. J. P. Moreland, *Scientism and Secularism: Learning to Respond to a Dangerous Ideology*, Crossway, 2018, 26 and 29.
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5. Ibid., p. 55.
6. Stark, p. 76.
7. Keas, p. 4 and Chapter 6.
8. Herman Bondi, *Cosmology*, Cambridge University Press, 1952.
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10. Sagan, 1980 *Cosmos* TV series, episode 3.
11. Kepler, letter to Herwart von Hohenburg, April 9/10, 1599.
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17. Ibid., p. 151.
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20. Ibid., p.174.
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# “What Is the Prevailing Evolutionary Theory for the Origin of the Universe?”

Dr. Ray Bohlin

**What is the prevailing evolutionary theory for the origin of the universe? I would also like to know your views on the “Gap Theory.”**

The prevailing theory for the origin of the universe is the Big Bang Theory which suggests that the universe began as a particle that was infinitely dense and occupied no space. This particle came into existence essentially from nothing (actually a quantum fluctuation from nothing to something), and immediately exploded, thus beginning a process that led to the universe as we see it today. This happened approximately 12-13 billion years ago.

Astronomers, cosmologists, and astrophysicists alike will admit they have a

problem accounting for the origin of the initial particle. How does something come from nothing? The quantum fluctuation idea is a dead end since quantum physics is a property of the current universe. If there was no universe prior to the existence of the particle, how do we know that a quantum fluctuation was even possible? You must have a universe first!

In addition, the mechanistic process following the explosion that led to our current universe as we see it has difficulty explaining the many finely tuned characteristics of this universe seemingly designed for life with no purpose or design. How does a mechanistic process accomplish this? [Some Christians](#) believe that God ordered the initial particle in such a way to allow these finely tuned parameters to arise by His design by a seemingly mechanistic but preordained process. However, others like me see these properties requiring God's intimate involvement and perhaps even intervention. The other view seems more deistic (a distant God who wound up the universe initially and then left it alone) than theistic. It also seems difficult to reconcile Romans 1:20 where we are told we are without excuse of God's existence by simply observing what has been made. If it all looks like a mechanistic process, how are we without excuse?

The gap theory has been largely rejected by evangelical scholars since it requires a reading of Genesis 1:1-1:2 that seems to be ruled out by the grammatical construction of the sentence. The Gap Theory usually suggests that the earth BECAME formless and void, suggesting that God's original creation was marred (perhaps by the fall of Satan) and then God recreated it in six literal days. However, while the verb *was* is sometime translated as *became*, the Hebrew grammar of the sentence does not allow it in this case. Therefore the traditional translation that the earth WAS formless and void is preferred.

Hope this helps.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, PhD

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# “Is Dark Matter Another Attack on God?”

Dr. Ray Bohlin

**I was reading an article about experiments with dark matter in a very deep underground lab in South Dakota. What is dark matter and is this another secular atheist way to circumvent God?**

The simple answer is that dark matter is material in space that cannot be directly detected with telescopes because it does not emit any type of radiation. Ordinary dark matter is made up of cold gas, stars with so little mass that they never ignite nuclear fusion, small rocks, etc. Even though astronomers cannot directly see dark matter, they can detect its presence through its effects, e.g. impact on movement of galaxies. (See the excerpt from an article by Dr. David Rogstad below for more information on this.) In attempting to measure the amount of dark matter required to create the observed effects, astronomers have developed a theory that there are two types of dark matter: ordinary dark matter and exotic dark matter. Exotic dark matter only weakly interacts with light and ordinary matter, so it is different than the material we normally deal with on earth. I would guess the experiments you were reading about were dealing with the study of exotic dark matter.

Based on this definition, the existence of dark matter does not directly bear on the existence of God. I have not seen any arguments from atheists that point to dark matter as supporting evidence for their claims. Given that dark matter in space can only be detected through very sophisticated, expensive methods, I would not expect the Bible to talk about it directly, and it does not. Of course, the Bible makes it clear that “For by Him [Jesus Christ] all things were created, both in the

heavens and on earth, visible and invisible” (Col. 1:16). No matter how you define dark matter, it is covered by this verse.

Going a little deeper, it is true that some (but not all) of the ways used to estimate the amount of dark matter in the universe assume that the universe has been expanding for billions of years. Some Christian scientists, such as those at Reasons to Believe, who promote a Biblical creation model based on a 13.7 billion-year-old universe, point out that the existence of dark matter in just the right quantities is further evidence that our earth is fine tuned for life to such a degree that it could only be through the work of a transcendent, all powerful, intelligent creator. RTB has a number of articles on dark matter which you can see at [www.reasons.org/search/node/?keys=%22dark+Matter%22](http://www.reasons.org/search/node/?keys=%22dark+Matter%22).

If you are interested in understanding the different Christian perspectives on the origins of the universe, check out our Faith and Science section at [www.probe.org](http://www.probe.org); in particular you may be interested in “Christian Views of Science and Earth History” at [www.probe.org/christian-views-of-science-and-earth-history](http://www.probe.org/christian-views-of-science-and-earth-history)

I hope this answer is helpful for you.

God bless,  
Steve Cable

Excerpt from Dr. David Rogstad on history of dark matter: “Based on his observation that clusters of galaxies do not have enough matter to remain gravitationally bound, Fritz Zwicky proposed (in 1933) the existence of dark matter to provide the needed gravity. Since then, there has been a growing body of supporting evidence, including flat rotation curves in large spiral galaxies, larger-than-expected velocity dispersion in elliptical galaxies, and certain measured characteristics of the cosmic microwave background, all of which require the presence of dark matter for their explanation.”  
[[www.reasons.org/filling-gap](http://www.reasons.org/filling-gap)]



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