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Sound Reasoning Leads to God

and

Jesus, The Son of God

By

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Ottawa, Ohio
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SOUND REASONING LEADS TO GOD

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Feast of the Immaculate Conception
December 8.

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by

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Preliminary Remark

I consider it my duty to publicly acknowledge the many helpful suggestions which I have received on the manuscript of this little brochure from the Most Rev. Karl J. Alter, D.D., Bishop of Toledo; from the Very Rev. Ignatius A. Wagner, C.P.P.S., Ph.D., Mod. Provincial of the American Society of the Precious Blood; and from the Rev. Joseph Rohling, C.P.P.S., S.T.D., Professor of Dogmatic Theology and Patrology at St. Charles' Seminary, Carthagena, Ohio.

May the reader of "Sound Reasoning Leads to God" and of the article following it, "Jesus, the Son of God", reap the full benefit of this message, which I consider opportune and necessary.

The Author.

SOUND REASONING LEADS TO GOD

There are quite a number of persons in this country who do not practice any religion. They are not members of any church. They imagine that religion is based upon sentimentality.

Many of these persons would practice religion if they could find any reason for doing so. They do not know that there are sound basic proofs for the existence of God, for the divinity of Christ, and for the mission of the true Church. Perhaps you get in contact with some of these unbelievers. You can do them a good turn by acquainting them with the proofs contained in this booklet. Sound reasoning leads to God. The examples adduced in the argumentation on the existence of God are suggestive of similar examples. In fact, the reader should bring similar arguments to his mind and follow the method of argumentation. We use the example of a watch to prove that there is a watchmaker. We might just as well use the example of a shoe to prove that there is a shoemaker, or the example of a wagon to prove that there is a wagon maker. All of this may be used as a means to realize the fact that every effect has a cause. When we behold a thing we know that that thing was caused by something or somebody.

When we see a thing in motion we know that somebody or something started the thing to move. The whole universe is in motion. Who started it to move? The Prime-mover is God.

WHO IS GOD AND WHERE IS HE?

1. Cause and Effect

That watch was made. You know that it did not come together by itself. Perhaps you have never met the man who made it. Nevertheless you know that some one made the watch, and that it would be foolish to say: "I don't believe that anyone made my watch, because I did not see it." How do you know then that there is a watchmaker and has been one, though you never saw him? You know it by the watch which was made. By the thing made we prove that there must be a maker. In other words, by the effect we argue the cause.

Look about in nature. No matter whither we look, we see how one thing is caused by another. The change of weather, the recurrence of the seasons, the sprouting of the flower, the birth among animals, the numerical growth of mankind; all of these are effects produced by their respective causes. There is a cause for everything. Now, all these things, as we observe, have a beginning and come to an end. We are all finite beings. There was a time when neither you nor I existed. None of us existed a hundred years ago. There was a time when our parents did not as yet exist, neither their parents, nor any of their ancestors. Thus going back from parent to parent, we come to a period when no human being existed. The first man had no parents. How did he come into existence? He could not make himself, because he did not exist. No human being existed; therefore, some one

else was the cause of his coming into existence. The First Cause of man's existence we call God. God created man.

In charity I do not presume that you are an evolutionist. Material Evolutionists hold that man descended from lower forms of life, namely animal forms, and even go so far as to claim that living matter has been evolved out of non-living matter.

The First Cause of all created things we call God.

Trace the pedigree of an animal to the utmost. Finally, we behold the first. That first animal evidently was not born. How did it come into existence?

Take the trees. Some of them developed from the planted seed. That seed came from another tree; that tree from another seed, and so on and on until we come to the first tree. It could not come by itself. Who caused that tree to be? That First Cause we call God.

God is the First Cause of all created beings; God is our Creator. He gave us existence and caused all things by which we are kept alive. God is He who gave us being and life and keeps us in existence, keeps us alive. He is the author of our being and of all the good in existence.

From the existence of finite beings, going back to the start, we come to the knowledge of an infinite self-existent Being, the creator of all; we come to the knowledge of God. Moreover we come to the knowledge that He who brought beings into existence must be omnipotent, all-powerful; and that He must exist independent of creation, an all-sufficient, intelligent, eternal, perfect

Being. Reason tells us before the world was made, or anything was in it, God existed. Therefore He does not depend upon the things which He created.

2. Motion and Moving Power

An automobile speeds along the road, or a majestic passenger train runs at a tremendous rate. You see it and admire the speed. You know for certain, that neither the train nor the auto started by itself. You know that someone set it into motion. Motion presupposes a mover, no matter who or what that may be. By itself nothing can move which belongs to inanimate nature. Motion is the effect of a moving cause. All the world is in motion; and all that is in it moves along with it through space immeasurable. The stir of a soft evening breeze as well as the howling hurricane indicates motion. The light of the sun, which we see every day, is another proof of great motion. Light travels at the tremendous speed of 186,000 miles a second. The clouds in the sky, the stars in the firmament are moving along continually. Even the tiny blade of grass by its slow growth is in motion. Growth, be it ever so slow, is in motion. From the remotest heavenly planets to the most humble creature on earth, motion is everywhere. We behold the earth vibrating and pulsating from end to end, from day to day, from year to year, incessantly in motion. If we reflect for a moment, we understand plainly that there must be one, who caused the first motion; and this Prime-mover we call God. One thing moves another; but the first thing could not move unless it was put into motion. The motion in the world

argues a Prime-mover, proclaims the existence and action of God, in whom "we live and move and are." Acts 17:28.

3. Necessity and Contingency

The answer to the question, who is God? may be this: God is the necessary Being. That sounds rather philosophical. It means the same as saying: God must exist and does exist; the universe may exist and does exist. Real truth always excludes error. In this, mathematical and metaphysical truth are alike. Nevertheless, there is a vast difference between our perception of truth. We know that some statements are so evidently true that they cannot be otherwise; two times two must be four. That is a necessary fact. We cannot even think it to be otherwise.

Now I give you another fact. Here is the statement: Chicago is built near Lake Michigan. This is a fact, but we can easily see that Chicago might have been built somewhere else. That the world exists is a contingent fact. Anything in the world occupies space for a while. There is a tree in the field. That is a contingent fact only, for we see instantly that it might be otherwise. Thus it is with every part of the universe; and what is true of its constituent parts is true of the whole universe. The existence of the world is a contingent fact. **A** contingent fact always presupposes a cause, which determined it so. There is a man with a red nose. That **■**his nose is red is a contingent fact. Now that presupposes a cause. The cause may be found across the bar, or it may be due to sickness. The world exists, but not necessarily so. Reason tells us there must be a Being who

determined its existence, and this is the necessary Being, whom we call God, the Creator of heaven and earth.

4. Perfection, Relative and Absolute

By the comparative perfection in nature, we can argue to the fact that God is a perfect Being. There is an old Latin adage: "Nemo dat, quod non habet. No one can give what he has not." No cause can convey to its effect what it has not. But he may have the cause of it in a higher and nobler form. To illustrate: there is a beautiful picture painted by an artist. People admire this masterpiece. Not the paint, but the mind of the artist is the efficient cause of that masterpiece. The conception of his mind he put on canvas. The picture represents a Saint. The artist thought of the virtues, of the kindness, of the heroism, and many other noble qualities of a Saint. By this painting the spiritual thought appears in material shape. In a more eminent manner all that is contained in the picture was contained in the idea of the artist. The perfections of the masterpiece reflect the idea and skill of the artist. The artist gave shape and expression to it in the color on the canvas. No one can confer a perfection, which he does not in some way or other possess.

The world is God's creation. There is a great deal of beauty in this world. God who caused it must be beautiful. He must possess beauty in a more eminent degree. There is power in the world. God who caused it must be powerful. There is intelligence in creatures. In the Creator we find it in all its perfection. There is wisdom

displayed in the harmony of this world. The Creator thereof must be more eminently wise. The perfections found in the effect argue to the perfections of the cause.

By the comparisons we make of relative value and perfections in nature, we unconsciously profess our belief in God. Some of the things in this world are better than others. Some are more beautiful than others; some are more powerful, and so on. It is all comparative, showing degrees of perfection. Higher and lower, good and better, more or less are plainly relative terms. That implies that there must be a standard somewhere in relation to which a thing has comparative perfection. A relative perfection without an absolute perfection is rank nonsense; for relative thus used always indicates a comparison with the absolute. That absolute standard of perfection is such that no higher degree of perfection can be possible; it is infinite perfection. Therefore the relative perfections found in this world prove the existence of infinite perfections, which are not found in the creation but must be found and are found in the Creator, in God. God is infinitely perfect. As to duration God is eternal. As to His manifestations God is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-wise, all-just, all-merciful, the Creator and Preserver of every creature.

5. Design

No matter what thing in nature we analyze we find symmetry in its construction. There is symmetry in a snowflake, in a crystal and in all vegetation. In everything we behold construction, the adjustment of parts for

the fulfillment of a given purpose. Everything in nature has a specific tendency. We cannot help to observe laws in nature, neither can we refrain from admiring the grand mechanism in the heavenly bodies and in things on earth. That presupposes an Intelligent Adjuster who designed with a purpose; and He is God.

6. Law and Lawgiver

One of the laws of nature is the law of gravitation, whereby all matter tends toward the center of the earth. Water runs downhill no matter what people decree. Supposing the whole world would demand that water run uphill; that demand is futile because the laws of nature are not depending upon man's likes and dislikes. This also includes centrifugal force, etc. Who made this law? Man could not make it. The author of this law we call God. Wherever there is a law, there must be a lawgiver.

7. Conscience

Our conscience tells us that certain things are right, and other things are wrong for us to do. There is a law of right, as well as of truth. Every human being, not deprived of good common sense, knows that there is a natural law of right and wrong. Like all natural laws it is not and was not made by man. The author of all nature is the author of that law. There can be no law without a lawgiver. Our conscience tells us of the law. A little reasoning leads us to the conclusion that there cannot be a law without a lawgiver, and since this law is not made by man, it must be made

by some other intelligent personal Being. This Being we call God. Our conscience tells us what we ought to do, what God wants us to do; that we must do good, obey God's will, and avoid sin, which is a transgression of God's laws. By its praise for the good done, and by its rebuke for the evil, our conscience tells us that God as a just Being demands an account of all our deliberate actions and omissions. As reason tells us that God is the cause and destiny of our existence, so our conscience decides within us whether we are tending to our destiny, or not.

WHO IS GOD?

God is the prime cause of the whole universe and of everything that is in it. God called everything into existence. He set His creation in motion and it is now whirling around or about in space. God is the only Necessary Being on whom all contingent beings depend for their existence and sustenance. He is the absolutely perfect Being as proclaimed by the relative goodness and perfection in creation. God is infinitely perfect and created everything for a specific purpose. There is symmetry and order in His creation. God is our Creator, our First Cause and our Final Destiny. Reason, therefore, tells us that God is our Creator, Preserver, our greatest Benefactor and that we owe Him gratitude for the favors received. We depend on Him utterly. To deny the ex-

istence of God is the same as to deny your common sense. It is the same as to go contrary to the conviction upon which your intellect acts under the voice of conscience. Shutting your eyes against the light causes darkness; wilful darkness, as far as you are concerned. Withhold the use of your intellect and you are in the darkness of sinful folly. The man who closes his eyes and then complains that he cannot see is acting stupidly. The man who does not reason, and in spite of all evidence does not know anything about God, or even denies God, is Justly called a fool. "The fool hath said in his heart: there is no God." Ps. 13:1.

If I observe a piece of paper whereon something is written, I know that an intelligent person has expressed his idea or at least some idea, a thought on matter. Those material letters before me are evidence of an immaterial agency, thought conveyed on matter. When a man walks I know he is alive. I do not see his soul, his life-principal, but I notice its influence on the material body that moves along. His soul is there.

WHERE IS GOD?

God's handwriting is everywhere. God is on earth in every place and in everything. The earth is full of creatures. A creature is a manifestation of the Creator. No creature can exist by itself; of necessity it needs the support of the Creator. Ascend in spirit up to the firmament and see the majestic orbs coursing along their

designated orbits. God's omnipotence keeps them there. Where there is a display of His present omnipotent work, there is God. Dive down into the depths of the sea and behold the creatures on the bottom of the ocean. Who provides for them and keeps them alive? There is the work of God; God is there. God is everywhere. God is infinite in all His perfections; there can be no limit to His presence. Where is God? God is here. Though you know it not, God is with you in every place. When you sought the lonely place of sin and shame, you were walking in God's presence. God saw you. God sees and observes you this very moment. Where is God? God is visible to the Angels and Saints in Heaven; but He is not only there, He is everywhere. Reason tells us that an infinite self-existent Being cannot be limited.

“O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is thy name in the whole earth.” Ps. 8:1.

“But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee: and the birds of the air, and they shall tell thee.

Speak to the earth, and it shall answer thee: and the fishes of the sea shall tell.

Who is ignorant that the hand of the Lord hath made all those things?

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the spirit of all flesh of man.

Doth not the ear discern words, and the palate of him that eateth, the taste?” Job 12:7-11.

“The heavens shew forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hands.

Day to day uttereth speech, and night to night sheweth knowledge.

There are no speeches nor languages, where their voices are not heard.

Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth: and their words to the ends of the world." Ps. 18:1-5.

"For thy magnificence is elevated above the heavens. Out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings thou hast perfected praise, before thy enemies, that thou mayest destroy the enemy and the avenger.

For I will behold the heavens, the works of thy fingers: the moon and the stars which thou hast founded.

What is man that thou art mindful of him? of the son of man that thou visitest him?

Thou hast made him a little less than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honor: and hast set him over the work of thy hands.

Thou hast subjected all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen: moreover the beasts also of the fields.

The birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea, that pass through the paths of the sea.

O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is thy name in all the earth!" Ps. 8:2-10.

Oh what a lesson does that teach us! God sees me. In need I am not entirely forsaken; God is with me.

JESUS, THE SON OF GOD

JESUS, THE SON OF GOD

The following pages will adduce a few biblical testimonies for the divinity of Jesus Christ.

The belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ is not a mere feeling; it is based upon the fact that God has made this truth known.

God can reveal truths directly or indirectly through His agents. When He speaks through another He supplies this agent of His with the credentials necessary to assure us of the fact that he is God's spokesman. Such credentials are holiness of life and loftiness of doctrine, but especially miracles and prophecies. When a person performs acts that can be performed only by the power of God, or when he foretells with certainty future events that can be known only by the foreknowledge of God, and if he appeals to these miracles and prophecies as the proof of the truth of his mission, we know that he is a spokesman of God.

The prophets in the Old Testament had such credentials. In the New Testament the Apostles had them. When they worked miracles or prophecied they did so by the power and knowledge which God communicated to them. They acted in the name of God. They did not profess to do so in their own name.

There has been one person, however, who worked many miracles and who uttered many prophecies, and did so in His own name. That person is Jesus Christ. By His miracles and prophecies He proved that He was a spokesman of God. Therefore, what He taught must be

true. And one of the truths that He taught is the fact that He Himself is the true Son of God.

Jesus performed miracles in His own name. God alone can do this. Therefore His miracles are evidences of His divinity.

We have selected a few of the most telling testimonies of the divinity of Christ in this brochure. May these few pages strengthen you in your faith and give you convenient arguments for the belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ.

Testimony of the Prophets

As a rule, the biography of a person is not written till after his death, seldom during his lifetime, and never before his birth. But wonderful to relate, the entire life-story of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, was minutely told hundreds of years before His birth. The Old Testament contains the entire life of Jesus Christ in prophecy. Even the circumstances of His life were told: namely, that He would be born of a Virgin, in Bethlehem, during the time of universal peace, when a star would appear in the East. His flight into Egypt was foretold, His coming into the Temple, sitting among the doctors and instructing them, His hidden life, and in detail, His public life. The prophets in advance described Him as a Good Shepherd, as a doer of wonderful works, as a teacher, as a prophet, and as the Redeemer of the world. His suffering, His agony, His death on the cross, His burial and glorious resurrection, His ascension into

Heaven, and the continuity of His Church; these and many more things were foretold of Him and were literally fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Testimony of St. Elizabeth

When the Blessed Virgin Mary visited Elizabeth, St. John the Baptist was sanctified in his mother's womb. At that moment St. Elizabeth said among other things: "Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" St. Luke 1: 43.

Testimony of St. John the Baptist

John saw Jesus coming to him, and he said: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sins of the world." St. John 1: 29.

Testimony of His Heavenly Father

"And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened to Him: and he saw the spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him. And behold a voice from heaven, saying: *"This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."* St. Matt. 3:16,17.

Testimony of Jesus Christ Himself

Jesus Christ gave ample proof of His Divinity. He showed His unlimited power over the elements of nature. Upon His command the water blushed into wine; loaves of bread were miraculously multiplied, the bouncing

waves of the sea served Him for a solid pathway as He walked over them and came to His frightened Apostles, who were struggling against the waves and the storm; He commanded the wind and the waves, and there came a great calm; He cursed the fig tree and it withered instantly. All nature obeyed His commands. Therefore He is the Lord of all nature.

He is supernatural. He cured the sick as He pleased by His simple command. He restored eyesight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the mute and the use of their limbs to the palsied, feverish, lepers and cripples. He drove our devils and restored the dead to life. Jairus with his wife and friends wept over the death of his young daughter, a girl of twelve years. Jesus took the dead girl by the hand and said: "Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted: Damsel, (I say to thee) arise. And immediately the damsel rose up, and walked." St. Mark 5:41,42. At another time, probably previous to this event, we see Jesus at the gate of the city of Naim. "And when He came nigh to the gate of the city, behold a dead man was carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow; and a great multitude of the city was with her. Whom when the Lord had seen, being moved with mercy towards her, He said to her: Weep not, and He came near and touched the bier. And they that carried it, stood still. And He said: Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead, sat up and began to speak. And He gave him to his mother." St. Luke, 7:12, 15. Shortly before His bitter passion Jesus went out to

the grave of Lazarus, who had been dead for four days. In the presence of Lazarus' sisters, Martha and Mary, and in the presence of many persons, after the stone had been removed from the sepulchre, Jesus "cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth. And presently he that had been dead came forth, bound hands and feet with the winding bands, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them: Loose him, and let him go. Many therefore of the Jews, who were come to Mary and Martha, and had seen the things that Jesus did, believed in Him." St. John, 11: 43-45. Thus Jesus repeatedly gave proof of His omnipotence. He proved His omniscience by the many contingent things which He foretold and which have been fulfilled. We shall mention only some of them: the betrayal of Himself by Judas; His *owti* bitter passion and bloody death; His glorious resurrection; His ascension; and the persecution and perpetuity of His Church.

When St. Peter said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus answering, said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father Who is in Heaven." St. Matt. 16: 16,17. When the Jewish high priest had said: "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ, the Son of God, Jesus saith to him: Thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven." St. Matt. 26: 63,64. "But hereafter the Son

of man shall be sitting on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all: Art thou then the Son of God? Who said: You say that I am." St. Luke, 22: 69,70.

"For God so loved the world, as to give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting." St. John 3:16.

However the most convincing proof of His divinity, to which He Himself so often referred, is His glorious resurrection. Great is the skill and the power of man. But no man has either skill or power over his own body after the soul leaves it in death. From that moment on the body remains helpless. There is only one exception to this. Jesus had promised that He would rise from the dead on the third day after His crucifixion. His heart had been pierced and slashed with a lance and the last drop of His Precious Blood oozed forth. Soldiers guarded His grave. The third day began to dawn and Jesus came forth alive from the grave and appeared to His Apostles and disciples for forty days. They all saw Him and they frequently spoke to Him and many of them saw Him ascend into Heaven. In testimony of His Godhead the Apostles and many others at their time and since that time have performed astounding miracles in the name of Jesus. Jesus is God. May He be loved and faithfully adored by all of us until a happy death brings us into His visible presence.

Testimony of Evangelists and Apostles

“And when they were come up into the boat, the wind ceased. And they that were in the boat came and adored him, saying: “Indeed thou art the Son of God.” St. Matt. 14: 32,33.

Testimony of St. Mark

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” St. Mark, 1:1.

Testimony of St. John

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” St. John 1: 14.

“Many other signs also did Jesus in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that believing, you may have life in his name.” St. John 20: 30,31.

Testimony of St. Peter

“Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.” St. Matt. 16:16. “Then Jesus said to the twelve: Will you also go away? And Simon Peter answered Him: Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known, that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God.” St. John 6: 68-70.

Testimony of St. Paul

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

For in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and in him.

And he is before all, and by him all things consist.

And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he may hold the primacy.” Col. 1: 15-18.

“For let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.” Phil. 2: 5,6.

“God, who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all,

In these days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world.

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the figure of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sins, sitteth on the right hand of the majesty on high. Heb. 1: 1-3.

Testimony of the Centurion

“Now the centurion and they that were with him watching Jesus, having seen the earthquake and the things that were done, were sore afraid, saying: Indeed this was the Son of God.” St. Matt. 27: 54.

Testimony of the Jewish Historian

Flavius Josephus, born 36, died 96 A.D.

In his 18th Book of the Antiquities of the Jews, Chapter III, No. 3, he writes: “Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call Him a man, for He was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to Him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was (the) Christ: and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned Him to the cross, those that loved Him at the first did not forsake Him, for He appeared to them alive again th« third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and the thousand other wonderful things concerning Him; and the tribe of Christians, so named for Him, are not extinct at this day.”

N. B.—For further and more exhaustive proofs of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, our Savior, read my book,

Prophetic Biography

of

Jesus Christ

