

1 Because physics supports a Creator: The Big Bang



The best physics supports the doctrine of a Divine Creator.

First, we have the Big Bang. Scientists now agree that time and matter began in a precise moment 13.8 billion

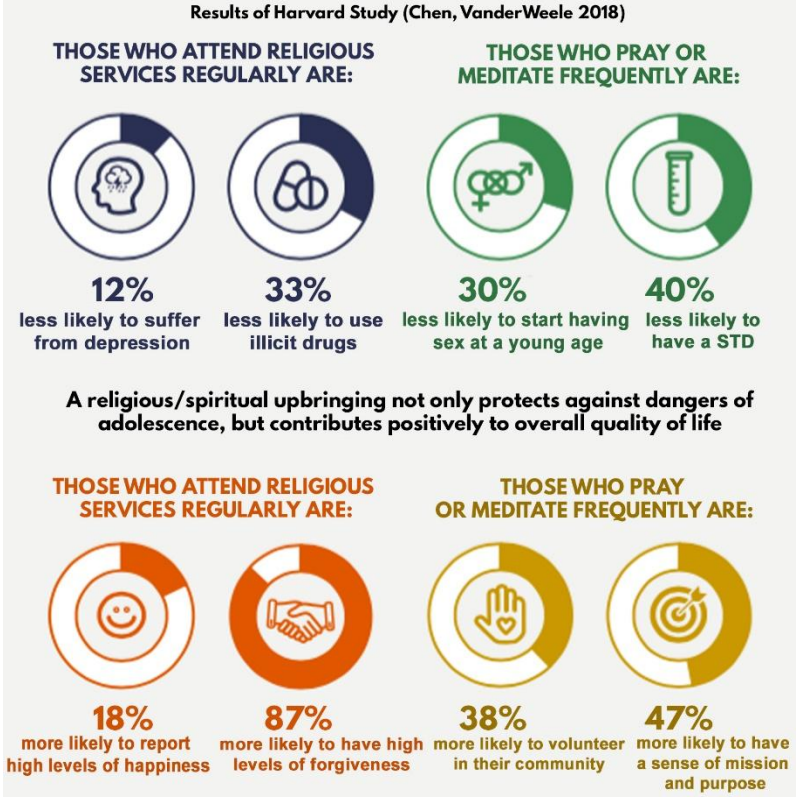
years ago, starting from a tiny singularity. Everything that exists has a cause: what caused the birth of our universe? Top scientist Dr. Francis Collins (recent head of both the Human Genome Project and the National Institutes of Health) writes: “The very fact that the universe had a **beginning** implies that someone was able to begin it. And it seems to me that had to be outside of nature. And that **sounds like God.**”

Second, there’s the Fine-Tuning Argument. The existence of our universe depends on approximately 15 physical ‘constants’ (very, very specific numbers, e.g., the ‘gravitational constant’). To quote Dr. Francis Collins: “If any one of those constants was off by even one part in a million, or in some cases, by one part in a million million, the universe could not have actually come to the point where we see it. ...there would have been no galaxy, stars, planets or people. ...It **seems almost impossible that we’re here.** And that does make you wonder - gosh, **who was setting those constants anyway?** Scientists have not been able to figure that out.” Order doesn’t come from chaos; it is more likely that a Creator set the constants.



Dr. Karin Öberg (Professor of Astronomy at Harvard): “The fine-tuning, underlying order, and very existence of the Universe are all crying out for a Creator. The Big Bang aligns better with traditional religion than with atheist philosophy.”

2 Because religion can increase health & happiness



The best studies show that religiosity is associated with increased health and happiness. Religiosity increases a sense of community, purpose, and altruism, and it provides a support against risky behaviors (like drug use or riskier sexual activity). In today’s world beset by confusion, religion gives a beautiful and clear roadmap to meaning, happiness, and service of others.



Dr. Tyler VanderWeele (Professor at the Harvard School of Public Health): “Weekly religious service attendance is longitudinally associated with lower mortality risk, lower depression, less suicide, better cardiovascular disease survival, better health behaviors, and greater marital stability, happiness, and purpose in life.”

3 Because it’s a smart bet: Pascal’s Wager

Blaise Pascal (17th century scientist) reasoned that belief in God is a more rational choice than atheism. He imagined a coin being tossed: either God exists or not. Before we die, we must place our bet: either we believe in God (and practice religion) or not.



We will all die one day. When we do, either our souls will meet God, or we will forever cease to exist (since there’s no God and no soul). There is no third option; agnosticism doesn’t exist after death.

Major religious texts (e.g., the Bible and the Qur’an) suggest that Heaven awaits those who believe, whereas Hell awaits the unbelievers. (Of course, there are important caveats to this general doctrine.) A table gives the possible four outcomes:

	God exists	God doesn't exist
Practice religion (theism)	Very positive: Heaven (unimaginable, eternal happiness)	Neutral: nonexistence after death
Don't practice religion (agnosticism or atheism)	Very negative: Hell (unimaginable, eternal sadness)	Neutral: nonexistence after death

The choice for God (theism) leads either to infinite happiness, or to a neutral outcome. The choice for atheism leads to infinite sadness, or to a neutral outcome. Therefore, theism is the better bet.

When the stakes are high, it is wise to play it safe. E.g., we wear seat belts when driving. We give extra effort when we see a huge potential benefit vs. risk of not doing so. The stakes of eternity (the fate of my immortal soul, FOREVER) are unimaginably high. The cost of being a theist (e.g., daily prayer) is

small in comparison to eternity... and theism has many other benefits (see #2). The Wager at least shows that this issue merits significant effort and study, given the stakes. Many think: “I’m a nice person, surely I’ll go to Heaven if God exists.” Many saints and theologians might disagree. **Are you 100% sure you’ve made the best bet? If not, you should investigate further!**

The Wager also supports Christianity specifically over some Eastern religions; e.g., if Buddhism or Hinduism are true, then reincarnation gives you multiple chances to ‘get it right’ (i.e., betting against monotheism/Christianity has higher risk).

4 Because of universal moral norms: The Moral Argument

Why have nearly all humans in history believed in certain moral norms, in right vs. wrong? Every sane person believes that child torture and cannibalism are morally unacceptable. Why? Why does each of us seem to have a conscience, an inner voice that directs us to right or wrong? Indeed, this standard seems outside of us, stronger than us, fixed and universal.

Atheism cannot explain why we should choose good over evil. For materialists, molecules are all there is. Their argument that conscience is a simple product of evolution runs counter to the evidence: sometimes, our conscience urges us choose against our evolutionary instincts. E.g., we willingly rush to help the person in a wheelchair who falls in a river. Such actions run counter to “survive and reproduce” and “survival of the fittest”. So too the works of Oskar Schindler or Mother Teresa.

The existence of universal moral laws implies a Lawgiver, a Rule against which we can judge good vs. evil. Molecules alone can’t be virtuous or sinful. To quote Dr. Scott Hahn: “Without God, everything becomes a matter of moral indifference or mere human preference.” The atheist Nietzsche saw morality as relative: “might makes right” ... meaning the powerful can do as they please.

5 Because only God can satisfy my deepest desires



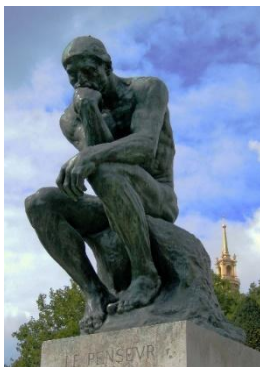
We all have natural desires: e.g., food, drink, sex, sleep, knowledge, friendship. All of these desires correspond to actual objects. Food, drink, sex, etc. really exist.

All of us also have a deep desire for infinite goodness and joy. This desire is not fulfilled with even limitless money, pleasure, power... nothing on this earth can truly fulfill it. Either we are destined to be unfulfilled, or the object of our deepest desire (absolute Goodness and Joy) actually exists.

This universal, deep desire seems unlikely to be a product of evolution, since feeling unfulfilled with material goods is not beneficial to humans. Given that all other objects of human desire (e.g., hunger) correspond to an actual object, it is reasonable to believe that our deepest desire too can be fulfilled.

To quote St. Augustine: “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

6 Because religion gives meaning to my life



What is the meaning of life? Why are we here? How can we be happy? Religion provides convincing answers to these questions; it provides certainty in a world plagued by doubt. The peace and joy of the saint (whether Mother Teresa or the pious peasant) stand in contrast to the angst of the atheist Nietzsche.

Ancient Greek philosophy and Christianity argue that happiness is achieved by a life of virtue: habits instilled by choosing the good and avoiding evil

(even when this is difficult). Christianity elevates **selfless love** as the prime virtue, an ideal that is mirrored even in secular culture (e.g, countless movies with the self-sacrificing hero).

If not God, then what? What “-ism” offers a glorious promise of meaning and happiness, and the many real-life examples (=saints) to back it up? Atheism? Agnosticism? Materialism? Relativism? Spiritualism? Liberalism? Utilitarianism? To quote Johnny Cash: “They’ve been weighed in the balance and found wanting.” (see Daniel 5:27).

7 Because of beautiful religious art: The Argument from Beauty



*There is the music of Johann Sebastian Bach.
Therefore there must be a God.*

-Dr. Peter Kreeft (Professor, Boston College)

Throughout human history, religious belief has inspired humans to create beautiful artwork. Examples include the Acropolis, the Pyramids, Macchu Picchu, and the Taj Mahal, and Angkor Wat. Christianity has myriad examples of breath-taking beauty in architecture (churches like Notre Dame or St. Peter’s Basilica), painting (Michelangelo, Caravaggio), music (Mozart, Vivaldi), and literature (Dante, J.R.R. Tolkien). Many people have come to faith through an experience of such beauty.

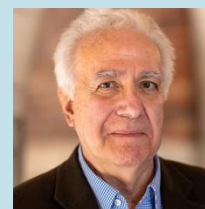
Faith lifts us beyond ourselves and our primal struggle to survive and procreate. The best artists aim to imitate Infinite Beauty and leave us in awe.

To paraphrase Pope John Paul II: “From the Sistine Chapel, the Invisible is mysteriously made visible.”

8 Because of miracles



Numerous miraculous events have defied any scientific explanation. E.g., the tilma of **Our Lady of Guadalupe** (scientists cannot explain how it was painted or has survived), the **Shroud of Turin** (scientists think it was created by an instantaneous flash of light), the 1917 **Miracle of the Sun** (at Fatima), the blood of St. Januarius, and miraculous healings (e.g., at Lourdes). Miracles still occur in modern times. The Catholic Church requires verified miracles to canonize a saint (e.g., the miraculous healing of Benedicta McCarthy in Harvard’s Mass. Gen. Hospital in 1987, attributed to St. Edith Stein).



Dr. Carlos Eire (Professor of History at Yale, author of *They Flew: The History of the Impossible*): “Miraculous events that baffle any scientific explanation are verified with stunning regularity.”

Notably, some agnostic experts who investigated these miracles themselves became believers. **Barrie Schwartz**, who studied the Shroud of Turin, wrote: “It was the science that convinced me.”

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Top 8 Reasons to Believe in God



Ivy-League Professors Speak