



DEFENDING THEISM

Arguments for God's Existence



SESSION 3

OPENING PRAYER

THE FINE-TUNING ARGUMENT

DEFENDING PREMISE THREE

THE MORAL ARGUMENT

ANSWERING COMMON OBJECTIONS

PRAYER BEFORE STUDY

Ineffable Creator, Who, from the treasures of Your wisdom, have established three hierarchies of angels, have arrayed them in marvelous order above the fiery heavens, and have marshaled the regions of the universe with such artful skill,

**You are proclaimed the true font of light and wisdom,
and the primal origin raised high beyond all things.**

**Pour forth a ray of Your brightness into the darkened places of my mind;
disperse from my soul the twofold darkness into which I was born:
sin and ignorance.**

**You make eloquent the tongues of infants;
refine my speech and pour forth upon my lips the goodness of Your blessing.**

**Grant to me keenness of mind, capacity to remember, skill in learning,
subtlety to interpret, and eloquence in speech.**

**May You guide the beginning of my work, direct its progress,
and bring it to completion.**

You Who are true God and true Man, who live and reign, world without end. Amen.

THE FINE TUNING ARGUMENT

Defending Theism

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY FINE-TUNING?

In our physical universe, there were and are a variety of **initial conditions** (e.g. the initial expansion rate of the universe) and **universal constants** (the relative strength of gravity, or the strong or weak nuclear force) which make the universe exactly what it is.

In over 20 cases, if any one of these conditions or constants were just slightly different in magnitude or value, the universe itself would look **VASTLY DIFFERENT**.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY FINE-TUNING?

How VASTLY DIFFERENT?

In many cases, no stars or planets could have even formed.

In others, no life would have been possible.

And in others, certainly no complex life could have been sustained.

Think of the tuning dial on a old radio.

LET'S GIVE SOME EXAMPLES OF FINE-TUNING

GRAVITATION CONSTANT

If the Gravitation Constant (G) had differed in strength by as little as 1 part in 10^{60} , the universe would have either quickly collapsed back on itself, or expanded too rapidly for stars to form. In either case, life would be impossible.

COSMOLOGICAL CONSTANT (OF EXPANSION OF UNIVERSE)

If the Cosmological Constant (driven by "dark energy") had differed in strength by as little as 1 part in 10^{120} , again, the universe would have either quickly collapsed back on itself, or expanded too rapidly for life to be possible.

INITIAL DISTRIBUTION OF MASS AND ENERGY (VERY LOW ENTROPY)

The low-entropy conditions of the initial universe are what made any life possible at all. The odds of these conditions coming to be by pure chance are estimated at 1 in $10^{10^{123}}$

SOME *MORE* EXAMPLES OF FINE-TUNING

STRONG NUCLEAR FORCE

If the force which holds together the nucleus of the atom were 2% stronger there would be no hydrogen (and therefore no life). If it were 2% weaker, there would be nothing but hydrogen (and therefore no life).

MASS OF NEUTRONS

If the neutron were not about 1.001 times the mass of the proton, all protons would have decayed into neutrons or all neutrons would have decayed into protons, and thus life would not be possible.

WEAK NUCLEAR FORCE

If the force which governs the decay of unstable subatomic particles were different by only one part in 10^{100} it would have prevented a life-permitting universe.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY FINE-TUNING?

The phrase “fine-tuning” by itself is not meant to be synonymous with “DESIGN.”

This would be the error of “begging the question.”

THE FINE-TUNING ARGUMENT

Premise 1: The universe displays an incredible degree of fine-tuning which calls for an explanation.

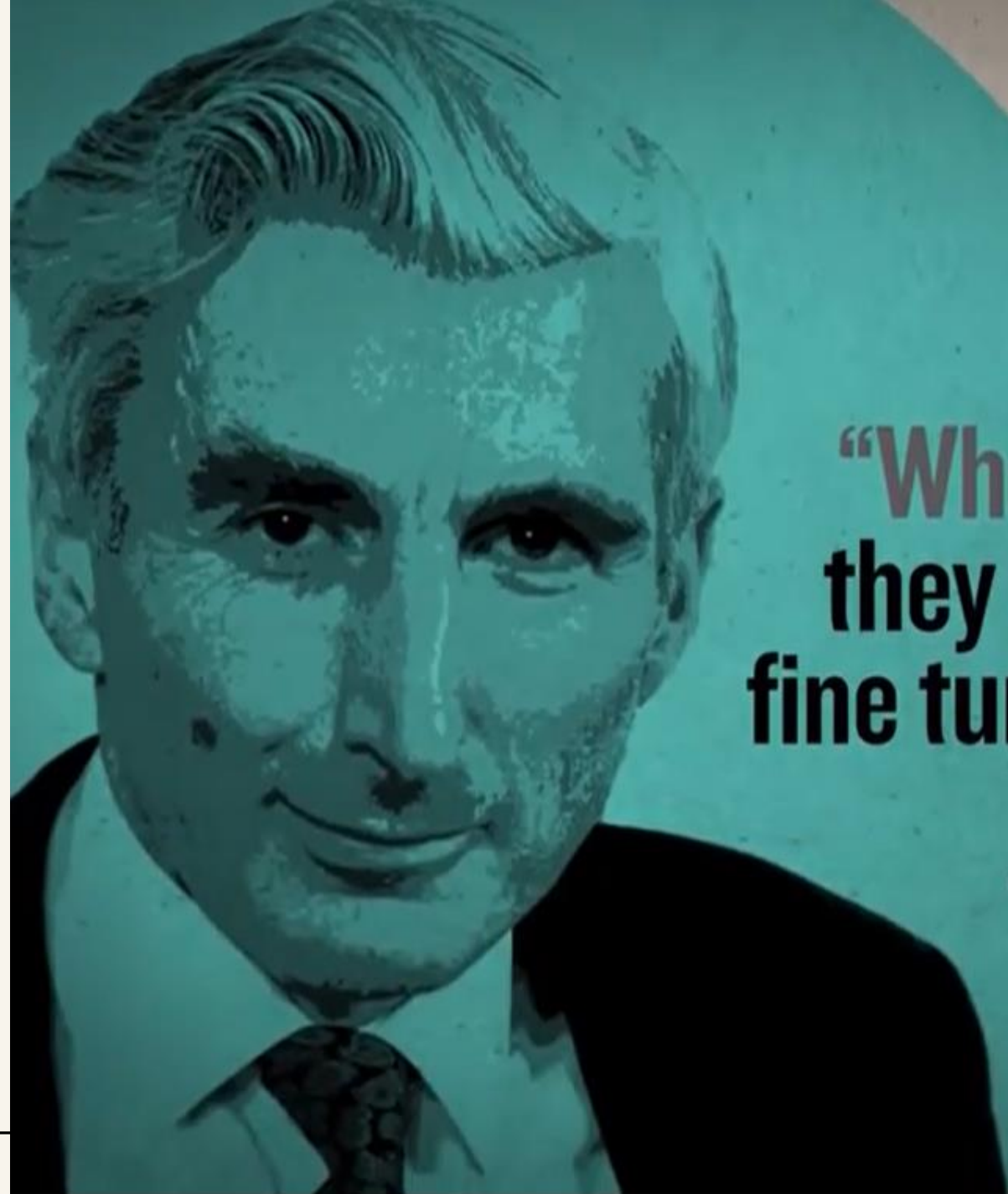
Premise 2: This fine-tuning is due to either necessity, chance, or design.

Premise 3: It is not due to necessity or chance.

Conclusion: The fine-tuning of the universe is due to design.

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 1

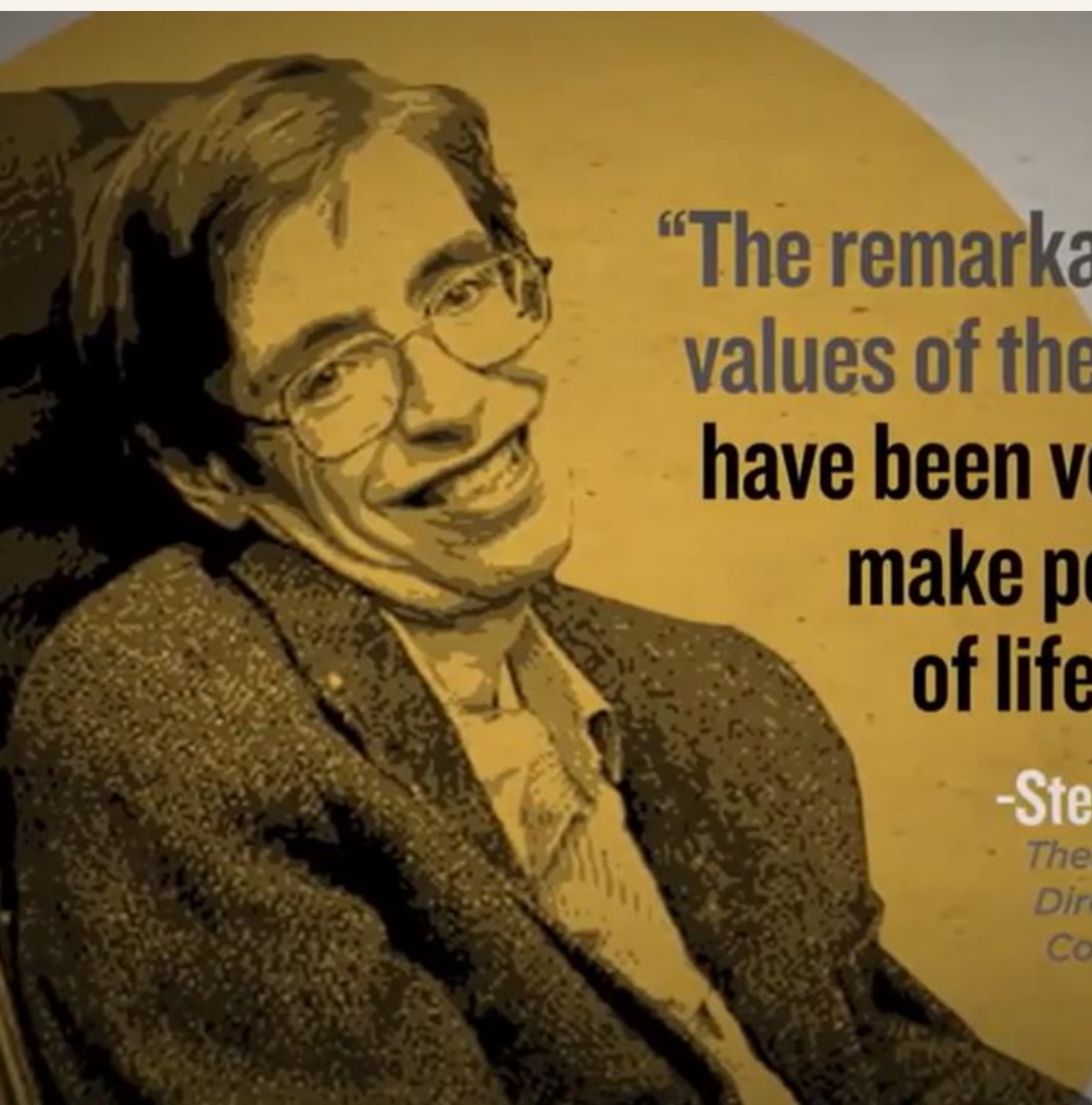
Virtually no one who looks at the evidence denies that there is an astounding physical balancing act with these universal conditions and constants which has allowed a “life-permitted” universe.



**“Wherever physicists look,
they see examples of
fine tuning.”**

-Sir Martin Rees

*Astronomer Royal of Great Britain
Fellow of Trinity College and Emeritus
Professor of Cosmology and Astrophysics
at the University of Cambridge*



“The remarkable fact is that the values of these numbers seem to have been very finely adjusted to make possible the development of life.”

-Stephen Hawking

*Theoretical physicist and cosmologist
Director of Research at the Centre for Theoretical
Cosmology within the University of Cambridge*

“If anyone claims not to be surprised by the special features the universe has, he is hiding his head in the sand. These special features are surprising and unlikely.”

- David Deutsch

*Physicist at the University of Oxford.
Visiting Professor in the Department of Atomic
and Laser Physics at the Centre for Quantum
Computation (CQC) in the Clarendon Laboratory
of the University of Oxford.*



THE FINE TUNING
ARGUMENT:
DEFENSE OF
PREMISE 3

Defending Theism

IS NECESSITY AN EXPLANATION?

The constants and quantities are not determined by the laws of nature, and are independent of one another.

There would have to be some larger, currently unknown, "theory of everything" that could explain these relationship in a unified way.

IS NECESSITY AN EXPLANATION?

The most promising candidate for a TOE to date, super-string theory or M-Theory, fails to predict uniquely our universe. String theory **allows a "cosmic landscape" of around 10^{500} different possible universes governed by the present laws of nature**, so it does nothing to render the observed values of the constants and quantities physically necessary.
(William Lane Craig)

IS CHANCE AN EXPLANATION?

For this universe (which is all that we know exists) chance is an absolute absurdity due to the infinitesimally small probabilities we are dealing with in any one case.

And the unlikelihood is compounded by each additional example of fine-tuning.

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 2: IS CHANCE AN EXPLANATION?



WHAT ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A MULTIVERSE AS MAKING “CHANCE” MORE PLAUSIBLE?

The problem with this response is that it generally just kicks the problem of fine-tuning back one step.

Example: The super-precision key

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 2: IS CHANCE AN EXPLANATION?



OCCAM'S RAZOR

“The problem-solving principle that recommends searching for explanations constructed with the smallest possible set of elements.”

This is the standard for normal rational thinking.

THE MORAL ARGUMENT

Defending Theism

CONNECTION BETWEEN GOD AND MORALITY

Bumper sticker that reads:

"Good without God"

What is being asserted here?

WHAT THE MORAL ARGUMENT IS NOT SAYING

It is NOT saying that belief in God is necessary for **doing** some/many morally good things.

WHAT THE MORAL ARGUMENT IS NOT SAYING

It is NOT saying that belief in God is necessary in order to **recognize** many morally duties and values.

So what is it saying?

THE MORAL ARGUMENT

Premise 1: If God does not exist, objective moral values and duties do not exist.

Premise 2: Objective moral values and duties do exist.

Conclusion: God exists

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MORAL VALUE VS. MORAL DUTIES

“Moral values” is a phrase meant to signify actions and behaviors regarded generally as morally praiseworthy/blameworthy. (e.g. generosity, veracity, self-sacrifice vs. selfishness, egotism, etc.)

“Moral duties” is a phrase meant to signify moral obligations. (“You must do this...You must not do that”)

OBJECTIVE VS. SUBJECTIVE

The word "objective" means "independent of peoples' opinions"

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 1

“There is at bottom no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pointless indifference. . . . We are machines for propagating DNA It is every living object’s sole reason for being.”

- Richard Dawkins (famous atheist author)

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 2

Virtually all human beings, including/especially atheists, make objective moral claims which they expect others to know and follow...

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 2

...these are not just expressions of subjective preferences...

(ex: C.S. Lewis and "quarrelling")

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 2

...and these are not just socially-taught taboos...

(Our society has no problem violating taboos,

plus, consider what that would mean for things like rape, child-abuse, the Holocaust, etc.)

DEFENSE OF PREMISE 2

...and neither are they instincts ingrained in us via evolution.

(There is a clear difference between instinct and moral duty.

Plus, why would some of these be an evolutionary advantage? And even if they are for the species as a whole, why should I care as an individual?

COMMON OBJECTIONS

Defending Theism

EUTHYPHRO OBJECTION

Objection:

Are these moral values and duties good because God willed them...

Or did God will them because they are good?

EUTHYPHRO OBJECTION

False Dilemma!

GOD IS GOODNESS ITSELF,
and therefore the designs of his
will are expressions of that
goodness.

CLASSICAL NATURAL THEOLOGY OBJECTION

Objection:

For human beings as free agents, there is not a radical gap between ontological goodness and moral goodness. Therefore moral duties don't require an explicit reference to a moral "lawgiver."