

# Contending FOR THE Faith™

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH AND HATE ERROR

## ATHEIST ETHICS: *Are Ethics Without God Possible?\**

David P. Brown

Ethics pertain to the good or the right of human actions. More precisely this study is concerned with the origin of ethics. It is interested in answering the question serving as the title of this chapter. Asked in a different way the question is: *If God is not, can ethics (good or right human acts) exist?*

In beginning this study, the following precise statement is affirmed to be true. *There is a universal, immutable, objective, absolute, and humanly attainable ethical standard.* What does the preceding statement actually declare? To answer this question the terms of the statement must be defined.

1. By *universal* is meant that which pertains to all in reality (Reese 597).

2. By *immutable* is meant “not susceptible to change” (Webster 602).

3. *Objective* is defined to be that which exists in its own right outside of any mind (Reese 398).

4. *Absolute* means that which is complete or fixed (Reese 2).

5. *Human* means “relating to or characteristic of man” (Webster 586).

6. The definition of *attain* is “to reach as an end” (Webster 114).

7. *Humanly attainable*, therefore, means man has the wherewithal to reach as an end the *ethical standard* of the statement.

8. *Ethics* as earlier defined pertains to the good or the right of human actions (Reese 156).

9. *Standard* means that to which one conforms such as laws and customs (Webster 1148).

Thus, it is affirmed: (1) A real right and a real wrong actually exists. (2) It is independent of humanity and superior to all things human. (3) Humans are able to understand it. (4) All humans are amenable (liable to be brought to account) to it. (5) It is also affirmed that it is right for human beings to think that one’s *moral obligation* is dependent on moral truth. In many cases the word *moral* is used as a synonym for *ethics*. Also, morality is defined as the principles of moral conduct, and ethics is defined as pertaining to ethical acts. (6) Further, it is affirmed that humans are to be aware of this moral truth and the obligations placed upon them to determine whether human acts (ethics) are based on and governed by it. *However, the preceding affirmations do not state that morality begins and ends with ethical rules and regulations arbitrarily determined and codified, to which humans must submit and by which they must live.* In other words, this study does not begin and end with simply determining the constituent elements of an ethical code, one of which might declare a person to be moral if one commits one robbery during a twelve-month period. But if one commits more than one robbery during a twelve-month period that person would be immoral. *Thus, this article is interested in the origin, source, basis, or foundation of ethics without which there is and can be no ethics.*

*Herein affirmed is that there is a fact in existence that is higher than humans of which there can be no higher.* (1) It is

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also affirmed that this fact is connected with and to humans. (2) Furthermore, it is affirmed that by and through this fact the correct ethics for human moral behavior is made possible. (3) Moreover, it is herein affirmed that without this higher than human fact, of which there can be no higher, human ethics is impossible. Therefore, if atheism is true, humans could not possess the wherewithal to conceive of morality. Without the ability to conceive of morals, the basis for seeing the need to regulate morality (ethics) also would not exist.

For the sake of argument, suppose humans do exist without God. This is the atheist position. If God does not exist, what is in or a part of a human that compels one necessarily to be amenable to any ethical standard. Logically, if God does not exist, an ethical standard would owe its origin to human beings. But such a standard would only be authoritative over those who were amenable to it. But, what humans would be amenable to it? Those who freely chose to submit to it or those who were forced to do so. Of course, such an ethical standard would *not* be immutable, universal, objective, or absolute. It would be relative and subjective—varying in meaning and the constituent elements comprising it. In both cases, the constituent elements comprising an ethical system would be determined by the social, racial, religious, philosophical, and cultural beliefs of those who developed it. Each component part would bear the subjective imprint of the person(s) who originated them. In other words, human beings would be the fact, of which there is no higher, pertaining not only to morality, but everything else. *This is nothing more or less than Humanism.*

In a democratic form of government, the majority of the people would determine what is ethical. But, since the world is composed of many nations, cultures, philosophies, and religions, logically each nation's government must be the final and highest authority in determining what is and what is not ethical. In a totalitarian state only a very few people or only one person would have the final authority in determining what the ethical system would be that governed the ethical conduct of its citizens.

Because of the atheist position regarding the origin of humans, the reasoning done by atheists in determining and deciding on a code of ethics would be much like that found in the following syllogisms. However, before noticing the syllogisms the following material concerning syllogisms is important to understand.

In a general sense a syllogism is an argument (the fundamental unit of reasoning) in which two sentences (statements) lead to a conclusion. If the premises of the following syllogisms (or any syllogism) are true and the syllogisms are valid (an argument is valid when the premises necessitate the conclusion), then the conclusion of each syllogism is true (Ruby 329).

To show some of the *implications* of those who affirm that man is only organized matter in motion, the accidental product of millions of years of organic evolution, the following syllogisms are offered. They are stated as an organic evolutionist (atheist) must state them in order to reason from the atheist position to determine the origin of ethics.

#### SYLLOGISM ONE

- (1) If it is the case that all living things are only the accidental product of lifeless matter (The late Thomas B. Warren in his 1976 debate with Antony G. N. Flew used “dead rocks and dirt” as a synonym for “lifeless matter”);
- (2) And, if it is the case that humans are living things;
- (3) Then, it is the case that humans are the accidental product of lifeless matter.

#### SYLLOGISM TWO

- (1) If it is the case that humans are only matter;
- (2) And, if it is the case that humans are in motion;
- (3) Then, it is the case that humans are only matter in motion.

#### SYLLOGISM THREE

- (1) If it is the case that humans are only matter in motion;
- (2) And, if it is the case that an ethical system is a thing humans have produced;
- (3) Then, it is the case that an ethical system is produced only by human matter in motion.

The atheist (organic evolutionist) must affirm and argue from the following affirmative statement: *Humans are only organized matter in motion, only the accidental product of millions of years of organic evolution.* And, as proved in the previous syllogisms, the atheist is forced to affirm and argue that ethics is only the accidental product of lifeless matter (“dead rocks and dirt”) that over millions of years of organic evolution produced human beings.

Of course, the foregoing atheist position raises many questions that atheists cannot consistently answer—some of which will now be noticed. On the basis of this premise, how can the human sense of oughtness (that one ought not murder, ought not lie, ought not steal, ought not rape, or that one ought to respect life, or ought to tell the truth, etc.) be adequately accounted for and explained? Surely the atheist will not state that humans are without a sense of oughtness. Assuming that the atheist will not deny that a real and actual sense of oughtness exists within ordinary humans, will the atheist affirm that the human sense of oughtness is nothing more than the product of organized human matter in motion—itsself being only the accidental product of lifeless matter (“dead rocks and dirt”) that over millions of years of organic evolution developed into humans who are only

matter in motion? If that is the case, what adequate scientific evidence proves that physical matter alone by accident over millions of years of organic evolution not only produced human beings, but also produced the non-material human sense of oughtness? If it cannot come from human organized matter in motion, what can produce it? What law of science states that “dead rocks and dirt,” by accident, over millions of years of organic evolution, produced a human (organized matter in motion), and from such a human there is derived a non-material sense of oughtness? *How can that which is not matter (sense of oughtness) derive from that which is only matter?* So, will an organic evolutionist attempt to tell us what there is in this organized matter in motion (the human physical body) that compels them to even conceive the idea of morality, much less seek to develop ethics to regulate the conduct of that which is nothing more than organized matter in motion—only the accidental product of lifeless matter over millions of years of organic evolution?

Furthermore, what about the thought processes of the brain—are such processes only the atoms of the brain accidentally bumping into one another? How could anyone ever trust such “thinking”? But if humans are nothing more than matter in motion, the product of accidental evolution over millions of years, how does an atheist explain what thoughts and ideas are? We certainly cannot engage in such crazy “thinking” when it comes to the development and operation of a computer.

In passing, it would be interesting to hear an atheist *adequately* explain how “dead rocks and dirt” over millions of years of organic evolution *accidentally* organized itself into human matter in motion, or dog matter in motion, or cat matter in motion, or bird matter in motion, or elephant matter in motion, or fish matter in motion, or bumble bee matter in motion, etc., ad infinitum, ad absurdum.

*Furthermore, the idea of an accidental organization is an oxymoron.* Organization demands an organizer. It demands a mind that can conceptualize and that, therefore, thinks organized thoughts about organization. Further, it must be a mind with the wherewithal to carry out the organization it conceptualized—to bring into existence and organize whatever demands organization. And that means there must be a person of such a nature and attributes to act within and of itself to bring the necessary power it possesses to organize what needs organizing. No wonder the Bible begins with, “**In the beginning God...**” (Gen. 1:1; Also see 1 Cor. 14:40)—the eternal uncaused first cause (mind/person) of which there is no higher.

What about the human *conscience*? The *conscience* is the source of one’s feeling of self-approval or guilt. If the **conscience** is ultimately, finally, and only the product of matter (“dead rocks and dirt”), *how* does one account for it? If atheism is true, one must conclude that the *human conscience* is nothing more than the product of molecules and

chemical reactions that influence matter in motion, etc.

Again, the preceding remarks about accidental organization must not be forgotten. *Truly, from nothing comes nothing.* Thus, *no* organization can produce organization. But the atheist affirms that by an accident, from “dead rocks and dirt,” not only did life come, but human life, with intelligence, rationality, free will, a sense of oughtness (moral obligation), and a conscience (moral approval or disapproval). Thus, logically the atheist is forced to conclude that human life, human intelligence, human rationality, human will, the human sense of oughtness, the human conscience, and the whole human moral realm derives *only* from the chance physical interaction of matter in motion—the accidental product of millions of years of organic evolution.

In view of their major premise (that humans are the accidental product of millions of years of organic evolution), the person(s) who develops a code of ethics, with the power to bind it on other humans, becomes, then, the enforcing authority. If such authority is worldwide, it can hold all humans accountable to it. Therefore, all humans would be amenable to it and must be informed accordingly. *This is Humanism—it all begins and ends with humans and humans are nothing more or less than matter in motion, the accidental product of millions of years of organic evolution.*

Having stated the preceding, comes again the questions of *how could* and *why would* human matter in motion, the accidental product of “dead rocks and dirt,” over millions of years of organic evolution conceptualize human ethics, much less develop the constituent ethical elements to comprise an ethical code? Furthermore, what is there within a human (“matter in motion,” etc.) that *produces the idea* that humans *need* any kind of standard by which to determine whether their actions are *good (right)* or *bad (wrong)*? What is there *about* or *within* matter in motion, etc., that *conceives* of *good* and *bad*, *right* and *wrong*? Moreover, *how* can that which is only matter in motion, etc., develop the concept of *need*—in this case the need for a standard by which human conduct may be approved (good) or disapproved (bad)? From *where* does the *concept* come that *directs* humans to *think* that people *ought* to be amenable to them, in some cases for other humans to mete out severe punishment when certain guidelines are broken (the Nazis at the Nuremberg, Germany war crime trials)? How can human matter in motion, etc., have the wherewithal to *conceive* of what it is to *care* about one’s own conduct, much less the kind of actions in which other humans engage?

It must be proved that matter (“dead rocks and dirt”) over millions of years of evolution accidentally produced human matter in motion in which is found what is called the human senses. It must be proved that from matter (“dead rocks and dirt”), over millions of years of organic evolution, there was accidentally produced human matter in motion from which came non-matter, the metaphysical (spiritual)—

the sense of oughtness and the conscience, ideas, motives, reasons, purposes, the desire to regulate human acts, to conceive of certain human acts as bad and other human acts as good, to condemn and punish (even capital punishment in some cases, or life in prison in others, etc.) those who violate certain ethical principles, to approve and encourage other conduct, to reward it, etc. *Again, where is the scientific and/or philosophical proof that from lifeless matter comes life of any kind, much less the proof from science or philosophy that “dead rocks and dirt” in and of itself, no matter the length of time involved, can produce the metaphysical as noted previously?* To allege that there is no metaphysical reality is one thing; to prove it is quite something else.

Having stated the purpose of this study and noticing the absurd and nonsensical alternatives, it is herein argued that *God is the only true source of humans and human morality.* Hence, it is God, the creator of all that is creatable; the first cause who is uncaused; the final authority of which there is no other; the eternal one from whom human ethics is derived; the eternal fact of which there is no higher and from which all physical and metaphysical (spiritual) reality comes. It is the Divine authority of God generally declared in the natural world and more specifically revealed in the Words (vehicles of thought, signs of ideas) of the Bible that declare His moral nature to human beings. *So, it is affirmed that true human ethics is an authoritarian standard that derives from the Divine Nature of God, which nature issues from His very essence; that it is observed generally in the laws governing God’s material creation and more precisely detailed in God’s revealed will—the inspired Words of the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:2-4; Jam. 1:25; John 12:48).* Any ethical system leaving God out of it cannot be true and morally absolute. Nothing else but God qualifies as an absolute, eternal, omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient being, possessing the wherewithal to produce a universal absolute objective system of ethics.

*Any system admitting to be subjective and relative, by the very nature of what it means to be subjective (in and of one’s own experience) and relative (changing according to one’s own experience), and at the same time affirming objective absolute morality, is a self-contradiction producing inconsistent moral principles and ethical conduct.* Such is nothing less than absurd and nonsensical. This is the case, because any ethical system affirming absolute morality must presuppose God, the source of authoritarian ethics. But, as noted, to do so is against the very nature of what it is to be subjective and relative.

The absurdity of this view has been observed on several occasions in various higher education classes. It has happened when ethical subjective relativist professors have dogmatically affirmed the statement: “There is no absolute truth.” Their absurd statement was met by students asking them if they are absolutely sure that there is no absolute truth.

Thus, before the class, they have been reproved to their own chagrin and embarrassment by a simple question, but one of great import. *Hence, we are on rationally sound ground when we affirm that there is a universal, objective, absolute authoritarian system of ethics that originated with, is derived from, and was revealed by God to his human creatures in general through natural law and specifically, precisely, and in detail in the Words of Bible* (Rom. 1:19-20; Heb. 11:3; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; et al.).

The preceding information should make it clear that it is impossible for anyone who is some sort of materialist/organic evolutionist to appeal to human nature for the highest fact of which there is no higher, as the standard that determines what is and is not good human behavior. Remember, the atheist position is that humans are at best no more than organized matter in motion, etc. Atheists are consumed with declaring humans to be nothing more than the accidental product of millions of years of evolution from matter (“dead rocks and dirt”). Atheists cannot logically explain how, by an accident, that organized human matter in motion, without outside guidance or assistance, became organized without an organizer, much less logically explain how human nature was formed by an accident out of evolved “dead rocks and dirt.”

*Human nature is not the product of molecules and chemical actions interacting on and with one another.* From where, then, did it come? Atheists cannot consistently answer that question. They cannot prove what they must prove—specifically, that matter is eternal. Or, if they think it is not eternal, they are completely at a loss to adequately account for the existence of matter—“dead rocks and dirt.” *But without adequate evidence they go ahead and think it to be that way anyway.* In so doing, they go against everything they teach about proof, verification, and falsification in the scientific method of research or in logical proof (a true proposition is one that corresponds with the facts). *In other words, they think what they do about the origin of humans, their own being, and their conduct, knowing full well that they have no adequate evidence and valid arguments to prove their dogmatic atheistic and evolutionary views regarding human-kind.* What scholarship!

When people cut themselves loose from God, they cannot claim human nature as the standard for determining correct or incorrect ethics. This is the case because, when one denies the existence of God, by implication one has denied that man is made in the image of God. Thus, as studied previously, atheists do not think humans possess a nature that bears the imprint of God’s nature—the *sense of oughtness, conscience, or any other metaphysical (spiritual) aspect of mankind.* So, atheists are between the proverbial rock and a hard place in their logical consideration of ethics without God.

It would be a gross absurdity to deny that what is called

*moral* exists. The atheist knows that. So, if there is no God, from where does morality come? Furthermore, if there is no God, but there is human nature, what is the fact that is higher than man of which there is no higher, that morally obligates one to conduct oneself according to the atheist’s concept of human nature? The *sense of oughtness* earlier discussed could not exist. And since it could not exist, there could be *no moral obligation* on the part of humans to comply with the atheist’s natural law—a fictitious law that is derived from a fictitious human nature. The atheist’s human nature and natural law are fictitious because there is no proof of any kind that states that such law and nature comes from dead matter. But in the atheist’s false scheme of things, human nature and the moral law derived from it *must* exist without the divine nature of the Creator. *Let it be clearly understood that the Bible teaches that human nature exists, but it also teaches that human nature bears the imprint of God’s moral nature and that the knowledge of right and wrong ultimately is based upon God’s existence.*

If God does not exist, there is nothing in human nature (whatever such a human nature would be) that morally necessitates humans to live in accordance with a nature that allegedly derived accidentally via organic evolution over millions of years from “dead rocks and dirt.” Thus, to advocate that one is *obliged* to do what is right (whatever right would be) when no objective absolute criterion of duty exists, is to affirm that what is morally right and wrong is dependent on each person’s subjective concept of things. Furthermore, what is morally right on one day may be immoral the next day. The very concept of ethical relativity demands that contradictory ethical rules be permitted. *So, why were the Nazis guilty of objective moral wrong in the killing of the millions of Jews and other people before and during WWII?* Did not the German government at the time authorize the killing of the Jews? How can the killing of the Jews be labeled murder seeing that the government authorized the action that killed them? Let the atheist attempt to logically answer the previous questions. Try though they may, atheists cannot adequately and/or consistently answer them and like questions. The atheists who strongly condemn the Nazis, as they deny the existence of God, have no basis for accounting for their desires to declare the Nazis to be guilty of actual objective moral wrong. The “fun begins” when an atheist begins to attempt to prove that without God the Nazis were guilty of wrong objective moral acts.

If God does not exist, how would anyone know specifically what is morally right and what is morally wrong? There would be no supreme final moral nature in existence of which there is no greater to set out the universal, absolute, objective moral standard of right and wrong. From what source, then, could moral law be derived—eternal matter (“dead rocks and dirt”)? If atheism is true, there is no such thing as a moral person. Thus, there can be no immorality. The atheistic mind rebels at such an idea, but cannot explain

why organized matter in motion, the accidental product of millions of years of organic evolution, should and could develop a (nonmaterial) sense that would be offended and outraged at the Nazis for doing what they did to people and why their actions ought to be judged morally wrong. Thus, the atheist does not possess the wherewithal to explain why he rebels at the atrocities committed by the Nazi's or why he even thinks of those acts as atrocities. *What a dilemma for the atheists—but their own absurd position logically leads them to their sad state of mental self-contradiction, confusion, and frustration.*

This study now turns to the requirements that are fundamental to an ethical system in order for all human beings to be amenable to it. From this study it is determined that the following requirements are basic to an ethical system for all humans. They are:

1. It must be justifiable—that means there must be an adequate source for the constituent ideas that comprise ethics.
2. It must be the product of a higher moral nature of which there is no higher.
3. Since moral nature derives from a person, it must be a person who is higher than human beings, of which there is no higher.
4. The first, the last, the definitive basis for human ethics must be the eternal Spirit—the eternal fact of which there is no higher—God (Gen. 1:1; John 1: 1-4; 4:24; Luke 24:49; Acts 17:27-28).

However, more and more people are choosing some system of ethics that in one way or the other rejects absolute objective truth. They are choosing *secular ethical systems*. These systems leave God out of all things and militantly oppose Him, while rejecting and opposing absolute objective truth. More specifically, they are seeking to determine right and wrong conduct on the basis of a specific society and/or culture. Thus, to them there is no ultimate, absolute, and objective right or wrong by which all cultures are to be evaluated.

In general, the following will suffice to show what these false systems are, how they work, and what is wrong with them. The philosophy known as *utilitarianism* determines morality by the end result. But the rule that the end justifies the means is false. Utilitarianism affirms that good is what gives one the most pleasure. What is bad is anything that is hurtful to mankind. On this basis one determines what acts are good or bad. It was good for the Nazis to kill the Jews, but it is obvious the Jews did not hold the Nazi view of what was good for them (the Jews). So, what was good to the Nazis was bad for the Jews. Thus, the dilemma for those who follow this false ethical system.

Morality is *not* based on results. Because a majority of people want abortion, or to kill the Jews, or to legalize ho-

mosexual relationships by calling them marriages and voting them to be legal, or a court deciding they are legal, does not make such immoral acts into moral acts.

The means must be evaluated by an objective, consistent, et al., moral standard, as has been set out and proved in this study. Utilitarianism does not fit the four points previously listed. But those principles are necessary for an ethical system to be that to which all men of all cultures are amenable.

Another false philosophy of ethics that is much like utilitarianism is *situation ethics*. It also advocates that the end justifies the means. The philosophy also errs in thinking that before anyone can know what the moral act can be, he must know the end results.

Situation Ethics substitutes the Greek *agape*/love for utilitarianism's pleasure principle (Anderson 15-19). At the same time this false ethical system corrupts the meaning of *agape*/love. Situation ethicists think of *agape*/love as a warm, fuzzy, sick, syrupy, subjective, sentimental, romanticism. In fact, taking notice of the word's usage in most cases reveals that many people use the term *love* to represent some sort of affection or lust for something or someone. Thus, many rarely, if ever, think of love in any other way than a certain kind of affection or lust for someone or something. But the affectionate loves are one thing and *agape*/love quite another. Therefore, few people really understand the highest form of love that the Greek word *agape* conveys.

The following quotation does a great job in defining and illustrating the highest form of love—*agapao/agape*—the love of God for man in John 3:16 and love as Paul discussed it in 1 Corinthians 13.

Now love is not a mere affection or emotion. Love, strictly speaking, is an act of the will and it may or may not be associated with affection or emotion. Love is actively disposed to become an enduring thing, a habit, a virtue. But affections and emotions are, of their nature, passing. Affections and fine emotion are flowers that bloom sometimes upon the sturdy plant of love, but they are not the substance of the plant. Many of us must recall the pointed lesson contained in a school reader of a day when such textbooks were not entirely given over to butterflies and robins and John and Lucy and their nice dog, Fido. It is the story of two little girls and their mother. One daughter made a show of affection, and, with many a lusty hug, declared that she loved her mother very much; after which pious declaration she issued forth to play with little friends. The other child said never a word about love, but she washed the dishes and swept the floor before going out to play. The obvious point is that the second child was the one who had true love for her mother. Love is a will-habit that naturally tends to translate itself into action. Our Lord said, **"If you love me, keep my commandments."** Which (saving reverence) is equivalent to saying, **"If you love me, love me; show it in action; don't merely talk about it."** Now, love may be love of concupiscence or love of benevolence. The love of concupiscence (and the word *concupiscence* has

no evil meaning here: it means desire) tends to possession of the object (person or thing) beloved. The love of benevolence tends to seek the welfare of the object beloved. The first seeks to win or have its object; the second seeks to do good to its object (Glenn 184-185).

Jesus said that the proof of one's love for Him is to keep His commandments (John 14:15). John said,

**By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous** (1 John 5:2-3).

*Thus, the proponents of situation ethics fail to understand that doing the loving thing is to obey God* (Ecc. 12:13; Heb. 5:9).

The meaning of *agape*/love does not change from situation to situation. It remains constant—always motivating one to obey God in any and all situations and circumstances. No matter the sacrifice that must be made, whether affection is involved or not, or any pain, or pleasure, or the amount of pain or pleasure, *agape* will lead one to obey God. Without exception love and faith (Jam. 2:24) reveal themselves to be the driving forces behind one's obedience to God.

In the Old Testament, God's command to Abraham for him to offer up his son, Isaac, as a burnt offering is a prime example of *agape*/love working in man, leading him to obey God, no matter the cost to himself. That Old Testament account also serves well to show the place and significance of a living faith in God and His will as such trust and confidence of Abraham (and Isaac) toward God and His will led the great patriarch and his son to obey Him. Abraham's *agape*/love of God and His Word demonstrates how the emotional affectionate loves are controlled by the supreme love of God working in a person, which love always leads one to submit to God—doing what He said, in the way He said it, and for the reason(s) He said it (Gen. 22:1-14; Heb. 11:17-19; Jam. 2:21-24; 1 John 2:3-5; 5:2-3).

Of course, the greatest example of *agape*/love in action of which there is not greater, is the example of the willingness of Christ to do His Father's will. He became a man to be tempted in every point as man is tempted but without Himself sinning. Then, to suffer the agony and shameful death on the cross for the ultimate good of others. In our Lord's action we see *agape*/love motivating one to obey God, to the Father's glory, and for the ultimate good of humanity. There is no greater example of how far *agape*/love will go in motivating a person to deny himself for the ultimate eternal good of others than Christ's own love for sinful man and God, which love caused Him to deny Himself and obey God in order to save the human race from sin (John 3:16; 10:17; 13:1; Rom. 5:8; Eph. 2:4; 5:25; Heb. 4:15; 12:2).

The old saying that "the road to Hell is paved with good intentions" well describes the false doctrines of *Utilitarianism* and *Situation Ethics* and, for that matter, any other sub-

jective, relative system of ethics. Yes: **"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"** (Pro. 14:12).

Obviously for something to have a beginning, including the universe, it did not exist until it began to do so. For some thing or someone to come into being, there must be an adequate or efficient cause to bring it into existence. But before matter, time, and space there was something or there was nothing. If there was nothing (not one thing), how did things that require an adequate cause begin, including ethics? If we were to take a family pet, say a cat, we know that the adequate cause for its existence is its father and mother. And, we know they had fathers and mothers. Of course, some erroneously teach that if we go back far enough, we will come to something that is not a cat, but it is the ancestor of the cat. Since so many people believe in evolution, emphasized here is this—*that even the evolutionist has an insurmountable problem*. So, let us continue with this line of reasoning. If such were the case, then there would continue to be fathers and mothers of whatever the ancestor of the cat was. Further, many very intelligent and highly educated people tell us that if we trace the ancestry of our cat far enough back we will get to a single cell. Then, continuing even farther back that simple cell will end up coming from something that was not alive. But the history of this cat has always involved adequate or efficient causes for it and its ancestor's existence.

Of itself, matter, the ultimate evolutionary beginning of the cat, could not exist. Notice that if the cat could not exist of itself, then whatever preceded it, and was inferior to it, could not exist of itself, either. Knowing that this adequate or essential cause and effect cannot go on indefinitely, one is forced to get back at some point to a cause that was uncaused—*something that does not depend on something else for its existence*. Therefore, even the organic evolutionist runs into a dilemma in his own evolutionary descent of the cat to the present—from "matter to meow." And the same dilemma exists for those who believe in the evolutionary descent of any other life form. But the theory (and that is all it is—a theory—a poor one at that) never would have been thought of except for certain humans' strong desire to rule out God as the creator of all things. The same is also true concerning the origin of ethics.

If this first cause does not depend upon something else for its existence, logically it must eternally exist of itself. In other words, it exists eternally by its own essence from which its nature derives.

The Bible teaches: **"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"** (Gen. 1:1). In concert with the inspired Moses, the inspired Psalmist wrote, **"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth"** (Psa. 33:6; cf. John 1:3; Heb. 11:3). The Bible also affirms that **"there is none good but one, that is, God"** (Mat. 19:17). Thus, in the beginning

God, who is eternally “**Good**,” created all things. Since from the ultimate Good comes only good, of the completed creation, Moses wrote it was “**very good**” (Gen. 1:31). Since God cannot do anything that is not in complete harmony with His own being and, thus, His nature, then the creation of the universe and all things pertaining thereto were in perfect harmony with His nature. God being good, He could only create that which is good. Hence, as noted, God declared that His completed creation was “**very good.**” But the Bible states that “**God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created them**” (Gen. 1:27). Man’s material body is not contemplated in the preceding statement because God is not matter (John 4:24). Thus, it is the spirit of man that is created in God’s likeness (Heb. 12:9b). Furthermore, it is man’s moral nature that bears the stamp of God’s image. From this imprint derives man’s *sense of oughtness* and his *conscience*. *There is no other adequate explanation for the existence of man’s moral awareness and concerns.* Therefore, when it is affirmed that God is the uncaused cause of which there is no greater, by implication the Bible is teaching that God, whose essence is good, is the good uncaused cause of which there is no greater good. Thus, because God is good, good has always existed. Therefore, without God there is no good (In fact, there would be no evil without that which is good, because evil (that which is bad) is contrary to that which is good). Without good there are no ethics. Without mankind studying the Bible correctly, one cannot properly understand the moral and spiritual principles whereby God, in part, expects humans to act or live (ethical conduct). So, humans cannot be good without direction from the ultimate good of

which there is no greater (God), Who directs them to engage in good or right actions (Gal. 5:19-23; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Jam. 1:25; 2 Pet. 1:2-11). Thus, if God is not, there can be no possibility of ethics, atheists to the contrary notwithstanding.

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