

# Objections So Bad I Couldn't Have Made Them Up

(or, the World's Ten Worst Objections  
to the *Kalam* Cosmological Argument)

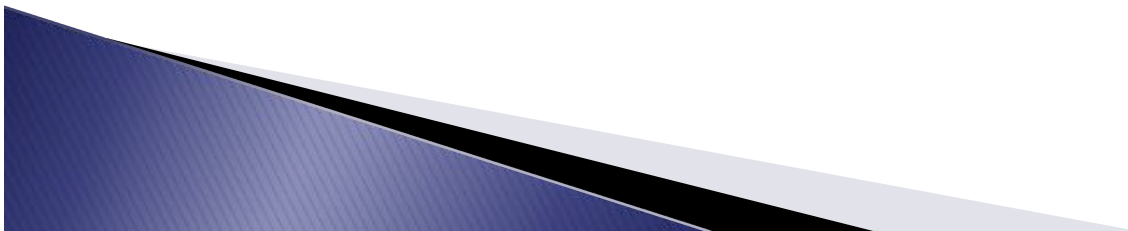


Dr. William Lane Craig

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# *Kalam* Cosmological Argument

1. Everything that begins to exist has a cause.
2. The universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the universe has a cause.



# Objections to the Form of the Argument

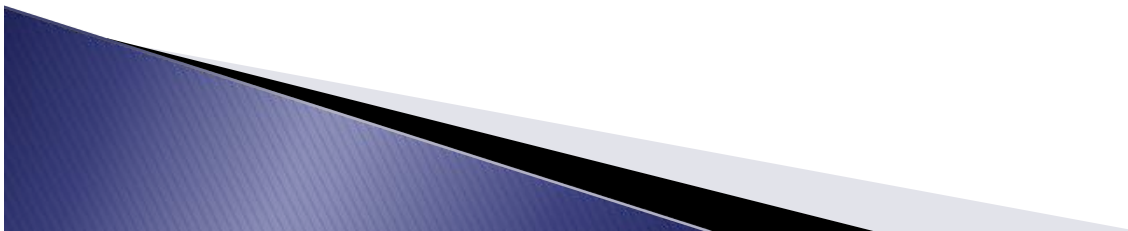
Objection #1: Craig says that he believes in God on the basis of the self-authenticating witness of the Holy Spirit in his heart, not on the basis of the *kalam* cosmological argument. In fact, he says that even if the argument were refuted, he would still believe in God. This is blatant hypocrisy on Craig's part.



Objection #2: The *kalam* cosmological argument is question-begging. For the truth of the first premiss presupposes the truth of the conclusion. Therefore the argument is an example of reasoning in a circle.



1. All men are mortal.
2. Socrates is a man.
3. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.



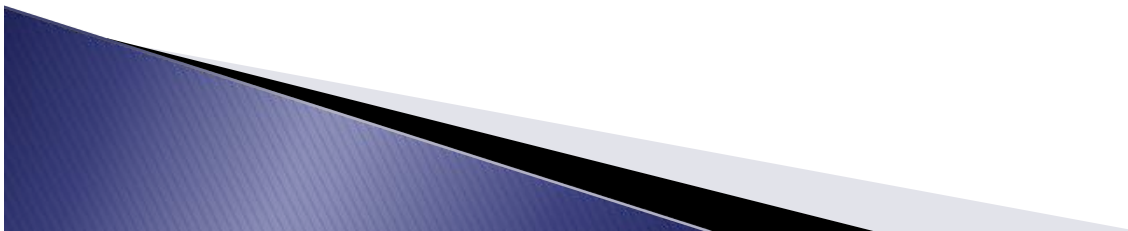
# *Modus ponens*

$p \supset q$

$p$

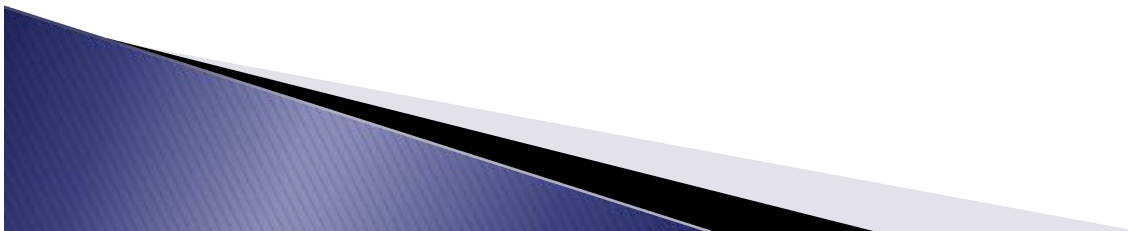
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$\therefore q$

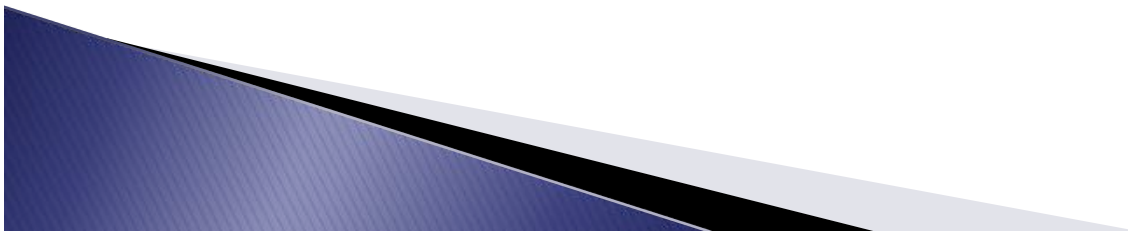


# Begging the Question

1. Either God exists or the moon is made of green cheese.
2. The moon is not made of green cheese.
3. Therefore, God exists.



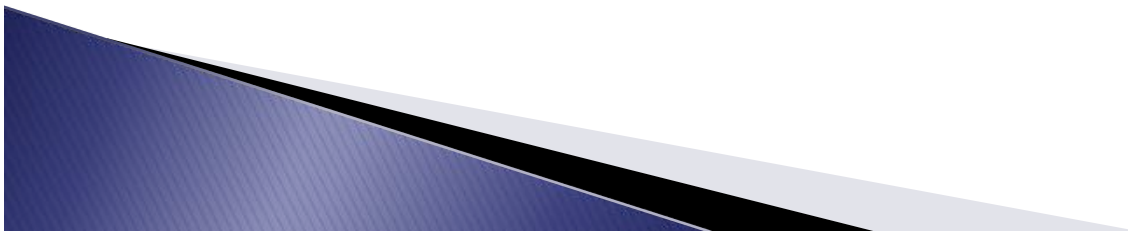
Objection #3: The argument commits the fallacy of equivocation. In the first premiss “cause” means “material cause,” while in the conclusion it does not.





# Fallacy of Equivocation

1. Socrates was Greek.
2. Greek is a language.
3. Therefore, Socrates is a language.



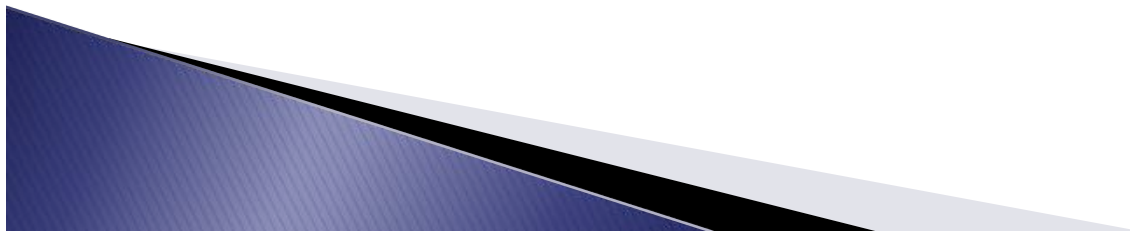
# *Objections to the First Premiss*

*Objection #4:* The first premiss is based upon the fallacy of composition. It fallaciously infers that because everything in the universe has a cause, therefore the whole universe has a cause.



# Why Everything that Begins to Exist Has a Cause

1. Something cannot come from nothing.
2. If something can come into being from nothing, then it becomes inexplicable why just anything or everything doesn't come into being from nothing.
3. Common experience and scientific evidence confirm the truth of premise 1.

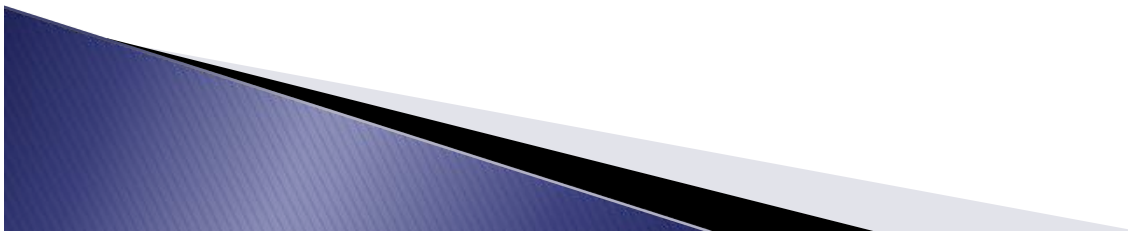


Objection #5: If the universe began to exist, then it must have come from nothing. That is quite plausible, since there are no constraints on nothing, and so nothing can do anything, including producing the universe.



“We must in my opinion begin by distinguishing between that which always is and never becomes and that which is always becoming and never is. . . . everything that becomes or changes must do so owing to some cause; for nothing can come to be without a cause. . . . As for the world—call it that or ‘cosmos’ or any other name acceptable to it—we must ask about it the question one is bound to ask to begin with about anything: whether it has always existed and had no beginning, or whether it has come into existence and started from some beginning. The answer is that it has come into being. . . . And what comes into being or changes must do so, we said, owing to some cause.”

(Plato, *Timaeus* 27–28)



# *Objections to the Second Premiss*

*Objection #6:* Nothing ever begins to exist!  
For the material of which something consists precedes it. So it is not true that universe began to exist.



Objection #7: The argument equivocates on “begins to exist.” In

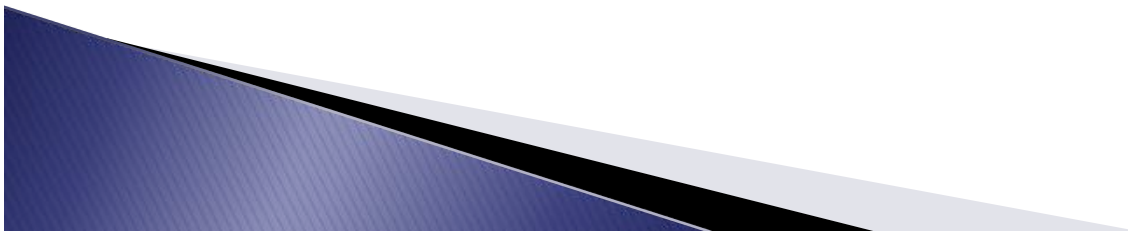
1. Everything that begins to exist has a cause.

it means to begin “from a previous material state,” but in

2. The universe began to exist.  
it means “not from a material state.”



- ▶ “begins to exist” = *def.* “comes into being.”
- ▶  $x$  begins to exist if and only if  $x$  exists at some time  $t$  and there is no time  $t^*$  prior to  $t$  at which  $x$  exists.
- ▶  $x$  begins to exist if and only if  $x$  exists at some time  $t$  and there is no time  $t^*$  prior to  $t$  at which  $x$  exists and no state of affairs in the actual world in which  $x$  exists timelessly.





## *Objections to Argument's Conclusion*

*Objection #8:* The argument is logically self-contradictory. For it says that everything has a cause, yet concludes that there is a first uncaused cause.



Objection# 9: The cause mentioned in the argument's conclusion is not different from nothing. For timelessness, changelessness, spacelessness, *etc.* are all purely negative attributions which are also true of nothingness. Thus, the argument might as well be taken to prove that the universe came into being from nothing.



### Objection #10:

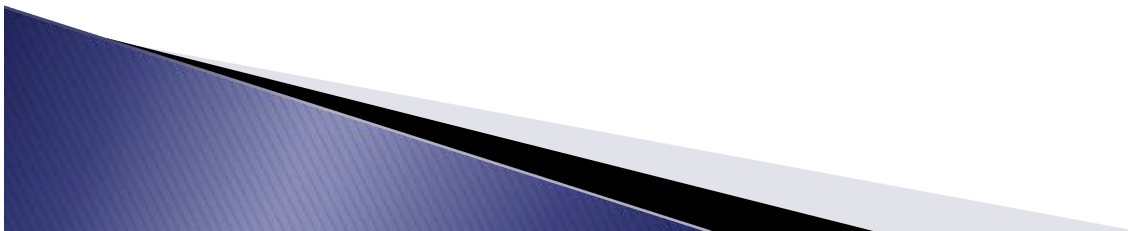
“Even if we allow the dubious luxury of arbitrarily conjuring up a terminator to an infinite regress and giving it a name, there is absolutely no reason to endow that terminator with any of the properties normally ascribed to God: omnipotence, omniscience, goodness, creativity of design, to say nothing of such human attributes as listening to prayers, forgiving sins and reading innermost thoughts.”

(R. Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, p. 77)



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