

God and Science: Where Does the Evidence Lead?

Steven R. Hemler, President



Challenges to Belief in God

- “There are few scientists, less than 10%, who believe in God.”
 - Sir Harold Kroto, Nobel Prize in Chemistry
- “The idea of a personal God is quite alien to me and seems even naive.”
 - Albert Einstein, World-Famous Physicist
- “Faith is belief in the absence of evidence. Believing when there is **no compelling evidence** is a mistake.”
 - Carl Sagan, World-Renowned Astronomer

Pew U.S. Religion Survey

- 41% of adults who were raised Catholic no longer call themselves Catholic
- 35% of adults age 18-33 *not* affiliated with a church or organized religion
 - 80% of “nones” raised in a religious faith
 - Half don’t believe anymore, mention science
- Need to be prepared, know **why** believe
 - *Video: Challenges to faith in college*

Facing the Challenges

- **Need to equip Christians:**
 - (1) Help those searching for answers to “big questions” (e.g., Does God exist?)
 - (2) Help meet St. Peter’s challenge:
“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” (1 Peter 3:15)
- **Strengthen** faith and help us **explain and share** our faith (apologetics)
 - *Video: Short “commercial break”*

Apologetics

- **Learn new “language” of apologetics**
 - **Better explain and share our faith**
 - **Best survive challenges if our faith is built on a solid and objective foundation**

Apologetics

Bishop Robert Barron: “Innumerable surveys and studies over the past ten years have confirmed that young people frequently cite intellectual reasons when asked what has prompted them to leave the Church or lose confidence in it. Chief among these are the convictions that religion is opposed to science or that it cannot stand up to rational scrutiny.”

“What is vitally needed today is a renewed apologetics. A new apologetics should look deep and long into the question of the relationship between religion and science.”

Does God Exist?

(Scientific Evidence)

Initial Reflection

- **Handout #1**

- **Please reflect on and answer each question individually**

“The Rest of the Story”

- **Scientific evidence that God exists:**
 1. **Big Bang**
 2. **Laws of Nature**
 3. **Fine Tuning of the Universe**
- ***Short Video Break***

Alien Song



The big



300 thousand years

1 thousand million years

15 thousand million years

3 minutes

10^{-32} seconds

10^{-30} seconds

10^{-34} seconds

10^2 degrees

10^{15} degrees

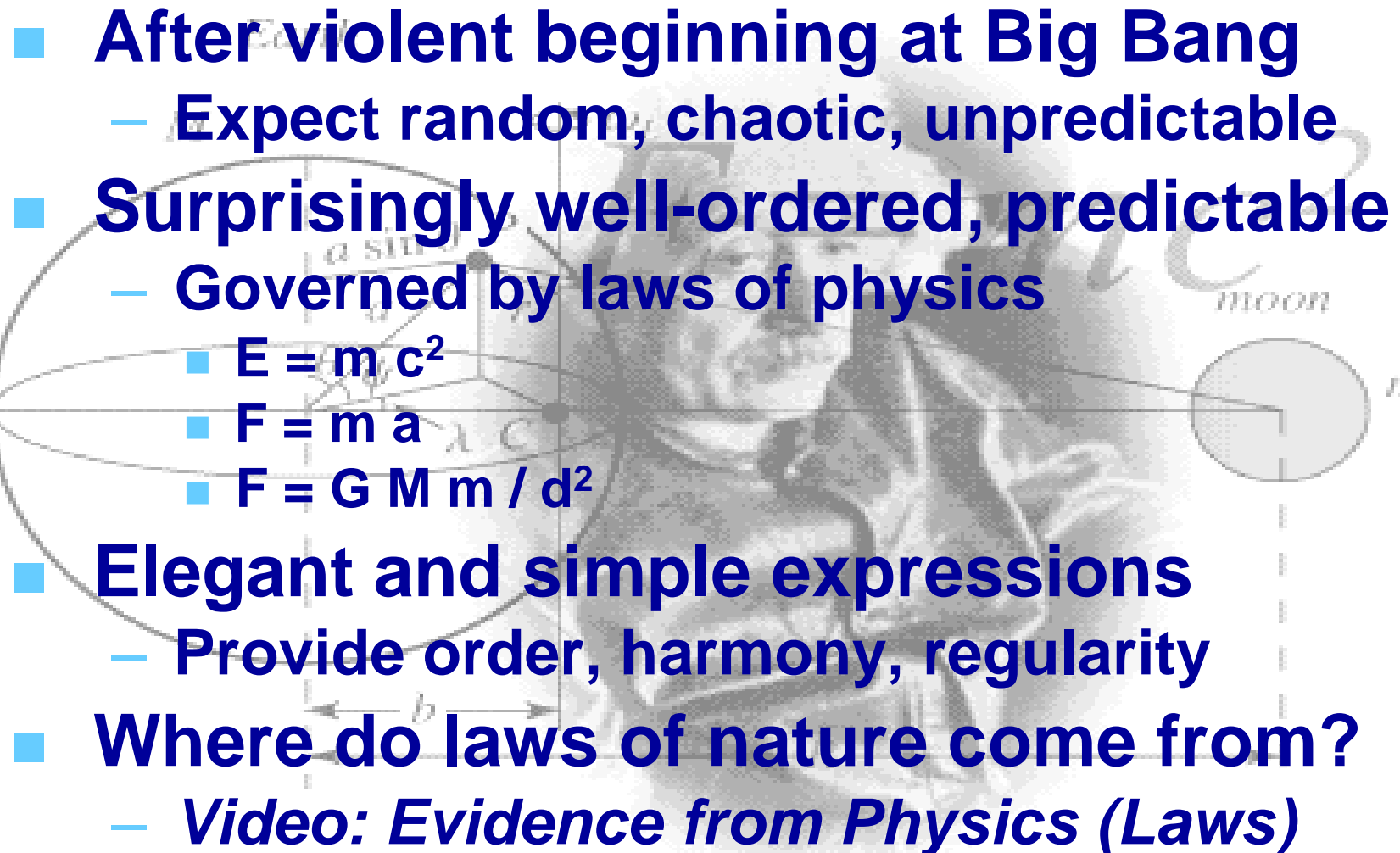
10^{10} degrees

- **When universe came into existence**
 - Space, time, matter, energy
 - Began outward expansion
- **Proposed by Fr. Georges Lemaître (1927)**
 - Confirmed by Edwin Hubble (1929), etc.
 - Finite universe - not infinite, static, eternal
- **Big Bang: Universe had a beginning**
 - Evidence of transcendent Creator outside space and time who “ignited” Big Bang
- ***Video: Big Bang evidence that God exists***

The Big Bang

- **Big Bang = “Let there be light” (Gen. 1:3)**
- **The Kalam Cosmological Argument:**
 - (1) Whatever begins to exist has a cause**
 - (2) The universe began to exist**
 - (3) Therefore, the universe has a cause of its existence**

Laws of Nature

- After violent beginning at Big Bang
 - Expect random, chaotic, unpredictable
 - Surprisingly well-ordered, predictable
 - Governed by laws of physics
 - $E = m c^2$
 - $F = m a$
 - $F = G M m / d^2$
 - Elegant and simple expressions
 - Provide order, harmony, regularity
 - Where do laws of nature come from?
 - *Video: Evidence from Physics (Laws)*
- 

Laws of Nature

- **Intelligible since created by Intelligence**
 - Mathematical laws of nature take greatest efforts of finest human minds to unlock
 - Must have come from a Mind far greater
- **Let's look closer at constants in laws:**
 - $E = m c^2$ $c = ?$
 - $F = G M m / d^2$ $G = 6.673 \times 10^{-11} \text{ N m}^2 / \text{kg}^2$
- ***Video: Evidence from Fine Tuning***

Fine Tuning

- Constants in laws of nature are set to precisely what is needed for life to exist
- Examples of “fine tuning”?
- Fine tuning provides evidence of a Creator who “set all the dials” just right for us to be here

Summary

- **Scientific evidence that God exists:**
 1. **Big Bang**
 2. **Laws of Nature**
 3. **Fine Tuning of the Universe**

Reflection and Discussion

- **Handout #2**
 - **Fill-in individually**
 - **Then discuss in small groups**

Summary

- Scientific evidence that God exists:
 1. Big Bang
 2. Laws of Nature
 3. Fine Tuning
- Is this evidence absolute **proof** of God's existence?
 - Or does some doubt remain?

“God has provided each of us with the opportunity to make an eternal choice to either accept him or reject him. And in order to ensure that our choice is totally free, he puts us in an environment that is filled with evidence of his existence, but without his direct presence -- **a presence so powerful that it could overwhelm our freedom** and thus negate our ability to reject him.

“In other words, **God has provided enough evidence in life to convince anyone willing to believe, yet has also left some ambiguity so as to not compel the unwilling.** In this way, God gives us the opportunity to either love him or reject him without violating our freedom. For **love, by definition, must be freely given. It cannot be coerced.**” - *Dr. Norman Geisler*

Leap of Faith

- **Not possible to absolutely prove the existence of God beyond doubt**
 - **God leaves room for unbelief because it's only way to leave room for love**
 - **Our choice whether or not we will believe in God and seek to live our lives in accordance with His Will**
- **God wants us to voluntarily choose to know, love and serve Him**

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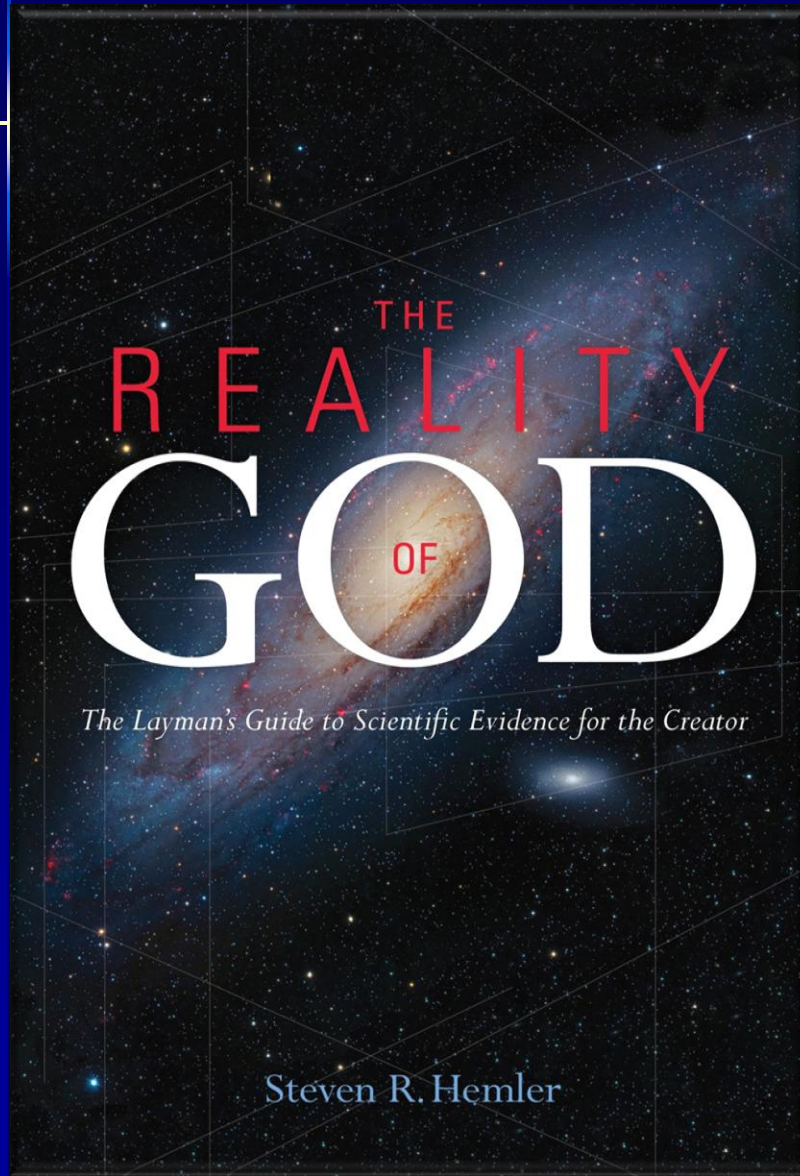
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