

DOES GOD EXIST? 042009

(Colossians 2:8)

DOES GOD EXIST?

FIVE ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

1. The Ontological Argument
2. The Cosmological Argument
3. The Teleological Argument
4. The Moral Argument
5. The Resurrection of Jesus

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THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

- Basic argument:
 - If we can conceive of God he must exist.
 - Descartes:
 1. Whatever I clearly and distinctly perceive to be contained in the idea of something, is true of that thing.
 2. I clearly and distinctly perceive that necessary existence is contained in the idea of God.
 3. Therefore, God exists.
- Basic criticism:
 - The argument commits a *bare assertion fallacy*, as it offers no supportive premise other than qualities inherent to the unproven statement.
 - This is also called a *circular argument*, because the premise relies on the conclusion, which in turn relies on the premise.

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THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (KALAM)

- Basic argument:
 - An argument for the existence of a First Cause or an Uncaused cause.
 1. Whatever begins to exist has a cause.
 2. The Universe began to exist.
 3. Therefore, the Universe had a cause. (God is the best explanation for that cause)
- Basic criticism:
 - What Caused the First Cause?
 - Since the First Cause doesn't have a beginning, it doesn't need a cause.
 - If the First Cause has a cause then it is not the First Cause – this begins the cycle of *infinite regression*.

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THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (KALAM)


- Basic criticism:
 - What Caused the First Cause?
 1. If there ever was a time when **nothing** at all existed, then there would be absolutely **nothing** today.
 - It is an axiomatic truth that if nothing exists, then "nothing" will be the case forever (nothing simply remains nothing!)
 - nothing and (+ or x) nothing always equal nothing.
 - If there is absolutely nothing but nothing, there cannot ever be something.
 - "Nothing" and "something" in reference to the same object are mutually exclusive terms.

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THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (KALAM)

- Basic criticism:
 - What Caused the First Cause?
 2. Since it is the case that something **does** now exist, one must logically conclude that something has existed **always**.
 - If nothing cannot produce something, and yet something exists, then it follows necessarily that something has existed always.
 - The question then becomes this: What is the "something" that has been in existence always?
 3. In logic, the "law of the excluded middle" states that a thing either is, or it is not.
 - A woman is either pregnant or not.
 - A line either is straight, or it is not straight.


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THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (KALAM)

- **Basic criticism:**
 - What Caused the First Cause?
 - The counterargument goes like this:
 - Something has existed forever.
 - That "something" must be either material or non-material in nature.
 - If it can be demonstrated that the eternal "something" is not material in nature, then it must follow that the eternal "something" is non-material in nature.
 - The most reputable scientists in the world concede that "matter" is not eternal.
 - The student of logic is irresistibly forced to the conclusion that the "something" that is eternal is non-material (which means it must be "spirit" in its essence.)
 - The Scriptures identify that spirit Being as God. "God is spirit" (Jn. 4:24) — an uncreated, eternal Spirit Being.

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THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (KALAM)

- **Basic criticism:**
 - Causality
 - **Inductive reasoning:** particulars lead to absolutes (*a posteriori*).
 - All crows that I've seen are black (a particular)
 - All crows must be black (absolute)
 - Depends on experience (science uses this line of reasoning)
 - **Deductive reasoning:** from absolutes, we can draw conclusions about the particulars (*a priori*).
 - All turtles have shells (absolute)
 - The animal I have captured is a turtle
 - I conclude that the animal in my bag has a shell (particular)
 - The premise of causality has been arrived at via *a posteriori* (inductive) reasoning, which is dependent on experience.
 - Even though causality applies to the known world (our experience), it does not necessarily apply to the Universe at large.
 - In other words, it is unwise to draw conclusions from an extrapolation of causality beyond experience.