

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Cosmic Chemistry with Dr. John Lennox

(November 12, 2021)

Ladies and gentlemen, what is the biggest myth that the general public believes concerning the relationship between God and science? Can a scientist believe in God? Can science explain everything? Is science an unstoppable force in human development? Is it going to provide for all our needs or have there been new developments in recent years that are now causing some people to say, all this really points back to some sort of intelligence? Well, there is no better man on the planet to deal with these issues than my guest today, one of my favorite guests of all time. We've had this man on the program several times because he's written some outstanding books including, *God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God*, *Gunning for God*, *Seven Days to Divide the World*, *Determined to Believe*, *2084*, *Against the Flow*, book after book, especially in recent years, very timely books.

And the guest comes all the way from Oxford, England. He is the great Dr. John Lennox and he's going to be with us for the entire program. He's written a brand-new book called, *Cosmic Chemistry*, which I've been going through for the past several days. You're going to enjoy it. And as always, Dr. Lennox really can explain complex issues to everyday people like myself. That's why I appreciate him so much. So, Dr. Lennox, great having you on. How are you today?

Dr. Lennox:

I'm very well. I'm absolutely delighted to see that you're well and going at full power. It's always a pleasure to have a conversation with someone like you.

Frank:

Well, John, it's great having you on. And I know our listeners really appreciate the way you can take these complex issues and make them understandable. And this brand-new book is actually an expansion and a revision of a book you wrote about 14 years ago called, *Gods Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?* The new book is now called, *Cosmic Chemistry*. So, my question, John, is: Why did you write *Cosmic Chemistry*? What's new in the book? What's changed in the past 14 years?

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Dr. Lennox:

Well, I've been constantly thinking about these things over the past 14 years, and I'd already begun to revise some of my more recent books like, *God and Stephen Hawking*. And so, I thought, I ought to bring *God's Undertaker* up to date. But it very soon became apparent that it needed to be rewritten. There's been such a lot of development in the science religion debate, especially where biology is concerned. And there have been so many new discoveries that have overturned some of the ideas that are associated with Neo Darwinism, so that you've got to the state for some very leading scientists...they're not necessarily Christians, of course, or believers of God...but on the basis of the sheer science. Let me quote one of the most famous, and that is Dennis Noble, fellow of the Royal Society of Oxford, who was very kind in endorsing my book. And he just says, Neo Darwinism doesn't need to be revised, it needs to be replaced.

And I think it's important that people know that, that many of us have been for years skeptical about the capacity of natural selection, and mutation, and one or two other things, to be creative. That clearly does something that counts for levels of variation and so on. But now what we're finding is, biologists themselves are showing us that the complexity of the living cells say, vast as we knew it was, is even vaster and it's of a nature that really pushes me certainly very much further in my conviction that there's intelligent God behind it. And so, I wanted to bring that to the attention of my Christian friends, but also of the general public, so that at least they have the information on which they can make their decisions.

Frank:

Dr. Lennox, you mentioned this royal society that Dr. Noble is a part of there in Oxford. And I recall there was a meeting about five years ago there, November of 2016, calling into question the prominent Neo Darwinian viewpoint that natural selection and mutation could bring forth new life forms. These people, these members of the Royal Society, that scientific affiliation over there in the UK, are not necessarily Christians, these are just people saying, look, the Neo Darwinian viewpoint of the world doesn't seem to work anymore. We need to come up with a new naturalistic theory. What naturalistic theories are they putting forth now, to say that this is how life got here, or this is how subsequent life forms got here?

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Dr. Lennox:

Well, I'm not so sure that they're actually got as far as putting forward a new naturalistic theory. What they're doing, as many of them are convinced naturalists, they feel that in the end there's going to be a natural solution. That is, we don't have to invoke God at any level. But the interesting change is that for a long time, it has been assumed that life developed bottom up. In other words, you can explain the complex things in terms of the simple things. They've now realized that this is not true from a scientific perspective. Top-down causation is very real, and the cell can modify itself. And what they're talking about, as I understand it...and I must emphasize to our hearers that I'm not a professional biologist, although I read an awful lot of it, and I'm fascinated by it. But the exciting thing to my mind is that they're saying that the cell itself exhibits top-down causation.

Now, for someone like me, I believe that there's an ultimate top, that that reflects the fact that we've got to incorporate somehow the influence of a mind in it all. And let me give you a simple illustration. If we see the word exit above a door, and we see the sign EXIT, now we know that there are materials involved, and automatic processes may have created that, but the fact that this is a word that carries meaning...it's actually a Latin word for going out...means that we know that there's a human mind involved in it. And we know that because of the linguistic nature of EXIT. It carries meaning. And when we look inside the living cell, not only do we see DNA, which is an information bearing macro molecule, we now see various levels of language like information uncovered at the epigenetic level above the genome and so on. And this is not a mathematical proof, of course it isn't, but it's a huge pointer that perhaps what we need to do scientifically is open our minds to the possibility that the whole thing, it depends on top-down causation by the mind of God itself.

Frank:

Well, that's what you cover in the book, Cosmic Chemistry. Ladies and gentlemen, talking to Dr. John Lennox, all the way from Oxford, England. The brand-new book is called Cosmic Chemistry and it covers the waterfront on so many issues. In this book Dr. Lennox is covering: What is science? How do we define science? What are the assumptions made by scientists? Why did science come out of the Christian worldview in the 1600s and the 1700s? He covers all that. He covers the Galileo issue. He covers several other issues in that regard. And then he gets into fine-tuning of the universe. He gets into biology. He talks about why information is so important

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

and how do you explain information. Even talks a little bit about theistic evolution and these kinds of ideas. We're gonna get into all that as this program unfolds.

Again, my guest is Dr. John Lennox. The book is called Cosmic chemistry and it is a tour de force. You're gonna want to get it so check it all out. Go to Amazon or anywhere you get books and look up Cosmic Chemistry by Dr. John Lennox. And when we come back from the break, I'm going to ask Dr. Lennox this question: What is the biggest myth that the general public believes concerning the relationship between God and science? And then we're going to take our conversation from there, talk about the God of the Gaps fallacy, several other important concepts related to this. So, don't go anywhere. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. Back in two.

Welcome back to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. My guest today is the great Dr. John Lennox, all the way from Oxford, England. As you know, John has been a professor over there for many years. He's debated Richard Dawkins a number of times, which you can all see on YouTube. Check that out. Just look for the Dawkins Lennox debates, you should be able to find them. And he's debated several others as well. I know, Dr. Lennox, you debated I think Peter Atkins, Christopher Hitchens, several other debates. You just got to go to YouTube. And Dr. Lennox is just so affable and winsome and also brilliant in many of the analogies he brings to the table when he debates these folks that you're going to really enjoy and learn a lot from him. But Dr. Lennox, I wanted to jump right back into our discussion about your book, Cosmic Chemistry, which is an expansion and revision of the original book called, God's Undertaker. A lot of new information in there, because a lot has happened in 14 years. Let me ask you this, Dr. Lennox. What do you think the biggest myth is that the general public believes concerning the relationship between God and science?

Dr. Lennox:

I think, probably, the biggest myth in that direction is that science can explain everything, and therefore, we don't need God. And that's only a small step from there to saying that God doesn't exist. And it's a myth because it isn't even true. And it's very important for the general public to realize that the notion that science can explain everything is palpably false, because if that very statement, science can explain everything, is not a statement of science, it's a

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

statement about science. So, science itself cannot explain that statement. But easier to follow is the fact that some of the greatest scientists have seen that very clearly. Albert Einstein once said, you can talk about the moral basis of science, but you can't talk about the scientific basis of morality. And Sir Peter Medawar, who was a Nobel Prize winning scientist in Oxford, once said, it's so easy to see that science is limited because it cannot even answer the questions of a child: Where do I come from? Where am I going? What is the meaning of life? We need to turn to literature and theology and philosophy for answers to those questions.

Now, I'm passionate about science, make no mistake about that. But Medawar added, he said, you're doing science a disservice if you claim that it's going to be able to answer every question. And the myth that goes along with that, Frank, is that science and rationality are co-extensive. If it's not natural science, then it's not rational. Well, that's sheer nonsense. If that were true, half the faculties in your distinguished universities would have to close tomorrow. There would be no history, no philosophy, no languages, no literature, and all of that. These are rational disciplines, but they are not natural science. And of course, I'm very careful to use the word science in the Anglo-Saxon way. That is, as the natural sciences. The Germans have a word, *wissen schaff*, to create knowledge, which covers both the humanities and the natural sciences. What are the natural sciences we're talking about? And that we now call, I call it scientific fundamentalism, that science is the only way to truth. We need to open up the sheer fact that most of the truths that most of us believe were not given to us by science anyway.

And secondly...and this is part of the myth, I suppose...that a God explanation is excluded by a scientific explanation. And the simplest example for that is water boiling. Why is the water boiling? Well, the heat is agitating the molecules of water and the water is boiling. Well, I could equally well say it's boiling because I would like a cup of tea. And those two explanations of boiling water are not in conflict. They certainly don't contradict each other, they complement each other, but they're different kinds of explanation. And what I love to try to get across in my book is simply this. The God explanation doesn't compete with a science explanation any more than, let's put it this way, the Henry Ford explanation for a motorcar competes with automobile engineering and physics. They're complementary. And when I put this to school children, they'll say, but sir, you need both. And that's exactly it. We need both for a full explanation. So, there are a lot of myths surrounding the nature of explanation and that's why many people don't even get started in thinking about God because they exclude him for all the wrong reasons.

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Frank:

You also spend a lot of time Dr. Lennox...again, the book is called, Cosmic Chemistry. I was gonna ask you about the Henry Ford illustration, you've already covered that. But you also talk about the fact that there's another myth, or I don't know if it's a myth, but people have committed the God of the Gaps fallacy. And some people then think that any explanation that says intelligence is behind it is the God of the Gaps fallacy. First of all, you got a whole chapter on this, but can you sum up what is the God of the Gaps fallacy? And why are you and other theists not committing the God of the Gaps fallacy when we say, either God created the universe, or fine-tuned the universe, or started life, or anything like that?

Dr. Lennox:

Well, putting it crudely, the God of the Gaps fallacy is, I can't explain it, therefore, God did it. And then when science fills up that gap, then there's less space for God. That's basically it. So, in the ancient world, they couldn't understand lightning or thunder, and so, they said the gods did it. So, a short class on atmospheric physics and that God has disappeared. And many people feel, even the late Stephen Hawking, he thinks that the God of the Bible is that kind of a God of the gaps. Now, I want to refute that very, very strongly, indeed, because so many people today, when they hear the word God, they're thinking about these ancient gods of the gaps. Let me illustrate it two ways, one with Newton when he discovered his law of gravitation, he didn't say, oh wonderful, I now know how it works, I don't need God. No, what he did was write the most famous book in the history of science, the Principia Mathematica, and expressed in it the hope that it would lead thinking people to believe in a deity. In other words, the more he understood about the workings of the universe, the more he was convinced there was God behind it, not less. God wasn't filling a gap God was the explanation of why there were scientific explanations.

But let's now take an example I've already used on this program, the word exit, above a door. Now, that appeals to many of us that it indicates a human intelligence was involved. But if I say to you, look, come on, you're jacking out of this, because that exit, you postulate a mind, that's a mind of the gaps. No, nobody would accept that. And if I said to them: Why do you think a mind is involved? They'll say, because of the language involved. It involves language. And therefore, when I say at the deeper level, to my colleagues who are doing research on the human genome, or DNA, I say, look, you see exit, that's only got four letters, and you postulate an intelligence for it. And now we have the human genome that carries meaning for the

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

proteins, 3.4 billion letters, and you say, chance and necessity, the laws of nature and natural processes, you've got a problem. The obvious inference is that there is intelligence involved. You see, there are good gaps and bad gaps and I talk about these in my book. A bad gap is one that science will close, and it needs to be closed, like the thunder and lightning example. But a good gap is, that if we're looking at a language like structure in the living cell, to try to close that by saying it's the result of a natural process, that isn't an explanation at all, because we know of no natural processes that create language. So, the explanation, in terms of intelligence, is let me put it this way, an explanation that makes sense. And I much prefer that to one that doesn't make any sense.

Frank:

Yes, and that's what is covered in the book, Cosmic Chemistry. Again, my guest is Dr. John Lennox, all the way from Oxford, England. John, a lot of people want to boil everything down. They want to reduce everything down the reductionist view that everything is physics and chemistry. Let's go below that for just a second and ask the question to an atheist. What would an atheist say...I know you've had many dialogues with atheists? I've had a few myself. What would an atheist say to the question: What is the origin of the laws of physics? What is the origin of the laws of mathematics? What is the origin of the laws of chemistry? You're saying they've created everything: Where did they come from and why are they so fine-tuned and consistent? How do they answer that?

Dr. Lennox:

Well, I'd love to hear a sensible answer [unintelligible]. They just simply don't know. And many of them have got the honesty to admit it. And that's a very good question to ask people because a lot of this scientific work assumes many things. It assumes the rational intelligibility of the universe and the existence of the laws of nature. And nobody can tell you where the laws of nature come from, unless they're prepared to say they come from an intelligent Creator who designed the universe, the cosmos, with certain regularities inbuilt into them. That makes perfect sense. But to say they're just there as brute facts is very antithetical to the scientific spirit that wants explanation. The thing is that some scientists are intent on limiting explanation to the natural and the materialistic.

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Now, of course, it's important to know what material and natural processes are involved, that is a very important part of science. In fact, it is a very large part of science. But in these particular areas, where we've got language involved, language encoded, then we need to open our minds. I say in my book, that this universe appears to be word based. And that reflects, of course, the statement in John's gospel, "in the beginning was the word". But I use it to point out two things. One, word based in the sense that we can describe it, at least in part, in mathematical terms, and word based biologically, in the sense that one of the biggest growth areas in biology is molecular biology. You study the longest word that we've ever found and if that doesn't point to a Logos, a word behind the universe, I don't know what does.

Frank:

The word is 3.5 billion letters long. Right?

Dr. Lennox:

Yeah, that's right.

Frank:

Yes. And, and if the word exist, as you've been saying John, requires an intelligence, then a word 3.5 billion letters long should require it as well. And notice that Dr. Lennox is not arguing from what he doesn't know. He's not arguing from a gap in his knowledge. He's arguing from what he does know that messages come from minds and if the word exist requires a mind, then a word that's 3.5 billion letters long would require a mind as well. We've got a lot more with Dr. John Lennox right after the break. I'm Frank Turek. You're listening to I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist on the American Family Radio Network. Back in just two minutes.

Ladies and gentlemen, Frank Turek with you on I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. I want to mention that this weekend I'll be up in Bangor Maine at Crosspoint Church. I'll be there this Saturday, November 13, and also will be there for the Sunday morning services, November 14. And then coming up early in December I'll be in Port St. Lucie, Florida, and then out near Seattle, Washington the week after that. All the details are on our website, CrossExamined.org. Click on Events, you will see them there. My guest today is the great Dr. John Lennox. His brand-new book, Cosmic Chemistry, covers the waterfront, everything that you really need to know regarding God and science and evolution and intelligent design and fine-tuning and these

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

kinds of questions are the questions that are addressed by this book. And I want to ask you this, John. You talk so cogently about the rational intelligibility of the universe, and so my question is: Why can human beings do science at all? What does our ability to do science presuppose rationality in order? It seems to presuppose that. And why is rationality and order better explained by theism rather than materialism?

Dr. Lennox:

Well, the belief for the faith that the universe is rationally intelligible lies behind the rise of modern science. And I use the word faith deliberately because there's another great myth, following up on your earlier mention [unintelligible], and that is that religion involves faith, but science doesn't. And the second myth in that direction is that faith is a religious word that means believing where there's no evidence. That's nonsense. Faith, to be worth talking about, must be evidence based. And in order to do science, clearly you won't do it unless you believe that science can be done. What's being translated means, unless you believe that the universe is accessible and part of the human mind it's rationally intelligible. Now, the great pioneers, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, [unintelligible], Maxwell Faraday, Babbage and so on, they all their motivation for doing science came from the fact that they believe the universe was rationally [unintelligible] because it had been created by a rational God. And that makes perfect sense. And that's the tradition on which I stand.

Now, the problem with atheism is, if you do not believe in God, then you have to simply take the rational intelligibility as a brute fact. And I often have the following conversation...and it can be very interesting...with my colleagues. They say: What do you do science with? And they might want to say mind, but many of them don't believe in the mind as distinct from the brain, although I do. And I say, give me a brief history of the brain. Well, the brain is the end product of a mindless, unguided process. And I smile at them, and I say, and you trust it? Tell me, honestly, if you knew that your computer that you use every day was the end product of a mindless, unguided process, would you trust it? Now I always push for an answer, and I've always got the answer, no. So, I said, you have a problem. You're trusting your brain and your explanation for the existence of brain, or mind, is one that you would reject everywhere else. You have a real problem. So, it seems to me that atheism taken to its logical conclusion doesn't simply shoot itself in the foot, it shoots itself in the head. And that's fatal, of course.

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Frank:

Yes. And you have pointed that out so well in the book, *Cosmic Chemistry*. Ladies and gentlemen, that's the book we're talking about with my guest, Dr. John Lennox. John, it seems to me, I know that Daniel Dennett, the atheist, said that Darwinism is the universal acid that cuts through everything. It seems to me that materialism, atheism is the universal acid that cuts through everything, because if we can't trust our minds, then we can't actually do science. And if we can't do science, which is exactly what these Atheists say we get all our truth from, then how do we get truth? It cuts through everything. If we can't trust what our minds are telling us about the world outside of ourselves, then we can't do science, we can't reason, we can't do philosophy, we can't do mathematics. We can't do any of these things that the scientific world wants to do. So, it seems to me that's universal acid. And you do a great job of pointing that out, as CS Lewis pointed it out before, that if we're just molecular machines, moist robots, we shouldn't believe anything we think. If you want to unpack that further, please do.

Dr. Lennox:

Well, CS Lewis certainly started me on thinking about it. And he said, any theory that invalidates thinking cannot be true, because you reach it by thinking. But what has been more impressive in recent years is an atheist like Thomas Nagel, who's a very distinguished philosopher in New York has picked up the same thing. Now he's a hard atheist in the sense that he openly says he doesn't want there to be a God, and yet, he says that evolutionary naturalism, there's something wrong with it, because it undermines any possibility of having confidence that our beliefs are true, whether the scientific beliefs or anything else. In other words, he got to where CS Lewis has got, and he still hopes, I think, for some kind of naturalistic answer, but I don't think he's going to get one. And I think this argument is enormously important, that if, at the heart of science, there is a leap of blind faith on the part of the atheist. In other words, they are going to trust their rationality and accept the intelligibility of the universe. The sheer irony of that is, their faith is based on nothing, whereas the Christians, doing science that is, their faith that science can be done is based on the fact that there is an intelligent God behind it. So, the shoe is completely on the other foot.

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Frank:

Yes, and reason is an effect for us. We can reason. We should try and reason back to a cause and if we can't reason back to a cause have a mind what do we reasoning back to, John? What are the atheists reasoning back to? I don't I don't understand how they come up with it.

Dr. Lennox:

That's right. And you'll have noticed the title of my book, Cosmic Chemistry: Do God and Science Mix, in there somewhere I say, well God and science mix very well, but atheism and science don't mix very well. Now that's a very provocative statement, but it's based on what we've just been talking about. And therefore, I want to alert people, both Christians and the general public, to say all is not as it seems. Atheism seems, to many people, the most enlightened attitude that there could possibly be, but it isn't.

Frank:

Yeah, if they can't explain where reason comes from, and that's the basis for everything they know, why should we trust anything else there's telling us?

Dr. Lennox: Exactly, exactly.

Frank:

And John Lennox, he unpacks this in a very cogent way in the book, Cosmic Chemistry. You ought to pick it up on Amazon or wherever you get books. And it is actually a revision and expansion of the other book that he wrote 14 years ago called, God's Undertaker. But this has a lot of new information in it, and some new illustrations, and some new insights that you're definitely going to want to avail yourselves of. John, I do want to ask you, because this is a great, you have so many great analogies. You're kind of like CS Lewis in that regard. Can you tell us about Aunt Matilda's cake? Because I think that drives the point home that needs to be driven home on this topic

Dr. Lennox:

Well, that drives the point home that we mentioned earlier that science is limited. And the illustration is simply this. Here's my aunt Matilda, a fictional aunt, she's baked a cake and I get all the Nobel Prize winners for science to examine it. And so, the chemist will tell us the

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

chemicals that are involved, the physicist the various elementary particles, and so on. And we've got a description of the book by these brilliant minds. But then I said, tell us why she made the cake. And she sits there quietly and grins. She knows why she made the cake, but no amount of scientific advances can tell us why she made the cake. That is a question, a rational question, that the natural sciences cannot answer. And the interesting thing is, we never know unless she reveals it to us.

Now, what happens when she reveals it to us by telling us? Do we close down our mind and not use our rationality? No, we listen to her and see if what she says makes sense. Now, ratcheting that up to the universal level, we can study the universe and see what it's made of and how it works, but why it was made, well, we never know unless the one who made it tells us and he does in scripture. But when we open Scripture, we don't shut our minds. It's written in rational words we can think about it. Does it make sense? And of course, the reason that I'm not only a believer in God, but a Christian, is because it makes absolutely perfect sense at all levels, both in terms of the universe, and of my life and the significance of my life, my relationship of God. So, that's the aunt Matilda story.

Frank:

You know, you mentioned something in the introduction of the book, *Cosmic Chemistry*, and I'm playing off what you said in the introduction for this question. Here's my question. Is science at war with God or are some scientists at war with God?

Dr. Lennox:

Well, science, understood properly, is not at war with God. And you made the point earlier that the real battle is between worldviews, atheism and theism. And there are scientists who are at war with God. I think Dawkins has more or less declared that he's at war with God. So, it's not just atheism, it's anti-theism.

Frank:

Yes.

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Dr. Lennox:

And that is a very real battle. But it's so obvious that the conflict is not between science and God. And I often illustrate this just with the Nobel Prize in Physics. Two winners of it, Bill Phillips, who's a Christian American, and Peter Higgs, who's a Scotsman and an atheist. Now, their science doesn't divide them. They're both top of the tree, brilliant Nobel Prize winners. But their worldviews divide them. So, the real question to ask, not is there a conflict between science and God? But there is a conflict between atheism and theism. Science sits in the middle. Which way does it point? Does it point towards theism, as I hold, or materialism as Dawkins held?

Frank:

Yeah, as we've said before on this program, science doesn't say anything, scientists do. And sometimes their philosophical outlook can cause them to ignore evidence that seems to be pointing in the direction of intelligent beings such as God. And Dr. John Lennox covers all of this in the brand-new book, *Cosmic Chemistry*. And Dr. Lennox, when we come back from the break, I want to talk a little bit about biology because you spend a lot of time on that topic. And maybe we can whet the appetite of our listeners to go a little bit further and get the book because there's so much in the book that we can't cover here on the radio program. So, we're going to cover that right after the break. My guest, again, is Dr. John Lennox, all the way from Oxford, England. A professor there at Oxford University who has written the brand-new book, *Cosmic Chemistry*. He's got a long line of other great books you want to check into as well. So, don't go anywhere. We're going to be back in just a couple of minutes with Dr. John Lennox. See you in just two minutes.

Welcome back to *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist* with Frank Turek. My guest is the great Dr. John Lennox, all the way from Oxford, England. We're talking about concepts that are throughout his brand-new book, *Cosmic Chemistry*, and it's a book you really need to get because so much of it is hard to describe on radio. But it needs to be discussed, it needs to be read. So, get the book, *Cosmic Chemistry*. And before we get back into that, Dr. Lennox, you did a full-length movie with the American actor Kevin Sorbo, not long ago called *Against the Tide*. Can you give us, kind of, a snippet of what that movie is about?

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Dr. Lennox:

Well, it's really about the questions we've been discussing. Kevin Sorbo appeared as the atheist teacher in *God's Not Dead*. And the student that challenged him use my arguments. So, the whole idea of the film is that now that that films over Sorbo, in his own right wonders: Who is this person that came up with this argument that defeated me, the atheist teacher? So, he comes to Oxford to interview me, and we travel around Oxford and my own college and various institutions, and he asked me these big questions. And the film is interspersed with excerpts from my debates with Dawkins, and Hitchens, and Singer and all of this kind of thing. So, we're building up a case on the topic for God and science.

But then there comes a point in the film where he sets me down and he says, look, this talk about God and science is very interesting, but you're actually a Christian. How do you take the step from coming to believe in some kind of God and coming to believe in the Christian concept of God? And I say, well Kevin, perhaps the best way to answer that is to go to where it all started, so we end up in Israel, talking about the historicity and the evidence for the resurrection, and the manuscripts of the New Testament, and so on. So, it's an introduction to rational thinking about God and science, but also about Christianity and rational thought and evidence for the truth of Christianity.

Frank:

Well, *Against the Tide* movie, if you Google that, you'll be able to find it. You can get it on Amazon, maybe some other outlets. It's not online yet, but you can buy it online. *Against the Tide* movie. Check that out with my guest, John Lennox, and also the actor, Kevin Sorbo, who played the atheistic professor in *God's Not Dead*. It covers some of the same material we're covering today, albeit not quite the depth that the book does. But let's get back to the book, *Cosmic Chemistry*, Dr. Lennox, because you cover the concept of evolution quite a bit in the book. And a lot of people erroneously think that, even if that if macro-evolution is somehow true, that God therefore doesn't exist. Why is that an erroneous assumption, Dr. Lennox?

Dr. Lennox:

Well, because whatever evolution...and we'd have to define what that meant, but just take the informal thinking about it...development by descent and modification. Whatever it does or doesn't do, first of all, it depends on this being a fine-tuned universe with carbon in it. So, no

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

argument against God, based on evolution, like that of Dan Dennett that you mentioned earlier, can shake the physics argument that the fine-tuning is a very strong pointer towards God. That's the first thing. But secondly, whatever evolutionary processes do or don't do, it's very interesting that even some very bright world class evolutionists point out that that only drives the problem up to a higher scale. In fact, Charles Kingsley, he talked about a God who was so wise that he could make all things make themselves. And people then talk about nature is a machine making machine. And the argument here is that the evolutionary viewpoint doesn't invalidate an inference to intelligent origin, but it just moves it back one level, from the organisms to the processes by which those organisms come to exist from primary to secondary causation.

And my illustration of that is thinking of a man, he sees a car for the first time, he supposes that it's made directly by humans, and later he finds it's made in a robotic factory by robots, which in turn were made by machines made by humans. So, his initial inference to direct intelligent origin was not wrong. It was his concept of the nature of the way in which intelligence was implemented that was inaccurate. If I put that another way, I would say that direct human activity is not detectable in the robotic factory, because it's the existence of the factory and the machines that are evidence of intelligence. So, if nature is capable, by some means, of producing life, and all this kind of stuff, well then that is suggesting that behind that huge mechanism and its complexity, there is a mind. So, although I'm very skeptical, as many of my colleagues are these days, of these Darwinian processes, they don't get rid of God at all, they just shift him back up one level.

Frank:

So, the very intelligence required to create the universe, fine-tune the universe, create the first life, and then drive the laws that drive evolution, all that intelligence is necessary, even if from that point on there's no intelligence involved. There's intelligence underneath the whole process, if I'm understanding you correctly.

Dr. Lennox:

Well, that's absolutely right. Yeah, we need to be very clear here, because for years, Richard Dawkins confused the public by saying that natural selection was responsible for the existence and variation of life. He says that in *The Blind Watchmaker*. But he saw in the end what is

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

obvious from the start, that evolution cannot have produced life for the very simple reason that, whatever evolution does or doesn't do, it depends on the existence of life for doing anything. So, it cannot be an explanation of the existence of life. And that brings me to the heart of what we were saying earlier, you see. Life is word based in the DNA code, and so in one sense, trying to find explanation for the existence of life is virtually equivalent to discovering the explanation for the existence of information bearing molecules. That is the information of meaning, the existence of meaningful information itself. The origin of life, and the origin of information are very closely related, and natural processes certainly don't account for the latter.

Frank:

Yes. There are only four known natural forces, correct Dr. Lennox? You got strong and weak nuclear forces, electromagnetism and gravity. It would seem that the atheist could defeat any intelligent design argument if they could figure out how these natural laws could create information. Of course, they wouldn't have an explanation for the universe, or the fine-tuning of the natural laws, but if they could figure out a way those four natural forces could create information, a software, if you will, they could defeat some of the Intelligent Design arguments. Correct?

Dr. Lennox:

Well, a software is usually intelligently designed to start.

Frank:

[laughing] I know.

Dr. Lennox:

The point is, the laws and forces of nature cannot create information. I'm quite impressed by the work of Paul Davis, a physicist at ASU, who's not a theist. And he just makes it very clear in his books that laws that we know about on this, they cannot be responsible for the nature of information. You can't just build a house by...I think this it says analogy...by putting dynamite in a pile of bricks. You've got to order them, and linguistic order is the most sophisticated type of order that there is. And this is an impasse for science proceeding on a naturalistic basis.

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Frank:

Well, Dr. Lennox, the book, Cosmic Chemistry, has so much in it. I feel inadequate just trying to do 45 minutes on this because I really want people to get it and read it. There's so much in it that I think everyone needs to read and understand. So, thank you so much for writing this. And before we go, I got to mention one thing. You and I have a mutual friend, Max McLean, who's just come out with a new movie that's only in theaters until November 18. It's called, Most Reluctant Convert: The Untold Story of CS Lewis. And I know you've seen the movie, I've seen the movie, we like it very much. You're a student of CS Lewis. You were actually in a classroom with him. Give us a minute on what it was like to be in Lewis's classroom.

Dr. Lennox:

Well, I wasn't a student in the technical sense, but I did attend his last ever lectures in the English faculty at Oxford. That's totally memorable. It was freezing cold, and the place was packed, and at the appointed hour, the double doors burst open. This big burly man came in wearing a hat, a long scarf, and a heavy coat. And he started lecturing immediately. And he picked his way through the crowd as he slowly removed the scarf, the hat, and the coat, and by the time he got to the podium, you'd have three or four minutes of brilliant lecture. And so, he went on, wonderful use of words. But at the end of the lecture, he reversed this process. He kept lecturing as he put on his scarf, his hat, his coat, and he uttered his last words as he burst out of the door. There was no Q&A. And I reenact that in the film.

Frank:

Oh, you do?

Dr. Lennox:

In the film, Against the Tide. Yes.

Frank:

So, that was what 1962?

Dr. Lennox:

Yes, it was indeed 1962, the year before he died. That was the year I went to Cambridge.

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)

I don't have enough **FAITH**
to be an **ATHEIST**

with Dr. Frank Turek **PODCAST**

Frank:

Well, as always, it's a great pleasure having you on, Dr. Lennox. Thank you so much. And we're gonna we're going to have you on again. Again, the book is called Cosmic Chemistry. Where can people go to find out more about you, Dr. Lennox?

Dr. Lennox:

Well, I've a big website, JohnLennox.org. There are masses of stuff that's been put up on it the last couple of years during lockdown; lectures, all kinds of things, and information about my books, and all sorts of things that I hope people will find interesting to peruse.

Frank:

They shall and that's it. JohnLennox.org, ladies and gentlemen. Again, the book you need to get, Cosmic Chemistry, and get it wherever books are sold. And if you can't, ask them for it. I know it's on Amazon. That's where I got it. So, check it out, Cosmic Chemistry. And ladies and gentlemen, I want to announce that we have a generous donor who has given us a \$20,000 matching gift, so any donations you give from now to the end of the year will be matched up to \$20,000. So, if you go to CrossExamined.org and click on Donate, you will help us. Get the word out. Not just here on radio, but also on TV, social media, and college campuses where we spend a lot of our time. Alright, ladies and gentlemen, see you next week. God bless.

**CROSS
EXAMINED
ORG**



[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO THIS PODCAST](#)