

UNIT 2: God’s Creating Work

Section 6: Refuting Naturalism

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The First Life: Natural Law or Divine Awe?

“God never performed a miracle to convince an atheist, because his ordinary works provide sufficient evidence.”—Ariel Roth

TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE —LOVE MOM

Sixteen-year-old Johnny came down from his bedroom and stumbled into the kitchen to get a bowl of his favorite cereal Alpha-Bits. When he got to the table, he was surprised to see that the cereal box was knocked over, and the Alpha-Bit letters spelled “TAKE OUT THE GARBAGE—LOVE MOM” on the placemat.

Recalling a recent high school biology lesson, Johnny didn’t attribute the message to his mom. After all, he’d just been taught that life itself is merely a product of mindless, natural laws. If that’s the case, Johnny thought, why couldn’t a simple message like “Take out the garbage—Love Mom” be the product of mindless natural laws as well? Maybe the cat knocked the box over, or an earthquake shook the house. No sense jumping to conclusions. Johnny didn’t want to take out the garbage anyway. He didn’t have time for house chores. This was summer vacation, and he wanted to get to the beach. Mary would be there.

Since Mary was the girl Scott liked too, Johnny wanted to get to the beach early to beat Scott there. But when Johnny arrived, he saw Mary and Scott walking hand-in-hand along the shore. As he followed them at a distance, he looked down and saw a heart drawn in the sand with the words “Mary loves Scott” scrawled inside. For a moment, Johnny felt his heart sink. But thoughts of his biology class rescued him from deep despair. “Maybe this is just another case of natural laws at work!” he thought. “Perhaps sand crabs or an unusual wave pattern just happened to produce this love note naturally.” No sense accepting a conclusion he didn’t like! Johnny would just have to ignore the corroborating evidence of the handholding.

Comforted by the fact that principles learned in his biology class could help him avoid conclusions he didn’t like, Johnny decided to lie down for a few minutes to get a little sun. As he put his head back on his towel he noticed a message in the clouds: “Drink Coke,” the white puffy letters revealed on the sky-blue background. “Unusual cloud formation?” Johnny thought. “Swirling winds, perhaps?”

No, Johnny couldn’t play the game of denial any longer. “Drink Coke” was the real thing. A message like that was a sure sign of intelligence it couldn’t be the result of natural forces because natural forces have never been observed to create messages. Even though he never saw a plane, Johnny knew there must have been a skywriter up there recently. Besides, he wanted to believe this message—the hot sun had left him parched, thirsting for a Coke.

SIMPLE LIFE? THERE IS NO SUCH THING!

One needs to be playing with only half a deck or be willfully blind to suggest that messages like “Take out the garbage—Love Mom” and “Mary loves Scott” are the work of natural laws. Yet these conclusions are perfectly consistent with principles taught in most high school and college biology classes today. That’s where naturalistic biologists dogmatically assert that messages far more complicated are the mindless products of natural laws. They make this claim in trying to explain the origin of life.

Naturalistic biologists assert that life generated spontaneously from nonliving chemicals by natural laws without any intelligent intervention. Such a theory might have seemed plausible to a nineteenth-century scientist who didn’t have the technology to investigate the cell and discover its amazing complexity. But today this naturalistic theory flies in the face of everything we know about natural laws and biological systems.

Since the 1950s, advancing technology has enabled scientists to discover a tiny world of awesome design and astonishing complexity. At the same time that our telescopes are seeing farther out into space, our microscopes are seeing deeper into the components of life. While our space observations have yielded the Anthropic Principle of physics, our life observations are yielding an equally impressive Anthropic Principle of biology.

To show you what we mean, let’s consider so-called “simple” life—a one-celled animal known as an amoeba. Naturalistic evolutionists claim that this one-celled amoeba (or something like it) came together by spontaneous generation (i.e., without intelligent intervention) in a warm little pond somewhere on the very early earth. According to their theory, all biological life has evolved from that first amoeba without any intelligent guidance at all. This, of course, is the theory of macroevolution: from the infantile, to the reptile, to the Gentile; or, from the goo to you via the zoo.

Believers in this theory of origin are called by many names: naturalistic evolutionists, materialists, humanists, atheists, and Darwinists (henceforth, we’ll refer to believers in this atheistic evolutionary theory as Darwinists or atheists. This does not include those who believe in theistic evolution—i.e., that God guided evolution). Regardless of what we call the true believers in this theory, the key question for us is this: “Is their theory true?” It appears not.

Forget the Darwinist assertions about men descending from apes or birds evolving from reptiles. The supreme problem for Darwinists is not explaining how all life forms are related. The supreme problem for Darwinists is explaining the origin of the first life. For unguided, naturalistic macroevolution to be true, the first life must have generated spontaneously from nonliving chemicals. Unfortunately for Darwinists, the first life—indeed any form of life—is by no means “simple.” This became abundantly clear in 1953 when James Watson and Francis Crick discovered DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid), the chemical that encodes instructions for building and replicating all living things.

DNA has a helical structure that looks like a twisted ladder. The sides of the ladder are formed by alternating deoxyribose and phosphate molecules, and the rungs of the ladder consist of a specific order of four nitrogen bases. These nitrogen bases are adenine, thymine, cytosine, and

guanine, which commonly are represented by the letters A, T, C, and G. These letters comprise what is known as the four-letter genetic alphabet. This alphabet is identical to our English alphabet in terms of its ability to communicate a message, except that the genetic alphabet has only four letters instead of twenty-six. Just as the specific order of the letters in this sentence communicates a unique message, the specific order of A, T, C, and G within a living cell determines the unique genetic makeup of that living entity. Another name for that message or information, whether it's in a sentence or in DNA, is "specified complexity." In other words, not only is it complex—it also contains a specific message.

The incredible specified complexity of life becomes obvious when one considers the message found in the DNA of a one-celled amoeba (a creature so small, several hundred could be lined up in an inch). Staunch Darwinist Richard Dawkins, professor of zoology at Oxford University, admits that the message found in just the cell nucleus of a tiny amoeba is more than all thirty volumes of the Encyclopedia Britannica combined, and the entire amoeba has as much information in its DNA as 1,000 complete sets of the Encyclopedia Britannica! In other words, if you were to spell out all of the A, T, C, and G in the "unjustly called 'primitive' amoeba" (as Dawkins describes it), the letters would fill 1,000 complete sets of an encyclopedia!

Now, we must emphasize that these 1,000 encyclopedias do not consist of random letters but of letters in a very specific order—just like real encyclopedias. So here's the key question for Darwinists like Dawkins: if simple messages such as "Take out the garbage—Mom," "Mary loves Scott," and "Drink Coke" require an intelligent being, then why doesn't a message 1,000 encyclopedias long require one?

Darwinists can't answer that question by showing how natural laws could do the job. Instead, they define the rules of science so narrowly that intelligence is ruled out in advance, leaving natural laws as the only game in town. Before we describe how and why Darwinists do this, let's take a look at the scientific principles that ought to be used in discovering how the first life began.

INVESTIGATING THE ORIGIN OF FIRST LIFE

Many evolutionists as well as many creationists speak as if they know, beyond any doubt, how the first life came into existence. Both, of course, cannot be right. If one is right, the other is wrong. So how can we discover who's right?

The following fact is obvious but often overlooked: no human observed the origin of the first life. The emergence of the first life on earth was a one-time, unrepeatable historical event. No one was present to see it—neither evolutionists nor creationists were there, and we certainly can't travel back in time and directly observe whether the first life was created by some kind of intelligence or arose by natural laws from nonliving materials.

That raises an important question: if we can't directly observe the past, then what scientific principles can we use to help us discover what caused the first life? We use the same principles that are utilized every day in our criminal justice system—forensic principles. In other words, the origin of life is a forensic question that requires us to piece together evidence much like detectives piece together evidence from a murder. Detectives can't go back in time and witness

the murder again. Neither can they revive the victim and go into the laboratory to conduct some kind of experiment that will allow them to observe and repeat the crime over and over again. Instead, they must utilize the principles of forensic science to discover what really happened.

The central principle in forensic science is the Principle of Uniformity, which holds that causes in the past were like the causes we observe today. In other words, by the Principle of Uniformity, we assume that the world worked in the past just like it works today, especially when it comes to causes. If “Take out the garbage—Love Mom” requires an intelligent cause today, then any similar message from the past must also require an intelligent cause. Conversely, if natural laws can do the job today, then the Principle of Uniformity would lead us to conclude natural laws could do the job in the past.

Consider the Grand Canyon. What caused it? Did anyone see it form? No, but by the Principle of Uniformity, we can conclude that natural processes, particularly water erosion (Flood perhaps???), were responsible for the Grand Canyon. We can conclude this confidently, even though we were not there to see it happen, because we can observe these natural processes creating canyons today. We see this in nature when we observe water’s effect on a landmass. We can even go into the laboratory and repeatedly pour water in the middle of a mass of dirt, and we’ll always get a canyon.

Now consider another geologic formation: Mount Rushmore. What caused it? Common sense tells us that we would never suggest that the presidential faces on Mount Rushmore were the result of natural laws. Erosion couldn’t have done that. Our “common sense” is actually the Principle of Uniformity. Since we never observe natural laws chiseling a highly detailed sculpture of a president’s head into stone at the present time, we rightly conclude that natural laws couldn’t have done it in the past either. Today we see only intelligent beings creating detailed sculptures. As a result, we rightly conclude that, in the past, only an intelligent being (a sculptor) could have created the faces on Mount Rushmore.

In the same way, when we look at the first one-celled life, the Principle of Uniformity tells us that only an intelligent cause could assemble the equivalent of 1,000 encyclopedias. Natural laws never have been observed to create a simple message like “Take out the garbage—Love Mom” or “Drink Coke,” much less a message 1,000 encyclopedias long.

Why then do Darwinists come to the conclusion that the first life generated spontaneously from nonliving chemicals without intelligent intervention? Spontaneous generation of life has never been observed. Ever since Pasteur sterilized his flask, one of the most fundamental observations in all of science has been that life arises only from similar existing life. Scientists have been unable to combine chemicals in a test tube and arrive at a DNA molecule, much less life. In fact, all experiments designed to spontaneously generate life—including the now discredited Urey-Miller experiment—have not only failed but also suffer from the illegitimate application of intelligence. In other words, scientists intelligently contrive experiments and they still cannot do what we are told mindless natural laws have done. Why should we believe that mindless processes could do what brilliant scientists cannot do? And even if scientists eventually did create life in the laboratory, it would prove creation. Why? Because their efforts would show that it takes a lot of intelligence to create life.

Do Darwinists insist on spontaneous generation because they just don't see the evidence for design? Not at all. In fact, exactly the opposite is true—they see the evidence clearly! For example, Richard Dawkins named his book *The Blind Watchmaker* in response to a man named William Paley's famous design argument. The appearance of design in life is admitted on the first page of *The Blind Watchmaker*. Dawkins writes, "Biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose." Two pages later, despite acknowledging "the intricate architecture and precision-engineering" in human life and in each of the trillions of cells within the human body, Dawkins flatly denies that human life or any other life has been designed. Apparently, Dawkins refuses to allow observation to interfere with his conclusions. This is very strange for a man who believes in the supremacy of science, which is supposed to be based on observation.

Francis Crick, codiscoverer of DNA and another ardent Darwinist, agrees with Dawkins about the appearance of design. In fact, the appearance of design is so clear he warns that "biologists must constantly keep in mind that what they see was not designed, but rather evolved."

Crick's little memo to biologists led Phillip Johnson, author and a leader in the Intelligent Design (ID) movement, to observe, "Darwinian biologists must keep repeating that reminder to themselves because otherwise they might become conscious of the reality that is staring them in the face and trying to get their attention."

The complexity of DNA is not the only problem for Darwinists. Its origin is also a problem. A difficult chicken-egg dilemma exists because DNA relies on proteins for its production but proteins rely on DNA for their production. So which came first, proteins or DNA? One must already be in existence for the other to be made.

So why do Crick, Dawkins, and others in their camp ignore the plain implications of the evidence staring them in the face? Because their preconceived ideology—naturalism—prevents them from even considering an intelligent cause. As we're about to see, this is bad science, and it leads to wrong conclusions.

GOOD SCIENCE VS. BAD SCIENCE

It is commonly believed that the so-called creation-evolution debate (now often called the intelligent design vs. naturalism debate) entails a war between religion and science, the Bible and science, or faith and reason. This perception is perpetuated by the media, who consistently depict the debate in terms of, "Here come those crazy religious fundamentalists again, and they want to impose their dogmatic religion and ignore objective science."

Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. The creation-evolution debate is not about religion versus science or the Bible versus science—it's about good science versus bad science. Likewise, it's not about faith versus reason—it's about reasonable faith versus unreasonable faith. It may surprise you to see just who is practicing the bad science, and just who has the unreasonable faith.

Science is a search for causes. Logically, there are only two types of causes: intelligent and nonintelligent (i.e., natural). The Grand Canyon had a natural cause, and Mount Rushmore had an intelligent one. Unfortunately, on the question of first life, Darwinists like Dawkins and Crick rule out intelligent causes before they even look at the evidence. In other words, their conclusions are preloaded into their assumptions. Spontaneous generation by natural laws must be the cause of life because they consider no other options.

Spontaneous generation is what critics of evolution call a “just-so” story. Evolutionists provide no evidence to support spontaneous generation. It isn’t supported by empirical observation or forensic science principles. They say because life exists it must be true although it is manifestly absurd. It’s “just-so” because life exists, and since intelligent causes are ruled out in advance, there can be no other possible explanation.

Consider this quote from George Wald, “One has only to contemplate the magnitude of this task to concede that the spontaneous generation of a living organism is impossible. Yet here we are—as a result, I believe of spontaneous generation. Time is in fact the hero of the plot. The time with which we have to deal is of the order of 2 billion years. What we regard as impossible on the basis of human experience is meaningless here. Given so much time, the ‘impossible’ become possible, the possible probable, and the probable virtually certain. One has only to wait: time itself performs the miracles.”

The problem for Darwinists is immense. Biochemist Klaus Dose admits that more than thirty years of research into the origin of life has led to “a better perception of the immensity of the problem of the origin of life on Earth rather than to its solution. At present all discussions on principal theories and experiments in the field either end in stalemate or in a confession of ignorance.” Francis Crick laments, “Every time I write a paper on the origin of life, I swear I will never write another one, because there is too much speculation running after too few facts.”

The evidence is so strong for intelligence and against naturalism that prominent evolutionists have actually suggested aliens deposited the first life here. Fred Hoyle (the same evolutionist who popularized the Steady State Theory) invented this far-out theory (called “panspermia,” for “seeds everywhere”) after calculating that the probability of life arising by spontaneous generation was effectively zero. (Of course panspermia doesn’t solve the problem—it simply puts it off another step: who made the intelligent aliens?)

As crazy as the theory sounds, at least panspermia advocates recognize that some kind of intelligence must be behind the amazing wonder we call life. Still, when top evolutionists have to resort to aliens to explain the origin of life, you know the simplest life must be incredibly complex.

Another panspermia advocate, Chandra Wickramasinghe, admits that the Darwinists are acting on blind faith when it comes to spontaneous generation. He observes, “The emergence of life from a primordial soup on the Earth is merely an article of faith that scientists are finding difficult to shed. There is no experimental evidence to support this at the present time. Indeed all attempts to create life from non-life, starting from Pasteur, have been unsuccessful.” Microbiologist Michael Denton, though himself an atheist, adds, “The complexity of the simplest known type of cell is so great that it is impossible to accept that such an object could have been

thrown together suddenly by some kind of freakish, vastly improbable event. Such an occurrence would be indistinguishable from a miracle.”

In light of “just-so” explanations such as spontaneous generation and panspermia, who do you think is practicing the bad science: the people derisively called “religious” (the theists/creationists) or the “enlightened” ones (the atheists/Darwinists) who are really just as religious as the “religious”? Physicist and information scientist Hubert Yockey realizes it’s the Darwinists. He writes, “The belief that life on earth arose spontaneously from nonliving matter, is simply a matter of faith in strict reductionism and is based entirely on ideology.”

Yockey is right. Darwinists falsely believe they can reduce life to its nonliving chemical components. That’s the ideology of reductionism. For Darwinists like Dawkins or Crick who must believe that only the material (and not the immaterial) exists, then life can be nothing more than chemicals. But life is clearly more than chemicals. Life contains a message—DNA—that is expressed in chemicals, but those chemicals cannot cause the message any more than the chemicals in ink and paper can cause the sentences on this page. A message points to something beyond chemicals. The message in life, just like the one on the page of a book, points to an intelligence beyond its chemical elements. (We realize that life is certainly more than chemicals with a message, but the key point here is that it’s certainly not less.)

So by blind allegiance to this naturalistic, reductionist ideology—which is against all observation and reason—Darwinists dogmatically assert that life arose spontaneously from its nonliving chemical components. Ironically, this is exactly what Darwinists have long accused creationists of doing—allowing their ideology to overrule observation and reason. In truth, it’s the Darwinists who are allowing their faith to overrule observation and reason. Creationists and Intelligent Design proponents are simply making a rational inference from the evidence. They are following the evidence exactly where it leads back to an intelligent cause.

Yockey is not the only one pointing out that Darwinists have a philosophical bias against intelligent causes. Phillip Johnson serves as the sharp edge of a steel wedge that is now splitting the petrified wood of naturalism in the scientific community. He correctly points out that “Darwinism is based on an a priori commitment to materialism, not on a philosophically neutral assessment of the evidence. Separate the philosophy from the science, and the proud tower collapses.”

And it’s not just the critics of evolution who see this bias. Prominent Darwinists admit it as well. In fact, Dawkins himself has acknowledged the bias in responding to an e-mail question from Phillip Johnson. “[Our] philosophical commitment to materialism and reductionism is true,” Dawkins wrote, “but I would prefer to characterize it as philosophical commitment to a real explanation as opposed to a complete lack of an explanation, which is what you espouse.” (Dawkins may think he has a “real explanation,” but, as we have seen, his explanation is against all of the observational and forensic evidence.)

If Richard Dawkins leaks out a half-hearted admission of bias, Darwinist Richard Lewontin of Harvard University gushes a complete written confession. Read how Lewontin acknowledges that Darwinists accept absurd “just-so” stories that are against common sense because of their prior commitment to materialism:

Our willingness to accept scientific claims that are against common sense is the key to an understanding of the real struggle between science and the supernatural. We take the side of science in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, in spite of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a prior commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counterintuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover that materialism is absolute for we cannot allow a divine foot in the door.

Now the real truth comes out. It's not that the evidence supports Darwinism—in fact, according to Lewontin and our own common sense, Darwinist explanations are “counterintuitive.” The real truth is that the Darwinists have defined science in such a way that the only possible answer is Darwinism. Any other definition would, God forbid, allow God to get his “foot in the door”!

The bottom line is this: the event required to get the atheistic theory of macroevolution off the ground—the spontaneous generation of first life—is believed because of false philosophical assumptions disguised as science, not because there are legitimate scientific observations that support spontaneous generation. False science is bad science, and it's the Darwinists who are practicing it. Their belief in spontaneous generation results from their blind faith in naturalism. It takes tremendous faith to believe that the first one-celled creature came together by natural laws, because that's like believing 1,000 encyclopedias resulted from an explosion in a printing shop! Atheists can't even explain the origin of the printing shop, much less the 1,000 encyclopedias.

GIVE TIME AND CHANCE A CHANCE!

“Not so fast!” say the Darwinists. “You've overlooked time and chance as plausible explanations for how life spontaneously generated.”

Give Time More Time!

Darwinists dismiss the conclusion that intelligence was necessary for the first life by suggesting that more time would allow natural laws to do their work. Give it several billion years and eventually we'll get life. Is this plausible?

Let's go back to Mount Rushmore for a minute. Darwinists assert that science is built on observation and repetition. Okay, suppose we observe and repeat an experiment where we allow natural laws to work on rock for the next ten years. Will we ever get the faces on Mount Rushmore? Never.

You say, maybe natural laws would do it if we give them billions of years. No, they wouldn't. Why? Because nature disorders, it doesn't organize things (the fact that nature brings things toward disorder is an aspect of the Second Law of Thermodynamics). More time will make things worse for the Darwinist, not better. How so?

Let's suppose you throw red, white, and blue confetti out of an airplane 1,000 feet above your house. What's the chance it's going to form the American flag on your front lawn? Very low. Why? Because natural laws will mix up or randomize the confetti. You say, "Allow more time." Okay, let's take the plane up to 10,000 feet to give natural laws more time to work on the confetti. Does this improve the probability that the flag will form on your lawn? No, more time actually makes the flag less likely because natural laws have longer to do what they do—disorder and randomize.

What is different about the origin of the first life? Darwinists might say that the Second Law of Thermodynamics doesn't apply continuously to living systems. After all, living things do grow and can get more ordered. Yes, they grow and get more ordered, but they still lose energy in the process of growth. The food that goes into a living system is not processed at 100 percent efficiency. So the Second Law applies to living systems as well. But that's not even the point. The point is, we're not talking about what something can do once it's alive; we're talking about getting a living thing in the first place. How did life arise from nonliving chemicals, without intelligent intervention, when nonliving chemicals are susceptible to the Second Law? Darwinists have no answer, only faith.

Give Chance a Chance!

Can all the incredible specified complexity in life be explained by chance? Not a chance! Atheists and theists alike have calculated the probability that life could arise by chance from nonliving chemicals. The figures they calculate are astronomically small—virtually zero. For example, Michael Behe has said that the probability of getting one protein molecule (which has about 100 amino acids) by chance would be the same as a blindfolded man finding one marked grain of sand in the Sahara Desert three times in a row. And one protein molecule is not life. To get life, you would need to get about 200 of those protein molecules together!

That probability is virtually zero. But we believe the probability is actually zero. Why? Because "chance" is not a cause. Chance is a word that we use to describe mathematical possibilities. It has no power of its own. Chance is nothing. It's what rocks dream about.

If someone flips a fair coin, what's the chance it will come up heads? Fifty percent, we say. Yes, but what causes it to come up heads? Is it chance? No, the primary cause is an intelligent being who decided to flip the coin and apply so much force in doing so. Secondary causes, such as the physical forces of wind and gravity, also impact the result of the flip. If we knew all those variables, we could calculate how the flip would turn out beforehand. But since we don't know those variables, we use the word "chance" to cover our ignorance.

We shouldn't allow atheists to cover their ignorance with the word "chance." If they don't know a natural mechanism by which the first life could have come into existence, then they should admit they don't know rather than suggesting a powerless word that, of course, really isn't a cause at all. "Chance" is just another example of the bad science practiced by Darwinists.

SCIENCE IS A SLAVE TO PHILOSOPHY

Unfortunately, Darwinists have been successful in convincing the public that the only bad science is that which disagrees with Darwinism (and that really isn't science at all, they say—it's just religion masquerading as science). In fact, the exact opposite is true. It's the Darwinists who are practicing the bad science, because their science is built on a false philosophy. In effect, it's their secular religion of naturalism that leads them to ignore the empirically detectable scientific evidence for design.

What lessons can we learn from the bad science of the Darwinists? Let's look at a debate between William Lane Craig, a Christian, and Darwinist Peter Atkins. The debate was over the existence of God. At one point, Atkins argued that God wasn't necessary because science could explain everything.

"There is no need for God," declared Atkins. "Everything in the world can be understood without needing to evoke a God. You have to accept that's one possible view to take about the world."

"Sure, that's possible," Craig admitted. "But . . ."

[Interrupting] "Do you deny that science can account for everything?" challenged Atkins.

"Yes, I do deny that science can account for everything," said Craig.

"So what can't it account for?" demanded Atkins.

A veteran of many debates, Craig was ready with a multifaceted answer. "I think there are a good number of things that cannot be scientifically proven but we are all rational to accept," he said. Craig then cited these five examples of rational beliefs that cannot be proven by science:

1. mathematics and logic (science can't prove them because science presupposes them),
2. metaphysical truths (such as, there are minds that exist other than my own),
3. ethical judgments (you can't prove by science that the Nazis were evil, because morality is not subject to the scientific method),
4. aesthetic judgments (the beautiful, like the good, cannot be scientifically proven), and, ironically
5. science itself (the belief that the scientific method discovers truth can't be proven by the scientific method itself); (more on this below).

(Following this barrage of examples refuting Atkins's view, moderator William F. Buckley, Jr., could not hide his pleasure with Craig's answer. He peered over at Atkins and cracked, "So put that in your pipe and smoke it!")

Craig was right. The scientific method of searching for causes by observation and repetition is but one means of finding truth. It is not the only means of finding truth. Nonscientific (philosophical) laws, such as the laws of logic, help us discover truth as well. In fact, those laws are used by the scientific method!

Moreover, Atkins's claim that science can account for everything is not false only because of the five counterexamples Craig noted; it is also false because it is self-defeating. In effect, Atkins was saying, "Science is the only objective source of truth." If we test that statement by the Road Runner tactic (testing a claim against itself), we see it is self-defeating and therefore false. The statement "science is the only source of objective truth" claims to be an objective truth, but it's not a scientific truth. The statement is philosophical in nature—it can't be proven by science—so it defeats itself.

This leads us to perhaps the greatest lesson we can learn from the bad science of the Darwinists: science is built on philosophy. Indeed, science is a slave to philosophy. Bad philosophy results in bad science, and good science requires good philosophy. Why? Because:

1. Science cannot be done without philosophy. Philosophical assumptions are utilized in the search for causes, and, therefore, cannot be the result of them. For example, scientists assume (by faith) that reason and the scientific method allow us to accurately understand the world around us. That cannot be proven by science itself. You can't prove the tools of science—the laws of logic, the Law of Causality, the Principle of Uniformity, or the reliability of observation—by running some kind of experiment. You have to assume those things are true in order to do the experiment! So science is built on philosophy. Unfortunately, many so-called scientists are very poor philosophers.

2. Philosophical assumptions can dramatically impact scientific conclusions. If a scientist assumes beforehand that only natural causes are possible, then probably no amount of evidence will convince him that intelligence created the first one-celled amoeba or any other designed entity. When Darwinists presuppose that intelligent causes are impossible, then natural laws are the only game in town. Likewise, if a creationist rules out natural causes beforehand (and I don't know of any who do), then he also risks missing the right answer. But a scientist who is open-minded to both natural and intelligent causes can follow the evidence wherever it leads.

3. Science doesn't really say anything—scientists do. Data are always interpreted by scientists. When those scientists let their personal preferences or unproven philosophical assumptions dictate their interpretation of the evidence, they do exactly what they accuse religious people of doing—they let their ideology dictate their conclusions. When that's the case, their conclusions should be questioned, because they may be nothing more than philosophical presuppositions passed off as scientific facts.

MATERIALISM MAKES REASON IMPOSSIBLE

When you get down to the root of the problem, you find that the bad science of the Darwinists results from the false philosophy of naturalism or materialism at the foundation of their worldview. Why is materialism false? Here are five reasons why materialism is not reasonable:

First, as we've already pointed out, there is a message resident in life, technically called specified complexity, that cannot be explained materially. This message cannot be explained by nonintelligent natural laws any more than the message in these notes can be explained by the nonintelligent laws of ink and paper.

Second, human thoughts and theories are not comprised only of materials. Chemicals are certainly involved in the human thought process, but they cannot explain all human thoughts. The theory of materialism isn't made of molecules. Likewise, someone's thoughts, whether they be of love or hate, are not chemicals. How much does love weigh? What's the chemical composition of hate? These are absurd questions because thoughts, convictions, and emotions are not completely materially based. Since they are not completely materially based, materialism is false.

Third, if life were nothing more than materials, then we'd be able to take all the materials of life—which are the same materials found in dirt—and make a living being. We cannot. There's clearly something beyond materials in life. What materialist can explain why one body is alive and another body is dead? Both contain the same chemicals. Why is a body alive one minute and dead the next? What combination of materials can account for consciousness? Even Atkins, in his debate with Craig, admitted that explaining consciousness is a great problem for atheists.

Fourth, if materialism is true, then everyone in all of human history who has ever had any kind of spiritual experience has been completely mistaken. While this is possible, given the vast number of spiritual experiences, it does not seem likely. It is difficult to believe that every great spiritual leader and thinker in the history of humanity—including some of the most rational, scientific, and critical minds ever—have all been completely wrong about their spiritual experience. This includes Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Kepler, Newton, Pascal, and Jesus Christ himself. If just one spiritual experience in the entire history of the world is true, then materialism is false.

Finally, if materialism is true, then reason itself is impossible. For if mental processes are nothing but chemical reactions in the brain, then there is no reason to believe that anything is true (including the theory of materialism). Chemicals can't evaluate whether or not a theory is true. Chemicals don't reason, they react.

This is supremely ironic because Darwinists—who claim to champion truth and reason—have made truth and reason impossible by their theory of materialism. So even when Darwinists are right about something, their worldview gives us no reason to believe them—because reason itself is impossible in a world governed only by chemical and physical forces.

Not only is reason impossible in a Darwinian world, but the Darwinist's assertion that we should rely on reason alone cannot be justified. Why not? Because reason actually requires faith. As J. Budziszewski points out, "The motto 'Reason Alone!' is nonsense anyway. Reason itself presupposes faith. Why? Because a defense of reason by reason is circular, therefore worthless. Our only guarantee that human reason works is God who made it."

Let's unpack Budziszewski's point by considering the source of reason. Our ability to reason can come from one of only two places: either our ability to reason arose from preexisting intelligence, or it arose from mindless matter. The atheists — Darwinists — materialists believe, by faith, that our minds arose from mindless matter without intelligent intervention. We say it is by faith because it contradicts all scientific observation, which demonstrates that an effect cannot be greater than its cause. You can't give what you haven't got, yet materialists believe that dead, unintelligent matter has produced intelligent life. This is like believing that the Library of Congress resulted from an explosion in a printing shop!

It makes much more sense to believe that the human mind is made in the image of the Great Mind—God. In other words, our minds can apprehend truth and can reason about reality because they were built by the Architect of truth, reality, and reason itself. Materialism cannot explain reason any more than it can explain life. Materialism is just not reasonable.

THE ATHEIST VS. THE CRITICAL THINKING CONSULTANT

The very fact that Darwinists think they have reasons to be atheists actually presupposes that God exists. How so? Because reasons require that this universe be a reasonable one that presupposes there is order, logic, design, and truth. But order, logic, design, and truth can only exist and be known if there is an unchangeable objective source and standard of such things. To say something is unreasonable, Darwinists must know what reasonable is. To say something is not designed, Darwinists must know what designed is. To say something is not true, Darwinists must know what truth is, and so forth. Like all nontheistic worldviews, Darwinism borrows from the theistic worldview in order to make its own view intelligible.

This tendency of atheists to borrow unwittingly from the theistic worldview was beautifully exposed by author Pete Bocchino during a curriculum meeting for the State of Georgia’s Department of Education. Pete, who was working for an internationally known Christian ministry at the time, was slated to be on a subcommittee to review and improve the sixth to twelfth grade public school curriculum in subjects such as U.S. government, law, ethics, and character training.

The first of a weeklong series of meetings was held in a large room where all the subcommittee members were given an opportunity to introduce themselves. Pete, who got held up in traffic, arrived late, missed the introductions, and started heading for his seat. When the subcommittee chairman noticed Pete walking in, he told him that they had already introduced themselves and asked Pete to do the same by giving his name, background, and occupation. Pete gave his name and said that he had a degree in mechanical engineering. Pete thought to himself, “I certainly don’t want to bring Christianity into this by telling them that I work for an international Christian ministry.” So he cryptically said, “I currently work for a not-for-profit organization as a critical thinking consultant.”

The chairman said, “A what?!”

“A critical thinking consultant,” Pete repeated.

“What exactly does a critical thinking consultant do?” the chairman persisted.

“Well, we’re already running late, and I don’t want to take up the committee’s time,” Pete reasoned, “but you’ll find out during the week.”

As the week progressed, the committee debated various topics, such as diversity, tolerance, human rights, and other controversial issues. At one point, when they were discussing psychology standards, Pete noted that the standards did not contain a definition of personhood.

This was a gaping hole in the psychology curriculum; so Pete submitted the following definition based on a section of Mortimer Adler’s book, *Haves Without Have-Nots*:

Course: Psychology / Topic: Uniqueness

Standard: Evaluates the uniqueness of human nature and the concept of personhood.

1. Intellect / conceptual thought
2. Freedom to choose / free will
3. Ethical responsibility (standards)
4. Moral accountability (obligations), and
5. Inalienable rights of personhood.

As soon as this standard was placed on the table, an educator sitting across from Pete—who had made it known that she was an atheist—was about to challenge this standard. Before she could do that, Pete stopped her and said to the group,

If anyone were to disagree with this standard, they would be doing the following:

1. That person would be engaging me in conceptual thought (in 1 above).
2. That person would be exercising his/her “freedom” to do so (in 2 above).
3. That person must think that there is an ethical responsibility to teach what is right (in 3 above).
4. That person is seeking to hold me morally accountable to teach the truth (in 4 above).
5. That person has the right to disagree with my position (in 5 above).

So if one were to disagree with these criteria, that person would actually confirm the validity of each point of these criteria.

The group became rather quiet for a moment. Then the chairman spoke up and said, “Now we know what a critical thinking consultant does!” With that he told the committee secretary to include the standard in the recommendations.

With a little critical thinking, we see that the Darwinian worldview collapses not only from a lack of evidence but also because Darwinists must borrow from the theistic worldview as they attempt to make their case. Intellect, free will, objective morality, and human rights as well as reason, logic, design, and truth can exist only if God exists. Yet Darwinists assume some or all of these realities when they defend their atheistic worldview. They can’t have it both ways.

In light of the fact that this Designer exists, when we see biological systems that even Darwinists like Richard Dawkins recognize “give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose,” maybe we ought to conclude that they really were designed for a purpose. As William Dembski points out, “If a creature looks like a dog, smells like a dog, barks like a dog, feels like a dog, and pants like a dog, the burden of evidence lies with the person insisting the creature isn’t a dog.” Since the universe is created and designed, then we should expect life to be created and designed as well. (At least it’s possible that life was created by intelligence. Ruling out that possibility beforehand is clearly illegitimate.) So the conclusion that life is the product of an intelligent Designer makes sense because it’s not a lone piece of evidence. It’s consistent with other scientific findings.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Since we've covered a lot of ground, let's sum it up with a few short points:

1. Life does not consist merely of chemicals. If that were the case, mixing the chemicals of life in a test tube would produce life. Life clearly consists of more than chemicals; it also includes specified complexity (which comes only from a mind). Therefore, materialism is false. (There are numerous additional reasons why materialism is false, including the fact that reason itself would be impossible in a materialistic universe.)
2. There are no known natural laws that create specified complexity (information). Only intelligence has been observed creating specified complexity (e.g., "Take out the garbage—Love Mom, "Drink Coke," Mount Rushmore, etc.).
3. The simplest life consists of amazing specified complexity—equivalent to 1,000 complete sets of the Encyclopedia Britannica. Einstein said, "God doesn't play dice with the universe." He was right. As Phillip Gold said, "God plays Scrabble!"
4. Science is a search for causes that is built on philosophy. There are only two types of causes, intelligent and natural, but Darwinists philosophically rule out intelligent causes before they even look at the evidence. That's why when Darwinists look at those 1,000 encyclopedias—despite observing and recognizing their obvious design—they assert that their cause must be natural. But if "Take out the garbage—Love Mom" requires an intelligent cause, then so do 1,000 encyclopedias.
5. Spontaneous generation of life, which Darwinism requires to get the theory started, has never been observed. It is believed in by faith. And in light of the strong cosmological and teleological evidence that this is a theistic universe (and for many other reasons), the Darwinian belief in naturalism (or materialism) is also an article of faith. Hence, Darwinism is nothing more than a secular religion masquerading as science.