

APOLOGETICS



Keep The Faith

Episode 8 – Finely Tuned

Hi guys and welcome back to the companion for the podcast!

We had a few weeks off to give you guys a break from the high pace of learning apologetics, but we're back now with our new argument, a re-formulation of the old Teleological argument known as the Fine-Tuning argument, which we introduced in last week's episode. Let's look at it to remind ourselves of it:

- P1. The universe is fine-tuned for life
- P2. Fine-tuning can potentially be explained by chance, necessity or design
- P3. It is not due to chance or necessity
- C. Therefore, the fine-tuning of the universe is the result of design

This week, we're in our first premise, the idea that the universe is finely tuned for life. Now, what does this mean, to be finely-tuned?

In the original argument, the Teleological argument, it didn't use the term fine-tuning, but rather this idea of 'teleology', so let's start there and work around that the word 'teleology' for a bit.

Here is what you would find if you looked online for the word 'teleology':



teleology

/ˌtɛlɪˈɒlədʒi, tiːliˈɒlədʒi/

noun

PHILOSOPHY

the explanation of phenomena in terms of the purpose they serve rather than of the cause by which they arise.

"no theory of history can do without teleology"

• THEOLOGY

the doctrine of design and purpose in the material world.

Now, here is the explanation I gave in the episode to illuminate this somewhat:

Imagine, if you will, a mobile phone. Imagine this phone is so big it can't be held in your hand or go in your pocket, it has a battery life of 20 minutes, and doesn't make calls.

I know what you're thinking, you're probably thinking "wow, that sounds like the worst mobile phone in history", and you'd be right! It wouldn't be fit for purpose, it would have been designed poorly, it exhibits a low level of teleology.

Now consider the mobile phones we actually have – they're lightweight, fit in your hand and pocket easily and comfortably, make and receive calls ludicrously reliably, have great battery lives – they have a really high level of teleology.

That is what we mean when we talk about teleology, or the Teleological argument – the world we observe is so perfectly fine-tuned to allow life that it *must* have been designed.

The most likely reason we see what seems to be design in the structure... is because it was designed. That's fair, right?

If you said "yeah, that seems fair" then well done you esteemed thinker! You're like many of the most famous thinkers in history – Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Isaac Newton, Gottfried Leibniz, William Paley, Alvin Plantinga, William Lane Craig, even the Apostle Paul! – who have all, at some point, mused on and in some form endorsed the idea that something that looks designed is likely designed and thus needs a designer. If you don't know any of those names I would **strongly** suggest you google them and read some of their works.

One of the most famous examples of the teleological argument being used is something called 'the watchmakers analogy' (click [here](#) for link to the Wikipedia entry).

Allow me to explain by going back to our considerations of our mobile phones.

Imagine you were walking in the woods one day, happily minding your own business as you walk around enjoying nature, when, all of a sudden, you step on a brand new phone on the floor!

You have two options. You can either look at it and say

"Weird. Why would nature randomly assemble atoms into the form of a phone right here?" and walk off, not bothered in the least, **or** you could look at it and say

"Oh, someone dropped their phone, this isn't here because of a random chance of nature or quantum mechanical madness, this isn't supposed to be here, this was designed by someone."

Which would you choose?

Let me put it another way.

If you came across something so incredibly well-designed as a phone or, in the original analogy, a watch, you would be warranted in assuming it had been designed by someone.

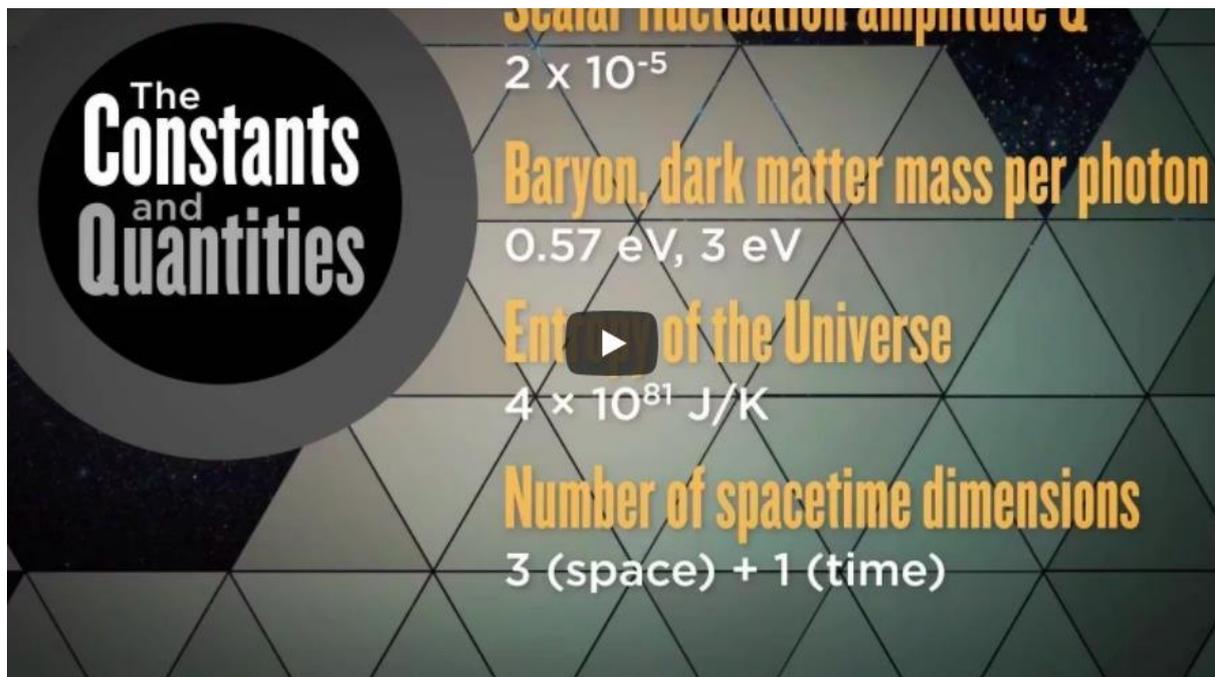
Paley stated that the universe is so much more complex than a watch that it also requires an explanation, we can't just chalk it up to "wow, weird, that was lucky".

When we talk about the universe being 'finely-tuned' we mean that everything works

damn thing, so death. Too slow and it would have been too dense and basically as hot as the cheese you find in a stuffed crust pizza crust, it's basically death.

3. **Mass and energy.** If the mass and energy of the beginning of the universe was not as equally distributed as it was between neutrinos, photons, atoms and dark matter, we again have a life prohibiting universe. These quantities couldn't be out by as little as 1 part in $10^{10^{123}}$. That's 10 sets of 10 with 123 zeros after them! To give you a sense of the enormity of that number, here's a little fact to help you understand and appreciate it – if you wrote a 0 on every proton and neutron in the universe, there still wouldn't be enough 0s.

Enjoy this video from Reasonable Faith to better understand this:



Those are just three examples of the constants and quantities in the universe, out of 26. If we know anything about mathematics, we know that when you take something unlikely happening and then add in another unlikely thing happening, it gets *less* likely for both things to happen rather than *more* likely. We have here 3 examples of incredibly unlikely things. Just adding the likelihood of those three happening together would make it seem laughable to think it might happen by chance, but when you add the other 23 on top... well, we'll come back to that in premise 3.

So, I think it's fairly clear that the universe seems to have the exact conditions necessary for life, and this is what scientists call the 'fine-tuning' of the universe.

Our scripture of the week this week is Job 38:4-7, bit of an unusual book for us to be using at this point but here we are. In this passage we see God chatting with Job, who is doing his usual thing of moaning his head off, and God basically gets a bit fed up and starts listing off His credentials to sort of shut Job's moaning up. We won't go through them all because, obviously, there's loads, so here are the ones we're concerned with:

"Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?"

*Tell me, if you have understanding.
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!
Or who stretched the line upon it?
On what were its bases sunk,
or who laid its cornerstone,
when the morning stars sang together
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?”*

So, why are we interested in this?

Well, here we have God talking about how He finely-tuned the universe! He’s saying He laid the foundations, determined its measurements, lined it up Himself, laid the cornerstone and had the Heavens rejoice over His work.

That’s amazing! And it fits perfectly into this session. God Himself declares He is the author, creator and sustainer of the universe in this chapter of Job (I recommend you check it out, it’s quite cool).

As we will see as the weeks go on, the best explanation for the universe being this way is exactly what God is saying here – He did it.

But we’ll save that for later.

As for our debate club question, here it is – is the universe really that well-made or does it have some glaring flaws?

Prepare to discuss this on Thursday.

That’s all for this week, guys!

As always, don’t be afraid to get into the youth whatsapp chat and let us know how you are, what you’re up to and what you’re thinking. Get your prayer requests ready for Thursday and get involved in our Bible study! And you can grab us on Instagram @chawnyouth.

Speak to you next week!