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Truth and Science | A Christian, Muslim, and Atheist Discuss

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The Veritas Forum

In this episode we hear from three different world views including a Christian (Kirk Durston), a Muslim (Imam Hosam Helal), and an Atheist (Matt Monrose) as they discuss their unique perspectives on faith and science. From the stage at McMaster University. • Please like, share, subscribe to, and review this podcast. Thank you!

Transcript

Welcome to the Veritas Forum. This is the Veritas Forum Podcast. A place where ideas and beliefs converge.

What I'm really going to be watching is which one has the resources in their worldview to be tolerant, respectful, and humble toward the people they disagree with. How do we know whether the lives that we're living are meaningful? If energy, light, gravity, and consciousness are a mystery, don't be surprised if you're going to get an element of this involved. In today's episode we hear from three different worldviews, including a Christian, Kirk Dirston, a Muslim, Imam Husam, Halal, and an atheist, Matt Munroz.

As they discuss their unique perspectives on faith and science, a discussion titled Truth and Science, a Christian, Muslim, and atheist discuss from the stage at McMaster University. Just by way of overview, I'm going to argue that three things, that the origin of nature entails a non-natural cause. Secondly, that the fine-tuning of the universe implies a designer.

And third, that the scientific method applied to history suggests the existence of the Judeo-Christian God. These will not be proofs, they are just arguments. And I would like to argue that the most rational position to take is that a scientist should believe in God.

But when I say most rational, it doesn't mean the other positions are irrational. So often in the case there's good, there may be reasons for several different positions, but I want to argue that the rational justification for the position I'm presenting for is such that a

scientist ought to believe in God. So let's begin with God and the origin of nature, my first argument.

And a few years back, it seems to be this consensus of scientists involved in the field of cosmology is that the universe did have a beginning, whether you hold to a multiverse theory or oscillating universe or a one-off deal. And even if we didn't know that, we know that we cannot possibly have an infinite regression of time in the past, that there has to be a finite age to physical reality. Now I'm defining nature here in this first argument as the entirety of physical reality composed of space, time, matter, and energy and the laws of physics.

So when I say entirety, if you're one of those who believe in a multiverse, it would include that as well because that does require space, time, matter, and energy and its own laws or fundamental laws of physics if you go with the ultimate one that Stephen Hawking talks about. So that brings us to the question then what is the cause of nature, what caused nature to come into existence. My first proposition is that the cause of nature must be either natural or not natural, and not natural is analytically equivalent to supernatural.

And so I would argue this is a true dichotomy, there's no middle ground in this particular proposition, it's either natural or it isn't. The second proposition is that the cause of nature cannot be natural, and that's what logic entails, it requires us to avoid the circular fallacy. It's for example science is committed to finding a natural explanation for things, but it cannot find a natural explanation for the origin of natural processes without assuming natural processes in its explanation to explain how natural processes came into existence.

You see that's entirely circular. So the option that nature was caused by something natural is a logical fallacy, and it leaves us only with the second option, and if you have two options and the first is eliminated, the second one no matter how much you might initially not be enthusiastic about it is the true one, is the proper one that we ought to go with. Therefore it logically follows that the cause of nature must be supernatural.

Well that often raises the question, well then what caused the supernatural creator, and that too can be answered logically, the cause of physical time, which is one of the components of physical reality, must be either dependent upon time or timeless, again a true dichotomy, it's either dependent on time or it's not. But it's logically impossible for the cause of physical time to be dependent upon physical time, that would be a circular fallacy, and therefore we are left with only the second option, which is the cause of physical time must necessarily have been not dependent on time, in other words it must be timeless. And one final thing about that is that it's logically impossible to cause a timeless entity to come into existence, it either is always there or never there.

In other words it's logically impossible for a timeless entity to have a temporal beginning.

And for that reason the regression that we constantly study throughout science and throughout life, what caused this, well that was caused by that, which was caused by that, there's actually an end point to this regression and you're looking at it right here. So we don't have an infinite regression.

So the first conclusion is that logic dictates that the cause of nature must be supernatural, timeless or eternal, and uncaused. Now the second argument I'd like to run by you for your contemplation has to do with the fine-tuned universe. Now what we're observing, 20 years ago it was found to be very impressive, but as science advances what we're finding is it's far more fine-tuned than we had thought 20 years ago when Penrose made published this probability statement here.

His calculation suggests that in order to get any kind of universe at all capable of supporting life, it would be about one chance and ten raised to the one hundred and twenty-third power. Now that's not the probability of getting this particular universe, we're not really interested in the probability of getting this particular one. All we need is any kind of universe at all capable of supporting life.

So you have the set of all possible universes permitted by the full range of what physical constants can take and so forth. And then you have a subset of those universes that are capable of supporting life, a minuscule subset. And what this number is telling us is that the probability of obtaining a universe in this minuscule subset is about that.

But that was 20 years ago and it has gotten significantly more impressive since then. I might recommend to you a recent book called *A Fortunate Universe*, which goes into the latest findings of just how fine-tuned the universe is. Co-authors, one a theist, one an atheist.

And so you're getting, and they look at all the different possible explanations for that. But what this does do though is it suggests that if the universe is incredibly fine-tuned to support life, then this supernatural cause that we derived by logic in the first argument actually must have a purpose for the universe, a plan that requires life. And if that's the case, anything that has a plan or a purpose, we're now talking about a mind.

So it's not just an impersonal supernatural force. Now we have a possible natural explanation that's been put forward and that's a multiverse consisting of an enormous number of universes. And if you have an enormous number of possible universes, then sooner or later you're going to get lucky and you get one that capable of supporting life.

But there's a couple of problems with that. First of all, it's the opposite of what Occam's razor suggests or recommends. Occam's razor suggests that we should probably go with the simplest explanation that actually solves the problem.

Now an infinite number of universes or a non-infinite number would solve the problem,

but the problem, the additional problem is that we're now appealing to a horrendous number or even a near infinite number of unseen untestable entities just so that we can avoid appealing to one unseen entity. And that actually might be testable. The second problem with that is that it's not science.

And so as a scientist, if we're going to seriously consider whether or not we should believe in God, we have to stick with science. And there's some very good papers recently, One in Nature by Ellis and Silk, and they're pointing out that these discussions pertaining to the multiverse and Lawrence Croes' universe for nothing are actually a threat to the integrity of physics. A threat to the integrity of science, and why is that? It's because the scientific method usually begins with a question.

You then draft a certain hypothesis as a possible answer to that question. Then you come up with one or more predictions that are testable, falsifiable, and verifiable, and then you do an experiment to see what happens and so forth. But the multiverse stops with step number two.

The question is where did the universe come from, or how do we explain the fine-tuning of the universe? Well, there's this hypothesis of a multiverse, and it stops there. Now, there are prominent-- Sean Carroll, for example, would like to stop there, but it is creating a problem within science itself that we can get to later. So the second conclusion is that we have two options.

We can either imagine or make up in our minds an enormous number of unseen untestable entities to try and explain away the fine-tuning. Or we can pause at just one unseen entity, which logic already dictates from the first argument, and which we might actually be able to test for, and that brings me to my third argument. So I would say that of the two things, when we see something like this, the most rational explanation is that there is a mind behind the universe that is incredibly fine-tuned to be able to support life.

My last argument, again, none of these are proofs. These are just arguments to support this idea. There might be some rational justification for scientists believing in God, and that has to do with applying the scientific method to history.

Now, first of all, we make two historical observations. The first one is that Christianity is the only religion in the world that began thousands of years before its founder and central figure shows up in history. Now, that doesn't necessarily mean anything.

It doesn't mean it's true or false, but it's a fascinating observation in human history that we have a religion that begins thousands of years before the founder shows up. Normally, it's the founder first, then the religion. The other observation that we can make is that the Old Testament, which contains numerous prophecies concerning the Messiah, or in English the Christ, providing a falsifiable hypothesis as follows.

So the hypothesis is this, that there is a creator of the universe, that this creator is timeless and will appear and interact with humanity. That's the hypothesis presented from the initial first stages of the Old Testament. Now, the interesting thing about the Old Testament, it was written and completed long before the time of Christ.

It contained predictions, and there can be many of these predictions pertaining to the Messiah, and they can be sorted into two major categories. One pertaining to his first coming and the second pertaining to the second coming at the end of human history at a time, popularly known as Armageddon. Now, the historical outcome is interesting, because we can actually observe history, and what we're seeing is that these predictions that actually set Christianity up for falsification seemed to have been verified.

The first set of prophecies appear to have been fulfilled. Examples would be that God would one day be valued at 30 pieces of silver, one day be crucified, he'd rise from the dead, come from Bethlehem, and the exact time of his arrival would be before, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the second destruction of Jerusalem in the temple, which we know occurred in 70 AD, and there's many more. So, the logical argument from history goes as follows, it's a matter of historical record that Jesus claimed to be "I am." And secondly, that's not that controversial, but the second one is controversial, that there is a warrant for the belief that he was telling the truth.

Now, anybody can claim to be the creator of the universe, anybody in the room actually could make the claim, but the next question, what warrant can you supply that would justify me in taking your claim seriously? But in the case of Jesus of Nazareth, these falsifiable predictions were fulfilled, including the one that appears, that the historical evidence appears that he actually rose from the dead, which was one of those predictions. Therefore, there is warrant for the belief that God has interacted with humanity. So in summary, why a scientist should believe in God, my first argument suggests that logic dictates that nature must have a supernatural, uncaused, timeless creator.

The second argument suggests that the existence of a creator that has a purpose for the universe, i.e. to be able to support life, is the most rational explanation for the fine tuning of the universe that we are observing now, that scientists are observing. Finally, when we look at the testable, falsifiable, and verifiable predictions that arise under the hypothesis that God exists is interested in humanity and will interact with humanity, it appears that that first set of prophecies has been verified. They were not falsified.

In other words, that doesn't prove that the hypothesis is true if you take a scientific perspective, but it does allow the hypothesis to live to see another day. And that's what science does. A prediction that's verified does not prove your hypothesis, but it allows it to see, it says maybe you're on the right track.

If it's falsified, of course, then you've got to go back and do some serious work on your

hypothesis. And so that's my presentation for now, thank you. Good evening ladies and gentlemen, I'm Matt Munroz.

I'm an undergraduate at Mac, as they said earlier, and I'd like to thank very TAS and all of you who've came the organizers, it's a good success. So atheism, the modern world has a plethora of religions and worldviews. All religions, in some way, require faith to validate the assumption of some sort of celestial dictator.

For the sake of clarity, the working definition that I refer to is a strong belief in the doctrines of religion based on spiritual conviction rather than proof. Since Francis Bacon introduced the philosophical concept of empiricism, science and religion have had an arduous interrelated past. Today atheism is an ever-growing community of skeptics from all walks of life.

Before presenting my argument, I'd like to establish what an atheistic worldview actually looks like, as well as some common myths and misconceptions that the stick apologists don't seem to understand. Atheism is not a religion, it does not require faith. I often hear things from religious apologists like when you use deduction to assert a general scientific theory isn't the act of testing that theory, a practice of faith.

I mean you don't actually know what's going to happen, you're just going on faith. This is where we have a problem with the world of faith. See atheism takes a passive stance whereas religion is active.

This means that atheists act don't actively effect energy towards atheism or faith but rather accept the most reputable or reliable source of information. This means our opinions can indeed change. Atheists hold varying beliefs about various things.

But they are not theistic matter related beliefs. A theist will actively think about their faith in God throughout the day. Whereas an atheist won't even think about atheism because it is a passive conclusion to conclusive evidence.

Nobody would call someone who doesn't believe in fairies and a-fairiest. Why? Because that can be what can be asserted without evidence can also be dismissed without evidence. This is the attitude in which atheists approach theism.

Here's a short anecdote of what encapsulates an atheistic worldview. So we have a hockey game and different theists are out on the rink and they're playing hockey and skating around and trying to hit an imaginary puck. Meanwhile all the atheists are on the bleachers and they're saying this game shouldn't be taking place, there's no puck.

So how does science show faith is irrational? First I'd like to acknowledge the major role religion has had in both enhancing scientific processes as well as detracting from it. Though we can talk about the positive applications and contributions religion has donated they're transient compared to the accomplishments of scientific discourse.

Today science employs Baconian empiricism in Karl Popper's falsification as well as other philosophies.

These various views and methods are designed by epistemologists who are concerned with establishing a certain standard of evidence to be used to determine what constitutes scientific fact. Remember that atheists require specific standard of evidence that religion, religious books and religious apologists don't. Baconian inductive empiricism demands that an observable fact must be used to create a generalized, generalizing or working theory to explain certain phenomenon.

Other atheists and theists reach our first impasse. A great example that illustrates this impasse are the young earth creationists. Today geologists and paleontologists have shown us a world much older than what young earth creationists can accept.

If a book like the Bible creates enough ambiguity to be poorly interpreted in a way that contradicts scientific wisdom, maybe that book is wrong. A book is not self-authenticating. Furthermore faith has the pernicious ability to convince the most intelligent and sane person that an untestable emotional belief in a celestial dictator is a feasible explanation not only for the creation of the universe but for laws and morality as well.

This is often what I hear apologists say, things like, "Well how do you think the earth or the universe came into existence?" Those Kirk said, "We can't use... There are many plausible theories as how the earth came about..." Oh, it's my apologies. The lack of... Though there are many plausible theories as how the earth came about, an atheist position will be "I don't know" and that is okay. The lack of evidence for any speculated action God performs or any phenomenon for that matter does not imply the existence of a God.

If you invoke God as the answer to every question you can explain, then in the words of Neil deGrasse Tyson, God is in every receding pocket of scientific ignorance that gets smaller and smaller and smaller as time goes on. This could be paraphrased again by saying that any reliance on a God or supernatural being to establish truth obviously blunts Occam's razor. In short, science does not invoke supernatural entities or use faith for things in which it cannot explain.

This is where the true nature of the God argument manifests. In accepting a lack of evidence as evidence for God or coincidental phenomenon, theists and atheists come to an impasse. Often, theists give tautological arguments like "God is great all the time" or "God's actions are excused because he knows best." Or "I am right because my book said so." If this is what theists consider evidence, then there is nothing an atheist can say to counter it.

Yes, we cannot use natural processes to prove or verify the way in which the universe

came into existence, but we also cannot employ faith just because we don't know. Ancient books attempting to explain the universe, written by men who don't know where the sun went at night, are not viable sources for explaining existential truths. The divide between atheists and theorists is often based on different standards of evidence.

If a person does not value logic or evidence, there really is not much one can do to convince them other of the fact. As scientific discourse develops and the world becomes increasingly secular, religion has been forced to amalgamate scientific discourse into their worldview. There is debate whether science and religion contradict.

Despite numerous ways in which they could be forced to coexist and authenticate each other still, the scientific method itself has no space for faith. Imagine a scientist using God as the premise for an inductive argument. The argument could go as follows.

God exists, therefore the sky is blue. Most academics would not take the argument seriously. If this is one's basis for logic and reasoning, then scientific rigor potentially is not useful in your life.

As the saying goes, you can't reason some out of something they were never reason to in the first place. And of course, faith is not often something people were often reasoned into. The number one way in which religious faith survives today is through the proselytization of children.

Science requires a scope of understanding beyond that of faith, which relies more often than on unconditional positive regard. Science, on the other hand, survives and endures through rigorous debate, quality education, and constant scrutiny. So how does science show the irrational nature of faith? Well, faith tends to lead to out ofistic behavior inconsistent with modern knowledge, evidence, and logic.

The successes of modern science, logical discourse, and the truths they reveal are self-evident. Medicine, engineering, psychology, and myriad other advances that today many theists accept as fact. Now then, let's go back to 14th century Europe, a time when the bubonic plague had most of Europe trapped in religious fear.

Plagues of antiquity were often thought to be punishment for various behaviors including homosexuality and menstruation. Today we know the bubonic plague and other diseases are not caused by divine intervention, but rather bacteria carried by fleas and rats and other animals. Therefore, we clearly know it is not demons or God's vengeance that perpetuates any medical issue.

Despite this, many theists and religious leaders advocate for practices that are known to be anti-diluvian, archaic, and immoral. In many places throughout Africa and the Middle East, millions believe that curing the AIDS virus is much more sinful than to treat it. Many Christians and Muslims throughout the world subscribe to the erroneous belief that the

AIDS virus is punishment from heaven because of a man's homosexual promiscuity.

Some religious populations throughout Africa today subject their children to circumcision and in fibrillation. This procedure is often done with a sharp stone and without observing adequate sanitation or pain management. For women, in fibrillation is often subsequently followed by stitching up the vaginal opening with string, only to be broken by the wedding night, by male force.

And just on the point of genital mutilation, creating male and female genitalia, just for them to be disfigured and damaged, is completely counterproductive. But of course, an all-knowing God creates you perfect, but then asks you to make a man yourself. Carrying on in Canada, some groups of Christians, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other anomalous sects do not seek medical treatment when ill.

Some of these groups even go as far as to prevent their own children from seeking medical care, believing that whatever transpires is God's will. On the other hand, some theists might believe that faith works through medicine and science to cure. As wonderful as a thought this may be, faith has never cured an amputee.

I would challenge any person of faith to pray to their deity to grow a new leg. Unless you're an octopus, it probably won't happen. There's conclusive evidence confirming that high morale and self-efficacy is often enough to cure even the most terrible of diseases.

For most of us, these actions of genital mutilation, sexual deviancy, and medical abuse would be immoral, sinful, and despicable. Many theists here would not commit these atrocious acts and might even condemn them as contrary to their beliefs. But this is a fallacy.

These people who commit the terrible actions upon their children do so out of faith. Some of you who are faithful may be thinking that those who commit atrocious crimes out of faith are simply not exercising their faith properly. Just because you practice your faith differently than others does not make it more logical than the extremists.

Faith still brings wrong conclusions even if they are relatively safe. In this brief talk I have outlined some of the main reasons science shows faith is irrational. From an atheistic perspective, science is one of the many areas of study that leads to agnostic conclusions.

An atheist is not often an atheist simply because of science, whether it be historically, philosophically, psychologically, ethically, or scientifically. There are many inconsistencies that lead truth seekers toward an atheistic worldview. In short, atheism is not founded on faith, it is a passive worldview.

Theists assume the existence of God without adequate evidence and religious faith brings unnecessarily wrong conclusions. If truth is what you seek, then start learning

with a blank slate and build your knowledge on logical standards of evidence. If faith gets in the way of truth, it's probably not worth having.

Ultimately, the truth is out there and it will be there whether we accept it or not. Thank you for your time. It's good to be here.

Good evening everybody. I would like to begin by thanking my brother's here for giving us the opportunity to listen to the perspectives. And I would also like to begin with a quick recitation of the Quran.

And the Quran we believe Muslims is the divine word of God. And it really brings sweetness or calm and peace and tranquility to the heart. [Singing in Arabic] [Singing in Arabic] [Singing in Arabic] [Singing in Arabic] [Singing in Arabic] [Singing in Arabic] I'm not going to go into translation of that, but you can read the opening.

The opening of the Quran is called al-Fatiha the opening. You can look it up on your own. Now, when anyone says to me, and I'm being very genuine and honest here to the best of my capacity in saying this, when someone says I don't believe in God, the automatic response that I have is I don't believe in the God that you don't believe in either.

I don't believe in the God that you don't believe in either. The reason why a lot of people, most people, don't believe in God is because they've created in their minds an image or a conception or a reality of God that is not believable. All right.

When someone says there is no God, when someone says there is no God, we say as Muslims there is no God, but the one true God. That's actually part of our faith. There is no other God, but the one true God.

The reason why there's so much confusion, so much discussion about this is because human beings have created so many fake and created and artificial imaginary. And this historical, of course, discussions about that, of different God. So then it's very difficult for a human being to pop in the 21st century.

Look at all these various pictures and depictions of God and then say, well, how can there be one true God? How can there be one true religion? Where am I supposed to go? Where am I supposed to start? How am I supposed to find the one true religion? If you have all these religious people all claiming to have the truth, fighting amongst each other, debating amongst each other, where am I going to start? And that's why I believe Islam is so unique. Islam is so unique. Professor Kirk and I'm very humbled to be sitting next to you and my brother as well.

I'm really humbled to be with you and to be sharing this platform, but you said something that's interesting. You said Christianity is the only religion that has, I'm misquoting you here, but I hope not. The only religion that has its founder or has preceded its founder, something like that, right? That's not true because Islam literally

means to submit to God.

Islam, we believe, is a religion based on submission to one absolute true timeless infinite being. We believe as Muslims that there is no difference in religions that all of it can be understood and interpreted as Islam. Jesus submitted his being, his will to God, he's a Muslim.

Abraham, we believe, is the first Muslim. So Mohammed wasn't bringing anything new. Mohammed, as a prophet, was restoring a belief that existed throughout all of humanity.

And I want you to bear with me here. I'm going to try to condense this argument very, or not argument, but discussion, very simply. Any religious or any community throughout history, any location on earth, for the most part, has a conception of God.

A conception of religion, historically. And any conception of religion has three things, has three main beliefs. There's a God, there's a belief in a God, there's a belief in a soul, and there's a belief in the hereafter.

Those are three main unifying principles in all conceptions of religion. Now the reason why we're having this conversation here is because historically, and I'm going to be, again, just generally looking at the Bible, just generally looking at this, historically, there has been a clash between religion, or a specific form of religion, and a specific form of rational or logic. And we're talking here about the church.

The church had a history of suppressing, or oppressing logic and logical arguments. And then there was a reaction. So there were two main reactions.

There was a reaction that was rooted in religiosity, and there was an action rooted in completely dismissing religious, religiosity, or religiousness. And the first was basically, you know what? Let's allow everybody to interpret the Bible as they will. You know, that was one of the counter, or reaction, or movement.

And the second one is, excuse me here, there is no God, because God doesn't make sense because religious people have oppressed, have done so much wrong in the name of God, in the name of religion. All right? Whereas when you take this notion, which is a very small, you know, period in history, in relation to all other periods in history, and cannot be superimposed to every other part of the world, and you make that the framework or the lens through which you're going to view this discussion, there's going to be a problem in that. Why am I saying this? Because I come from a place in the world, and I adopt a religion that does not view science and faith or religion to be standing in contradiction.

What does that mean? I view, as a Muslim, knowledge, as immense. Knowledge is immense. And we as human beings are very little beings in a pool of information and knowledge, struggling to find and discover and be curious and navigate through all of it.

As a Muslim, I believe that there are four forms of knowledge. There's the knowledge of the empirical lens. Those are the things that I can see.

Those are the things that I can touch. The knowledge of the touch, the knowledge of the vision. Then there's also the knowledge of the mind, the knowledge of the inference.

I don't see a fire, but if I see a fire truck with its sirens panicking through the traffic, I'm going to assume there's a fire. This is the lens or the knowledge of the inference. I haven't seen anything, but I have made an inference.

But we believe there are two other forms of knowledge as Muslims, and those two forms of knowledge are the knowledge of the heart and in popular culture. You'll see people thinking, we're making reference to a sixth sense. The knowledge of the heart, love, mercy, compassion, relationships.

We're talking about an ounce of psychology, emotional intelligence. And we also believe there is the knowledge of the soul. We have and we believe in something that's the soul.

It's deeper. It's very difficult to measure. It's very difficult to assess.

But we believe in that as well. And Muslims, if you look into the golden age of Islam, there has been a very, very strong, parallel focus on religion and science. And this also can be discussed in other faiths as well.

But very interesting, in Islam, you see the same people who were building the mosques, building the mass, empowering religion to spread to the people, to hold on to those religious beliefs. They were the same ones endorsing libraries to be built. They were the same ones that were endorsing for the first telescopes to be purchased, to be built.

The same because my Quran as a Muslim tells me, "Do you not think, do you not reflect, God has given you an eye, he's given you a mind, he's given you a hand. We're here on this earth to construct, to go, to look, to explore, to be curious. There's a curiosity in us and that curiosity is supposed to navigate us to learn.

When you look at somebody else, when you look at your own hand, when you look at your own being, God tells us in the Quran, "Sen uriheem ayaht, when I feel a family, wafih and fusihim." Which means we will allow them to see the manifestation of our signs, of our miracles within themselves and in the universe around them. So I don't see a contradiction between the things that I can measure, the things that I can see, the things that I can study, the things that I can do to serve people, and those same things empower me to learn about my God, to find my God, to explore further my Creator. And I know that the more I worship my Creator, the closer I am to my Creator, the closer I am to being myself, to being real, to being genuine, with myself as a human being, finding those intricacies, those flaws within me, and religion or faith helps me perfect them, it gives me a lens that I'm able to again employ and interacting with the world.

Let me give you a few examples. The Quran says beautifully, right? And there are many examples of this. You know, you can't really mention all of it in a 10 or 15 minute conversation.

Allah says, or God says, "Was semah, abanah, abi, adi, ina, lemuh, seanuh, semah?" I want you to just go with me here on a linguistic journey, okay? I love linguistics, I love languages, so amazing. Semat usually is translated as sky, but semat linguistically means that which is high and above and beyond. Semat from semah, which means height, that which is above and beyond.

So language is so interesting in this discussion. When you look at a translation of the Quran and it says, "God built the sky." You know, you gotta look into the depth of the words and linguistically analyze them. So God here saying in this verse, Allah or God or Creator, "Fashioned." That which is above and beyond.

Meaning what's above and beyond us? The universe. God has fashioned the universe which encompasses everything with his own design and it is constantly expanding. The word "muh-seer" means it's expanding, there's no discussion about it.

All commentators throughout all of time have said that the things that God has created or has created the universe, whatever it is that contains us, it's expanding. How long did it take us as human beings to figure out that the universe is actually expanding? And that exists in the Quran written 1400 something years ago. Let me give you another example.

Allah says, or God says, "Allah lemure on levina kephur annessa mawat wal al-ar-dukanata, rat-kran fafat-a-tah-na-hum-a." Do the people who deny God, do they not see that once upon a time, the heaven and the earth and everything that exists was once clumped altogether and then it was blown, blown out into various particles and components. That means there's scientific evidence for the big bang within the Quran. And we're talking about a book that exists 1400 years ago.

You know what? This at least should get us to think. This at least should get us to look at the discussion from a different lens. Let's look at another example.

And there are many. There are stages in the Quran that outline the way that the human being is developed in the womb as a child. As a child.

And one of the stages God mentions that he created the human being in one of the stages from the term "a-da-da-ka." And "a-da-ka" linguistically is associated with all the hangs, all that sticks, all that comes together. And if you look at the process of fertilization, just looking it up right before it came here, fertilization happens in two main phases. In the first a sperm recognizes an egg, sticks to its jelly like coating and strips to reveal parts of its cell membrane.

So look at that. Sticks. And then there's another.

You know, you continue the discussion in the second phase, the cell membrane of the egg and the sperm cling together in an intimate embrace before fusing to allow the DNA to meet. And then there's a whole chapter written about this one word and how it can be related and how it can be understood from the lens of science. What I want to just share with you to bring it all together here is that as a student studying at the University of Toronto, doing my undergrad in or have done my undergrad in life sciences, studied evolutionary biology and continued to do my nurse, my master in neuroscience, you know, after finishing my master, and this was a lot, you know, it was, it was beautiful.

I loved it. Challenging. I looked at myself and I looked at the world around me and asked myself, is this really it? There's something deeper beyond that.

There's something much deeper beyond this. And it's a calling from within. And it takes time to recognize that some of you have some of you may, you know, some of you may feel it in some levels.

But this calling, this depth that exists within you, that calls you to look at the world and to people around you in a deeper way to really reach out to people, to try to understand yourself and the world around you. You know, I put my studies on hold, I put my pursuit of science on hold, and I took time to come and to work here in Hamilton as the E-MAM, to serve as the E-MAM, and to really just get to know people, to get to know humanity. And you know, I leave you with this.

When you start to notice and to look at humans and to really understand humans in a deeper way, it allows you to really see things in a different, and from a different lens. And that allows you to see truly appreciate science for what it is, a tool for discovery, but to also understand that religion does not, and has not, contradicted or stood in opposition with religion. And that's what I believe in as a Muslim.

They're tools, they're ways of looking at the world, they complement each other. God gives me the strength to look at the world, and religion, or science, allows me to reaffirm and regrow or continue to grow my faith. Thank you so much for the opportunity.

God bless you all. What would you say about the fact that science cannot prove the existence of God, and that therefore God doesn't exist? You have one minute. In one minute, I would say that science can provide a way to prove God, and that is in the way that you interpret everything around you.

It all again goes back to the lens, the lens that you're viewing the world by. That's all it is at the end. This is what the main discussion here is about.

Again, I do not find any contradiction between anything we discover scientifically, and science is always changing and quickly evolving. There are little things here and there

that, of course, you'll look at and you'll think about twice, but for the most part, I find no contradiction between the things that I discover or study scientifically, and what God says about himself, about people, and about the nature of the universe we live in. And so, based on that, I say that when you look at science and the purpose of science and the discoveries of science, the essence of science, it all goes back again to actually reassuring me that there is a creator, that there is a designer, that the code, the complexity, the complexity, the complexity, the complexity, the complexity, the complexity, what is the word? That sounds right.

That's a complexity, right? That's a... I'm a thought, I'm a thought. [laughter] You got to accept what you are, right? And you got to accept that there's a God, now I'm just under your hand. God exists in my eyes.

I see no contradiction between science and God, and I think that science can actually prove the existence of God. It all depends on the lens and the tools you choose to deploy in that discussion. Thank you very much, Jack.

Hi, I'm William. So my question is for all of you, I wanted to know how you would all sort of define faith and how you might define rationality or what is considered evidence. Because I feel like there may be different understandings people are using those words with, so I'd like maybe that to be more clarified for everyone.

Faith is maybe another word that would be similar, would be trust. So for example, and I think we all exhibit faith all the time. For example, I used to work for Pratt, Whitney, I was involved in the test of experimental aircraft engines, and I saw the engine that I work on, that I did work on, explodes three times in a test cell.

It's now used on certain aircraft, and I have flown on those aircraft, and when I get on that aircraft, there's no way that anybody can prove that I'm going to get to my destination with one of those aircraft engines exploding. Now, they have taken, be assured, they did take steps to limit that. But that's faith.

I'm fairly confident the engineers did their job in all the testing procedures. I'm very confident, but there's still that margin of uncertainty there. So when I get on an aircraft, I'm putting my faith in that aircraft, and I do not know for a fact that I'm getting to my destination until it gets there.

So faith is, I would say, it's trust. It's trust to the extent that it's not just believing something. I could believe it gets there, but I wouldn't get on the aircraft.

No, I actually get on the aircraft. So it's trust to the extent that I'm actually going to act on it. And we use that all the time, sitting on a chair, for example.

So for me, faith is, as I defined it earlier, but I'm a person that goes off of more of it from a statistical basis. If I think there's a high probability using a Kirk's example that the

plane, the engine, is going to explode, I probably won't go on it. Hopefully.

But if I know or most of the time, when I do go on a plane, I'm fairly confident that it will function properly. Faith, for me, seems to be, from a religious perspective, is more of a psychological construct. It's something that you've convinced yourself of.

It is not based on something rational. It is based off of a want, or a yearning, or a crutch, or a dependency on something. So the word for faith in Islam, or used in Islam, is "Iman." And "Iman" means "coulon wa amal," which basically means that "Iman" or "faith" is an action of the heart manifesting itself in the limbs and in your speech.

And like the two brothers said, it is a conception of the mind and a belief in the heart that manifests itself in the things that you say, and of course, in the actions that you take. Now the interesting thing is, there's no such thing as blind faith. The word itself "Iman" does not mean it's blind.

It's always got to be guided by logic, by rationale, and always has to make sense. And that's why, again, when we go back to the first point that was mentioned, when people say "I don't believe in God," usually it's because they've created an image that is not believable. And that's where the issue is.

So faith is something that can, you know, logically makes sense, can be rationally for the most part be proven. But there's an element of trust, and that is where the manifestation in the heart, or the, you know, the construct in the heart is manifested in the things that we say, and how we carry ourselves, and in the attitude that we adopt. This one is for Dr. Kirk, and it says, "About the scientific method applied to history, would it not be more scientific to claim that the reason some Christian predictions came true, or people saw what they claimed they saw, must fall within the bounds of nature? For example, would it not be more scientific to claim the apostles were hallucinating rather than somebody actually walked on water?" First of all, I think we need to define what a miracle is.

I'm going to go with Michael O'Connor's definition, that a miracle is something that is not possible, as far as we know, under the laws of nature, and it occurred in a religiously charged situation, so that there's a direction to the divine there. Whether we can say that scientific or not, of course it's not. That's the very aspect of a miracle.

With regard to the prophecies, you can have prophecies, none of which are miracles in and of themselves, but the probability of getting all of those things to fall. For example, the prophecy that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. No, it's not a miracle that people are born in Bethlehem, but when you start looking at, let's say his genealogy, descended from King David, born in Bethlehem, he's betrayed for 30 pieces of silver.

These are all prophecies that were made hundreds or thousands of years before the time. When you see all of those things all come to pass at the right time in history, the

probability of that being an accident, even though any one of those things might be natural, except for rising from the dead, of course. But any one of those other things might be natural.

The probability that becomes so infinitesimally small, that now you have to start thinking as my friend who works for the entire Lottery Commission, when they see a spike in improbability, they automatically do it. It's not improbable to win the lottery. That's fine.

They can handle that. But let's say two people in the same family or three people in the same store, then an investigation is launched because the automatic suspicion is that this is not just an accident. The probability, the anomaly is so sharp there that we're going to have to look for some sort of an intelligent manipulation of the Lotto system in the same way for the prophecies, I think.

Even if they were all natural events, the fact that they all took place at the proper time in history serves to, like for example, if I said the winning Lotto 649 number for next week is such and such, that's not a miracle that I said that number. Even if you put that number in and you won, that's not a miracle. But this I did it the week after and the week after and the week after, then you'd think there's something going on here and maybe none of that is a miracle.

But what it does indicate that maybe it's worth listening to Kirk, next time he gives a winning Lotto, suggests there's a win. So my credibility in that area has been enhanced because of the fulfillment of my prior predictions. Good evening, Matt, and everyone.

So, you know, since the time we were in grade 10 in science, at least in Canada, right, and we keep seeing this lesson taught again in every science course, the conservation laws, conservation of mass, energy, mass, energy. And the basic lesson behind all of this is that something cannot come from nothing. And I know that you said, please correct me if I'm interpreting incorrectly.

You said atheists are, for the most part, passive-bell things, right? You know, you accept what seems rational and you even quoted that faith was irrational. So, you know, to say that, and, you know, if we're looking at the Big Bang Theory, right, everything that started out as some clump that with heat and expansion exploded and formed us, me and you and everyone else here, and the rest of the universe. So, we can only go so far to say, this came from that, this came from that.

I believe Dr. Kirk referred to as a regression factor. So at one point, do you have, I mean, you know that you can't keep saying, this came from that, this came from that because, you know, you just keep going in some loop. So wouldn't you say that the only rational idea behind this is that there is a God or a creator that is independent of all these things, who himself is being and is the source of all being.

And does not, has not been sourced or has not been begotten? First, thank you. No, I wouldn't say there is a creator. There, there, well, very well may be a correlation between certain evidence and the idea of a God, but that doesn't, again, I said earlier, imply a God.

We don't know necessarily that Kirk mentioned different versions of how the universe is speculated to come into existence. So there is no general consensus around the world of what, how the universe actually came into existence. I personally don't know a lot about physics and from what I've read, a lot of atheists would say, simply, I don't know.

They are not going to assume that a God did it just because they don't know. They are okay with the fact that they don't know. We seem to be angry or anxious that just because we don't know something, immediately we have to solve it and know the answer.

I don't think that is a, it's a, I don't think that's a relevant thing for us to do. We have to actively take the time to discover these things. If we simply don't know, we say we don't know until a better form or a superior form of evidence shows, XY may be true.

Our next question is for Haslam and it says, how does Islam explain how the concept of God came to exist? Again, going back to the discussion of the uncaused cause. If we believe in everything has a beginning, everything has a cause, everything has a cause, imagine this analogy. Let's give this analogy, okay? Imagine if, you know, Kirk, Professor Kirk is a coach on a basketball team.

And I want to take a shot. And before I take the shot, I got to take permission from my captain and my captain has got to take permission from Kirk. And Kirk has got to call the manager, the manager has got to call the district manager, the district manager has got to call his wife because the wife is the boss.

Alright? Shout out where she at. Anyway, so there's not going to be anything. Nothing is going to exist.

You're just going to go through infinite regression. So the fact that we exist means there has to be a beginning. There has to be an uncaused cause.

And that's how we believe, rationally, there's a God. He's the beginning to which there's no end. He's not limited by space nor is he limited by time.

So going back into the nature, once you have a true or a rational and he uses that word loosely, a proper conception, Islamically speaking, of who God is, then it's very easy to believe in that God. Now, one for Dr. Kirk, we'll just pass the mic down. So this one is, would you describe Christianity as blind faith? No, certainly not.

Blind faith, I would think, is very dangerous. Just a complete leap in the dark. You could

end up believing, putting your faith in anything.

And so, no. If you go to my third argument there, the question is, is my faith in Jesus Christ blind faith? So along comes this person in the first century. He claims he is I am.

He claims that he has existed before Abraham lived and so forth. He's making remarkable claims. And I have met guys like this.

I met a guy at UBC who believed or claimed that he was God. I met a guy at the University of Manitoba who was claimed to use God. And if I had just simply accepted that with no evidence whatsoever, that would be blind faith.

But to be polite, I don't laugh at people who claim to be God because, you know, maybe the real one shows up sometimes. But I ask the person, why should I believe you're telling the truth? And when it comes to Jesus of Nazareth, there were two things I look at. One is that set of messianic prophecies that existed long before the time of Christ.

That stated when he would come, where he'd be born, how much he'd be betrayed for, they'd be crucified, they'd cast lots for his garments. And the interesting thing is, when I was in high school, I thought the Christians had actually put those prophecies in there to make Jesus look good. And then I found out, no, they're in the Jewish shat'nach as well.

They're in the Dead Sea Scrolls, some of which predate the time of Christ. So I knew the prophecies existed before he came. He comes along and fulfills them.

It's kind of like me giving you the winning lot of 649 numbers for about three or four weeks in a row. Then you start thinking, maybe Kirk is on to something here. And the second thing would be the historical evidence that Jesus appears to have risen from the dead on the third day.

And I would refer you to Michael Lacona's work there when he looks at an historiographical analysis of three bedrock facts that are granted by the full range of scholars in the field. So when I look at that, I say, okay, I don't know for a fact. I can't prove that Jesus Christ is God and that my whole eternal destiny hinges on whether I accept his pardon for my sin and his gift of eternal life.

I can't prove that. But there seems to be some rational justification here that there's something highly unusual about him to the extent that I think he might have been telling the truth. That leap is the leap of faith there, but it's not a leap from zero to putting my faith in Christ as it would have been for the guy at UBCU claimed he was God.

But rather I see that Jesus Christ has two highly unique lines of warrant, whereas the guy from UBCU claimed he was God had nothing that would constitute any evidence at all or any reason at all to think he was telling the truth. So I would say it's rationally justified faith as opposed to a blind leap in the dark. My question is for you, Matt.

First, I'd just like to thank you for your presentation. I thought you brought a lot of points that were very enlightening, especially about some of the cons that can come from believing when you don't think rationally. And so my question for you is that you started off by explaining that you have a passive view of God, and so because there's not sufficient empirical evidence for God in your eyes, you choose not to believe in God.

And my question is, why be passive if you lose nothing from believing? If you're able to think rationally to supplement your faith, why not take that leap and become active by exploring? Who knows, searching and seeing the world from a religious perspective might actually benefit you? So why limit yourself to that passivity? First, thank very good question. First thing is I don't think I have for my whole life taken a passive position. I've actually explored many of the face, and I've actually taken the time to read through their books.

And there have been times where I thought that maybe there was a good point said, but I never had this idea of this higher calling. I never felt that. I just thought this was a thing that I should explore.

When I say passive, I mean that you don't actively search for something that validates your world view. You let passive as in, you let knowledge, you learn, you let knowledge pass through your mind, you learn and you keep learning. And what you collect, you assess based on the standards of evidence that you go by, and then you then use that to create or forage your world view based on what you think is the best standard of evidence that then therefore constitutes a truth.

So, okay, thank you. Okay, our next question is for Hasam and it says, how do you know that the Quran is true without a doubt? So, I actually have the pleasure of teaching a course called Quran Journey here at McMaster, and it's a four year course that we literally break down every single word of the Quran linguistically study it, linguistically study its roots, trace it to a context of time, a context of time. Now, to answer the question, how do I know that the Quran is the true word of God? The Quran, firstly, is memorized by more than currently 10 million children all over the world.

The reason why we have various religions, various forms of understanding the world is because God sends a messenger, and with that messenger comes a book, comes a form of instruction, a law. And then that law historically has been again, you know, the duty of preservation has usually been placed in the hands of a few, like the rabbis or the priests or the clergy, the learned men, and then they were trusted to interpret for the rest of us, rest of people of the time, the meaning of what is actually entailed, what is actually the content of the book. Whereas the Quran, when it came from day one, the Quran from the very beginning, it was memorized, it was an oral tradition.

So now you can actually go, and this is a miracle in itself, to me this is a beautiful miracle, I can actually go to Egypt, I can go to Pakistan, I can go to Russia, I can go to

Palestine, I can go to anywhere in the world, Djibouti, Cameroon, anywhere, name it, Cameroon, yeah, you know, shadow. So anywhere in the world, anywhere in the world, and people will recite the Quran in the exact same way. And I'm going to actually test this, how many Muslims are in the audience, how many Muslims are here? Okay, it's not good to recite the Quran and make a mistake, but I'm doing this to actually prove a point, that if I were to make a mistake in a syllabus, or what's the what's the thing, man, syllable, yeah, it's a long night, it's a long night, we wear a good team together.

So yeah, if I make a mistake in a single syllable, right, they would actually recognize it, and they would correct it, and children as young as five years of age can actually correct that. Now I've had the pleasure of memorizing the Quran when I was eight years of age, and the Quran were talking about, you know, 600 pages of pure classical Arabic text, really deep. Now it took me maybe 18 years before I actually finally understood what it is that I'm reading, the context and the depth.

Oh, okay, so let's do this quickly, let's do this quickly, okay, just random person, who's Muslim here, guys help me out here. Okay, I'm having a mistake, stop me and tell me what I did, okay. [Singing in Arabic] What is the correct one? [Singing in Arabic] And that goes to show you the synchrony and the unity we have in that text.

There's no difference of opinion about it, there's no difference even in the, again, the constants or the words or the letters themselves. It is a preserved text, and that makes sure there's no evolution, there's no change, there's no difference of opinion about the commentary, there's no later in search and there's no later deletion, and that's why we believe it's the final testament from God. I'm going to ask you to pass it to Kirk, we have the same question for Kirk, but we're asking how do you know that the Bible is true without a doubt? Okay, so there's a point in my life where I had to decide, I take that step of faith, am I going to put my faith in Jesus Christ for forgiveness for sins that I had committed and for eternal life or not? And one night I was laying in bed, I decided, okay, I would really like to know God, but my fear of God was removed when it occurred to me, if God loved me and actually enough to die for me, and go through what he did for me, then I can trust him, because at that point I asked Jesus Christ to come into my life that night and take away the sin that separates from him, God, I'm just asked him for eternal life when I died, and at that point I began a personal relationship with God, and so if you're asking me how do I know Christianity is true, it's none of the arguments I presented tonight, that's just, it supplies rational justification for putting my faith in God and in Christ, but how do I know it's true? It's because of my personal, the awareness of his presence with me throughout the day.

I talk with him, I'm either insane, or I'm telling the truth, or I'm telling you a bold faced lie, it's one of the three, and that to me is the most fulfilling thing I've ever experienced in my life. I've seen, I've been on top of the Rockies, taken the last ski one of the day as the sun sets in the west, I've snorkeled on coral reefs, I've seen wonderful things in this

life, and I've had good times, but nothing compares to the experience of experiencing God's presence, and that's how I know that he exists, and that he, I have a relationship with him, but I could only have that once I put my faith in Christ, once I became spiritually alive to be able to have that relationship. So it all hinges down to this personal relationship and the experience of his presence with me throughout the day.

Okay, thank you very much. So I'm going to pass the next one off to Matt, and this one says, "I'm aware that you do not believe in God, but in your presentation you conveyed God as a dictator. Why do you believe that if God did exist, that they would be a dictator?" Oh, it's more of a saying, but things like, I have a problem with things like in the Bible where God creates you, and he created the whole universe, but what he really cares about is who you sleep with.

I don't think that is irrelevant. He commands things like, "You should not sleep with someone before you marry." Things like that. I don't think that seems like a big brother to me.

It's too much. And if you read George Orwell or any of those kind of guys, there's a very stark parallel between religious texts and the idea of a dictatorship or a big brother that's watching over you, and he knows best simply because he says so. And I use it more as a metaphor.

I don't think there is a God. I will ultimately say, "I don't know." In that sense, I'm agnostic. But from the ideas of God that we have today based on various religions, I don't think they are true.

I think there are methods of controlling people, and I think they're very effective methods of controlling people. As I think if you read any history book, there's going to be some of that in there. Thank you very much.

So, off back to Assam, and this question is for you, and it says, "What does Islam say about the Messiah and Jesus?" I'm going to try to do this in literally one minute. I just want to go back to this point because it's really important. A lot of people think, "How can God, some of the reasons why people don't believe in God? How can a God that's so powerful, so busy doing all this awesome stuff, half time to analyze my little movements and answer my little calls? And how can there be six or seven billion people in the world all calling and praying to God, and God is able to answer them at the same time? Again, it goes back to the conception you have of God.

The conception you have of God. There are repercussions to every action that we take, there are repercussions to decisions, the moral choices that we make, and I believe that everything that God teaches, if you look at it, if you analyze it, it is there to preserve our human dignity, it is there to preserve a human heart, it is there to preserve a human mind, it is there to protect us at the beginning. God is not there to command things

because he needs that God is self-sufficient, he is free of want, he is free of need.

So when he tells us something, we interpret it as a good thing that allows for our preservation. That's number one. Number two is, we as human beings have created a framework that is actually able to take in all of these queries at once.

Think about Google. Google can take in billions of questions at once. We as human beings are own, back in the 90s, I was struggling, how can God answer all of these things? Questions that we have.

Realistically speaking, we as human beings have created similar concepts as humans. God has fought above that. And to go back to the question again.

What does say about Jesus in the Messiah? Jesus is a prophet, a messenger of God. You have 15 seconds. Jesus is a prophet and a messenger of God.

He is a continuation of prophets and messenger of come before. He came to, as the Quran says, came to reiterate, re-explain a lot of the Old Testament. He came to perform many miracles.

We believe he was born of a virgin mother. He was born of Mary. We believe they performed many miracles.

He spoke in the cradle. We believe that he was in all the miracles for the most part that I mentioned in the Bible. Very similar ones for the most part mentioned in the Quran.

In terms of the Sai, we believe that he is going to come back. Jesus is going to come back at the end of time. We can read all about that.

It's just literally Google or research tonight. It's not the concept of Reza or Jesus. Thank you very much.

This one will be for Kirk. Dr. Kirk, you've used the fine tuning of the universe to point to the existence of an intelligent and intentional designer. However, only a universe capable of eventually supporting life would there be living beings capable of observing and reflecting upon its fine tuning.

This is based on an anthropic principle. With this in mind, the appearance of a finely tuned universe is actually impressive and unimpressive and inconclusive. Can the fine tuning argument still stand? I'm going to mention an argument or a response that I heard Dr. William Craig say once because I think it illustrates it well.

Imagine that you are standing before a firing squad. You've done something really nasty. And there are 3,000 sharpshooters and unlike normal firing squads, all of them have ammunition every last one of them.

And they're all fully committed to do their job. The instructor says, "Ready aim, fire 3,000 rifles go off and you're standing there." And they all miss. Well, that objection there would go something like this.

It's not surprising that you find yourself in a situation where they all miss because if they hadn't missed, you wouldn't be here to be surprised. But that totally misses the amazing situation you find yourself in is that it's not the fact that they all miss doesn't explain the problem. The probability of them all missing.

That's what's interesting. And in this case with the universe, there are an extremely large number of possible universes. And it is true that if this universe wasn't capable of supporting life, we wouldn't be around here to be surprised that we're in one of those microscopics subset of universes capable of supporting life.

But here we are. And now we're start to calculate, well, what are the odds of this happening? And we find that the odds are infinitesimally small. Especially if this is a one-off deal.

If there's a nine-infinite number of universes, then it's not so surprising. The last question we have here, we're going to wrap it up. So for Matt, when you make statements of objectivity, or objective morality, using words like right and wrong, what moral basis are you making these statements from? Why is your definition of how things ought to be superior to anyone else's? I don't think I said that there's an objective moral because I think that's a misquote.

I don't think there's any objective morality. I think man makes their life the way they want. You create meaning for yourself.

And for me, morality is part of that meaning. I treat my brothers and sisters the way that I want to be treated. And I don't think that is a goal that necessarily related to religion, though it is.

To me, that's practical. From an evolutionary perspective, it's practical because you don't want anarchy, you want to survive, you want people to help you out. When somebody helps you, you want them to help you.

Morality, though, is not just a practical thing for me. It's something that I live by because it brings meaning to my life. And that is still relative.

I don't mean that to have a moral basis in religion, that seems to me that you're being moral because God said so or that your religion says so. I choose to be moral because I'm a volunteer. I view myself as a moral volunteer, not as a moral slave.

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(gentle music)

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