**Why Antony Flew Came to Believe in God**

in his own words

“Now most of my discussions [arguing for atheism] were carried on independent of develop-ments in modern cosmology. In fact, my two main anti-theological books were both written before the development of big-bang cosmology or the introduction of the fine-tuning argument from physical constants (p. 130) … When I first met the big-bang theory as an atheist, it seemed to me the theory made a big difference because it suggested that the universe had a beginning and that the first sen-tence in Genesis (“*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*”) was related to an event in the universe. As long as the universe could comfortably thought to be not only without end, but without beginning, it remained easy to see its existence (and its most fundamental features) as brute facts… (136).

“But the big-bang theory changed all that. If the universe had a beginning, it became entirely sensible, almost inevitable, to ask what produced [it]. This radically altered the solution” (p. 136).

“I concluded…, even if it were agreed that the universe as we know it began with the big bang, it is *physically* impossible to discover what, if anything caused that big bang (*emphasis* mine—138).

“The old attempt to explain the universe by reference to an infinite series of causes has been [invalidly] recast in the language of modern cosmology. But John Leslie finds this unsatisfactory. Some people, he remarks, claim the existence (143) of the universe at any given moment can be explained by the fact that it existed at an earlier moment and so on, ad infinitum…

“Richard Swinburn summarized his exposition of the cosmological argument by saying, ‘There is quite a chance that if there is a God, he will make something of the finitude and complexity of the uni-verse. It is very unlikely that (144) a universe would exist uncaused, but rather, more likely that God would exist uncaused.’” (145).

**Why Dr. Flew Rejected Scien*tism* and Embraced Intelligent Design?**

“This is the world picture as I see it that has emerged from modern science. Science spotlights three dimensions that point to God (88). The first is that nature obeys laws. The second is the dimen-sion of life, of intelligently organized and purpose-driven beings which arose from matter. The third is the very existence of nature.

“My departure from atheism was not occasioned by any new phenomenon or argument…When I finally came to recognize the existence of God, it was not a paradigm shift, because my paradigm remains. [As stated in Plato’s *Republic*], ‘*We must follow the argument wherever it leads*.

“You might ask how I, a philosopher, could speak to issues treated by scientists. The best way to answer this is with another question. Are we engaging with science? When you study the interaction of two physical bodies, for instance,, two subatomic particles, you are engaged in science. When you ask how it is that [any physical entity or interaction] could exist and why, you are engaging in philosophy. (89).

“In 2004 I said that the origin of life cannot be explained if you start with matter alone. My critics responded by triumphantly announcing that I had not read a particular paper in a scientific journal or followed a brand-new development related to abiogenesis…In doing so they missed the whole point. My concern was not with this or that fact of chemistry or genetics, but with the fundamental question of what it means to be alive and how this relates to the body of chemistry and genetic facts **viewed as a whole** [boldface mine]. To think at this level is to think as a philosopher. And, at the risk of sounding immodest, I must say this is properly the job of philosophers, not of scientists as scientists; the competence specific to scientists gives no advantage when it comes to considering this [philosophical] question….

Of course, scientists are just as free to think as philosophers as anyone else…But their disagree-ments will have to stand on their own philosophical feet. (90).

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Antony Flew with Roy Abraham Varghese. There is a God: How the World’s Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind. (Harper One, 2014).