

## PREFACE

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IN HIS ESSAY “CHRISTIAN Apologetics,” C. S. Lewis once commented, “I am to talk about Apologetics. Apologetics means of course Defense. The first question is—what do you propose to defend? Christianity of course . . .” Similarly, “God exists” is a proposition this book seeks to defend. But in the end, I hope you find out not only that there is a God, but that there is a wonderful world he has created, and that you have been given a life that is meant to be enjoyed with him. There is something about human nature that longs for this life of happiness and meaning. Thus, the good news is that there is a way to have what your heart already naturally seeks.

Consequently this book is written with three different kinds of readers in mind. It is a book for *thinking Christians* who want to know more about the nature of their faith. It is book which tries to show how faith is both an instinctive response to human nature as well as a seed divinely planted. It is the conviction of the author that this seed can (along with God’s special revelation found in the Bible) grow into a life filled with something more wonderful than anything this world has to offer in its current state.

This book is also for all *thinking seekers* who want to know why they may struggle to believe. It is my hope that the contents of this book will help students of literature and/or religion, who are sincerely sitting on the fence of doubt and uncertainty, to take their first real step of faith.

But this book is also written for *C. S. Lewis readers* who simply want to learn more about a subject that was very important to him. It can well be argued that the “Argument from Desire” can be found in some form in the vast majority of Lewis’s works of fiction and non-fiction.

Lewis believed that humans have a natural (albeit strangely elusive and mysterious) desire for a transcendent world. Consequently, it is a desire that nothing *on earth* can satisfy. We will get into this more later. But for now I want you to know what to expect from this book. It is a bit academic at times. But there is a reason for this. I wish to challenge

your thinking. I want to show you that nothing I say in this book is completely new and has been said by thinkers long past. God's existence has been felt and perceived since the beginning of human history. While we focus on the thoughts of C. S. Lewis in this book, we will discuss many more authors, philosophers, and poets along the way. This will make this book both intellectually challenging as well as (we hope) stimulating. I write this book with both the average (but serious) reader in mind as well as the scholar who has an interest in the world of philosophy, literature, and apologetics. I seek to put together as much literary and sociological evidence as possible in a short space. While it will have been helpful for the reader to have read some of the works by C. S. Lewis before reading this book, it is not necessary. In fact, I hope this book will encourage the reader to pick up more of Lewis's works after having read this one.

The purpose for writing this book is to challenge the skeptical trend (sometimes referred to as the "New Atheism") of putting out books that seek to make believing in God look silly. But belief in God is anything but silly. Belief in the divine is ingrained in the history of human thought and experience and has inspired wonderful works of art, literature, and charity. Those who believe can see the beauty in the world in a way that the unbeliever cannot. The believer sees the universe as a divine act of creation. The unbeliever can see the beauty of the world but chooses to ignore the Artist who made it so beautiful for us to be here to see in the first place. But, as we will seek to show, in order to do this, the unbeliever must put aside his/her instincts. He/she must ignore what is most natural to the human being—the natural instinct to believe in the divine.

There have been a flood of recent books that have come out seeking to place doubt in people's minds about the existence and nature of God. And yet people continue to believe regardless of these constant challenges. There is a good reason for this. Human beings are brought into this world with a planted seed that sprouts a desire for ultimate meaning and happiness that just will not go away. It is as though something (or someone?) put those desires there. Some have sought to explain away these desires by saying that evolution (through natural selection) has allowed these thoughts to continue only for survival purposes. We talk about this theory a lot in chapters 14 and 15. But for now, I will only say that this answer is far too simplistic.

But sometimes we can't exactly explain *why* we believe. And that's okay. I cannot exactly explain why I get hungry, I just do. And when I

get hungry, I eat. Faith can work this way. There are many good arguments for God's existence. But sometimes people have a hard time putting their finger on exactly *why* they believe. My proposal (which was C. S. Lewis's proposal) is that you don't always have to put your finger on it *exactly*. Belief in God springs from a natural desire like hunger. You don't have to over analyze hunger to know when you need to eat. So do not get frustrated when a skeptical book comes out trying to explain away your hunger for God. You know yourself when you are hungry. All you have to do is eat. Once you take in this divine nourishment, your life will never be the same again.

In part 1 we will discuss what C. S. Lewis said about the argument from desire. We will try to explain and define some key terms and concepts that will help you understand this argument. In part 2 we look at some objections to the argument that have been promoted by the agnostic writer John Beversluis. In part 3 we will examine some experiences of life (i.e., evidence that is *a posteriori*) that further push our natural longing (i.e., that which is *a priori*) for God along in life. In part 4 we consider one of the most important objections not considered by Beversluis—the evolutionary objection. In the conclusion we will apply all that has been said to see if the argument works and what it actually does and does not tell us about God's existence. I have added an appendix to discuss some other theological implications of the argument. In it we will discuss the ultimate goal and object of this intense longing humans have. Even though it is an appendix, in some ways, it can be thought of as making one of the most important points of the book.

I want to thank a number of people for their contribution to this work. I want to thank Paul Copan, Mike Young, and Dan Primozic for all of their helpful suggestions and insights. I also want to thank Mark Linville (one person I have dedicated this book to) for being such a great friend and mentor. He has not only taught me a lot of philosophy, but he has instilled in me the desire to be a better analytical philosopher who can more effectively learn to love the Lord my God “with all my mind” (Matt 22:37). Finally, I want to thank my wife and daughters for their enduring support and love. Without them, I could not have done this work. They are the best images on earth that help me to see what love in heaven will actually be like.

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