

# TRUTH ON TRIAL

A 12-week series on  
the Evidence for  
Christianity



Sermon Notes 1/30/2022

## “The Truth about the Universe”

### What does the Bible say about the universe?

1. God designed the universe to support \_\_\_\_\_.

Isaiah 45:18

Psalm 104:24

2. God designed the universe to be \_\_\_\_\_.

Psalm 111:2-4

Romans 1:20

3. God designed the universe to display His

\_\_\_\_\_.

Isaiah 40:25-26

Psalm 19:1-3

### What does science tell us about the universe?

1. The universe was designed for life.

2. The universe was designed for discovery.

## Small Group Discussion Guide

# Lesson 4: “The Truth about the Universe”

Today, virtually all scientists agree that the universe seems to have been finely tuned so life could exist and flourish on planet earth. However, those scientists who don’t believe in God say that we just got lucky. They believe that all those characteristics of the universe that make life on earth possible happened by accident. In this lesson, we will consider both the Scriptures and the Science, and we will see that the universe gives us convincing evidence for the existence of God.

1. What is the most complicated thing you have had to assemble?

### Some Definitions:

**THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT**—An argument for the existence of God based on the fact that since the universe had a beginning, it must have had a Beginner.

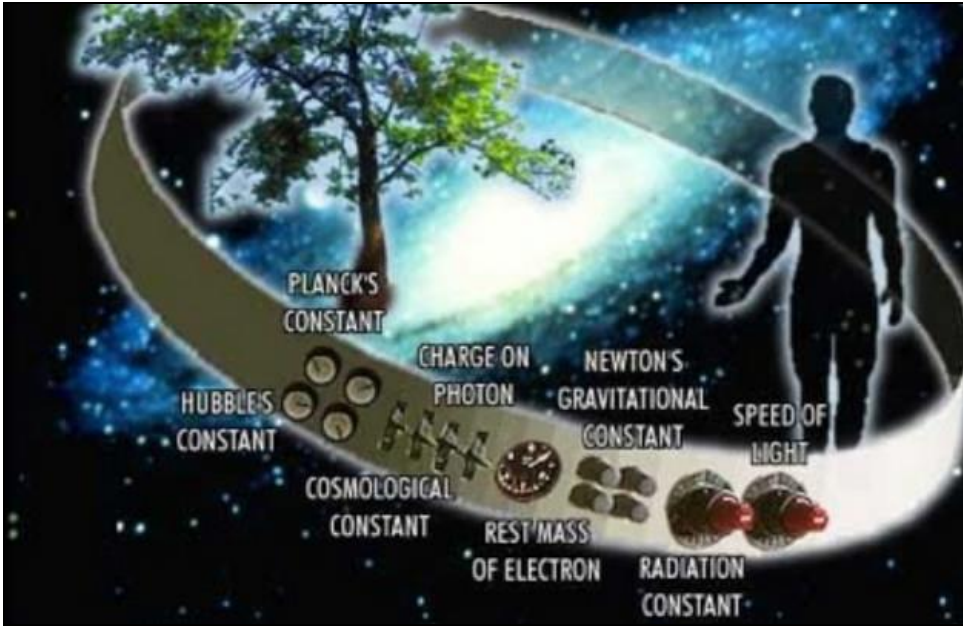
**THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT**—An argument for the existence of God based on the evidence of order, purpose, and design in nature; from the Greek word *telos*, meaning “design.” The more popular term for this argument is “intelligent design.” William Paley used this argument back in the 18<sup>th</sup> century when he said, “Every watch requires a watchmaker.”

**THE ANTHROPIC PRINCIPLE**—A scientific principle that the universe is extremely “fine-tuned” to support human life on Earth. Astrophysicist, Hugh Ross has identified more than 100 finely tuned characteristics in the universe essential for life on earth.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hugh Ross, “Probability For Life On Earth,” Reasons to Believe, 2004, <https://reasons.org/explore/publications/articles/probability-for-life-on-earth>.

These factors are called “anthropic constants.” The word *anthropic* comes from the Greek word for “mankind.”



Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century almost all of the scientists believed in God. They studied the design of the universe and they saw the fingerprints of God. Look at the conclusion of Sir Isaac Newton when he made observations about the solar system.

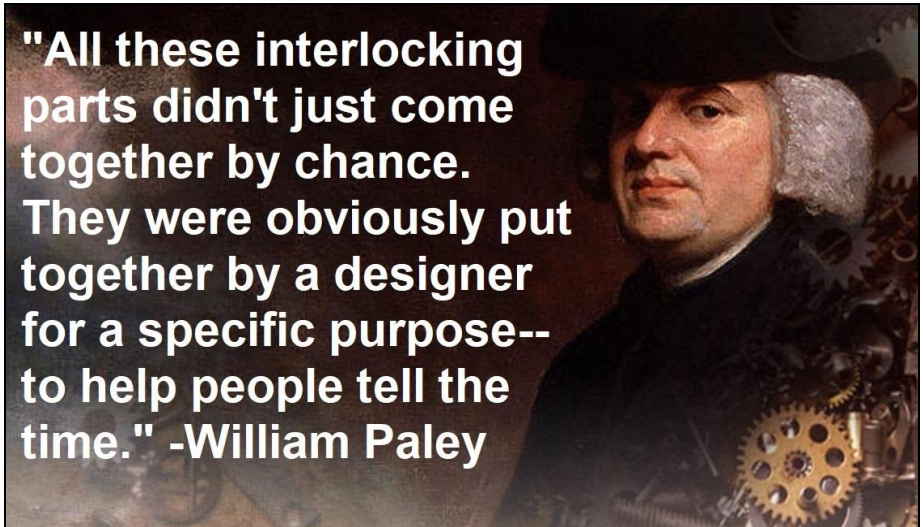
“Though these bodies may indeed continue in their orbits by the mere laws of gravity, yet they could by no means have at first derived the regular position of the orbits themselves from these laws. Thus, this most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets could only proceed from the council and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.”  
—Sir Isaac Newton

2. If there really is evidence for “intelligent design” in the universe around us, what does that imply about how the universe came into existence?

3. What are some things in nature that have amazed you with the way they were designed?

4. If you found a diamond studded Rolex in the woods, would you think it just accidentally came into existence by natural laws?

William Paley came up with this analogy back in the 18th century when he said, "Every watch requires a watchmaker."



5. Read the following passages and discuss what Bible teaches about the design of the universe:

Psalm 19:1-3

Psalm 104:24

Psalm 111:2-4

Isaiah 40:25-26

Isaiah 45:18

Romans 1:20

## What do the scientists say about the design of the universe?

“The thought insistently arises that some supernatural Agency must be involved. Is it possible that suddenly, without intending to, we have stumbled upon scientific proof of the existence of a Supreme Being? Was it God who stepped in and so providentially crafted the cosmos for our benefit?”<sup>2</sup> —George Greenstein, Astronomer

“Astronomy leads us to a unique event, a universe which was created out of nothing, one with the very delicate balance needed to provide exactly the conditions required to permit life, and one which has an underlying, one might say, supernatural plan.”<sup>3</sup> —Arno Penzias, Nobel laureate

“Here is the cosmological proof of the existence of God – the design argument of Paley – updated and refurbished. The fine tuning of the universe provides prima facie evidence of deistic design.”<sup>4</sup> —Ed Harrison, Cosmologist

“If the universe had not been made with the most exacting precision we could never have come into existence. It is my view that these circumstances indicate the universe was created for man to live in.”<sup>5</sup> —John O’Keefe, Astronomer

## What are some of the anthropic constants?

### 1. Liquid H<sub>2</sub>O on the Earth

In order for life to exist on a planet there has to be a lot of water in circulation.

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<sup>2</sup> George Greenstein, *The Symbiotic Universe* (New York, NY: William Morrow, 1988), 27.

<sup>3</sup> Lee Strobel, *The Case for a Creator: A Journalist Investigates Scientific Evidence That Points Toward God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 189.

<sup>4</sup> Norman L. Geisler and Frank Turek, *I Don’t Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 106.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Jastrow, *God and the Astronomers* (New York, NY: Readers Library, 2000), 118.

## 2. The Expansion Rate of the Universe

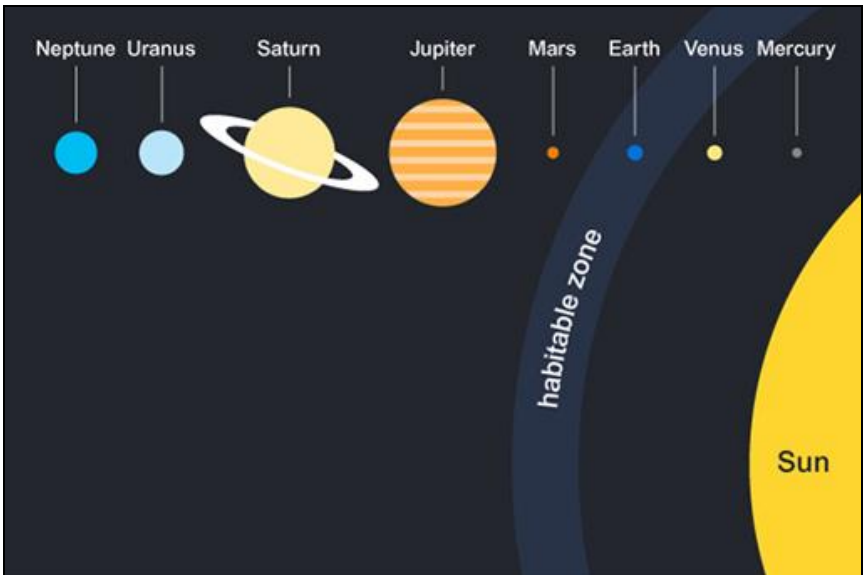
Stephen Hawking said, “If the expansion rate of the universe was different by one part in a thousand, million, million a second after the big bang, the universe would have collapsed back on itself or never developed galaxies.”

## 3. The Rate Gravitational Force

If the gravitational force were altered more than 1 part in 10 to the 40<sup>th</sup> power, the sun could not exist and the moon would crash into the earth or drift off into space.

## 4. The Position of the Earth in the Solar System

In order for life to exist on Earth the planet must be in the “habitable zone” AKA the “Goldilocks Zone.” This refers to how close the planet is to the sun. Life is a lot like Goldilocks, she needs a planet that is not too hot and not too cold. And the position of planet Earth is just right. Earth is only planet in our solar system that is in the habitable zone.



## **5. The Position of the Solar System in the Galaxy**

Our solar system just happens to be in a safe part of the galaxy that is not too close to the center where it would be in danger of being destroyed by other stars or cosmic activity and not too far away from the center where it would not have the gasses and materials necessary to exist. And our solar system just happens to be in between two spiral arms of the galaxy so we have a clear platform to view and learn about other galaxies.

In their book, *The Privileged Planet*, Gonzales and Richards show a strong connection between these anthropic constants and the factors necessary for scientific observations and discoveries.<sup>6</sup> God designed the Earth not just so we could survive on it. He also designed the Earth so that we could observe and study His creation.

## **6. Giant Planets on the Outer Rim of the Solar System**

We have four huge planets on the edge of our solar system. They have powerful gravitational forces that act like the vacuum cleaners of our solar system. The dark spots on Jupiter were caused by comets being pulled into the planet and crashing on the surface. Some of these comets were bigger than the Earth!

## **7. The Tilt of the Earth on its Axis**

The earth is tilted 23.5 degrees which allows for the change in the season. This variety in the weather is absolutely necessary for life on earth.

## **8. The Movements of the Earth**

The movements of the earth is actually two different constants because the earth spins on its axis at the perfect speed and the earth travels in a nearly perfect circular orbit around the sun. If either of those two variables was significantly changed life could not exist on the planet.

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<sup>6</sup> Guillermo Gonzalez and Jay Richards, *The Privileged Planet: How Our Place in the Cosmos is Designed for Discovery* (Washington, DC: Regency Publishing, Inc., 2004), 166.

## **9. The Size of the Earth**

The size of the earth in relation to the size of the moon and the distance away from the moon must be finely tuned in order for life to exist on the planet. If the earth was larger or smaller, life on the planet would be impossible to maintain.

## **10. The Size of the Sun**

There are a lot of different kinds of stars in the universe. Most of the stars in our galaxy are smaller than our sun, but some of the stars are a lot bigger than our sun. Our planet is orbiting a main sequence G2 dwarf star, which is the only size that would allow for life to exist on earth.

### **More questions to discuss:**

6. Scientists estimate that there are more stars in the universe than there are grains of sand on all the beaches of the earth. And the Bible says that our God knows every star by name (Is. 40:25-26). When you consider how massive the universe is, what do you think about humanity? What do you think about God?

7. Scientists have discovered literally hundreds of “anthropic constants” (factors necessary for life to exist on the earth). Which scientific observations about the earth or the universe stand out to you as the most powerful evidence for intelligent design? Why?

8. If God really did design the universe and our planet with intelligent design and beauty what should our response be?