



# AREOPAGUS PROCLAMATION

Volume 13 • No. 8 • May 2003

Revised to 05/2019

## What If the Cosmos Is All There Is?

by Daryl E. Witmer

Are you a **materialist**? The philosophy of materialism propounds the idea that physical matter is the only true reality, and that everything — including thought, feeling, mind, and even human emotions — can all be explained in terms of matter and physical phenomena alone.

Or perhaps you prefer the term **naturalist**. You believe that all can be explained in terms of natural causes and laws. Nothing has any moral, spiritual, or supernatural significance. It's all just nature.

**Carl Sagan** once said: "The cosmos is all there is, was, or ever will be."

**Douglas Futuyma** in *Science on Trial: The Case for Evolution*, says: "Some shrink from the conclusion that the human species was not designed, has no purpose, and is the product of mere mechanical mechanisms — but this seems to be the message of evolution."

**Richard Dawkins** in *The Blind Watchmaker*: "Natural selection is the blind watchmaker, blind because it does not see ahead, does not plan consequences, has no purpose in view. Yet the living results of natural selection overwhelmingly impress us with the appearance of design as if by a master watchmaker, impress us with the illusion of design and planning."

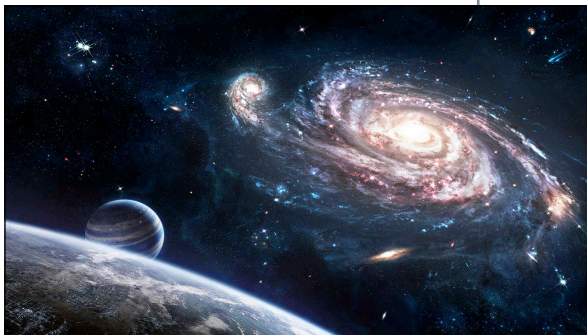
A bimonthly thoughtletter  
published by the  
AllA Institute  
PO Box 262  
Monson, Maine 04464

**Francis Crick** in *The Astonishing Hypothesis* says:  
"The Astonishing Hypothesis is that you — your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense

of personal identity and free will — are in fact no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules..."

**What if all this is true?** What if the cosmos and the chemicals and the particles really are all that there is, and all that we are?!

"If man has been kicked up out of that which is only impersonal by chance, then those things that make him man — hope of purpose and significance, love, motions of morality and rationality, beauty and verbal communication — are ultimately unfulfillable and thus meaningless." — **Francis Schaeffer** in *The God Who Is There*



"Eventually materialist philosophy undermines the reliability of the mind itself — and hence even the basis for science. The true foundation of rationality is not found in particles and impersonal laws, but in the mind of the Creator who formed us in His image." — **Phillip E. Johnson**, *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds*

"Can man live without God? Of course he can, in a physical sense. Can he live without God in a reasonable way? The answer to that is No!" — **Ravi Zacharias**, *Can Man Live Without God?*

If you are an atheist, materialist, pantheist, or naturalist, try answering the following eight questions:

1. If everyone completely passes out of existence when they die, how can life have any ultimate meaning? Even if a man's life has a positive influence on others or advances the course of history in this world, of what *ultimate* significance is there if there is no immortality and if all other lives, events, and even history itself are all ultimately meaningless?

2. In a universe without God or immortality, how is humanity *ultimately* any more valuable than a swarm of mosquitoes or a barnyard of pigs?

3. Why does research, discovery, diplomacy, art, music, sacrifice, compassion, feelings of love, or affectionate and caring relationships mean anything at all if everything *ultimately* comes to naught?

4. Without absolute morals, what *ultimate* difference is there between Adolph Hitler and Mother Theresa?

5. If there's no immortality, why shouldn't all things be permitted? (Dostoyevsky)

6. If morality is only a relative social construct, on what basis could or should anyone ever challenge cultures that practice apartheid, female circumcision, cannibalism, or ethnic cleansing?

7. If there is no God, on what basis is there ever any meaning or hope for justice, comfort, or better times?

8. Without a personal Creator-God how are you anything other than the coincidental purposeless miscarriage of nature, spinning round and round on a lonely planet in the blackness of space for just a little while before you and all memory of your futile pointless life finally blinks out forever in the endless darkness?

**SOURCES:** Many, but not all, of the preceding questions are paraphrased versions of those posed by William Lane Craig in his book **Reasonable Faith**, chapter 2, *The Absurdity of Life Without God*.

**More Evidence in Defense and Confirmation of the Christian Faith**