

Logical Proofs Cannot Include Unsubstantiated Assumptions **By David VanLandingham**

Thomas Aquinas developed his logical proof of the existence of god, the creator, in the 13th century. He formalized the “uncaused cause” theory which has since evolved into the “intelligent design” argument. In his Third Article on the existence of God Aquinas posed two proofs. All motion must have a generator and all matter must have a cause. He concluded that neither could move nor cause itself and therefore the original mover and cause had to be God. There are several problems with his argument but the most obvious is that he failed to give proof that matter and energy did not always exist. He simply resolves that by stating “Now in efficient causes it is not possible to go on to infinity, because in all efficient causes following in order the first is the cause of the intermediate ...” and a similar argument in the case of motion, but he established no evidence or logic to prove that impossibility.

In modern physics “The Laws of Conservation of Mass and Energy” conclude the total quantity of matter and energy in the universe is a fixed and never any more or less, demonstrating that it is indeed not only possible but probable motion and matter do “go on to infinity” in both directions. Aquinas’ conclusion is not proven because he cannot assume without proof that in an ever expanding and contracting universe matter and motion did not always exist.

“Intelligent Design” continues this flawed logical process and adds the concept that life is too complex for it to have evolved, proving God. Again, the initial assumption is unproven; “too complex” is entirely relative. Simply because humans have not evolved sufficiently to figure it out does not prove the assumption. Life as we know it exists; therefore it is possible for it to exist, evolution has been found to exist in the growth of viruses, therefore evolution is possible. To be accepted as definitive, “Intelligent Design” must disprove logic that suggests given infinity and the concept of evolution, any life form that can exist, will exist, regardless of complexity. Perhaps if “Intelligent Design” could point out a specific process that is impossible without divine intervention it’s theory could be substantiated.

I am not arguing here that the creator does not exist, just that the basic premises supporting the uncaused cause and “Intelligent Design” theories cannot be accepted as definitive proof because they are based on unproven assumptions. Aquinas concluded he could prove God by logic; therefore it is sufficient to demonstrate that the possibility a contradiction exists. If an alternative theory can be conceived, then Aquinas must prove his premise before reaching a conclusion

If you base your belief on faith then you are secure, however, an offer of proof through logic invites examination if only because the flawless proof of the existence of God would have an immeasurable impact.