Maker of Heaven & Earth

Robert C. Newman
"I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth…"

So begins the Apostles' Creed, a very early formulation of historic Christianity.

Anyone who has read the Bible knows that this is what it teaches also.

Yet today this belief is widely rejected, especially among people who consider themselves to be well-educated.
Carl Sagan on the Cosmos

- For instance, Carl Sagan, in his acclaimed PBS series "Cosmos," begins his presentation with these words:
- "The cosmos is all that is, or ever was, or ever will be."
I have studied science for a number of years myself (I have a PhD in theoretical astrophysics), and I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. I think there are good reasons for believing this. That’s what we want to discuss here.
**Introduction**

- I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth because:
  - The existence of God explains the nature of the universe;
  - The existence of God explains the nature of living things;
  - God said so.

- Let's have a look at these three reasons.
God's Existence Explains the Nature of the Universe
The Universe Today

- We currently live in a very large universe, which is billions of light-years across.
  - A light-year = about 6 trillion miles.
- This universe is in the process of expanding.
  - The galaxies are obviously moving apart, and we think that is because space is expanding.
The Universe Back Then

- The universe was once (early in its history) very dense and very hot.
- We can tell this by extrapolating backwards in time, and by observing remnants of its early history:
  - The cosmic black-body radiation
  - Galaxy-counts and early galaxies
  - Recent evidence that the universe is expanding more rapidly now than earlier
Is the Universe Oscillating?

- Until the 1990s, this was widely favored as the way to avoid a beginning, e.g., by:
  - Isaac Asimov
  - Carl Sagan
- This now appears to be impossible:
  - Looks like universe will expand forever
  - Looks like a collapsing universe would not bounce to shift into an expanding mode
Is the Universe Just a Bubble?

- A recent alternative to a universe with a beginning is to claim that our universe had a beginning, but it is just a bubble in an infinite universe with no beginning.

- This cannot be ruled out with our finite human knowledge, but neither do we have evidence for this hypothetical unseen universe outside ours.
Recent Cosmology

- The history of cosmology in the 20th century has been one frantic attempt after another...
  - ... to avoid a universe with a beginning
  - ... in the face of mounting evidence that this is just the sort of universe we live in!
- A universe created at the big bang fits known data better than the alternatives.
In recent decades, physicists and astronomers have noted that the universe also looks designed. The basic forces are finely-tuned to permit life in our universe. Our own environment here on earth may well be unique in the universe in allowing advanced life.
Recap

- So I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth...
- ... because the universe looks like it was created.
God's Existence Explains the Nature of Living Things
Bible-believers disagree on the age of the earth and whether God used evolution as a part of his creative activity.

But people who believe that life arose by chance, by purely natural, undirected processes, face insuperable problems.

Let's see.
Even the simplest known life is very complex:

- Information content of E. coli bacteria = ~4000 sets of the Encyclopaedia Britannica.
- The minimal complexity of the simplest known organisms are about 1500 gene products (proteins, etc.) for those which can live independently and about 500 for parasites.
Producing Order

- It is very hard to produce organization by random processes.
- Consider the problem of getting trained monkeys to type the words "ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA"
  - Typing at 3 characters/sec on special monkey-proof typewriters using only capital letters and standard punctuation
  - 30 billion billion billion monkey-years!
Consider the problem of forming a simple specified protein:
- 100 linked amino acids
- Using the 20 standard amino acids

Imagine that all the nitrogen in the universe is tied up in 100-link amino acid chains, each of which trade partners as fast as the amino acid can move a short distance at standard temperature & pressure.

There is only one chance in $10^{28}$ that the specified protein would be formed in the entire history of the universe!
By contrast, minds can produce order very easily (in spite of the college roommate you may have had).

So the Christian model, that God produced the order seen in living things, is a model that is known to work.

There is no evidence that the atheistic model of randomness will work.
Recap

- So I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth…
- … because the universe looks like it was created.
- … because living things look like they were created.
God Said So
Is this just an appeal to blind faith?

- Like the statement "God said it, I believe it, that settles it!" is so often claimed to be?

No, blind faith can be very dangerous.

- A leap in the dark might land us in the wrong place.

But believing what turns out to be true can be very advantageous, even if our reasons weren't very good.
The importance of this point

- When we say we believe in God the creator because he said so, the point is that this belief is not *just* an inference, but it is the result of a communication from God.

- Many people believe in extra-terrestrials, but the evidence would be more conclusive if these beings made a public appearance on the White House lawn.
Which communication?

- But the human race has many who claim to have received divine revelation…
  - Muhammad
  - Joseph Smith
- How do we know which (if any) is right?
- We try to make this decision by looking at the evidence.
The evidence

- The Bible provides excellent evidence that it is what it claims to be – communication from the Creator
- See the many materials on our IBRI website: www.ibri.org.
An outline

- Historical evidence:
  - The phenomena of Sinai
  - The phenomena of Jesus
- Prophetic evidence
  - Jesus: see our PP talk "Jesus, the Testimony of Prophecy & History"
  - Israel: see our PP talk "Israel, Evidence of God in History"
- Personal evidence
  - Lives transformed by knowing the Creator
  - Societies transformed by Christianity
Summary

- The worldviews we call atheism and secular humanism are purely inferential (with some bad inferences).
- They ignore important problems.
Recap

- So I believe in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth...
- ... because the universe looks like it was created.
- ... because living things look like they were created.
- ... because God said so.
Conclusions

- We as Christians certainly do not know all the answers…
  - … but God does!
  - … and we need not be ashamed to believe in the God of the Bible, maker of heaven and earth.

- Do you know him?
- May we live for him in such a way as to draw others to him.
The End

… is just the beginning if you know your Creator.