

Chapter 1 : Agnosticism - Wikipedia

An agnostic that says he would believe in Jesus, if clearly does not yet believe in Jesus, and often what follows the 'if' is an excuse, even if they don't recognize or mean it as such. The answer is the clear proclamation of the Gospel.

Science and Faith Answering an Atheist - Part 1 In this first article from Come Reason Lenny eavesdrops on a discussion taking place between a believer and an atheist. Read on to see how Lenny responds to the objections raised. The following is excerpted from one of the Christian newsgroups in the Net. I felt this is an excellent way to show some of the inconsistencies that people will raise as being "logical". The posting is from Rod Monsees objecting to the response Dan Adkins gave to a previous message. After I published this page, I sent a copy to Rod. The second page contains his responses to my statements and my replies to him. If you wish, you may click on the link following each point, and it will take you to the continuing debate; or you may just read the article from top to bottom. The Trinity is Logical I understand your inability to relate to some of the statements you were responding to; but your inability is based in your rejection of the concept of the supernatural, and belief in the Almighty, supernatural God is the basis upon which the Christian faith is built. Having faith means coming to a conclusion without examining evidence or using logic. You simply accept what your religious teachings say is true, without critically examining those claims. Produce some evidence of the "supernatural", and then we can talk. Observable things are by definition part of the natural world. First, here is a classic mis-definition. He observes the chair, judges it sound based on what he sees and his past experience, then sits down. He has faith that the chair will support him. Everyone exercises faith every day. The question is whether the evidence upon which that faith is based is sound. The Bible has eyewitness accounts of supernatural phenomena. Eyewitness accounts are considered admissible in a court of law. The interesting thing is even the skeptics agree that the Bible contains historically accurate data, unless it refers to a miracle or an unexplainable wonder. Those are the parts they deny. By the way, the definition of supernatural is: Under the Christian faith, of which I am a member, you are wrong. No "good deed" wins entry into heaven. God allows those into His eternal presence who are righteous; none can be righteous who are tainted by sin; all have sinned, therefore none can enter heaven. Except those who have accepted the atonement for their sin that was offered when Christ became a sacrifice on the cross. Through their faith in Christ, they become righteous. So, you can commit genocide, perform terrorist acts, dismember children, etc. That sounds like a pretty poor system of morals to me. Dan does a reasonable job in presenting the Christian belief of justification. Everyone has sinned at some point in their life. No reasonable person would deny that fact. The righteousness that God requires was satisfied by Jesus Christ. By believing in Him, His righteousness is imputed to us through His sacrifice on the cross. That is the belief of Christianity. Rod asks how one can commit heinous crimes and still be forgiven. If God is a holy God, then He cannot have sin in His presence. Think of a glass of purified water. No matter how small or how large the amount of sewage added, the water is no longer pure. No matter how small or how big the sin, God would not be holy if He allowed it in His presence. Fair is an interesting term. It is a term that humans use frequently How could he be "all-loving", but not fair? How could that remotely be called "all-loving"? This is where Dan may blur his message. The Bible presents God as an all-loving father. However, most people fail to realize that He is also a holy God and a God that demands justice. God is a just God, and all sin must be judged. This satisfies His requirements for justice and allows us the opportunity to again come into fellowship with Him. Rarely in the Bible does He compromise. Sounds pretty much like a petty dictator. This is just an ad-hominem attack. Nor would he like an airline pilot to compromise on a safety checklist before his flight took off. If God would allow some evil to exist, which should it be? One can quickly see the futility of this argument. But he does not meet the human definition and expectation of "fairness" -- and we should be glad He does not. We should all be glad that Hitler could now be spending his time in Heaven. All he had to do was ask forgiveness just before he committed suicide. Again, how much sin does it take to make the pure impure? That is provided they receive the remedy provided for them. I often find it interesting that the non-believer has a certain set of ethics; but I often wonder on what are they basing them? Hitler did what was legal in Germany at that time.

Was he still right? Of course not, but why? Ultimately, to have an ethical standard that transcends all governments or man-made institutions, one has to look above mankind. That again brings us to God. The Nuremberg trials that convicted many Nazis for war crimes argued the same. They had committed crimes against God and man. Dan is in error on a couple of points: God does not relent change His mind as humans think of it. He is unchanging or immutable Malachi 3: When passages of scripture speak of God as "changing His mind", it is only from the human point of view. God knew the Ninevites would repent, so He tells them they face judgment unless they do. Whether he is "fair" is not in question. No one would want a God that looks away at sin. Rod demonstrates that himself when he complains of Hitler being able to be forgiven. Thus, God sees us with the purity of Jesus, and with His righteousness, we can enter His presence. What Rod says would be true This is the thought of which most unbelieving people are the most afraid: That is what the Bible is all about. Ironically, this idea is also the most comforting, if you know Him. Jesus is the source of refuge and protection for the believer, or the point of judgment for the non-believer. Though we believe Jesus does live, we also believe he "was marred more than any man" Isaiah More than that, He gave up His privileges as God to live forever as a man. I think it shows many points where some basic study in logic can help the believer adequately answer those with doubts or who may be opposed to Christianity. Please let me know what you think. E-newsletter Signup Get the latest news and articles delivered to your inbox each month - absolutely free!

Chapter 2 : Answering the Atheists

(7) Recent Agnosticism is also to a great extent anti-religious, criticizing adversely not only the knowledge we have of God, but the grounds of belief in Him as well. A combination of Agnosticism with Atheism, rather than with sentimental, irrational belief, is the course adopted by many.

There are many questions an atheist is faced with that he will never be able to answer. Like, if the big bang is true how come only one explosion in the history of the universe produced harmony? Which came first the chicken or the egg? You get the idea. Why did Trump run for the presidency after amassing the wealth he has? Why does the position of CEO appeal to most? Why do men spend hours in the gym dropping barbells on their chests or crumbling under the squat rack to get stronger? Because men are obsessed with power. Properly, whole, entire or perfect, in a moral sense. Hence, pure in heart, temper or dispositions; free from sin and sinful affections. Man is unholy, Jeremiah And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Men are wicked hell-bound sinners and to try to make God out to be like any other man just exercising power willy-nilly is ridiculous. God is all powerful AND Holy. For I am the Lord your God: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. When God exercises his power its in holiness. This type carried on throughout the Old Testament, as men had to sacrifice a clean animal to have their sins covered, but the sin could not be taken away. Mankind now, being born in the image of Adam and not God Gen 5: In the Old Testament if you kept the law and sacrifices you made it Ezekiel So God prophesied in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 that Jesus Christ would come and pay for the sins of the world by his blood. No longer would man have to rely on the blood of an innocent animal. Mary was not a perpetual virgin Matt 1: And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Because the Holiness of God requires a Holy sacrifice to atone for the sinful nature of mankind acquired by the sin against God of Adam and Eve in the garden; and allow men to get to heaven. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. If Jesus had not gone through with Calvary then all of mankind would have the wrath of almighty God awaiting us after death John 3: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: BUT Jesus Christ did go through with Calvary, he did die, was buried, and rose again the third day to satisfy the need for a holy sacrifice Romans 5: For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 1 Corinthians And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five

hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. And there it is, the reason, why God almighty would sacrifice his only begotten Sonâ€”For your sins! If God did let everyone off the hook and let everyone in heaven then he is not Holy, and is no better than you or I or the Antichrist sitting in Rome. You need the holiness of God if you want to make it. And only Jesus Christ can give it to you. If a man rejects Jesus Christ, God will reject him Matt Yet if a man receives Jesus Christ John 1: Eternity will be too late.

Chapter 3 : What is agnosticism?

Agnosticism exists only because we need an answer to this incorrect question. Atheism is the realization that the question is incorrect. An unbeliever simply does not have an equivalent answer to the question of absolute certainty.

Answering an Agnostic in Crisis I received this urgent sounding message in my inbox: Hi Tristan, I hope you can help me out. I was once a Christian, my faith was at its peak ten years ago. From then on, day by day my faith in Christ diminished until a couple of years ago it completely expired. From then on I continued believing in a deity, but certainly not the God of Abraham. Today, I am agnostic verging, just verging, on atheism. I wish I could be an atheist but deep down I doubt I can. I rely solely on reason and my reason tells me that we cannot know whether a god exists which is why I am only an agnostic for the time being. I would probably feel finally free if I admitted to myself that I am an atheist. It is like being gay, first you have to face the fact that you are gay and then to embrace it. Do you have any advice for me? Here is my response: Dear Agnostic , All I can do is give you my thoughts and opinions. What is true, and what one wishes to believe, are different things. Agnosticism deals with what we can know, so it deals with truth claims. Consider the following question: Is it true that Mt. Everest is the highest mountain in the world? Everest is the tallest mountain in the world because there is a definitive answer to this question. Everest and have found it is the tallest. Consciousness is a good example of this. We cannot see or measure it. But we can detect it indirectly. We know, for example, that most sentient animals are conscious creatures. This awareness of other minds of the other allows us to recognize that the conscious mind is a real thing. That which we recognize in ourselves we recognize in others as well, and we realize we are like them, we share the same emotions, and can show empathy and altruism with respect to those like us. It might just be a more highly evolved form of consciousness. A sentient alien, a super-computer, or even a conscious, living galaxy. So, as far as anyone knows, life on Earth is the only kind of life that exhibits this higher form of consciousness – at least the sort of minds that we would consider conscious, living, thinking minds capable of rationality. This we do not find outside our own corner of the galaxy. Theologians, apologists, and believers faced with this dilemma then turn around and make the opposite claim that God is beyond our comprehension. Instead of a conscious mind we can detect, God is rendered undetectable. I must wonder, if this is true then what is there to know? It is, after all, possible. However, when we talk about things that are plausible, we are talking about things that can be argued for or against. If we argue for the truth of a matter, like whether something really exists, we must have positive evidence to base our argument upon. If I say that God really exists, for example, I have to have real support to back up that claim. If we are adding a postulate to the null hypothesis, e. If I make the positive claim that Mt. Everest is the highest mountain in the world, then I have to be able to support that claim with evidence. An un-evidenced positive claim is an empty claim. Which is why those who have zero evidence for God can only profess belief in God – not certainty. Atheism is not a positive claim. It does not add anything to the null hypothesis in this case, the natural world is as we observe it. This is what is known as weak-atheism or agnostic-atheism. Now, if you make the counter-claim the negative claim you are saying that there is absolutely no God. This is what is known as strong-atheism or gnostic-atheism. The strong-belief where you feel convinced that there are no gods. But this we do not find. So atheism aligns with the null hypothesis, the world being as we observe it. So that makes the God-hypothesis the one that needs to be proved. At the same time, you can remain skeptical, but choose to believe. This is called agnostic-theism, because although you admit the evidence is inconclusive and that you cannot know for certain, you feel inclined to believe for whatever reasons. But once again, I feel I must stress that this is still making a positive claim – in this case the postulate is a possible deity rather than a prospective deity, but both assumptions add to the null hypothesis. This means you have to make, at the least, an argument to sustain your belief. I consider myself an agnostic-atheist because I know that I cannot definitively rule out the existence of a God, but that there is no evidence for any God or gods either, and so I have no reasons that compel me to believe theism is true. Minus any convincing reasons to believe, the default position becomes skepticism. Everest, for example, is the highest mountain in the world. Everest has time and again been demonstrated as the tallest mountain on this

planet. This is why I think most agnostic-theists get a bad rap. They are technically saying they are skeptical of what they believe based on the fact that there is no compelling evidence to support their beliefs, but they choose to believe it anyway. We can only stare at them blankly and scratch our chins. I think the way you describe yourself you probably lean more toward agnostic-atheist. I find this is a very reasonable position to take. If you stop to think about it, agnostic-theists are making a rather bold claim. I find this position unreasonable. Because not knowing something could never lead to a conclusion of any certainty. In other words, their feelings are being distorted by what they wish to be true rather than letting themselves be guided by what is most likely to be true. So how can they be uncertain whether there is a God then settle on the choice that God exists? I think the Great Agnostic Robert G. Personally, I would find it shocking to find out that there was a God controlling things behind the scenes, a man behind the curtain so to speak, pulling the levers and manipulating things to his will, like the Great Wizard of Oz. I am wholly skeptical of any such a claim because I see absolutely no evidence to even assume such a possibility in the first place. And then those signs fit with, coincidentally enough, exactly what they imagine their God to be like. In other words, these people want God to be real so badly that they see him everywhere they look. I find such thinking to be entirely wishful and overly expectant. Presumably, they wish for it to be this way because they want the universe to have meaning, so they imagine there is a God, and then suddenly the universe has meaning for them! That way they can pretend that their lives have meaning in a vast universe of apparent meaninglessness. They would feel lost in a never ending void of hopelessness and indifference “so they like to conjure up Gods, which always have the unlucky habit of being created as mere reflections of human desires instead of the other way around. My mother, who is still a believing Christian, likes to tell me she knows God is real. How does she know? It is all representative of human psychology. It fulfills our desires. It fills the void of a meaningless universe. It soothes our fears. Personally, I take the view that the universe is without meaning, but like Fredrick Nietzsche I feel that we have the ability to supply meaning to the universe. In fact, I would say this is true of everybody. They simply mistake their desires for truths, and then say because they want it this way rather than some other way then it must be true for everyone. Again, this is more wishful thinking. I am reminded of what Bertrand Russell once said: Almost inevitably some part of him is aware that they are myths and that he believes them only because they are comforting. But he dare not face this thought, and he therefore cannot carry his own reflections to any logical conclusion. Why would they even think, for a second, that they would be wrong? All that would mean is a sense of dread, insecurity, and purposelessness. Which means, at least in my mind, atheists are brave. I think this can be said of all of us, but especially of theists and believers. At the end of the day, it simply comes down to where your priorities are. Do you value knowledge, asking question, discovering answers, and gaining a better understanding of the world “or are you content to idly while away the hours twiddling your thumbs and believing you already know all there is to know? As my favorite Free Thinker G. It means caution, independence, honesty and veracity.

Chapter 4 : Grass People: Answering Agnosticism

Now, these atheists argue that just as that man is a fool, so we would be fools to believe the universe was designed so that we could exist. The problem with this argument is that it radically misunderstands the consequences of what would happen if the physical constants and quantities were off.

Charles Darwin Raised in a religious environment, Charles Darwin studied to be an Anglican clergyman. While eventually doubting parts of his faith, Darwin continued to help in church affairs, even while avoiding church attendance. Darwin stated that it would be "absurd to doubt that a man might be an ardent theist and an evolutionist". Though Huxley began to use the term "agnostic" in , his opinions had taken shape some time before that date. In a letter of September 23, , to Charles Kingsley , Huxley discussed his views extensively: I see no reason for believing it, but, on the other hand, I have no means of disproving it. I have no a priori objections to the doctrine. No man who has to deal daily and hourly with nature can trouble himself about a priori difficulties. Give me such evidence as would justify me in believing in anything else, and I will believe that. Why should I not? It is not half so wonderful as the conservation of force or the indestructibility of matter It is no use to talk to me of analogies and probabilities. I know what I mean when I say I believe in the law of the inverse squares, and I will not rest my life and my hopes upon weaker convictions That my personality is the surest thing I know may be true. But the attempt to conceive what it is leads me into mere verbal subtleties. I have champed up all that chaff about the ego and the non-ego, noumena and phenomena, and all the rest of it, too often not to know that in attempting even to think of these questions, the human intellect flounders at once out of its depth. And again, to the same correspondent, May 6, Nevertheless I know that I am, in spite of myself, exactly what the Christian would call, and, so far as I can see, is justified in calling, atheist and infidel. I cannot see one shadow or tittle of evidence that the great unknown underlying the phenomenon of the universe stands to us in the relation of a Father [who] loves us and cares for us as Christianity asserts. So with regard to the other great Christian dogmas, immortality of soul and future state of rewards and punishments, what possible objection can I—who am compelled perforce to believe in the immortality of what we call Matter and Force, and in a very unmistakable present state of rewards and punishments for our deeds—have to these doctrines? Give me a scintilla of evidence, and I am ready to jump at them. Of the origin of the name agnostic to describe this attitude, Huxley gave the following account: The one thing in which most of these good people were agreed was the one thing in which I differed from them. They were quite sure they had attained a certain "gnosis"—had, more or less successfully, solved the problem of existence; while I was quite sure I had not, and had a pretty strong conviction that the problem was insoluble. And, with Hume and Kant on my side, I could not think myself presumptuous in holding fast by that opinion So I took thought, and invented what I conceived to be the appropriate title of "agnostic". It came into my head as suggestively antithetic to the "gnostic" of Church history, who professed to know so much about the very things of which I was ignorant. To my great satisfaction the term took. In , Huxley wrote: Therefore, although it be, as I believe, demonstrable that we have no real knowledge of the authorship, or of the date of composition of the Gospels, as they have come down to us, and that nothing better than more or less probable guesses can be arrived at on that subject. Ross championed agnosticism in opposition to the atheism of Charles Bradlaugh as an open-ended spiritual exploration. If one arrives at a negative conclusion concerning the first part of the question, the second part of the question does not arise; and my position, as you may have gathered, is a negative one on this matter. However, later in the same lecture, discussing modern non-anthropomorphic concepts of God, Russell states: On the other hand, if I am to convey the right impression to the ordinary man in the street I think I ought to say that I am an Atheist, because when I say that I cannot prove that there is not a God, I ought to add equally that I cannot prove that there are not the Homeric gods. In his essay, What Is An Agnostic? Or, if not impossible, at least impossible at the present time. An atheist, like a Christian, holds that we can know whether or not there is a God. The Christian holds that we can know there is a God; the atheist, that we can know there is not. The Agnostic suspends judgment, saying that there are not sufficient grounds either for affirmation or for denial. Later in the essay, Russell adds: Christian agnosticism Wikiquote has

quotations related to:

Chapter 5 : Sharing the Gospel: Answering Questions from Agnostics | Project Inspired

Answering the Atheists Sam Harris Sam Harris wrote a slender volume entitled 'Letter to a Christian Nation,' in which he intones, "One of the enduring pathologies of human culture is the tendency to raise children to fear and demonize other human beings on the basis of religious faith."

This is not a logical position to hold since to know there is no God means the person would have to know all things to know there is no God. Since he cannot know all things if he did he would be God , then he cannot logically say there is no God. I believe there is no God. To say "I believe there is no God" is a conscious choice. Then, on what do you base your choice: How could evidence disprove the existence of God who is, by definition, the creator of reality and separate from it? I am defending the Christian God as revealed in the Bible. Testimony is admissible in court as evidence, but no one can rightly testify that God does not exist. At best, logic can only disprove theistic proofs. Disproving theistic proofs does not mean there is no God. It only means that the proofs presented thus far are insufficient. Logic can be used to disprove theistic evidences that are presented. If there were a logical argument that proved God did not exist, it has not yet been made known. If it were known, then it would be in use by atheists. If faith alone, then the position is not held by logic or evidence and is an arbitrary position. A combination of insufficient means does not validate atheism. For someone to believe there is no God is to hold that belief by faith since there is no evidence that positively supports atheism, and there are no logical proofs that God does not exist. It is, after all, virtually impossible to prove a negative. There is no evidence for God. Since he cannot do this if he did he would be God , then he cannot logically say there is no evidence for God. If a person has not seen sufficient evidence for God, then it means he has not yet seen all evidence; and there might be sufficient evidence. This would mean that God may indeed exist; so the person is really an agnostic concerning God, which makes his atheist position inconsistent with his statement. I lack belief in God. To lack belief in God appears to be a defensive position since the assertive atheist positions are wrought with logical problems shown above. The problem is that "lacking belief" in God is an intellectual position made by a choice to "lack belief. Any position held must have reasons, or it is not a position. It would be nothing. The atheist who asserts that he lacks belief is asserting a position of lack of belief. My cat lacks belief in God as does my computer. Are they also atheists? Therefore, simply lacking belief is not a sufficient statement since it can include animals and inanimate objects. If you say that "lacking belief" refers only to yourself as a human being, then see point A. Is this a choice you have made? What made you not believe in God? Is there an intelligent reason why you do not believe in God? Can you please tell me what it is? Naturalism is true; therefore, there is no need for God. Naturalism is the belief that all phenomena can be explained in terms of natural causes and laws. If all things were explainable through natural laws, it does not mean that God does not exist since God is, by definition, outside of natural laws since He is the creator of them. Some might say that if all things can be explained via natural laws, then it means there is no evidence for God. But, can all things be explained via naturalism? No, because naturalism has not explained all phenomena known today, nor can we assert that all things in the future will be explained via naturalism because we do not know all phenomena that can and will occur. Therefore, it is not a fact that naturalism can explain all things. Therefore, God is not negated via naturalism.

Chapter 6 : Reasonable Christian: An Answer to an Agnostic

answering agnosticism I think philosopher William L. Rowe describes agnosticism well. He says an agnostic is someone who neither believes nor disbelieves in the existence of God, while a theist believes that God does exist and an atheist believes that God does not exist.

This past week was no exception. As an agnostic, humanist, and naturalist, I am sure that you view me as the enemy. I stopped and reflected on that for a while. Why would he assume I, Dr. Howe or in fact, MCOI, would view him as the enemy? In my case, I grew up as an atheist. So, I opted for the safer path of agnosticism. As my friend Dr. Norman Geisler points out, there are two kinds of agnostics, the ornery agnostic and the ordinary agnostic. I guess I must have been more of an ordinary agnostic, because I was open to information that might change my view. And when confronted with good reasons to believe, I was willing to truly consider the evidence and accept the change in worldview that entailed. To this day, I think that any belief worth holding needs to be able to stand up to examination and testing. Questions are our friends, because answering them refines our beliefs or, if they are found false, allows us to abandon false beliefs. But I am actually a friend; a friend trying to rescue you; a friend trying to rescue you from a false belief system; a friend trying to rescue you from a cult. I can identify with the sentiment here. Joy and I, and in fact everyone associated with MCOI really do care about folks we believe are caught up in false belief systems. I appreciate it when others challenge my assumptions and are willing to rescue me from what they see as false beliefs. Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses. I am told not to listen to my non-member friends and family. I suppose that perhaps some church somewhere teaches this kind of thing, but certainly none of the leaders I have met. One of the keys to the historic Christian faith is that it promotes examination and has strong answers to questions. In an attempt to support his story line he writes: Your magical belief system tells you that witches exist and have the power to call up the dead I Samuel chapter 16. Your magical belief system teaches you that wizards can turn walking sticks into snakes Exodus chapter 7. Your magical belief system teaches you that goblins demons can enter and possess large herds of pigs Mark chapter 5 driving them to commit mass suicide. This is not a rational, informed, belief system, friends. This is an ancient, scientifically ignorant, superstition. In determining whether or not Christianity is true, the first question to be answered is, does God exist? An interesting short video I just saw is helpful on that question. This is an important question to answer. We know that from nothing, nothing comes "so how did everything which exists come from nothing in the beginning? Now that is an appeal to magic! We believe that the evidence shows that God exists and has revealed Himself in history, especially in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. This is confirmed by the physical resurrection of Jesus. There are many proofs for the resurrection of Jesus, which I will not go into here, but are available to anyone who wants to examine them. Do we believe witches exist? Well, yes and so do groups like the Covenant of the Goddess and Fellowship of Isis but we do not believe that witches have the power to truly call up or communicate with the spirit of someone who has died. The witch was terrified! So, the power resided in God and not the witch. That miracles are not normative "they do not happen regularly" does not prove that miracles do not happen at all. But a miracle without a miracle worker! I strongly encourage you to do this: Allow for the possibility that your belief system is wrong. Read information that challenges your belief system That is something I often encourage so we are on the same page there. An untested faith is not worth having.

Chapter 7 : Answers for Atheists and Agnostics

The following is excerpted from one of the Christian newsgroups in the Net. I felt this is an excellent way to show some of the inconsistencies that people will raise as being "logical".

I would like to point out that comparing the existence of a unicorn to that of a God is completely irrelevant. As for the evidence supporting the existence of God, not necessarily the Abrahamic God, well, there is plenty. After witnessing both theistic and atheistic arguments for and against the existence of a supernatural power, I must admit that I personally found the latter objectively more convincing. That is, from a purely philosophical, rational point of view. I will present you with two arguments that support the existence of a supernatural creator, I will then present you with evidence to support the existence of a personal creator, an Abrahamic God. Now, many theories do not agree that the universe had a starting point, including ones that suggest an oscillating universe, parallel universes, and many more. They have all been rejected due to inconsistency with logic. The theory of causality suggests that for anything that comes into being, also has a cause. What caused the Big Bang? Considering that the Big Bang initiated the dimensions of space and time, we can logically conclude that nothing precluded it. Therefore, we are also compelled to rationally infer what caused this Big Bang the theory of causality. Well, Since nothing existed before the Big Bang, this leaves us with the only reasonable conclusion that it must have been a supernatural cause outside the dimensions of space and time that triggered the Big Bang. The initial conditions, the values of the constants in space, must have had to be in perfect order for any life to be possible at all. Physicists explain that if any of these values were altered even slightly, a life permitting universe would not exist. Now, in atheistic perspective, the universe randomly came into being and produced life-permitting conditions. Now, this is extremely implausible. Consider my card game analogy. Logically, the probability of being dealt any hand is equally likely, the probability of being dealt AA the exact same probability of being dealt K2. Now, consider after having played for 5 hours. Your opponent has been dealt an A,K of hearts, and the flop was Q,J,10 of hearts every single time for 5 straight hours. Of course, you would be very suspicious. You would consider one of the following scenarios. A Your opponent is the luckiest person in the history of this earth and just so happened to get dealt a Royal Flush every single hand. B The Dealer and your opponent and conartists, they have intricately designed a way for your opponent to get a Royal Flush every single time thus taking your money away from you. We are faced with the same dilemma for the case of the existence of God. You can either believe that all these initial conditions that were unmistakably perfect for even the possibility of the existence of life came out of absolute randomness or luck or a supernatural force that exists beyond the boundaries of space and time in fact set these conditions for life to exist. God is timeless, infinite in nature. Thus, the argument, "so what came before God? These are two arguments for the existence of a supernatural force. Now, an argument for the existence of a personal God. If objective moral values exist, then God exists since a personal being must have set a Moral Law for his creations. This statement is universally accepted by both theists and atheists. Atheists fundamentally believe that morality is in fact subjective. I will argue against this. Perhaps so, but this fundamentally conflicts when you believe morality is actually subjective. Consider the holocaust, for example, a dark time in human history that is now universally dubbed as brutal, inhumane, and immoral. However, if you went back in time and asked Adolf Hitler and many Germans whether they thought that the Holocaust was immoral, they will undoubtedly answer you with a confident "No". Thus subjectively speaking, the Holocaust was perfectly justifiable and moral act. It is completely irrelevant what you, I, or anyone believes. Aca May 16, at 7: From my perspective both are mythical creatures and there is no evidence for either. But, in these kinds of debates usually we skip the first step. That is, from a purely philosophical, rational point of view I will present you with two arguments that support the existence of a supernatural creator, I will then present you with evidence to support the existence of a personal creator, an Abrahamic God. One could also argue for unlimited number of big bangs and big crunches that have been taking place eternally and so on. My knowledge of physics is limited, but my understanding is that multiple universe theory makes sense in quantum physics. Still, current evidence points to Big Bang. We also know that particles pop in and out of

existence in vacuum. Apart from that, why is it rational that, if we do not know something, it was god? You understand that by posing god as the starter of the universe whilst at the same time insisting on causality you are question begging. You can not remain logically consistent and at the same time exclude, by definition, god out of realm of logic. I will stop here, for today. Family duties Would you mind if we transfer this to some forum? It is much easier way to have a dialogue I think. Maybe juventuz forum, in their religion section?

Chapter 8 : Pastor Louie's Shepherd's Log: ANSWERING AGNOSTICISM

Atheists have Proven God Does Not Exist. Right? - Only if that god is not the God of the Bible; Religion is the Cause of All (Most) of the World's Problems - Religion is not even close to being the leading cause suffering in the world. In fact, atheists have been responsible for most of it within the last years.

Design Contingency "For since something must needs have been from eternity, as has been already proved, and is granted on all hands, either there has always existed some one unchangeable and independent being, from which all other beings that are or ever were in the universe have received their original; or else there has been an infinite succession of changeable and dependent beings, produced one from another, in an endless progression, without any original cause at all. Now this latter supposition is so very absurd, that though all atheism must in its account of most things as shall be shown hereafter, terminate in it, yet I think very few atheists ever were so weak as openly and directly to defend it; for it is plainly impossible, and contradictory to itself. This proof does not ask much of the world; if there is only one thing which exists, which can be known to be contingent through inventory of its concept, this proof is happy. To give a sufficient reason for a contingent thing to exist, one must look outside it, beyond it either to another contingent or to a necessary being. The world is filled with things whose existence depends upon other things; we realize this because they come and they go, like smoke or vapor. If the cause for their existence lay within them, they would ever abide. We can recall times when we were, but then we run into a brick wall; we are contingent beings. This is a matter of common observation: If we admit the existence of even one contingent thing: Yet there is one contingent thing; therefore God also exists. The hinge point is that everything cannot be contingent; if we set off down a daisy chain where one contingent thing derives its existence from another, which in turns derives its existence from another contingent thing, we are in the state of an economy which functions through everybody borrowing five dollars from one another: Not everything can be contingent: But it is impossible for these always to exist, for that which is possible not to be at some time is not. Therefore, if everything is possible not to be, then at one time there could have been nothing in existence. Now if this were true, even now there would be nothing in existence, because that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing. Therefore, if at one time nothing was in existence, it would have been impossible for anything to have begun to exist; and thus even now nothing would be in existence -- which is clearly false. Therefore, not all beings are merely possible, but there must exist something the existence of which is necessary Therefore we must admit the existence of some being having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity. This all men speak of as God. Nothing that once did not exist can be the cause of its own existence. When it did not exist, how could it call itself into being? Thus, all contingent things depend upon something outside themselves for their existence. If any contingent thing exists in the world rather than nothing, then a necessary being must also exist. That that unchangeable and independent being, which has existed from eternity, without any external cause of its existence, must be self-existent, that is, necessarily-existing:. Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? Order As we cast our gaze about the world, we find the objects around us obeying natural law with wondrous docility. Why is the world that way at all? The very smallest things are not so accommodating, so we know it need not be this way! Why does the human day-dream of mathematics fit the world hand in glove -- just as if God were a mathematician? Mathematics works, from from observation, but from the opposite direction, from deduction. Its objects are not even objects in the world; no material thing is the triangle of the geometricians, only a feeble caricature thereof. Yet in the end mathematics is found an apt model of the universe. How could that be, unless the mind that made the world thinks along the same lines? Likewise, the world obeys law, just as if it trembled in fear of judgment. Law implies a law-giver. Intelligibility implies intelligence; the simplest and most economical account for an intelligible world is an intelligent artificier. The End "The fifth way is taken from the governance of things. We see that things which lack knowledge, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result. Hence it

is plain that they achieve their end not by chance, but by design. Now whatever lacks knowledge cannot move towards an end, unless it be directed by some being endowed with knowledge and intelligence, as the arrow is directed by the archer. Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are ordered to their end; and this being we call God. Living creatures are so constructed as to be competent to continue their existence; their construction is fitted to their needs. But widen the focus to the whole: The universe is a vast machine for producing life; life is good, yet the universe, being unthinking, cannot know that life is good. Thus it works to achieve an end of which it can have no cognizance. Some mind, capable of apprehending the good, must therefore have moved it so. Had nature opted for a slightly different set of numbers, the world would be a very different place. More intriguing still, certain crucial structures, such as solar-type stars, depend for their characteristic features on wildly improbable numerical accidents. And when one goes on to study cosmology -- the overall structure and evolution of the universe -- incredulity mounts. If the universe were intentionally designed of a set purpose, it would not look any different from the way it does look. Just so anyone entering this world, as it were some vast house or city, and beholding the sky circling round and embracing within it all things, and planets and fixed stars without any variation moving in rhythmical harmony and with advantage to the whole, and earth with the central space assigned to it, water and air flowing in set order as its boundary, and over and above these, living creatures, mortal and immortal beings, plants and fruits in great variety, he will surely argue that these have not been wrought without consummate art, but that the Maker of this whole universe was and is God. Those, who thus base their reasoning on what is before their eyes, apprehend God by means of a shadow cast, discerning the Artificier by means of His works. How can one investigate whether a thing exists in the world, without knowing what the thing sought is? How else to know what is looked for? Yet no one expects to see one. Likewise we understand that, if God exists, He is omniscient, omnipotent, exists necessarily, is omnipresent, etc. Is the beauty of the world evidence of its nature and origin? The world is the most perfect work of art. Therefore, the world was made by a good and most perfect Author. Thus we have the knowledge of the existence of God.

Chapter 9 : Atheism and Agnosticism (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

The foundation of an agnostic life is twofold: "In case there is a God, I'm going to try and be a good person, but I'm still going to live life the way I want to because if God doesn't exist, I don't want to miss anything." Agnosticism has always seemed to me like a confusing belief to hold.

Atheistic materialism assumes out of hand that there is no God because in doing empirical science there can be no appeal to supernatural intervention, otherwise science degenerates into superstition and mysticism. However, the philosophy of science has challenged the idea that somehow "science" is neutral. Thomas Kuhn in his classic book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* argued convincingly that science is basically controlled by sociological power structures very similar to a religious organization like the Roman Catholic Church. In other words, there is a degree of subjectivity in doing science and in determining the current "dogma. Do blackholes exist and what about string theory? Can life spontaneously generate itself from a primordial soup of the right combination of amino acids? No scientist has been able to duplicate the process. You would think if they know how it happened it could be repeated in laboratory conditions. Really the agnostic position is no better than the atheist position because it presupposes that there can be no rationally acceptable answers. But if that is so then empirical science should become agnostic instead of making theoretical presuppositions and then testing those presuppositions. You assume that the burden of proof is on the Christian. When you said that there is no way to prove Jesus rose from the dead, etc. But how can the atheist be rationally certain that there is no God apart from presupposing that there is no God? The atheist is on equal ground with the Christian since the burden of proof is equally his to prove there is no God. That comes down to rationally and logically comparing religions. There is a reason why Christianity is one of the three major religions in the world. It is because it is superior rationally, ethically, and spiritually. Of course, I am biased and presupposing that. Forgive me for being blunt here but agnosticism is in fact a choice. You have deliberately chosen not to choose and you do so based on your presupposition that God is unknowable and that Christianity is irrational. But that is far from the case as you intimated in your inner struggle. God is indeed incomprehensible as far as knowing everything about an omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient being goes. But incomprehensibility is different from unknowability. To believe or not to believe is based on your own choices and your own presuppositions since there is no absolute knowledge of anything. We are all in the same situation on that point whether the choice is atheism, agnosticism, Christianity or some other religion. The bottom line is presupposition. In my opinion Christianity is compatible with science and it is superior to atheism, agnosticism and to any other religion when rationally examined and when one finally decides to believe. Calvinism takes the position that God will actually cause you to believe, though you must make the choice John 1: The onus is still on you but God will help you to make that decision if you are willing to stop choosing rebellion and simply submit to the Creator. Choose you this day whom you will serve.