The Great Debate: Does God Exist?

Dr. Greg Bahnsen versus Dr. Gordon Stein

At the University of California, Irvine, 1985

SEGMENT ONE

I. OPENING STATEMENT—BAHNSEN

A. Introductory Remarks About the Nature of the Debate

1. Defining Terms

- **The Argument is for Christian Theism**

It is necessary at the outset of our debate to define our terms; that is always the case. And in particular here, I should make it clear what I mean when I use the term "God".

I want to specify that I'm arguing particularly in favor of Christian theism, and for it as a unit or system of thought and not for anything like theism in general, and there are reasons for that. The various conceptions of deity found in world religions are in most cases logically incompatible, leaving no unambiguous sense to general theism - whatever that might be.

I have not found the non-Christian religions to be philosophically defensible, each of them being internally incoherent or undermining human reason and experience.

Since I am by the grace of God a Christian, I cannot, from the heart, adequately defend those religious faiths with which I disagree. My commitment is to the Triune God and the Christian world view based on God's revelation in the Old and New Testaments. So, first I am defending Christian theism.

2. What the Debate is About

- **We are debating about philosophical systems, not the people who adhere to or profess them**

Our concern is with the objective merits of the case which can be made for atheism or Christian theism, not related subjective or personal matters.

The personalities of those individuals who adhere to different systems of thought are not really relevant to the truth or falsity of the claims made by those systems. Atheists and Christians can equally be found emotional, unlearned, intolerant or rude in their approaches.

Subjective claims made about the experience of inner satisfaction or peace - claims that are made in earnest by both Christians and atheists in their literature - and promotional claims made about the superiority of Christianity or atheism.

For instance, some atheist literature suggests that greater mental health comes through the independence of the atheist outlook. These sorts of things are always subject to conflicting interpretations and explanations, being, I think, more autobiographical, rather than telling us anything for sure about the truth of the system under consideration.

The issue is not whether atheists or professing Christians have ever done anything undesirable or morally unacceptable.

One need only think respectively of the atheist involvement in the Reign of Terror in the French Revolution, and the professing Christian involvement in the Spanish Inquisition.

The question is *not* whether the adherents to these systems have lived spotless lives, but whether atheism or Christian theism as philosophical systems are objectively true. And so I'll be defending Christian theism, and I'll be defending it as a philosophical system.

B. A Concession to Stein's Area of Expertise

My last introductory remark is something to the effect that I want to concede to my opponent all issues pertaining to ***The Control of Ovarian Maturation in Japanese Whales***, the subject of his doctoral dissertation in 1974 at Ohio State.

Dr. Stein is a man of intelligence, and that's not a question in this debate. I would not pretend to hold my own in a discussion with him in the empirical details of his narrow domain of specialized natural science.

However, our subject tonight is really much different, calling for intelligent reflection upon issues which are philosophical or theological in character. For some reason, Dr. Stein has, over the last decade, left his field of expertise and given his life to a campaign for atheism. Whatever his perception of the reason for that, I do not believe that it is because of any genuinely cogent philosophical case which might be made for atheism as a world view. And it is to this subject that I now turn for tonight's debate.

C. Opening Case for the Existence of God

My opening case for the existence of God will cover three areas of thought: the nature of evidence, the presuppositional conflict of world views, and the transcendental argument for God's existence

1. The nature of the evidence

How should the difference of opinion between the theist and the atheist be rationally resolved? What Dr. Stein has written indicates that he, like many atheists, has not reflected adequately on this question. He writes, and I quote, "The question of the existence of God is a factual question, and should be answered in the same way as any other factual questions."

The assumption that all existence claims are questions about matters of fact, the assumption that all of these are answered in the very same way is not only over simplified and misleading, it is simply mistaken. The existence, factuality or reality of different kinds of things is not established or disconfirmed in the same way in every case.

We might ask , "Is there a box of crackers in the pantry?" And we know how we would go about answering that question. But that is a far, far cry from the way we go about answering questions determining the reality of say, barometric pressure, quasars, gravitational attraction, elasticity, radio activity, natural laws, names, grammar, numbers, the university itself that you're now at, past events, categories, future contingencies, laws of thought, political obligations, individual identity over time, causation, memories, dreams, or even love or beauty. In such cases, one does not do anything like walk to the pantry and look inside for the crackers. There are thousands of existence or factual questions, and they are not at all answered in the same way in each case.

Just think of the differences in argumentation and the types of evidences used by biologists, grammarians, physicists, mathematicians, lawyers, magicians, mechanics, merchants, and artists. It should be obvious from this that the types of evidence one looks for in existence or factual claims will be determined by the field of discussion and especially by the metaphysical nature of the entity mentioned in the claim under question.

Dr. Stein's remark that the question of the existence of God is answered in the same way as any other factual question, mistakenly reduces the theistic question to the same level as the box of crackers in the pantry, which we will hereafter call the crackers in the pantry fallacy.

2. The presuppositional conflict of world views

Dr. Stein has written about the nature of evidence in the theistic debate, and what he has said points to a second philosophical error of significant proportions. In passing, we would note how unclear he is, by the way, in speaking of the evidence which must be used, describing it variously as logic, facts, or reason. Each of these terms is susceptible to a whole host of differing senses, not only in philosophy, but especially in ordinary usage, depending on who is using the terms.

I take it he wishes to judge hypotheses in the common sense - by tests of logical coherence and empirical observation. The problem arises when Dr. Stein elsewhere insists that every claim that someone makes must be treated as a hypothesis which must be tested by such evidence before accepting it. "There is to be nothing," he says, "which smacks of begging the question or circular reasoning."

This, I think, is oversimplified thinking and again misleading, what we might call the *Pretended Neutrality* fallacy. One can see this by considering the following quotation from Dr. Stein: "The use of logic or reason is the *only* valid way to examine the truth or falsity of any statement which claims to be factual."

One must eventually ask Dr. Stein, then, how he proves this statement itself. That is, how does he prove that logic or reason is the only way to prove factual statements?

He is now on the horns of a real epistemological dilemma. If he says that the statement is true by logic or reason, then he is engaging in circular reasoning; and he's begging the question which he [supposedly] forbids. If he says that the statement is proven in some other fashion, then he refutes the statement itself, that logic or reason is the only way to prove things.

Now my point is not to fault Dr. Stein's commitment to logic or reason, but to observe that it actually has the nature of a pre commitment or a presupposition. It is not something that he has proven by empirical experience or logic, but it is rather that by which he proceeds to prove everything else. He is not presuppositionally neutral in his approach to factual questions and disputes. He does not avoid begging crucial questions, rather than proving them in what we might call the garden variety, ordinary way.

Now this tendency to beg crucial questions is openly exposed by Dr. Stein when the issue becomes the existence of God; because he demands that the theist present him with the evidence for the existence of God. Well, theists like myself would gladly and readily do so. There is the evidence of the created order itself testifying to the wisdom. power, plan, and glory of God. One should not miss the testimony of the solar system, the persuasion of the sea, the amazing intricacies of the human body.

There's the evidence of history: God's deliverance of His people, the miracles on Passover night and [at] the Red Sea, the visions in Isaiah, the Shekinah Glory that filled the Temple, the Virgin Birth of Jesus, His mighty miracles, His resurrection from the dead.

There's the evidence of Special Revelation, the wonder of the Bible as God's Word, unsurpassed in its coherence over time, in its historical accuracy and its life-renewing power.

In short, there is no shortage of empirical indicators or evidences of God's existence - from the thousand stars of the heavens to the 500 witnesses of Christ's resurrection. But, *Dr. Stein precludes the very possibility of any of this empirical evidence counting as proof for God's existence.* He writes, " Supernatural explanations are not allowed in science. The theist is hard put to document his claims for the existence of the supernatural if he is in effect forbidden from evoking the supernatural as a part of his explanation. Of course, this is entirely fair; as it would be begging the question to use what has to be proved as a part of the explanation."

In advance, you see, Dr. Stein is committed to disallowing any theistic interpretation of nature, history or experience. What he seems to overlook is that this is just as much begging the question on his own part as it is on the part of the theist. who appeal to such evidence. He has not at all proven by empirical observation and logic *his* pre commitment to Naturalism. He has assumed it in advance, accepting and rejecting all further factual claims in terms of that controlling and unproved assumption.

Now the theist does the very same thing, don't get me wrong. When certain empirical evidences are put forth as likely disproving the existence of God, the theist regiments his commitments in terms of *his* presuppositions, as well. Just as the Naturalist would insist that Christ could not have risen from the dead, or that there is a natural explanation yet to be found of how he did rise from the dead, so the supernaturalist will insist that the alleged discrepancies in the Bible have an explanation - some yet to be found, perhaps - and that the

evil of this world has a sufficient reason behind it, known at least to God. They both have their governing presuppositions by which the facts of experience are interpreted, even as *all* philosophical systems, *all* world views do.

At the most fundamental level of everyone's thinking and beliefs there are primary convictions about reality, man, the world, knowledge, truth, behavior, and such things. Convictions about which all other experience is organized, interpreted, and applied. Dr. Stein has such presuppositions, so do I, and so do all of you. And it is these presuppositions which determine what we accept by ordinary reasoning and evidence, for they are assumed in all of our reasoning - even about reasoning itself.

3. The Transcendental Proof of God's Existence

How should the difference of opinion between the atheist and the theist be rationally resolved? That was my opening question. We've seen two of Dr. Stein's errors regarding it: the crackers in the pantry fallacy and the pretended neutrality fallacy. In the process of discussing them we've observed that belief in the existence of God is not tested in any ordinary way like other factual claims. And the reason for that is metaphysically because of the non-natural character of God, and epistemologically, because of the presuppositional character of commitment for or against His existence.

Arguments over conflicting presuppositions *between* world views, therefore, must be resolved somewhat differently, and yet still rationally, from conflicts over factual existence claims *within* a world view or system of thought.

When we go to look at the different world views that atheists and theists have, I suggest ***we can prove the existence of God from the impossibility of the contrary. The transcendental proof for God's existence is that without Him it is impossible to prove anything.*** The atheist world view is irrational and cannot consistently provide the preconditions of intelligible experience, science, logic, or morality. The atheist world view cannot allow for laws of logic, the uniformity of nature, the ability for the mind to understand the world, and moral absolutes. In that sense the atheist world view cannot account for our debate tonight.

II. OPENING STATEMENT—STEIN

A. Introductory Remarks

I will grant Dr. Bahnsen his expertise on ***A Conditional Resolution of the Apparent Paradox of Self-Deception***, which was his dissertation. I don't know how much more relevant that is to our discussion tonight than mine is, probably not any more. But I would also like to thank Dr. Bahnsen for showing us that he really doesn't understand too much about atheism. I will try to straighten him out.

This is an important question we're discussing. Perhaps it is the most important question in the field of religion, because if God doesn't exist, then the Bible is not the word of God,

Jesus can't be the Messiah, and Christianity can't be true, as well as any other religion. So, we're dealing with an important issue here.

Now, Dr. Bahnsen repeated for me that the existence of God is a factual question. I don't think he would dispute that. I think he misinterpreted what I said, when I said we resolve factual questions in the same way. I didn't mean exactly in the same way; I meant with the use of reason, logic, and evidence. And that is what I am holding.

B. Definitions

1. Atheism

Now, first of all, let me make clear what atheism is and is not. I think this has been a very commonly misunderstood subject. Atheists do not say that they can prove there is no God. Also, an atheist is not someone who denies there is a God. Rather, an atheist says that he has examined the proofs that are offered by the theists, and finds them inadequate.

Now, if I were to say that this gentleman sitting in the front steps could fly by flapping his arms, I'd be making a kind of unusual statement. And it would be up to me or him to demonstrate that he can fly. If he can't demonstrate it, then we don't believe that he can fly. Now, if he doesn't demonstrate it right now, it doesn't mean that he can't fly; it just means that he can't fly right now. So, we do not deny that he can fly because he can't demonstrate it right now; but you see, he has not proven his case. And therefore, we do not believe that he can fly until he proves so.

And this is what the atheist says about the existence of God: He says the case is unproved not disproved. So, an atheist is really someone who is without a belief in God, or he does not believe in a God. It is not someone who denies the existence of God, or who says that one does not exist, or that he can prove that one does not exist.

2. God

Well, I think would like to define a god, as well . I'm not so sure I like his definition. I'm not going to stick to just the Christian God, I'm going to stick to all kinds of gods. I'm going to use the definition which Father Coppleston and Bertrand Russell both agreed on in their debate. Now this is a definition that both sides agreed to, so I think it must be an adequate one, if not a great one. And this is the definition: "A supreme personal being, distinct from the world, and creator of the world."

Now before asking for proof of God's existence we need a satisfactory definition, and I think I've given one which I will find at least satisfactory. If Dr. Bahnsen doesn't agree, we can hear from him. Nothing can qualify as evidence of the existence of a god unless we have some idea of what we're searching for. That's why we need the definition.

3. The Burden of Proof

Throughout history there are eleven major kinds of evidence or proof have been offered for God's existence. In my campus visits all kinds of other things have been offered as proof, but they all can fit under these eleven categories with some juggling. Now if these

eleven proofs do not work out logically, or lead to logical self-contradictions, then we can only say that God's existence is not proven; it is unproved, not disproved, as I mentioned before.

Now if I assert that this gentleman can fly by flapping his arms, as I said, the burden of proof is on him. Suppose I make a more complicated statement. Suppose I say that my dog can talk in complete sentences. Well, again, I'm making a kind of unusual statement, and it's up to me to offer the evidence. So. I'd better be prepared to do that, or I'd better be prepared to have people not believe what I say.

I'd like a demonstration either of this gentleman flying or of my dog talking, if I were the person being asked to make a decision before I admitted that such things were possible or existed. How easy would it be to show that this gentleman cannot fly or that my dog cannot talk in complete sentences? As I mentioned before, you get into a real problem trying to show that something cannot happen or that something does not exist.

For example, if I wanted to prove that unicorns do not exist, I could examine this room and conclude that there are no unicorns in this room, which is a small area. To prove the general nonexistence of something like unicorns, you would have to search the entire universe simultaneously. And then you could only say that no unicorns existed at the moment we searched the universe. But maybe they were there five minutes before, or if maybe we only searched the whole earth, they were on another planet at the time. There are all kinds of possibilities. So, you cannot prove that something does not exist. That's why, as I mentioned before, the definition of an atheist is not someone who thinks he has proven that God does not exist, because he cannot.

C. The Theistic Proofs

I want to quickly go over some of the eleven major proofs. They have been 900 years in the formulation, and during this 900 years, this is what people have basically come up with.

1. The First Cause (Cosmological) Argument

Everything must have a cause, therefore the universe must have a cause, and that cause was God. God was the first or uncaused cause.

Response: This leads to a real logical bind for the theist, because, if everything must have a cause, then God must have a cause. If God had a cause, he cannot be the first or uncaused cause. If God did not have a cause, then not everything must have a cause. If not everything needs a cause, then perhaps the universe doesn't need a cause. Thus, there is a logical bind and the proof fails.

2. The Design (Teleological) Argument

The universe is wonderful and exhibits evidence of design and order. These things must have had a designer that was even more wonderful, and that designer was God.

Response: Surely if the world is wonderfully designed, and God, the designer, is more wonderfully designed, then God must have a designer even more wonderful than He

is. If God didn't need a designer, than neither should the relatively less wonderful thing such as the universe have needed one. Again, there is a logical self-contradiction.

3. The Argument from Life

Life cannot originate from the random movement of atoms, and yet life exists. Therefore the existence of a God was necessary to create life.

Response: Basically, life didn't originate from the random movement of atoms, and no scientists would say so. Because there are limits of a chemical composition and physics of atoms, and they do not move in any possible way, chemicals do not combine in any possible way. That's why when you see these one billion to one kind of odds that people have set for life originating. They're all wet. They haven't considered the possibility that not every reaction can occur. So, it's possible to explain the origins of life without a god and using the principle of parsimony or Occam's Razor, I think we are left with the simpler explanation. [which is] the one without the God. I'll go into more detail on that later.

4. The Argument from Revealed Theology

The Bible says that God exists, and the Bible is the inspired word of God, therefore what it says must be true. Therefore God exists.

Response: Well this is obviously a circular argument. It begs the question. We are trying to show whether God exists; therefore, calling the Bible the word of God is not permitted, because it assumes the existence of the very thing we are trying to prove. So, if the Bible is not the Word of God, then we cannot give any real weight to the fact that it mentions that God exists. Thus, it does not become a proof. In fact, to prove God from the Bible is standing things on its head. First you must prove God, then you may say whether God dictated it or inspired it. But you can't really use the Bible as Dr. Bahnsen seems to want to do as evidence for existence of God, per se.

5. The Argument from Miracles

The existence of miracles requires the presence of a supernatural force, or a God. Miracles do occur, and therefore there is a supernatural force or God.

Response: Again, this is begging the question; it requires that you must believe in a God first, beforehand. Then you say there are such things as miracles, which are acting of a God who creates violations of his own laws. So, it is not evidence, per se, it can serve as supplementary evidence, once you have good evidence in another kind of way for the existence of a God - you can use miracles as a additional argument, but in and of itself it doesn't show the existence of a God, because it assumes that which needs to be proven.

A quote from Thomas Paine about miracles: "When you see an account is given about such a miracle, by a person who says he saw it, it raises a question in the mind that is very easily decided. Is it more probable that nature should go out of her course, or that a man could tell a lie? We have never seen in our time Nature go out of her course, but we have good reason to believe that millions of lies have been told in this same time. It is therefore at least millions to one that the reporter of a miracle tells a lie" I think those are good odds.

6. The Ontological Argument

God is, by definition, perfect. A necessary quality of any perfect object is that it exists. If it did not exist it would not be perfect. If perfection requires existence, then God exists.

Response: There is a problem with the word *exists*. In order for something to be perfect, it must first exist. If something didn't exist, the word *perfect* wouldn't mean anything. First you must have existence, then possibly you may have perfection. So, this again is going backwards; you must first have an existing God, and then you can decide whether He's perfect, if perfection is a quality of a God, then He may be perfect, but He first must exist.

7. The Moral Argument

All people have moral values. The existence of these values cannot be explained unless they were implanted in people by a God. Therefore, God exists.

An atheist's problem: There are simpler ways to explain the origin of moral values without requiring the existence of a God to implant them into people. Besides, if moral values did come from a God, then all people should have the same moral values. They don't. People's moral values are a result of an accommodation they have made with their particular environment and have taught to their children as a survival mechanism.

8. The Wish Argument

Without the existence of a God people wouldn't have any reason to live or be good, therefore there has to be a God. Most people believe in a God, therefore there is a God.

Response: This really isn't a proof, it is just a wish. It's like saying that it would be nice to have a God (which it would), but that doesn't have anything to do with whether there is one or not.

9. The Argument from Faith

The existence of God cannot be proven by the use of reason, but only by the use of faith. The use of faith shows that there is a God, therefore God exists.

Response: Reason is a proven way to obtain factual information about the universe. Faith has not been shown to produce true information about the universe because faith is believing something is so because you want it to be so, without adequate evidence. Therefore, faith cannot be used to prove the existence of anything.

In addition, there is the fact that faith often gives you the opposite answer to what is given by reason to the same problem. This also shows that faith does not provide valid answers.

10. The Argument from Religious Experience

Many people have claimed to have a personal experience or encounter with God, therefore God must exist.

Response: This is a difficult one to handle, because, first of all, I've never had such an experience, but I'm sure that people have absolutely honestly thought they've had such experiences. But, the *feeling* of having met God cannot be confused with the *fact* of having met God. There is a semantic confusion; and also, we cannot use our own feelings as if they were valid ways to obtain information about the world. They are feelings that we have inside of us, but we cannot demonstrate them to another person. They cannot be used as an evidence. If everyone had that same experience; like if we all looked around the room and we all agreed that there is a clock over there, then we might say that the vision of a clock is a consensual one, if everyone agreed on it. Other than that, if you saw a clock and no one else did, or if only two or three people did in the room, then you have a bit of a problem.

11. Pascal's Wager

We have no way of knowing if a God exists or not, and we have no way of finding out, but you have nothing to lose by believing in a God, but on the other hand, you do have a lot to lose by not believing in a God, and it turns out later on that there is one after we're dead,

Response: This is only true if 1) You are right about a God, and 2) you have picked the right religion, because you might wind up on the Judgment Day and be right about a God, but He says, "What religion were you?" and you say, "I was a believer in Islam." And He says, "Sorry, Catholicism is the right religion. Down you go." So, in addition, you might have a God Who punishes people who have lived virtuous lives, say an atheist who has lived a virtuous life, did wonderful deeds in the world, but just does not believe in a God, if the God punishes him, you have an irrational God who is just as likely to punish the believer as the unbeliever.

III. CROSS EXAMINATION

A. Bahnsen Examines Stein

Bahnsen: Dr. Stein, do you have any sources that you can give to us, very briefly, that defines atheism as one who finds the theistic proofs inadequate rather than one who denies the existence of God?

Stein: Yes, sir. George Smith's book, which you will find for sale at the back of the room, upstairs, later, called ***Atheism: The Case Against God***, makes what I think is the finest book ever written on the subject which was quite explicit. I have a copy right here. I can quote you, in exact words if you like....

Bahnsen: Oh , I don't think that will be necessary. Do you have any other sources?

Stein: Do I have any other sources?

Bahnsen: Do You have any other sources?

Stein: Sure.

Bahnsen: What will they be?

Stein: Charles Bradlaugh, who, I will give you right now. 100 years ago Charles Bradlaugh made the comment in one of his pleas for atheism. he said....

Bahnsen: That will be fine. Dr. Stein, did you hear Dr. Bahnsen use the following argument: "The Bible says that God exists; the Bible is the inspired word of God; therefore what it says must be true; therefore God exists?"

Stein: You did not use that; you just assume that was so because you were quoting from the Bible as if it were....

Bahnsen: I didn't ask you what I assumed, I asked you if I used that argument.

Stein: No, you did not use the argument; but you used the results of the argument.

Bahnsen: Dr. Stein, you mentioned eleven basic proofs for the existence of God. Did you mention Transcendental Proof for the existence of God?

Stein: No, I didn't mention it by name. I think its not a proof. I wouldn't call it a proof. As I understand it, the way you said it...

Bahnsen: There's no time for rebuttal on that point. Otherwise you didn't deal with that particular one. All right, are all rational questions answered in the very same way?

Stein: No, they're not. They are answered by logical methods, though, that are the same: reason, logic, and presenting evidence and facts.

Bahnsen: I heard you use "logical binds" and "logical self-contradiction" in your speech . You did say that?

Stein: I used that phrase, yes.

Bahnsen: Do you believe there are laws of logic then?

Stein: Absolutely.

Bahnsen: Are they universal?

Stein: They are agreed upon by human beings not realizing it is just out in nature.

Bahnsen: Are they simply conventions then?

Stein: They are conventions that are self-verifying.

Bahnsen: Are they sociological laws or laws of thought?

Stein: They are laws of thought which are interpreted by man.

Bahnsen: Are they material in nature?

Stein: How could a law be material?

Bahnsen: That's the question I'm going to ask you.

Stein: I would say no.

B. Stein Examines Bahnsen

Stein: Dr. Bahnsen, would you call God material or immaterial?

Bahnsen: Immaterial.

Stein: What is something that's immaterial?

Bahnsen: Something not extended in space.

Stein: Can you give me any other example, other than God, that's immaterial?

Bahnsen: The laws of logic.

Stein: Are we putting God as an equivalent thing to the laws of logic?

Bahnsen: No, only if you think all factual questions are answered in the very same way would you even assume that by thinking that there are two immaterial things that they must be identical....

Stein: I not assuming that. I'm just assuming that because the laws of logic are conventions among men. Are you saying that God is a convention among men.

Bahnsen: I don't accept the claim that the laws of logic - that Christ's laws of logic - are conventional.

Stein: OK, Is your God omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent?

Bahnsen: He is.

Stein: You don't find this to be a contradiction at all?

Bahnsen: I do not.

Stein: Well, we'll show, a little later, that it is. If your argument that favors the existence of God is shown to be incorrect, will you relinquish your belief in God?

Bahnsen: If my arguments are disproved?

Stein: Yes.

Bahnsen: Will I relinquish my belief in God? If there were no arguments for the existence of God, I wouldn't believe in God.

Stein: That's not quite answering the question. If someone could show you that there are no arguments, would you relinquish your belief? I'm trying to see what's the basis of your belief.

Bahnsen: You're the one who said that it's impossible to show a universal negative;no one could show that there are no arguments for the existence of God. So you can only deal with the ones I know of.

Stein: OK. If some one showed that all the ones you produced were invalid, what would be your position?.

Bahnsen: Rationally speaking, if there is no basis for believing in the existence of God, I would relinquish that belief.

Stein: Is God good?

Bahnsen: Yes, He is.

Stein: How do you know that?

Bahnsen: He saved me. He created me. He made the world and made it good.

He sent His Son into the world to die for my sins. Many of these evidences are quite convincing to me, but I don't use them outside of a world view in which they make sense, in which they are taken as true. If you mean if God is good in such a way - or can I give you evidence that you would accept - that would depend on what your presuppositions are.

Stein: Well, I'm asking if God says something, anything, is it right because...anything God does is good because God is good, or does it become good just because God said it. I don't know if I said that right. I guess I did.

Bahnsen: No, I understand the problem. What God says to be good is good, because it reflects his own character. God is good and is the *standard* of goodness. That's one of the presuppositions to the Christian world view.

Stein: But isn't it indeed a presupposition which is presupposed before there is any actual data from God.

Bahnsen: Is this a question about my first opening statement?

Stein: In a sense it is, because it has to do with the whole idea of whether there are absolutes outside of God which is an important issue in this debate may come up later.

Bahnsen: I still think were straining at the limits of debate rules here; but I will answer your question. There are no absolutes outside of God.

Stein: So, in other words, the fact that God is good is something that God told you; and that's why you accepted it rather than moving ahead and assuming it as a presupposition which is what you said a minute ago.

Bahnsen: That's extremely simplistic. God told me *and* provided evidence of it.

Stein: But you also said it was a presupposition.

Bahnsen: That's right.

Stein: Isn't that a contradiction?

Bahnsen: Not at all. There many things which are presupposed as well as evidenced in this world. For instance: The laws of logic.

Stein: I would disagree with that. When we talk about immaterial things are you also saying that there is such a thing, let's say, as a ghost or the soul, which are examples of immaterial things? Would you put them under immaterial?

Bahnsen: I would say that man is a living soul and has an immaterial aspect to his being, yes.

Stein: And how would you prove this?

Bahnsen: Does this have to do with the existence of God then?

Stein: Well it has to do with the existence of immaterial things.

Bahnsen: Well, if there is an immaterial Being, God, and if the Bible is His Word, then I would say that his revealing of the human nature of man in the Bible is sufficient proof. And that takes us back logically to what you're bound to say to whether God Himself does exist. That's what we're supposed to be debating.

Stein: So, you're giving me a circular argument.

Bahnsen: No, I'm telling you what the debate is about.

Stein: I know what the debate is about. I'm asking for an answer to the question. I didn't get one.

Bahnsen: I'm not debating the nature of the soul tonight, but the existence of God. Yes, I believe man has a soul.

Stein: The only reason I asked about the soul is because this is a simpler immaterial object that most will hold to.

Bahnsen: I don't believe it is similar. I mean that's *your* point.

Stein: Simpler, not similar, I said.

IV. REBUTTAL—BAHNSEN

We are debating the existence of God. I specified I would be speaking in order to avoid logical contradictions on one particular view of God, the Christian view of God, which I personally hold. Dr. Stein said he will not restrict himself to the Christian conception of God. That's fine, he may not. But all the time he uses anything outside the Christian conception of God will be irrelevant. In fact I would join him in refuting those other conceptions of God. The existence of God that I'm arguing tonight is the Christian one.

Secondly, when Dr. Stein defines an atheist as one who finds the theistic proofs inadequate, that is unproved but not disproved, he's engaging in some linguistic revision. He does quote for us, of course, (he said that he could and I trust that he can) two atheists who likewise define atheism in that way. But you see, that strikes me as similar to a Christian who defines his position as being true at the outset; and therefore it must be true, because it is true by definition.

He has minimized the task that is before him by simply saying "I'm here to show the theistic proofs are inadequate." Well, you see even at that point he didn't do his job, even though that was less than he really should be doing. Because he gave us eleven basic proofs for God, attributing one to me which I didn't use, do not use, and do not assume. He mentioned eleven basic proofs, but did not deal with the ones I gave in my opening presentation. So he has not dealt yet with the argument that is before us this evening.

Dr. Stein has mentioned logical binds and logical self-contradictions. He says that he finds that the laws of logic are universal; however, they are conventional in nature. That is not at all acceptable philosophically. If the laws of logic are conventional in nature, then you might have different societies that use different laws of logic.

It might be appropriate in some societies to say, "Well, my car is in the parking lot, and it's *not* the case that my car is in the parking lot." There are laws in certain societies that have a convention that says, "go ahead and contradict yourself". But then there are in a sense, some groups in our own society that might think that way. Thieves have a tendency to say, "this is not my wallet, but it is *not* the case that it's not my wallet." They may engage in contradictions like that, but I don't think any of us would want to accept this.

The laws of logic are not conventional or sociological. I would say the laws of logic have a transcendental necessity about them. They are universal; they are invariant, and they are not material in nature. And if they are not that, then I'd like to know, in an atheist universe, how it is possible to have laws in the first place. And secondly, how it is possible to justify those laws?

The laws of logic, you see, are abstract. As abstract entities, which is the appropriate philosophical term, not spiritual - entities that Dr. Stein is speaking of - abstract entities - that is to say, not individual (or universal in character). They are not materialistic. As universal, they are not experienced to be true. There may be experiences where the laws of

logic are used, but no one has universal experience. No one has tried every possible instance of the laws of logic.

As invariant, they don't fit into what most materialists would tell us about the constantly changing nature of the world. And so, you see, we have a real problem on our hands. Dr. Stein wants to use the laws of logic tonight. I maintain that by so doing he's borrowing my world view. For you see, in the theistic world view the laws of logic makes sense, because in the theistic world view there can be abstract, universal, invariant entities such as the laws of logic. Within the theistic world view you cannot contradict yourself, because to do so you're engaging in the nature of lying, and that's contrary to the character of God as we perceive it. And so, the laws of logic are something Dr. Stein is going to have to explain as an atheist or else relinquish using them.

The transcendental argument for the existence of God, then, which Dr. Stein has yet to touch, and which I don't believe he can surmount, is that without the existence of God it is impossible to prove anything. And that's because in the atheistic world you cannot justify, you cannot account for, laws in general: the laws of thought in particular, laws of nature, cannot account for human life, from the fact that it's more than electrochemical complexes in depth, and the fact that it's more than an accident. That is to say, in the atheist conception of the world, there's really no reason to debate; because in the end, as Dr. Stein has said, all these laws are conventional. All these laws are not really law-like in their nature, they're just, well, if you're an atheist and materialist, you'd have to say they're just something that happens inside the brain.

But you see, what happens inside *your* brain is not what happens inside *my* brain. Therefore, what happens inside your brain is not a law. It doesn't necessarily correspond to what happens in mine. In fact, it can't be identical with what is inside my mind or brain, because we don't have the same brain.

As the laws of logic come down to being materialistic entities, then they no longer have their law-like character. If they are only social conventions, then, of course, what we might do to limit debate is just define a new set of laws. and ask for all who want the convention that says, "Atheism must be true or theism must be true, and we have the following laws that we conventionally adopt to prove it," and see who'd be satisfied.

But no one can be satisfied without a rational procedure to follow. The laws of logic can not be avoided, the laws of logic can not be accounted for in a Materialist universe. Therefore, the laws of logic are one of the many evidences that without God you can't prove anything at all.

V. REBUTTAL—STEIN

Okay, I'll now touch on the transcendental evidence for the existence of God which the only time I could really do such is in my rebuttal. But first I'd like to do one more important thing. Rather than asking what is the cause of the universe, we must first ask "does the

universe require a causal explanation?" Rather than asking what is responsible for the design in nature, we must ask "does nature exhibit design?"

God is given as a solution to a metaphysical problem, but no consideration is given to whether such a problem exists in the first place. But God is not an explanation for anything. For example, if you say, if I ask you "how did the universe come [into existence]" and you say "God created it," that doesn't answer the question. The question is "*how* did God create it". And I defy any theist to define how God created it. Basically what you're saying is that an unknowable Being is responsible for a given phenomenon which He caused through unknowable means. And that's not an explanation, but rather a concession that the phenomena is totally inexplicable.

Now, about the laws of science in an atheist world: first of all I don't think that Dr. Bahnsen understands what a scientific law is. A scientific law is an observation that is made over and over and over again. The law of gravitation: we drop objects all over the world in different situations and we always observe they fall to the earth. So eventually we make a statistical statement that objects are likely, almost 100% likely, to fall to the earth if they're not accelerating in the opposite direction. Or if a rocket doesn't fall immediately, but [it] eventually will if it doesn't escape the gravity of the earth. So these scientific laws are merely consensuses based on thousands and hundreds of thousands of observations.

The laws of logic are also consensuses based on observations. The fact that they can predict something correctly shows they're on the right track, they're corresponding to reality in some way.

If I can plug in a formula and show exactly where a cannon ball is gonna land and predict exactly where it will strike, then my mathematics is reflecting something valid about the behavior of cannon balls that are fired on this earth. Otherwise, I wouldn't have picked the exact spot. And mathematics is basically logic again used in the same way by consensus of tested things that are self verifying. I'm not explaining it as well as I could, but that's basically what I'm saying.

An atheist's universe, then, goes on the basis of the fact that matter has certain intrinsic behavior patterns. Electrons repel each other because they're both negatively charged. Protons repel each other and electrons and protons attract each other. The opposite poles of a magnet do that. It's an inherent property of matter.

That is what produces the regularity in the universe. If there were no regularity then there would be no science possible, because you couldn't predict anything. Matter wouldn't behave the same way the second time as it did the first time, or the third or the fourth. So the lack of having a God is in no way detrimental to logic and to having laws in an atheist universe.

In fact, if we had a God we could very easily have an irrational God who did things capriciously. So that if I threw a ball one time I threw it would go up and the next time down and crash right down and soar right up. That would be just as much evidence for a God as a regularly behaving ball or object dropped. You could have a God who makes the rules and

changes them from time to time, or we could have one that makes things the same or we could have a universe that just behaves that way normally.

Now, to ask what caused the universe, although we didn't get into this exact thing. I'm trying to show you that its to ask an absurd question in the first place. To give God as the answer, first of all, I mentioned it doesn't explain anything; but secondly, before something can act as a cause it must first exist. That is, it must be a part of the universe, and the universe sets the foundation for a causal explanation, but it cannot itself require a causal explanation.

I don't know if that's clear. If I say every human being had a mother, that's a valid question. But if I ask, "who is the mother of the human race," that is a non valid question, because the human race did not have a mother.

I can ask what was the cause of this planet exploding, but to ask what was the cause of the universe is to ask an invalid question. And to offer the answer as God is to offer an invalid answer to an invalid question.

We haven't gotten into morality. I think I'm going to leave that for the second half. If Dr. Bahnsen doesn't raise it I will. He makes an awful lot of statements that are basically feelings: he felt God enter his life, he felt this happened, he felt that Jesus was resurrected. If he were held to a historian's standard, especially the standard when a miracle is done, as David Hume said, "when a miraculous or very unlikely event such as the resurrection..." , although he didn't use that exact analogy, that exact example, "occurs, we must demand an extraordinary amount of proof."

If I say "the sun is going to rise tomorrow," you don't need too much proof because it's been rising every day. If I say "the sun is not going to rise tomorrow," then we need an extraordinary amount of evidence, because it's an extraordinary event. Now he has not been held up to the historian's standard to alot of the things he's accepted from the Bible as evidence from God; and I think if he did so, he would soon see that those evidences dried up.

Now to get to transcendental evidence, finally. The statement that if God did not exist we couldn't prove anything, and that logic and scientific laws would be invalid is *nonsense,* and I think I've demonstrated part of that.

He says that the laws of logic are the same everywhere. This is not true, although they are mostly the same. And I wonder if he ever heard of a Zen Koan, and the answer to a Zen Koan, is something which is like - "what is the sound of one hand clapping" is the most famous Zen Koan - The answer to that kind of question is in a different kind of logic in a sense, or extra logical, if you want to call it that.

But I think that most logic that we accept in the Western world and most of the Eastern world is the basis of agreement on people that reflect something about the universe. The idea that transcendental evidence of the existence of God is the impossibility of the opposite, that the world view would not be rational if it were atheistic, is total nonsense; and I've demonstrated to you that it depends on the inherent properties of matter. If matter has

properties that it behaves than we have order in the universe, and we have a logical, rational universe without God. The God issue is not germane if matter behaves in a regular way; and I would hold that the properties of matter, as demonstrated over and over again, are regular. It's an inherent property of matter.

So I think the transcendental evidence statement can be dismissed as mere wishful thinking coupled with misinformation about what scientific laws are and what atheists would hold. In fact most scientists are atheists - in fact science itself is atheistic. Science is not allowed to use a supernatural explanation for anything.

There's a very good reason for that. If your experiment came out one way you could say God did it. If it came out the opposite way you could say God did that. You would never make any progress in explaining anything in science. And so the agreed upon consensus or rules of science is that naturalistic explanations only are asked for and allowed.

SEGMENT TWO

I. OPENING STATEMENT—STEIN

It would be logically wrong to say that if all the proofs fail for the existence of God that one is justified in saying that there is no God. There's a logical fallacy - argumentum ad ignorantum (or something like that) that says that you accept something just because all evidence to the contrary fails.

However, we have two other factors here that we must consider. One of them is the fact that 900 years have passed since Anselm first postulated the Ontological Proof, and Thomas Aquinas in 1200 or so. So we have a long period of time in which all these proofs that are being professed failed; that's some evidence about probability - about there being a proof that someone will come up with that will succeed being pretty unlikely.

In addition, we have a number of things which I wouldn't call *proofs*, but I would call *evidence* which make the existence of God even more improbable. One of them is the problem of evil: If an all-good God exists, why is there evil in the world?

We are told that with God all things are possible. If it is possible, if all things *are* possible, it would be possible to create a world in which the vast majority of suffering which is morally pointless, such as the pain and misery of animals, the cancer and blindness of little children, the humiliations of senility and insanity are avoided.

These are apparently the inflictions of the Creator Himself, or else we have a God who isn't omnipotent. If you admit that, then you deny His goodness. If you say that He could not have done otherwise, then you deny [that] with Him all things are possible.

So the atheist can present several arguments [in] which we sort of increase the possibility that there is not a God. [But they are] not proofs, as I said. One of them would be the problem of evil. The idea is that the presence of evil is incompatible with the all good, all knowing. all powerful God as Dr. Bahnsen says he believes in.

Now he can come up with the statement that all the injustice in this world will be corrected in the next world, but that would be something [a statement] that he would make without any evidence whatsoever. It's just, again, wishful thinking.

He could also get out of this bind by saying that God is not all powerful, that some evil things are done without His permission, so to speak, in which case his statement that he believes in an omnipotent God is falsified.

He could also [use] the old argument about free will. That's basically a morass into which he may fall if he likes, but it will not do. To say that god gave man a free will, and therefore can choose between evil and good is to imply that God is unable to make a man who could examine both sides and always choose the good.

In other words, He's limited; and the only way He could do it is to let man choose it for himself, as if that would take something away from man if he could examine both sides and still have guidance within himself to always choose the good.

Now there's no obvious physical evidence of a God. If God wanted man to believe in Him . . .all He'd have to do is put in an appearance, and that way anyone would believe in Him, except a fool.

Well, the Christian says this may sound logical to you but it doesn't to God. God evidently wants man to believe on faith without adequate evidence. Well, if He does, then why did He give man the power of reason? And why did He give man more reason than any other animal has?

If all the many things on the earth were created by a god, and if He is an all-loving God Who made man in His own image, how do you explain the fact that He must have created the tapeworm, the malaria parasite, tetanus germs, polio, ticks, mosquitoes, cockroaches, and fleas? Now, surely, the dog is not suffering from Original Sin and needs to be infected with fleas , so that he can get to doggie heaven which will be better than his present life!

The standard answer of theists to this kind of question is that things have to be better after death. You know, we have these things on earth; it's veil of tears, so to speak. That doesn't make much sense. I mean, any God that would punish a man for what his ancestors did is not a very moral God. (We're talking about Original Sin now - Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden.)

There are many instances on this earth in which no distinction seems to be made between the innocent and the guilty, between the Christian and the non-believer, for example, in natural disasters like an earthquake or a fire. It kills Christians; it kills babies; it kills animals; it kills non-Christians. You surely can't say that these people were punished in some way for something they did. It also demolishes churches and hospitals without distinction. Isn't this evidence that, at the very least, whatever force there is controlling these things doesn't care if people are Christians or not? Or whether they're innocent or not?

If there's only one God and He cares at all [about] how He's worshipped, why are there so many different conceptions of God and so many different religions, all claiming to be the one true religion? Does that mean they're all mistaken? Does it mean that one is correct, and all the others are mistaken?

There's an old joke about that atheist in which he said to a believer, "You now, you believe that 99 of 100 gods are false. I just go one step further and say that the 100th one is also false . I'm sure that Dr. Bahnsen - in fact he even agreed that he would help me refute any other gods but the Christian God.

If Christianity is the one true religion, why are so many people who sincerely believe in it found in the slums and organized crime? I'm not saying that all people there are Christians; I'm not saying that all people in organized crime are Christians, either. But, evidently, if Christianity led to an elevation of moral standards - which we haven't gotten into yet, but I'm

going to jump the gun here a little bit - Christians would be expected to be highly moral, not less moral.

In fact studies of the religious beliefs of prisoners have shown that almost all are devout Christians. The numbers of atheists is less than one percent. These statistics were so disturbing to the people that conducted them that they stopped collecting them recently. You can't argue with the facts, though. Any system that seems to fail in its application as frequently as Christianity does is not a very good or practical system for mankind to follow.

I don't want to get into a real discussion of Christianity, except that Dr. Bahnsen insists that the Christian God and Jesus and the other evidences that come from the Christian God and the concomitants with them are true while the others are not.

What are we left with after this exercise? Well, we can see that we can't prove the existence of God by any rational or logical process - and Dr. Bahnsen has not offered us any.

We have a factual issue here. Again, as I've said, because the proofs fail, it doesn't mean that His existence is disproved; but it certainly is unproved. This does not leave us in a bleak, horrible world; there are many things that the atheist does with his life which makes this world a nice place and in order to get to the solving of the problems of this world, instead of hoping for a pie in the sky, which does not seem to be very probable.

II. OPENING STATEMENT—BAHNSEN

You've heard Dr. Stein refer to the transcendental argument and try to dismiss it simply as wishful thinking. If our debate is going to degenerate to that level, then I dismiss everything he's been saying as wishful thinking and delusion, and why don't we all go home. But I know we're here to argue. We're here to argue a point, and I'm going to stay with the argument that has been proposed and see if Dr. Stein has any better answer than just to engage in name calling.

Dr. Stein proposes an atheist world view. I propose a Christian theistic world view. There are other proposals out there that may want their evening to debate as well. I'm maintaining that the proof of the Christian world view is that the denial of it leads to irrationality. That is, without the Christian God, you cannot prove anything.

As one illustration of that, although I want to get into more than that in the second speech, I have referred to the laws of logic. An atheist universe cannot account for the laws of logic. Dr. Stein, in his responding to that, spoke more about scientific law than he did about the laws of logic, and I'm going to come back to that in my rebuttal to ask about his understanding of scientific law. However, we still hear him saying that laws of logic are a matter of consensus and are just this way. That is to say, "I don't have to prove that the laws of logic exist or that they are justified. It's just this way."

Now friends, how would you like it if I would have conducted the debate in that fashion this evening? God exists because it's just that way. You just can't avoid it. You see, that's not debate, that's not argument, and it's not rational. And therefore, we have, interestingly, an

illustration in our very debate tonight that atheists cannot sustain a rational approach to this question.

What are the laws of logic, Dr. Stein, and how are they justified? We'll still have to answer that question from a materialist standpoint. From a Christian standpoint, we have an answer - obviously they reflect the thinking of God. They are, if you will, a reflection of the way God thinks and expects us to think.

But if you don't take that approach and want to justify the laws of logic in some *a priori* fashion, that is apart from experience, something that he suggests when he says these things are self-verified. Then we can ask why the laws of logic are universal, unchanging, and invariant truths - why they, in fact, apply repeatedly in the realm of contingent experience.

Dr. Stein told you, "Well, we use the laws of logic because we can make accurate predictions using them." Well, as a matter of fact, that doesn't come anywhere close to discussing the vast majority of the laws of logic. That isn't the way they're proven. It's very difficult to conduct experiments of the laws of logic of that sort. They are more conceptual by nature rather than empirical or predicting certain outcomes in empirical experience. But even if you want to try to justify all of them in that way, we have to ask why is it that they apply repeatedly in a contingent realm of experience.

Why, in a world that is random, not subject to personal order, as I believe [it is] for a Christian God, why is it that the laws of logic continue to have that success generating feature about them? Why should they be assumed to have anything to do with the realm of history? [And] why should reasoning about history or science, or empirical experience have these laws of thought imposed upon it?

Once again we have to come back to this really unacceptable idea that they are conventional. If they are conventional, then of course, there ought to be just numerous approaches to scholarship everywhere, with approaches to history, to science, and so forth, because people just adopt different laws of logic. That just isn't the way scholarship proceeds, and if anyone thinks that is adequate, they just need to go to the library and read a bit more.

The laws of logic are just not treated as conventions. To say that they are merely conventions is to simply say "I haven't got an answer." Now if you want to justify logical truths along *a posteriori* lines, that is rather than arguing that they are self evident, but rather arguing that there is evidence for them that we can find in experience or by observation - that approach, by the way, was used by John Stuart Mill - people will say we gain confidence in the laws of logic through repeated experience, then that experience is generalized. But in some weaker moments I think Dr. Stein was trying to say that.

Of course, some of the suggested logical truths, it turns out, are so complex or so unusual that it is difficult to believe that anyone has perceived their instances in experience. But even if we restrict our attention to the other more simple laws of logic, it should be seen that if [their] truth, cannot be decided independently of experience, then they actually become contingent. That is, if people cannot justify the laws of logic independent of

experience, then you can only say they apply, as far as I know, to any past experience that I've had.

They are contingent, they lose their necessity, universality, and invariance. Why should a law of logic, which is verified in one domain of experience, by the way, be taken as true for unexperienced domains as well? Why should we universalize or generalize about the laws of logic- especially in a materialistic universe, not subject to the control of a personal God?

Now, it turns out, if the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* lines of justification for logical truths are unconvincing - as I'm suggesting briefly they both are - perhaps we could say they are linguistic conventions about certain symbols. Certain philosophers have suggested that the laws of logic would not be taken as inexorably dictated, but rather we impose their necessity on our language. They become, therefore, somewhat like rules of grammar, and as John Dewey pointed out so persuasively earlier in the century, laws of grammar, you see, are just culturally relative. If the laws of logic are like grammar, then the laws of logic are culturally relative, too.

Why then, are not contradictory systems deemed equally rational? If the laws of logic can be made culturally relative, then we can win the debate by simply stipulating that a law of logic that says "anybody who argues in this way has gotten a tautology on his hands, and therefore it's true.'

Why are arbitrary conventions like the logical truths so useful if they're only conventional? Why are they so useful in dealing with problems in the world of experience?

We must ask whether the atheist has a rational basis for his claims. Atheists love to talk about laws of science and laws of logic. They speak as though there are certain moral absolutes from which Christians were just a few minutes ago being indicted because they didn't live up to them. But who is the atheist to tell us about laws? In a materialist universe there are no laws, much less laws of morality that anybody has to live up to.

When we consider that the lectures and essays that are written by logicians and others are not likely filled with just uninterrupted series of tautologies, we can examine those propositions which logicians are most concerned to convey. For instance, logicians will say things like "a proposition has the opposite truth value from its negation."

Now when we look at those kind of propositions, we have to ask the general question: what type of evidence do people have for that kind of teaching? Is it the same sort of evidence that is utilized by the biologist, by the mathematician, the lawyer, the mechanic, by your beautician? What is it that justifies a law of logic, or even beliefs that there is such a thing? What is a law of logic, after all?

There's no agreement on that question. If we had universal agreement, perhaps it would be silly to ask the question. It's been suggested to you that it is absurd to ask these sorts of things, although the analogy that was used by Dr. Stein about the absurdity of asking about the cause of the world is not at all relevant because that isn't what my argument is...by the way, it's not absurd to ask that question either. It maybe unnecessary to ask it if you're an atheist, but certainly not absurd to ask it.

But it isn't absurd to ask the question that I'm asking about logic. You see, logicians are having a great deal of difficulty deciding on the nature of their claims. Anybody who reads in the philosophy of logic must be impressed with that today.

Some say the laws of logic are inferences comprised of judgments made up of concepts. Others say that they are arguments comprised of propositions made up of terms. Others say they are proofs comprised of sentences made up of names. Others have simply said they are electrochemical processes in the brain. In the end, what you think the laws of logic are will determine the nature of the evidence you will suggest for them.

Now in an atheist universe, what are the laws of logic? How can they be universal, abstract, invariant? And how does an atheist justify the use of them? Are they merely conventions imposed on our experience, or are they something that look like absolute truth?

Dr. Stein, tonight, has wanted to use the laws of logic. I want to suggest to you one more time that Dr. Stein, in so doing, is borrowing my world view. He's using the Christian approach to the world, so that there can be such laws of logic, scientific inference, or what-have-you. But then he wants to deny the very foundation of it.

III. CROSS-EXAMINATION

A. Stein Examines Bahnsen

Stein: Is mathematics either atheistic or theistic?

Bahnsen: Foundations of mathematics, yes.

Stein: Which?

Bahnsen: Theistic.

Stein: Theistic?

Bahnsen: Christian theistic.

Stein: How do you figure that?

Bahnsen: From the impossibility of the contrary. No other world view can justify the laws of mathematics or of logic, because no other world view can account for universal invariant, abstract entities such as them.

Stein: Do you think it's fair, since you pointed out that logicians themselves are in great disagreement about the nature of the laws of logic, to ask me to explain them in a way that you would find satisfactory?

Bahnsen: Yes, it's fair.

Stein: Why?

Bahnsen: Because this is a rational debate about world views. You have a naturalistic world view, I have a super naturalistic one. I want something even beginning to be an answer of how a naturalist can justify a universal abstract entity. I haven't heard one yet.

Stein: O.K. Is logic based upon mathematics?

Bahnsen: No.

Stein: Never? Not symbolic logic, for example?

Bahnsen: No.

Stein: I would disagree with you.

Bahnsen: Well, if we want to get into Russell and Whitehead and debate those issues, I'd be glad to do that, but if you ask a simple question, I can only give you a simple answer.

Stein: You said...

Bahnsen: Assume the opposite. As far as I'm concerned, as a Christian, I'm not committed one way or another to that. If you want to say mathematical laws and the permutation laws of math are the same as those used in logic, that's fine. How do you justify either one of them is my question.

Stein: Well, I would ask you a more fundamental question that is: you explained that the laws of logic reflect the thinking of God. Number one, how do you know this, and number two, what does it mean?

Bahnsen: What difficulty are you having understanding what does it mean?

Stein: I don't know how you are privy to the thinking of God.

Bahnsen: He revealed Himself through the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Stein: And that explains the logic?

Bahnsen: That explains why there are universal standards of reasoning, yes.

Stein: It doesn't explain them to me. Could you explain them again?

Bahnsen: Yeah, we have Bible studies from time to time where we delve into it.

Stein: You mean you spend some time rationalizing the irreconcilable, or reconciling the irreconcilable? Like the two accounts in Genesis, the two...

Bahnsen: This is a cross-examination. If you have something other than a rhetorical question, I'll try to answer it.

Stein: Well, it's not intended as a rhetorical question, it's intended as...

Bahnsen: The previous one was rhetorical only.

Stein: Well, it was intended to show that your...

Moderator: Please limit your comments to questions.

Stein: O.K. Saying that logic reflects the thinking of God is to make a non statement. How is that an answer to anything that's relevant in this discussion?

Bahnsen: It answers the general metaphysical issue of how there can be universal, invariant, abstract entities in a particular person's world view. If you want to know the precise relationship, for instance, if somebody wants to know for instance, "how did God make a cow?",

Okay. The statement that God made the cow has meaning apart from my being able to explain the mechanics of God making a cow. Likewise, the statement that the laws of logic are intelligible within a Christian theistic universe has meaning because there are things which are, in fact, spiritual, immaterial, and have a universal quality, such as God's thinking, and those standards that He imposes on people.

And so again we can at least metaphysically make sense of invariant abstract entities in one universe, whereas we can't make sense of them at all in the other. We're not asking for the mechanics here, or anything precise such as resolving the relationship of logic to math. I'm simply asking a more general question. If you're an atheist, how, in the atheist universe, is it possible to have an abstract, universal law?

B. Bahnsen Examines Stein

Bahnsen: Well, Dr. Stein, you made reference to David Hume and his rejection of miracles. Have you also read his David Hume and his discussion of induction - or more popularly - the Uniformity of Nature?

Stein: A long time ago. I can't recall exactly what he says, but I have read David Hume.

Bahnsen: Were you convinced a long time ago that you had an answer to Hume's skepticism about induction?

Stein: I can't answer that question. I don't remember what...This was at least fifteen years ago I read this.

Bahnsen: The validity of Scientific Laws were undermined by Hume when he contended that we have no rational basis for expecting the future to be like the past - to be

the types of events (so that when one event happened, it's a type of event so that when you see it happening somewhere else) you can expect the same consequence from similar causation. Hume suggested that there was no rational basis for expecting the future to be like the past, in which case Science is based simply on convention or habits of thought. Do you agree with him?

Stein: Not on this issue I don't.

Bahnsen: Do you now have an answer for David Hume?

Stein: I think he was wrong on that one thing, but I also think he was right about a lot of other things.

Bahnsen: What is the basis for the Uniformity of Nature?

Stein: The Uniformity of Nature comes from the fact that matter has certain properties which it regularly exhibits. It's a part of the nature of matter. Electrons, opposite things attract;[whereas] the same charged things repel. There are certain valences that fill up the shell of an atom, and that's as far as they can combine.

Bahnsen: Have you tested all electrons?

Stein: All the electrons that have been tested repel each other. I have not tested all of them.

Bahnsen: Have you read all the tests on electrons?

Stein: Me personally? Or can I go on the witness of experts?

Bahnsen: Have you read all the witnesses about electrons?

Stein: All it takes is one witness to say "no", and it will be on the front pages of every physics journal, and there are none. So I'd say, in effect, yes.

Bahnsen: Well, physicists have their [own] presuppositions by which they exclude contrary evidence, too...In other words, you haven't experienced all the electrons, but you would generalize that all the electrons under certain conditions repel each other.

Stein: Just statistically, on the basis of past observation.

Bahnsen: But we don't know that it's going to be that way ten minutes after this debate then.

Stein: But we see no evidence that things have switched around, do we?

Bahnsen: Do you accept the Zen Buddhist logic that allows for koans, the different kind of logic that you referred to which is used by Zen Buddhists?

Stein: I'd use the word "extra logical"; it's outside the normal kinds of logic. It's not necessarily a different kind of logic, but it's just non logical - accepted in place of logic.

Bahnsen: Are extra logical things absurd?

Stein: They may seem that way to us, but I would say "no, they aren't absurd in the grand scheme of things."

Bahnsen: Can claims about extra logical matters be true?

Stein: That's impossible to answer; because if we're using logic to answer if something is true or not, then extra logical things are not something in the analysis of logic.

Bahnsen: Are claims about extra logical entities allowed or disallowed in your world view?

Stein: It depends on what we're talking about. If we're talking about things like Zen Buddhism, and they confine themselves to these philosophical speculations, then yes. If you're talking about science, no.

Bahnsen: That sounds very arbitrary.

IV. REBUTTAL—STEIN

I would first like to make one little factual rebuttal (to) a statement that slipped by in the first speech of Dr. Bahnsen - that atheists caused the French Revolution. This is a false statement. The leader of the French Revolution was Robespierre who was a Christian. There may have been atheists there, but that doesn't mean they caused the French Revolution. There are atheists everywhere.

We've spent a lot of time talking about logic. And yet I'd like to know why Dr. Bahnsen stresses the laws of logic so much when he has refused to apply them to the existence of God. I'm not so sure it's even falsifiable; so, therefore I don't know if it's a statement that can even be tested in any way.

He has stressed the laws of logic because he knows there is no explanation for the laws of logic that philosophers agree upon. This is a trap! I might have fallen into it, I don't know. [Yet] it's not relevant to his position. He doesn't have an answer to the laws of logic, either.

To say that they reflect the thinking of God is to make a non-statement. First of all, he doesn't know what the thinking of God is. All he knows is what has been by men to be what they thought the thinking of a god might have been many years ago - maybe, if we granted all the possible things in his favor.

It's like saying God created the universe. Unless you explain how He created it, you have not made a statement that has any intrinsic value to it. You may have made part of a

statement, but I want to hear the other half. What is there in the method that God used that we can learn from? Why did God do it?

Science doesn't try to answer the question "why"...only "how." But theologians do ask the question "why" and try to answer it. I haven't heard an answer to why God did anything He supposedly did. Nor have I heard how he did it. These are the two most essentially meaningful answers to asking a question. If we don't supply these we have ducked the whole center of the issue, and it's just giving you another mumbling that doesn't go anywhere.

[I'll give you] an example: If I said, "How did that car that's parked in the parking lot - the red car - how did it get there?" And you say "General Motors made it," that doesn't explain how the car got there.

Now if you want to go and explain that in Detroit 100 men worked a certain number of hours to make this car out of steel which they got from Youngstown, Ohio - from the smelting plant - then maybe we're getting somewhere: I mean, how it got here in existence. To say that General Motors made it is not answering the question of how the car got here. Neither is it an answer to say that God made it.

I would ask Dr. Bahnsen to explain if he thinks he knows the answer [which] none of these philosophers knows about the laws of logic...to put his answer in some kind of meaningful language. To say that the laws of logic reflect the thinking of God is to make a non-meaningful statement - not just to me, [but] to anyone.

I want to know whether God thinks rationally all the time, or whether he can be irrational. How do we know when he's being irrational? Is it possible for him to be irrational? I want to know what kind of logic God uses. Does He use the kind of logic that we can demonstrate, that we can test the same way we use the logic that we are talking about in science? If so, should it be impossible for God to contradict Himself in any way?

Can he make a stone so big he can't lift it? Is that a logical impossibility? Is God limited by that kind of a thing? Can God make a square circle? These are little logical games we play, but they have a reflect of a problem that he is having with his concept of God. If God can do anything, if He 's omnipotent, omniscient, and omnibenevolent, can he do those things I asked? And if He does, what kind of logic is he using? The logic of self contradiction? Until we have some answers to these questions, I don't think we have gotten very much that is meaningful from Dr. Bahnsen in the first place about any issue. He certainly hasn't applied logic to the proofs of the existence of God that have been offered by philosophers.

IV. REBUTTAL—BAHNSEN

Dr. Stein has demonstrated, it seems to me repeatedly, in the course of tonight's debate, the claim that was made very early on in my original statement, and that's that the Atheist world view cannot give an account of those things which are necessary for a rational discourse or science.

When asked about Hume, and the skepticism that he generated about induction or the uniformity of nature, we don't hear an answer coming forth. I don't think there will be an answer coming forth from the atheist world view. However, Dr. Stein , who is an atheist, has

said - and I think this is close to a quote - "If there were no uniformity, science would be impossible."

Exactly, Dr. Stein! If there were no uniformity, science would be impossible. So on what basis in an atheist's universe is science possible, since in an atheist's universe there is no basis for assuming that there is going to be uniformity?

For someone to say, " well, it's been that way in all the cases in the past that we know of and therefore very probably is going to be that way in the future" is to assume, because you're using probability, that the future is going to be like the past, that is to say, is to beg the very question that's being asked you.

Now, of course, if you don't like the tough philosophical questions that are asked you about the nature of laws of logic, how they are justified, the nature of natural law, how it is justified, and so forth, and just dismiss it as absurd questions or non questions that no one understands and do not have meaning, seems to me is just to try to give medicine to a dead man. You see, it's to say, "I'm not going to reason about that, because I don't have an answer to it, and that's just uncomfortable." But you see, these are philosophical questions which not just Christians, by the way, but all philosophers have had to ask and face throughout the centuries.

Dr. Stein doesn't even begin to scratch the surface of giving us an answer of how an atheist world view can account for laws--laws of science, laws of logic, laws of morality. And yet he does tell us without them, science would be impossible.

As for the transcendental argument "not being logical," I mean, you can claim that, but I have yet to see Dr. Stein show any self contradiction on any violation of the laws of logic in it, but of course, if he were, I would ask him if that law of logic is one of the things that we are necessarily to live according to?

Are we to reason by this law, or is that just a convention? Should I say, "well, it's your convention, but it's not mine." Or is that law of logic universal, invariant and something that must be followed if we're going to arrive at truth? If it is, I'm going to ask him how it's possible to have such a thing in his universe; how he can justify it at all. But he hasn't, shown any contradiction; he has simply, again, called it illogical.

Whether it's falsifiable or not - I mean, even asking that question, I think, shows that Dr. Stein is not really aware of the philosophical nature of the question in the debate before us. No, transcendentals are not falsifiable--that's right--but they are very meaningful, the very sorts of things that philosophers deal with all the time. Look at Kant or Aristotle or other philosophers: you'll see they deal with the preconditions of experience. And since they are preconditions of experience, they are not falsifiable, and yet they are meaningful.

He says that I do not have an answer to these questions either. Well, I certainly do! It's just that he doesn't like the answer. The answer is that God created the world, and this world reflects the uniformity that He imposes on it by His governing, and our thinking is to reflect the same consistency or logical coherence that is in God's thinking.

How do we learn about those things? He revealed Himself to us. Again, these are simple answers, the sorts of things Sunday School children learn, but, you know, I've yet to find any reason not to believe them.

For Dr. Stein to say, "well, these aren't answers" doesn't convince me at all. He says there aren't going to be answers unless I include how it took place. What is God's method, and why did he do it? Well, I don't accept those standards. I don't accept that this is a requirement for an explanation at all. And he doesn't give us a good reason except that he's not going to satisfied or it's unhelpful to him.

He says it's a non meaningful statement to say that the laws of logic reflect the thinking of God. He wants to know things like, "can God be irrational?" Well, if you'd ask those questions in cross examination, I'd answer them. No, God cannot be irrational. Rationality is measured by the standard of his thinking and his revelation.

The atheist world view cannot account for the laws of logic, [and] cannot account for any universals or abstract entities, for that matter. [It] cannot account for the uniformity of nature, and therefore, [it] cannot account for the successes of science.

Nor can the atheist's universe give us universal and absolute laws of morality. And so on three of the most important issues philosophically that men must face- logic, science, and morality- the atheist's universe is completely at odds with those things.

Well, we have one minute left, and I want to answer very quickly those few things that Dr. Stein brought up in his second presentation so that I might rebut them.

He wants to know about the problem of evil. My answer to the problem of evil is this: there is no problem of evil in an atheist's universe because there is no evil in an atheist's universe. Since there is no God, there is no absolute moral standard, and nothing is wrong. The torture of little children is not wrong in an atheist's universe. It may be painful, but it is not wrong.

It is morally wrong in a theistic universe, and therefore, there is a problem of evil of perhaps the psychological or emotional sort, but *philosophically the answer to the problem of evil is you don't have an absolute standard of good by which to measure evil in an atheist's universe.* You can only have that in a theistic universe, and therefore, the very posing of the problem presupposes my world view, rather than his own. God has a good reason for the evil that He plans or allows.

SEGMENT THREE

I. CLOSING STATEMENT—STEIN

Dr. Bahnsen in his last response, and, indeed, throughout his entire talk, has made a number of claims about what's possible in an atheist's universe and what is not possible in an atheist's universe. All I can say is that he has a very strange conception of an atheist universe and perhaps of the universe in general.

First of all, evil in an atheist's universe. Yes, indeed there can be evil in an atheist's universe. *Evil is*, by definition, in an atheists universe, *that which decreases the happiness of people, the most unhappiness in people.* In other words, if we have two things that we want to make a comparative evil statement, which is more evil than another, the thing is more evil which causes more people to be unhappy.

Well, how do we know this? *We don't know this; it's a consensus, just like morality in general is a consensus.* It's a consensus reinforced by the teachings of society through its parents to children, teachers to students, the media, literature, the Bible: all these things reinforce morality through teaching and the socialization process. And also we pass laws to punish people that violate some of the more blatant [offenders in] cases that we have said are no-no's.

So the idea that there's no evil in an atheist's universe is utter hogwash. Our evil is at least a rational determinate thing. We don't say, "well, did God make this evil?", and then we have to go flipping through the Bible to see if it was covered at all. You know, there [are] a hundred volumes of commentary--at least a hundred volumes, more--called the Talmud which is the Jew's interpretation of all the places that the Old Testament didn't give them any guidance on for ethical and moral issues. So, I mean, these things are not clearly not spelled out in the Bible.

We have no guidance on a lot of things, as to what's evil. Is organ transplant evil? I mean, you won't find that in your Bible! You've gotta go and look at the issues, and you do an analysis just the way any rational philosopher would do it, or an the, the ethnical, whew! an eth--what do you call that person? an ethicist! Couldn't think of the word. So, I mean, we have standards by which we determine evil and good and in an atheistic world, the atheistic world view.

I think I've demonstrated that the regularity of matter, which is an inherent property of matter, explains the way we are able to make laws, which are generalizations in the field of science. To say that (first of all, most, many, many scientists are atheists--it's been shown by studies over and over again) So to claim or, as Dr. Bahnsen claims to claim, that science doesn't give us an atheistic world view that is in conformity with sci-- I mean that science is not in conformity with an atheistic world view is utter nonsense! Science is in itself atheistic. It doesn't use God to explain things, and it understands that matter behaves in a regular and therefore predictable way. And that is the way in which scientific research is done.

The same with logic. Logic is a consensus, and I think it has a mathematical and linguistic basis; it has some conformity to the reality of the world. I don't know how many times we have to repeat that for to get through to Dr. Bahnsen, but it doesn't seem to be.

And he seems to specialize in what we call the "thinking makes it so" school of logic, if you want to call it that. Because he says something is so, because he knows what God's thinking was, therefore it is so. The omniscient Dr. Bahnsen has answered. Well, that doesn't answer anything, if we're going to apply the tests of reason to what he says. His statements are not only irrational, they are unreasonable.

The idea that the future is going to be like the past; it's a statistical probability statement. We have never seen a future. Today is the future from yesterday. And yesterday, what is happening today was the future. We have not seen anything in that time period that we have observed, which is several hundred years, to show that the regularity of matter and its behavior is going to change. If it changes, scientific experiments will go haywire, and we'll know it right off the bat, and then we'll have to revise a lot of things. I think the chances of that happening are pretty small.

Now, let me just finish by saying that atheism is not a bleak and negative concept. It frees man, it sweeps away the theological debris that has prevented man from taking action to correct the problems of this world. We want to feed the hungry, we want to educate the illiterate, we want to clothe the naked, we want to raise the standard of living, we want to spread reason and thinking and progress and science.

These are all things which are, in and of themselves, atheistic. We don't do them because God tells us to do them, we do them because they're right; they need to be done in this world. And if we do them because they're right and they make people happy, we will be made happy ourselves by making other people happy. It's a very positive world outlook, something which I don't think Dr. Bahnsen has even mentioned, but it's certainly the other side of the coin.

I mean, what happens when you wipe away the God concept? Are you left with nothing? No, you're left with responsibility that you have to take on yourself. You are responsible for your actions, and also, you get the credit for the things that you do.

And I would rather have a realistic world view that gives up a few things that would be nice to have but just don't happen to be true, and I'd rather operate on a world view like that than I would on making wish fulfillment on things that just are not so.

II. CLOSING STATEMENT—BAHNSEN

As far as my rebuttal/ my closing statement, I need to deal first of all, perhaps in the entire time analyzing this remark that my statements tonight have been irrational. Perhaps they have, but saying so doesn't make it so. That's something we just heard, as well. If my statements have been irrational then we need some standards of reasoning by which these statements have been shown to be irrational.

Dr. Stein has yet to explain to us even in the broadest simplest Sunday School child manner that I told you about laws of logic, laws of science and laws of morality. He hasn't even begun to scratch the surface to tell us how in his world view that there can be laws of any sort. And if there can't be laws, or standards in his world view, then he can't worry about my irrationality, my alleged irrationality.

The transcendental argument for the existence of God has not been answered by Dr. Stein. It's been evaded and made fun of, but it hasn't been answered. That's what we're here for: rational interchange. The transcendental argument says the proof of the Christian God is that without God one cannot prove anything.

Notice the argument doesn't say that atheists don't prove things, or that they don't use logic, science or laws of morality. In fact they do. *The argument is that their world view cannot account for what they are doing*. Their world view is not consistent with what they are doing; in their world view there are no laws; there are no abstract entities, universals, or prescriptions. There's just a material universe, naturalistically explained (as) the way things are happen to be. That's not law-like or universal; and therefore, their world view doesn't account for logic, science or morality.

But, atheists, of course, use science and morality. In this argument atheists give continual evidence to the fact that in their heart of hearts they are not atheists. In their heart of hearts they know the God I'm talking about. This God made them, reveals Himself continually to them through the natural order, through their conscience, and through their very use of reason.

They know this God, and they suppress the truth about him. One of the ways that we know that they suppress the truth about him is because they do continue to use the laws of logic, science and morality though their world view doesn't account for them.

Dr. Stein has said that the laws of logic are merely conventional. If so, then on convention he wins tonight's debate, and on convention I win tonight's debate. And if you're satisfied with that, you didn't need to come in the first place. You expected the laws of logic to be applied as universal standards of rationality. Rationality isn't possible in a universe that just consigns them to convention.

Dr. Stein said the laws of science are law-like because of the inherent character of matter. But Dr. Stein doesn't know the inherent character of matter. Now if he were God he might reveal that to us, as I think God has revealed certain things to us about the operation of or the universe. But he's not God. He doesn't even believe there is a God.

Since he hasn't experienced all the instances of matter and all the electron reactions and all the other things that scientists look at. Since he hasn't experienced all of those.

He doesn't know the future is going to be like the past. When he says " Well it always has been in the past and what if it changes tomorrow, won't that make the front pages," that's not an answer. You see, we're asking *what justifies* your proceeding on the expectation that the future's going to be like the past? When they say, " well its always been that way in the past,"

its just to beg the question. We want to know on what basis your world view allows for this uniformity of nature and laws of science.

Thirdly, we talked about laws of morality. He said they had morality, the utilitarian standard of what brings the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people. Well that doesn't justify utilitarianism [simply] to announce it. He's announced that it's a standard. But why, in an atheistic universe, should we live by that standard. Marquis de Sade enjoyed torturing women. Now why should he give up torturing women, so that he may bring greater happiness to those women that he is torturing.

Now, I've got an answer for that. It's not one that Dr. Stein likes, and maybe [it's] not one that you like, but at least I can begin philosophically to deal with that. I have an answer - a universal absolute about morality - Dr. Stein does not. He simply has an announced, stipulated standard. And if morality can be stipulated, then of course, Marquis de Sade can stipulate his own even as Dr. Stein has stipulated his own.

Why should he feed the poor? He says they want to do that. I grant that. My argument has never been that atheists are the lousiest people in the world. That's not the point. Some Christians can be pretty lousy, too. But why is it that I can call atheists or Christians lousy when they act in the ways we're thinking of? [It's] because I have absolute standards of morality to judge. Dr. Stein does not.

Therefore, from a transcendental standpoint the atheistic view cannot account for this debate tonight; because this debate has assumed that we're going to use the laws of logic as standards of reasoning, or else we're irrational; that we're going to use laws of science; that we're going to be intelligent men; that we're going to assume induction and causation and all those things that scientists do. It's assumed in a moral sense that we're not going to be dishonest and try to lie or just try to deceive you.

If there are no laws of morality, I'd just take out a gun right now and say, " OK, Dr. Stein, make my day: is there a God or not". You see, if he says, "Oh no, you can't murder me because there are laws of morality," of course he has made my day, because I've won the debate. That shows that the atheist's universe is not correct.

But if he says "Oh no, there are no absolute standards; it's all by convention and stipulation," then I just pull the trigger and I win the debate anyway. Except you wouldn't expect me to win the debate in that fashion. Absolutely not. You came here expecting rational interchange. I don't think we've heard much from Dr. Stein.

I've asked him repeatedly - it's very simple, I don't want a lot of details, just begin to scratch the surface, - how, in a material, naturalistic outlook on life and man his place in the world, can you account for the laws of logic, science, and morality?

The atheist world view cannot do it, and therefore I feel justified concluding as I did in my opening presentation this evening by saying that the proof of the Christian God is the impossibility of the contrary. Without the Christian world view this debate wouldn't make sense.

The Bible tells us, " the fool has said in his heart: there is no God." Don't misunderstand that. When the Bible uses the word *fool* it is not engaging in name calling. It's trying to describe somebody who is dense in the sense that they will not use their reason as God has given him. (someone who is rebellious and hard hearted) It's the fool who says in his heart there is no God.

Paul tells us in I Corinthians the first chapter, that God has made foolish the wisdom of this world. He calls rhetorically, " Where are the wise? Where is the debater of this age? Hasn't God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" In a sense I think what Paul is telling us, if I can amplify or read between the lines, is that the whole history of Philosophy is an argument for the existence of God. The whole history of Philosophy is an argument for the existence of God because of the impossibility of the contrary.

Someone who wants to say [something that is] contrary to what the Bible says about God, let him stand up and answer these questions. Let him show that in his heart he may say there is no God, but he can't live that way. He can't reason that way.

In Romans the first chapter Paul says God is making himself known continually and persuasively to all men, so that men do not have an excuse for their rejection of the existence of the Christian God. That isn't to say that all men confess this God. Not all will own up to Him as their heavenly Father. Not all will submit to Him. Some continue to rebel. Some continue to devise their fools' errands and rationalizations of why they don't have to believe in Him.

That's what the Bible teaches. I didn't just come here and make this up. I didn't come here to say, "If you don't agree you're just being rebellious." That is what the Bible says.

What I want you to do tonight is to go home and consider whether there isn't something to that: Why is it that some people continue to use laws of logic, morality, science, and yet they have a world view that just clashes with that; and [yet] they just won't do anything to resolve that contradiction.

Dr. Stein tonight made reference to my doctoral dissertation on self deception. He wondered how relevant it might be. Well, it's very relevant, because what I do in that doctoral dissertation is to show that there are some people who know the truth and yet work very hard to convince themselves that it's not true.

Now, of course, atheists think that's what Christians are doing. I recognize that and that we'd have to argue about the evidence for and against the self-deception. All I want to leave with you tonight is the fact that self-deception is a real phenomenon. It does happen to people. People can know the truth and yet work very hard to rationalize the evidence, as Paul says, "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" in order to convince themselves that there is no God.

Well, you may want to cam choose tonight between the Christian world view and the atheist world view. We haven't touched all the issues that you may want to look into. However, in broad strokes we have touched on a very important issue. If you're going to be

a rational man, a moral man, a man of science, can you do so in an atheist universe. I say you can't.

SEGMENT FOUR

Moderator: The first question in keeping with our format this evening, will be directed to Dr. Greg Bahnsen.

What solid evidence do you have to maintain that the Christian faith is the only true religion with a God? There are religions far older and more or just as widespread which millions of people consider valid. Once again, what solid evidence do you have to maintain that the Christian faith is the only true religion with a God?

Bahnsen: That's a very good and relevant question. I want to say two things just by way of preface.

One, that isn't what the subject of our debate was tonight. However, that can't just be taken for granted and its worthy of a debate. Its just that we couldn't do everything in one debate.

Secondly, you might be interested to know that in my original opening statement, I have a long paragraph dealing with that very question so that it wouldn't be thought that I was just flying over it arbitrarily, and dealing with the matter. But, when I read it back to myself and timed myself, it just turned out that I had to cut a number of things out, and so I cut that down.

What I did say, however, was that - if I can find it here - that I have not found the non-Christian religions to be philosophically defensible, each of them being internally incoherent or undermining human reason and experience.

Unless it will violate your debate format, I'll give just a couple of illustrations, its obviously not going to cover all of them. But, for instance, Hinduism, assumes that God, or *Brahman*, is the impersonal universal soul of the unchanging One of which all things are part, for instance, and because of that particular outlook Hinduism says that everything in terms of my normal experience of the world and thinking is *Maya,* or illusion, because everything in experience and thinking presupposes distinctions. But that is contrary the most fundamental metaphysical fact, and that is that there are no distinctions all is one. So basically, Hinduism tells me that all of my thinking, all of my reasoning, is illusion, and in so doing underlies reason.

You can take religions such as Shintoism, its a view of *Kami* and the forces that permeate the universe; or Taoism, the ordering force in the universe and they are impersonal forces and as such are even less than human beings because they don't have volition or intelligence.

Stein: Well, Dr. Bahnsen has criticized Hinduism.

I would make the case that Hinduism is no more irrational than Christianity is, nor do I think it is anymore irrational than Islam is, nor is it anymore irrational than almost any other religion that you might name. With one exception, I'd say Buddhism is more rational than either Christianity or Hinduism. That doesn't mean I accept Buddhism either, but I just think its more rational; at least it makes some psychological sense if nothing else.

Moderator: The next question will be directed to you, Dr. Stein. And the question reads as follows:

According to your definition and basis for evil, why was Hitler's Germany wrong or was it? Note: Jews and others were defined as non-persons, so their happiness doesn't really count. Once again, according to you definition and basis for evil, why was Hitler's Germany wrong, or was it?

Stein: Well, Germany is part of the Western European tradition, its not deepest Africa, or some place or Mars.

They have the same Judeo-Christian background and basically the same connection with the rest of the developed world, so therefore the standards of morality that have been worked our as consensuses of that society apply to them, too.

They can't arbitrarily, Hitler can't arbitrarily, say "Well, I'm not going by the consensuses that genocide is evil or wrong. I'm just going to change it and make it right." He has not the prerogative to do that; neither does the German society as a whole because it is still apart of a larger society, which you might call a western society.

So, even though morality is a consensus of an entire civilization, he cannot just arbitrarily do that, so what he did is evil and wrong.

Bahnsen: Dr. Stein continues to beg the most important questions that are brought up.

He tells us that Hitler's Germany was wrong because Hitler or the German people didn't have the right to break out of the consensus of Western civilization. Why not? Why is there any moral obligation upon Hitler and the German people to live up to the past tradition of Western morality. In an Atheist universe there is no answer to that question. He give the answer, but it is totally arbitrary.

Moderator: Next question is directed to you, Dr. Bahnsen. Why is there pain and evil in the world?

Bahnsen: There are a number of answers that could be given to a question, "Why is something the way it is?"

One relevant one, but not the most ultimate answer would be that there is pain and evil in this world because men have decided to rebel against God, their maker, and that's one of the consequences of rebelling against God.

Now somebody can say, "Well, that's not fair, God shouldn't punish people for rebelling against Him." Well, if there is a God, as I have maintained, and if he is the Christian God as

revealed in Scriptures, it won't do any good to complain about that. That's the way God governs mankind and if you think you know better than God about morality, then your in Job's position. You want to have an interview with God and you'll end up like Job. You'll put your hand over your mouth and you'll say, " I've spoken too soon. I can't contend with the Almighty."

One answer is that God has decided what would be the outcome of people who decided to rebel against Him; and if they want to be their own little gods, if they want to make their own rules of morality and live by them, then the consequences are going to be such and such, and that includes pain for animals in the created order, because in so doing man represented all of creation.

Even as the second man, Jesus Christ, represents all of creation, and the new heavens and the new earth, which I believe based on faith in the Scriptures is yet to come. In that new heavens and new earth, there will be a redeemed earth where pain and suffering have been removed.

Why is there evil ultimately? The answer is obviously because God has planned it. I believe that he governs everything that's in history. Does that mean that he caused it? No, I don't believe he compelled Adam to fall into sin.

Stein: Well, Dr. Bahnsen has given us another one of his famous non-answers. Basically, what he said is anything God does is what He does. It's a tautology, it doesn't say anything.

Now, how can someone rebel against omnipotent God? This is a logical self-contradiction. If God is omnipotent, He has the power to prevent them from rebelling against him. And assuming he doesn't like rebellion - which I think Dr. Bahnsen would concede, because man is evidently going to be punished for this in some way for his rebellion, eventually, on the day of judgment - if God had the power to prevent them from rebelling, then he *ought* to [have] prevented them from rebelling. And just to say the God does what he does is not to give us an answer at all.

Moderator: The next question is directed to you, Dr. Stein. It reads:

If you haven't examined all the evidence, then is it not true that you are really an agnostic? Isn't it true that you are open to the fact that God may exist? If you haven't examined all the evidence, then isn't it true that you are an agnostic?

Stein: Well, *agnostic* is a word that is very badly used. Thomas Huxley, who invented the word, used it in an entirely different way from the way we use it today. And in fact, the way we use it today is entirely different from the way Herbert Spencer used it.

I would define an agnostic as a subtype of atheist. An atheist is someone who does not believe in a God. A theist is someone who does believe in a God. There's no middle ground. You either do or you don't.

Now an agnostic doesn't not believe in a God because of either one or two things. Either he thinks its impossible to know if there is one or not. That's the Spencerian, the Herbert Spencer type agnostic, that thinks there are unknowables. Or secondly, because he or she has never examined the evidence that exists and therefore has not made up his or her mind, but still at this point he does not believe in a God. Now if he examined the evidence and found it convincing, then he would move into the theist camp.

So, no, I am not an agnostic because I do think that these answers to these questions are sound if not maybe we do not know the answer now, but I think we can eventually know the answer so I'm not a Spencerian agnostic, and I have examined things so I'm not the other kind of agnostic. Whatever that kind is called, they don't have a name for it.

Bahnsen: It's interesting that the word *agnostic* is being used as a subclass of *atheist*. I would agree with that, but for reasons different than have been suggested.

Its also interesting, that *atheist* is being redefined. Earlier in the debate an atheist is one who finds a theist proofs inadequate. I said, "no, traditionally an atheist is one who denies the existence of God, or he doesn't believe in the existence of God." Now he's using the traditional definition to answer the question.

One more interesting comment about that and we'll let it go, he says "We do believe there are answers to these problems. We have yet to find them. You see, that's the problem: atheists live by faith.

Moderator: The final set of questions are here before me. Dr. Bahnsen, the question for you reads: Why is it necessary for the abstract universal laws to be . . . derived from the transcendental nature of God? Why not assume the transcendental nature of logic?

Bahnsen: Somebody who wrote the question is good, in that you've studied philosophical issues.

The answer may not be meaningful to everybody in the audience, but very briefly, it is that I *do* believe in the transcendental nature of the laws of logic. However, the laws of logic do not justify themselves just because they are transcendental, that is a precondition of intelligibility. Why isn't it just "sound and fury signifying nothing?" That's a possibility too.

So the laws of logic do have a transcendental necessity about them; but it seems to me you need to have a world view in which the laws of logic are meaningful. Especially when you consider such possible antinomies as the laws of logic being universal and categorizing things in that way and yet we have novelties in our experience. I mean the world of empirical observation isn't set rigidly by uniformity and by sameness as it were. There isn't a continuity in experience in that way as there is a necessary continuity in the laws of logic.

How can the laws of logic, then, be utilized when it comes to matters of personal experience in the world? We have a contingent changing world and unchanging and variant laws of logic. How can these two be brought together? You need a world view in which the transcendental necessity of logic can be made sense of the human experience. I believe Christianity provides that and I just can't find any other one that competes with it that way.

Stein: I do not have a rebuttal to that particular answer. I do have a rebuttal . . . to the last rebuttal if I may make that very briefly.

Dr. Bahnsen's comment that atheists believe things on faith is a false statement. We have confidence based on experience. We have confidence that things happen in a certain way, that we have learned a lot of things about the world; and therefore, we will continue to learn a lot more about the world, things that we do not know now. We will eventually have answers to. That's not faith, that's confidence based of experience. So, I think he's misusing the world faith.

Moderator: Dr. Stein, the final question is directed to you. It reads:

You have said that there has been no adequate evidence put forth for God's existence. What for you personally would constitute adequate evidence for God's existence?

Stein: Well, it's very simple. I can give you two examples.

If that podium suddenly rose into the air five feet, stayed there for a minute and then dropped right down again, I would say that is evidence of a supernatural because it would violate everything we knew about the laws of physics and chemistry.

Assuming that there wasn't an engine under there or a wire attached to it, we can make those obvious exclusions. That would be evidence for a supernatural violation of the laws. We could call it a miracle right before your eyes. That would be evidence I would accept.

Any kind of a supernatural being putting it into appearance and doing miracles that could not be stage magic would also be evidence that I would accept. Those are the two simplest way. I would also accept evidence that logically non-contradictory, and I have not heard any yet here tonight that hasn't been offered already.

Bahnsen: Dr. Stein, I think, is really not reflecting on the true nature of atheism and human nature when he says, "All it would take is a miracle in my very presence to believe in God." History is replete with first of all things which would be apparently miracles to people.

Now, from an atheistic or naturalistic standpoint, I will grant, in terms of the hypothesis, that that's because they were ignorant of all the calls of factors and so it appeared to be miracles. But you see that didn't make everybody into a theist. In fact, the Scriptures tells us that there were instances of people who witnessed miracles, who all the more hardened their heart, and eventually crucified the Lord of glory. They saw his miracles, that didn't change their mind.

People are not made theists by miracles. People must change their world views; their hearts must be changed. They need to be converted. That what it takes, and that's what it would take for Dr. Stein to finally believe it. If this podium rose up five feet off the ground and stayed there, Dr. Stein would eventually have in the future some naturalistic explanation because they believe things on faith, by which I mean that they believe things as which they have not proven by their senses.