

## 6th & 7th Grade Edge Homestudy

# Lesson #3: Proof in the Paint

Is It Reasonable to Believe That God Exists? (First Cause Argument)

## GOAL

The goal of this lesson is to help the youth understand how the scientific fact that our universe has a beginning brings us to the conclusion that there must be a God and that our faith helps us understand why God created the universe.

## TEACHING

### Beginnings

Everything in our world has a beginning — human life, plants, animals, songs, movies, our days, etc. We usually measure things from their beginnings — how old we are, how long a movie is, how long our school days are, how long summer vacation is, etc.

### The Cause For Existence

Everything in our universe has a beginning and something or someone that caused the beginning. Everything relies on something else for its existence — every human being came from another human being, all mammals came from other mammals, even animals that lay eggs depended on that egg being laid to come into existence. It is scientifically impossible for anything in our world to come into existence on its own from nothing. There is not a single element in our universe that does not have something, even the smallest atoms, that in some way caused it to exist.

There are very compelling scientific theories that point to our universe having a beginning, a moment that it came into existence — these theories are shown through empirical evidence pointing to things like gravity, general relativity, cosmic microwave background radiation, the density of matter and energy in the universe, gravity waves, quantum disturbances, etc. (“Reflections on the Latest Big Bang Discovery,” Trent Horn, April 2014)

### ***Going Deeper***

*The beginning of the universe is often referred to as the Big Bang Theory, which was coined by a Catholic priest, Fr. Lemaitre, who worked closely with Albert Einstein. This theory was originally mocked by those who thought the world had always existed, but in 1965 proof of cosmic radiation from the Big Bang proved that the universe in fact has a beginning. This theory does not contradict Catholic teaching but, rather, affirms it. The Big Bang Theory was affirmed by Pope Pius XII in his “Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences,” November 22, 1951*

If there is strong evidence that our universe has a finite beginning, and everything that has a beginning has a cause for that beginning then we can logically wonder what caused our universe to exist.

### ***Going Deeper***

*St. Thomas Aquinas created five different arguments for the existence of God and one of them — the argument from efficient cause — explains how everything that exists has an efficient cause, meaning something that is has something else that caused it to exist. He argues that if there is no first cause, the universe coming into being, then there could be no second causes, such as all the life around us that all depend on a cause or beginning. There must be a beginning or a first cause, and this first cause must be God who has no beginning. (“The First Cause Argument,” Fundamentals of the Faith by Peter Kreeft)*

Since everything that exists was brought into existence by something outside of itself then we can reasonably conclude that there must be something, or someone, outside of time and space that created the universe. (CCC 290;

Genesis 1:1; John 1:3) This cause for the existence of the world would have to be outside of time because when the universe began, time began and this being would also have to be outside of space because it created space — just like we did not create ourselves but someone separate from us, our parents, brought us into being, or an egg does not create itself but the chicken who is separate from it laid the egg.

Through these scientific findings we can use logic and philosophy to come to the conclusion that the creator of everything that exists, must be existence itself — something that does not have a beginning but simply is. The supreme being that is existence itself that is separate from time and space is who we call God. (Exodus 3:14, Revelation 1:8)

### **Loving Creator**

Through science, we can know these facts about the beginning of the universe. Using our intellect, we can conclude that there must be something, or someone, who is outside of the universe to cause it to begin and exist. We can learn these facts, but science alone cannot answer the question, “Why does the universe exist at all?”

Generally, music is a way for musicians to express themselves and share their thoughts or what they love. It is also a way for them to create and share something they believe is meaningful and beautiful. In a similar way, scripture and the teachings of the Church continually reveal to us that God created the world out of love and goodness because He wanted to, and He created the world good and beautiful. (CCC 293)

The world was not created by accident, it was not a mistake, but it was the plan of our God who is so good and loving that He desired for it to be, and it was. Our faith shows us the “why” of creation and that there is meaning for existence and behind it all is a powerful, all-knowing, loving God. Scripture is filled with the stories of our God who from the beginning creates with plan and a purpose to reveal His great love and glory and we too are a part of this story. (CCC 293)

## **Prayer**

Take a few moments to think about beginnings in your life. Some beginnings are good, some are scary, and some are exciting. Take a minute of silence to think of one beginning in your life that you are thankful for and one beginning you want to pray for. Once you think of your beginnings, take a moment to say the following prayer:

*We all have a web of beginnings in our lives. Some we can think back on and be thankful for, while others we look forward to with excitement or nervousness. Whether or not you believe that God is real, He is with you in all of these moments. Sometimes it is difficult to see or understand, but the more we turn to Him in gratitude or for support, strength, and guidance, the more we will find Him. At this time, we are going to continue to do just that: turn to God, who is the ultimate beginning.*

Close by praying a Glory Be.

## **Lectio Divina**

### **Read Revelation 4:11**

What word or verse jumped out at you?

What is God saying to you through this scripture?

What is God asking you to do?

**Read Nehemiah 9:6**

What word or verse jumped out at you?

What is God saying to you through this scripture?



- Do you think it is reasonable to believe that God created the universe?  
Why or why not?

- What does it mean to you that God created the world out of His love and goodness?

- What does it mean to you that God created the world out of love?