

The Christian & Science

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[0 : 00] I would have, I had a real problem with Christianity, and I was quite confident that my Harrison! Cambridge undergraduate often is, and I even wrote a poem to express my contempt for Christianity.

! Now you need to understand that I was studying science, not English, and so my poem isn't very good, but I can still remember it, and it went like this. Some folks seem to find it odd that people grow from tiny cells. Pathetic, those who think of God, and still got coins in wishing wells. There we are, that was my picture. But it just shows you something of my mindset, and I guess lots of people's mindset today about Christianity. It must be that people didn't understand about the basics of biology. You know, they still thought things were magic or miraculous, but we just knew how they happened. They didn't understand about people growing themselves. They were still superstitious in the way that people throw their money into a well and make a wish. That's what I thought Christians must be like. I mean, sure, people used to think that God made it rain with a big watering can in the sky. But then we understood about evaporation and condensation of the water cycle. People used to think that people got ill because of demons, and got better because of God. But then we came to understand about viruses and antibodies, and we could explain it. And so surely nowadays, now that we've put man on the moon, and we've sequenced the human DNA, surely it was time to forget about these naive, superstitious ideas about God and angels and invisible things, and write them off. So that was what I thought when I was 18, and I was quite constant about that, and went around telling everyone my poem. I know I really did. It's quite sad, but yes. But then, just a short time after that, I became a Christian. And it was a result, really, of meeting Christians at university who just didn't conform to my stereotype. If you asked me what I thought about Christians,

I would have said, Christians are gullible hypocrites. They're gullible because they don't understand science, and they're hypocrites because they don't live it out. Because I'd been to a church when I was growing up, where people were kind of religious on Sunday, and then just did their own thing, the same as everyone else, midweek. And as a 16-year-old, I find that really hard to stomach. It just seemed very fake to me. And I think it is fake, even now. But then when I was at university, I met some people who were neither of those things. They weren't hypocrites, because for the first time I met people who actually lived the way that Jesus taught, or tried to live that way. And it was just quite striking. Just noticed the way that they were very different. Now, that didn't make it true, of course, just because they're nice doesn't mean everything they think is true. But it did make me want to know what's going on. You know, why do you live so differently? Why are you like this? And I got talking to them, and then I discovered that they weren't naive or gullible. That they had actual reasons for what they believed about Jesus. And that was a surprise to me, because I'd never realised that there were any reasons for believing in Christianity before. Anyway, to cut a long story short, I went on the run. I didn't want to become a Christian. I thought it would ruin my life. I tried to hide from it all. That didn't work. I got converted.

I stopped writing poetry. And now I'm a believer. But I continued to do science, and as Paul said, I went on for the years, and gave a little bit of my early 20s to that. But now a Christian, but still a scientist, both and. And actually, it turns out there were lots of other people in the same category. Lots of other scientists who, at the same time, were Christians. That's certainly true of the history of science. So I'm going to give you some scientist names.

[3 : 47] You've got to see if you know what they're famous for. Okay, so it's a bit interactive. So we'll start with an easy one. Isaac Newton. What does Isaac Newton do? Anyone?

Gravity. Yeah, okay. Gravity. Lots of things. But gravity, one of his most famous. Also, a firm believer in God. In fact, he thought that his book about the Bible book of Daniel was more important

than his book about gravity, because he really cared about knowing God properly. Harder one, Johannes Kepler. Astronomer. Astronomer. Very good. Interplanetary motion. He was looking at how the planets related to each other, how they moved. He once said that he thought he was thinking God's thoughts after him, as he investigated how God had made the universe work. Another tricky one. Robert Boyle. Did anyone do Boyle's laws at school? Those gas laws? Laws about gas. Committee of Christian. Michael Faraday. Electricity. Yeah. Or Louis Pasteur. Microbiology. In fact, discovered the bacteria. Or another one. Charles Babbage. Difficult one. First mechanical computer. Yeah. Kind of pre-electronic computer. Very good.

[4 : 55] So, of all those people, element scientists in their day, but also, at the same time, committed Christians. Now, that's all very well, but actually, according to one historian of science, Alfred North Whitehead, there's actually a connection between those two things.

So, he wrote that man became scientific because he looked for law in nature. He looked for order in the way the world worked. But, he looked for law in nature because he believed in a law giver. In other words, it was because of the belief that the world that we live in had been ordered by an intelligent mind that made people start to investigate it intelligently. They thought God has put this world together in a way that we should investigate.

So, it was because they believed in a God who made everything that they thought it was worth investigating scientifically. And that's how science got started. I think it's doubtful that if people believed, as some people believe today, that the world is essentially random, that people would have bothered trying to understand what they thought was going to be essentially random. And they didn't think it was essentially random. They thought it was created by an intelligent God. And they thought, so let's intelligently try to investigate. That was, arguably, how modern science came about because people believed in a creator.

[6 : 13] But you might say, well, okay, that was in the 16th, 17th century. What about the 21st century? Well, interestingly, although there are some famous atheist scientists like Richard Dawkins, Stephen Hawking, you've maybe heard of.

And there were also some eminent scientists who are Christians. So, I became a Christian in Cambridge. I went to church the first Sunday after I became a Christian.

And I sat down next to a man with a big beard who, appropriately enough, he had a professorial beard, appropriately enough, he was a professor. And it turned out he was a professor of geophysics at Cambridge University, Professor Bob White, in church with me.

Oh, that's odd. Turns out he's one of the elders of the church. Then I got talking to my next neighbor, Halls. He was doing geology. He was supervised by a guy called Professor Simon Conway-Morris, a professor of paleontology, dinosaurs, that kind of thing.

Turned out he's also a Christian. Isn't that strange? Because people today tell you that you can't believe in the Bible because of the dinosaurs. But Professor Conway-Morris knows more about dinosaurs than almost anyone else on the planet.

[7 : 18] And somehow he's a Christian. He believes the Bible. Doesn't seem to be this kind of either or crass that you read about. Okay, that's geology. What about microbiology? What about evolution and all that kind of stuff?

Well, you may know that the same year that Richard Dawkins published his book, *The God Delusion*, the same year, Francis Collins, the director of the Human Genome Project, that's the international group that was trying to work out the human DNA sequence, he published his book, *The Language of God*, in which he explained his faith in Jesus Christ.

So I just want to say that in the past and in the present, there were many scientists who were also Christians, or Christians who were also scientists. It seems to be possible to hold both together. But all the time in the media, we're reading that it's got to be an either or. You've got to be a scientist or you've got to be a Christian. And that kind of polarisation.

And I want to suggest today, and this is maybe the most important thing I'm going to say, I want to suggest there is an either or. But the either or, the battle, is not between Christianity on the one hand, and science on the other.

[8 : 30] Rather, the conflict is between two different philosophies. Two different views of the world. Two different religions, if I can put it that way.

Now, Richard Dawkins would get very annoyed if he heard me describing his position as a religion. But in some ways, it's interesting just how quasi-religious it is. If you read *The God Delusion*, and

underline the number of times he says, I believe something, without giving any scientific reason for it, it's just quite illuminating.

Or the kind of, I think there was a campaign recently to, they wanted to book The God Delusion in hotel floors, and they liked the Gibeon suit.

And then they wanted to have atheist summer camps, the way that we had Christian summer camps, that kind of thing. It is kind of religious in its attitude. So I want to suggest that on the one hand, atheism or naturalism, and on the other hand, Christianity, they are opposed to each other. But science is not arguably sense. Science is just a kind of way of investigating the world. And we're going to have to decide in this talk, whether science fits better with atheism, or whether science fits better with Christianity.

[9 : 40] So firstly, what I'm going to do is outline these two views, and then we're going to try and compare them by looking at the evidence, which is what any scientist ought to want to do. So firstly, here's the view of naturalism, or atheism.

This is the world view that says that matter, and chance, is all that there is. So, for example, in the words of Bertrand Russell, the philosopher, he said, mankind is nothing but a chance collocation of atoms on a minus speck of interstellar dust.

That's all you are. Or, I think that's quite depressing, but you can go more depressing if you cross the channel and you ask the French existentialist philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre, what he thinks. He puts it this way.

I'm interested in French, but this is the translation. He says this, every living creature was born without reason, prolongs itself out of weakness, and dies by chance.

Thanks. You know, you can imagine this could be a fun guy to have back for dinner. But everything is just random. It just happened by accident, without any purpose to it. Or in my own field of neuroscience, Francis Crick, the Nobel Prize winner, he once said this, he said, you, he puts it in inverted commas, because he doesn't really believe in persons, or personality, you, your joys and your sorrows, your sense of personal ambition, and free will, your memories and your hopes, are in fact, no more than, the behaviour of a vast assembly of nerve cells, and their associated molecules.

[11 : 14] Now, I was a neuroscientist, I do believe that there are nerve cells in your brain, and that the movement of electrons around those nerve cells are involved with how you think. I think that's fair.

But a quantifier, Francis Crick, the words are, you are no more than. That's the key word. It's reductionism. You are nothing but, Bertrand Russell says, a chance collocation of atoms.

Now, that view of the world is very different to the Christian view of the world. And I'm going to now, outline the Christian view, and I thought I would do it by using some words, actually from the Bible, so that you know I'm giving you kind of God's version, rather than just kind of my twisted version of Christianity.

And I'm going to read from page 926. If you've got a Bible and you can find it, that would be helpful, just as a reference point. So, turn to page 926, 926.

Some of you will know this passage well, others won't know it at all. So, this is a speech that one of Jesus' followers, called Paul, gave in Athens in the first century to a group of, we're told, Epicurean and Steric philosophers.

[12 : 25] Verse 18. Now, I don't know much about that, but I looked up in a dictionary of philosophy about Epicureanism, and apparently the Epicureans believed that the gods were not involved in human life.

They were remote, distant. But basically, human life was due to chance, randomly. things. And that when you died, that was it. There was no afterlife. So, in some ways, Epicureans believed the same as modern day atheists.

Not exactly, but roughly the same. And so, here is Paul trying to explain to them what is different about Christianity compared with what they thought. And I'm going to read from verse 24, so that little number 24, at the bottom of the right hand column of page 96.

The gods who made the world, and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, doesn't dwell in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God and perhaps feel their way towards him and find him.

[13:43] Yet he's actually not far from each one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own parents have said, we are his offspring. Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.

The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed the day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he's appointed, and of this he's given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.

Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, but others said, we will hear you again about this. And maybe those reactions will be here in this room as well.

Some of you will mock, others will say, we want to hear more about this. Now what if you can see, just in that short reading from the Bible, that in some ways Christianity is actually the opposite of atheism.

Let me explain what I mean. If you said to Richard Dawkins, does God exist, he would say, no, or actually he'd say, probably not. That was his slogan, wasn't it?

[14:50] There's probably no God. But if you said to Richard Dawkins, does Christianity exist? He'd say, well obviously it does. Now of course this is an international phenomenon of religion, which I'm doing my best to stamp out, but it's there, it exists.

And then you'd say, well, where does that come from, Richard Dawkins? He would say, humans invented it. So human beings, we came about by chance, we got brains by chance, and then we invented the idea of a God in our imagination.

That's what he would say. But do you see that is exactly the opposite of what Paul is saying. It's not that we invented God, like the people in Athens who made little gods out of gold and put them on their manacophies, look at the God that I just made.

He said, no, it's not like that. No, God invented us. He's the one who decided, imagined, that it would be nice to make people. And he gives, it's not that we give God stuff.

He's his little statue, I better feed it because it's probably hungry. God gives us stuff. Here are these human beings, I'd better give them breath and life and everything.

[15:57] So, these two things are really the opposite view. If we invent God, because really there's nothing but random chance, or actually are we made by, creatures of, an intelligent, personal, eternal being.

Now, those of these are pretty different and I want to spend the rest of our time comparing them and asking the scientific question, which one of these makes most sense of the evidence?

And that's what we're going to do for the rest of me talking before you ask questions. So, at this point, I just need to warn you against a bias in your thinking or in some people's thinking because it's possible to set up science atheistically so that the only kind of explanations that you accept as scientific are atheistic explanations.

Sometimes people do that. Now, I want to say to that and reply, firstly, that is not how science was done in the beginning. So, lots and lots of people who started science who weren't atheists, they were Christians.

They thought they were investigating the world that God had made. But secondly, if you set up the experiment so that the only answers that are allowed are atheistic and then you get atheistic answers out of it, you've just cheated.

[17:12] I mean, if you set up the experiment that way, you're going to get that answer. Let me show you what I mean. Imagine I make a visible light detector. Here's a machine for detecting visible light.

So, inside the machine I have a prism to break light up into all the different colours from red all the way through to blue of the rainbow of the visible spectrum. But because it's a visible light detector, I don't bother putting any sensors in for infrared light or ultraviolet light.

Just the light that you can see with your eye. OK? So, I make my machine and then someone comes along and says, I think I've discovered this thing called infrared light. I think that's how the remote control works in my telly.

I say, oh, very interesting. Let me test it with my machine. So, they point their remote control at my machine and it registers nothing on the drive. And I say, ah, infrared light does not exist.

That's a stupid conclusion. If I set up the experiment to only be sensitive to visible light, I can't use the experiment to tell you about things that it can't measure. If I set up science so that the only kind

of things I think are scientific or atheistic, then I can't use the experiment to tell me about anything it wasn't designed to or capable of measuring in the first place.

[18:24] So, that's just to warn us, don't let's pretend that science is automatically atheism. Never started that way, it needn't be that. In fact, objectively, what is science? Science is really just a methodology, a way of investigating the world, where you observe what you see, you try and describe what you observe in a hypothesis, and then you try and test that hypothesis by doing further experiments to accept or reject it.

It's not science, it's just a method of approaching the world. And I want to suggest there's nothing about that method, nor anything that's been discovered by that method that argues against the God of the Bible.

I don't know of anything. People say science disproves God, I want to say, oh, how? Tell me about the experiment that I don't understand, I haven't heard of, that disproves something in the Bible. There isn't one, actually. But there is a conflict between these worldviews. Atheism is against Christianity, yeah, of course it is. But is science against it?

Well, you need to show me the experiment or the information that proves it. Well, we're going to compare these two, as I said, in three ways. Here are our three tests. Firstly, which one makes the most sense of design?

[19:39] Secondly, which one makes the most sense of human life? Thirdly, which one makes the most sense of Jesus Christ? And then we're done. Okay, so here we are, design. Firstly, which one makes the most sense of design?

Now, even as I say that word, there's only atheists in the room, you will be getting twitchy because people hate the idea of the word design. Because according to atheists, there wasn't any design, it's just random.

But at least everyone agrees that there was the appearance of design. It doesn't look as though this world is just random. In fact, Sir Fred Hoyle, the astronomer, he once famously said that the idea of random chance suddenly coming up with something like all of us in this room, is a bit like suggesting that a whirlwind passed through a junkyard and came up by chance with a fully assembled functioning 747 aircraft.

It doesn't seem very likely to have happened just by accident. But according to atheists like Richard Dawkins, we have an explanation. This is what he said. This is what he says. He says, design is only accidental.

We have a mechanism to account for it. Natural selection, the blind, unconscious, automatic process, which we now know is the reason for the existence of and apparently purposeful form of all life, has no purpose in mind.

[21:07] It has no mind, no vision, no foresight, no sight at all. If it can be said to play the role of watchmaker in nature, it is that of the blind watchmaker.

And that was the title of his book that we had to read before we went up to university when I was 18. So it looks as though it was designed, but it's just a trick that randomness and evolution have played on you.

Really it's just random. On the other hand, the Bible says, the God who made the world and everything in it gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

This world is the way it is because God decided it would be that way. Which one, no design to this randomness or a creative God who made it, which one makes most sense of the evidence?

Now I'm going to just turn to the question of how this world could have come about. And rather than getting into the debates about evolution, which some people want to talk about all the time, I want to say actually even to have evolution or natural selection, you first have to have a universe in order for evolution to happen in, and you have to have DNA or RNA, molecules that can carry information and copy the information down through generations.

[22:26] So even whatever you think about evolution, and I have my particular view about that, whatever you think about evolution, even to have evolution at all, you first have to have very, very complicated molecules capable of containing information and passing information on.

So where do they come from? How do you explain why you've got RNA or DNA out of nothing randomly? That's not a question that evolution can answer. Where do you get the information from that these molecules contain?

You've just got a black box and in goes randomness, you can't just get information magically turning out of randomness and coming out the other side. Where does that come from? And actually, just to make it even more difficult, where does the universe come from that these molecules exist in? And this is where we really have problems for the atheists, because physicists will tell us that in order to have any kind of universe of the kind that we live in, some of the kind of fine tuning of the universe has got to be exactly right.

So if you just make a few tiny adjustments to the kind of physical consonants underlying the universe, you can't have a universe at all. Do come and grab a seat, I think there's a couple of extra seats.

[23 : 40] Oh, we've got some more chairs, can't we? So, here's my favourite one. In the Big Bang Theory, the universe all starts from nothing and then just explodes out.

Well, firstly, how did it go bang? Who made it go bang? There's a question. But secondly, even people who believe in the Big Bang Theory acknowledge that the expansion rate of the universe has got to be exactly right.

So out of the beginning of the Big Bang, writes Alan Gougeon, who came up with a view of inflation, he's not a Christian, he's a physicist, he comes up with this theory. He explains, if the universe had expanded too quickly, then you'd never get any stars or planets or people, you'd just have gas, because it would go kind of bang so fast that you just had spread out gas as you were.

On the other hand, if the universe expanded too slowly, then gravity would get the better of it and it would go kind of bang, and then gravity would pull it all back together and it would go crash. And you have a universe and nothing, even before you got to one millisecond on your stopwatch. And then there would be nothing at all. So in order to have a universe that goes bang fast enough to beat gravity, and slow enough to give a chance for stars and planets, you've got to be very, very accurate in how fast you go bang.

[24 : 58] In fact, you'll know how accurate you've got to be one in ten to the fifty four accurate. So that's one in ten with fifty four zeros on the end. Accurate. Otherwise you're going to lose.

So to give you an idea of what that's like, cover America with five penny pieces and stack them to a height of the distance between here and the moon, about 380,000 kilometres away, and then do the same for a billion other continents the size of America.

Blindfold to husband or your wife or girlfriend, get her to pick one at random, paint one of them red with lipstick and hide it in the pile, get it around them, she picks the red one, that's about the chances.

So in other words, very, very, very, very, very, very, very unlikely to have happened by chance.

Why did it work out just right to have a universe with stars and planets in it?

Why did it work out just right to have human beings and human brains? By chance, in other words, it's lucky, says somebody. Or, there's a God who designed this, and who ordered this.

[26 : 14] This makes a lot more sense. We've got an explanation, why it went bang, why it went bang at the right speed, why all these other things turned out right to have humanity.

Whereas just the kids saying, oh, lucky, it's just lucky, starts to look unscientific and problematic. And in fact, recently, atheists have acknowledged that the numbers are just too small to be lucky.

I mean, this is just ridiculously lucky. And instead, they've got this theory, you might have come across this, of the multiverse. The idea of the multiverse is that there's infinitely many universes. And if you have infinitely many universes, one of them's going to get lucky, right? If you throw the dice infinitely many times, then you're going to get the number you want eventually. So they prefer the idea of a multiverse.

Now, that's okay to believe in that. But when it was reviewed recently in the scientific journal Nature, the reviewer said this, I thought this was very interesting. He said, the multiverse may be the most important theory of our time, but I don't think it can be called a scientific theory, because it is not observable, or repeatable, or testable.

[27 : 26] you can believe in it, if you want, by blind faith, but there's no scientific reasons for it. So you can believe in there's infinitely many universes, that's why this turned out just right, or you can believe in the God who made it just right.

But there's nothing about the science that tells you to believe in this. And in fact, I want to suggest that multiverses are quite problematic conceptually. so everything that's unlikely isn't really unlikely, because there's infinitely many universes.

So as well as this talk, where I get to this point and I'm still alive, there's the talk at which I drop dead now. Oh, no, I'm not in that universe, that's okay. If I had done, that would have just been the explanation.

There's also probably, I guess, the universe where I suddenly turn to a pink rabbit now. No, we're not in that universe either. But there's no point in being surprised by everything, because it's just the version of the universe in which that unlikely thing happens, right?

And everything also didn't do today in the other version of yourself, in the other copy of the universe somewhere else. I mean, this starts to require quite a lot of faith, I think.

[28 : 34] Quite a lot of irrational, blind faith. Whereas, why not believe the really very straightforward idea that there is a creative, intelligent person who decides to make a world and have the power to do so?

There we are. Which one makes the most sense of design? I'm going to be more quick for the other two. Secondly, which one makes the most sense of, human purpose and existence. Now, I want you to understand me rightly.

I'm not saying here that Christianity must be true because it's less depressing. I'm about to show you that atheism is very, very depressing. That doesn't make Christianity true, OK?

Because depressing things can sometimes be true. But it does, I think, give you reasons not to be very comfortable with your atheism if you're an atheist. See, one of the things I've told you already, one of the things I hated about Christianity was hypocrites.

You know, people who said one thing on a Sunday and then did something else in the rest of their life. I hated being too fast. And when I saw it in, you know, churchy people, I hated that.

[29 : 41] And if you hate hypocrisy, you're in good company because Jesus Christ hated it too. Many of his most strong rebukes come to religious people who didn't actually trust or follow God.

He hated that. But what I never noticed as an atheist when I was giving up my Christian friends a really hard time, I never noticed my own hypocrisy. I never noticed that I wasn't living out the thing that I said that I believed.

So I was saying the world is random. I exist randomly, without reason, and that's why I'm here. I did not live as though that were true. So, Professor John Gray, he's a professor at the London School of Economics, a professor of European Thought, apparently Tony Blair's favourite philosopher.

So either you love him or you hate him, because of that, I don't know what you think of Blair. But he has, in his book *Straw Dogs*, he's not a Christian, he's got a really weird view of a kind of Mother Earth kind of thing.

But he has a go at atheists for their hypocrisy. He doesn't think that they follow their ideas through to their logical conclusion. So he writes this, he says, mankind must accept that his or her life is entirely accidental.

[30 : 55] He must realise that like a gypsy, he lives on the boundary of an alien world that is as indifferent to his hopes as it is for his sufferings and his crimes.

So John Gray's saying if you really want to believe that your life is random, you've got to believe that the universe doesn't care about what you hope for, he doesn't care about your suffering, and it doesn't care about your morality, because it's just random.

So try living that out, he says, and see if you really believe it. So, for example, what should an atheist say to somebody, a mother, whose teenage son has been killed in a hit-and-run car accident?

Motorist came round a blind corner, driving too fast in a country lane, killed him, and then drove off. So that's what happened to my mother, Jean's, my mother, my mother, his best friend, and they wrote Jean.

What should my mum have said to Jean if she was an atheist? Just, um, unlucky. Unlucky. That's it, isn't it? Just the way in which the atoms of the universe bumped into one another many million years after they started purposely that unlucky.

[32 : 08] That's all you can say, because the universe doesn't care, it's just random. Now, I don't know any atheist who would be that kind of rude or unthinking. I'm not suggesting atheists actually would say that to a grieving mother.

I'm just saying that if they were honest and consistent, that is what they'd say. Instead, my face, as I know, would say something like it being a terrible tragedy and feeling for you and your loss.

But what they mean is unlucky. Meaningless. Unlucky. Unlucky. Now, of course, sophisticated atheists, they might say something like, no, I care about it because I've evolved to care. We've evolved to be in a society where we worry about each other. But the trouble with that is it boils down to something that doesn't care. So sociology, in atheism, is reducible to psychology. It's just the behaviour of lots of brains together in a room. So it's reducible to explaining each particular brain. But psychology is reducible to biology because all your brain is is a biological thing. [33 : 10] And biology is reducible to chemistry because all the biological things is complicated chemicals. And chemistry is reducible to physics and physics is reducible to matter and chance and matter and chance doesn't care. So you're seeming to care.

It's just an illusion created by randomness, says atheism. And what about your crimes? I was talking to one of the professors doing my PhD, a lady called Kate.

She's a very intelligent lady, but an atheist. And I said to her, Kate, I wanted to eat a coffee. I said, Kate, I don't understand. If you're right about the world, why would killing you be wrong? In particular, why would it be any different to cutting a grapefruit in half my breakfast? Kate's atoms, grapefruit atoms. Much the same kind of thing. All I'd be doing in both cases would be increasing the entropy of the universe by a factor of two.

You know, I have to say, Kate and I were good friends. This is a cheeky question, rather than I actually wanted to kill that, just to clarify. She said, she thought about it for a moment, she said, well, my mother would be upset.

[34 : 17] That's the answer. But then I said to her, but Kate, what's upset? What is upset? Upset is just the change in the concentration of a particular chemical in the randomly assembled collection of atoms, which is your mother's brain.

That's what she said that she believed about life. She didn't believe that. She wasn't living that. But it's what she said she believed as an atheist. It can't make sense of our sense of right and wrong, hope and tragedy and suffering.

It doesn't make any sense of that. Whereas the Bible really does make sense of those things. We matter as people because we are made by a person of God. Our suffering matters because we are made by a loving God who intended for things to be good before we mess things up.

And our crimes matter to God because God is a moral God who loves good and hates evil. Makes sense of those things. But of course the problem with something personal, a relationship with God that's personal, is it's out of the boundaries of where science can get you.

Let me just read to you again from Paul's speech. He said this. He said, God made from one man every nation of mankind in order that they should seek God and perhaps feel their way towards him and find him.

[35 : 38] He's not far from each one of us. Now that for me was an extraordinary thought when I first came across it. Not just that God is the explanation for a long, long time ago why it went bang, but that God intends to know me personally.

He wants me to relate to him and him to relate to me on a personal level. Now that was a mind-blowing thought for me. But the trouble with knowing people personally is science can't really do that.

It's not that science isn't really good and useful and powerful, it's just science can't tell you everything that's important about the world. And in particular it's not very good at telling you about people.

Let's suppose that you wanted to get to know me, which maybe as a result of this talk you really don't, but I don't know. Let's suppose you wanted to get to know me better, but all you were allowed to go on was things that you could work out by scientific experiments.

What could you find out? Well, you could do scanning electron microscopy on the fibres of my genes, and you could tell me if I'm wearing natural fibres or mixed fibres.

[36 : 50] You could see the dust lights and tell me whether I've got an above average density of them. That kind of thing. You could tell me if I sat in everything nasty on the tube without realizing. That kind of stuff.

Then you could do gas chromatography under my armpits, and you could tell me what deodorant I'm wearing and whether or not it's coping with this slightly intimidating situation. You could do DNA fingerprinting, you could work out if I'm related to anyone on the Interpol database, or whether I'm likely to die young of a known genetic illness.

And that is about all. I think that's about all you could tell. So you couldn't tell my name, you couldn't tell what I love, what makes me laugh, what makes me cry, you couldn't tell who is important to me, you couldn't tell me what I would die for.

In fact, almost anything that's important about knowing me as a person would be beyond you. And don't get me wrong, it's not that science isn't really powerful, science is a really, really useful thing, but science can't tell us everything that's important.

Which is why I very much doubt that anyone here who's in a relationship began on their first date by saying, excuse me, can I take a small DNA sample and I'll be back with you in a position in a couple of weeks time.

[38 : 07] I doubt that. Because when it comes to knowing people, science is out of its depth. You need them to reproduce themselves, to speak to them, to relate to them like that. And the Bible's claim is that that is exactly what God has done with us.

And this is our closing filter today. Rather than leaving us to guess about him, or even rather than leaving us to try and do experiments on him, because that's typical, isn't it?

If God's everywhere, how are you supposed to get rid of him from the moment, to take a control, no reading? What would the universe without God look like if this is the universe we've got to measure?

You can't even do the experiment. define that kind of thing out. But rather than leaving us in the dark, God has made himself known, and he's done that through the man Jesus Christ, who was really born in history, and really lived and really died, and he's given us evidence, Paul says.

And this is the last verse of this speech, verse 31. God commands us to change our minds about him, because he's fixed the day on which he will judge the world in righteousness, righteousness, by a man he's appointed, and of this he's given assurance or proof by raising him from the dead.

[39 : 21] When they heard about the resurrection, some mocked, others said, we'll hear more about this. God has given assurance or proof by raising him from the dead. And that was a real surprise to me as an 18 year old.

See, because I bought into the idea that as Richard Dawkins puts it, science is about facts and it gets results. And Christianity is about myths and fairy tales and it doesn't.

So he divides the world up into actual thinking and fact stuff, which is over on my side, and flaky imagination stuff, if you like that kind of thing, which is on Jesus' side.

And here was something about Jesus that was in the facts category, in the evidence category, in the what actually happened in history category. I started to realise that the Bible wasn't just a kind of religious book that someone had written to express their imagination, a bit like someone paints a religious painting or a stain on Sunday.

That's what I thought it was. I realised that the New Testament contained eyewitness documents about what people had seen about Jesus. And that the people who wrote them were sometimes martyred and lost their life for defending the things that they said.

[40 : 35] That was pretty striking. I started to ask questions like what actually happened? Who was this man in history? Jesus Christ. Was he just a religious lunatic that convinced people?

Or was he actually the creator of the universe coming to the universe? I started reading about these miracles. It's interesting isn't it? People go both ways of miracles. Some people say, oh miracles aren't possible scientifically.

If you did miracles it must be a fairy tale. I think that's a bit unfair really because if you think for a moment, if someone came into the world and they were actually God who created the worlds, I think you would be more suspicious if nothing unusual happened.

If I said, I'm God, and they go, oh really, prove it then. Oh no, I can't actually do anything other human beings can't do. Yeah, like get out of here. If I say I'm God, you'd expect some kind of things that only someone who was God could do.

Things that involved adjusting the laws of physics or biology. That would impress you. And Paul says Jesus has done this by raising, or God has done this by raising Jesus from the dead.

[41 : 40] If you're a scientific person, I urge you to look at the evidence of Jesus. His life, his death, and his resurrection. And ask yourself, is this what happened?

Now in the God Elysium, Richard talked to speak about the resurrection only once, and similarly I've heard him on debates on this. And that is to say that it cannot have happened, no matter what the evidence is, it can't have happened, because it contradicts the laws of science.

That's true. Because I'm just not the gods who designed the laws of science, and he keeps them the same, day after day after day, from changing them one day, to make the central point in history. What Mr. Dawkins really means is it's not consistent with my atheism. See, if the world is just random, then there can't be a resurrection. If the world is in personal forces, then the laws of physics can never be changed.

But if there is a God who made the world and everything in it, who gives all men life and death and everything, then he can give assurance to all, if he wants to, by raising him from the dead.

[42 : 51] So will you be scientifically open-minded when you hold on to your blind faith in atheism? I don't need to look at the evidence, I've made my mind up, says the atheist.

Or will you be more scientifically honest and say, here is this man, Jesus. Is it possible, am I open to the possibility that he is the God who made me? Does this make sense of my human life that he's given me?

Does it make sense of the universe that I live in? And what if he actually wants to know me, for me to turn back to him, to say, I've got it wrong about you, I want to trust in you.

That's the decision I made about 18 years ago, and about which I had no poetry of my own to share. Thank you so much for listening. I think we're going to take questions, shall we just take a two minute break, if anyone needs to dash to the loo, or just compose your thoughts, and then you can go on with it.

Thanks for being such a good audience.