

BELIEF IN GOD IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE

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Life Together • 9/21/2025
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CHAPTER ONE

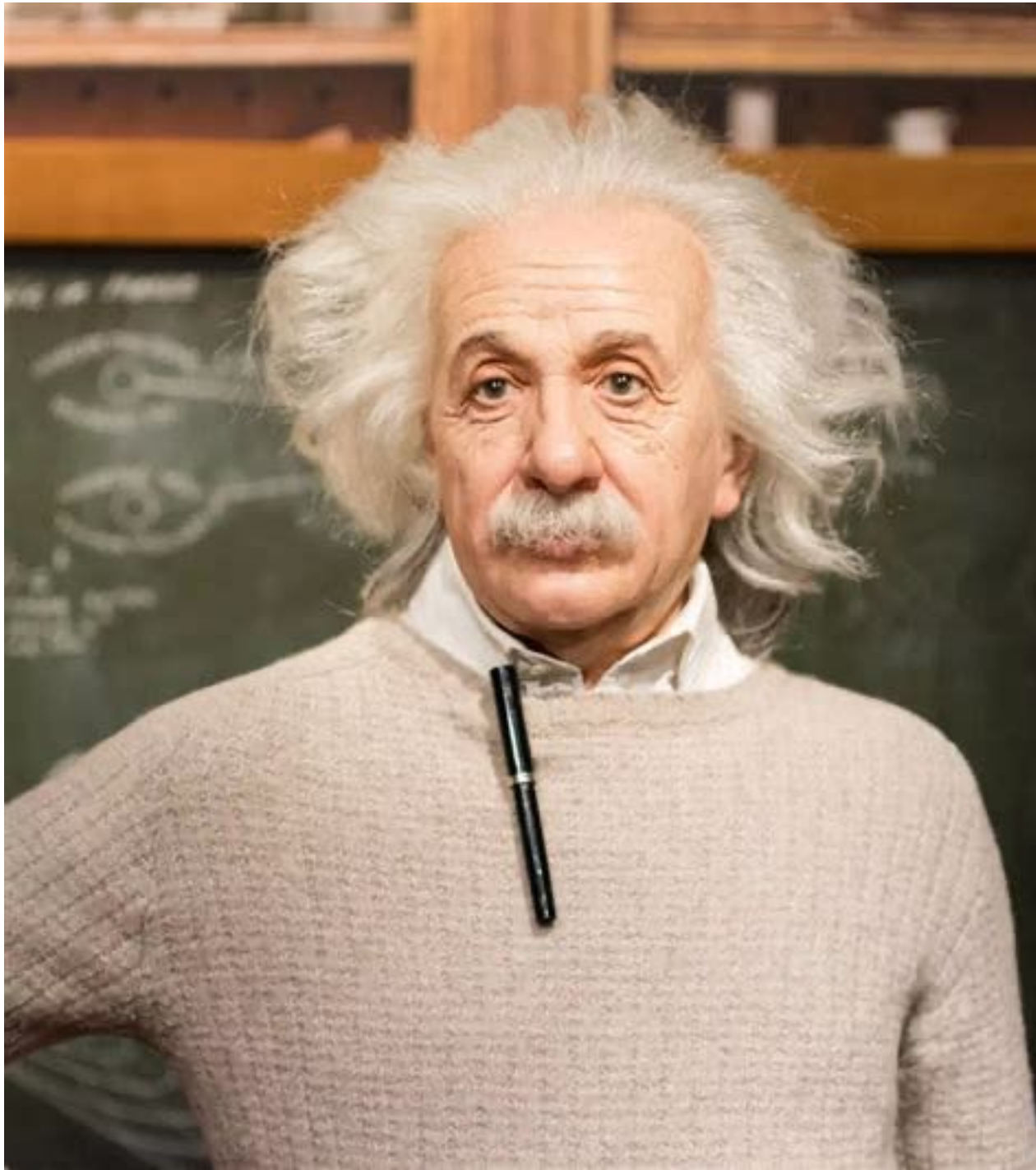
- For Polkinghorne, Belief in God is grounded in the fact that there is a **Mind** and **Purpose** behind the history of the cosmos.
- That One who is “intimated in this way is worthy of worship and the ground of hope.” 1
- The self-awareness of the universe and the means by which it has created that self-awareness are the centers of our inquiry.

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- Paul Dirac said, “The laws of nature should be expressed in beautiful equations.” 2
- “We live in a world whose physical fabric is endowed with transparent physical beauty.” 2
- Our accounts of physical processes are developed into pleasant mathematical shapes.



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- “There is no a priori reason why beautiful equations should prove to be the clue to understanding nature; why fundamental physics should be possible; why our minds should have such ready access to the deep structure of the universe.” 4

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- Where do we find Purpose?
- Darwin in revealing the laws of evolution went farther than Hume and Kant to open to us a method by which the universe experiments with life. He offers an alternative story for its becoming what it is today.
- Evolution unlocks the history not only of living things, but the universe.
- Yet evolution is not enough to account for the fruitfulness of the world on its own.
- Why?

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- The Anthropic Principle has opened a world of inquiry.
- What is the anthropic principle, and how does it account for life and purpose?
- It is John Leslie's suggestion that the precise characteristics of physical law that we see must account for the ultimate life-generating effects.

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- Let's not trivialize these remarks.
- It is not trivial that conscious life emerged in the universe. The fact that it did points to purpose beyond mere mechanics. What could possibly be the reason for life without purpose or direction.
- The fine-tuning argument (the anthropic principle), encompasses the possibility that the God who made the universe is populating it with beings capable of consciousness of its surroundings.

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- Either God produced this fruitful universe with conscious life, or, it is pure chance that in all the possible universes, this one has the capability to support the emergence of life.
- The supposition that there are many universes and that this one happens to support life just puts the problem off of whether God is holding the purpose of this or all universes or not. God could have created the multiverse as well.
- John Leslie suggests that this profligate speculation of multiple universes is unhelpful.

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- The theistic proposition is not scientific, but complements the scientific by proposing an explanation for the inherent purposiveness in a scientifically apprehended universe.
- This is a new form of natural theology that can be incorporated into an overall theory of the universe, since science itself cannot provide purposiveness even though it finds it wherever it looks.



CHAPTER ONE

- “Not all that happens is in accordance with God’s will because God has stood back, making metaphysical room for creaturely action.” 13
- What would you prefer: a world where we couldn’t do any harm and without freedom, or a world that struggles through its freedom to consciousness of something beyond itself.
- Do you want a deterministic machine or a world where our choices can lead us to transcendence over criminality.