Shades of Creationism 3

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 December 2021

Preacher: Luke Batty

[0:00] Well, let us start up. Why don't we start with prayer. Father God, thank you for this day. Thank you for this opportunity that we can gather together and think about you.

I ask, Lord, that this class would be edifying to the body, that we would glorify you with our interactions, and that we would be able to leave today with a better understanding of our fellow Christians.
In Jesus' name, amen. Okay, so, as, you know, it's tradition now. Let's do preamble. So, the preamble today is basically can be summed up as, I'm inadequate.
So, this is a very complicated discussion, and as I was preparing for today's class, I realized that I had to truncate a whole bunch of things to fit everything in that I wanted to fit in.
And so, I guess what I want to say is that if a specific point that I'm making or argument that I'm making doesn't sound particularly persuasive in the way that I have articulated it, just know that there is an entire book on that argument that you can read that will most likely make more sense than the way I'm putting it together.
[1:30] Although, who knows? I mean, I don't know. Okay, so with that being said, let's start our final class today, which is going to actually start touching on what I've been hinting at in the subtitle, which is Intelligent Design and Theistic Evolution.

The last two classes, we've been dealing with sort of the historical background. What do I mean when I say Intelligent Design and Theistic Evolution? What kind of arguments are they making?
Last class, we talked about how different biblical interpretations of Genesis can either leave room for or not leave room for evolutionary mechanisms, among many other things.
And now we're going to deal with the positions themselves. But before we do that, I'd like to start with just a very simple crash course in scientific reasoning.
Okay, so just as an explainer of how there can be differences of opinion when it comes to scientific information, and what does that even mean, right?
And a question that was asked in the first class, or was it the second class? You know, they all rub together now. There was the question of, you know, how can we have different interpretations of science, essentially?
[2:58] And I want to explain a little bit about how that is. So how is science actually done, right? That is the question.

Science is very fruitful. But it's not that science is something that does not require interpretation or other forms of communication.
So as Christians, we believe in what is called the correspondence view of truth, right? Which means that for something to be true, it has to correspond to reality, right?
So that is actually pretty straightforward. But I'm just going to posit that because all of the scientific reasoning that we are going to be talking about today, and a lot of the arguments flowing from that, are assuming this view of truth.
That there is something real. There is something called reality. reality that when we understand it, we can gain knowledge that is true, right?
[4:01] And so in science, what we're trying to do is actually get a little piece of this reality, get a glimpse of it, using repetition, instrumentation, eliminating variables, among a whole host of other things, right?

So if I was going to try to diagram it, it would look something like this. We have this thing called reality, right? It's real, you know, by definition.
Here's this thing called reality. And in science, what we're trying to do is we're trying to observe some facet of this reality using instruments, often.

You know, I mean, back in the day, they would just use their eyeballs. But I guess if you could, you know, in a certain sort of reductive way, call your eyeballs instruments, right? But yeah, we're going to be observing reality, some facet of reality.
Based on this observation, this is going to give us some sort of data output, right? And this is what kind of output you get is going to be dependent what kind of instrument you're using and the way that you're trying to observe, right?
[5:08] Because, believe it or not, the observation itself is not necessarily the data output, although observation is a form of data, right?

But oftentimes, the instrument is observing something and it tells us something about what it's observing, right? Finally, on top of this data output, we're going to be interpreting the output, right? So we get this number or this picture or this, you know, solution or pellet, whatever it is.
We get some sort of output and on top of this output, we are going to be interpreting the data to make sense in what we already know about the world, to posit new facets of how the world is working based on the output you've gotten.
And on top of this interpretation, we're now going to be building a worldview, right? So this is the layer, the layers of scientific reasoning, okay?
[6:20] And so in most scientific circles, this is sort of seen as a, unbreakable chain, right? The reality necessarily leads to, leads to the observation, which necessarily leads to this data output, which necessarily is interpreted correctly this way, which necessarily means in a big worldview sense, X, right?

So, but is that necessarily true? Do we have to, is it an unbreakable chain? And, you know, people who, so I guess I should say maybe the popular view of science is that this is an unbreakable chain, right?
People who are actually doing science know that, you know, these chains are often very, very weak. And so, oftentimes, a lot of what we're trying to do is determine how, you know, how can we reliably say that this X equals this, right?
So, what's the Christian's responsibility in all of this, right? So, we've talked over the last few classes about the fact that Scripture being our highest authority, we were committed to the claims of Scripture, but also Scripture testifies to the reliability of what we can learn from nature, right?
And because we affirm Scripture, we, in some sense, Christians are responsible for the realities of nature.
[7:50] So, at a very base level, Christians are responsible to the truth of this, right? This thing here, reality, is real, right? And Christians have to affirm that at the very least, right?

Secondly, I would say, to a lesser extent, Christians are, have to be, by way of being intellectually honest, we have to at least affirm the observations with the instruments and the data that the instruments put out, right?
Now, the reason I say to a lesser extent is because these observations with instruments are not the reality themselves. These are ways of getting at the reality and scientists know depending on the instrument you use, the reality may look different.
Depending on the way that you use the instrument, the data output might be different, right? And so, these are extrapolations from the reality, but they're not the reality itself.
So, I think, at the very least, Christians need to be able to say, yes, there is something real that scientists are observing or trying to observe that I, as a Christian, must say, that is true.
[9:00] Okay? If we think about our last class, this is where the differences between the philosophical views about balancing general and special revelation comes in because maybe you're thinking about the first group that I talked about which would be the science skeptics and the science skeptics would say, really, there is no way to get from reality to observations with instruments, right?

I mean, like, they get stuff right sometimes, but there really isn't any consistent way to get at this, right? But I think most Christians would consider it their responsibility to affirm that there is a reality that is being observed with instruments and it is putting out some sort of information, okay?
So, but, what about these next levels? The interpretation of output and the worldview based on Pata. Now, everybody, all Christians of all stripes, right, whether they be intelligent design advocates, theistic evolutionists, creationists, they are all going to say the worldview, the interpretation to worldview connection is not, is not something that we as Christians need to affirm

and oftentimes we as Christians need to fight against that interpretation, right?
Even a theistic evolutionist would be arguing that the scientific materialism that often results from the interpretations of the data is not warranted.
It's a philosophical, metaphysical argument that is not, that is maybe is understandable in light of the data but is not required, right?
[10:41] And so, we would all argue, boom, this connection we as Christians can argue against and often should be arguing against of all stripes, right?

obviously, as Christians we have to at least argue against scientific materialism, right? Otherwise, you know, that assumes there is no God, right? And as Christians that, you know, puts us in a weird position.
So, now secondly, now this is where a lot of the disagreements come in between Christians. As I said before, most people would argue that the data output that comes out from our observations is something that we need to affirm is real in some sense, right?
With qualifications, right? And scientists know all the qualifications, right? Everybody, I mean, I don't know about the other scientists in the room, but I do get annoyed when you read a scientific publication and then you read the news articles from the scientific publication, right?
We've all had this experience in the scientific community where you're like, oh man, they did not get it. You know, they're not making the kinds of qualifications that are necessary to get at the accuracy of what's going on.
[11:58] Yeah, you could understand the data that they put out in the way that you're describing, but nobody would actually argue that that's actually what's going on. Okay? So, we're all familiar with that, but qualifications in mind, there are basically two different groups understanding how are we going to argue against this interpretation of output.

There are Christians who say, this interpretation of output is very reliable, right? And then there are Christians who say, I am not required to accept this and I'm going to argue my own case against it based on the data, right?
So, and this actually comes down to the second tension in creation as I've been talking about.
But I guess I just want to get across in this section here that it's not just Christians who need to be skeptical about this chain of reasoning, right?
And it's not just Christians who are skeptical. Scientists are often very critical of other scientists' interpretation of data, especially if your interpretation of your own data differs with their interpretation, right?
[13:15] That's when the gloves come off and the fighting really begins metaphorically. So, you know, hopefully metaphorically. So, yeah, we all argue about the interpretation of the data.

The question is at what point should Christians affirm so-called consensus in the interpretation of the data? versus not, right?
So, what's this second tension in creationism all about? Okay? So, the second tension in creationism I'm going to talk about has to do with God's activity, right?
What is God's activity? How can we understand it? So, first of all, Christianity asserts that God is active in the world.
world. So, I'm just going to leave that, you know, we're going to just assume that as Christians. But how can we, how are we supposed to understand this activity, right?
[14:19] There's actually been a lot of discussion on these arguments with much of the talking surrounding it talking about what could or could not be a miracle.

when are we talking about miracles, when are we talking about just regular activity? Is everything a miracle? Right? Some Christians would argue yes, right?
There is no such thing as like a natural law that has its own abilities, its own functions, it has ingrained causal abilities. Everything is God's active activity.
So, in a sense, everything is a miracle, right? The fact that the laws of nature are in force is because not that there is such a thing as the law of nature, only because God is doing the thing that we as scientists observe and say, okay, this is a regular thing, we're going to call this the law of nature, right?
Now, there has been disagreement. Evangelical Christians generally arrive at a picture that separates God's ordinary providence God working through secondary causation, this is God's sort of what I was just describing, sustaining the world and its regularities and existence, right?

[15:40] And we have a lot of biblical evidence that this is what God does, okay? So, pretty much everybody agrees on this point, right? That God does sustain the way that the world works, right?

Nothing that came into being would come into being without God and Jesus sustaining it, upholding the world, as it were, right? And so the idea of ordinary providence is that God, in his foreknowledge and in his power, creates things or sustains things using secondary causes, right?
So he creates, for instance, physical things that have certain properties ingrained in the physical things that behave with the laws of nature in a certain way, right?
Does that make sense? So, in a sense, so maybe a way of understanding ordinary providence is to say that when God says that he knit you in your mother's womb, he was being honest, right?
But we also know how, you know, kids, look away from the thing, how egg and sperm work, right?
How embryonic development works, how placental biology works, right?
[16:59] We know all that stuff. I mean, you will eventually. So, we know how that works, but at the same time, we also understand that it is God's sustaining work that maintains the pregnancy.

It is God active in the secondary causes that makes the pregnancy work, and this is throughout all of Scripture, right? The birth of Isaac, the birth of John the Baptist.
These are all instances where the people in these situations attribute the pregnancy to God's direct activity, but it wasn't a virgin birth or a virgin conception like Jesus, right?
You know, the husband and wife really did love each other, right? So that's a way of understanding ordinary providence, which all Christians affirm. But there is an idea of what's called extraordinary providence, which is God's primary activity in the world.
And so how can we understand extraordinary providence? This is describing God's work in history that extends beyond the regular activity in the world, which would include what we would call miracles, right?
[18:21] So we all understand how a baby is conceived and born, but we don't understand how, based on just secondary causation, water can turn into wine.

Does that make sense? So this is an activity. Water, in general, doesn't turn into wine, right? You usually need some grapes and some thyme, et cetera, right?
But this isn't to say that God necessarily disappeared the water and then reappeared wine in its place.
He transformed water into wine without using the normal natural processes, right? He uses primary causation in some way. And the reason we call miracles miracles is because they go beyond the normal activity of the world, right?
You know, basically resurrections are astounding because dead people have a propensity to stay dead, right? In our normal experience.
[19:29] Now, there actually is a lot of discussion, you know, does this require God to break his own laws, right? This is a long-standing argument among philosophers of religion.

In fact, this very question is one of the driving forces. In the first class, we talked about the fundamentalist modernist divide, right?
Where there's a lot of philosophical arguments going on, and one of them was among modernists, the argument that extraordinary providence is impossible, right?
Extraordinary providence is impossible because this would require God to break his own laws, and that's an inconsistency in his character, right?
Now, of course, if you follow that logically down the slide, then you stop believing in the virgin birth, you stop believing in the miracles of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus, and this is how a lot of the theologians, such as Bultman, slid into agnosticism, if not outright atheism, because if you argue that there is no such thing as a possibility of such a thing as a miracle, then you come up against those miracles in the Bible, right?
[20:58] So, now the argument is, so most Orthodox Christians really aren't arguing at this level, we're usually arguing at the next level, which is, when is it appropriate for us to appeal to an ordinary versus an extraordinary called providence, right?

And so, like I said before, some Christians would argue that everything is extraordinary providence, right? God is doing everything actively all the time, not in a sustaining way using secondary causation, but in a primary way, right?
That's one way of understanding it. But, generally, that is not, that is, that is not really going to be playing a major role in the sort of evolution, theistic evolution, intelligent design arguments, right?

Although that is a part, so, you know, if you're going to be reading the literature, this is going to come up. So, but basically, when it comes down to the science of faith discussion, you really get generally two groups, right?
You get one, you get your, what I'm calling providential creationists, which, after having made the PowerPoint and all the outlines, I realized that I used providence in a different way, just like a slide ago.
[22:20] Anyways, I was too lazy to redo everything. So, I'm going to call them providential creationists, but this is basically the argument that God universally, in creation, is using secondary causation.

He's using ordinary providence, right? So, God imbued nature with certain properties that is capable of bringing to fruition that which he wants to come to fruition, okay?
In creation. Generally, this also is, this also comes with, or is a result from, a high confidence in science's ability to explain all phenomena, right?
So, we, you know, we live in a time where science is able to explain a whole bunch of different things. And so, in the minds of scientists and non-scientists alike, there is this view that given enough time and enough effort, all phenomena that we see or can observe can be explained, can be interpreted in some sort of naturalistic way or in a way that comes down to natural things doing natural things resulting in natural things, right?
So, this is that mechanism, that's that assumption of methodological naturalism, right? Which assumes that in science we're going to be talking only about natural causes doing natural things, right?
[23:49] And so, if science has made a lot of inroads using this assumption of methodological naturalism, which again, is not like in the bylaws of science, but it is philosophically an assumption, then maybe that will just continue forever and we'll get everything pretty timed in.

Yeah, Ivor? Does this put aside God's sovereignty? mean, he has to abide by certain rules. If he's a sovereign of the universe, he can do whatever he wants.
In principle, yes. But the argument they would argue is that God in his foreknowledge created materials that in his sovereignty would bring to fruition what he wanted to bring, right?
So it's not like he's restricting himself. They're saying God is front loading in his creation everything that's necessary to bring what he wants to bring, right?
There's nothing lacking in nature to do what God wants it to do. Does that make sense? It's a sort of a best... In a sense, it's limiting God with that explanation.
[25:02] I mean, that's a way of understanding it. I think they would argue that that is a reverse... They would argue that that's... What you're saying is a limitation of God because what you're saying is that God couldn't create something that could do what he wants it to do.

He would have to actively intervene, right? I'm not saying that that's a very... I'm not saying that that's the correct argument. Yeah, I mean, right.
It's a philosophical disagreement, right? And it's going to come down to batting back and forth in that way. So along with science's ability to explain information or the phenomena, there's also sort of an assumption of a causally closed universe.
If you're a philosophy-minded person, basically that means that everything is in a chain of cause and effect and that that chain of cause and effect can't be broken. Anyways, if you're interested in that, you can ask the question afterwards.
That's problematic. It is problematic. So Orthodox Christians will acknowledge that extraordinary providence is a thing, but they tend to restrict this to what they would consider theologically important situations, right?
[26:17] So they would say, oh yeah, to be an Orthodox Christian, you have to believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ and his resurrection. These are miracles. These are instances of extraordinary providence, but these are occurring because God has a human audience that he is then trying to give theological information to, right?

And in creation, we don't have that argument. That's their argument. The next group is what I'm calling designing creationists, which again, I'm actually not very happy with that idea. Yeah.
Lay down, Amos. Question on the last slide. Yeah. How does quantum mechanics play a role in these arguments where there are phenomena that don't have?

How's that? Yeah. So that's a great question. In fact, in Alvin Plantaga's book, Where the Conflict Really Lies, he's going to argue that a causally closed universe is scientifically, well, philosophically unwarranted, scientifically unwarranted, and now, given our understanding of quantum mechanics, doesn't really make any sense because we're not talking about strict cause and effect, we're talking about probabilities of effect.
There are some arguments against that. I don't have enough time to go into how some interpretations of quantum mechanics result in potentially a still causally closed universe.
[27:51] They would argue that the particles themselves, while acting unpredictably, have their own causally determined properties that are then resulting in what we would call unpredictability, which on that back end is not actually unpredictable.

Those are very in the multiverse direction, right? Yeah, I mean, they go multiverse, or they're going to argue about different fundamental properties of the particles themselves, and how the particles themselves are then, how they come into being, right?
So you can imagine a situation when you have a chain of cause and effect that produces this particle that then has unpredictable properties that, on the macro scale, events in phenomena that are then understandable under cause and effect.
So they would bring the causally closeness back words. Does that make sense? If it doesn't make sense, it's because it barely makes sense to me.
But moving on, we got designing creationists. I like that question that Amos, by the way. Designing creationists, as you might imagine, believe that God creates through a combination of primary and secondary causation.
[29:18] And we're talking about creation here, right? Because I just mentioned, Orthodox Christians who are of the providential stripe will acknowledge extraordinary stuff, but only in really theological situations, right?

But designing creationists are more comfortable with God having primary and secondary causation in creation. Usually, this is accompanied with a less sanguine outlook on what science could ultimately predict.
They would believe that science will not be able to explain all phenomena. And therefore, they would also posit a causally unclosed universe.
But again, the philosophy of that is weird. But anyways, they would say that they would be looking for recognizable signs of God's activity in nature because they're going to be open to primary causation in creation if not looking for it.
And Orthodox Christians of this position, they also will affirm ordinary providence and how important it has been in history. They just don't think it's the whole McCoy.
[30:33] It's not the whole picture. So, with that background in mind, just keep those two groups sort of in your mind. I mean, it's pretty obvious how they cash out in the theistic evolution versus Intel design argument.

But it is going to be interesting, I think, at the end to bring it all home to what I think is this disagreement about what does it mean for God to be active in creation. So, let's talk about theistic evolution.
I'm going to give an overview of how theistic evolution arguments generally work. And then I'm going to give two arguments.
I'm looking at the time. I'm going to give two arguments for theistic evolution. And then I'm going to go over what are usually the general critiques of the view. And then I'm going to do the same for intelligent design. And then I'm going to close.
So, we're going to go quick. All right. So, what is the basic form of a theistic evolutionary argument? I'm going to call it TE just to save my mouth.
[31:37] So, baseline, as we talked about on class one, they're going to assume the verifiable truth of macroevolution. Okay? So, just, that's that.

So, we're not really going to try to think about it not being true. They're going to assume that it's true. Okay? So, if we go back to our thoughts of scientific reasoning, they accept the interpretations of the data output of a variety of different sources, anthropology, paleontology, biology, geology.
Anyways, therefore, usually the argument comes in two propositions, generally. Right? The propositions are, one, the evolutionary interpretation of the science is true, and two, the biblical account is also true.

Right? So, these two, this is the basic form of the argument, right? Not all of their arguments are for these specific propositions, but that's generally how it goes. So, usually, when you read TE literature, you're going to be looking at two specific elements of evolutionary thinking paired with a specific overlap area of theology.
So, for instance, to give an example, you know, proposition one could be evolution of humanity is true versus proposition two, man was made in the image of God. Okay?
[33:06] Those both are true. The TE position is now I'm going to explain why that can be true. Does that make sense? So, you know, just plug in any evolutionary interpretation in here, plug in any biblical interpretation here that you think are going to overlap and then your argument is these are going to be coherent.

Okay? Somehow. Right? And then the specifics of how that works is going to depend on the specific argument being made and how they make that argument, obviously. So, I don't have time to go through a lot of these different arguments.
arguments. I want to give you two high-level arguments. Oh, I already said that. Okay. So, just imagine that I'm saying it again. And they're going to work about philosophically, theologically. Again, right? Because it's not a scientific position, TE. It is a philosophical, theological position. Right? So, the concert of these two propositions is going to come down to the philosophy, interpretation, etc.
So, I want to give two big-picture arguments. These two big-picture arguments, I think, give us an understanding of the macro-level argument for the big picture of evolution and the big picture of scripture.
[34:21] Right? So, these are going to basically come down to evolution occurred and two, God created the world.

Right? So, these are the two propositions that I'm going to be dealing with with two different kinds of arguments. And then, just to give you a flavor about how this cashes out, and then we're going to talk about criticisms.
Again, the breadth of this position is so wide that you're going to find people who will argue these two propositions in completely different ways.
And then they're going to argue with each other over how your solution to this problem, or this coherence, is wrong, but mine is right. Okay? So, I'm not pretending to sort of present this is the unified front of theistic evolution.
In fact, probably the two arguments I'm going to put forward forward, they're not mutually exclusive, but the people who would argue for one or the other probably wouldn't agree with each other. So, anyways, again, that's just the nature of this position.
[35:35] So, the first one is going to be pretty hard, and it's going to be dry. So, prepare yourself. This is a philosophical argument. Okay?

So, and I've tried to boil it down, but again, there's an entire book on it. So, the book you're going to want to read if you want more on this is Where the Conflict Really Lies with Alvin Plantinga, where he famously puts forward this argument.
So, this is how the argument goes. Humans have cognitive faculties such as memory, perception, intuition, introspection, testimony, sympathy, moral sense, etc.
You can go along the lines, and we all intuitively understand our cognitive faculties to be mostly reliable. Right? We believe that our memories are able to give us reliable information, if not perfect information.
We believe that our ability to perceive the world is perceiving a real world. It's not an imaginary world. Right? We make predictions based on these. Our intuition about logic, mathematics, these are what we consider to be reliable.
[36:43] Our introspection about our own mental states, our own thoughts and feelings, we believe is reliable, etc. We can learn from testimony from other people to teach us things.

Now, here's where it gets complicated. Naturalism, which I'm going to call N because I didn't have space on the slide to keep on writing naturalism. Naturalism N posits that these faculties are merely neurophysiological properties.
Okay? Now, depending on how you make the argument from materialism, you're going to either be a reductive or an irreductive unreductive?

Nonreductive. That's the one. Some prefix reductive materialist, right? You're going to be arguing either that the mental, the cognitive faculties are neurophysiological properties or that they are neurophysiological properties that also unrelatedly produce a mental state that has some sort of content.
Again, there's an entire book. Read it. For the time being, naturalism posits faculties are merely neurophysiological properties. Okay?
[37:56] That's one. Two, evolution, which I'm calling E, does not select for faculties that are true. They select for only advantageous behaviors.

Right? Evolution doesn't care whether you think that your mental states or that your ability to remember five seconds ago is true. They only care that you don't do stuff that's going to get you killed.
Does that make sense? Right? So you could believe anything. You could believe that everything in the whole world is purple. Right? But as long as you eat, as long as you reproduce, as long as you survive and are able to function, you're going to be doing well in life.
Okay? This is a well-known effect of evolution that it only selects for functional behavior.
It does not select for content. Right? So, this is where it gets confusing, but follow with me. If naturalism and evolution are both true, then we have good reason to believe that our mental faculties are not reliable.
[39:10] Because there are neurophysiological properties that are only selected based on their fitness. They're not selected based on their connection to reality. Right?

How close your neurophysiological properties are to a quote-unquote truth is unrelated to how they're going to affect your fitness in the evolutionary process.
That's the argument. So, if both naturalism and evolution are both true, and we have good reason to believe that, to doubt our own cognitive faculties, then that means that we have a reason to doubt our understanding that naturalism and evolution are true, or any proposition is true.
Therefore, if naturalism and evolution are both true, then we have a good reason to believe that they are both not true. Does that make sense? Sort of. Does that make sense?
Again, this is an argument. Right? So, this isn't a given. Alvin Plantinga is arguing that this is true. So, if you read his book, he's going to argue for the fact that naturalism posits neurophysiological properties.
[40:21] He's going to argue that evolution does not select for true cognitive faculties, only faculties that are advantageous behaviorally. right? I find his arguments persuasive.

You may not, but this is how the argument goes. Right? Does that make sense to everybody? How if evolution is both, if naturalism and evolution are both true, then naturalism and evolution are both false.
Does that make sense? So, how does the theistic evolution get in here? Sorry, go ahead. Before you even went on to your second statement there, it says evolution does not select for faculties that are true, only those that produce advantageous behaviors.
You could have stopped right there and I would have said, oh yeah, that's totally contradictory. Yes. Yeah. But, remember, this is a philosopher. He can't stop there. He's got to go, he's got to have at least nine different parts to his syllogism.
Otherwise, other philosophers will say, hey. Sorry, yeah. I just wanted to, it's not just Alvin Plantinga, right? Like, this is a very common old argument. I remember C.S. Lewis making this argument and it comes up a lot.
[41:26] I love you, Tom. This is, okay. Watch this, okay? Check this out. You're predictive. Okay. So, this is the basis of the argument, right? So, now, based on this argument, you can argue either naturalism is true and evolution is false or evolution is true and naturalism is false.

Does that make sense? You can't have them both together based on this argument. Now, since theistic evolution assumes the truth of evolution, right? We already argued that. We didn't argue that.
I just posited that. That's the truth. This argument necessitates the fact that naturalism is false. Therefore, some sort of theism, some naturalism is not true.
Therefore, most likely theism is true. Does that make sense? How evolution, the truth of evolution could lead philosophically to the belief that God must exist in some sense, right?

So, as Tom pointed out, this is actually a formal way of articulating C.S. Lewis's own intuitive disagreement with naturalistic evolution, in which basically he was saying that if we're just a collection of atoms bumping in the night, then why should we care at all what two atoms rubbing together think?
[42:40] Right? So, if you're arguing for naturalistic evolution to me, in which you're saying that I'm just a collection, an interesting collection of atoms altogether, and you're in a different interesting collection of atoms altogether, his argument is, why do I have to listen to your atoms?

Right? It undermines the bases of rational thinking. Okay. That's argument one. Again, there are arguments for it.
The next argument for theistic evolution I'm going to present is what I call the fine-tuning in convergent evolution argument. So, in evolutionary theory, there is a phenomenon known as convergence.
What is convergence? Well, I'll tell you. Convergence is where genetically and historically isolated populations give rise to animals, to functions that are very eerily similar.
Okay? So, we can look at the macro scale and say, we got wolves here who look very wolf-like. We have hyenas here who also are looking pretty similar.
[43:53] And we also have what is now an extinct organism, the Tasmanian tiger, which I think should be called the Tasmanian wolf, but whatever. So, you have three different groups.

Right? And maybe you're thinking on the evolutionary paradigm they are closely related and therefore, you know, they're just modifications of each other. Well, in fact, if you use the genetics, phylogenetically, which is a fancy way of saying evolutionary relationship between these three is actually very distant.
Okay? They're not actually related. Well, I mean, if you take universal common ancestry, everything is related. Right? But that's not the point. What I'm pointing out is that evolutionarily they're not in the same tree.
They're on a different branch. Right? But they look incredibly similar and they do exactly the same job in their environments. And their environments are not particularly similar.
You know, the Tasmanian dude, he's living out in Australia, which is not known for being the same as Northwest. Right? I mean, I've never been to Australia. I'm sure it's very nice.
[45:03] I mean, unless you like Australia, which Northwest is not very nice. Anyways. And then you have the hyena, which is living in a different environment. And so the argument is this phenomenon that everybody, all evolutionists, will acknowledge this is something that has happened.

Right? It's not in controversy that these three different species are unrelated, although they look very similar and do very similar things. And this isn't the only example I could give.
I could give examples of different sort of functions, sort of echolocation. Right? Echolocation is a very rare way of hunting, but there's a whole bunch of different unrelated organisms in evolutionary theory have developed echolocation in their own way, like bats and whales and not whales.
I think there's bug. There's some kind of bug that does it, too. What's up? Well, no, that's not right. I don't even know. I don't know. I am a biologist. I don't even know what I'm talking about.
Okay. So based on these observations, a theistic evolutionary advocate will argue that evolution isn't as random as is proposed by materialists.
[46:15] And in fact, while the mechanism of evolution is in one sense random because of the mutations and the natural selection, there seems to be some sort of fine-tuning of the whole process, some sort of constraint on the whole process that produces specific animal forms consistently.

And this would be very unlikely on naturalism if it were to be true. Right? On naturalism, you would expect evolution to be very contingent, which is another way of saying a very random, historically unpredictable situation.
But on convergent evolution, it seems like no matter where you are, things, the evolutionary process sort of gives you the same results in a way, depending on no matter where you go. Right?
And so the TE advocate would argue that this implies that evolution had us in mind, which is harmonious with belief in God and it's less likely based on theism.
Whew. Okay. Does everybody understand that? Make sense? Okay. Let's move on to general critiques of theistic evolution. evolution. The first of which, and again, the TE group is very broad.

[47:37] Right? So, you know, there are people within the group who are very orthodox. There are people in the group who are not as orthodox. What the general critique of it is, is that it, as a worldview, depending on how much of the interpretations of the data and the corresponding worldview that you accept leaks into your theology.

Right? So, examples of this. TE advocates often argue that human beings didn't originate from a single population. Some do, some don't.
But this can undermine human uniqueness. Another way of, another group may posit that Adam and Eve didn't exist in any sense, which produces theological problems in a variety of different ways.
It's not intractable theological problems, but it's not, it's, it's, it does provide some issues. Right?
Additionally, many have challenged the idea of original innocence, that human beings were made morally good or morally innocent, which, in contrast, sort of undermines the entire idea of the doctrine of original sin.
In some ways, it would argue against a fall, which would then give us the doctrine of original sin.
And concomitantly, you often get TE advocates that will argue for an alternative atonement than substitutionary atonement, which is the, the, the, basically the gospel as understood by evangelicals.
[49:11] Right? Is substitutionary atonement. Not that there are other atonements aren't in activity, but in the gospel, substitutionary atonement plays a major part. Right?

And then, maybe you would argue that this is an unfair criticism of theistic evolution because there have been different arguments for atonement in the entire history of Christianity. And I would argue that that's true.
Although, basically there are two major themes in Orthodox Christianity for atonement. In the Western side, we have substitutionary atonement.
On the Eastern side, we have kenosis. Am I doing that right, Tom? Is that unrelated? Okay. I mean, it's similar. Yeah. So. Ancestral sin instead of original sin.
Right. Right. And then the idea is not that God is here to, to atone for moral sins, law-breaking, but to atone for death by introducing life.
[50:10] If you want to learn more about that, Athanasius. Yes. Can you clarify what's meant by original innocence? Since we wouldn't describe sin to a lion eating the buffalo that it finds.

Yeah. So they would argue that, that modern humans, as we understand them, were never innocent. Right? Different strains of... What does the word innocent mean? So the word innocent means that they, they had not sinned until the fall, basically.
So there were, they did nothing morally evil until the fall occurred, which introduced in original sin. Right? So in an evolutionary and some assessments of, of the evolution of humanity, you're going to get modern humans, you know, killing and other untoward things, other human beings.
And that is an important or essential part in the history of the evolution of humanity. Right? And so depending on how, where you place humanity, right?
Because that is an open question in evolutionary arguments. At what point do hominins become modern humans? And there's a whole debate over that. And it's not very clear. But depending on where you fall on that, on the theistic evolutionary side, that's going to depend, determine whether or not you believe that there was such a thing as original innocence.
[51:32] Whether human beings were ever made morally innocent. Does that make sense? Right? So does that exclude sin as a possibility?

Or does that just mean that we were always pretty messed up? Yeah. So that would argue that we were pretty messed up from the beginning. Right? That's the kind of argument I'm talking about here.
Now there are other kinds of arguments that say in some sense sin had been influencing the evolutionary process. And so the story of Genesis is really an argument about how that sin in the process of nature affected human beings, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.
Right? Is there any sense where like, oh yeah, the devil, he came in and messed things up? That's a very common position. Well, I wouldn't say very common, but it is a common position.
But that's not even restricted to theistic evolutionists, actually. That's also a creationist position, depending on the group, who argue that, so for instance, if you're an old earth creationist, you're going to be more open to the idea of the devil influencing the history of the world in which you get

extinctions and et cetera.
[52:47] Right? Again, depending on what kind of old earth creationist you are. This next one, potentially enhancing the problem of evil, depending on, again, the TE argument you make.

On some formulations of TE, the world as it is now is the way it should be. Right? There has been no cataclysmic sort of fall.
The evolutionary process as it works today, as we imagine it working backwards in time, is the way that God meant it to be. Right? So that implies that natural evil, and possibly even moral evil of human beings, depending on whether you believe there was original innocence in human beings, are part of God's good creation.
Right? Now, a TE advocate would say, well, theistic evolution suffers from the problem of evil like everybody else does. And they suffer in many of the same ways as old earth creationism does. But in this specific way, there is a difference, because many in the creationist camps would argue that in some sense the fall of human beings, if not the fall of creation, depending on how you understand that, has affected the way that nature works.
[54:01] And so if you were to study nature now and extrapolate backwards, you would get a bad picture of history. As opposed to the TE argument, often, which says, no, we get an accurate picture of the way history was.

That's just good, in a sense. Does that make sense? And so now, this leads to very interesting and possibly problematic views of atonement.
So if we're talking about alternate views of atonement, based on this understanding of the problem of evil, this version of atonement imagines that the crucifixion of Jesus in God is God, in some sense, taking responsibility for his creation by entering into our suffering.
Right? He says, God's good creation creates this suffering in this TE argument. And in the crucifixion, God is not staying separate. He is entering into the suffering of creation as a way of taking responsibility for his creative act, which I think can lead to a variety of theological problems.
Yeah, lay it on me. I know we've got to move on, but just real quick, would this idea that the nature of the way it should be, which includes natural or moral evil, being good, does that lend itself to sort of like moral progressivism?
[55:23] Like, well, we just need to keep getting better and better until, you know, we fix everything. Yeah, I mean, that is one way of doing it, is one way of understanding it.

The problem is, and I think that's a legitimate argument, the problem is, how do we score that view with the view of scripture? Right? Right.
Yeah. So, I mean, that's my point about it being a theological problem. Right. Because, I mean, many of the TE arguments make logical sense and philosophical sense. The problem is, if we're thinking about the biblical theology that we get based on our last class with Nick and my good friend Tyler, how do you get those streams, how do you get those storylines, those narratives in the Bible, if that's what's going on?
Right. Okay. Okay. I'm going to get to the arguments of intelligent design, and I'm going to fly through them, because we can't leave the building after 1025.
Okay. Basics of ID arguments. So, in the same sense that I outlined how TE arguments go, I'm going to argue how ID arguments go. ID arguments can come in two streams.
[56:35] And, again, they're scientific arguments, as they would construe them. So, they're going to use scientific evidence to posit design in nature in two different ways. They can use negative arguments. Negative arguments means that they seek to make naturalistic explanations of scientific data, the data output that we talked about earlier, make those naturalistic interpretations less likely, and on average make theism more likely.

Positive arguments that provide empirical evidence that suggests that design is more likely. You see how that works? There's sort of mirror images of each other, but there is a difference. Right? To say, this naturalistic mechanism is not likely, is not the same as saying, this phenomenon that we see gives me evidence of design.
Does that make sense? I think there's a place for both of them. I think they both have their own potential flaws. But, either form of this argument is going to be using the inductive interpretative scientific method in history called inference to the best explanation.
Right? So, in the historical sciences, you have a phenomenon that you're trying to explain. What you do is you fan out a whole variety of different hypotheses of what could explain this.

And, inference to the best explanation is the interpretative method in which you say, how do you decide between these different hypotheses? Right? And so, ID arguments trade on this form of reasoning to argue that, given a variety of hypotheses for a specific phenomenon, the inference to the best explanation is going to give us some sort of design.
[58:17] Some sort of intelligent agency. So, I'm not going to give you negative arguments, because I think that they have their own issues that are, and they're less interesting.

So, maybe two positive arguments. I'm going to focus on two arguments that are often used. These are sort of the bread and butter, you might say, of the ID position. And these different arguments can actually be applied to different fields in different ways.
So, I'm going to be focusing on the biochemistry side of things, because that's what I do, or that's what I've done, or, I don't know. That's not who I am, but, you know, you get my point. I'm a biochemist.
I guess I am a biochemist. What am I, what am I, I'm not fooling myself. Okay. So, the first argument is going to be complex specified information in DNA. Okay.
So, what are we talking about when we say complex specified information? Well, according to information theory, there are two components that can modify what we call information and give it different properties.
[59:22] Okay. These two, as you might guess, are complexity, which describes the improbability of a configuration or sequence of characters. Specificity, which is a configuration fitting to an independent pattern that conveys meaning.

Okay. You can have a complex information that's not specific. You can have specific information that's not complex. And you can also have complex specified information.
Okay. What does that look like? This is very complex. In this understanding of complex. Okay. I just literally took my keyboard and went, okay.
But, so you say it's random. Complexity and randomness are not in opposition. Right. When we say complexity, we mean the likelihood, if we're doing probabilities, the likelihood of this sequence of characters is very, very low.
It's very improbable. Right. Because how many letters are other than the alphabet? I'm really asking. I totally forget. 26. Okay. Okay.
[60:31] How many sections are there in the sequence? We got, you know, I'm not going to do the math. But anyways, for every position of here, there's a, the likelihood is 1 to the 26 that you're going to get this one compounded across the section.

It's very improbable. It's the same thing as looking at a giant pile of rocks and saying the likelihood that they landed in exactly that position is very low.
Right. Right. You couldn't, probability wise, you couldn't place them in that order to try to get that configuration. Right. It's just astronomically hard to do. The next example is specified information. This means something to us. Right. Two. It corresponds to a preexisting standard that we can apply to. Right.
Two. We know it's a word. It means something. Right. Two. I'm not going to describe it. Anyways, you guys get it. Two. But it's specified, but it's not complex. Right. The, the likelihood of a T being next to an O are actually not that hard given randomness.
[61:38] Right. You're just kind of like, you know, if you're, I don't know if you've ever been bored at the computer trying to write and you just do this, you're going to get T twos. You're going to get thes. You're going to get wees. Right.

Very short sequences that correspond to what we would call a separate thing. Right. Now, complex specified information is information that is both complex and specified.
Right. It's very unlikely to get this sequence in a row if you're just playing on your computer. And also, if you see this sequence in a row, it means something to you. Right.
Right. It is not just random stuff in a row. You're like, oh, I get information from that. Right. So how does this go into ID? When information is both complex and specified, it is universally the product of intelligence.
Complex specified information does not occur under this understanding from random processes. At the very least, at the base, you're going to find intelligence as the, as the result of it.
[62:42] So DNA, this argument goes, contains complex specified information in the form of nucleotide triplets that serve to represent amino acids and protein coding sequences.

Right. And this isn't an analogy. This is actually true. The triplets, the sequences in DNA form triplets. And these triplets have no physiological connection to each other.
There's no necessary reason why these three should be next to each other or why the chemistry of these three makes a difference. Right. So the sequence is, is complex.
Right. And it's specified because these specific nucleotides next to each other mean glutamine.
Right. So based on this argument, therefore, inferring to the best explanation.
Right. That's the way that ID arguments work. Inferring to the best explanation, DNA originates from intelligent agency because given hypotheses, different hypotheses for the origin of DNA.
[63:43] The likelihood of there being complex specified information outside of intelligence is low. But the existence of complex specified information on intelligence is very high.

So if you're going to choose between them, intelligence design, intelligence is the best explanation.
Right. What's that I hear? Yes. This does reject methodological naturalism.
Right. If you're on methodological naturalism, intelligent agency is not a possibility. Not a possible hypothesis. So now among the non-intelligent group, you're going to have to choose between those options about what's the most likely hypothesis.
Right. But if we understood, remember from section one or class one, methodological naturalism is not necessary to science. So if you reject that assertion and include intelligent agency into the possible hypotheses, that is the best explanation.
Okay. Okay. Irreducible complexity of a biochemical, biomechanical machine, I should say. So what is irreducible complexity?
[64:56] Okay. The way to understand irreducible complexity is it's a quality in a system where that system is dependent on multiple independent parts that produce a single function.

Where each part has no function separate from the parts in the whole. Okay. Classic example is the mousetrap. I know it's old and everybody does it, but it's a good example just to get our heads around the idea.
Right. Each of these different components together is necessary for the mousetrap to do its single function, which is, unfortunately, to trap the mouse. Or fortunately, depending if you have a mouse problem.
I lived in a house with a mouse problem. We never used mousetraps, but at a certain point you start to be like, okay, they ate my lazy boy chair. I'm getting close to throwing mousetraps everywhere.
Anyways, so this piece right here is meant to release once the cheese is disturbed, which is going to release this piece, which is going to go forward because of the spring, which is then attached to the base.
[66:02] And every one of these parts is necessary for the mousetrap to do its function, but separately they don't do anything by themselves. Okay. So, how is this an argument for ID?

There are examples of irreducibly complex systems in biology by argument, such as multiprotein complexes. So, for instance, you've got your ATP synthase. Right? Everybody knows what that is. Right? Of course. No, but ATP synthase is a motor that when stimulated by protons moving across a gradient, biologists, you know what I'm talking about.
Basically, it spins and it can convert low energy molecules into high energy molecules. And these high energy molecules are what is necessary for biology to happen. Right?
Because we're very unlikely, cells are very unlikely states of entropy and you need high energy to get them from. Anyways, I'm going through too much information here. But anyways, it's a very complex machine.
[67:01] Each of these different parts does its own thing. Separate from the machine, separate from the whole, these different parts don't do anything. Right? They don't produce a function such as converting something from low energy to high energy.

Right? So, another example is the famous flagellum. It's a motor, spins the thing to let the bacteria move along. Okay? I'm not going to spend a whole lot of time on that.
Because it's not necessary for the argument. All that needs to be true for the argument to be true is that each of these different components are necessary altogether to produce a function.
And without one of these different components, the function would not occur in any sense. Okay.
Irradiably complex systems are impossible to produce in a step-by-step Darwinian mechanism.
As each component in the right order are all necessary to function, but they have no independent function. So, if you imagine the Darwinian mechanism as normally understood, each step in the

mutation selection system is selecting for function.
[68:09] Right? That's what selection is separating. But you cannot produce a step-by-step machine that only functions when all the steps are together. Does that make sense?

So, to step-by-step add each part to the system, you need to have foresight that the end product is going to be functionally helpful. But natural selection is unguided, does not have that foresight, and therefore cannot produce irreducibly complex systems.
Okay? Therefore, intelligence agents, but we know that intelligence agents are capable of producing irreducibly complex systems. We invented the mousetrap.
Right? It's not like we were sitting around, and we had all these different parts, and we're like, oh, you know. No. We knew when we put together the mousetrap, not us specifically, but human beings, intelligent agents knew what they were trying to produce.
Therefore, inferring to the best explanation, irreducibly complex systems are the result of intelligent agency. Again, spread out the hypotheses, pick the one that makes the most sense. That's the idea for an intelligent design argument.
[69:19] Okay. Moving on to general critiques. I'm flying through them. I know, I'm sure we all could think of objections to any different parts of all these different arguments.

I'm trying to put forward the arguments as stated. So, one of the general critiques of intelligent design is the God of the gaps fallacy, which essentially states that when we don't know what happened, we just insert God into the system, and that is the best explanation at that point because all the other explanations are very bad.
Right? And this is actually, this criticism is valid when the gap is due to ignorance. However, the argument goes, there are gaps that are not due to ignorance.
Potentially. Potentially. Or are there. Are all gaps due to ignorance. Second, tension in creationism should be floating in your mind when I ask you that question, right?
Whether we decide whether there's a gap of ignorance or not. Second, we got bad theology. Okay? This criticism comes in many different forms.
[70:28] One form says that by arguing for the apparent design of different features of nature, ID proponents are actually creating a dichotomy between that which God has created and that which he has not created.

Right? And as Christians, we believe that God has created everything. So this creates sort of a bad dichotomy in theology for the activity of God. Another critique is to imply that God did not create a world that was sufficient for his purposes.
God needed to intervene. And doesn't that mean that God was an ineffective creator if he has to intervene in his creation to institute a change that he wants?
Couldn't he have just front-loaded everything? Isn't he powerful enough to do that? And finally, this is actually sort of a heavy philosophical argument.
So if you're into that kind of thing, get ready. So there's an argument that ID assumes the mechanistic nature of the modern view of the universe.
[71:37] And therefore, by God creating in the way that ID proponents argue, that makes God into a too-imminent anthropomorphic sort of deity.

If that doesn't make any sense to you, it's probably because you're not Catholic. Okay. As opposed to transcendent and other? As opposed to, yes, transcendent, other. This argument is usually put forward by classical theists who argue that God is not imminent in the way that we are imminent.
In the sense that he doesn't work the way that we work. To impose ideas on God based on our own activity is to anthropomorphize God. Okay. Okay.
Summing up. We got through it. Technically, almost 15 minutes over. So, how does second tension in creationism help us understand these different views? Right?
If you're a providential creationist, they're not going to find any ID arguments convincing. Because a priori, meaning before the fact, God is asserted to work through secondary causation.
[72:44] Based on this view, you're not going to find any gaps that are not due to ignorance.
Right? The other kind of gap we could talk about would be a gap due to the nature of the cause.

Right? Sort of a gap between water and wine. We know water doesn't turn into wine. Right? There's a gap due to the nature of the substance and the activity that it produces.
And so, to infer intelligent agency there is legitimate. But in creation, a providential creationist is to say there is no gaps due to the nature. There is a secondary causation that can cause everything.

Because God did use secondary causation to cause everything. Does that make sense? Okay. A designing creationist is going to be more comfortable with ID. Surprisingly. I mean, not surprisingly. And perhaps not feel the need to take what they would consider potential theological risks of TE. Right? If I'm comfortable with God doing primary causation in history, I am not wedded to the specific interpretations of the data that is being produced.
[73:56] Therefore, I can criticize the interpretation, put forward my own interpretation, and that keeps me safe from these potentially theological problems.

Right? You can imagine this actually makes dialogue between ID and TE advocates very difficult. Right? This second tension. Right?
Because you're going to have an ID person arguing scientifically, no, here is a gap due to nature. And you're going to have a TE person arguing, there are no such things as gaps due to nature. Right?
Right? So, hopefully after this, no matter where you are on either position, you can at least understand how a Christian can come to this position, why they come to this position, and maybe argue for your position based on their own assumptions, and try to convince them on that way, as opposed to producing an argument based on your own assumptions, which is probably not going to get anywhere.
Does that make sense? Okay. That was the goal of the whole class. Okay. Thank you. That's it. Alright. Questions afterwards.
[75:08] This is actually already over time. But if you have a question, I'll answer it in the next five minutes. Can I just reiterate, you need to go, leave in a car, do that now.

Yes. Yes, because you have ten minutes to leave before the run starts. Really, you should be leaving now to get out in time. Leave now, as opposed to the station of second service. Right. That's right. Yeah. I'm saying to the second service, we're good.
Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. Or if you want to hang around until 1115. No, I just want to make sure. See you, Tom. Second service is good. I was waiting to have a question. Oh, you have a question. Lay it on me. I was going to ask about the providential creationists. Yeah. So, how are they materially or substantially different from deists? If they think that God just set everything up from the beginning and everything is secondary and that he doesn't interfere, he doesn't come in in a personal, imminent way, to me, that's deism, right?
I mean, isn't that... So, yeah, it depends on how you're going to argue for that. Because some would argue that God, in his sustaining of nature, that is activity, right?
[76:15] God is, through his will, sustaining the natural properties of these different things. And therefore, their activity is ultimately a result of God's activity.

And to say that God is hands-off is not true. He has to be hands-on. Otherwise, everything falls apart. I see. Okay. The other thing there is...
The providential creationists are just saying, in creation, God is just working through secondary causes. He only steps in and does the miracle thing at theologically opportune times.
So, they're not being full-on deists. You can think of it kind of as deists about the process of biological creation. Okay. And some would be comfortable with that assessment, being called deists for creation.
Others would be very... would be rankled, if you call them a deist on creation. So, there is difference. There are some who are like, oh, yeah, for sure. I'm a deist, essentially, until it comes into history, right?
[77:16] Yeah. Any other questions? Lay it on me. Maybe this is a sticking point about the imminent versus transcendent argument.

And I know that's more of a theological and philosophical thing. Oh, yeah. Doesn't matter. Doesn't mean it's not important. Well, sure. And maybe I just need to do more background, not research on that whole debate.
But doesn't the dual divine human nature of Jesus sort of help us with that supposed dichotomy? Like, that God is both imminent and transcendent? Yeah. But they would argue, if you're a classical theist, that that is restricted to history.
So, post-incarnation, God in his humanity in Jesus, we can anthropomorphize. Well, he is. It's not anthropomorphizing. He's human.

[78:10] Right. So, attributing human traits to Jesus is legitimate. They would argue pre-incarnation to attribute human traits to God is to anthropomorphize him.

Before he's anthropomorphized in the ultimate sense. Why is this a problem? Well, that is a great question. Why is it a problem? It's based on the actual, your view of God.
Right. So, on the classical theist position, you have divine simplicity, impassibility, and timelessness. And these three together form a view of God in which God is transcendent.
And the creation is sort of a causal eminence of God. And God is not changed by the creation. That's the impassibility part.
Right. God is not changed by his activity of creation. Think of creation in this view. Creation is like a shadow and God is the real thing.
[79:14] Right. The thing doesn't change because of the shadow. Right. Right. And so, to say that God is fiddling with the shadow seems to assume that God is changing.

And that's not allowed. Does that make sense? Yeah. Remind me just one more thing. Remind me what a classical theist is again. Yeah. I'm getting lost in all the definitions today. Yeah. So, it depends on who you ask.
Classical theist could be another way of just saying I'm an orthodox Christian with a view of God. But there's a term of art called classical theism which asserts the view of God as understood in the first couple centuries.
Well, I mean, in their credit, the first millennia or so of Christianity. Right. Which is to view God based on Aristotelian understandings of myriology and other, sorry, understandings of how parts work, what metaphysics is.
Basically, if you assume an Aristotelian metaphysic or a Platonic metaphysic, then you're going to be restricted to a classical theist God due to the nature of the way that reality works.
[80:22] But, if you reject the classical metaphysic, then these problems go away. So, does it just come down to God's in the ability then?

Yes. So, in classical theism, God's aseity, his self-sufficiency requires that he be impassable and simple and timeless.
So, that's why they would require certain constraints when we're talking about creation. Exactly.
Well, that's not true. I mean, necessarily. They would argue perhaps God imbued nature with the ability to create systems that look designed.
I mean, that... Right? That's kind of... But, so they're not arguing necessarily for evolution or that it's completely secondary causation. They're saying that the way that ID arguments work assumes a God that is tinkering.
And God, based on their assessment, cannot tinker. Or will not tinker. Or cannot tinker. I don't know. It's a very confusing argument. So, if you can get a handle on it, tell me.
[81:29] I just need a lot of books is what I'm getting at. Yeah. I mean, you need like a PhD level education in philosophy. Yeah. It's very difficult to understand.

All right.