



## Sometimes it can be rational to be irrational

- Religion is an art, not a science
  - a. “So the question to ask of a creation story is not whether it is true or false, but what it means, what it’s trying to tell us- a distinction many religious people never get a hold of. And as we’ll see, some of them make themselves look silly trying to prove that the creation story in the Bible is a work of science and not a work of art”
- Strict adherence to logic and reason can only take us so far
  - a. Our emotions are inherently irrational. You can’t apply logic and reason to the way you feel about somebody. Love, grief, and jealousy-irrationality fills our hearts and our souls and plays just as important a role in our lives as rational thought.
- Religion might not provide truth, but it provides meaning
  - a. The lessons religion teaches us access truth through an irrational channel.

### Famous Attempts to Prove the Existence of God

- Cosmological Argument: everything in the universe has a cause; there must be a being initiating the first cause...
- Design Argument: the universe and living elements exhibit evidence of purposeful design
- Ontological Argument: the very concept of God, as the greatest being, entails His existence

## Your subjective, personal experience > objective, logic-based arguments

- Suspension of disbelief
  - a. When we’re consuming art- watching movies, reading fiction stories, looking at a painting- we know they aren’t real, but they still have the power to move us emotionally. We know that *The Notebook* isn’t a real story, but yet it somehow makes us cry anyway.
- Though no objective, philosophical proof of God’s existence has yet been crafted, the fact that He exists in our own heads is enough proof in and of itself
  - a. There are thousands of religions, and they all take different forms. There is no one size fits all approach- the personal relationship that *you* have with God justifies your belief. Religion is an irrational, subjective state of mind, rather than one motivated by rationality and objectivity.

### Responding to the Former Atheist Version of Myself

This inquiry was motivated by my long-held belief that I would never, under any circumstances, become a theist. It’s important to note the value of intellectual open-mindedness- though we hold our opinions close to our hearts, it’s important to approach opposing arguments with an impartial perspective. Believing in God- and being religious- is a very existential state of mind that impacts every living moment we have. Opening your mind to the possibility of God’s existence, just the possibility, may in turn yield spiritual and intellectual awakenings once considered impossible.

## Giving in to the chaotic nature of the universe

- Being religious is about surrendering yourself to God and the chaotic elements of the universe that we can’t possibly control
  - a. You can’t find your car keys, and you’ve checked everywhere. Your pants, the laundry basket, the kitchen table, etc. In that moment, it may seem impossible that your car keys are anything other than lost. Then, out of nowhere, you realize they were in the car the entire time.
- Fate vs. free will
  - a. We certainly have some agency over our actions, but there’s still a supernatural force influencing our objective reality. Luck and randomness influence our daily lives despite our attempts to have complete agency.
- We only have knowledge of the past, and none of the future
  - a. We must give in to the path God puts us on; don’t fight fate, accept it.

### References

- “A Little History of Religion” by Richard Holloway
- “36 Arguments for the Existence of God” by Rebecca Goldstein
- “Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion” by David Hume