

**FEATURE: *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist***

VOICE: Professor, am I seeing correctly? Is the book in front of you really called *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* ?

PROF.: Yes. That's an unusual title, isn't it?

VOICE: I always thought believers in God were the people who had faith, and that unbelievers were the realists.

PROF.: This book says that idea is backwards. Let's analyze how much faith a person needs, if he wants to be an atheist.

FORMAT: THEME AND ANNOUNCEMENT

VOICE: Professor, you surprised me a moment ago by saying atheists have faith. Let's check the dictionary to make sure we we're talking the same language. Do we mean the same thing by the word "faith"?

PROF.: Good idea! The dictionary's first definition of faith is "unquestioning belief." Another definition is "complete trust, confidence, or reliance; as children usually have faith in their parents."

Both of those definitions agree with the way the Bible explains faith. The New Testament book of Hebrews says, "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." (11:1).

That fits very well with the dictionary definition, "unquestioning belief."

VOICE: By that definition, how does atheism require "unquestioning belief"? Isn't atheism disbelief?

PROF.: Atheism is disbelief in one thing, but belief in another. One scholar said, "Any person who claims to be a skeptic of one set of beliefs, is actually a true believer in another set of beliefs."

VOICE: Are you saying a person who disbelieves in God, makes something else the supreme being in his universe?

PROF.: Yes. For example, he may exalt education to the status of God. Or he may place himself there.

VOICE: But my atheist friends claim they believe nothing – at least nothing that they can't see and test. They can't see God, so they say that means God doesn't exist.

PROF.: But atheists believe many things they can't see or test.

VOICE: (SURPRISED) Really? Give me an example.

PROF.: Right now one of the most popular ideas among atheists is the hypothesis of multiple universes. Sometimes they shorten the words “multiple universes” to “multiverse.”

VOICE: Yes, some of my friends were discussing that the other day. The idea is that our universe contains a very precise set of conditions, which enable life to exist here. Dozens of individual factors have to be exactly right.

One friend quoted British cosmologist Stephen Hawking, who said, quote, “In fact, a universe like ours with galaxies and stars is actually quite unlikely. If one considers the possible constants and laws that could have emerged, the odds against a universe that has produced life like ours are immense.”

They admit the likelihood that our universe would have all of its characteristics so perfectly arranged is extremely small. They illustrate it as like tossing dozens of coins into the air, and having all of them land “heads.”

PROF.: Our universe is much more precise than even that. For example, very few planets have stable temperatures in a range that will allow life to exist. Many of the conditions that enable life to exist, have to be in such a small range, that it's more like tossing coins and having most of them *stand on edge!*

Another scientist said about the precise fine-tuning of the universe, quote, “The precision is as if one could throw a dart across the entire universe, and hit a bullseye one millimeter in diameter on the other side.”

VOICE: That's amazing!

So my atheist friends reason that nature would have had to experiment many times before getting all the conditions so perfectly coordinated. They reason that nature must have created *millions of universes that failed*, before “getting lucky” and creating our universe – the one that is ideal for life.

PROF.: Even with the most powerful telescopes, can they observe any of the other universes that they speculate about?

VOICE: (HESITATING) Well, no. They see just our one universe.

PROF.: Then why do they think there is more than one universe?

VOICE: They assume the failed universes exist, because random natural processes would not have gotten everything right the first time.

PROF.: Isn't that faith? Isn't that “the evidence of things not seen”?

- VOICE: (HESITATING AGAIN) Yes, in a sense. But it's logical reasoning, because they believe only nature exists. They say they are sure there is nothing above nature, like God.
- PROF.: So atheists begin with an “unquestioning belief” – a faith that God does not exist. And to have that idea make sense in light of evidence that the universe is structured very precisely, they take another step of faith – assuming without evidence that multiple universes exist.
- VOICE: I'm surprised. It does sound as if my atheist friends really do accept some things by faith.  
But what alternative do Christians provide?
- PROF.: If God knew everything from the beginning, he could have created the universe *perfectly the first time*. He wouldn't need to conduct failed experiments to learn how to do it right.
- VOICE: That's an amazing idea! The concept of a God we can't see, and the concept of multiple universes that we can't see, both require faith. Neither the Christian nor the atheist has visual proof for his belief or disbelief.
- PROF.: That's one point Norman Geisler and Frank Turek make in their book, *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. They compare the fragmentary information that we have, to a jigsaw puzzle.
- VOICE: What do they mean when they compare fragmentary scientific information, to a jigsaw puzzle?
- PROF.: We have only a partial idea of how the pieces fit together.  
But most puzzles come in a box, and the outside of the box shows how the finished puzzle will look. So the authors ask if there might be a box for the puzzle. In other words, is there any place where we can learn what the big picture looks like, and where the puzzle pieces that we have, fit into it?
- VOICE: How do they answer that question?
- PROF.: The introduction summarizes some evidence that they elaborate in later chapters: First, scientific evidence confirms that the universe had a beginning. This fact can be interpreted either of two ways: Either someone created something out of nothing, or no one created something out of nothing. The atheist prefers the second view, but it takes more faith – more evidence of something unseen.

VOICE: In other words, it takes more faith to believe *no one* created something out of nothing, than to believe *someone* created something out of nothing.

PROF.: Yes. Second, the authors state, quote, “The simplest life form contains the information-equivalent of 1,000 encyclopedias. Christians believe only an intelligent being can create a life form containing the equivalent of 1,000 encyclopedias. Atheists believe non-intelligent natural forces can do it.”

VOICE: Someone illustrated that point by saying a watch doesn’t make itself. I guess the atheistic interpretation – that a watch created itself – requires more faith.

PROF.: True. And thirdly, they point out the fact that the Bible predicted history accurately. Quote, “Ancient writings foretold<sup>1</sup> the coming of a man who would actually be God. This man-God, it was foretold, would be born in a particular city from a particular bloodline,<sup>2</sup> suffer in a particular way, die in a particular time, and rise from the dead to atone for the sins of the world.”

VOICE: It sounds as if they’re talking about Jesus the Christ.

PROF.: You’re right. They continue, “Immediately after the predicted time, multiple eyewitnesses proclaimed and later recorded that these predicted events had actually occurred. Those eyewitnesses endured persecution and death when they could have saved themselves by denying the event. Thousands of people in Jerusalem were then converted after seeing or hearing of these events, and this belief swept quickly across the ancient world. Ancient historians and writers allude to or confirm these events, and archeology corroborates them. ...Christians believe these multiple lines of evidence show beyond a reasonable doubt that God had a hand in these events. Atheists must have a lot more faith to explain away the predictions, the eye witness testimony, the willingness of the eyewitnesses to suffer and die, ...and other evidence that we’ll investigate later.”

VOICE: There’s a lot of detail there. I’m glad we’ll be discussing some of these points in more detail on future programs.

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1 Predicted; told in advance.

2 A particular nation or family.

PROF.: Before we close, let's share a few more quotations. The late Dr. Francis Crick [KRIK] shared a Nobel Prize for discovering the structure of DNA. Although he called himself an atheist, Crick admitted, quote, "An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to have been satisfied to get it going."

VOICE: (SURPRISED) Really? An atheist admitted that?

PROF.: Yes. And Paul Davies wrote, quote, "To postulate<sup>3</sup> an infinity of unseen and unseeable universes just to explain the one we do see seems like a case of excess baggage carried to the extreme. It is simpler to postulate one unseen God."

VOICE: So both the Christian and the atheist have faith.

PROF.: Any person who claims to be a skeptic of one set of beliefs, is actually a true believer in another set of beliefs. "To postulate an infinity of unseen and unseeable universes just to explain the one we do see seems like a case of excess baggage carried to the extreme. It is simpler to postulate one unseen God."

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<sup>3</sup> To assume without proof to be true.