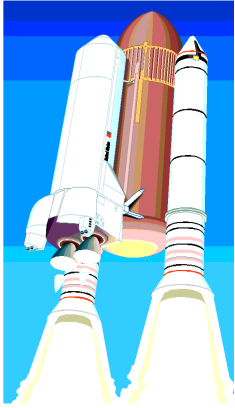


Introduction

By space the universe encompasses and swallows me up like an atom: by thought I comprehend the world.

Pascal



On January 28, 1986, the people of the United States watched the nationally televised launch of the space shuttle Challenger. Although shuttle launches were becoming a routine event, this one was unique because amid the Challenger's seven crewmembers was Christa McAuliffe, a high school teacher from New Hampshire. At 73 seconds after take-off, enthusiasm turned into horror as the world witnessed the most tragic event in the history of space exploration. Challenger exploded and in its wake left a trail of smoke that tracked the craft as it fell into the ocean and took the lives of all aboard. The ensuing investigation traced the cause of the explosion to something as simple as a faulty "O-ring" seal. Even though the seal was a simple component, it had a very particular and critical function. The seal was designed to isolate the solid-fuel rocket gases from the main fuel tank. However, its faulty design, coupled with extreme environmental conditions, affected the seal's functional integrity. This defective seal allowed the hot combustion gases to leak through the booster rocket joint. Once these hot gases made contact with the shuttle's external fuel tank, the fatal explosion was imminent.

Perhaps the most disconcerting aspect of this catastrophe is the fact, that prior to the launch, NASA engineers had warned mission control executives of the impending danger. Despite the concerns of engineers, the decision was made to continue with the launch—all systems go! Other matters and pressures took priority over the odds that there would be some fatal disaster. After all, the shuttle had many capable back-up systems to ensure the safety of its crew. Unfortunately, the crew of the space shuttle put their destinies into the hands of others who had made a wrong decision and lost their lives as a result.

We have written this book in an effort to keep you from making a similar mistake with respect to your spiritual life. As you continue to learn, whether formal or informal, you will find yourself in situations that may have serious consequences with respect to decisions you make about what you believe to be true. Teachers, colleagues, peers and others may challenge you in ways that will force you to reevaluate your beliefs in light of what is being taught or said to you. Therefore, we implore you: Do not put your faith into the hands of

someone else! This book offers a good number of very credible reasons as to why Christianity is intellectually sound.

To help us show you why this claim is true, we turn to Aristotle who noted long ago that every field of knowledge begins with certain truths he referred to as *first principles*. First principles are *not* conclusions found at the end of a set of premises, but rather premises from which conclusions are drawn. They are axioms, givens, or self-evident truths. They are so obviously reasonable that they neither demand nor admit direct proof. First principles are beyond direct proof because they are known to be true based upon their self-evident and inescapable nature. They also cannot be disproved, for if one were to try and disprove first principles (within any given field of study) one will only end up in self-defeating statements. Aristotle also explained how these first principles form the *unshakable foundations* upon which all thought and knowledge rests. This book is intended to confirm Aristotle's observations and show why only the God of the Bible provides an ultimate rational justification for first principles.

In **chapter one** we will introduce you to **Logic** and the first principle of all knowledge, the law of noncontradiction. The universal and inescapable nature of this simple but profound law leads us to question its origin and ultimate rational justification. The answer to this question is that there must be some ultimate Mind that exists as the foundation for the laws of human thought. In **chapter two**, we examine the popular views of agnosticism, pluralism, and relativism. As we analyze each view in light of the law of noncontradiction, we show how they are ultimately self-defeating. With these views out of the way, we then explain why it is credible to believe that absolute truth exists and define **Truth** as a statement, idea, symbol, or expression that matches (corresponds to) reality. **Chapter three** gives a brief description of **Worldviews** and explains how they affect the beliefs and behaviors of individuals. We have also included a test to measure the credibility of truth claims worldviews make, and offer a few suggestions about how to handle worldview questions.

In **chapter four**, we embark on a journey into the discipline of **Science**. Our goal is to gain a basic understanding of the foundations upon which science is built, its limitations with respect to knowledge, and how to apply the scientific method to the question of origins. In **chapter five** the discipline of **Cosmology** is brought to bear on the nature and structure of the universe. The question of its origin, namely whether or not it needs a cause, is answered in this chapter. It is argued that based upon the first principle of science and supporting observational evidence, it is most reasonable to believe that the universe is finite. With that being the case, it is necessary to conclude that an infinite and eternally powerful Cause brought it into existence. In

chapter six, we explain why it is credible to believe that this infinite and eternally powerful Cause must also be intelligent. Our reasoning is based on the science of information theory, as it relates to the **Origin-of-Life**. **Chapter seven** is dedicated to evaluating various models of origins and answering the questions surrounding **Macroevolution**. Arguments are made and evidence presented to show that macroevolution is not a credible model of origins. In **chapter eight**, we show why theistic macroevolution fails to provide the scientific reasoning and empirical evidence needed to support its claims. Hence, we turn to the only logical alternative—the **Intelligent Design** model—and argue for its credibility as the most plausible model of origins.

Chapter nine discusses **Law** and the shift in American legal theory from the classical understanding of *natural law* (*Jus*) to a theory of law that finds its origin in human reason called *positive law* (*Lex*). The examination of the shift from *Jus* to *Lex* includes the identification of danger signals that ultimately threaten not only the stability of the criminal justice system, but our basic human rights as well. **Chapter ten** uses a historical context (Nazi Germany) to disclose how the wrong view of human nature (macroevolution) and law (based upon human reason alone) has already violated human rights. Furthermore, we show how the prosecution argued for **Justice** at Nuremberg based upon an intuitive knowledge of “higher laws” that transcended governments. The foundation for that higher law is a higher lawmaker—the Creator—who bestowed upon humanity intrinsic value that no government or people have a right to take away. At the end of this chapter, we conclude that it makes sense to conclude that we live in a theistic universe. However, if an infinitely powerful and just God exists (theism), what about evil? Where did evil originate? Did God create evil? **Chapter eleven** examines the questions concerning the nature of **God** and the problem of **Evil**.

With the problem of evil identified, and since we believe the answer to the problem came to earth 2000 years ago in the person of Jesus Christ, we turn to **History**—**chapter twelve**—to discover the answer. However, a proper interpretation of historical events depends upon the belief that history is really knowable and that miracles can be part of history. After showing that history is indeed knowable and that miracles are possible in a theistic universe, we present the evidence to support the authenticity of the New Testament documents and the reliability of its authors. Once the New Testament is shown to depict a factual representation of the life and teachings of **Jesus**, we move to **chapter thirteen** where we examine his claims to see if they are trustworthy, specifically the claims he made concerning his **Deity**, and what evidence he offered to substantiate his claim to be God. The three lines of evidence offered are: 1) his fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies; 2) his sinless life and miraculous deeds; and 3) his resurrection from the dead. If indeed Jesus is God, then what did he say about the problem with humanity?

In **chapter fourteen** we turn to Jesus for his analysis of the human condition, but we do so after we deal with the popular belief that **Ethics** and **Morals** are purely subjective and merely a matter of feelings or human instinct. A summary of various arguments given by C.S. Lewis is presented to refute those popular beliefs. Following that, we look to Jesus and see what he has to say about ethics, the root cause of humanity's moral disease, and the permanent cure for that disease. The decision one makes on whether to accept or reject the teachings of Jesus on this topic, carries with it temporal and eternal consequences: a destiny of eternal bliss or eternal misery. Each person must decide for himself or herself whether or not to believe in Jesus.

In **chapter fifteen**, we examine more closely the consequences mentioned above. Our discussion centers on what gives life ultimate meaning, and we show why **True Meaning** cannot be found apart from a loving relationship with God. God designed us to run on Himself, and apart from Him there can be no "ultimate" meaning—just temporary states of superficial fulfillment. For those who accept the cure Jesus offers for humanity's moral disease, there awaits an eternal state of ultimate meaning and true happiness in **Heaven**. However, for those who reject God and the cure that Jesus offers, there awaits a place of **True Misery**, a misery that will last forever. The Bible refers to that eternal state of misery as **Hell**. **Chapter sixteen** was written to briefly show why hell makes sense and how it logically follows from God's holy, just, and loving nature.

In addition to these chapters, we have included an appendix titled, **"First Principle Responses To Ethical Questions."** The topics addressed in the appendix include abortion, euthanasia, biomedical issues and human cloning.

It is our hope that your own doubts and questions will be answered somewhere in the pages of this book and as a result, you will better understand why your faith rests upon **Unshakable Foundations**. We also hope that this work will help to foster in you a non-defensive boldness to be a confident witness as you share the gospel of Jesus Christ.