



TRUE HORIZON

EMPOWERING THINKING CHRISTIANS TO ENGAGE THE WORLD

## ***Getting To God***

***The Basic Evidence For The Truth of Christian Theism***

[truehorizon.org](http://truehorizon.org)

# A True Worldview

A worldview is like a set of glasses through which you see everything in life. It is the lens that brings the world into focus. You use it to make sense of reality. Everybody has a worldview and each of us can evaluate our worldview based on how it corresponds to the *actual* the world in which we find ourselves.

**Does what you believe *about* the world match the way the world *actually* is?**

This is not a tricky question. In fact, it is a question all of ask ourselves all the time. This question is so basic, it is the way philosophers define **truth** itself. When it comes to the Big Questions in Life, we need to apply this test to ask ourselves if what we claim to believe about reality actually makes sense. Watch this quick 3 minute, 40 second YouTube video ...

## [Video: What is a worldview?](#)

Understanding that each of us has a worldview is simple enough, but how do we go about determining if our worldview is correct? I mentioned the first test above. It's called *Correspondence*. If what you believe about the world *corresponds* to the way the world actually is, that worldview is true.

This makes sense but everyone thinks their worldview is the correct one, otherwise they wouldn't claim to believe it. So how do we test the



“correspondence” of the Christian worldview to ensure that it actually does match reality?

Before we get into the specifics of Christianity, and as a way of making the test for correspondence more clear, it is important to address an idea that many people seem to accept about religions in general. This is the common claim that “all religions lead to God” — that they are all just different ways of looking at the same thing. But, as Ravi Zacharias points out in the video below, that claim is easily disproved. Though some religions share some of the same ideas (like the “Golden Rule” for instance), the similarities between religions are not their important parts. *The real way to test them is to look at their differences.*

## **Video: How Do You Know Christianity Is The One True Worldview?**

Recognizing the categories discussed in the video [1) only God exists, 2) only the physical universe exists, and 3) both God and the universe exist] makes it simpler to evaluate and differentiate between worldviews.

If we can demonstrate that there is a good reason to believe that *both* the the physical universe *and* something outside the physical universe exists, we can eliminate categories 1) and 2). That would mean that the third category — both God and the universe exist — *has to be* the worldview that corresponds to reality. In other words, this process of elimination would



demonstrate that a worldview like Christianity, Judaism, or Islam *must be true*?

\*\*\*\*\*

## Getting To God

It seems pretty obvious (and non-controversial) to claim that the physical world exists. We live in it. We experience it. We can see, hear, taste, touch, and smell it. These are simple, intuitive realities. But do we have any evidence that something also exists *outside* the physical universe?

You bet we do.

I can say that with confidence because of the logic of what we call the ***Cosmological Argument***. Though it leads to a profound conclusion, the argument is very straightforward. It goes like this:

1. Anything that begins to exist must have a cause adequate to explain it.
2. The universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the universe must have a cause adequate to explain it.



Check out this short video that demonstrates the power of the Cosmological Argument:

## **Video: The Cosmological Argument**

The first line (the first premise) of the Cosmological Argument is obviously true. Cakes don't bake themselves. Houses don't build themselves. Paintings don't paint themselves. If you hear a knock at your front door, you don't assume that it knocked itself. Each of these things requires a "cause" — Cakes require bakers; houses require builders; paintings require artists. None of this is controversial.

At the same time, the conclusion of the Cosmological Argument is also driven by basic logic. None of us would deny that when something happens, something else must have *caused* it to happen. We live in a world of cause and effect. The law of cause and effect is one thing about the world we live in that is completely reliable. It lies at the heart of science itself. Science is the study of seeing effects and looking for their causes.

So, what if we could show that *just like* a cake, or a house, or a painting, the entire universe *began to exist*?

If we have evidence that the physical universe came into existence at some point in the finite past, then that event — the universe coming into existence — must have a cause adequate to explain it. Not only so, but whatever the cause of the universe is, it *could not be explained by the*



*universe itself.* Things don't cause themselves to happen. A universe that began to exist, must have been caused by something outside the universe.

This 8-minute video gives a brief history of the 20th Century discovery that the universe most definitely had a beginning:

## **[Video: Did the Universe Have a Beginning?](#)**

To sum it up, the universe began to exist. Something outside the physical universe must have caused it.

***Beginnings require Beginners!***

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Identifying the “Cause”**

Not only must there be a cause for the universe we live in, but there are several other inferences about the cause that we can draw from the evidence we have so far:

1. Our universe — the entire natural world — is composed of matter, energy, space, and time which all came into existence together.



2. The universe contains all physical *matter* and *energy* — therefore, the cause of the universe cannot be part of the matter and energy we observe around us.
3. The universe is defined by physical *space* — therefore, the cause of the universe cannot exist within that physical space.
4. *Time* began when the universe sprang into existence instantaneously — therefore, the cause of the universe cannot be bound by time.
5. Finally, when the “effect” we observe includes every physical thing we know to exist or to have ever existed, the “cause” of the vast effect we know as our universe must be *immensely powerful*.

In summary, we can infer that the cause of the universe is an immensely powerful, timeless entity that is not only *not* physical, but is also not bound by physical space. By definition, we have an implication of something that lies outside the natural world. It's beyond natural.

It's *supernatural*.

Notice that using the word “supernatural” is not just a blind appeal to some inexplicable “spooky” phenomenon we don't understand. It is a *direct inference* from the scientific data about the most thoroughly tested scientific theory in human history — *Big Bang Cosmology*. Also notice that there seems to be an unbelievably amazing coincidence about the description for the cause for the universe we have uncovered so far. It sounds suspiciously like what someone might use to describe — God.



Please understand that we have not drawn this conclusion through an appeal to the Bible or any other form of religious writing. All we have done is made a logical observation about the scientific evidence we have in front of us. And, if you are a follower of Christianity, please don't dismiss the overwhelming scientific evidence here for fear of rejecting the authority of Scripture or equating the Creation Event with some chaotic, random explosion. Neither of these is applicable. You can read a short explanation for why I say that in two blog posts linked here:

### **Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Bang? ([Part I](#) and [Part II](#))**

The bottom line is that atheists have historically rejected the Big Bang because they know exactly what it implies about the reality of a *Transcendent First Cause* for all of nature. The implications are clear and unavoidable — if the universe had a beginning, it must have a Beginner — and atheists don't like that inference at all.

“It is said that an argument is what convinces reasonable men and a proof is what it takes to convince even an unreasonable man. With the proof now in place, cosmologists can no longer hide behind the possibility of a past-eternal universe. There is no escape: they have to face the problem of a cosmic beginning.”

~ *Alexander Vilenkin*

\*\*\*\*\*





# The Nature of the Cause

The fact that we have direct evidence for a supernatural Cause for the universe is incredible enough on its own, but digging a little deeper brings out some even more astounding inferences about the nature of the cause we're talking about. This eleven-minute video looks at the evidence we have that shows the universe wasn't just created, it was very intricately designed to allow for our very existence:

## [Video: The Fine-Tuning of the Universe](#)

It is interesting to consider that in both the earlier explanation about the discovery that the universe had a beginning, and in the discussion of the evidence for the “fine-tuning” of the universe in this video, some of the greatest scientific minds of all time have denied the clear inferences to the existence of God. Yet in each case, they did so not because of the scientific evidence they uncovered, *but in spite of it!*

“I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that.”

~ **Thomas Nagel**



Regardless of how any of us *wants* the universe to be, an intellectually honest approach to a search for the truth demands that we look at how the universe actually *is*.

So, in what kind of place do we live? Just to summarize a few of the most compelling facts about our home:

- The **rate of expansion** of the universe has to be fine-tuned to one part in a quintillion (1 part in 1,000,000,000,000,000,000) or the universe would not have survived the Big Bang.
- The **cosmological constant** has to be fine-tuned to one part in  $10^{120}$  (1 part in  
1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,  
,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,  
000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000) or there would be no universe.
- The **force of gravity** has to be fine-tuned to within one part in  $10^{90}$  (1 part in  
1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,  
,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000)  
or the universe could not have produced the elements, planets, and stars required for life to be possible.
- The existence of life requires its habitat to be in a **Goldilocks Zone** — a place where conditions have to be “just right” for life to not only appear, but to survive. For instance, one such requirement is that water must be present. Nine so-called Goldilocks Zones have been identified but the Earth is the only planet ever discovered that resides in all nine.



- The **tilt of the Earth** is 23.5 degrees from the plane of its orbit. This is what gives us our seasons. The uneven heating of the surface of the Earth also contributes to our water cycle and its accompanying weather patterns. If the Earth were tilted slightly more or less than it is, there would be no life.
- The **origin of life** on Earth was early, sudden, and arose in what had been an environment completely hostile to its appearance. The first life was complex and had characteristics that defy natural explanation.
- The **information content in DNA** is exactly analogous to a computer code that controls biological development and the processes that make it possible for life to reproduce and survive. Computer hardware, like a biological system, is useless without the software designed to run it — and software is always the result of an intelligent cause that wrote it for a purpose.

This very short list of attributes of the place we call home is a minuscule representation of observations that tell us a lot about the kind of cause that must have brought the whole show together. But with these we get a few more inferences to add to our list of characteristics of the cause of our universe.

From its very inception, the universe seems to have been meticulously set up with the goal of allowing and sustaining advanced life. Each of the discoveries mentioned above work together to form an explanation for the origin and nature of both the universe we live in and the cause that brought it into existence.



*The evidence reveals a cause that must be **spaceless, timeless, immaterial (not physical)**, and that must possess an enormous amount of **power, forethought, care, purpose, and intelligence**.*

In other words, the world we find ourselves in seems to point to a Creator God just like the one we find described in the Bible.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **A God-Centered View Of The World**

At the beginning of this exercise we asked the question, “What is your worldview?” We also looked at what it meant to say that something was “true.” The challenge was to compare what we believe about our view of the world with the way the world actually is, and to see if they match. If they don’t match, intellectual honesty compels us to reconsider what we believe. If they do match, we can be confident that we know the truth.

A look at the evidence leads us to the conclusion that the physical world we live in is the result of the action of a powerful, supernatural, designer God — a God just like we read about in the Bible.



To be fair, we have much more work to do before we can claim to have verified that the Cause for our existence is the God of the Christian Bible. At a minimum, we would have to argue for the possibility of miracles, for the trustworthiness of the Bible, and for the verifiability of the Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, in order to claim that Christianity is the one true worldview. Those projects will follow.

For now, it is safe to say that the case for a God *consistent* with the God of the Bible is a strong one. No matter where you stand on the issue, a fair assessment of the evidence suggests that this is a reasonable claim and that those of us who believe it do not do so from some “blind faith” in things we could never hope to know. There really is *evidence* available to all of us that the Christian faith is worth thinking about.

We have only scratched the surface of the case for a Christian view of the world. Please know that there is much more to explore and that ***True Horizon*** exists not only to do just that, but to apply the findings of that exploration to the way we should be living our lives if they are true.

I appreciate your willingness to consider the evidence ... and to join me in the journey.

~ Bob Perry



## Other Resources

Summit Ministries Curriculum (website)

<http://impact360institute.org/about>

Summit Ministries Age Appropriate Worldview Curriculum (website)

<http://www.summit.org/curriculum/>

Can a Universe Be Created Out Of Nothing? (video)

<https://youtu.be/khFcjfaP32U>

Dr. Hugh Ross: *Why The Universe Is The Way It Is* (book)

<https://www.amazon.com/Why-Universe-Way-Hugh-Ross/dp/0801071968>

Jay Richards & Guillermo Gonzalez: *Privileged Planet* (book and DVD)

<http://www.privilegedplanet.com/>

Dr. Stephen Meyer: *A Case For Intelligent Design* (video)

<https://youtu.be/OJNMJef-gqU>

