The Christian worldview has been under attack for centuries and one cannot expect that to change. We are reminded of this fact when we read the apostle Paul defending the Christian faith in the New Testament or see another book in the New York Times Best Seller list about how religion has run its course. While the attacks against religion have varied in motivation through the centuries, I believe the most compelling and, therefore, most dangerous to believers and unbelievers alike are the attacks based on scientific underpinnings. The scientific arguments against the existence of God seem to rise whenever modern breakthroughs surface or when controversial opinions emerge.

As 19th century science pushed evolution into the centerpiece as the primary explanation for the origin and existence of the universe and life, the science vs. religion debate intensified. Regardless of the fact that science and belief in God should go hand-in-hand, this debate has led many people to the conclusion that belief in God is outdated, old-fashioned, archaic, narrow-minded, chauvinistic, prejudiced, ethnocentric, genocidal, and based on stubborn blind faith. More recently, ever since the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, the assault on religion has increased as a result of the aggressive voices of the “New Atheists”. Not only have the New Atheists (or probably more accurately described as the “anti-theists”) lumped all religions into one indistinguishable group, their hostile attitude towards religion has noticeably infiltrated many aspects of our education system from our public schools all the way up to universities and higher educational institutions. Credible authors (mathematicians, philosophers, physicists, etc.) struggle to have books published if they disagree with the status quo. The film Expelled demonstrates that qualified scientists are overlooked in regards to their careers because of their beliefs in a supernatural creator. Some even lose their jobs because they dare to say that God is a
reasonable conclusion to the existence of life. Are the atheists right? Has God already been
disproved by science? The answer is no, but there are strengths and weaknesses in the arguments
that need to be considered to gain a fuller picture of what the best conclusion is to the existence
of life. This argument, of course, is meant to be handled with gentleness and respect to those
with differing opinions than my own while, at the same time, not shying away from the truth of
what the evidence suggests.

As in most things in life, it helps to start at the beginning. Let’s take, for instance, the
beginning of everything we have physical evidence for: the universe. Up until the second half of
the twentieth century many believed that the universe could be eternal. Atheists advocated that
the universe, therefore, did not need a designer. It did not need a creator. However, evidence now
strongly suggests that the universe did in fact have a beginning (known as “The Big Bang”) that
started about 13.7 billion years ago. If it is true that the universe is indeed finite, which all
relevant evidence states that it is, then the universe had to have been caused. Naturally, you
cannot have an effect without a cause. If effects have causes, then clearly something must have
caused the largest and most powerful incident ever perceived. Some scientists suggest that the
universe was created from nothing. David Berlinski references this stance by quoting a physicist.
“One thing is clear,” a physicist writes, “in our framing of questions such as ‘How did the
Universe get started?’ is that the Universe was self-creating (The Devil’s Delusion, 96).” We
cannot rationally consider this a legitimate scientific position. I tend to agree with Berlinski as he
writes, “The question: What caused the universe? The answer: something (The Devil’s Delusion,
63).” Some even suggest that mathematical proofs and the laws found in the universe brought
everything into existence. Dr. John Lennox, a mathematician, responds to this notion by writing,
“However, the idea of a theory or physical laws bringing the universe into existence does not
make sense. Or am I missing something (Gunning for God, 33)?” Dr. Lennox is not missing anything as he points out that the reality of 2+2=4 does not create four dollars in your pocket. The laws of the universe describe the reality of our existence, they don’t create it. With this in consideration, the evidence for the beginning of the universe without intelligent design is very weak.

Isaac Newton said, “the most beautiful system of the sun, planet and comets could only proceed from the counsel and domination of an intelligent and powerful Being (The Devil’s Delusion, 52).” What is the evidence that led to Newton’s conclusion? I will address this in a moment. First, let’s consider the atheist response to the idea that brilliant minds of the past such as Newton believed in God based on the cultural influences of their time. I will agree that this could be true. However, couldn’t we suggest the same thing for atheists in our current post-modern culture; that they do not believe in God because of post-modern cultural influences of our time? Or are atheists above the influence of their current culture unlike Isaac Newton? No, they are not (nor are any of us), so we need to consider the evidence because, while cultural influences are a reality, they should not be used to persuade anyone in a particular direction for or against the existence of God.

Let’s consider the universe further. Even outspoken atheist and scientist Richard Dawkins defined biology as “the study of complicated things that give the impression of having been designed for a purpose” and says that it is “terribly tempting” to say that the universe has been designed (Gunning for God, 228). The notion that the universe is so incredibly complex, delicate, and improbably designed for life is commonly described as “fine-tuning” or referred to as the Anthropic Principle. Our universe exists in such a way that it appears to have been “fine-tuned” to be able to sustain life on earth. The distance of the earth to the sun, the speed of planetary
rotation, the tilt of the earth, the shape of the orbital path of the earth around the sun, the size of
Jupiter (the planet as well as the massive gravitational “vacuum cleaner”) intercepts potentially
lethal asteroid collisions, the size of earth’s moon to stabilize earth’s axis, etc. all (along with
many more examples) point to the extreme improbability of life on earth. If any of these
characteristics were altered even slightly, life on earth would be impossible. Theoretical physicist
Paul Davies says, “It seems as though someone has fine-tuned nature’s numbers to make the
universe... The impression of design is overwhelming (God’s Undertaker, 70).” What is
incredible about the implications of this is not only is that there is an intelligent designer that
created the universe and all life on earth, but that this Designer holds his creation in extremely
high regard and to possess extraordinary value. Biochemist Michael Behe explains, “Now,
through the work of many physicists and astronomers, we know the universe is balanced on a
knife edge to allow for life. And not just the universe, but our solar system, our moon and our
world are fashioned for life in ways that scientists of earlier centuries never recognized. With the
help of science we reaffirm and extend the wisdom of antiquity in its affirmation of the
purposeful design of life (God is Great, God is Good, 88).” Although the earth is not the center
of the universe or even our solar system, it appears that everything is amazingly lined up to allow
for there to be life on our planet.

I believe that one of the strengths that the scientific argument uses against the existence
of God is the atheist avoidance of the concept of chance to describe the process of natural
selection. One could look at the complexity of life and reasonably conclude that it is the result of
one of two options: random chance or design. Chance is a very weak argument for the result of
such complex mathematical laws that govern the universe, intricate forms of life, and the
elaborate social and cultural structures of our world. Even Dawkins recognizes this as he writes,
“Chance is not a solution, given the high levels of improbability we see in living organisms (The God Delusion, 145).” So if life didn’t develop by design or chance as anti-theists suggest, then how did it develop? Dawkins eloquently suggests that natural selection is another possibility other than chance and design. He describes this process as a slight ramp, not steep inclines or cliffs. He writes, “natural selection is a cumulative process, which breaks the problem of improbability up into small pieces.” He adds that the creationist doesn’t “understand the power of accumulation (The God Delusion, 147).” Dawkins even addresses those that call themselves Christians and still agree with the concept of macroevolution. He writes “they note that evolution by natural selection would be a very easy and neat way to achieve a world full of life. God wouldn’t need to do anything at all (The God Delusion, 144)!”

What do theists say in response? Quite a lot; much more than I can fit into this paper. Nevertheless, let me first briefly address Dawkins’ idea of a “lazy God” who doesn’t need to do anything at all because of natural selection running the show. Contrary to what some atheists (and theists) would recommend, many Christians believe in Darwinism and that it does not disprove God. Although I do not agree that Darwinism’s macroevolutionary theory is based on strong evidence (which I will address), it wouldn’t change the evidence for the existence of God if it was true. When have we ever considered a genius inventor who created a stunningly intricate and sophisticated piece of equipment lazy? The more you learn about a combustible engine, the more you can appreciate the intricacies of the design. As you discover how the engine works, you wouldn’t assume that it has no designer. I would have no reason to worship God less or believe in him any less if macroevolution turned out to be true.

Although Dawkins does well to describe how natural selection deals with the improbability of macrevolution, it still fails to answer the major questions that lead thinking and
questioning individuals to doubt macroevolutionary development. While I think macroevolution is a somewhat rational conclusion to life’s development initially, upon further investigation it lacks the evidence that it would need to defend its claims. Atheists want to break up the origin and development of life into small, manageable pieces that evolve over long periods of time by slight modifications. They suggest that natural selection, by breaking up the smaller pieces, limits improbability. Does this work? Mathematically speaking, it is quite the opposite. Dr. Lennox, a mathematician, writes, “Let us say 1,000 steps to the top of the mountain (to produce a haemoglobin molecule), and let us look at a very simplified solution where there are only two choices at every step. One leads to something viable, and the other does not; so that natural selection will eliminate it; and each step is independent. What is the probability of finding the right path up the mountain? 1 in 2 to the 1000th, that is about 1 in 10 to the 300th. But this is smaller than the probability of the random assembly of the haemoglobin molecule in the first place. Dawkins’ mountain climb is improbable in more senses than one (God’s Undertaker, 156).” As we can see, the atheist reliance on chance actually increases with natural selection’s influence on macroevolution!

In addition, consider how life developed in the first place. The concept of simple organisms originating out of some unknown matter/energy combination seemed more probable when Darwin’s theory of macroevolution was introduced. However, we are now much more aware of the extreme complexity of even the simplest organisms. Philosopher Anthony Flew says, “It has become inordinately difficult even to begin to think about constructing a naturalistic theory of the evolution of that first reproducing organism (God’s Undertaker, 116).” Geneticist Michael Denton writes, “no living system can be thought of as being primitive or ancestral with respect to any other systems, nor is there the slightest empirical hint of an evolutionary sequence
among all the incredibly diverse cells on earth (117).” To explain further, let’s look at the bacterial flagellum as an example. This is a propeller-like device enabling bacteria to swim. It is a very complex motor consisting of four necessary parts in order for the machine to work: a rotor, a stator, bushings and a drive shaft. Structures like this have made it clear that the concept of a simple cell or organism is not accurate. We could also mention the complexity of other characteristics of a cell such as DNA. Bill Gates said “DNA is like a computer programme, but far, far more advanced than any software we’ve ever created (136).” The human genome contains an incredible amount of information; over 3.5 billion letters long that would fill an entire library. Even a simpler organism like the E.coli bacterium is about four million letters long and would fill 1,000 pages in a book (129). The information that exists within these organisms clearly points to an intelligent designer, but why else is this so important? We are now aware of the difficulties of getting from non-living to living. How do atheists handle this modern-day evidence? Not very well, as this question leads us to circle back to the argument that chance is eliminated because of natural selection.

Regardless of how atheists like Dawkins eloquently describe the process of natural selection eliminating the chance of complex development of life on earth, one cannot deny (rationally) that an unguided process of complex organisms developing are, in fact, astronomically improbable. Dawkins even backs himself into a corner as he tries to defend the origin of life based on evolutionary methods. He is well aware of the extreme implausibility of the origin of life without design, but still writes “The origin of life only had to happen once. We therefore can allow it to have been an extremely improbable event (The God Delusion, 162).” He himself uses the words “extremely improbable” and yet says that chance does not play a role in macroevolutionary origin of life. Atheists can use sophisticated language all they want, but
chance is an accurate word that describes what Darwinists are relying on when describing macroevolution. Not only that, the lack of evidence available demonstrates that they are exhibiting blind faith; something that the New Atheists inaccurately accuse theists of in their beliefs in regards to the existence of God. The Christian belief in God is based on evidence; it is not blind faith. Dawkins even writes, “I shall not be surprised if, within the next few years, chemists report that they have successfully midwifed a new origin of life in the laboratory (The God Delusion, 165).” It has been more than a few years since he made that comment (and decades have gone by with laboratory attempts), and we’re still waiting. Chances are that the origin of a living organism is a little more complex than we thought, not to mention a self-replicating one.

The origin of life is not the only issue that macroevolution has to deal with. When considering the flagellum further, if only one part of the motor was removed from the total system it would cease to function. This structure is therefore irreducibly complex, meaning that it would be impossible for this system to develop and evolve through slight modifications over a long period of time. Stephen Jay Gould states “irreducibly complex systems – that is, most of the interesting phenomena of biology, human society and history – cannot be so explained (God’s Undertaker, 119).” Darwin was unaware of the existence of this particular system at the time, but he was not unaware of the implications to his theory if it became known that such a system existed. Darwin writes, “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down (God’s Undertaker, 118).” Indeed it has broken down, so much so that it prompted Michael Behe to say, “That should have been the end of Darwinism’s strong claim right there - to explain all of life as the random mutation and natural selection - but intellectual
inertia and wishful thinking kept it going (\textit{God is Great, God is Good}, 82).” Even still, there is much more evidence yet to consider.

Not only has macroevolution been determined to be an impossibility at the cellular and molecular level, but it also fails to provide any evidence at the species level. The fossil record, if macroevolution has any evidence to lean on, should prove to be an invaluable resource. Darwin himself recognized this as he wrote in \textit{The Origin of Species}, “The number of intermediate varieties, which have formerly existed on the earth, [should] be truly enormous.” The reality, however, is that the fossil record provides no evidence of true transitions from species to species. Physicist Paul Wesson writes, “Large evolutionary innovations are not well understood. None has ever been observed, and we have no idea whether any may be in progress. There is no good fossil record of any.” Paleontologist Steven Jay Gould explains that the history of most fossil species contain two features that do not agree with the idea of gradual evolution. The first feature is that most species display no change in any particular direction towards adaptation. Fossil records show species looking pretty much the same as when they disappear. The second feature is the sudden appearance of species. Species do not appear gradually, but all at once and fully formed (\textit{God’s Undertaker}, 111). Even Darwin was aware of the reality of the lack of fossil evidence to support his theory as he writes “Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not reveal any such graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps the most obvious and gravest objection which can be urged against my theory.” As astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle says, “The Darwinian theory is correct in the small, but not in the large. Rabbits come from other slightly different rabbits, not from either [primeval] soup or potatoes. Where they come from in the first place is a problem yet to be solved, like much else of a cosmic scale (98).” Geneticist Richard Goldschmidt adds, “the facts
of microevolution do not suffice for an understanding of macroevolution (pg. 107).” The simple truth that it is impossible for macroevolution to take place at the molecular and cellular level should be proof enough that it is impossible on a species level, but the macroevolutionary theory is bracketed on both ends by lack of evidence. On one end, there is little verification for pre-complex organisms (molecular/cellular evolution). On the other end, there is no support for the transition from complex to more complex (fossil evidence for species to species transition). It begs us to ask the question, “what scientific evidence are Darwinists (atheists and theists alike) really relying on?”

I have spent a lot of time discussing the arguments in the Darwinism versus religion debate. With this in consideration, I do not believe that, if macroevolution is true (which, of course, is very clear that I do not), that it disproves the existence of God. Theoretical physicist John Polkinghorne is a theist and slants towards belief in the Darwinian theory of evolution. He says, “The theist has no need to be worried the widespread role of evolutionary process. God is the ordainer of nature, and God acts as much through natural processes as in any other way (God is Great, God is Good, 75).” Why do I spend so much time trying to defend my faith against something that I do not believe disproves it? The first reason is that it disturbs me that the theory of macroevolution has been presented in our society as fact. While I was growing up I was taught in school all about the theory of evolution with no reference to the scientific “holes” that reveal that it is incredibly unlikely to the point where I believe it is accurate to say it is impossible. It concerns me that many other people are being misled by an incomplete picture of the origin of life. I would not mind at all if Darwinism was taught in our education systems, but it should be taught with an inclusion of the evidence of why many people do not accept it based on scientific substantiation. I am not suggesting that we even need to teach that God is a rational conclusion.
to the existence of life, I am simply suggesting that the scientific evidence will point to the truth of that fact. This, of course, will only happen if we teach the truth based on scientific verification.

The second reason I spent so much time on this is the reality that much of our culture has adopted the “choose science or choose religion” mentality. Choosing science, according to this view, means choosing macroevolution as the explanation for life while denying the existence of God. Throughout my years of sharing the Christian faith with high school and middle school students, I have dealt with many people with concerns that science has disproved God because of evolution. I have found that it helps their faith when they hear 1) that scientific evidence does not support the theory of macroevolution and 2) even if scientific evidence did support the macroevolutionary theory it would not disprove God.

As I wrote this paper describing the strengths and weaknesses in the argument against the existence of God from a scientific perspective, I was surprised that I could not find many relevant arguments that I considered to be strengths. The only one that stood out to me in my research and reading was the discussion on chance, but after some more reading and processing of the argument it was easily dismissed. In addition, I know my thoughts in no way comprehensively addresses all issues on this broad topic, but I see a disconnect between our culture’s pursuit of science and the pursuit of truth. Science and truth should be parallel at all times, but in the context of the origin and development of life we are putting truth and science in different categories. John Lennox points out that the rise of modern science can be attributed largely to theists as he writes, “Men became scientific because they expected law in nature and they expected law in nature because they believed in a lawgiver (Gunning for God, 28).”

Shouldn’t science be the process of pursuing truth based on the evidence? If that is what
science’s aim is, then the evidence points to the most rational conclusion that an intelligent
designer created the universe and everything in it, and this Designer holds his creation to possess
incredible value to himself.