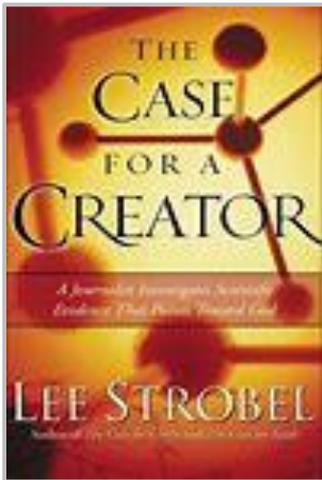


Adventure Club

A weekly lesson for children, young people, parents and grandparents, from the GCI Watford Church.
Number 32, 30th October 2020

The Case For A Creator

My Road to Atheism was Paved by Science, but so was my later Journey to God.



During his academic years, Lee Strobel became convinced that God was outmoded, a belief that coloured his career as a journalist. Science had made the idea of a Creator irrelevant, or so Lee thought. But today science is pointing in a different direction. In recent years, a diverse and impressive body of research has increasingly supported the conclusion that the universe was intelligently designed. At the same time Darwinism has faltered in the face of concrete facts and hard reason. This is giving faith an immense boost as new findings emerge about the incredible complexity of our universe. Lee re-examines the theories that once led him away from God. Through his account, you'll encounter the mind-stretching discoveries from cosmology, cellular biology, DNA research, astronomy, physics and human consciousness that present astonishing evidence in *The Case For A Creator*. If you would like to build up your own evidence that God is the universe's Creator, then this book is recommended. Below are introductory overviews to the eleven chapters in the book.



Lee Strobel

Chapter 1

White-coated Scientists Versus Black-robed Preachers

Back in 1974 some parents were unhappy about evolution being taught in their schools. Lee was asked to write a newspaper report about it. One of the new school books talked about the 'theory of divine creation'. One parent emphatically commented: The Word of God is not a theory. Take God out of creation and what's left? Evolution. Scientists want to teach our kids that divine origin is just a theory that only stupid people believe. Instead they want to teach that evolution is a scientific fact. Well it's not.

Lee thought to himself: Doesn't this parent know that evolution is a proven fact? Didn't he realise that in an age of science and technology it's simply irrational to believe the ancient myths about God creating the world and shaping human beings in his own image? Did he really want his children clinging desperately to religious nonsense that's so clearly disproven by modern cosmology, astronomy, zoology, comparative anatomy, geology, palaeontology, biology genetics and anthropology? Lee really believed that Christianity was just a 'dinosaur' from the past. He thought: Why can't these parents get their heads out of the sand and admit the obvious: science had put their God out of a job! The white-coated scientists of the modern world had trumped the black-robed priests of medieval times. Darwin's theory of evolution – no, the absolute fact of evolution – meant that there is no universal morality decreed by a deity. Lee believed that the views of these parents were a last gasp of an archaic belief system hurtling towards oblivion. He thought that as more and more young people are taught the ironclad evidence for macro-evolution and the impossibility of miracles, as they see how science is on the path to ultimately explaining everything in the universe, then the belief in an invisible God, in angels and demons and in a long-ago rabbi who walked on water and multiplied fish and bread and returned from the dead, will just fade into a fringe superstition. As far as Lee was concerned, that day couldn't come soon enough.

Science versus Religion



Searches for answers
Lectures
Big heavy books
Says God is man-made

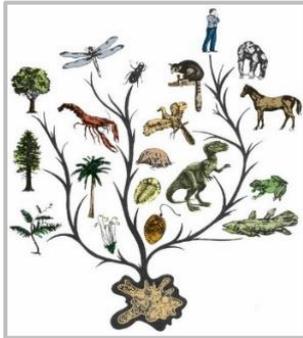
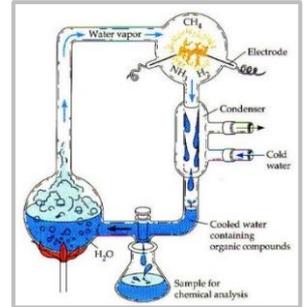


Searches for answers
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The Images of Evolution

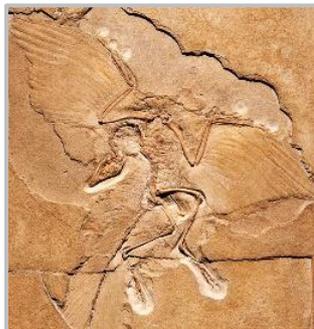
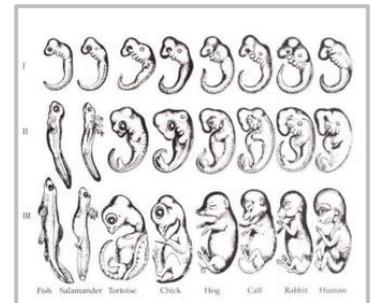
As a young man Lee Strobel saw science as a foundation, an anchor, always rock solid in its methodology. His admiration for scientific thinking was developing at the same time that his confidence in God was waning. In 1966 in biology classes he began to learn about scientific discoveries which he thought would make it possible for him to become an 'intellectually fulfilled atheist'. Lee was a visual thinker and about this time he came across four images each of which made a deep impression on him.

The first image was of a laboratory experiment that Stanley Miller did in 1953 to 'artificially produce the building blocks of life'. As Lee went deeper into Miller's 'success', his mind flashed to the logical implication: if the origin of life can be explained by laboratory experiments solely using natural processes, then there was no need for a Deity because living organisms could emerge by themselves out of the primordial soup and then develop naturally over eons into more and more complex creatures.



The next image was based on Darwin's 'tree of life'. Lee looked at this and to him it explained that primitive cells somehow morphed, over very long periods of time, into every species of creatures. In other words, fish were transformed into reptiles and reptiles into birds and mammals, then into apes and finally into humans. To Lee, this illustration of Darwin's theory nicely showed how many millions of species could gradually develop.

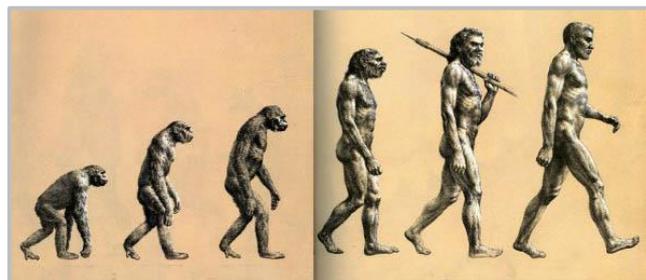
Darwin's theory seemed to be confirmed by the third image that stuck in Lee's mind. This was Ernst Haeckel's sketches of three developing stages of embryos. The embryos were of a fish, salamander, tortoise, chick, hog, calf, rabbit and a human. Haeckel graphically established that they all appeared strikingly similar in their earliest stages of development. It was only later that they became distinctly different. To Lee, this pointed to all of them having common ancestry somewhere early in the trunk of Darwin's tree.



The fourth image was of a 'missing link'. The fossil that to many powerfully symbolises the evolutionary process. It is one of the most famous fossils in the world. It is called *archaeopteryx* or 'ancient wing' and is supposed to be about 150 million years old. With the wings, feathers and wishbone of a bird, but with lizard-like tail and claws on its wings, it was hailed as the missing link between reptiles and modern birds. Here was a half-bird, half-reptile, and on seeing it, Lee felt he needed to look no further. He believed palaeontology backed up Darwin. Lee was thoroughly convinced that Darwin had explained away any need for God. He felt he did not need any Bible if he had Darwin's *Origin of Species* (published in 1859).

Then it happened. Lee's wife Leslie announced she had decided to become a follower of Jesus. Lee simply could not comprehend how such a rational person could buy into an irrational religious concoction of wishful thinking, make-believe, mythology and legend! However, Leslie's character began to change, her values underwent a transformation as she became a more loving and caring person. Something – or as she would claim, *Someone* – was undeniably changing her for the better. Lee writes that this is when he decided to investigate, so he started asking questions, lots of them about faith, God and the Bible. He was determined to go wherever to get the answers.

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Doubts about Darwinism

Dr Jonathan Wells wrote a book entitled *Icons of Evolution*. Lee interviewed him. Regarding Stanley Miller's 'origin of life' experiment, Jonathan explained that modern scientists simply look at Miller's results as 'meaningless'. He also explained that Darwin's 'tree of life' had been 'uprooted' by the fossil evidence in the

'Cambrian explosion'. He said that Haeckel's drawings of embryos had been doctored and did not reflect reality. Also, that *archaeopteryx* is not half reptile and is not an ancestor of modern birds. It is from an extinct group of birds and as such is not a 'missing link' which some ardent evolutionists now agree with. Despite increased geological activity around the world, when it comes to finding 'missing links' the fossil record has utterly let Darwin down.



Lee also asked Jonathan about two more well-known evolution icons. One was the parade of ape-like creatures that gradually morph into modern human beings. The other was the ‘Java man’. Jonathan dismissed the ape to human illustration as there were only a ‘minuscule’ number of fossils believed to be ancestral to humans. For example, he explained, all that was found for the ‘Java man’ was nothing more than a skullcap, a thigh bone and three teeth. So he explained that the painting of Java man was fuelled by evolutionary expectations of what he *should* have looked like together with a great deal of imagination! Jonathan said the evidence for Darwinism is not only grossly inadequate, it’s also systematically distorted. He concluded by saying the case for Darwinian evolution is ‘bankrupt’.

Chapter 4

Where Science Meets Faith

‘Science and religion are friends not foes’ begins this chapter. For the subject of science meeting faith Lee Strobel interviewed Dr Stephen Meyer. Stephen is an advocate of intelligent design. He gained his doctorate in Cambridge, England and has contributed to numerous books. He believes that scientific evidence actually supports theistic belief. In fact, he says, across a wide range of the sciences, evidence has come to light in the last fifty years which, taken together, provides a robust case for theism. He then gives six examples:



Dr Stephen Meyer

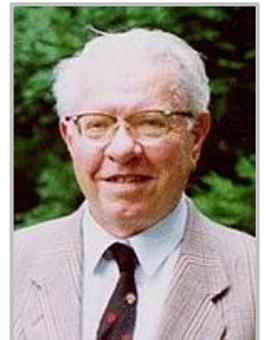
- The Big Bang and general relativity provide a scientific description of what Christians call *creatio ex nihilo* – creation out of nothing.
- The fine-tuning of the fundamental laws and parameters of physics, for example, the expansion of the universe is fine-tuned to one part in a trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion, trillion!
- The origin of information necessary to bring life into existence, such as DNA.
- The evidence for design in molecular machines that defy explanation.
- The Cambrian explosion in the fossil record, which is another striking piece of design evidence in the history of life.
- The human consciousness, which certainly supports a theistic view of human nature.

Stephen continues: Taken together, what we know today gives us heightened confidence from science that God exists. The weight of the evidence is very, very impressive, in fact in my opinion it’s sufficiently conclusive to say that theism provides the best explanation for the collection of things we’ve been discussing. Science and faith are not at war. When scientific evidence and biblical teaching are correctly interpreted, they can, and do, support each other. He concludes by saying: Science done right points towards God.

Chapter 5

The Evidence of Cosmology: Beginning With a Bang

Dr William Craig has written many books on cosmology. In this chapter Lee Strobel interviews him and investigates William’s belief that the ‘Big Bang’ is one of the most plausible arguments for God’s existence. William explained that from the ancient Greeks through to the 19th century secular science assumed the universe was eternal. Christians denied this on the basis of Biblical revelation saying that although the universe appeared to be static, it did have a beginning when God created it. So the discovery in the twentieth century that the universe is not an unchanging eternal entity was a complete shock to secular minds. It was utterly unanticipated. Lee then asks William: How do we really know that the universe started at some point in the past? What proof is there? William then says there are two pathways to explain it, the first is mathematical and the second is philosophical, the chapter then goes on to explain both of these. It also explains that there had to be a cause for the Big Bang. The chapter concludes with William saying that there has never been a time in history when the hard evidence of science was more confirmatory of belief in God than today.



Sir Fred Hoyle coined the term ‘Big Bang’.

Chapter 6

The Evidence of Physics: The Cosmos on a Razor’s Edge

This chapter focuses on the incredible fine-tuning of the universe. One expert said there are more than 30 separate physical or cosmological parameters that require precise calibration in order to produce a life sustaining universe. Examples could be the force of gravity, the laws of nuclear physics and the electromagnetic force.

Following are some quotes from the chapter:

- Evidence for an intelligent designer becomes more compelling the more we understand about our carefully crafted habitat.
- The unrelated constants in physics have one strange thing in common, they are precisely the values you need if you want to have a universe capable of producing life.
- Through my scientific work I have come to believe more and more strongly that the physical universe is put together with an ingenuity so astonishing that I cannot accept it merely as a brute fact.
- The fine-tuning is genuine evidence that God is real.
- Today it seems to me, there is no good reason for an intelligent person to embrace the illusion of atheism or agnosticism.
- The seemingly miraculous concurrence of these numerical values must remain the most compelling evidence for cosmic design.
- The facts concerning the universe's remarkable 'just so' conditions are widely regarded as by far the most persuasive current argument for the existence of God.
- I see physics as uncovering the evidence of God's fingerprint at a deeper and more subtle level than the ancients could have dreamed of.
- The logical conclusion, based on the evidence, is that the universe's highly sophisticated fine-tuning cries out for a designer.

‘The Heavens Really Do Declare the Glory of God.’

‘For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.’ *NIV*

The above heading and Romans 1:20 are both in this chapter.

Chapter 7

The Evidence of Astronomy: The Privileged Planet



A privileged planet? This chapter explains why. It's turning out that the earth is anything but ordinary, that our sun is far from average, and that even the position of our planet in the galaxy is eerily fortuitous. The idea that the universe is a flourishing hothouse of advanced civilizations is now being undermined by surprising new scientific discoveries and fresh thinking. In short, new findings are suggesting that the earth is very special and undoubtedly unique. More and more scientists are studying the mind-boggling convergence of scores of extraordinary 'coincidences' that make intelligent life possible on earth and concluding that this can't possibly be an accident. They're seeing signs of design. Once again, we find the evidence of science pointing in the direction of a Creator. If God so precisely and carefully and lovingly and amazingly constructed a mind-boggling habitat for his creatures, then it would be natural for him to want them to explore it, to measure it, to investigate it, to appreciate it, to be inspired by it – and ultimately, and most importantly, to find him through it.

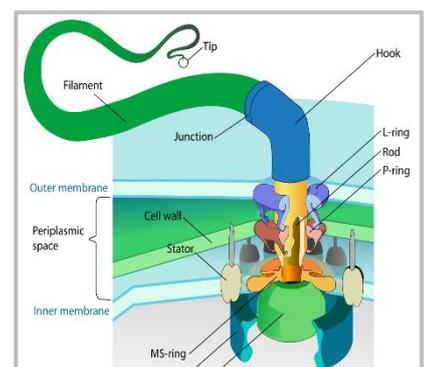
Chapter 8

The Evidence of Biochemistry: The Complexity of Molecular Machines

A typical cell takes about ten million, million atoms to build. It's like a high-tech factory which comes complete with artificial languages and their decoding systems, memory banks for information storage and retrieval, elegant control systems regulating the automated assembly of parts and components, error fail-safe and proof-reading devices utilised for quality control, assembly processes involving the principle of prefabrication and modular construction and a capacity not equalled in any of our own most advanced machines,

‘The World’s Most Efficient Motor’

‘The flagellum functions like an outboard motor. Its propeller is long and whiplike. It's attached to a drive shaft by hook protein which acts as a universal joint, allowing the propeller and drive shaft to rotate freely. The propeller can spin at ten thousand revolutions per minute and stop within a quarter of a turn and then instantly start spinning the other way at ten thousand revolutions per minute! The flagellum propeller is about 1/20,000 of an inch and the flagellum motor is about 100,000 of an inch! Its energy comes from a flow of acid through the bacterial membrane, a complicated process which scientists are still trying to understand. The flagellum has its own guidance system!



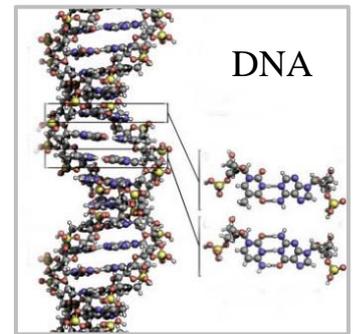
The Bacterial Flagellum

for it would be capable of replicating its entire structure within a matter of a few hours! The chapter concludes: Complex biological machines can be summed up in a single word: *design*. I believe that irreducibly complex systems are strong evidence of a purposeful, intentional design by an intelligent agent. They conspire to point towards a transcendent Creator.

Chapter 9

The Evidence of Biological Information: The Challenge of DNA and the Origin of Life

The chapter begins: Human DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) contains more organised information than the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*! If the full text of the encyclopaedia were to arrive in computer code from outer space, most people would regard this as proof of the existence of extra-terrestrial intelligence. But when seen in nature, it's explained as the working of random forces!



'Sun and Back over 600 times!'

'If you put all the DNA molecules in your body end to end, the DNA would reach from the earth to the sun and back over 600 times (100 trillion times six feet divided by 92 million miles). Every human being shares 99.9% of their DNA with every other human. You also share 85% of your DNA with a mouse, 40% with a fruit-fly and 41% with a banana!' *Thoughtco.com*

There's about six feet of DNA tightly coiled inside every one of our body's one hundred trillion cells! The chapter ends with this question: What else can generate information but intelligence? The conclusion was compelling: an intelligent entity has quite literally spelled out evidence of his existence through the four chemical letters in the DNA genetic code. It's almost as if the Creator has autographed every cell!

Chapter 10

The Evidence of Consciousness: The Enigma of the Mind

Why should a bunch of atoms have thinking ability? So begins this chapter and continues: Why should I, even as write now, be able to reflect on what I'm doing and why should you, even as you read now, be able to ponder my points? Many scientists and philosophers are now concluding that the laws of physics and chemistry cannot explain the experience of consciousness in human beings. They are convinced that there is more than just the physical brain at work, that also there is a nonmaterial reality called the 'soul', 'mind' or 'self' that accounts for our perception by the senses. They say there is concrete evidence to show that the brain and mind are actually distinct from one another, although they clearly interact. In fact, they cite the mind's very existence as strong evidence against evolution and in favour of a Creator who imbued humankind with his image.



If in the beginning you just have particles, then the history of the universe is just a story of a more complicated arrangement of particles. However, if you begin with the Word, the Logos, an infinite mind, then one can explain how finite minds could come into existence. The chapter concludes: I am more than just the sum total of a physical brain and body parts. Rather, I am a soul and I have a body. I think, therefore I am. Or as Hackett said (with apology to Descartes): I think, therefore God is.

Chapter 11

The Cumulative Case for a Creator

Lee Strobel concludes in this chapter that he had investigated the design hypothesis for about two years. He had from his interviews with experts looked intently at the evidence from six scientific disciplines: Cosmology, Physics, Astronomy, Biochemistry, Biological information and Consciousness. He now considered all the data he had collected and came to the obvious conclusion that it pointed powerfully towards the existence of a Creator. He writes: To me, the range, the variety, the depth, and the breath-taking persuasive power of the evidence from both science and history affirmed the credibility of Christianity to the degree that my doubts were simply washed away.

Belief in the Certainty of the Creator

'The vast mysteries of the universe should only confirm our belief in the certainty of its Creator. I find it as difficult to understand a scientist who does not acknowledge the presence of a superior rationality behind the existence of the universe as it is to comprehend a theologian who would deny the advances of science.' *Werner von Braun, 'the father of space science'.*

In the closing pages of the book, two scriptures from Psalms are mentioned: Firstly 'At the beginning You existed and laid the foundations of the earth; the heavens are the work of Your hands.' *Psalm 102:25, Amp.* And secondly: 'You formed my innermost being, shaping my delicate inside and my intricate outside, and wove them all together in my mother's womb. I thank you, God, for making me so mysteriously complex! Everything you do is marvellously breath-taking. It simply amazes me to think about it!' *Psalm 139:13-14, TPT*

See if you can memorize these words:

'For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.' Romans 1:20, NIV

Word Search

LEE STROBEL
 CASE CREATOR
 DNA COSMOLOGY
 BIOLOGY ASTRONOMY
 PHYSICS UNIVERSE
 SCIENCE RELIGION
 EVOLUTION DARWIN
 JAVA MAN
 FAITH PLANET
 BIG BANG
 GRAVITY COSMOS
 HEAVENS CREATION
 FLAGELLUM ORIGIN
 MIND SOUL

A	H	M	Y	M	Y	G	O	L	O	M	S	O	C
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C	T	Q	U	V	B	M	D	I	H	X	F	Z	S

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Any questions, etc, please contact the UK GCI Watford Church Council or Geoff Sole, 01707 880782 or geoff@geoffsole.co.uk.