**An Introduction To Intelligent Design (SR: Ps. 65)**

Recently we discussed a classic philosophical approach for the existence of God known as the Cosmological Argument. It was rather straightforward suggesting that there is an unmoved mover or an uncaused cause. It is a favorite and has been for centuries.

Another favorite approach for the existence of God is known generally as Natural Theology (i.e. understanding from nature that there is a God). This field of thought is narrowed into what is known as the Teleological Argument (Greek: *teleos* – perfect; orderly; completeness; design). Most often, when the teleological argument is being used nowadays, it is referred to as ID, as distinct from a theory such as naturalism, which contends that life originated without oversight & design. While we refer to this as a philosophical argument that is not to say that it is not a biblical argument. In fact, the writer of Hebrews made a teleological argument: *“Every house has a builder; the Builder of all things is God.”* (Hebrews 3:4) So when we refer to ID, we are simply exploring what the inspired writer of Hebrews meant with this statement. Compare other verses like: John 1:3; Is. 48:13; Ps. 139:14f; Gen. 1; Ps. 8; 19; 33:6-9; Rom. 1:20.

**I. Concepts At The Root Of ID**

A. The “Signature” Or “Look” Of Design – e.g. Paper; Houses; Universe

1. A piece of paper is not particularly difficult to make, yet it still betrays a maker after it is produced. Why is this? It conveys design.

2. Our world is much more complex than a piece of paper. There are systems, objects, beings, and a billion other realities that convey information, purpose, and production. ID takes this back to its root.

3. We do this in everyday life and we take it for granted. It is a fact. If we see a house, we know someone built it, even if we did not witness its being built (cf. Acts 14:17). It is completely irrational to believe otherwise.

B. Irreducible Complexity – e.g. mouse trap

1. *“The entirety of an organic being forms a coordinated whole, a unique and closed system, in which the parts mutually correspond and work together in the same specific action through a reciprocal relationship. None of these parts can change without the others changing as well.”* (Gustav Cuvier, 1839)

2. *“A single system which is composed of several interacting parts and where the removal of any of the parts causes the system to stop functioning.”* (Michael Behe, 1996, speech at the Discovery Institute)

C. Specified Complexity – e.g. Bacterial Flagellum; propulsion of cells @ Berkeley

1. Randomness is complex by definition and unlikely by default.

2. What we see is not simply “random” or “improbable, yet still possible.” What we see is engineering for purpose.

3. Parts, pieces, and components are not only existent and developed but they serve a very precise purpose & w/o everything being “just-so” that purpose couldn’t be served. Chances are 1 in 1x10^340 million according to mathematician Cressy Morrison.

D. Fine-Tuning – e.g. distance from the sun, moon, Jupiter; gravity, atmosphere

1. Fine-tuning is the idea that everything in this universe is so perfectly tailored to accomplish its purpose that naturalism cannot explain it.

2. A fine-tuned car operates efficiently toward the goal of its tuner. A muscle car is designed for horsepower; a truck is designed for payload capacity and towing capability. Our universe is infinitely more complex and has infinitely more evidence of tailoring and tuning.

3. Habermas’ prosthetic hand illustration to Flew was part of what led him to conclude: *“The only satisfactory explanation for the origin of such ‘end- directed, self- replicating’ life as we see on earth is an infinitely intelligent Mind”* (132).

E. All of these are illustrated in God’s reproof of Job in Job 38-42.

**II. A Classic Example Of Scientifically Arguing For ID**

A. In 1802, William Paley wrote a landmark work on ID in his book Natural Theology or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity.

B. Sir Isaac Newton and other leaders of the scientific revolution upheld that the physical laws he had uncovered revealed the mechanical perfection of the workings of the universe to be akin to a watchmaker, i.e. God.

C. Here’s a synopsis of his argument:

1. One may be able to “explain away” what in actuality is the intentional placement of a fireplace hearth, but one cannot reasonably dismiss a watch as being without design.

2. He explains why this is the case: *“...when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, e. g. that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day; that, if the different parts had been differently shaped from what they are, of a different size from what they are, or placed after any other manner, or in any other order, than that in which they are placed, either no motion at all would have been carried on in the machine, or none which would have answered the use that is now served by it.”*

3. He proceeds to explain why our limited knowledge regarding the process by which the watch was made, what role each individual part may serve, why the watch may fail to work as the designer intended, etc.

4. Towards the end of chapter 3 in his work, he introduces another element into the equation while simultaneously drawing out some logical conclusions about the vastly inferior view of atheism: *“The conclusion which the first examination of the watch, of its works, construction, and movement, suggested, was, that it must have had, for the cause and author of that construction, an artificer, who understood its mechanism, and designed its use. This conclusion is invincible. A second examination presents us with a new discovery. The watch is found, in the course of its movement, to produce another watch, similar to itself; and not only so, but we perceive in it a system or organisation, separately calculated for that purpose. What effect would this discovery have, or ought it to have, upon our former inference? What, as hath already been said, but to increase, beyond measure, our admiration of the skill, which had been employed in the formation of such a machine? Or shall it, instead of this, all at once turn us round to an opposite conclusion, viz. that no art or skill whatever has been concerned in the business, although all other evidences of art and skill remain as they were, and this last and supreme piece of art be now added to the rest? Can this be maintained without absurdity? Yet this is atheism. This is atheism; for every indication of contrivance, every manifestation of design, which existed in the watch, exists in the works of nature; with the difference, on the side of nature, of being greater and more, and that in a degree which exceeds all computation. I mean that the contrivances of nature surpass the contrivances of art, in the complexity, subtlety, and curiosity, of the mechanism; and still more, if possible, do they go beyond them in number and variety: yet, in a multitude of cases, are not less evidently mechanical, not less evidently contrivances, not less evidently accommodated to their end, or suited to their office, than are the most perfect productions of human ingenuity.”*

**III. Current Organizations And Scientists That Uphold This Argument**

A. Time would escape us to explore the multitudinous proponents of this argument in the scientific community. There are numerous advocates of ID, despite that we are told that scientists can only believe in evolution.

B. We do not agree with everything that these organizations and individuals stand for, we merely use this brief listing to make a point; namely, that plenty of scientists believe in intelligent design.

C. A few organizations that support it: *The Discovery Institute, Center for Science And Culture, Centre for Intelligent Design, International Society for Complexity, Information, and Design (ISCID), Physicians and Surgeons for Scientific Integrity, Truth In Science*

D. A few individuals who have done an incredible job at explaining how intelligent design has scientific merit are Michael Behe and Stephen C. Meyer.

1. Michael Behe is a world-renowned biochemist and professor of Biological Sciences at Lehigh University in PA. His greatest work is his book entitled “Darwin’s Black Box” where he explores the concept of irreducible and specified complexity. He also demonstrates that the vast complexity of organisms is amplified by the vast assortment of different organisms in our universe.

2. Stephen C. Meyer holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy of Science from Cambridge University. He is a former geophysicist and college professor but is now known primarily for his work at the Discovery Institute. He has written several landmark works including: Darwinism, Design, and Public Education; Explore Evolution; Signature In The Cell: DNA and the Evidence For Intelligent Design; and Darwin’s Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life And The Case For Intelligent Design. His specialty is namely in DNA and the complexity of things like bacterial flagellum and the mechanism of blood clotting as well as his work with the fossil record, namely the Cambrian Explosion of life. He also departs from many by spending a great deal of his time exposing philosophical biases in proponents of evolution. *“Prior to the publication of Signature in the Cell, the piece of writing for which Meyer was best known was an August 2004 review essay in the Smithsonian Institution-affiliated peer-reviewed biology journal Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington. The article laid out the evidential case for intelligent design, that certain features of living organisms--such as the miniature machines and complex circuits within cells--are better explained by an unspecified designing intelligence than by an undirected natural process like random mutation and natural selection. Because the article was the first peer-review publication in a technical journal arguing for ID, the journal’s editor, evolutionary biologist Richard Sternberg, was punished by his Smithsonian supervisors for allowing Meyer’s pro-ID case into print. This led to an investigation of top Smithsonian personnel by the U.S. Office of Special Counsel, widely covered in the media, including the Wall Street Journal and Washington Post. The federal investigation concluded that Sternberg had been wrongly disciplined and intimidated. The case led to widespread public indignation at the pressures placed on Darwin-doubting scientists not only at the Smithsonian but at universities around the U.S. and elsewhere.”* (his FB page)

**III. The Application (Romans 1:18-23)**

A. It is far more reasonable to believe there is a personal Creator of this world than to believe it merely began of its own accord and built itself without any direction into what we see today. It is not reason that stands in the way of drawing this common sense conclusion; it’s volition, a will in hostility to God.

B. For the one open-minded & reasonable enough, looking at the evidence elicits a humble adoration of the Creator & a desire to know Him (Ps. 8; Rom. 11:33).

C. Humbling acknowledging that He is our Creator, repudiation of the cause for our existence (i.e. rebellion) is not only futile but brings calamity with it. Kicking against the goads benefits nobody; it is only detrimental to us. Scoffing at the Potter doesn’t change the fact that we are clay molded in His hands.

D. This all leads to the realization that there is an expectation of our Creator and that we are responsible to what He desires of us (Psalm 19). It’s a simple step.

E. The law of God leads us to Jesus the Nazarene. “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” to show us to light and the pathway back to our Creator (Jn. 1:14).

*“Life is not some simple mechanism that can be explained by blind evolutionary chance. Complex organisms give clear evidence of intelligent design.”* (Bill Jahns) Undeniably, the Builder of all things is God (Heb. 3:4). He has revealed Himself through general revelation in creation & in specific revelation in the Bible. If we are to be rational people, we cannot begin our quest to discover our true purpose until we accept these two truths.

I hope and pray that you do. And if you do, then it is a simple step to allow your faith to mature by rendering obedience to the gospel call. God created you; He alone has the power to save you from your rebellion. He can reshape and reform you back into His image through His Son. If you want your faith to become perfected today, heed His call.