

Timely topics; timeless truths

1

Intelligent design



What Is “Intelligent design”?

“Intelligent design is a scientific theory which holds that certain features of the universe and living things are best explained by an intelligent cause, and are not the result of an undirected, chance-based process such as Darwinian evolution.”¹—IDEA (Intelligent Design and Evolution Awareness) Center

1. How is the theory of intelligent design different from classical Darwinian evolution?
2. As a Bible-believing Christian, what are your initial reactions to intelligent design as an explanation for the origin of the universe?

Watch Dr. William Lane Craig’s video² on *fine tuning in the universe*.

1. Summarize how Dr. Craig sees *fine tuning* as evidence of intelligent design.

Watch the National Geographic video of Richard Dawkins discussing a giraffe’s recurrent laryngeal nerve³. (*Note: this depicts a dissecting of a giraffe. Some images may be disturbing.*)

1. Summarize the argument made against intelligent design based on the example of the recurrent laryngeal nerve.

¹<http://www.ideacenter.org/stuff/contentmgr/files/393410a2d36e9b96329c2faff7e2a4df/miscdocs/intelligentdesigntheoryinanutshell.pdf>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EE76nwimuT0>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cO1a1Ek-HD0>

2. What response can a Bible-believing creationist offer?

3. What encouragements and reminders can we take away from the video?

Understanding Intelligent Design

1. Intelligent design isn't **new**, but it is **current**.

Year	Author	Book	Significance
1802	William Paley	<i>Natural Theology</i>	Verifying the existence of God without using the Bible. Prior to this, most people assumed the Bible was the Word of God. No one needed to prove God's existence apart from the Bible. This was the first significant attempt to prove God's existence from nature.
1859	Charles Darwin	<i>On the Origin of Species</i>	Explaining nature without the intervention of God. Darwin took all of the arguments made by the field of natural theology and explained them apart from God.
1996	Michael Behe	<i>Darwin's Black Box</i>	Refuting natural evolution with "irreducible complexity." Behe introduced an important new idea into the debate. Irreducible complexity is the notion that certain features of nature are too complex to be reduced to a series of intermediate steps. It's either all or nothing. Behe used the example of a mousetrap. Every part of a mousetrap is essential. If you take away even one, you don't have a mousetrap.

2. Intelligent design explains observable **intelligence** with the cause of **design**.
3. Intelligent design struggles to explain perceived **unintelligence** and **imperfection**.
4. Intelligent design is not a **complete** explanation for the origin of the universe and, therefore, is not fully incompatible with natural evolution.
5. Intelligent design focuses on the **design** rather than the **Designer**.

Watch a video from *Answers in Genesis on Intelligent Design Movement.*

As Bible-believing Christians, what are the advantages and disadvantages of Intelligent Design?

Advantages	Disadvantages

Evaluating Intelligent Design

Romans 1:20,21

In fact, his invisible characteristics—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, because they are understood from the things he made. As a result, people are without excuse, ²¹ because, even though they knew God, they did not honor him or give him thanks as God. Instead, their thinking became nonsense, and their senseless heart was darkened.

1. What value does a field of study such as intelligent design have?

Colossians 1:15-20

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation, ¹⁶ for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, things seen and unseen, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and all things hold together in him. ¹⁸ He is also the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that in all things he might have the highest rank. ¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile all things to himself (whether things on earth or in heaven) by making peace through the blood of his cross.

2. What is the biggest reason why any examination of the intelligence of the universe's design is a good starting point but can't be the final destination?

