26-1028wc Neighborly Apologetics

Dr. Del Tackett's Neighborly Apologetics Webinar Series

26-1028wc - *NA- 4-Faith & Reason, Dr. Del Tackett*

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Neighborly Apologetics Transcript

26-1028-Transcript: 4-Faith & Reason (0:04 - 59:29)

Title: *Is Biblical Christianity a Leap of Faith?,* **Facilitator**: Scott Reynolds

1st Half - (0:04 - 37:09) Order Requires A Cause

(0:04) Mark, I appreciate it very much, and let me bring my greetings and welcome to all of you. (0:10) Thank you for joining us tonight. (0:13) To some extent, it's great that we can do this this way.

(0:19) I'm thinking that tonight I would much rather be in a classroom with you (0:24) because there are places where I really would want us to interact on this material, (0:29) but we obviously can't do that. (0:34) And especially for those of us who are in Colorado, I just drove here on very, very slick roads. (0:40) I know there are a lot of people who have experienced a lot of snow recently.

(0:48) So for that reason, it's kind of nice for us to sit in a warm room and not have to go out and drive. (0:55) Okay, so here's what I'm going to do tonight. (0:58) We're going to share my slides again.

(1:00) We're going to go through those slides. (1:02) There are quite a few of them. (1:04) Just to preface this, we're going to be dealing with a lot of things that are, I guess we could say, (1:11) more philosophical than what we've seen maybe in any of the times in the past.

(1:21) And so for some of you, it could well be that this is going to be old hat. (1:28) For others of you, it could be that this is new. (1:32) It could be that you aren't that interested in philosophy.

(1:37) But we're going to talk about philosophy. (1:39) We're going to talk about science. (1:40) We're going to talk a little bit about random numbers and DNA and topoisomerases and the cosmic cube and arrowheads.

(1:53) So there's a lot of things that will come together tonight in order for us to address this issue of faith and reason. (2:02) And again, just to set the foundation here again properly, this is neighborly apologetics. (2:09) We will be looking, and we're thankful for the academic apologetics that many people have put together.

(2:15) Very brilliant minds. (2:17) What we want to do is to talk about how we engage with our neighbor. (2:22) According to the royal law, to love your neighbor, that God has entrusted the prime work of the kingdom of the common Christian family.

(2:29) And they have a priestly role in their neighborhoods. (2:33) My prayer is that that will be returned by the body of Christ in Western culture. (2:38) But in doing so, we need to not only know how to love our neighbor and to build that relationship with our neighbor, (2:45) but we need to be prepared when we find out that if Mrs. Smith across the street has a problem that we'll talk about tonight with faith and reason.

(2:57) In other words, she doesn't believe that faith has anything logical or reasonable associated with it, that it is illogical. (3:08) Then we need to know how to talk to Mrs. Smith about that. (3:13) Mark mentioned a few of these questions.

(3:15) Is Christianity a leap of faith? (3:18) I don't know how many times have I heard charge that also belief in God is irrational. (3:26) Believing in Jesus as a savior is irrational. (3:30) Some people will say, no, I believe in Jesus as a historical figure, but not that he was a messiah, not that he was the savior of the world, (3:40) and not that he did miracles and so forth.

(3:43) And others who would lay claim to the fact that we're now in this age of science and reason, and we've discarded belief in all those fairy tales. (3:55) And there are questions that you might hear. (3:57) I've heard them.

(3:58) You might hear them. (4:00) They may even pop up in our own minds. (4:02) It may pop up in the minds of our children.

(4:07) And we need to be able to handle those. (4:09) Even if they're in our own mind, we need to be able to walk through those properly. (4:13) So we're going to do everything we can to do our very best tonight to deal with this issue (4:19) and how we can also present these things to those that we come in contact to have these issues.

(4:29) And first things, we always have to make sure that our focus is on God, upon the nature of God, the courage of God. (4:37) For all truth emanates from the very character and nature of God, and that's why we always go back to him to draw upon the truth about who he is. (4:48) That gives us the foundation for all of truth and for all of reason and all of our logic.

(4:58) Now, I wish we had time to talk about this because I know there are some people who actually will bow their back a little bit at this. (5:10) We're not going to spend a lot of time trying to argue these cases with you here in the beginning, but God is rational, and he is logical. (5:21) He has created us in his image.

(5:24) He has given us a rational mind and a logical mind. (5:27) He speaks to us with rationality, speaks to us with logic. (5:34) He is the one who lays out the logical statement before Adam and Eve.

(5:39) If you eat of the tree, this will happen. (5:41) If you do not, this will happen. (5:43) To have the children of Israel assembled between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim and give them the if-then-else clause.

(5:49) If you follow me, there will be blessings. (5:53) If you deny me and turn away from me, there will be curses. (5:58) There is the logic and rationale of God's word that is consistent throughout

from the very beginning to the end.

(6:07) Paul's writings are filled with logical statements. (6:11) God is rational. (6:13) He is logical, and he always acts in accordance with that nature.

(6:18) He always acts rationally. (6:19) He always acts with purpose, and therefore he does not act capriciously nor randomly. (6:27) And that's one of the beautiful things about the true God.

(6:31) The gods that man make, which are not gods at all, but the gods that man make, there's a reason to be afraid, (6:41) because we don't know how they're going to act. (6:43) We don't know if they're going to get angry. (6:44) We don't know if they're going to all of a sudden wake up on the wrong side of the bed.

(6:48) We don't know if they're going to have some whim that will prove to be disastrous for us. (6:55) God is not like that. (6:57) He does not act capriciously, even when he acts in judgment.

(7:00) His judgment is the result of the rational, logical process associated with his truth and judgment according to his word. (7:11) So we begin with God in this whole discussion because we want to make sure, (7:19) and I have heard this from believers who have a position that logic is not really a part of Christianity. (7:30) And so it's like we have this double-edged ax or sword here.

(7:38) On one side, the world might say that your biblical Christian faith is irrational. (7:48) There are people on the other side who will say that logic and rationality has nothing to do with Christianity. (7:56) So we're going to deal with, first of all, the charge that is in our topic tonight of faith and reason.

(8:06) And that charge is basically the charge that biblical Christianity is irrational. (8:12) Faith in God is irrational. (8:14) Belief in Jesus Christ and the miracles, all of that is irrational.

(8:19) And so I'm going to play this clip. (8:22) Some of you have heard this clip before if you've been through the Truth Project. (8:27) Will Provine, who has now since passed away, I pray God will have mercy on his soul.

(8:34) He might in the last days have embraced the Lord Jesus. (8:40) But Dr. Will Provine, this is in a debate he had with Dr. Johnson. (8:47) He was a professor at Cornell University.

(8:50) He believed in evolution. (8:55) He believed in naturalism, the philosophy of naturalism. (8:59) And so we're going to use his statements to help clarify and lay out the charge against Christianity, (9:09) biblical Christianity that we're going to be talking about here tonight.

(9:13) So let me roll this clip. (9:14) And when you die, you're not going to be surprised because you're going to be completely dead. (9:20) Now me, if I live after I'm dead, I'm going to be really, really surprised.

(9:29) But at least I'm going to go to hell where I won't have all those grinning creatures from Sunday morning with me. (9:42) Let me summarize my views on what modern evolutionary biology tells us loud and clear. (9:50) And I must say that these are basically Darwin's views.

(9:53) There are no gods, no purpose and forces of any kind, no life after death. (9:58) When I die, I am absolutely certain that I'm going to be completely dead. (10:05) That's just all that's going to be in the end of me.

(10:07) There is no ultimate foundation for ethics, no ultimate meaning in life, and no free will for humans either. (10:15) What an unintelligible idea. (10:19) Christian humanism has a great deal going for it.

(10:22) It's warm, it's kindly in many ways. (10:26) Maybe not to people who are a little different, but that's all right. (10:29) If you're gay, it's not so hot for many Christians.

(10:32) But anyway, let's leave that aside and look at the good parts of Christian humanism. (10:36) The bad part is that you have to suspend your rational mind. (10:41) And that part is really nasty.

(10:44) Atheistic humanism has the advantage of fitting rational minds trying to understand the world, (10:51) but it has the disadvantage of very little cultural heritage. (10:54) And that's a real problem. (10:57) So the question is, can atheistic humanism offer us very much? (11:01) Well, sure, it can give you intellectual satisfaction.

(11:04) I'm a heck of a lot more intellectually satisfied now that I don't have to cling to the fairy tales that I believed when I was a kid. (11:12) So life may have no ultimate meaning, but I sure think it can have lots of proximate meaning. (11:18) Free will is not hard to give up because it's a horribly destructive idea to our society.

(11:25) And since we know that we're not going to live after we die, there's no reward for suffering in this world. (11:31) I mean, you live and then you die. (11:34) And finally, there's no reason whatsoever that ethics can't be robust with no ultimate foundations for ethics.

(11:42) Okay, so here we have Dr. Provine's suppositions and propositions associated with the whole issue of faith and reason. (11:57) He said that one of the problems with Christianity is you have to suspend your rational mind. (12:03) He said now that he has left that, he doesn't have to cling to the fairy tales that he was taught as a kid.

(12:14) I will highlight three of these propositions, so to speak, that he spoke of. (12:21) There are no gods, there are no purposive forces, there is no ultimate foundation for ethics, (12:27) even though he said there is a proximate foundation for ethics, and there is no free will. (12:34) So we will use those premises as the foundation for the charge that we're going to be talking about today, (12:43) and we'll refer back to these as we go along.

(12:46) So the premise here is that naturalism and materialism are rational, and that supernaturalism and Christianity are irrational. (12:58) And that's what we're going to be dealing with. (13:01) And I will lay before you, I believe, the counter to this is that the biblical Christian worldview is not only rational, (13:10) but it is more logical than naturalism and materialism.

(13:15) And we will deal with that as we go through this content tonight. (13:23) So in our world today, what we see is the philosophy of naturalism and science have become wedded together. (13:33) You'll notice that in Dr. Provine's address.

(13:37) The philosophy of naturalism provides the fundamental basis of thinking for the scientific approach that he has to life, the world, to all things. (13:52) They are wedded together. (13:54) So let's look at how we got there, because that's not how science has been throughout history.

(14:04) So we're going to look at the history of science very briefly and look at the current paradigm. (14:11) And to do that, I'm going to refer to a book that was written in 1962 by Thomas

Kuhn. (14:18) And it caused a great stir in the scientific community, and you'll see why in just a minute.

(14:27) The title of it was The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. (14:32) And basically what the book lays out is that the history of science can be understood in the consistent rise and fall of different scientific paradigms. (14:45) So let me just put a graph up here for you.

(14:49) You can take a look, kind of like a timeline, where you will see labeled here ABC, that these are scientific paradigms of the past. (15:00) And what Kuhn recognized and what he wrote about was that if you look at the history of science, you will find that a paradigm would arise, a scientific paradigm would arise. (15:15) And while that paradigm was in place, it ruled and it reigned, and no one was really allowed to think outside of that box of the paradigm.

(15:28) Those who did were considered radicals, were not part of the scientific community. (15:39) But what happened is over time, the reality began to break through and showed that that paradigm wasn't right. (15:51) And that paradigm then collapsed.

(15:54) And then another paradigm arose, and it had the same characteristics from the standpoint of once it rose, it reigned and ruled, and no one was allowed to ask questions outside of that paradigm. (16:06) And in many cases, people didn't think outside of that paradigm. (16:09) But eventually it collapsed as well.

(16:11) And so Kuhn writes about these various paradigms that rose and fall and fell in the history of science. (16:23) Well, one of the problems that it brought to the current scientific paradigm was that it implied that your paradigm will probably fall. (16:36) That you, like every other scientist in all of the other paradigms past, believe that your science was absolutely correct, and yet it fell.

(16:46) And so, as you can imagine, there were a lot of scientists who took outrage at that because they were caught up in that paradigm and they believed it was absolutely correct. (16:56) And anybody who asked questions against it or offered things outside of it, they were tossed aside. (17:04) But what was different about the current scientific paradigm, the one that rules and reigns today, is that it wedded itself to a philosophy.

(17:16) And this philosophy that it wedded itself to was naturalism. (17:22) And that naturalism required that anything done inside the scientific paradigm had to conclude. (17:32) The conclusion always had to point to a natural cause.

(17:37) It was not allowed to point anywhere outside of that box. (17:42) Now, just to make the point that the scientific paradigms that were in the past were not like this, I'll point you to Johannes Kepler. (17:53) Through his view, in a different scientific paradigm, said the chief aim of all investigations of the external world, science, should be to discover the rational order and harmony which has been imposed on it by God.

(18:10) See, Kepler was not in a paradigm that said you cannot draw upon any cause that is outside of the natural box. (18:24) And so that is what's happened in the current scientific paradigm. (18:28) So naturalism and the current paradigm are now wedded together.

(18:32) Nothing is allowed to point to anything outside of the box. (18:35) For those of you who went through the Truth Project, we talked about the cosmic cube. (18:39) Naturalism says there is nothing outside of that cosmic cube.

(18:45) The realm of matter and energy is closed and there is absolutely nothing. (18:53) There is nothing, nothing, as Francis Schaeffer would say. (18:55) There is nothing, nothing outside of that box.

(18:59) And when you wed that philosophy then to science, that science then redefines itself by saying that every conclusion must point to a natural cause. (19:16) And so if you begin to argue for a cause that's outside of that, (19:22) as many scientists who have taken this route of beginning to argue for intelligent design, (19:31) the scientific paradigm will declare that you have defied the true science. (19:40) And you will therefore be shunned, canceled, shamed, ignored, or labeled unscientific.

(19:45) When I was doing the TV show Cross-Examine, we interviewed a scientist who, (19:52) because he had co-authored a book about intelligent design, was basically thrown out. (20:02) He was not allowed to have tenure and so forth. (20:05) So it's a real reality, just as Kuhn said.

(20:08) The paradigm we're in right now will not allow anybody to point to things outside of the paradigm, (20:14) to ask questions outside of the box. (20:18) And so this is the position of the current scientific paradigm, which is a philosophical science. (20:25) And so what we want to talk about is, you know, if you speak of God, (20:33) and this is why it's so important for us to go through this, (20:36) because we're going to walk into the charge that Dr. Provine made, (20:43) that supernaturalism, Christianity, they're fairy tales.

(20:51) It's irrational. (20:53) And so to speak of God, to speak of Christ as Savior, to speak of miracles, (21:00) of soul, mind, life after death, free will, (21:03) if you remember Dr. Provine's statement about there being no free will, will be viewed as irrational. (21:11) And that brings us then to the issue before us.

(21:17) And so the counter, again, is the question, but is this really irrational? (21:22) And that's what we're going to be talking about. (21:23) Is the biblical Christian world view irrational? (21:26) Or is it possible that if one doesn't want to believe the biblical Christian worldview, (21:34) the charge of being irrational is a way to rationalize that biblical worldview away (21:39) and dismiss it as unworthy of consideration. (21:43) And I think there is a part for that to play in what is going on.

(21:48) And I offer that to you, that if you have a discussion with Mr. Jones across the street (21:54) and you find him saying these things that, you know, I think that's all just a bunch of fairy tales, (22:03) then I don't think you ought to challenge him at that moment. (22:05) I mean, once you build a deep relationship with him, it's possible, you know, (22:10) when you have a great relationship with somebody, you can tell them their breath stinks (22:12) and they will thank you for it. (22:14) You can't do that to somebody in the elevator.

(22:17) But once you build that deep relationship with Mr. Jones, (22:21) it may be possible for you to say, you know, Mr. Jones, it's possible you keep saying those things (22:28) because you just want to get rid of biblical Christianity without any kind of a rational look at it. (22:37) So I think that plays a part of it. (22:39) So what we're going to do, we're going to do some rational and logical thinking here.

(22:44) I want to walk through, we talked in the beginning, God is logical. (22:48) He created a logical universe. (22:51) He created a universe that follows a rational pattern.

(22:56) He created human beings, gave us a mind that can respond to the logic of God. (23:04) When

God says, come, let us reason together, let us reason together, (23:10) thus saith the Lord that we can do so. (23:12) So we're going to do some of that.

(23:14) We're going to do some rational and logical thinking. (23:17) And I'm going to do that through several observations, three observations, and several conclusions, (23:25) and also then some logical considerations as a result of these observations. (23:30) So the very first observation I want to offer to you, (23:33) and I want you to consider these as things that you might offer in your conversation (23:39) with the young man next door or to Mrs. Smith or to Mr. Jones.

(23:44) And the number one observation is this, and that is that order exists. (23:50) Everywhere around us we see order. (23:55) It displays order that is exquisite order.

(24:01) It is an intricate order. (24:03) And we'll talk about some of the places where the order that we see in the universe around us (24:10) will sometimes cause us to just drop to our knees in awe before it, (24:17) whether you're talking about the order that we find in deep space (24:21) or in our own planetary system where you look at the cell itself. (24:26) As you see there on the right, the incredible order that we see within the cell, (24:30) not only all of these pieces and parts, but the operations that go on within the cell.

(24:38) Not long ago I was with an ENT doc, and he had a picture on the wall. (24:44) I took a picture from that here of the inner ear. (24:47) And while I was waiting for him, I waited a long time for him, (24:51) I studied this thing on the wall.

(24:53) And when he walked in, I said, (24:55) Man, you are blessed to be able to work with such an incredibly exquisite system. (25:01) And he looked at me and said, (25:02) It is the most complex, exquisite system in the entire human body. (25:06) The inner ear and the whole notion of hearing and so forth.

(25:11) From the atom to DNA and molecules, (25:15) chemical molecules that exist within the universe around everything (25:20) is in an order and an exquisite and intricate order. (25:27) So that observation is even acknowledged by modern science. (25:34) So if you recall Carl Sagan and his famous video series Cosmos, (25:45) he stated, Cosmos, this is a very interesting statement by Carl Sagan, (25:49) Cosmos is a Greek word for the order of the universe.

(25:54) It is in a way the opposite of chaos. (25:58) What an incredibly interesting statement by Carl Sagan, (26:03) who opened up the cosmos by saying, (26:05) The cosmos is all it is, ever was, or ever will be. (26:10) A man who believed that random forces produced everything.

(26:15) And so here, the conclusion, our first conclusion, (26:19) that when we look at all of this order, (26:22) I think it's proper for us with a rational mind and logical thinking to say, (26:27) Well, there must be an ordering cause. (26:31) Or if there is order, there must be an ordering cause or force. (26:35) Why? Because random forces don't produce order.

(26:39) Now, I had the blessing, some days I didn't think it was a blessing, (26:47) when I was in graduate school, (26:50) pursuing a graduate degree in artificial intelligence (26:53) back at Kansas State University. (26:56) The holy grail of computer science at that time was to find (27:01) a true random number generator. (27:06) Because the random number generators that we had produced at that point, (27:11) all eventually began to repeat themselves.

(27:15) And so, regardless of how long it took before they repeated, (27:19) there was a pattern.

(27:21) And once it began to produce a pattern, (27:23) then it was no longer random. (27:27) And so the holy grail was to find a random number generator (27:30) that would truly produce random numbers.

(27:34) And so the bottom line there is that just the definition of randomness (27:40) means that if random forces begin to produce order, (27:43) then they're not random. (27:44) They can't be random. (27:46) And so here we have a universe that is filled with exquisite order.

(27:53) In fact, you can't find randomness. (27:56) It's filled with exquisite order, intricate order. (28:02) And so it is logical and it is rational.

(28:06) Not irrational, it is rational for us then to conclude, (28:10) well, there must be an ordering cause, (28:12) or there must be an ordering force that brings about that order. (28:20) Now here's where I kind of wish we were in a classroom (28:22) because I took this picture a number of years ago. (28:26) A friend took me out on his property (28:31) and wanted me to look on the grounds and walked around.

(28:34) And maybe you by now have noticed that there is something on the ground there (28:39) that should cause you, if you're walking around, (28:42) should cause you to stop. (28:44) And the reason why you should stop is because you see order. (28:49) And here are those arrowheads on a black satin cloth (28:56) that helps you see them a little better.

(28:58) But the reason we value those and the reason we pick them up (29:02) versus any other rock is because there's an order (29:06) that is displayed in that artifact. (29:11) And it causes us then to think of the ordering cause, (29:17) the ordering force that brought about that order that we see. (29:22) And of course, that was a Native American who sat for how long (29:29) forming that arrowhead.

(29:32) And oftentimes where you find places where there is an encampment, (29:38) you'll find a lot of damaged arrowheads where they were making one (29:41) and it broke or something. (29:43) But obviously, it's not irrational to look at order (29:50) and say there must be an ordering cause, (29:53) there must be an ordering force behind producing that order. (29:59) The first time I went to Egypt, I was amazed at the pyramids.

(30:07) And took a lot of pictures of those. (30:12) And to some extent, because of erosion and so forth, (30:14) they don't look like they're really nice and neat. (30:18) But if you go inside, you'll see the inside of those stones (30:22) and they are beautifully cut and beautifully put together.

(30:25) So one does not walk in the desert and see those pyramids (30:30) and think that random forces produced those. (30:34) It takes your mind back to the ordering cause, (30:38) the people who brought about that order. (30:43) The same is true.

(30:44) Not long ago, I had the privilege of being in Scotland and England (30:49) and went to Stonehenge, took this picture. (30:53) This also brings our mind, it brings everybody's mind back (30:57) and the mystery associated. (30:59) That's the whole thing of Stonehenge.

(31:02) I mean, if we saw order (31:05) and we believed that random processes do it, (31:08) then Stonehenge would mean nothing to us. (31:11) It wouldn't draw our attention (31:13) because we'd say, oh, it's just random forces. (31:15) But it draws our attention and so much study (31:20) and people come from all over the world to see it (31:23) because of the mystery associated with who

was the ordering cause, (31:28) who was the ordering force and what were they doing.

(31:34) So I love being in the woods here in Colorado. (31:38) We have beautiful aspen trees (31:40) and oftentimes when you walk among the aspen trees, (31:44) you'll see the scarring on the aspens, primarily from elk. (31:49) They rub their antlers on there.

(31:52) And let me tell you, (31:53) you can tell the difference between an elk (31:58) randomly rubbing his antlers on an aspen tree (32:03) and someone who's carved their initials and date. (32:07) So no one would look at that aspen tree (32:09) and say, wow, that's pretty cool (32:10) how random forces have put those initials in there. (32:16) And the same is true for this picture.

(32:20) Around 2011, I believe, there were a Coast Guard pilot (32:30) and they were flying and they saw this SOS (32:35) in the sand off the Na Pali [Coast] (32:39) in one of the remote areas of the Na Pali [Coast]. (32:43) And it is good that the pilot didn't say, (32:47) well, that's pretty cool. (32:48) Look what the random forces of water and rocks (32:53) and everything have done.

(32:55) They knew that there was an ordering cause (32:58) behind those letters and those letters meant something. (33:03) And thankfully, they went and they found two women. (33:07) One was injured and they were unable to get off.

(33:12) There's only one way to get to that beach (33:15) and that's a very, very long, long hike or via water. (33:19) And so they were rescued as a result of the logical thing (33:24) that we all do every part of our day (33:27) and that is to recognize order (33:29) and to recognize that there is an ordering cause (33:33) behind that order. (33:36) Okay, so maybe too much here, (33:39) but the point is this is a rational thought process (33:42) we've gone through.

(33:43) This is not irrational. (33:45) This is not a leap of faith for us to look at order (33:48) and conclude that there must be an ordering force (33:52) behind that order. (33:54) Now, you may not agree with me.

(33:56) You may say to Mr. Jones, (33:57) you may not agree with this point, (33:59) but you can't charge me with thinking irrationally (34:01) at this point. (34:02) Okay, so a couple examples here from science itself. (34:08) You may be familiar with the SETI program, (34:13) the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence.

(34:16) They have a whole program using large dish arrays (34:22) looking into space. (34:24) They're looking for order. (34:25) That's what they're doing.

(34:26) They're looking for order in the midst of all of the noise. (34:31) So you have all of the space noise that's coming in. (34:35) And what they're looking for is order.

(34:37) So they're looking for, hey, how you doing? (34:39) Hello down there. (34:41) Something that shows order, (34:44) because if they find order rather than random noise, (34:48) it will conclude there is an intelligent source. (34:50) There is an ordering cause or force behind that order.

(34:58) Science has looked at the universe, (34:59) and what we see is that the universe is expanding (35:07) and it is accelerating as it is expanding. (35:11) And we can't explain that with all of the physics (35:16) that we know today. (35:17) We can't explain that.

(35:18) And so the explanation is not, well, that is random. (35:24) Science will say, well, it can't be

random. (35:26) There must be what we call dark energy or dark force (35:31) that is acting upon the universe to pull it (35:35) at an accelerated rate.

(35:39) On the other side, we'll look at these spiral galaxies, (35:44) and physics and all the laws of physics would say (35:47) if these have been around for as long (35:49) as the current scientific paradigm says they've been around, (35:53) then they should have, by now, (35:56) have lost their spiral characteristic (35:59) and all that matter should have eventually been tossed out. (36:04) But it doesn't. (36:05) It stays in.

(36:08) And rather than saying, well, that's the random forces (36:11) of the universe, they believe that there is a dark matter (36:15) that must exist that keeps this galaxy in its spiral form. (36:22) So this stage at this point, our observation (36:26) and our conclusion is a rational thought process. (36:28) People may not agree with it, but you can't charge us (36:32) with thinking irrationally.

(36:34) Even science up to this point is doing the same things. (36:38) So what we may say is this. (36:40) If one looks at the universe and sees vast, exquisite order, (36:45) it's a logical process to conclude (36:47) that there must be an ordering force.

(36:50) That's a logical conclusion. (36:53) But if a person looked at the universe (36:55) and saw vast, exquisite order everywhere (36:57) and yet concluded it was all the result of random forces, (37:01) a rational person might conclude (37:03) that the person was thinking irrationally. (37:07) And that would be a logical conclusion. (37:09)

2nd Half (37:10 - 59:29) The Character Of That Cause And The Historical Claim

(37:10) Okay. (37:11) So let's move on to what I always call observation 1A. (37:15) It's part of 1, but we just broke it up.

(37:18) That when we examine and look at the universe around us, (37:23) order exists cosmically everywhere. (37:26) Everywhere we look, even in the deep space, (37:29) there is order there. (37:31) Then we have to conclude that this ordering cause, (37:35) whatever this ordering cause is or force, (37:37) it must be transcendent.

(37:40) It's not a local force. (37:42) It is a transcendent force (37:43) because it's brought about order in the entire cosmos. (37:47) Everything we see around us.

(37:49) Again, this is a logical thought process that we're going through. (37:53) There must be a transcendent ordering cause or force. (37:58) We will refer to this as a transcendent ordering force (38:02) from this point on.

(38:05) Okay. (38:06) Again, this is a rational thought process. (38:09) And someone would say, (38:10) well, I don't know if you really call it transcendent, (38:12) but there's nothing irrational.

(38:15) There's nothing illogical about that (38:17) because it's a logical process. (38:20) The order is brought about by an ordering force. (38:24) We have order in the entire cosmos.

(38:28) Then that ordering force must be transcendent. (38:32) And again, you may not agree, (38:33) but you can't charge me with thinking irrationally at this point. (38:37) So observation two.

(38:39) In this order, in the order that we see in the universe around us, (38:43) what we see are systems, not non-systems. (38:45) We see systems. (38:46) Everything is bound up in a system.

(38:50) We see life versus non-life. (38:53) We see the personal versus the non-personal. (38:57) And we see relationships and communications.

(38:59) Those relationships are important and want to talk about those (39:03) because what we see in this order, (39:06) we just don't see, for example, in the random numbers, (39:09) we just don't see 0 through 9, 0 through 9, 0 through 9. (39:13) We say, okay, that's order. (39:15) But we see something entirely more exquisite than that. (39:20) We see order in terms of systems and pieces and parts that come together.

(39:26) And they come together in such a way that there is a relationship (39:31) between those systems, even systems of systems, (39:35) as we see in our example here. (39:37) You look at the human body. (39:39) The human body is filled with systems of systems.

(39:44) And those systems communicate with each other. (39:48) So there is a relationship that is built within the order that we see. (39:56) We see it in the whole cascade associated with blood clotting.

(40:02) It's one of those remarkable things we talked about in the Truth Project (40:07) that the systems and the pieces and the parts involved in that system, (40:13) which is just a minor, minor part of the total human system, is exquisite. (40:19) And if one of those little factors doesn't work right, (40:22) then you become a bleeder. (40:26) I wish we could spend more time talking about the

topoisomerases (40:29) and their finding within looking at the DNA.

(40:33) But the topoisomerases is an incredible machine (40:36) that's a part of the system within the cell that somehow gets a communication (40:43) of what the cell needs to produce. (40:46) And somehow it knows exactly where that code is in the DNA strand. (40:51) And it goes and it opens up, it clips that DNA strand (40:54) so that those instructions can be read, (40:58) and read in marvelous ways by other machines.

(41:03) And yet the point here is that there are systems here (41:07) and relationships that are inherent within those systems. (41:13) The topoisomerases has a relationship with the rest of the cell. (41:17) And that relationship involves its roles and its processes and so forth.

(41:24) And questions of animals who communicate with each other as well. (41:29) So the conclusion I would offer to you and argue (41:33) that is a logical conclusion that this transcendent ordering force (41:37) must be relational and must be communicative. (41:42) And that relational aspect of that transcendent ordering force (41:47) has been brought about order that is filled with relationships.

(41:53) And so now, again, this is a rational thought process. (41:59) And someone, maybe Mrs. Smith won't agree with you at this point, (42:02) but she cannot hold on to the notion that this is irrational. (42:08) It's not irrational, it's logical.

(42:10) It's very logical as they look. (42:12) If we have order, and we have order everywhere, (42:15) and all of the order that we see is based upon relationships (42:20) and the relational aspects of those systems depend upon (42:25) those deep relationships with all of the systems, (42:28) then it's not illogical to say that that force must be relational (42:33) to produce all of those relationships. (42:36) We have a good friend who produces the most exquisite, (42:43) I guess they're marionettes.

(42:44) You can call them puppets, they're marionettes. (42:46) And he has, for years, in his theater, (42:52) done amazing shows with these marionettes. (42:56) And the marionettes speak to each other.

(42:58) Now, he provides the voice, the background, (43:01) as he's working these marionettes. (43:03) But it's not irrational to say that if those marionettes (43:08) are communicating with each other, if they have a relationship (43:10) with each other, that's because the one who made them is relational (43:15) and he communicates. (43:17) So that's the point here.

(43:19) It's a rational thought process. (43:21) So we're going to combine this conclusion, and we'll continue with it, (43:27) that there must be, if we look around the universe, (43:32) a logical thought process would lead us to believe that there must be, (43:37) or at least it points us to a relational transcendent ordering force. (43:42) There's nothing illogical about that.

(43:43) There's nothing irrational about it. (43:45) You may not believe that. (43:46) But it can't be charged to be irrational or illogical.

(43:50) So let me begin with several reasonings then associated with this. (43:56) If there is a relational transcendent ordering force, (43:59) it would be reasonable and not illogical to expect that relational (44:05) transcendent ordering force to want to relate to us, (44:10) to communicate with us, and to get that communication right. (44:15) Now, as we go forward, the next logical things you will see, (44:21) you can tell people will start to back off because they know (44:24) where this is

going.

(44:25) And yet the point of all of this is to say we've said nothing illogical. (44:31) We've said nothing irrational. (44:33) You may not want to follow that path of reasoning, and that's fine.

(44:39) But you can't charge that my path of reasoning is illogical. (44:46) Okay, if we have a transcendent ordering force that is deeply relational (44:51) because it produces all of these relationships, (44:54) then it has to be a relational transcendent ordering force, (44:59) and we might expect then for that relational transcendent ordering force (45:04) to want to relate to us. (45:06) That's not illogical.

(45:09) And you may not believe that, but think about this. (45:12) That's what SETI is doing. (45:15) SETI is based, the scientific work of SETI is based upon this (45:23) whole logical process.

(45:25) Let me go back to it. (45:27) And that is that if there is an intelligent force out there, (45:34) they will communicate with us, and we want to listen to it. (45:38) Right? (45:39) So talking to Mrs. Smith, she said, (45:41) I don't know if I can take that next step that it would want to communicate (45:45) with us.

(45:46) Well, SETI is doing that. (45:47) Modern science says, yeah, okay, we believe that if there is an intelligent (45:51) force out there, it would want to communicate with us. (45:54) And we believe if it communicated with us, (45:56) they'd want to make sure that we could get that communication.

(46:00) Okay, reasoning number two. (46:01) The most extensive and expansive claim that this has happened, (46:07) that this relational transcendent ordering force has indeed communicated (46:13) with us, is that that communication is in the Bible. (46:17) Now, somebody said, I'm not good with the Bible.

(46:19) I said, we're just talking right now about the rational logical thought (46:24) process that says if this relational transcendent ordering being wants to (46:30) talk to us, and I believe rationally that that force would want to do that, (46:35) just as SETI has based its whole operation on, (46:42) that there is a very extensive and expansive claim already that that (46:48) relational transcendent ordering force has done so. (46:53) And he has communicated that in the Bible. (46:56) Now, if that is the case, and there's a possibility there because it's a (47:01) logical conclusion, it would be logical and it would be reasonable (47:05) to examine that communication.

(47:09) This is a rational thought process. (47:12) You may not agree with me or believe this, (47:14) but you cannot charge me with thinking irrationally at this point. (47:19) Reasoning number three.

(47:22) Examining that communication, if you then examine that communication, (47:25) it logically brings someone to understand that this force is a personal being. (47:32) In that communication, just as SETI would say, hey, we're trying to, (47:36) you know, if the guy says, hello, you know, (47:38) we are two-headed beings in Alpha Centauri, then we would learn more about. (47:45) And so this communication that many, (47:49) many people believe is the communication from that relational transcendent (47:54) ordering force.

(47:56) He has now declared who he is, so that he is a personal being. (48:00) He created the universe. (48:02) He communicated to us who he is, and he wants to have a relationship with man.

(48:08) That's a rational thought process. (48:11) There's nothing irrational or illogical about the

process. (48:14) You may not agree with it.

(48:15) You may not believe it, but you can't charge it to irrationality. (48:21) Okay. (48:22) Continuing that, reasoning number three, when you examine that communication, (48:27) it also tells us of an extraordinary sacrifice made in order for that (48:31) relationship to become a reality.

(48:33) And now, of course, you know, (48:35) I know we're starting to get into uncomfortable areas. (48:40) But the point of all this is to help someone understand we haven't taken a (48:46) leap of faith here. (48:47) We can't be charged with being irrational.

(48:52) We can't be charged with throwing out logic. (48:55) This is a logical process that we have followed. (48:59) And that brings us now to observation three.

(49:02) And, of course, you'll note that we're taking a huge step here. (49:05) But the most compelling evidence that bridges the gap between logically (49:09) seeing that a relational transcendent ordering force might exist and that it (49:13) might all be true is the reality of the empty tomb. (49:19) Is the empty tomb.

(49:21) We're offering this in the hopes that as we begin to build a relationship (49:24) with our neighbor, (49:27) and that relationship is one where we can openly talk about these things, (49:31) and you find that this neighbor has been caught up in the notion that (49:35) Christianity is irrational. (49:37) Christianity is based upon fairy tales. (49:40) Then this is a way for us to show them, no, that's all.

(49:44) There's a logical process that gets us to here. (49:47) You may not believe it, but it's not illogical. (49:51) And so the conclusion that we come from that observation is that Jesus is (49:57) who he says he is.

(49:58) He wants to have a relationship with us. (50:00) He came, died, and rose again to make that possible. (50:02) That's the power of the empty tomb.

(50:05) We already talked about that in the neighborly apologetics associated with (50:10) the life of Christ and the resurrection. (50:13) It is the prime ethic in biblical Christianity. (50:18) But again, the point is there is nothing illogical in the process.

(50:22) So let me go through the bottom line because we're running out of time here. (50:25) There's nothing here in what we've done that is different than the logical (50:29) process science takes to conclude that there is something out there that we (50:32) cannot see or even measure and calling it dark matter or dark force. (50:38) Our logical path is the same.

(50:40) And when we look at the entire universe, we logically and rationally conclude (50:44) that God does exist. (50:46) He is personal and he has communicated to us. (50:50) Again, people may not believe that, but you cannot charge it as being (50:55) irrational or illogical.

(50:57) It is rational, not irrational, to believe in a transcendent or reinforce (51:01) who is personal and communicative, that he has communicated in written form (51:06) in the Bible. (51:07) He has kept that communication inerrant. (51:09) It has revealed himself to man in that communication.

(51:14) Further, that communication declared that he came to earth as a man, (51:17) performed many signs, would sacrifice himself for us. (51:20) And the proof of this would be in his

resurrection, (51:22) which was validated by the empty tomb. (51:26) Further, we can logically and rationally conclude that this rational transcendent (51:30) or reinforce reveals himself to be holy, true, love, grace, (51:36) and that he was willing to die.

(51:37) He was willing to sacrifice himself for his people, (51:40) with whom he desires a personal relationship, (51:43) and that he did so in the historically corroborated events of the birth, (51:46) life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, validated by the empty tomb. (51:50) Now, this is something different than what SETI would find. (51:53) SETI, if the hopes and dreams of SETI come true, (51:59) they would find a communication from an alien out there, (52:03) and the alien would tell them, we live in this galaxy, (52:10) this is who we are, this is where we came from, and so forth.

(52:15) But what we have here in this communication is that this God came to earth, (52:24) and in history, in the historical reality of this world, (52:30) he lived and walked, and he died and he rose again, (52:34) and the evidence of that is here. (52:37) So it's not just a communication. (52:40) We now have the evidence here, and it's validated by the empty tomb.

(52:45) So the biblical Christian worldview is not based upon a blind leap of faith. (52:50) God has given us a logical, rational mind to discern the many ways (52:56) he has proven to us who he is. (53:00) And it may be that the real irrationality is found in the claims (53:07) that order comes from non-order, life comes from non-life, (53:11) information comes from noise, there is no mind, there is no free will, (53:17) there is no ultimate foundation for ethics, (53:19) there is no ultimate purpose or meaning for life.

(53:23) It might be charged that that kind of thinking is irrational. (53:29) Let's look at a couple of verses here. (53:31) In Hebrews 11, (53:32) Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, (53:36) the convictions of things not seen.

(53:39) For by it the people of old received their commendation. (53:43) By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, (53:47) so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. (53:54) In Romans 1, (53:55) For what can be known about God is plain to them, (53:58) because God has shown it to them.

(54:01) For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, (54:05) have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world (54:09) in the things that have been made, so they are without excuse. (54:14) So this is the declaration that God's creation itself, (54:20) through the rational mind, (54:23) everyone is without excuse because it's plain to them. (54:28) See, the world would say seeing is believing, (54:30) but the scriptures say seeing is not believing, (54:33) because there are people who see the same thing, (54:36) but they do not believe.

(54:38) So we're not talking about that which is irrational, (54:41) we're talking about that which is unwilling to believe what they see. (54:47) So, though we can show our neighbor that our Christian worldview is not irrational, (54:52) that's what we're talking about here today, (54:54) we want to put the bottom line to it, (54:56) nor illogical, that doesn't mean faith will come merely by rational logic. (55:03) Many saw the works of Jesus, they saw Him raise Lazarus, (55:06) they saw the man born blind healed, (55:08) they saw the empty tomb, (55:09) but true faith and belief comes only from God, (55:12) and that is why in our neighbor's apologetics, (55:16) we must precede and follow and walk in prayer as we do that, (55:24) that God would open the eyes of people who are blind, (55:29) that He would soften the heart of people whose hearts are hard.

(55:35) So, we can help people understand logically (55:38) that biblical Christianity is not a leap of faith, (55:43) it's not based on some irrational fairy tales and so forth, (55:47) there's a very logical process, (55:49) or why? (55:50) Because God's logical, He is rational, (55:52) He has shown Himself, (55:53) He's shown Himself through many, many ways (55:55) that the rational mind can perceive and understand, (55:58) that's why God says come, (55:59) let us reason, let us logically, rationally reason together, (56:05) thus saith the Lord, (56:06) though your sins be as garland, (56:08) they shall be white as snow. (56:11) Okay, we're right out of time, (56:13) so thank goodness I'm not going to have to go through the academic snobbery, (56:17) it has been my experience with Christian people going to college (56:20) who've run into some real buzz-saws associated with this accusation (56:27) that they're coming into this institution believing fairy tales, (56:30) you're not going to be able to survive here, (56:33) you know, leaning upon all of that irrational fairy tale stuff. (56:36) Anyway, we could do away with that.

(56:41) Okay, I'll leave you with a couple of references if you want, (56:44) just a few here. (56:46) Reasonable Faith by William Craig, (56:51) Faith and Reason by Ron Nash, (56:54) The Story of Reality by Koukl, (56:57) and then Worldviews in Conflict by Ron Nash. (57:00) You'll see these on the slides as we hand this out.

(57:04) So next time we come together, (57:06) oh, man, here we go from the frying pan to the fire, (57:11) we're going to talk about free will and sovereignty. (57:15) That'll be our task for the next webinar. (57:20) Okay, Mark, let me close this up (57:25) and turn it back over to you.

(57:28) Thanks again, everyone, for being with us here tonight (57:31) and taking time out of your busy lives. (57:33) As we said at the beginning of our time, (57:35) we've recorded tonight's live stream (57:37) and we'll be sending out the link to the recording (57:40) as well as Dr. Tackett's slides in PDF format. (57:45) You're going to also see on the same page of the recording (57:49) a series of the other recordings in this series, (57:52) and I'm going to do something really quick here.

(57:56) Actually, I'll tell you what I'll do (57:58) is I will send out a link to the page (58:06) that you're going to find all of the recordings on, (58:09) so you'll just have to click that one page (58:10) and not go looking for it. (58:12) So with that, Dr. Tackett, (58:13) would you please close the time in prayer (58:16) and we can keep it off. (58:18) Okay, thank you, Mark, and thank you all again for being here.
(58:22) Thank you for taking your time. (58:23) I know this could be tough stuff. (58:26) It could be dry stuff. (58:28) But we do it. (58:29) Why? (58:29) Because we love our neighbor and we want to be prepared, (58:32) as the Scripture calls us, to be ready, (58:35) to give it a defense for the hope that is within us. (58:39) Father, thank you again that we have this privilege (58:41) of being able to meet with hundreds of people.
(58:46) It's fascinating. (58:47) It's amazing that we have that capability. (58:49) I pray, Father, that you would oversee whatever is said here. (58:53) You would sift it, (58:54) that only that which is right and true and good (58:56) would come through. (58:58) We pray for each of these people. (59:00) Lord, if they are stumbling on some things, (59:02) if they're suffering with some areas, (59:04) Lord, that you might comfort them.
(59:06) And Lord, that what has been said here today (59:08) might be of benefit to them. (59:10) We pray that you would stir all of us on (59:13) to follow your command to love our neighbor (59:16) and to be prepared to be able to give an answer (59:18) to those who ask us for the reason for the hope that's in us. (59:22) All for your glory, in Jesus' name.
(59:23) Amen. (59:24) Okay. (59:25) Good night, and God bless you.
(59:27) Thanks, everyone. (59:28) Good night. (59:29)