

Key words:



**A posteriori:** argument based on experience.

**Empirical:** we use our 5 senses to gain this experience.

**Telos:** Goal/ purpose.

**Key Philosopher: Saint Thomas Aquinas.** His teleological argument is his fifth argument for the existence of God. Hence it is known as his “fifth way”.

When you look at the natural world you can see that everything in it follows natural laws, even if the things are not necessarily conscious, thinking being. Things are acting for a purpose/ to reach a goal.	“We see that things, which lack knowledge, such as natural objects, <b>act for a purpose</b> ”
If things follow natural laws / do the same things over and over they normally achieve their goal or purpose	“It is plain that they <b>achieve their end by design and not by chance.</b> ”
However, if a thing cannot think for itself then it does not have any self- given goal or purpose. It must be directed by an intelligent being.	It is obvious that <b>something without intelligence could not move towards</b> an end so unerringly unless it were directed by a being with knowledge and intelligence”
Therefore an intelligent being must exist to direct all natural things to their end/ goal/ purpose.	“Therefore, <b>some intelligent being exists which directs all natural things to their end.</b> ”
This intelligent being is God. So God exists.	<b>“This being we call God”</b>

Things are **designed** with a **purpose**. Remember “telos” means goal/ purpose. Aquinas examines the evidence of things in nature, even things without intelligent working towards a final goal, in order to achieve their purpose. Hence it is more appropriate to refer to his argument as the teleological argument, rather than design argument.

Aquinas argues that all things exhibit purpose, even if they are not intelligent beings. (eg. The planets spinning shows a purpose. ) By striving for this purpose they normally achieve good outcomes. This purpose must be designed/ given by an intelligent being. It has not just come about by chance. This intelligent being must exist (as their purpose exists). This being is God. God exists.



**Key Philosopher: William Paley: The Divine Watch Maker**

**Design:** when things show evidence of things being planned for a purpose.

*If you came upon a stone in an uninhabited place, you could reasonably say that it had been there since the beginning of time.*

*If you came upon a watch in an uninhabited place, you could not say that it had come to be there by chance. The complexity of its mechanism would make you say it had a designer.*

*The universe is far more complex than a watch, so if a watch needs a watchmaker, the universe needs a universe maker.*

*As the only being that could design the universe*

*Would be God, it follows that God must exist.*

**PALEY**

William Paley provided an analogy in which he asked you to imagine finding a watch in an unhabituated place eg. A beach. Having examined the watch, and recognising it had a purpose, we would say the watch was too complex to have happened by chance. You would not say this watch had just appeared. It is far too **complex** and has a **purpose**. Something/ someone has **designed** this watch in order for it to fulfil this purpose- the watch maker is the designer. He said the same could be said of the world. It is too **complex** to have happened by **chance**. It needed a designer. The human eye is very complex and design to see. All this complexity requires a designer. This designer is God. God is the “Divine Watch Maker”.

His argument states:

1. To design something takes intelligence and thought.
2. The universe shows evidence of design.
3. Therefore, a being with intelligence and thought must have designed it.
4. Only God could have intelligence and thought enough to design the universe.
5. Conclusion. Therefore, as the universe exists, God must exist.



**Key Philosopher Richard Swinburne.**

“Every object, however distant in time or space from ourselves, has the same powers and the same liabilities to exercise those powers as do the electrons and protons from which our own bodies are made. If there is no cause of this, it would be the extraordinary coincidence – too extraordinary for any rational person to believe”.

**SWINBURNE.**

It’s too irrational to suppose the laws of nature/ physics are just a coincidence, according to Swinburne. It is more rational to conclude the laws exist due to divine intelligence. The divine intelligence responsible for these laws has also made them easy for humans to observe. We can learn a lot of important things from these laws, including things important for our survival. Eg. Things fall when dropped, this can help us try to avoid accidents.

Swinburne’s argument follows the **principle of Ockham’ razor**. This principle states “do not multiply entities beyond necessity”. Essentially we should look for the simplest answer, and in this case Swinburne is saying it makes much more sense for all these complex laws of nature to have been designed then for them to have happened by coincidence.



**Key Philosopher: F R Tennant: Anthropic principle**



1. The world we live in provides precisely what we need to survive.
2. We can observe the world we live and we can rationally analyse how things work.
3. Evolution has led to intelligent life, only as intelligent beings can we observe the very precise and delicate balance of nature which allows us to live.
4. These conditions for survival are too complex and precise to have happened by chance- they must have been designed and created to fulfil the purpose of sustaining life.

**Key Philosopher: F R Tennant: Aesthetic principle**



Humans enjoy beauty, we find it pleasing. We always try to replicate the beauty of nature, but we never quite succeed. The existence of such natural proves there is a God because it was designed for enjoyment. To be designed for such a purpose requires an intelligent designer. There is no other reason for beauty to exist. It does not serve a ‘useful’ purpose other than pleasing us.

However, many may disagree and say that whilst beauty is a value judgment in humanity many animals perhaps have an idea of ‘beauty’ that they look for in a partner, which does indeed aid survival, so is actually an evolutionary development.,



Strengths of the Teleological/ Design argument.



- ✓ The use of an analogy by Paley makes the argument easier to understand.



- ✓ Not incompatible with scientific theories such as evolution and The Big Bang Theory- these could have been part of design.



- ✓ Has had support throughout time. Eg. Swinburne still supports this argument.



- ✓ It is the simplest and easiest solution- Ockham's razor.



- ✓ God as a designer reinforces the idea that God was involved in the history of the universe. This supports the view that God is Omni benevolent (caring so as to produce things the way we need to survive) Omnipotent (powerful enough to design the world) Omniscient ( knows exactly what to design/ how to design it).



- ✓ A posteriori: based on things we can SEE and TEST. Science has shown us how complex the body is etc



Weaknesses of the Teleological/ Design argument.



**Hume:** The analogy made by Paley is WEAK. There is very little similarity between machines, such as watches, and the natural world. You could say the jump in the analogy is too big. To base the argument on this analogy therefore makes it weak. Also we have experience of the concept of a watch designer, but not of a divine designer, hard to make the jump between too.

**Hume:** Just because there is order in this world does not mean there has to be a "divine orderer". In fact the world we live in may just appear to be ordered as this is all we know. It could really be disastrously chaotic compared other potential worlds.

**Hume:** if the world was not ordered it would not have survived. The order itself is a necessary part of the universe. It had to be there, it was 'put' there. The idea of survival was later supported by Darwin.

**Hume:** Even if there is a designer who says it has to be a God and a singular God? What proof is there of this?

*"why may not several deities combine in contriving and framing a world?"*

**Hume:** If the world was designed it wasn't done very well! It's a hugely flawed design which is evident through the evil and suffering experienced. (2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami nearly 250,000 dead). *"This world, for aught he knows, is very faulty and imperfect, compared to a superior standard; and was only the first rude essay of some infant deity, who afterwards abandoned it, ashamed of his lame performance: it is the work only of some dependent, inferior deity."*



**Mill:** If the world is designed then it hardly points to the God of classical theism which is supposed to be Omni benevolent (all loving). The world is full of cruelty. There are lots of human examples of human cruelty which goes beyond the needs for survival. (Terrorism: 2001 9/11 attacks. 7/7 London bombings, IRA attacks). Even plants can seem to use cruel methods of staying alive: Venus fly trap. Much of the death and cruelty actually seems to be art of a design (after all everyone dies). *"In sober truth, nearly all the things which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another are nature's every-day performances."*



**Darwin:** the complex and essential parts of nature that exhibit design and form the basis of Paley's argument haven't always been there. Darwin provided evidence of evolution and natural selection. Animals and plants have adapted over time in order to survive. If they didn't adapt they would die. So these 'complex and designed features' are actually adaptations and were not put there by God. Darwin's original scientific work has since been supported by many others. For example Sir Charles Lyell- showed the world was millions of years old, not just 6 thousand as is maintained in the Bible. Then Mendel and other geneticists have been able to provide more information about how species have developed and adapted.

**Darwin:** you can also link Darwin's scientific theories to Aquinas. If things had just followed the natural laws due to their God given purpose, would they have ever changed? We know things have adapted to survive, so does this mean they don't have a God given purpose to follow a certain law/ path to achieve a goal or purpose?



**Dawkins:** One of the most prominent atheists of modern day philosophy. Criticised Paley in his book The Blind Watchmaker). He maintains the analogy mad by Paley is false (thus supporting HUME). The watchmaker of nature= natural selection and this is automatic process. The universe = brute fact. *"Paley's argument is wrong...gloriously and utterly wrong."*

**Dawkins:** He states religion is an excuse not explore the world properly through science. Religion assumes that there are things that only God can explain, Dawkins does not agree with this.

