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Religion & Science (Part 1)

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For The King - Rocky Ramsey

This Wednesday, I dive into the ideas of a very famous agnostic/scientist/mathematician/philosopher named Bertrand Russell. Russell was a brilliant man with a great understanding of the natural world. Sadly, he decided that truth for him was that there was no good reason to believe that there is a God, or that the mind survives the death of the body. He was famous for his agnosticism and criticism of religion. He dealt mainly with Christianity but deals with the question of a monotheistic God in general. This book is a look into the history of religion and the onset of Christianity. I do not labor to pick out a lot of quotes from the book, but rather a few of the big ideas from each chapter and interact directly with those ideas. My goal here is to show the flaw in his logic and thinking that made him critical of religion. Nothing in the book would point one away from religion in my opinion. This episode is part 1 of a 2 part series I am doing on the book.

The Book -> Pick it up here

Russell's views

Highlights of Russell's works

John Lennox on Religion and Science

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Transcript

(music) Hello everybody. I am actually going to do something very special this episode.

And it involves one person, me, myself, and I. So usually I would have a guest on or have somebody else helping me talk through whatever topic that I am engaging with on the podcast for that particular episode.

But this is going to be another installment of the Meaningful Monologues, which the last one I did was I think over a month ago now of the music and beauty one. So I wanted to get back into this Meaningful Monologue series because I wanted it to be an outlet for me to actually engage with some of the more opposition to Christianity itself. So I have, you know, the wonky Wednesdays are more speculation and interesting thoughts based on Scripture.

Sunday series are things that we are very confident in and can glean from Scripture accurately. And then I wanted these Meaningful Monologues to be things that are hard topics interacting with the truths of Christianity. So for this week, I picked up a book a few, I think like a few weeks ago now by Bertrand Russell called Religion and Science.

And if you guys don't know who that name is, Bertrand Russell is actually a very famous philosopher and mathematician. He died in 1970. He was a graduate and a fellow at Trinity College at Cambridge University in the UK.

He also did a bunch of lectures in the US. He got a Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950. You know, he wrote a ton of books.

He lived from 1872 to 1967. So the bulk of his career was in the 20th century. And he was an agnostic, a pacifist, a humanitarian.

So he's not exactly a theist at all. He did not believe in God. He was functionally an atheist and he was also a really great philosopher and had a lot of really good thoughts.

So I picked up this book because I wanted to do, you know, start interacting with ideas and things that are just completely contrary to the faith and just seem to blow Christianity right out of the water. And we don't have a rebuttal to so I want to deal with that. So I'm flipping through the book.

That's how I'm going to be doing this. So bear with me. I don't have all the quotes right in front of my face, but I kind of just want to do a brief overview of some of the big topics that he goes over in the book.

And you guys can pick it up too. It's about 200 ish pages, something a little over 200 pages. And it's been a great book so far.

And I really enjoyed reading it. So it's called Religion and Science. And he starts off the book with just a chapter on the grounds of the conflict between religion and science.

Nothing honestly spectacular in this. He just kind of sets the stage of, you know, the

church has historical creeds or you could also call that orthodoxy, you know, positions of doctrine, positions of faith that the church has held for a very long time. And then he talks about the onset of science coming along based on observation that would combat some of this dogmatic, creedal language that Christians or any religious faith would purport in their religion.

So the second chapter after he sets the stage is the Copernican Revolution. So Copernicus lived in the 16th, sorry, the 15th and 16th century from 1473 to 1543. And he was the first to really start working on modern day astronomy and what we think about the heavens.

And before that, there was a Greek called Ptolemy that had a view of the heavens above that obviously wasn't correct, just like Aristotle's physics is not correct. And people come along like Newton later and get rid of some of Aristotle's physics in Galileo. But Ptolemy, so this is what he says on page 22, "This partially deprived his cyst-" Oh, sorry.

Let me back up a little bit. "Copernicus adhered to the view that their orbits that have planets must be circular and accounted for irregularities by supposing that the sun was not quite in the center of any one of the orbits. This partially deprived his system of the simplicity, which was its greatest advantage over that of Ptolemy and would have made Newton's generalization impossible if it had not been corrected by Kepler." So it's all about physics and how the heavens move.

But the big idea here is we have John Calvin writing, who's a contemporary of Copernicus during this time saying, basically calling him a heretic and really coming against him. And John Calvin is one of my favorite theologians. And he's saying these things.

He says, "The world is established and it cannot be moved." He would quote that often, basically going against what Copernicus is saying, because he puts the sun at the center of the universe rather than the earth. And just interacting with that for a second, when Calvin does something like that, these guys are obviously not scientists or understand the natural world as well as scientists do. Now, does that mean they're further from the truth? I would say they're much closer because they understand the metaphysical realities that underpin all of reality itself, namely that there's a God, the ultimate metaphysical claim.

But Copernicus is seemingly going against the Bible, the Bible's own words that the world is established. It cannot move. And Copernicus is saying the earth moves and revolves around the sun in a circular fashion.

And that is in that time heresy. Now, should it have been heresy? No. When we read the Nicene Creed, we don't see any of these statements being made as a matter of Christian orthodoxy.

The Catholic Church would combat Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo all throughout the work they were doing, which was good work and was helpful to understanding the natural world 100%. But when the theologians come against these men, it's because I think it's more they see it as attack on ecclesiology, on the authority of the church, rather than actually doing just good science and then realizing it doesn't actually combat Scripture at all. So when Scripture talks like this and, oh my goodness, he used Roman numerals.

I don't even know what Solomon's in. But when he says, there's a psalm that says the world also is established and it cannot be moved. David or whoever wrote that psalm is not making a physical statement about the nature of the earth itself.

This is again, the Bible is a theological book. It presupposes the existence of God. The language can be metaphorical or analogous or apocalyptic or poetic or narrative.

There's all sorts of different writings like that in the Bible and the psalms are definitely very poetic and not trying to make a truth claim about the nature of the earth, but just the fact that the world is established and that it is God made the earth for a reason, if that makes sense. So I would say that's the big idea there. And there's not actually this fight between religion and science here, but Calvin, who is one of my favorite theologians, seemed to think so.

And I would obviously side with Copernicus on this one rather than Calvin. He is kind of extrapolating Scripture out more than is meant to be read into it, I think. So yeah, so then he moves on.

He starts with Copernicus because he kind of creates the first, he's the first to kind of go against this teaching of the church that the earth is at the center of the universe. And it has to be because of these texts and the scriptures. So then Kepler comes around.

Copernicus actually did have some sense of persecution for his beliefs. Kepler didn't really come into contact with the church, you know, because of, I guess people were warming up by then. It says, Bertrand says, "The next great step in astronomy was taken by Kepler, who lived from 1571 to 1630, who, though his opinions were the same as Galileo's, never came into conflict with the church.

The Catholic authorities forgave his Protestantism because of his scientific imminence. They were appreciative. The emperor appreciated his ability to predict what would happen in the heavens, I guess.

So he publishes a few books that continues to move this along. This new view of astronomy and then Galileo comes along from 1564 to 1642. He's the most notable scientific figure of his time.

I'm reading on page 31 now. Both on account of his discoveries and through his conflict

with the inquisition. So he was, his dad was an impoverished mathematician, but you know, he, those people were actually kind of ostracized from society, the mathematicians, the, you know, we hold them in high regards now that they're doing good work and figuring things out.

But during that time, it was not really a noble task. It was more the theologian would be the noble job. But he figures out that there is a sense of direction to the motion of bodies, velocity, and also change in velocity, a change in velocity or direction of motion, acceleration.

So he starts to drop things off of the leaning tower of Pisa and kind of goes against Aristotle's physics of how things would be, accelerate as they're dropped and actually gets a more real understanding of masses and gravity. So Galileo discovered that apart from the resistance of air, when bodies fall freely, they fall in a uniform acceleration. And again, these are just things that God put intrinsically in the earth.

That's again, these are not coming against any orthodox teaching. There's no orthodox teaching on the nature of gravity or how things fall. But the authorities felt threatened because there is another way to get truth.

We know this as like I've been talking about the natural law, the natural theology, science used to be called natural theology because it was the study of the natural world. But it was natural theology because it was still kind of reigned in by the scriptures, what the scriptures taught about reality. So if you tried to observe something that against what the scriptures taught, then you were immediately ostracized and thrown out.

Now, is that an accurate reading of scripture and description or allow for that? Well, it seems to Romans 1 and 2 that there are ethical things that you can glean and reach apart from scripture. And I don't think that there are any teachings or anything. We see in the scriptures and Genesis that there are people after Cain and Abel's time that are learning how to work with metal and learning how to create instruments and do all sorts of things.

The Bible does not condemn this task of discovering things, understanding things and learning how to interact with the world as humans. We're called to go out and have dominion over it. So I do not imagine that somebody actually reading their Bibles would combat somebody trying to figure out the natural world.

It actually seems to be the Catholic church, that authoritative structure in the church, feeling threatened by this other sense of truth when basically they didn't let the lay person have access to the scriptures. They would preach in Latin so nobody could really understand. They would read the Bible in Latin.

It was in Latin. It wasn't translated in the language just until Martin Luther comes around

in the Reformation and starts to make this God's word more accessible to more people. So that would be my assessment of what's happening there.

Now, Bertrand Russell paints it as religious people cannot handle science and they think it is at odds with some of their teachings because of these texts and because of these great theologians said this. And I mean, Calvin just was not understanding what was going on there and thought the Bible was teaching something different when these texts really don't mean anything. So yeah, that would be my assessment of what's going on here.

Now, Bertrand Russell is trying to use that as an argument for the kind of uselessness of religion, but I don't think he is doing a very good job for those that actually have religious claims. I don't think he's really understanding that he's again kind of straw-mending. I see this in a lot of books that are agnostic or atheist or interacting with religion.

They always attack what religious people do rather than what the actual claims of their holy book is. So for me, it's the Bible, which is the only truth. There's no other holy book.

It's only the Bible, but again, for any theist, there's claims in their holy books that I don't think are their claim of God that most atheists don't actually understand because they never hardly ever actually deal with the intellectual claims about God, but it's more just emotionalism or attacking what people did. So this whole chapter was what the Catholic Church did in their authority, persecuting certain people for wanting to learn about the world. Copernicus Kepler in Galileo.

So that's the first chapter about the Copernican Revolution. So let's just move on. The third chapter, it started off with astronomy and he says this on page 49 and the third chapter is about evolution.

He says, "The scientists have developed in an order the reverse of what might have been expected, what was most remote from ourselves, namely the heavens is what he's referring to, was first brought under the domain of law and then gradually what was near. First the heavens." So yeah, so he does qualify. "First the heavens, next the earth, then animal and vegetable life, then the human body, and last of all, as yet very imperfectly, the human mind." Okay, so he is making a bold claim there.

I mean, this guy's living in the 20th century and there's a lot of things that we have figured out that would kind of go against what he's claiming here that we have this kind of a perfect understanding of the laws that govern the heavens, the earth, animal, vegetable life, human body, and the human mind. Because he was living in a time of the rise of machine functionalism of the human mind that the mind is purely material and we've actually now completely flip-flopped back to the ancient view of mind-body dualism. That's now where the contemporary philosophy is at because of things like

qualia, consciousness, and a few of the things that are really hard to understand, but that is my assessment and my education at a secular university telling me about the nature of philosophy.

So yeah, that's a starting claim and yes, it does seem kind of reversed in the order of what we'd expect. We would think maybe the things that were closest to first before we understand astronomy, but that actually the astronomy things came first because of I think the instrumentation was more easily accessible then with I think telescopes were created first and ways to observe the heavens and then we had microscopes and things that actually help us get to the atomic level to understand things that are at a smaller scale. So cool, on page 51 I marked this page because, let's see, yeah so in this chapter he hits on in terms of evolution, what came first was geology, the evolution of geology over time based on plate tectonics and you know various processes like that and then we got get to actual biology and evolution.

I don't know why I marked this page but basically he sets the scene for the Christian, the Bible's presentation of humanity that Adam and Eve were created and then they sinned and now animals are taking, praying on each other and thistles and thorns grow and there's different seasons and all these things happen in a result of the flood and eventually we have, sorry in a result of sin and then eventually we have the flood. It was not thought that man had grown better since but the Lord had promised not to send another universal deluge and now contented himself with occasional eruptions and earthquakes. So basically ridiculing the idea of judgment for sin based on the air that God kind of arbitrarily says I will never flood the earth again but I will do minor floods and minor eruptions, minor earthquakes but I'll never fully shake the earth again.

I don't really know, that just seems to be pure ridicule and not again just projecting our human minds onto what we would do in that scenario but I would chalk that up to if God does indeed do that then that would seem pretty gracious and maybe not just something randomly arbitrary He's doing but now ordering things in such a way that occasional earthquakes and eruptions now are the norm. Flooding the whole earth would not make sense to be the norm but I guess Bertrand Russell would think so maybe. I don't know what he would say about that but basically we have this narrative from evolution that the earth is 6,000 years old because the date became fixed in 4004 BC by Archbishop Usher, Dr. Lightfoot, Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge who accepted the state for the creation based on the Septuagint and other Hebrew texts.

So that's the stage that's set for the time frame but eventually we start getting these geological changes. So Newton suggested a way in which the solar system could have developed from a primitive or nearly uniform distribution of matter but so far as his public and official utterances were concerned he seemed to favor a sudden creation of the sun and planets as we know them until they leave no room for cosmic evolution. So Newton was a Christian.

God creates the world immediately and this seems to line up with physics and still actually does with contemporary cosmology that there was a big bang there was a beginning if we look at the red shifts everything is the light showing that there is continually speeding away from the center of the universe which means that if we trace that backward and reverse that speed of light then there seems to be a big bang that is coming from. So basically he just starts talking about geologists throughout the time that are making claims about how long it takes for some of these things to happen. Again not observable but inferences made on observations.

This is purely theory in terms of geology we've never actually witnessed these things happening. We yeah see small microcosms of it but it is a big claim to put that much trust and faith in an inference somebody is making based on what they see and especially when things don't match up with the data like when we find fossils that are protruding vertically through a oh through rock layers like they would say oh between this rock layer and this rock layer is millions of years or whatever but there is a bone protruding vertically in it after it's been laid which would be an odd discovery if it really is millions of years. So again there's things we find that would go against the narrative but that doesn't fit their metaphysical presuppositions that there is no god nor was there a flood or anything like that although most societies account a flood narrative even though they were there thousands of miles apart and haven't had no contact with each other there is um it's pretty ubiquitous throughout ancient cultures that there was a flood narrative and all of them which is odd.

So honestly the geology stuff I'm really not that competent in but I do find it kind of ridiculous sometimes and I took that in my undergrad doing environmental science I took a geology class and they were telling me all these things that um again are just kind of inferences made on certain observations but you can observe other things that would completely deny that so it's hard to tell what's true all the time when we look at these things um but they would have their conception of how this works based again on their presuppositions. Let's see so let's just get to the actual evolution part where's my next thing so oh um this is a big point guys so this is I've thought about this a lot I've taken a lot of evolution classes in my undergrad and thought about evolution really critically and I think I have an all right understanding of it and the false claims that are made so he says in page 66 another trouble arose from the mere number of the species that came to be known with the progress of zoology the numbers now known about two millions about two millions and if two of each of these kinds were in the arc it was felt that it must have been rather overcrowded this is a just super foolish statement by this guy like I really don't understand how he if he believes in evolution he understands species can um be changing often so it seems to be a fairly simple just based on his worldview you could have a couple thousand animals with every body plant accounted for and then they quote unquote evolve after they're off the arc into the millions that we see now a day but um I digress basically I hear this all the time how could uh you know we have we've

we've identified this many species how could he have fit them all in the arc well first of all the scriptures say uh two of every kind of animal now kinds to me when I've done so I took a class in invertebrate zoology and there are um you know kingdom violet class order genus species all of that those taxonomy classifications of animals now first of all one note I want to make is there are genetically so there's different ways you can describe species it can be on can they reproduce it can be on genetic variability there's different ways you can claim that you've discovered a new species like if they can't reproduce it used to be before genetics if they can't reproduce then they're different species um but now that we have genetics we can we can do that even more now one thing that they will not tell you or that they make light of is that there are certain strains of e.coli bacteria that can obviously reproduce and although not sexually because they are single celled um until they I guess they form biofilms but they're still single celled in their replication but regardless they claim that there are e.coli which is uh genus and species latin terms for the bacteria and they say that they have different strains of bacteria but they're not different species yet they're more genetically different than humans are from chimpanzees so the lines are blurry and what they call species all the time first of all so don't let them lie to you and just say that like the way they name these things again it's taxonomy it's human classification of naming animals which means that it's arbitrary that we came up with it we just came up with it will we know it it is useful it does help us delineate the differences between all these different animals we have but it's arbitrary it could have been different it's contingent so I think when the bible says all the different kinds of animals I think that that is a phyla I think every body plan that's what phyla is it's the body plan of organisms was accounted for on the ark now a majority of the body plans in phyla are marine organisms so obviously they did not need to be taken onto the ark because the flood was a water event so marine creatures were fine now land creatures those we have the worm in terms of phyla we have different kinds of worms different kinds of insects the insecta phyla man it's been so long now since I've thought about all of them but there's flatworms analytes all sorts of different kinds of worms and then we have the cordata class which is organisms that have a noticord that runs down the back which is basically a primitive version of that's non-bony of invertebrate so like there's these called lancelets that are like little fish that have they're not spiny uh sorry they're not bony spinal cords they're kind of like cartilage maybe something like that like a harder substance but it's not exactly a vertebrae so they're still in their invertebrate category but then the other phyla that is unique is vertebrates so I think kinds are the body plans available so maybe it could be I don't I don't know exactly how they divvy up all the ones in between they're like a kingdom phyla order I forget that all the different taxonomy things but basically it's got to be one of those higher ones species is too arbitrary and too like um hard to come up with what exactly we mean by species so for instance when I think kind of animal I think there was probably two sets of bears that were taken on the ark um you know you have a blackberry you have a brown bear the difference in size is pretty massive like the average black bear is around 500 pounds the average grizzlies probably around a ton

like 2 000 this pound something like that um so they're both bears they both are shaped and it's something something's crazy going on out there so they're both shaped the same way they're they're both the same kind of animal now the difference is their size and some other phenotypic characteristics that are unique to them uh maybe they can reproduce maybe they can but but at the end of the day they really look the same they're very similar and I imagine there was just one type of bear that was taken on the ark and afterwards the bears began to reproduce and just like how we have taken wolves and made chihuahuas you know but that's selective breeding that's a little more intensive but obviously I mean a thousand years is a very long time that's a lot of generations especially of animals with how much they reproduce so I don't know it doesn't seem far-fetched to me based on contemporary science that you could get a black bear that if it's living in colder climates and it needs more fat they continue to pass that down those genes and um those phenotypic genes and they're expressed a certain way and maybe they blend in more with a brown foliage and eventually they become brown bears so I think this is a really foolish claim by him kind of ridiculing oh how could millions of animals fit on the ark and I would just rebuttal yeah obviously nobody believes that you'd have to be a fool to believe that um because the ark is only so odd I don't know exactly how big it is I mean it was a big boat but it's not it's not enough for that many animals especially a blue whale you know what I mean things like that like yeah I don't I imagine the marine animals were not on there and I imagine the land animals they probably had one kind of elephant one kind of giraffe it doesn't seem far-fetched that the kinds of animals one kind of horse thing and eventually zebras came about because of I don't know like just phenotypic expression based on breeding I mean I think microevolution makes a ton of sense and I'm on board but this macroevolution stuff really makes no sense so there's a word on that and that's that's kind of my current understanding of evolution and I think it's kind of ridiculous when people claim certain things uh and one thing about this book obviously he was in the 20th century our um Darwin did not have the microbiology to bolster and genetics to bolster his theory our genetics are now showing that mutations usually end up in destroying the animal rather than helping it um proteins are absolutely impossible to make apart from nothing so how do you even get life started and there is no possible way based on genetics to get a difference in body plan you can definitely get different species you could get a grizzly bear versus a black bear that doesn't seem far-fetched to me but you'll never be able to turn a fish into um a land animal that would never happen the fish would die if you put the fish on land it would die and when we see these transition species I just imagine that's the unique thing that god put in um in creations things like amphibians that can live on both in both water and um land I don't know I don't I don't see macroevolution panning out with the microbiology we have based on genetics and I'll find some stuff to back that up and put that in the show notes let's see um on page 79 of this evolution chapter he says gladstone was horrified and said that if the principle of the judgment was followed up it would establish a complete indifference between the christian faith and the denial of it when Darwin's theory was first published he said expressing the

sympathetic feelings of one also accustomed to governing upon grounds of what is termed evolution god is relieved of the labor of creation in the name of unchangeable laws he is discharged from governing the world so obviously when god creates the world he says multiply and reproduce and gives the command to both animals and humans to multiply and reproduce and fill the earth microevolution seems like the perfect mechanism for animals to go and fill every little niche and fill the earth we have animals that live at the bottom of the sea and the mariana's trench and we have animals that live in the highest mountains and the highest altitudes there's certain plants and animals that live in those regions like god made animals to be resilient to adapt to pass on genetics that would help them adapt but becoming brand new animals and the the the claims of macroevolution make no sense so i do agree that the claim of macroevolution is completely at odds with the christian faith which is why i would never accept it i always reject it and i think there's good grounds to reject it let alone i would reject it if i wasn't even a christian if you read modern science microbiology has there's no mechanism at the at the micro level to sustain the macro level changes macroevolution needs it would never happen it's impossible so but but microevolution we observe that all the time darwin's finches we observe all sorts of stuff it's very in a few generations a lot of things can change in animals so again i don't think this guy actually understands evolution i don't think he had the microbiology neither did darwin to actually see if his theory holds water at the micro level it's actually being destroyed and it's everybody's abandoning it which is why we see most scientists actually starting to abandon materialism and atheism is actually on decline now and we see a flock to new age because everybody realizes that uh life is actually impossible at the microbiology level um yeah so we know how hard it is to make a protein in a lab and we're literally genetically engineering to make proteins and we need so many starting materials just like i was i brought up in a few podcasts ago the miller urie experiment they needed so many amino acids and starting molecules to to get life going um it's very foolish to think that uh it would just be again you don't get nothing into something so uh the claim of atheism is a complete absurdity from the get-go and evolution is not a mechanism that would produce the kind of life we see today the next chapter on demonology and medicine so here he's talking a lot about this was a fun chapter um so he says on page 82 um the scientific study of the human body and its diseases has had to contend and to some extent still has to contend with a mass of superstition largely pre-christian in origin but supported until quite modern times by the whole weight of ecclesiastical authority disease was sometimes a divine visitation and punishment of sin but more often the work of demons so st augustin says um i don't know which book it is but um st augustin maintains that all diseases of christians are to be ascribed to these demons chiefly do they torment fresh baptized christians yeah even the guiltless newborn infants so that was i guess uh his idea why infant mortality was high at that time or something like that so that is i i don't disagree with what he's saying there i think that was probably the conception of disease historically in uh in yeah before uh what we have been given from science and natural theology i i probably would have said the same thing as a christian

that yeah it's probably just satan or demons causing sickness because we know there was no sickness in the garden that death entered the world after sin entered the world um so i imagine i would make the same thing um that's just probably out of ignorance from the christians i do think i wouldn't completely disconnect it from spiritual warfare i imagine schizophrenia and mental illnesses we see nowadays actually sometimes are a result of demonic oppression but because psychology has no um category for the immaterial parts of that um yeah i you know depression sometimes is a chemical imbalance sometimes it's not there's no reason to think that uh there could be demonic tampering with uh the human mind that has caused physiological expression um paul says that some of you in first krynthians have fallen asleep or been ill been ill or fallen asleep and falling asleep was a euphemism for dying back in the day because they were taking the lord supper in an unholy manner so there's there's that category in the bible all over the place that the spiritual affects the physical and the physical can affect the spiritual um obviously sexual immorality is a signature of body that kind of thing the the spiritual affects the material the material affects the spiritual we're both body and soul that is the composite of the human there is a category for this in scripture and when the um historically when christians would just chalk it up to spiritual warfare for uh disease um i don't think they were obviously they were just completely ignorant so i again not a um polemic against the claim and the nature of god but uh an argument against the foolishness of religious people which is again that's uh that's a straw man argument that's not a good argument at all and although it is kind of ridiculous that they would think such things we can understand why and the people that were even atheist back in that day or did not believe necessarily in religion or adhere to it still were ignorant of the same thing so again there's some kind of um what's it called arrogance there that birch and russell is saying oh but if i was living in that time i would have thought clearly about and understood exactly how um people got sick you know i don't i imagine birch and russell would have made the same mistake and um there's some kind of arrogance there to think that he wouldn't have so basically he goes this this whole chapter he talks about the witch huts sorry which witch hunts um so and page 94 he says sorcery was not originally considered a particularly feminine crime uh basically just witches instead of sorcerers or wizards or whatever the concentration of um women began in the 15th century and from then until late in the 17th century the persecution of witches was widespread and severe and he he uh it was like oh here we go um between 14 this is page 95 between 1450 and 1550 a hundred thousand witches were put to death mostly by burning yeah i um just like atheists can be foolish and stupid in some things so can um religious people you know again back to the natural law thing because of our sin we have harmed our ability to reason massively so you know when he's making he's ridiculing christians for uh first of all that was awful that they would without rhyme or reason uh just based on any suspicion anybody could claim oh i saw this woman muttering something under her breath she was casting a spell uh you need to burn her at the stake immediately and then they really were not allowed um to to so basically so here here let me just read it um so thus towards the end of the 16th century flaudae

rector or flayed rector of the university of travace uh and chief judge of the electoral court after condemning countless witches began to think that perhaps their confessions were due to the desire to escape from the tortures of the rack with the result that he showed unwillingness to convict he was accused of having sold himself to satan because he was actually thinking clearly and was subjected to the same tortures as he had inflicted upon others like them he confessed his guilt so basically he's being tortured so bad that he is forced because he just wants his his tort he wants his torment to cease he just confesses yes i did sell myself to satan just let me stop being tormented and in 1589 he was strangled and then burnt so yeah these people were kind of wicked i mean yeah that is kind of a heavy reality that that's how that worked um and they were all of these again he talks in here i can't i don't know exactly where it's at but like there were popes that thought that um earthquakes happened because of uh certain witches getting together conspiring with satan dakaza all sorts of stuff um and i just would say sure there are definitely spiritual warfare things happening that we cannot see but you cannot just murder people because you think um you you just have a hunch that they're a witch rather than actually seeing them do these things um yeah i would say that was a that was a sad reality that that happened and uh i'm on board with virgin russell i thought that was kind of a foolish thing that christians did but you can you can see why um again you what would you have done in the situation it's easy it's easy to condemn nazis for what they did but uh you know do you think that you would have not done what the nazi regime did uh the asset you know if you were enlisted in world war two would you have done the same thing probably just like uh i would have because we're sinners okay so let's see what did i i marked something here so yeah he then he just goes in to talk about now we start to get a development of physiology we understand the circulation system they start the circulatory system um understanding why boils happen why people get sick um all sorts of stuff and i think that was a good thing that happened uh in society and i don't i don't think that is a triumph of science over religion i think that's actually um a gift god has given us in our mind to be able to figure things out and is not necessarily again it does not disprove just because of religious people thought that um people got sick in the past because of demons only uh there's room in the bible for and when i say room i mean they were interpreting it wrong the truth the whole time was there that the physical can impact the spiritual the spiritual can can impact the physical there's not there's no way there's no reason to think that sometimes um there was just a physical reason why somebody's sick uh you can fall and break your leg and it could be for no reason at all jesus says um you know why was this man born blind there must be he says uh you know he had not sinned he was born blind that the um glory of god might be shown in him so maybe some people are born blind because of their sin he says but this man no so i you know who knows sometimes people are just born blind and there's really no reason for it um no reason that we can um see easily okay so the last chapter uh chapter five and six that i'm gonna get into kind of go hand in hand he talks about the soul and the body and you know historically he talks about dakar and livenids and lock and human and all these people that had ideas about what the nature of the human

mind was and for 2000 plus years the idea of the human mind was this thing called mind-body dualism that there's both the the body and then the soul but we switch the word soul to mind eventually because we want to kind of get away from some of those metaphysical um ideas and we get calm and humed with skepticism and all of these you know phenomenal phenomenal phenomenology and um everything is just phenomena and there are different ways to receive phenomena through the body through the eye from the sun you know colors reflecting off of a thing traveling distance into my eye through all my nerves into my brain my brain processing and all these things so how can i trust you know what i'm seeing at the end of the day and uh skepticism really can only be done away with by christians uh so it became at page 121 it became evident that phenomena have whatever reality we can know of and that there is no need to assume a superior brand of reality belonging to that uh to what cannot be perceived there may of course be such a superior brand of reality but the argument's proving that there must be are invalid and the possibility therefore is merely one of those countless bare possibilities which should be ignored because they lie outside the realm of what is known or what may be known hereafter um again just skepticism pure reason um you know cot can just see these things based on ethics that's how we can know things are real uh you know he is big into the argument for god based on ethics and uh morals that kind of thing so basically the end of this again he was in a time of the philosophy of this of the mind that there are purely mental events that are happening in our mind and there are no such thing as a soul but the uh the contemporary conception of mind body dualism is not exactly that there's a soul but that there is a metaphysical component to the mind namely the qualia of consciousness and that's where we're at now so then he gets because of this purely materialistic view of the mind um he says personality is in page 143 personality is essentially a matter of organization certain events grouped together by a means of certain relations form a person the grouping is affected by means of causal laws those connected with habit formation which include memory and the causal laws concerned depend upon the body if this is true and there are strong scientific grounds for thinking that it is to expect a person to survive the disintegration of the brain when they die is like expecting a cricket club to survive when all its members are dead i do not pretend that this argument is conclusive so he maintains that it's not conclusive but this is where he was planting his flag as of reading this book it is impossible to foresee the future of science particularly of psychology and again he roots a lot of this in psychology because there was behaviorism machine functionalism all these things based on observation of psychology the trends and the nature of the brain um you know he roots a lot of this and that rather than philosophical arguments of the philosophy of mind so when philosophy of mind isn't formed by psychology yeah you're going to be a materialist you're going to think it's just the brain by itself but if you actually think about some of these things once you get down to the nitty-gritty with things like quality of consciousness frank jackson's color experiment things like that you're going to see that there is a metaphysical component to the brain which i think is the soul that god knits together which is a mystery on how that happens but i'm fine with that kind of mystery

that there's many more mysteries and what birch and russell was trying to explain to us that somehow although there's an infinite amount of causes that lead up to me seeing this plant outside my window that i'm looking at right now um somehow i believe that it's there and i just have to trust that it's real even though i have to be skeptical of everything so he comes down to because of this materialistic view of reality he ends in chapter six talking about determinism and this is his hypothesis the hypothesis is as follows from page 150 and 151 there are discoverable causal laws such that given sufficient but not but not superhuman powers of calculation a man who knows all that is happening within a certain sphere at a certain time can predict all that will happen at the center of the sphere during the time that it takes light to travel from the circumference of the sphere to the center so he is basically making an account that if we can understand all of the causes there is no chance whatsoever because the brain is purely material based on laws of evolution that we are just robots that are here to survive and reproduce and we'll do whatever is necessary and if given the upbringing of our family if you knew all the facts of me you'd be able to completely predict my behavior you would be able to completely determine where this B will go if i flip a coin we would say based on the law of um there's a there's a probability law where basically things even out all the time i can't remember what that's called but you know you can flip a coin 10 times and you can get heads eight of the 10 times that that's rare but it could happen if you do it a thousand times you're going to get something around 49 51 or 50 50 uh those kind of stats uh but every time you flip the coin if you knew all the wind speed in the room you knew all the physics impacting all the force from the flip with your thumb with how quickly and how many revolutions and the torque on it um the centrip centripetal force on it from it spinning all of that if you knew all of those forces you would be able to determine without account with 100 certainty what side the coin would land so that is the kind of determinism that he is talking for which i think is a great conclusion that you must reach if you're a materialist you cannot do anything otherwise but the same is actually true in christianity that there's actually um you are unable to do anything besides sin you are free to sin in whatever way you would choose but you are still obligated to choose so there is still a version of determinism in christianity but it seems much more freeing and there's a lot more to think about there um than just pure material uh determinism which is i think a more sad reality with less questions answered and um obviously kind of deprives humanity of a sense of responsibility for their actions let alone their being there's no morals at all in the first place if you are a materialist because um morals are um metaphysical so hopefully that was helpful uh that was just half of the book so i have still let's see i still need to read i need to finish up the last um so those were all his purely scientific understanding of and again this guy was a great mathematician great scientist great philosopher really respect him he was very smart but he was indeed a non-believer and had some very bad ideas but um in chapters seven eight nine and ten uh mysticism cosmic purpose science and ethics and the conclusion that is more metaphysical things more he's doing more philosophy there than he is exactly doing in these prior chapters and i think they kind of the book splits in half

pretty well so he's kind of dealt with where science is at right now with both astronomy the macro level both in geology coming closer life itself coming closer medicine the microbiology level the soul and body the even more close and intimate than even bacteria and pathogens are and then he ends up with determinism based on all the things that he knows about the stages of reality that he has talked about prior and then he's going to end with and try to root it somehow in a metaphysical way which i think is going to be hilarious to read i'm very curious to see what he tries to do but hopefully i defended the faith well you guys can see why i never really i i like to read atheist and understand what the arguments are but i do think um it does never it never really holds much water with me and 95 of the time even birchman russell you know does this who's of like one of the head hot shows if you want to talk about good arguers for atheism um he again is doing this straw man argument almost every atheist does that oh religious adherents do this therefore you know god must not exist i'm an atheist that that makes no sense whatsoever and uh that's a logical fallacy so i hope that he ends the book on a stronger note i'd love to hear some of his other thoughts um and this guy actually is uh you know he died let's see 70-ish years ago you think he died in the 50s since 20 he died uh well 1967 okay so i guess around 60 years ish but regardless he is 60 years too late to the game because contemporary science is now abandoning all of the things he's talking about in terms of evolution geology um it's not where it was and people are actually flocking towards new age spirituality and especially with quantum mechanics uh there are some very odd things in reality there that are completely kind of upending what he's talking about and he does hit on indeterminism he talks about quantum mechanics and how it seems to show free will because he was at the conception of quantum mechanics in the 30s and uh 20s 30s and 40s um so he had interaction with it and understood that it seemingly does bring a free will aspect to it but again it's just because we don't understand why adams choose to do certain things that they do at times so yeah i uh again i think a lot of strongman argumentation here not really anything i'm seeing that uh makes me antsy about my faith or would make me want to believe in something else or take maybe a worldview he's presenting not a lot of good argumentation here um would love to hear you guys interact with some of the things i talked about or what you think um but at the end of the day none of these really he has yet to interact with the claims about god he has just presented science and what religious people have thought about natural theology in the past and uh they were terribly wrong and and they were some of my brothers and sisters in christ that i'm gonna see in heaven which is funny and i'm gonna be like you guys were not very good at natural theology some of them were the big bang was posited by a uh a catholic bishop i think so yeah sometimes they do a good job i mean most of the scientists i mean newton galileo all these guys they were they were christians so at the end of the day it still was christians that i guess did the good science which is hilarious but uh he's he's interacting with them like they are heralds of his worldview and actually most of them that he's getting this stuff from is uh they're christians and it's uh it's interesting so hopefully that was helpful and you guys appreciated that this is a meaningful monologue

with rocky hopefully it wasn't annoying to sit here and listen to me and i i would like to as i read these last chapters have a little bit more pull more quotes and interact more with like literally what he says but i tried to do that to the best of my ability so i hope i did uh birchland and russell justice and i didn't interact with him in a bad way and i imagine if somebody that's read this book that's much smarter than me would say if you weren't even you didn't even understand what he was saying but uh that's just that's that's the best i can do right now so hopefully i did a good job and you guys appreciated that go check out the website for the king podcast dot com check out zach's blog i'm going to be putting in there uh my friend alex also has a blog that i think you guys would find useful so check that stuff out and um solely deo gloria jesus is the king oh for king jesus