

So, would you ever leave your faith?

“So, would you ever leave your faith?” That’s what I was asked. It had come out that I didn’t think evolution was plausible, and that I thought God better explained the facts.

My friend asked me, “So, what if evolution were proven? Would you leave?”

“Leave what”, I asked. “Christianity, or belief in God?”

“Well, they both go together, don’t they?”

I told my friend that there were two things that were foundational to my worldview. I’ve considered the alternatives and I’m convinced that God exists, and that Jesus rose from the dead. I’ve already covered the reasons I’m convinced [Jesus actually existed](#), that [he believed himself to be God](#), and that [he rose again to vindicate that claim](#). The one under question tonight was God’s existence.

Rather than outlining the [moral argument](#), the [cosmological argument](#), or [other apologetic standards](#), I decided to take a big picture approach. I explained that the existence of a God seemed to fit best with reality. **There are many big questions in life, and God’s existence seems to address them all.** Something that happened to my car might help explain my angle.



Last summer I noticed that my car’s A/C wasn’t working. The car was difficult to steer too. Since these seemed unrelated, I wondered what on earth was going wrong. I turned down the radio and heard some horrible clunking noises. At this point, I noticed that my engine gauge read incredibly hot, so I pulled over to shut it down before anything worse happened. (Side note: I’m definitely not a car guy, so looking at the engine is something I do because I know you’re supposed to - not because I’ll be able to fix anything.)

When I opened the hood I saw oil sprayed everywhere and what remained of a

belt. Even though I was out of my depth at this point, I had an idea what all the big parts did. It seemed to me that there were a couple of options, broadly speaking. Either there was one thing that caused all this destruction, or I had just witnessed a remarkable automotive catastrophe. Either a bunch of individual components simultaneously self-destructed like some horrible mechanical symphony, or one thing started a chain of events. One initial problem seemed most plausible, but the symptoms were so unrelated that it seemed like a stretch.

After reflecting on the symptoms, a scenario began to emerge. I knew a lot of expensive things had been connected to the belt that was now in shambles. That could explain how the problem spread. Since there was an oily mess that seemed to emanate from the steering pump, that reminded me of my difficulty steering. What if that started it all? If that seized, it would probably cause the belt to slow down. If the belt slowed down, it would make sense that my A/C would suffer. Since belts don't do well with seized parts, it probably snapped pretty quickly. That would completely shut down A/C and steering and anything else connected to the belt. If the water pump stopped working, that would explain the skyrocketing engine temperature.

It looked like the steering pump was the single cause of everything else. Was that explanation certain? No, but it did seem most plausible. If not that, it seems I would have to track down what could explain a spontaneously dying A/C unit, difficult steering, an overheating engine, and several other symptoms. It seemed more plausible to me that there was one cause rather than many. Why look for a half-dozen explanations when you would do. And when diagnosing it, the mechanic should probably start by looking at simple causes rather than outrageously rare ones.

When I say I believe in God, I'm doing the same sort of thing. I believe in God because a number of questions about reality are answered solely by his existence.

- How did something come from nothing?
- Where did life come from?
- Where did consciousness come from?
- Where did morality come from?
- What about things like justice, love, and hope?

On the Christian worldview, all these questions and more can be answered in a single response: God. I'm aware that nonbelievers have answers to some of these questions, but they are not terribly persuasive to me. Besides that, they require me to accept a separate explanation for each one. I *could* accept undirected macro-evolution, inexplicable forces of nature that happen to work nicely together, a herd morality that developed on its own, and all the other naturalistic explanations. Or I could observe that an all-powerful being could easily create all those things, and he could design them to function properly together. **The naturalistic worldview requires I take on a number of new, and unusual beliefs. The theistic worldview only requires I accept one.** I realize many people think that belief in an eternal, supernatural being is a big step - and maybe it is. But I'd rather take on one foreign belief than ten. And even so, this says nothing of the questions I'd have to be content leaving unanswered as a naturalist. Where did matter, space, life, consciousness, and all the rest come from? For these, there are no naturalistic answers. Nature can't explain where nature came from. Things cannot cause themselves - we have to look to other things for explanations. To explain nature we have to look beyond nature. Something you might call "super-nature". And that sounds to me like God. An omnipotent being that exists prior to space, matter, and time could create them all. A big bang needs a big-banger. The source of all life could create more life. A conscious creator would explain our consciousness. A maximally great being could do maximally great things. One explanation. One cause. Taking on this one belief that God exists explains everything we see. I'll concede that alone doesn't mean it's true. But it does mean it is the simplest explanation, and to my thinking the most plausible.

So, to return to the question I was posed, the proving of evolution would not cause me to turn from Christianity. (I think proof of such a thing is a very tall order, though I accepted it for the sake of argument.) Evolution itself says nothing about Jesus' resurrection or God's existence. As I hope I've explained above, I am convinced that God exists. Until a better explanation can be given for reality, things like evolution seem minor and insignificant.

In the rest of life, we typically exhaust simple answers before turning to the extravagant. Why not in metaphysical questions as well? Smart people have examined the evidence and come to different conclusions. I realize that. But if *you* haven't pondered the issue, you would do well to consider it. **Given the shape of**

reality, what is the most plausible explanation - one cause or an infinite number of causes?