

RATIONAL ANSWERS,  
REASONABLE HOPE:

# Why Intelligent People Believe in the Christian Faith:

~ Paul R. Shockley

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# Rational Answers, Reasonable Hope

This presentation is indebted to Kenneth Richard Samples, *Without a Doubt* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 21-32.



## Rational Answers, Reasonable Hope

“A good hypothesis, be it scientific or philosophical, is accepted because it possesses real explanatory power.”

~ Kenneth Samples, *Without a Doubt*, 22.



# Rational Answers, Reasonable Hope

The God of the Bible provides both a stable and consistent metaphysical foundation for explaining the important realities and phenomena encountered in our world and lives today.

Consider the following 10 ways...



# God reasonably accounts for...

## 1. The beginning of the physical universe:

- Evidence of the Big Bang;
- Evidence of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Law of Thermodynamics;
- Kalam Cosmological Argument;
- Cosmological Argument.



# **The Cosmological Argument: Cause at the Beginning:**

- 1. The universe had a beginning.**
- 2. Anything that had a beginning must have been caused by something (someone) else.**
- 3. Therefore the universe was caused by something (someone) else.**

***The universe had a beginning caused by something beyond the universe.***



# God reasonably accounts for...

## 2. Order, complexity, & design empirically evident in the universe.

- Teleological Argument:
  - Information as design (e.g., DNA);
  - Fine-tune evidence from galaxy as design;
  - Irreducible complexity as design (e.g., cilium, bacterial flagellum, blood clotting, animal cells, & antibodies among others).



# God reasonably accounts for

## 3. Abstract, non-physical realities:

- Numbers;
- Fundamental Laws of Logic.
  - Law of non-contradiction: The law of non-contradiction tells me the claim cannot be both true and false at the same time in the same way.



# God reasonably accounts for...

## 4. Objective Morality:

- If Theism is true, then we have an objective basis for moral values.
- If Theism is true, then we have objective moral duties.
- If Theism is true, then we have objective moral accountability.



God reasonably accounts for objective moral values.

- 1. Moral laws imply a Moral Law Giver.*
- 2. There is an objective moral law.*
- 3. Therefore, there is a Moral Law Giver.*



God reasonably accounts for objective  
moral values.

8 evidences why we can claim that  
moral objective values exist.



## 8 evidences for the Moral Law:

1. We know right from wrong best when WE REACT to wrongs done to us.
2. We wouldn't know injustice if there was no absolute sense of justice (you only know something is wrong by comparing it to an unchanging standard of what is right); it is the unchanging standard or basis of justice.



## 8 evidences for the Moral Law:

3. Real moral disagreements would not be possible without the Moral Law. Every moral issue would be a matter of opinion.
4. Everything cannot be morally relative. There must be some independent standard; otherwise one person's behavior should be treated the same as anyone else's behavior.



## 8 evidences for the Moral Law:

5. We would not make excuses for breaking the Moral Law if it didn't exist.
6. We would not know if our schools, communities, nation, other societies, or even our world was getting worse or better if there was no Moral Law.
7. The Moral Law is the “prescriptive” basis for political and social dissent.
8. Since we know what's absolutely wrong, there must be an absolute standard or basis of rightness.



## Consider the following:

1. An objective moral law cannot be grounded in a materialistic, atheistic universe.
2. There is no explanation for noble deeds if self-preservation is the foundation for generating moral values.
3. Heinous evil cannot be adequately explained apart from a Christian worldview.



5. God reasonably accounts for objective  
beauty:

7 evidences for objective beauty:



## 5. God reasonably accounts for objective beauty:

1. We know what is beautiful and what is ugly when we react to what we see (e.g., Monet vs. “anti-art art”).



## 5. God reasonably accounts for objective beauty:

2. We would not know what is ugly if there was no absolute sense of what is beautiful (you only know something is ugly by comparing it to an unchanging standard of what is beautiful).



## 5. God reasonably accounts for objective beauty:

3. Real disagreements over beauty would not be possible without some reference to objective beauty. Every issue of beauty would be a matter of opinion.

*In terms of beauty, there would not be a significant difference between a clear, star-filled night & a rusty pipe line.*



5. God reasonably accounts for objective beauty:

4. Beauty cannot strictly be subjective. There must be some independent standard. Otherwise, no one can criticize beauty. There would really be no substance to their argument.



## 5. God reasonably accounts for objective beauty:

5. We would not make excuses for making something ugly if we didn't have some conception on what is objectively beautiful. In fact, it is naturally *difficult to desire* to produce something ugly whether it is a landscape, a painting, or musical medley.

*We might have different art work on our walls across the world but we have a tendency to sweep the trash off the floor.*



## 5. God reasonably accounts for objective beauty:

6. We would not substantively know if an artist's work is getting worse or better if there was no conception of an objective standard of beauty.
7. Since we know what is absolutely ugly, there must be an absolute standard or basis of what is beautiful.

*Beauty must come from a perfect mind of beauty.*



6. God reasonably accounts for this real existential need for Him:

Consider the following:

1. **Human beings really need God.**
2. **What humans really need, probably really exists.**
3. **Therefore, God really exists.**



7. God reasonably accounts for this inherent need for meaning, purpose, and significance.

### **The Argument from Joy:**

**Creatures are not born with desires unless *satisfaction for those desires exists*. A baby feels hunger; food can satisfy.**

- 1. Every natural innate desire has a real object that can fulfill it.**
- 2. Human beings have a natural, innate desire for immortality.**
- 3. Therefore, there must be an immortal life after death.**



## 8. God reasonably accounts for miracles:

1. A miracle is an event whose only adequate explanation is the extraordinary and direct intervention of God.
2. There are numerous well-attested miracles.
3. Therefore, there are numerous events whose only adequate explanation is the extraordinary and direct intervention of God.
4. Therefore, God exists.



## 9. God reasonably accounts for Scripture:

1. Unique in its Continuity.
2. Unique in its Circulation.
3. Unique in its Translation.
4. Unique in its Survival.
5. Unique in its Teachings
6. Unique in Its Influence on Literature.
7. Unique in its Influence on Civilization.



10. God reasonably accounts for the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Consider the following 16 evidences for the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.



## Conclusion:

*Paul Gauguin (1848-1903), a follower of the social and political philosopher Rousseau, could not find the noble savage; the inherent goodness of humanity was illusory. Rather, what he found in humanity, whether civilized primitive, was humanity having no ultimate answers of life. So, on his last painting he titled it with these words:*



## Conclusion:

*“When Come We? What are We?  
Whither Do We Go?”*



## Conclusion:

Christian philosopher Norman Geisler notes:

In a frank interview with the Chicago Sun-Times, the famous atheist Will Durant admitted that the common man will fall to pieces morally if he thinks there is no God. "On the other hand," said Durant, "a man like me... I survive morally because I retain the moral code that was taught me along with the religion, while I have discarded the religion, which was Roman Catholicism."



## Conclusion:

Durant continued, "You and I are living on a shadow.... But will happen to our children...? We are not giving them an ethics warmed up with a religious faith. They are living on the shadow of a shadow."

~ Norman Geisler, *Is Man the Measure*, 170-71 cf. *Chicago Sun-Times* (25 Aug. 1975).



## Conclusion:

“Can an individual or society live with a complete disregard for a moral and spiritual center and not suffer from the wounds of wickedness?”

~ Ravi Zacharias,  
*Deliver us from Evil.*



## Conclusion:

“Apart from God, chaos is the norm;  
with God, the hungers of the mind  
and heart find fulfillment.”

~ Ravi Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God?*



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