

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT
From Darwin to Design

A Christian cannot read this book without his heart overflowing in exaltation of the Eternal Designer, Jesus Christ.

An unbeliever cannot read this book without his heart asking, “Why am I a willingly blind unbeliever when an honest examination of the universe’s mathematical precision should lead me to reverential fear of the Designer?”

—**Bob Jones III**

Chancellor, Bob Jones University

Drs. Cagan and Hymers have written a most interesting and informative book on a complex subject that needs to be understood by God’s people today.

—**Dr. Tim LaHaye**

Author of the *Left Behind* novels

This book could well be considered the Practical 101 approach in regards to that all-important admonition once given by Simon Peter: “*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear*” (1 Peter 3:15).

In a sentence, *From Darwin to Design* has been written to provide a ready answer regarding “*the hope that is in you.*”

—**Dr. H. L. Willmington**

Dean, Bible Institute

Liberty University

Thanks for this factual, well-crafted book. It has been carefully researched and presented in a way that anyone can read and understand. It again proves that true science never contradicts the Word of God and that the harmony of creation perhaps more than any other testifies to the existence of a creator, God.

—**Dr. Neal Weaver**

President, Louisiana Baptist University
Shreveport, Louisiana

This is an amazing, fascinating book....

Can science satisfy? Of course not, and this book proves it. But Cagan and Hymers don't just cry, "the sky is falling," they offer the solution from the living, eternal Word of God and its key personality, the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is a good book, one that you will not only enjoy, but profit immensely from spiritually. It bears our enthusiastic recommendation.

—**Dr. Robert L. Sumner**

Editor, *The Biblical Evangelist*

From Darwin to Design is a powerful book. It is truth presented in a timely and extremely interesting manner. I am delighted to recommend it.

—**Clarence Sexton**

President of Crown College
Knoxville, Tennessee

The journey of a mathematics professor from atheism to faith.

from
Darwin
to **Design**

Dr. C. L. Cagan
with Robert Hymers

W

WHITAKER
HOUSE

Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

**FROM DARWIN TO DESIGN:
The Journey of a Mathematics Professor from Atheism to Faith**

Dr. C. L. Cagan, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 15308, Los Angeles, CA 90015, United States.

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This book is dedicated to

Simon Wiesenthal

(1908–2005)

a defender of Israel

and to

Chaplain Manuel Antonio Mencia, Jr.

without whose prayers and efforts this book

would not have been published.

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FOREWORD

A word of warning to those of you who may pick up this book by chance: you most likely will not be able to put it down for the next several hours.

This is an intriguing and entertaining review of the basic teleological arguments, summarized in highly readable and uncomplicated form, to confirm and reinforce convictions about the scientific underpinnings of an unquestioning faith in God.

In easy-to-read language, the authors have propounded the sometimes difficult and abstruse principles of scientific knowledge that bind together all that can be known about the truths of nature and the spiritual truths of Scripture.

I believe this book will go far in convincing unbelievers that there clearly is no such tenable position as “science versus God,” as they are led to see the validity of the old expression: “science is the handmaiden of Christianity.”

D. James Kennedy, Ph.D.

Chancellor, Knox Theological Seminary

PREFACE

The authors of this unusual book have presented an attractive message, designed especially to set forth the truths of the gospel.

Beginning with a fascinating account of the author's conversion, the major part of the book is a condensed and simplified summary of his doctoral dissertation. Dr. Cagan had been raised as an atheist in an atheist family, and his testimony is a wonderful indication of how God can reach even an intellectual who would have seemed a very unlikely candidate for Christian conversion. Dr. Cagan's account of his coming to Christ is a delight to read.

In fact, the entire book is easy and pleasant reading. One who is not scientifically minded will not be turned off by his discussion of such key scientific subjects as thermodynamics, energy, and others. The discussions of these topics, while scientifically valid, primarily deal with their spiritual analogies in human life, making a strong appeal to the reader to believe the Bible and trust Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord.

I am glad to recommend *From Darwin to Design* for an evening or two of pleasant and profitable reading.

Henry M. Morris, Ph.D.
Founder, Institute for Creation Research

Chapter One

“WHY AN ATHEIST CHANGED HIS MIND”

The Inner Struggle of Conversion

My grandfather, David Kagan, was a Jew who came to Chicago from Kiev, Russia, in 1922. An immigration official made the mistake of spelling his last name with a C instead of a K, and it has been spelled that way ever since. My father was Jewish, but we did not go to synagogue.

I didn't believe in the existence of God. Even though I had never read the Bible I was firmly convinced that it was full of errors. I thought that Christianity was for ignorant people who needed something to believe in.

I laughed at the Christians who tried to “witness” to me. I thought their religion was fanatical, strange, and dangerous. Christianity was not something for intelligent people to believe.

As an atheist I thought that biblical Christianity was dark and medieval. I was convinced that the Catholics were especially bad and the Protestants weren't much better. After all, Protestants had killed “hundreds” of people during the

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Salem witch trials, or so I thought. That was the impression I had received in my secular education. I did not know that the Salem, Massachusetts, “witch trials” lasted less than a year (1692–1693). I did not know that a government edict, issued by the larger body of Protestants themselves a few months after the trials began, ordered the release of all prisoners charged with witchcraft. Although nothing of this nature has occurred since then, this short incident in the long history of American Protestantism was used again and again by my secular teachers to discredit all biblical Christianity.

These teachers never mentioned that Darwinian humanism, which largely replaced the influence of Christianity during the twentieth century, was directly or indirectly responsible for the deaths of well over 100 million people, through the impact this philosophical system had on Fascism,¹ Communism, and the abortion movement.² Dr. Henry M. Morris, founder of the Institute for Creation Research, said,

Untold damage has been wrought, especially during the past century, by this dismal doctrine that man is merely an evolved animal. Racism, economic imperialism, communism, Nazism, sexual promiscuity and perversion, aggressive militarism, infanticide, genocide and all sorts of evils have been vigorously promoted by one group or another on the grounds that, since they were based on evolution, they were “scientific” and, therefore, bound to prove beneficial in the long run.³

Nearly fifty million American children have died through abortion at the hands of the humanists. Another

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sixty million people died as a direct or indirect result of humanism in the twentieth century, through various wars and movements arising as a result of social Darwinism. Only nineteen people were victims of the zealots in Salem. The numbers show that the bad image of Salem is small in comparison. But I was not aware of these statistics because none of my secular teachers taught them to us. They also never mentioned that Baptists and modern evangelicals had nothing to do with the witch trials. My teachers gave only one side of the story.

As an atheist I would have disagreed with this comparison of the Salem witch trials to the effects of humanism. I would also have pointed to the Crusades and to the Spanish Inquisition as examples of Christianity's failings.

However, the Crusades have become far more understandable since 9/11. Militant Islam had taken the "Holy Land" away from the Christians, and they went to war to take back land that had been theirs. Militant Muslims had taken over 50 percent of their churches by force and turned them into mosques. Palestine was very important in the minds of the Christians, and I can understand that. It still has great significance to Jews and Christians. If Washington, D.C., were taken over by militant Muslims today, I am sure that most Americans would feel the same way the Crusaders did about getting it back. Therefore, I do not think that the Crusades would have been much of a barrier to Christianity if I were an atheist today.

The Inquisition, particularly in Spain, troubled me deeply, especially because of my Jewish roots. The Jews suffered greatly during the Spanish Inquisition. But I now think that the Inquisition was a medieval Catholic aberration and

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had little bearing on the evangelical Christianity I became familiar with. Even though the Inquisition went on for about six hundred years, 125,000 people died. Bad as that was, it was nothing like the nearly fifty million who have died from abortion, or the sixty million who have died in other ways at the hands of humanism in the twentieth century through Communism, Nazism, infanticide, and genocide, which have their philosophical roots in humanism. But I did not know these facts then.

The biased education I received on these subjects turned me against Christianity even more. I felt that the Christians were half-civilized barbarians who had nothing to say to me. Most of all, as a college student, I believed in myself.

My father and mother wisely kept me from watching much television. I am thankful that they encouraged me to do a lot of reading instead. I did well in school, especially in mathematics and science. I read everything I could get my hands on, including a lot of science fiction. I thought, “Some-day people are going to figure everything out and go flying to every star and galaxy and build a great new world.” And I had plans almost as big for myself.

After finishing high school, I came to Los Angeles and attended UCLA, where I received a bachelor’s degree (*summa cum laude*); a master’s degree, and a Ph.D in mathematics.

At UCLA I worked hard, taking five or six classes every quarter. After the first year I had to support myself. Soon I had a job. Then I had two jobs and then three jobs. I became a teaching assistant in the mathematics department. I wrote guides in math and chemistry that were sold at UCLA for twenty years. I put every royalty check in the bank and dreamed of the day when I would be rich and famous.

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I worked very hard to reach these goals. While most people I knew at college partied as often as possible, I kept working and studying night and day. I experimented with the sins of the world, but never moved my eyes away from my goal of success. I was hoping to make a million dollars before I was thirty years old.

But I was always very unhappy and empty inside. Even though I was successful in school and earning a lot of money, I wondered about the meaning of life. Who was I? Why was I here? Where was I going? I had no real answers to these questions.

When I was twenty-one years old, I met some evangelical Christians. They were kind to me, but I refused to believe in Jesus. I had my own plans. I wanted to build a big career. Jesus was not for me. I didn't want Him to interfere with my future. But I was now thinking about spiritual things. During this time I said to a friend, "If there is a God, He has to be the most important thing in the world."

Then in the fall of 1974 I had a very direct and sudden experience with God. I will share what led up to that crisis later in this book. The turning point came at 4:00 AM one night when I cried out, "God, forgive me." That was the first time I ever prayed in my life. I had some inner relief after saying that prayer. The next day I had another experience with God that changed my thinking forever. I suddenly knew, deep down inside, that God was real. Now I had more important things to think about than mathematics and money!

But I was not a Christian. The experience I had with God was very real to me, but I was not ready to believe in Jesus Christ. I was not willing to submit to Him. I wrestled inwardly with thoughts about Christ for two more years.

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My knowledge of God began with experience (empiricism) but was not confirmed until I dealt with God in my mind (rationalism). Experience and rationalism were fused together later, in my conversion.⁴ I had undergone a religious experience. I had felt the reality of the Holy Spirit. I had felt the presence of God. But I was still not a Christian. It was two more years before I was converted.

Knowing that there really was a God convinced me that I had been wrong all these years. I had lived as an atheist and had opposed and rejected Him. I was lost, and I knew it.

It was during this time that I first studied the Bible on my own. I read it all the way through, from Genesis to Revelation. Two verses seemed to leap out of the page at me as I read.

Riches profit not in the day of wrath.

(Proverbs 11:4)

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

(1 John 2:17)

That sentence from 1 John has become my “life verse,” the single most important Bible verse in my Christian life.

I went to several churches seeking answers to my questions, but the sermons I heard did not help me. I kept going to church even though no one ever spoke personally to me about becoming a Christian.

Then one Friday at UCLA I heard that an evangelist who preached gospel salvation was speaking that evening on campus. I went to hear this young man preach. He made

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it clear that I needed Christ to forgive me and save me from the penalty of sin. But I continued to fight inwardly against Jesus. I didn't want Him because I felt that He was higher and greater than me. I was too proud to believe in Him.

Yet I felt strangely drawn to those evangelistic meetings. Each night the preacher spoke of Christ's love for us and told us that He died on the cross to pay for our sins. At the end of one sermon the evangelist invited us to pray for Christ to forgive us. During that prayer I trusted Jesus Christ once and for all. I became a Christian by a simple act of faith in Jesus Christ.

I can remember, down to the exact couple of seconds, when I trusted Him. It was while I was praying. It seemed that I was immediately facing Him. No, I didn't see a picture or a vision or anything like that. But I was definitely in the presence of Jesus Christ and He was definitely available to me.

For many years I had turned Him away, though He was always there for me, lovingly offering me salvation. But that night I knew the time had come for me to trust Him. I knew that I must either come to Him or turn away. At that moment, in just a few seconds, I came to Jesus. I was no longer a self-trusting unbeliever. I had trusted Jesus Christ. I had believed in Him. It was as simple as that.

In that short time, in a single act of trust, which was so simple and yet so profound, I "crossed over" to Jesus Christ in the most important event that can happen in a human life—conversion. I had been running away all my life, but that night I turned around and came directly and immediately to Jesus Christ. My journey was complete. Faith was real. It was the greatest proof of all. Now everywhere

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I looked I saw evidence of God. This book brings together some of those insights. However, you must not think that it will convince you unless God intervenes in your life, as He did in mine. The apostle Paul spoke of this when he said,

Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost [Spirit], and in much assurance.
(1 Thessalonians 1:5)

The eighteenth century Bible scholar John Gill said that the effects of Paul's preaching "were not owing to the charms of words, the force of language, and power of oratory...but must be ascribed to the spirit of God, and to the power and efficacy of his grace."⁵

The arguments I give will not help you find God unless He uses them to illuminate you, "*not in word only, but also in power.*" Then all the seemingly disjointed pieces of the puzzle will come together, and the evidence will stand complete.

INTELLIGENT DESIGN

This book comes out of my own experience. It presents the struggle I had with the argument for the existence of God given by William Paley (1743–1805). Like me, Paley was a mathematician. He studied mathematics at Cambridge University and later taught at Cambridge.⁶

Dr. Norman Geisler, the renowned defender of Christianity, gives this summary of Paley's "intelligent design" argument for the existence of God—sometimes called the "teleological" argument:

Paley offered what has become the classic formulation of the "teleological argument" [which says that

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the complex design of the universe shows there must be an intelligent Creator]. It is based on the watch analogy: If one found a watch in an empty field, one would rightly conclude that it had a maker because of its obvious design. Likewise, when one looks at the even more complex design of the world in which we live, one cannot but conclude that there is a great Designer behind it.⁷

Geisler points out that “as late as 1831” Charles Darwin was deeply impressed by Paley’s *Evidences*. “Recently Paley’s thought has been the subject of a revival...”⁸

The central idea of intelligent design is that the complexity of nature demands that a thinking Being planned and devised it. This view has received a great deal of publicity in the last few years. The *Los Angeles Times* said,

Intelligent design, which started to gain notice about 10 years ago, holds that evolution alone does not adequately explain some complex biological mechanisms, suggesting that a plan by an intelligent force is behind changes in species (*Los Angeles Times*, August 3, 2005, p. A12).

In recent years, twenty-eight states and communities have proposed initiatives to include the teaching of intelligent design along with the theory of evolution in school curriculums.

Dr. Henry C. Thiessen, late professor at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, pointed out that the argument from intelligent design should be seen as one of many evidences of God’s existence, including the evidence of fulfilled prophecy. Dr. Henry M. Morris devotes an entire chapter to fulfilled

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prophecy as evidence of God in his book, *Science and the Bible*.⁹ Dr. Thiessen went on to say,

The evidence is cumulative, a single argument for the existence of God being inadequate, but a number of them together being sufficient to bind the conscience and compel belief.¹⁰

I believe that the teleological argument (the argument that the complex design of the universe shows there is an intelligent Creator), presented along with a number of other arguments, is the greatest philosophical proof of God's existence.

But philosophy alone can never take the place of conversion. When you have that experience, you will say with the man born blind, "*One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see*" (John 9:25). When Christ gives you spiritual sight and awakens you to the reality of God, then (and only then) the arguments for God's existence presented in this book will begin to take on profound meaning.

This book builds on Paley's work. It is adapted from part of my Ph.D. dissertation at the Claremont Graduate School and is my attempt to show the reality of God in several basic areas of physics and astronomy. It is simplified so that a high school student or college freshman can easily grasp the ideas. The overall argument I will give is that science contains principles that point to the reality of God, that the complex design of the universe shows that there must be an intelligent Creator.

Many scientists today are changing their opinion, and are saying that "intelligent design" is the only adequate explanation for the origin of life and the complexity of nature. I have

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in my hand a news story about Dr. Antony Flew, of Oxford University, long considered to be the world's leading atheist. The headline reads, "***Leading Atheist Says Science Has Changed His Mind.***" The article then says,

A British philosophy professor who has been a leading champion of atheism for more than 50 years has changed his mind. Antony Flew, 81, said scientific evidence has now convinced him that a super-intelligence is the only explanation for the origin of life and the complexity of nature...If his newfound belief upsets people, Flew said, "that's too bad"—but he's always been determined to "follow the evidence wherever it leads" (Associated Press, December 10, 2004).

Although Dr. Flew is not a Christian, he, like many scientists today, has taken the first step—the step I took back in 1974—of recognizing the reality of the Creator. It is my hope that you will come to the same conclusion by reading this book—and that you will go one step farther and come to know Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior.