

Everything with a Finite Past Must Have a Cause

THE ARGUMENT: Eternity is the state of timelessness. It is like past and present and future are all one moment. It is unchanging. Something could exist in eternity and come into time. In terms of time, it would seem to have a finite past. But when you consider eternity, it has always been there.

You might say your car had a cause. But the car is a combination of materials that had different causes. The metals may have been extracted from rocks millions of years old. We have to ask more than just, "What caused my car?" We are better just wondering what happened at the beginning of time when the big bang took place.

People then get into complex matters. This diminishes the plausibility of the statement for them. The statement in itself is plausible but the problem is recognising that plausibility.

It can take time to answer somebody who says, maybe the start of something was not the real start. Perhaps A causes B and B reverts in time and causes A. A Buddhist might use that reasoning.

Every Physical Event Must Have a Cause

I find this the most plausible because:

We observe cause and effect happening in the physical universe.

Nothing physical needs to exist. It can be done without. For example, if you find a shell on a seashore, that shell might not have existed. It is a mistake to think we just need suppose there is a first cause to start things off. That idea isn't wrong but it is incomplete. Whatever causes things to exist in the first place has to maintain them by constant (for want of a better word) creation. It is as correct to say that creation out of nothing is happening now as it is to assert that it happened in the beginning. The flower in the garden has not been created in the past and has not been sustain since. No. What is happening is it is being created every moment. Its whole being depends on "continuous" creation. God is the creator. Only an intelligent God can make a grain of sand. It is an intelligence so great that we cannot comprehend it.

Physical entities are complicated, Even the tiniest grain of sand is more complex than one could ever understand. Whatever needs to be put together must have a cause. We have to account for whatever put it together as well as account for whatever put the different parts together.

Personally the assertion that every physical event must have a cause is more plausible for it is more observable and the thought that everything with a finite past must have a cause. The latter is true and correct but requires a bit of thought and understanding. Most people will struggle the concept of infinity.

THE REFUTATION:

Infinite does not necessarily include all. If you calculate each number, 1 and 2 and 3 and so on forever, there will be an infinity of numbers. But if you count 1 and 3 and 5, you are skipping numbers, but you still get an infinity of numbers.

As religion says the infinite God is the source of all things, it follows that his infinity includes all. But that is not relevant now.

Infinity is finite in the sense that numbers can be left out and you still get an infinite series of numbers. Infinite and finite are not mutually exclusive. The first cause could be only the first cause in the infinite series. It does not mean there were no other infinite series producing it. It is possible that everything always existed in one form or another.

INFINITE - DOES IT MEAN ALL OR UNLIMITED WITHOUT BEING ALL?

The notion of God making all things from nothing cannot make sense or be understood without translation. It is saying that what is limited cannot exist unless a force that is unlimited and depends on nothing enables it to exist. It causes it to exist and without it there would be literally nothing. Any other concept is on the level of calling a woodcutter cutting a log a creator of logs! It turns God into an idol made in man's likeness. A God who makes from something and who cannot just cause things to exist without needing anything is not an all-powerful God.

If God is unlimited and infinite that means there is no power but God so he cannot create anything that is not him. If he

makes a rock it is him in some way. It is not distinct from him.

The idea of God creating what is not him implies things can exist that are not made of God or his power. Thus the things can exist without God for he is not really involved. What is not made of God's power or made of anything but is still there is by definition able to exist without being dependent on God.

If a rock can exist without a God to create is it God causing something to exist that can exist without him? If so then creation is not evidence that there is a God. It would be a proof that agnosticism is the right idea. It would be a contradiction to say all must depend on God to exist and then to say that he can cause things that don't need him for their existence.

Those who say creation points to God are guilty of assuming what they aim to prove. They define creation as that which needs God to exist and which would return to nothing should God cease to keep it in existence. So they argue that creation needs God therefore there is a God. But that is circular reasoning and is worse than a contradiction for it is totally absurd. An all-powerful God should be able to create an entity that might have existed without him. We shall see later that all that is needed is for a thing to be made of infinite power that traverses the infinite path from nothing to something. God should be able to create such a thing or it should simply exist without him. Christians want to limit God to making things that cannot exist without him!! Their God is thus an idol for a real God should be able to make things that could explain their own existence. The believers do not want that kind of God for even if he is the explanation for anything he won't let himself be.

Instead of saying creation depends on God or is made by God believers should admit that what they really believe is that things just popped into existence because God wanted them to not because he did anything. In fairness they admit they do not use the words as we normally understand them but they are clearly applying a mask to the truth.

So an infinite God means all is God (or in other words that God is absolutely unlimited). William Lane Craig would read the above and still try to get people to ask, "But does it?"

He applies more masks to hide the truth.

William Lane Craig says that it is wrong to understand God's infinity as meaning absolutely unlimited for the idea is incoherent. He feels if God is unlimited justice then what about the love? The correct view, he imagines, is that God's justice is limited by his love and vice versa. A God of pure justice would lack mercy.

What does Craig mean when he says God is metaphysically unlimited? He thinks God has the limits that make him the best and maximally great and perfect being. But these are not truly limits. His teaching is rubbish. God's justice is not limited by his love - the two come together in harmony. Love is not limited by justice for love without justice is not love at all. He forgets that love and justice need to go together. Justice that puts a limit on love or love that puts a limit on justice is nonsense. He sees them as being against each other. But if one helps make the other what it is then the justice and the love are two sides of an infinite coin. Justice and love working together does not mean that either is limited in any sense. It means it is not about limiting them.

Another (deliberate!) error is that he redefines infinity in an absurd way. For him it is not freedom from limitation and being literally unlimited. He denies that infinite means an infinite quantity.

Infinity cannot be merely the "antithesis to the finite". He denies that infinity is merely the opposite of finite for that makes infinite finite after all. How? It would need finite things to exist so that it can be different from them. An infinite that needs to create and make finite things is not infinite at all. It can only be defined or have being in relation to the finite.

Finite means that something is itself and not something else. For example, a rock is finite for it is not a human being. This limitation is the main characteristic of the finite. An infinite pink line and an infinite yellow line shows that even if they are unlimited in length they are finite in the sense that one is not the other. If the infinite is defined by being different from something else that means it is finite for finite is what which is defined by its distinction from something else. He agrees with Hegel who wrote, "The infinite, in that case, is one of the two; but as only one of the two it is itself finite, it is not the whole but only one side; it has its limit in what stands over against it; it is thus the finite infinite. There are present only two finites" (*Logic*, paragraph 288).

Craig sees infinite and finite not as opposites but in harmony. As an example, Craig says that eternity and time go together and must not be seen as opposing. Eternity is infinite and time has a start and a finish so it is not infinite. He says eternity embraces time. To see them as opposite turns eternity into a finite because eternity ends up being defined by the finite. He applies this example to God and the rock. God and the rock are not opposites but are intimately connected to each other.

But God and the rock are opposites. The hidden reasoning is that God made the rock so the rock so the two are very connected but making and connecting are two different actions! It is not the same thing!

And God is not time or eternity! The analogy does not work. Time and eternity are not intelligences while he is. They are not powers and he is. And time and eternity have one core similarity - both have a present.

Can an unlimited God allow for things to exist that are not God? It can be answered that that an unlimited line is truly infinite and has no bounds even though it is not the same as a rock. But the line is a created thing or could be. The reasoning is that God is the explanation for his own existence and thus needs no creator. God is that which simply has to exist while an infinite line does not.

What is masked in that is that all you need is to account for why something can exist as opposed to there being nothing at all. All you need to do is see that the "distance" between something and nothing is infinite. You just need enough to get that divide crossed. Only unlimited power that is limited in other ways is needed. All you need is something that is infinite one way and finite another way. Both the atom and the rock are made of infinite power but because the atom is so tiny it is a lesser infinite power that comprises it compared to the rock which needs immeasurably more. Infinite a and infinite b do not imply that the end result will be the same quantity. With the God thing believers want something that is infinite every way but that is not needed. Thus an atom can be composed of an infinite power and another one composed of a totally separate infinite power. Remember how two separate infinite lines can exist. They are infinite in how they exist but they are finite in the sense that one is not the other. Same idea. This is deliberately highlighted for it is the most important thing in the debate about whether or not a God explains anything.

The notion of a God creating an infinite line is said to make sense by believers. But that is really God creating what could in theory exist without him and thus is not logical behaviour for a God. It is like a mother feeding her baby who is fed by magic.

PANNENBERG

The theologian Pannenberg argues that the infinite being finite is a contradiction and there are two possible solutions to the contradiction.

One that the infinite simply means that which is not finite.

Two the finite is included in the infinite and the infinite is like a set of finite things. (These things might be closely linked or totally distinct from each other. I would argue that natural numbers are unlimited. Minus numbers are not natural numbers and they have another infinite. Plus each number has infinite fractions).

Two is just too general. The finite and the infinite can be compatible. As we have seen an atom is infinite in how it exists but not in any other way. We do not need to think of an infinite set if we are wondering how the universe came to be.

Aristotle would make the suggestion that the infinite is only potential and that there is no actual infinite and thus by implication no infinite God.

Some argue that abstract and mathematical infinities are not the same as an actual infinite – one that is real and not just an idea. So abstract infinities do not mean an actual one is possible. But by the way it is clear that if an actual infinite is possible then an abstract one definitely is as well. They say that if an actual infinite exists, such as God, then the absence of limits is not what makes it infinite. It just is infinite. And the actual infinite does not mean it has no limits at all. Thus it is possible for God to be infinite without it meaning God is all there is. He is not absolutely unlimited.

This is good but irrelevant reasoning. We are talking about how God as in only power and infinite power is the reason anything exists in the universe. We are told it is impossible for anything to exist without God creating it from nothing. Their argument is about peripheral limitations on God. God cannot need water to live. Things like that. They are sidetracking. The fact remains that in dependence on God there cannot be a limitation so creation either exists without God or it is part of him.

One more try from them: "If God being infinite meant that nothing finite or that is not God could exist it would follow that God is only infinite as long as he does not or cannot create something from nothing. The point is that we must not confuse infinite with all." What a ludicrous argument. If God's nature is that God must be all that he makes that is the way it is. It has nothing to do with showing infinite when it comes to making the universe does not mean all.

Some say that if God has no limits of any kind at all it is absurd to say he is not limited for he is. Again the limits are beside

the point. God not being able to kill himself has nothing to do with the argument that there is no power but God's therefore creation is a part of him.

They say, "God alone can be the absolute infinite. Only an absolute infinite can create from nothing - why?" They would say it is because the distance between something and nothing is literally unlimited or infinite. But as we seen from the infinite line idea that this argument is nonsense. What they probably sense is that creation from nothing is absurd so only an absolutely infinite God could make the contradictory possible. That is nonsense more in tune with Eastern gurus who argue that the creation is God and feel that reason is a hindrance to the truth.

Other answers would be variations of the idea that God can do contradictory stuff. "Because nothing is a part of God. God is everything and nothing. That is why he can turn nothing into something though there is nothing there to turn anything into. Because it takes infinite power to do the contradictory thing of something becoming nothing or vice versa. If it takes infinite power to do something doable then it takes absolutely infinite power to do what cannot be done."

God is turned more into being about why things exist than anything about justice or love.

Christians say that God being infinite means not that he is absolutely limited but that he is all powerful and depends on nothing to exist and knows all things and is perfect and present everywhere. Infinite merely summarises all that and thus does not mean infinite in the usual sense. This is just messing around with words. They choose to keep you distracted from the essential by bringing in talk about justice and love.

Keep the focus on infinite in relation to creation - where the distance between something and no-thing no matter how finite is infinite. That is what it is all about. How an atom exists is down to infinite power but the result of the power is not limited and not all infinities are the same or equally powerful. God is not only not needed but is totally irrelevant. God is disproven for God by definition has to be relevant as an explanation and relevant for our worship. God has to be a possible explanation but a possible explanation is to be dismissed when it is not necessary or in any way needed. A God who is an unnecessary but possible explanation is a God who is against reason if he wants us to believe in him. He is not relevant to our reason and opposed to it. The notion of God creating things that can explain themselves is nonsense unless that God is about being a function - not a relationship type of God.