

Atheism and Agnosticism

Carl Sagan (1934-1996), an American astronomer and author stated in his 1980 book *Cosmos*, "The Cosmos is all there is, all there was, and all there will ever be."¹

This statement embodies what the atheist believes, namely that the universe is eternal and if it is not eternal, then it came to be "out of nothing and by nothing."²

Today, there seems to be a much intensified onslaught from the "new atheists", natural evolutionist (naturalism) and the secular humanist (humanism) movements. Books and movies with the sole purpose of pushing these agendas are being produced at an alarming rate.

For example, books such as *The God Delusion* by Richard Dawkins, *God is not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything* by Christopher Hitchens and a *Letter to a Christian Nation* by Sam Harris, three prominent atheists as well as the movie *The Golden Compass* based on a trilogy by atheist Phillip Pullman which came out in December 2007.

What we believe matters. What we believe in regards to where we came from does impact the way we live and for what we live for.

If we believe that God does not exist, and secular humanism is correct in the respect that it is the "only worldview compatible with science's growing knowledge of the real world and the laws of nature"³, then what we do here and now ultimately does not matter one way or the other and we might as well "eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

The *Humanist Manifesto II*, written in 1973, is one of many documents that lay out what secular humanists believe. It states that "No deity will save us; we must save ourselves..." and "We are responsible for what we are and for what we will be..." and "We find insufficient evidence for belief in the existence of a supernatural; it is either meaningless or irrelevant to the

question of the survival and fulfillment of the human race. As nontheists, we begin with humans not God, nature not deity.”

Although the secular humanist would state that there is no God and only science can answer questions regarding human kind’s existence, they, by many accounts, still uphold the value of humanity and culture.

Many atheists “earnestly pursue both the arts and the sciences and express deep concern in ethical issues. Most atheists believe that racism, hatred, and bigotry are wrong. Most atheists commend freedom and tolerance and have other positive moral values.”⁴

Atheism

Atheism comes from two Greek words. The word *a* meaning “not or no” and *theos* meaning “god” and thus *atheism* means “no God.”

It’s the belief that God does not exist in any shape or form and that it’s impossible to know anything that cannot be proven scientifically.

The view that God cannot be proven scientifically is the essence that atheism is a valid worldview.

The atheist says that nothing exists outside of the known physical universe.

Agnosticism

Agnosticism also comes from two Greek words. Again, *a* meaning “not or no” and *gnosis* meaning “knowledge or known” and thus *agnostic* means “no knowledge.”

Agnosticism was coined by T.H. Huxley (1825-1895) to represent his belief that nothing can be known about the existence of God, spirits, or the supernatural...He said:

- “It is wrong for man to say that he is certain of the objective truth of any proposition unless he can produce evidence which logically justifies that certainty. This is what agnosticism is about.”⁵

Agnosticism asserts that definite knowledge about God is unattainable. But the assertion, "No one can really know anything for sure about God," is also a definitive statement regarding what one knows about God.⁶

Phillip Johnson, author of *Darwin on Trial* and *Defeating Darwinism* said:

- "One who claims to be a skeptic of one set of beliefs is actually a true believer in another set of beliefs."⁷

In other words, atheism and agnosticism are belief systems in and of themselves; they are worldviews just like Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, etc.

It's teachings like this that we, as Christians, need to defend against since there are literally millions of people out there buying into the concepts propagated by atheism.

I have taken some of the most notable questions posed by unbelievers that Ron Rhodes, in his book *Answering the Objections of Atheists, Agnostics & Skeptics*, addresses and I'll be using the acronym B.L.I.N.D. to help us better remember and defend against the worldview of Atheism and better equip us to share what the Bible teaches.

1. **B**ibles Reliability
2. **L**aw and Morality
3. **I**ntelligent Design
4. **N**atural Evil, Moral Evil and God
5. **D**arwinian Evolutions Flawed Premise

The first letter in the acronym of **B.L.I.N.D** is **B**, the *Bibles Reliability*.

1. Bibles Reliability

Atheists, agnostics and skeptics will claim that the Bible is an unreliable document, full of fables and old wives tales. They will argue that since we don't have the original documents, we cannot know what was originally

written and whether anything written in it, including what we read of Jesus is actually true.

How can we possibly rely on the oral tradition, from which the New Testament originated when it was years before they were finally written down?

The atheist would argue that the Bible is "at best irrelevant, possibly heavily rewritten, and at worst is subversive and dangerous."⁸

Since it's full of supposed miracles and cannot be trusted, atheists argue that only scientific proofs validate truth and life as we know it.

1. The oral tradition from which the New Testament was written was unreliable.

It should be pointed out that the Jewish people as a whole took oral tradition very seriously.

It can be conceded that a person's memory could become faulty, but oral tradition was handed down as a community practice collectively to all believers.

Not only was oral tradition a big part of communication but God also told men to write down what He had told them:

- See Deuteronomy 31:24-26; Joshua 1:8; 24:26; Jeremiah 36:28; Isaiah 8:1; Habakkuk 2:2.

In the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 contains one of the earliest creeds of Christianity:

- 1 Corinthians 15:1-5 says, "Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you – unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was

buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.”

It is believed, and with good reason, that this creed developed within five years of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- “In fact, many critical scholars hold that Paul received it from the disciples Peter and James while visiting them in Jerusalem three years after his conversion. If so, Paul learned it *within five years of Jesus’ crucifixion* and from the disciples themselves.”⁹ (emphasis added)

Also, the gospels Matthew and John were written by the disciples of Jesus, while Mark was written by Peter’s eyewitness accounts and Luke was written by Paul’s and possibly Mary and Jesus’ brother James accounts.

2. The gospel writers were biased with theological motives in what they wrote, and hence the New Testament is unreliable.

The Bible is full of ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances. We see people’s faults and all their human frailties, laid out for all to see.

Many of the events are not flattering and even embarrassing to the people in the Bible.

If indeed there was a “theological bent” when writing, surely there would have been an attempt to clean up and sanitize the embarrassing stories we read.

For example, we read of Peter being addressed as “Satan” by Jesus, the disciples scattering like a bunch of faithless cowards when Christ was arrested and then cowering in a room for fear of the Jews, and Thomas’ doubt about the resurrection of Jesus.

Also, if the resurrection of Jesus was a fabricated story, the writers would not have used women as the first people at the tomb given the low place

that women held in the first-century; they would have used men of high reputation to be the first at the tomb to further bolster the resurrection story.

Instead, in 2 Peter 1:16, Peter confirmed that "We did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, *but were eyewitnesses* of His majesty." (emphasis added)

John affirms in 1 John 1:1, "That which was from the beginning, *which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled*, concerning the Word of life."

3. Archaeological evidence is lacking regarding key events found in the Bible.

The truth is that over 25,000 sites of antiquity have been discovered that date back to the Old Testament times.

These sites and findings include:

- Hittite archeology from the time of Abraham (Genesis 23:10-20).
- Abrahams hometown of Ur (Genesis 11:31; 15:7).
- The city of Shechem (Joshua 20:7; 1 Kings 12:25).
- The city of Jericho (Joshua 6).
- Pool at Gibeon (2 Samuel 2:13; Jeremiah 41:12)
- Nazareth, Jesus' hometown (Matthew 2:23, 4:14; Mark 1:9).
- The city of Bethsaida (Matthew 11:21; Luke 10:13).

For years, scholars questioned the existence of Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor who dates back to the time of Jesus (Luke 3:1); they could find no archaeological evidence that he ever existed.

Then in June, 1961 an Italian archaeologist excavating the Roman amphitheatre near Caesarea discovered an inscription in a limestone block that reads "Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea".

The late Nelson Glueck (1900-1971), archaeologist and president of the Jewish Theological Seminary, said, "It can be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a biblical reference.

Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or in exact detail historical statements in the Bible...Proper evaluation of Biblical descriptions has often led to amazing discoveries."¹⁰

4. The Bible is lacking in legitimate extrabiblical support.

There are both Christian and secular writings that are very close to the time of Jesus that provide overwhelming legitimate extrabiblical support.

Christian writers include:

- Polycarp (AD 69-155) a disciple of the apostle John, quotes several gospels and attributes them as the words of Jesus.
- Papias, writing around AD 115-130, who was another "hearer of [the apostle] John" quoted the gospels. He specifically refers to John's Gospel as containing the words of Jesus.¹¹
- Clement of Rome (AD 88-98), writes to the Corinthians and cites part of the gospels and introduces them as the actual words of Jesus.¹²
- We also have the writings of Justin Martyr (AD 100-165), Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, and *The Didache*, dated to the early 2nd century that discusses early Christian life, cites portions of the gospels and refers to them as the words of Jesus.¹³

Non-Christian writings include:

- Josephus (AD 37-100) was a Jewish historian and Roman citizen who witnessed and recorded the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and gives important insight into early Jewish life.

- The Talmud, a collection of rabbinic writings discussing Jewish law and tradition mentions Jesus, although not in flattering light considering it's written from the view point of Orthodox Judaism.
- Pliny the Younger (AD 63-113), a Roman governor who through personal correspondences, recorded the arrests of Christians and how to handle their legal proceedings.¹⁴
- Tacitus (AD 56-117), a Roman historian who recorded the great fire of Rome in AD 64 which Nero blamed on the Christians.

The bottom line is that the extrabiblical evidence, both Christian and secular, corroborates and provides important information regarding the New Testament.

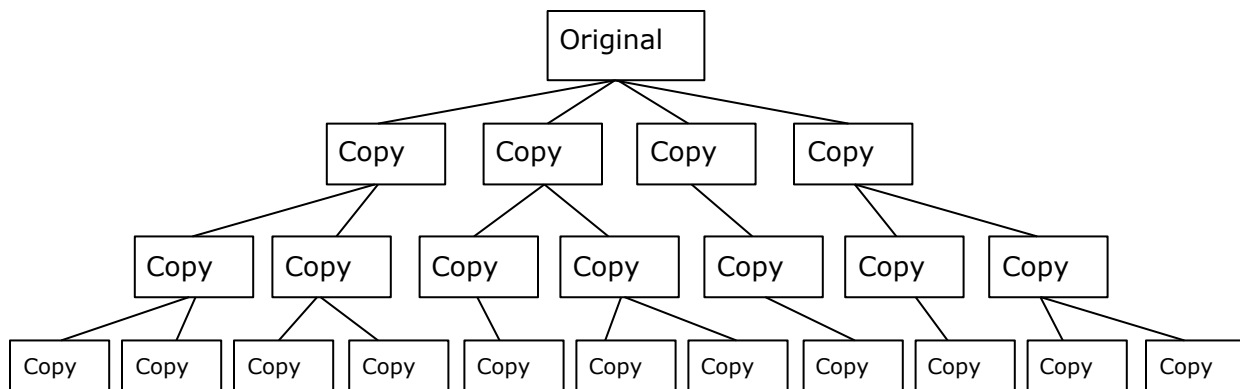
5. There is no good reason to believe that the Bible has been accurately transmitted down through the centuries.

The manuscript evidence we have of the New Testament is so overwhelming, that it's actually a good thing to have so many biblical manuscripts and an "embarrassment of riches."

Altogether, we have available for inspection 24,000+ partial and whole manuscripts and translations, much more than any other work of antiquity and it allows scholars to see where the textual criticisms come from and how to faithfully get back to the original autographs.

Work	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span (Years)	Number of Copies¹⁵
Euripides	450 BC	AD 1000	1500	9
Sophocles	450 BC	AD 1000	1400	193
Catullus	54 BC	AD 1550	1550	3
Homer	900 BC	400 BC	500	643
N.T.	AD 40-100	AD 125	50	24,000+

Since copies of the New Testament are nonlinear, meaning that copies take different paths down the line, not a single line of transmission, we can compare differing paths and see where errors crept in and in doing so, get back to the original autographs that the authors had originally intended.



This nonlinear transmission helps scholars in determining were a variant (see #6) cropped up and thus they can get back to the original autograph.

6. There are many variants in the biblical manuscripts, and hence the Bible is unreliable.

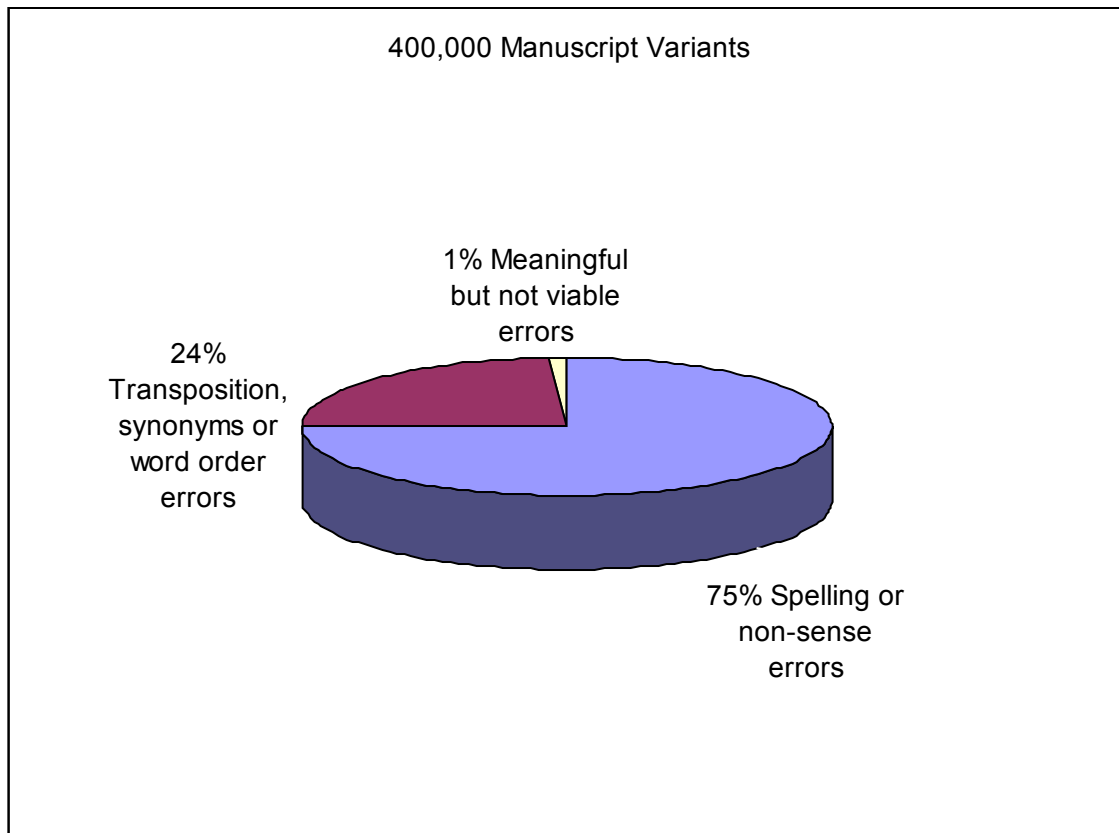
A "variant" is a copyist mistake in a manuscript that has a different reading when compared to another manuscript. The New Testament has about 400,000 "variants."

This large number is gained by counting all the variations in all of the manuscripts...For example, if one slight variation were to occur in 4,000

different manuscripts, this would amount to 4,000 "errors." But this is how one can arrive at the large number of..."errors."¹⁶

- Ron Rhodes says that "...more than 99 percent [of variants] hold virtually no significance whatsoever. Many of these variants involve a missing letter in a word; some involve reversing the order of two words (such as "Christ Jesus" instead of "Jesus Christ"); some may involve the absence of one or more insignificant words...only about 40 of the variants have any real significance – and even then, no doctrine of the Christian faith or any moral commandment is affected by them."¹⁷

Consider that the New Testament has approximately 138,000 words and with 24,000+ partial or complete manuscripts and with a conservative estimate of approximately 1,000,000,000 words with only 400,000 variants, that leaves approximately .04% of the text in error.



We also have approximately one million quotes from the early church fathers that attest to the accuracy of the manuscripts that were passed from church to church.

So rest assured the variants we see in the New Testament are not only miniscule but hold virtually no significance compared to the overwhelming amount of manuscript evidence we have.

The second letter in the acronym of B.L.I.N.D is **L** for *Law and Morality*.

2. Law and Morality

Morality or its root *Moral* according to Merriam-Webster online is:

“of or relating to principles of right and wrong in behavior; expressing or teaching a conception of right behavior; conforming to a standard of right behavior; sanctioned by or operative on one's conscience or ethical judgment; capable of right and wrong action.”

I want you to notice the comparisons to “right and wrong” – another way of saying it is “good or evil”.

The *Moral Law Argument* means we must know what is moral and what is not, to have a base line.

In other words, we need a *moral ruler* or standard to compare, to understand what is actually right and what is actually wrong.

It begins with the concept that we have moral codes and we know the difference between what is right and wrong.

Human beings know that love is good and hate is bad, kindness is good and envy or slander is wrong, telling the truth is a good thing while lying is bad.

The roots for Morality or the *Moral Law Argument* are found in Romans 2:12-16 which speaks to the fact that Gods laws (morality) have been "written in [our] hearts" and our "conscience also bears witness."

The *Moral Law Argument* can be summed up in *two premises* and *one conclusion*:¹⁸

1. All men are conscious of an objective moral law.
2. Moral laws imply a moral Lawgiver.
3. Therefore, there must be a supreme moral Law Giver.

Our conscience tells us these things and again we come back to the *measuring rod* that we cannot know what is evil unless we know that there is good to measure it against.

Whenever we argue over what is right and wrong, we are appealing to some higher law that we assume people are aware of and in order for there to be a higher law means that there must be a *Lawgiver* for it to come from.

An example of the *Moral Law Argument*, that there must be a Lawgiver for there to be a higher law, is seen in even the most remote civilizations where virtues like kindness, bravery, and loyalty and vices like cowardice and greed are universally known.

1. Christians are in no position to criticize the morality of atheists since there are so many moral atrocities recorded in the Bible.

Atheists will point out that the Bible condones morally objective practices such as slavery, condemnation of gays and the oppression of women and thus, cannot be considered a morally trustworthy document.

Slavery

When we think of slavery, we think of it in terms of the last few centuries where skin color and race were, for the most part, the deciding factors. This was not always the case as pointed out by Gotquestions.org:

- "The slavery in the Bible was not based exclusively on race. People were not enslaved because of their nationality or the color of their skin. In Bible times, slavery was more of a social status. People sold themselves as slaves when they could not pay their debts or provide for their family. In New Testament times, sometimes doctors, lawyers, and even politicians were slaves of someone else. Some people actually chose to be slaves so as to have all their needs provided for by their master."¹⁹

The fact is God created *all* human beings in His image (Genesis 1:27) and even though slavery was utilized in Biblical times, the law in the Bible (Exodus 21:2; Leviticus 25:40) demanded that slaves eventually be set free.

Even in New Testament times, slavery was the *de facto* situation of the day and Paul declared that in Christianity, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female" effectively destroying any kind of "social class" because we "are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

The purpose of the Bible as God's Word to us and as a history book is to point the way to salvation and not reform society.

Oppression of Women

It's true that in ancient Jewish times, women were deemed more as property than human beings and thus were often mistreated or looked down upon.

Rabbi Judah, a contemporary of Flavius Josephus (AD 37- 100) stated that, "a man must pronounce three blessings a day: 'Blessed be the Lord who did not make me a heathen; blessed be he who did not make me a woman; blessed be he who did not make me an uneducated person.'"²⁰

We can see several evidences of the low view of women in the first century in the following quotes: ²¹

- "Sooner let the words of the Law be burnt than delivered to women." (Talmud, Sotah 19a)
- "Any evidence that a women [gives] is not valid (to offer), also they are not valid to offer. This is equivalent to saying that one who is Rabbinically accounted a robber is qualified to give the same evidence as a woman." (Talmud, Rosh Hashannah 1:8)

We need to point out to the skeptics that as Christians, we always want to imitate Jesus Christ when it comes to His example regarding women.

- In John 7:53–8:11, we read that Jesus would not let the double standard of the woman be stoned for adultery when the man was not also brought (See Leviticus 20:10).
- Luke 10:38 records that Jesus let a woman sit at His feet, a place usually reserved for male disciples.

Other examples are found in scripture that validate women's value in the kingdom of God.

- Galatians 3:28 says, "...there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
- 1 Peter 3:7 points out that men and women are fellow "heirs together of the grace of life."

Homosexuality

Homosexuality is indeed a hot topic these days.

The Christian needs to point out that God loves everyone in the world (John 3:16) and desires that no one would perish (2 Peter 3:9), but there are some things that go against what God has set up for us in the Scriptures.

From the beginning, *sex* has been *biologically* identified in the Scriptures between one man and one woman.

God created "male and female" in His image (Genesis 1:27) and to go out and "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). This can only happen between a man and a woman.

Genesis 2:24 further elaborates, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

God loves all people (John 3:16; 1 John 4:16) and He does not condone oppression in the form of slavery or the oppression of women or homosexuals.

2. Christians aren't so moral and Atheists certainly are not any less moral than Christians.

It is indeed a sad commentary when Christians live hypocritical lifestyles.

It's sad when we read in a newspaper or hear on the news of a Christian leader who has fallen or stepped down due to sin.

But that does not mean that the historical figure of Jesus or His claims as God or even whether God exists is untrue. It simply points out that we live in a fallen world that has been corrupted by sin.

Christian apologist Kenneth Samples said, "Logically, a Christian's ethical inconsistency (while never to be condoned and understandably disconcerting) has little or no bearing on the objective truth-claims of Christianity."²²

In other words, the truth claims set forth by the Bible are not nullified by what you and I do as Christians. $1+1=2$ even if you were to go out and rob a mathematician and burn his house down – our actions do not nullify truth.

The fact is that all humanity is living in a fallen sin nature as seen in the following verse:

- Romans 3:23 says that "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

The Christian needs to point out yes, we sin and yes sometimes we sin greatly and fall very far, *but our example should be Jesus and His life* and not a man or a woman who has a fallen sin nature. If we place your full trust in a man or a woman – you will eventually be disappointed. Place your trust in God (Psalm 37:3; Proverbs 3:5, 6).

The bottom line is that in order to know what is good and what is evil, we need a standard with which to compare them against.

God and His Word is that standard. But "atheism makes the assumption that there is no authority for rightness or wrongness of human behavior outside of human beings themselves...atheists in general are on record as saying that in matters of human behavior, there are no absolutes of right or wrong at all, no good or evil, other than, at best, a consensus of what is good or bad for a particular society at a particular time."²³

The Bible does not gloss over the sinful nature of humans and as a history book, shows us up close and personal many faults that we as humans have because of the fall and our sin nature.

Moving on to the **I** in the acronym B.L.**I**.N.D., let's talk about *Intelligent Design*.

3. Intelligent Design

Starting with the first verse of the Bible, "In the beginning, God created...", Scripture maintains that the universe and all it contains was not a random chance event and that intelligent design was the cause of all that exists.

The *Discovery Institute* defines *Intelligent Design* as, "certain features of the universe and of living things are best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection."²⁴

Secular humanists, natural evolutionists, and atheists will point out that the "appearance of evidence" is just that, an appearance and nothing more.

But intelligent design means that we can examine the evidence, just like other job professions, to determine whether something came about from random, natural chance or by intelligent design.

For example, a "crime scene investigator (CSI)...examines all the evidence he or she can find at a scene of death in order to answer the question, was this person's demise *by design or by accident*? Life insurance companies also seek to ascertain whether a person's death was by design or by accident...Copyright offices seek to determine whether someone purposefully plagiarized a work...The reality is that in many cases, we can detect signs of intelligence by the effects left behind."²⁵

1. The intelligent design theory is not reasonable.

In order for *Intelligent Design* to be valid, we need to look at *two premises and one conclusion*:

1. All designs imply a designer.
2. There is great design in the universe.
3. Therefore, there must be a Great Designer of the universe.²⁶

Whenever we look at Mount Rushmore, Hoover Dam, The Empire State Building, we see design and we know that it is "reasonable" that where there is a design, there is implied a designer.

Turning to Merriam-Webster's online dictionary for the definition of *reason*, we find:

“a sufficient ground of explanation or of logical defense; *especially*: something (as a principle or law) that supports a conclusion or explains a fact.”

God Himself tells us in Isaiah 1:18, “Come let us reason together.”

- The word *reason* [Hebrew: *yakah*] means “to argue, convince, correct, plead, reason (together).”
- The word “reason” (*yakah*) is a law term used for arguing, convincing, or deciding a case in court. The people were to be convinced by their argumentation with God that He was right and they were wrong about their condition.”²⁷

And in Romans 1:20, we are given the *first of three* ways that we can know that there is a Creator, and that being the “knowledge or light of creation”:

- “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that were made...so that they are without excuse.”

2. Everything in the universe can be explained in terms of natural causes.

The atheist and natural evolutionist would argue that since we can explain evolution by purely natural causes, there is no need for an intelligent designer.

The problem with this theory is that when it comes to *irreducibly complex* structures, natural evolution cannot explain it and intelligent design can.

Irreducibly complex simply means “a single system which is composed of several well-matched, interacting parts that contribute to the basic function, and where the removal of any one of the parts causes the system to effectively cease functioning.”²⁸

For a simple example, a mousetrap has multiple parts including a base, a spring, a hammer, a catch and a hold down bar. Remove any of these and the system doesn't work.

Likewise, the eye, a wing, and the bacterial flagellum motor are examples of irreducibly complex machines in nature. Remove any of their parts and they simply do not work.

Even Charles Darwin (1809-1882) said about the eye, "To suppose that the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree."²⁹

When you take into account natural selection and random mutations, any animal that would have had a mutation that "brings about one tiny change at a time, and the development of a complex body part such as a wing would require untold thousands of random positive mutations. How would natural selection, at each minimal step along the way, know whether to keep each small mutational change, or breed that small mutational change out of the species? How would natural selection recognize the worth of a single mutation during a long process of multiple mutations, over innumerable generations, awaiting the eventual arrival of a complex body part such as a wing?"³⁰

Besides, mutations in DNA which arise from environmental agents like sunlight, radiation and chemicals or from mistakes when cells split and copy often produce bad effects like cancer and disease and are not positive things.

Most mutations are deleterious [injurious] to the individuals in which they occur. So mutation is good for the population [this is why we look different], but generally not so good for the individual.³¹

And yet another textbook puts it this way, "Experiments have conclusively shown that most mutations are harmful (about 99.9%), and

some are even deadly. Mutations seem to result from “accidents” which occur in the genes, and the chance that such an accident could be helpful rather than harmful is very small indeed.”³²

The Bible tells us 10 times in Genesis 1:11-25 that all plants and living creatures were created “according to its kind.”

Christian apologist, Dr. Henry Morris (1918-2006) said that:

- “...evolutionary dogma that all living things are interrelated by common ancestry and descent is refuted by these Biblical statements, as well as by all established scientific observations made to date.”³³

Further support for the different kinds created by God and not by a common ancestry and descent are found in 1 Corinthians 15:38, 39:

- “But God gives it [grain] a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds.”

3. DNA emerged strictly via natural causes.

DNA stands for *deoxyribonucleic acid* and is the chemical that carries genetic information or encodes the instructions for replicating and building all living things.

DNA can be compared to a highly complex computer program. The volume of information that is encoded in the single DNA cell is staggering to the mind. For example:

- “There is enough information capacity in a single DNA cell to store all 30 volumes of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, three or four times over...The amount of information that could be stored in a pinhead’s volume of DNA is equivalent to a pile of paperback books 500 times

as tall as the distance from the Earth to the Moon, each with a different, yet specified content.”³⁴

But just as a computer program, stored on a computer, needs a programmer to write it, so a “divine programmer” is needed to encode this tremendous amount of information that is stored within a single DNA cell.

This DNA information is not in a random order but in a very specific order and does not just collect by itself, just as a computer program simply does not write itself even given plenty of time.

Information does not arise from non-information.

Dr. Werner Gitt, retired director and professor at the German Federal Institute of Physics and Technology stated, “There is no known natural law through which matter can give rise to information, neither is any physical process or material phenomenon known that can do this.”³⁵

Now, if that isn’t evidence for a “divine Creator” or an “intelligent Designer”, let’s take it back a notch and see that another problem that naturalistic evolutionists encounter is the origin of *first life*.

In other words, for “naturalistic macroevolution to be true, the first life must have generated spontaneously from nonliving chemicals.”³⁶

The fact is that even the most intelligent scientists cannot reproduce and create life in their laboratories and yet they are to have us believe that a mindless, unintelligent natural process did.

Even if at some time in the future scientists were able to create life out of nonliving chemicals in the laboratory, they would have just proved the creationists point that life was created via a “designer.”

Moving on to the **N** in the acronym B.L.I.**N**.D., let's talk about *Natural Evils, Moral Evils and God*.

4. Natural Evils, Moral Evils and God

We've all heard the question and if we're honest with ourselves, we might have even at times asked the question, "Why would a good God allow such evil to take place?"

What about *natural evils* like tornados, hurricanes and earth quakes or the December 2004 tsunami that killed more than 225,000 people in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand or even more recently in cyclone-ravaged Myanmar where the death toll is estimated to be over 100,000.

Questions arise about *moral evils* like war, the holocaust, the atomic bomb, people like Adolf Hitler, Ted Bundy and Jeffrey Dahmer, abortion, ethnic cleansings, suicide bombers, and the murder of a loved one or close friend.

These arguments and questions are often posed by atheists as a barrier to any belief that God could exist, while agnostics and skeptics might remain unsure on these issues.

1. The existence of evil in the universe proves there is no all-good, all-powerful God.

Two points can be made here in regards to the existence of evil and God:

- First, in order to understand and judge what's considered evil, we need to have a *moral* ruler or measuring stick to compare it against.

In other words, how do we judge what is "evil" and what is "good"? What standard do we hold up evil to, to say that this is evil or this is good?

That standard is God. Since God is the ultimate good, everything compared to Him is absolute, but without God, evil and good is relative, i.e. what is evil to you might not be evil to me.

Evil actually argues for the existence of God since there are moral absolutes that we can compare to and that still repulse the overall majority of people. For example, a murder of a child, rape and stealing.

- Second, just because there is evil or an invasion of sin, does not negate a creator.

“The fact that ugliness, thorns, death, pain, suffering, and chaos are present in the world does not disprove design. *Infestation by termites* does not prove the house did not have an architect. *Vandalism* does not prove the house did not have an architect. *Arson* does not prove the house did not have an architect. *Sloppy homeowners* who do not paint or carry out the garbage do not prove the house did not have an architect. These matters simply raise questions about the situation of the house since it was built.”³⁷

The fact is that what God made was good (Genesis 1:31) but something happened between then and now - and that something was sin.

Through one man sin entered the world (Romans 5:12-19) and that resulted in the perversion or the corruption of good (evil).

2. If there is an all-good, all-powerful God, He should get rid of all evil now.

That sounds like an excellent idea! God should remove all evil that exists and everything would be perfect.

If we were to draw this out to its logical conclusion, everyone would be gone.

You and I would no longer exist because we are all evil:

- Romans 3:23 says that "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

The fact of the matter is, we are all evil and apart from Jesus Christ, who could stand?

The Bible makes it clear that God is not finished with His creation and in fact, uses the evil that volitional people do, to work things towards His ending. For example:

- Joseph points out in Genesis 50:20 that what his brothers "meant for evil...God meant it for good..."
- See also (Genesis 45:8; Proverbs 16:4; Acts 2:23, 4:27)

God's not finished with us yet and that future day will come when God wraps up all the loose ends of human history. As Christian philosopher Peter Kreeft explains:

- "On this day, the mystery of suffering and the deeper and more original mysteries of sin and death will be solved, not just in theory but in practice; not just explained but removed. God will tie up the loose ends of the torn tapestry of history, and the story which now seems to be a tortured tangle will appear as a masterpiece of wisdom and beauty."³⁸

In the meantime, the Bible points out that God has placed boundaries on evil so that it doesn't run amok:

- God has implemented and set over us governments as authorities and "God's minister" to curb lawlessness (Romans 13:1-7).
- The Church is to be "salt and light" and "the pillar and foundation of the truth" so that Christians, lead by the Holy Spirit, can help curtail the wickedness of the world (Matthew 5:13-16; 1 Timothy 3:15).
- God has ordained the family unit so that we can raise our children in the ways of God and in so doing, bring stability to society (Proverbs 22:6, 15; 23:13).

- God has not left us in the dark to figure out what is right and wrong but has given us His Word as a moral standard on how to live out our lives (Psalm 119).
- God has told us in advance, so that none may perish (2 Peter 3:9), that there will be a judgment day coming (Hebrews 9:27) and it helps to deter us from doing evil knowing that that day is fast approaching (2 Peter 3:10-11).

3. If there is an all-good, all-powerful God, surely He could have arranged things so that human beings would never sin.

If God had created us so that we would never sin, freewill would have gone right out the window.

Think about it, a robot does exactly as programmed. Love on the other hand is a choice.

God did not create robots but created human beings in the image of Himself (Genesis 1:26, 27). So what does that mean "in God's image"?

The church throughout history has held to basically three aspects or attributes that we, as human beings, are made in the image of God: ³⁹

- *Substantive View* – This identifies some particular quality of man (such as reason or spirituality) as being the image of God in man.
- *Relational View* – This view holds that the image of God had to do with our interpersonal relationships. (Genesis 1:27)
- *Functional View* – this view holds that the image of God has to do with a function we carry out, usually our exercise of dominion over the creation. (Genesis 1:26)

Basically, the text in the original Hebrew language reflects that we are created in the *likeness* of God and to *represent* God.

We can see an example of this in Genesis 5:3 where it says, "And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth."

- *Image* [Hebrew: *tselem*] and *likeness* [Hebrew: *demut*] are the same words used in Genesis 1:26 and are used to represent the fact that Seth was *like* Adam in a number of ways. Seth was not Adam, but he was "like father, like son."

4. Natural Disasters cannot be blamed on human free will and sin. Since horrible natural disasters occur regularly in our world, it is impossible that an all-good, all-powerful God exists.

Natural disasters like earthquakes, tornados, hurricanes, etc. do have their origins in the free will and fall of man.

Genesis 3:17 points out that the earth was cursed because of the sin of Adam and Eve.

What was once paradise was now gone. What was once a lovely garden began to deteriorate and spiral downwards. Sin leaves it's mark not only on human beings, but also on creation.

Romans 8:20-22 says that "creation was subject to futility (i.e., emptiness or frustration)" and that "the whole creation groans and labors".

The bottom line is that natural disasters are a result of sin and the fall of man.

But, why does God allow them to happen?

What we know for sure is that God is good! Even though natural disasters destroy lives and property, there are also many amazing miracles that have occurred preventing an even greater loss of life.

Natural disasters cause millions of people to stop and reevaluate their priorities in life. Billions of dollars in aid has been sent to help people that are suffering. Christian ministries reach out to victims of natural disasters and provide help, minister, counsel, pray and lead people to a saving faith in Jesus Christ! God can, and does, bring about great good out of natural disasters (Romans 8:28).

God can and does influence the weather (Deut. 11:17; James 5:17) and God does sometimes cause natural disasters as a judgment against sin (Numbers 16:30-34). There are natural disasters that are recorded in Revelation chapters 6, 8, and 16, but we must remember that every natural disaster is not a punishment from God.

Most natural disasters are simply the work of the laws of nature. Weather patterns cause hurricanes, typhoons, tornados, and the tsunami's that hit Asia in December of 2004 that were due to an underwater earthquake.

5. Because Christianity has been used throughout church history as an excuse for brutal, heartless, and senseless atrocities, Christianity cannot be true.

The Crusades are often brought up by atheists, agnostics and skeptics to point out that Christians have often been brutal and killed many people all in the name of God.

The truth is, the Crusades were launched in November 1095 when Pope Urban II called for a campaign to free the Holy Land and defend Christians in the east from the invading Muslim armies.⁴⁰

While it's true that many atrocities have been committed in the past by many who call themselves Christians, including during the Crusades, we must also point out that not everyone who calls themselves a Christian really is, according to Matthew 7:22-23:

- "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

There are of course authentic Christians as well as those who are cultural Christians as in any religion.

And we must remember that atrocities that were committed in the past, whether from the Spanish Inquisitions, war, Muslim extremists flying planes into the World Trade Centers, religious genocides in the Middle East or false leaders abusing their authority and encouraging their followers to drink poisoned grape juice, all in the name of "religion", are committed by sinful human beings.

Our example is Jesus Christ and our eyes should be kept on Him for He is the only sinless man (1 Peter 2:21-23) and the One we should be following (Mark 8:34).

The bottom line is that God's creation was good (Genesis 1:31) and then due to sin entering the world through one man (Romans 5:12), all creation, including sinful man, became subject to futility (Romans 8:20) and groans and labors (Romans 8:22) but that in no way nullifies the existence of God but as we have pointed out, the existence of evil argues for the existence of God.

This leads us to our final topic, which is the **D** in the acronym B.L.I.N.**D.**, let's talk about *Darwinian Evolutions Flawed Premise*.

5. Darwinian Evolutions Flawed Premise

Of all the theories that have caused Christians to question or lose their faith or have caused atheists to feel their worldview has been strengthened, the *Theory of Evolution* is one of the most common.

When it comes to evolution, scientists on both sides of the fence have the same evidence and whichever worldview we fall into is the worldview in which we use to interpret that evidence.

It was the theory of evolution that was one of the causes for Charles Darwin (1809-1882) to lose his faith and eventually become an agnostic.

In a nutshell, *Darwinism* or *neo-Darwinism* can be defined as "evolution is driven by natural selection acting on random mutations, an unpredictable and purposeless process that has no discernable direction or goal, including survival of a species."⁴¹

It is this *natural or purposeless process* that implies that a creator did not have a hand in the process that is in question.

As the author of *Introducing Evolution* says:

- "Once we accept the theory of evolution by natural selection, the traditional idea of God really does go out the window."⁴²

Darwin, well known to be an evolutionist, wrote *The Origin of Species* in 1859 which has been called "one of the most important books ever written" and "a book that shook the world."⁴³ In it, he lays forth the following theories:

- *Variation* – This is differences within a species.
- *Survival of the fittest* – The species create more offspring than can possibly survive to maturity. These offspring compete for the resources and only the strongest survive passing on the genes that caused them to be strong and the weaker ones to die off.
- *Natural selection* – This survival of the fittest continued on for millions of years guided by what is called natural selection eventually making changes in the species and creating new species.

Darwin said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change."⁴⁴

Yet regarding this change, Darwin states in *The Origin of Species*:

- "...innumerable transitional forms must have existed but why do we not find them embedded in countless numbers in the crust of the earth?why is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the greatest objection which can be urged against my theory".

1. Evolution must be true because it has been observed firsthand by scientists.

Despite the fact that there is no evidence of evolution's theory of the transition of one species to another, evolution is being presented as fact by scientists and text books over and over again.

For example, atheist and evolutionary theorist Stephen Jay Gould (1941-2002) wrote an article entitled "Evolution as Fact and Theory" in *Discovery Magazine*, in which he stated that scientists now have "observational evidence of evolution in action."⁴⁵

The fact of the matter is we have evidence that there is *microevolution* but there is no evidence that there are transitions from one species to another in the fossil records called *macroevolution*.

Microevolution is defined as changes within the same species for example, there are microevolution changes in dogs from when God first created the species but there is no evidence of a dog evolving into a different species like a cat or a bear or a horse.

A dog DNA stays the same and remains a dog DNA while a cat DNA always remains a cat DNA.

Another example of *small changes* or *microevolution* in DNA is the "human DNA [that] makes it possible for humans to have different eye colors, different hair colors, different heights, dark skin or light skin, a bulky frame or a scrawny frame and so forth."⁴⁶

2. The marked similarities between the anatomy of human beings and that of the higher vertebrata proves that human beings evolved from an animal ancestor.

Again, this is evidence of an Intelligent Designer.

When we look at the similarities of the different animals in the animal kingdom, we see a common theme in the respect of eyes, ears, legs, hearts, lungs, feet, toes, etc. The list just goes on and on.

When you look at plants like trees, grass, shrubs, bushes and flowering plants you see a root system pulls nutrients from the soil up into the stem. You see leaves that soak up light energy from the sun and synthesize food from inorganic compounds.

When we listen to bands who create music, you can hear similarities between songs and techniques that they use. Intelligent people wrote that music and they use the same techniques – why? – because it works!

When you look at a painting by Leonardo Di Vinci, Claude Monet, Thomas Kinkade, Howard Behrens or Alexandra Nikita you see similar colors and brush strokes even though they are complete different settings, objects or themes that were painted.

When you look at automobiles, you of course see similarity. Round wheels, mirrors, a steering wheel, trunk, engine compartment, seats, etc. Intelligent people created them using the same techniques – why? – because it works?

When we look at the type of environment that God created (Genesis 1:1), we see that vertebrates are indeed built similar because we live in a similar environment.

We see, so we have eyes, we hear so we have ears, we smell so we have noses and limbs to move around, we eat so we have mouths, stomachs and digestive systems and we produce waste.

It would of course be very logical that we would be very similar in many ways with other vertebrates – why? – because of an Intelligent Designer who designed us to live in a similar environment!

3. Transitional fossils have been discovered, thereby proving the truth of evolution.

If evolution were true, we would expect to find transitional fossils that show macroevolution and transitioning from one life form to another in the strata of rock formations.

Yet, of all the documented billions of fossils that have been found, there are some 60 million in the British Museum of History alone, *there is not one transitional fossil showing transition from one life form to another.*

Natural evolutionist's theories live or die by the transitional fossil record as explained by Pierre Grasse, Chair of Evolution at the Sorbonne for 30 years:

- "Naturalists must remember that the process of evolution is revealed *only through the fossil record*. A knowledge of paleontology is, therefore, prerequisite; only paleontology can provide them with the *evidence of evolution* and reveal its course or mechanisms."⁴⁷ (emphasis added)

In spite of the overwhelming evidence of no transitional fossils, the Archaeopteryx is often cited by naturalistic evolutionists and atheists that this is an example of a transitional fossil.

One atheist stated that Archaeopteryx is "a marvelous connecting link between two-legged dinosaurs and modern birds. It had a long, lizard-

like tail, teeth, clawed wing-digits still usable for climbing, and many other reptilian skeletal features too numerous to mention here. In fact, the only thing bird-like about it was its feathers."⁴⁸

But under careful examination, all evidence points to the fact that Archaeopteryx was indeed a bird and not a transitional creature somewhere between a bird and a reptile.

In other words, Archaeopteryx was a bird and was not a transitional form because it had fully formed parts. It had fully formed wings and could fly. It had a fully formed tail and could steer and it had fully formed claws. This was a creature created as it was by God.

University of Chicago paleontologist David Raup wrote:

- "We are now about 120 years after Darwin and the knowledge of the fossil record has been greatly expanded. We now have a quarter of a million fossil species but the situation hasn't changed much. The record of evolution is still surprisingly jerky and, ironically, we have even fewer examples of evolutionary transition than we had in Darwin's time."⁴⁹

British Museum of Natural History senior paleontologist Colin Patterson stated:

- "If I knew of any [evolutionary transitions], fossil or living, I would certainly include them [in my book *Evolution*]."⁵⁰

And finally, American paleontologist, Stephen Jay Gould (1941-2002) admitted that:

- "...the absence of fossil evidence for intermediary stages between major transitions in organic design, indeed our inability, even in our imagination, to construct functional intermediates in many cases, has been a persistent and nagging problem for gradualistic accounts of evolution."⁵¹

So, with no direct evidence in the fossil records that naturalistic evolution is the driving process of all animal and human evolution, it is still passed off as fact instead of theory in the scientific and educational communities.

Conclusion

As we have seen, there are several areas that atheists, agnostics, skeptics, natural evolutionists and secular humanists err in regards to:

1. **B**ibles Reliability
2. **L**aw and Morality
3. **I**ntelligent Design
4. **N**atural Evil, Moral Evil and God
5. **D**arwinian Evolutions Flawed Premise

It's not that a person *cannot* find God but rather they *don't want to* or *won't* find God.

- Psalm 10:4 says, "The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts."
- Psalm 14:1 says, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'"

But God says that He can be found:

- James 4:8 says, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."
- Jeremiah 24:7 says, "I will give them a heart to know Me, for I am the LORD; and they will be My people, and I will be their God, for they will return to Me with their whole heart."
- Jeremiah 29:13 says, "And you shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for Me with all your heart."
- Deuteronomy 4:29 says, "But from there you will seek the LORD your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul."

- See also (1 Chronicles 22:19; 2 Chronicles 22:9; Psalm 32:6; Matthew 7:7)

The bottom line is that God has made Himself known in three ways:

- *The Light of Creation* - Romans 1:20 says, "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are *clearly seen*, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse." (emphasis added)
- *The Light of Conscience* - Romans 1:21 says, "...because, although, they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened."
 - The word *knew* (Greek: *ginosko*) means, "be aware of, feel, perceive, understand".
- *The Light of Jesus Christ* - John 1:9 says, "[Jesus] was the true light which gives light to *every man coming into the world.*" (emphasis added)

Psalm 19:1-2 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge."

Resources used for this teaching and recommended reading material:

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If you have questions or comments, please feel free to email info@calvaryCO.church

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