WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?
Program 16
Order and Design - God's Existence
by Ernest O'Neill

What is the meaning of life? Why are we here? Why are you alive? Why am I alive? That's the kind of thing we are talking about on this program at this time each day.

You remember, what we have been saying is that the idea that there is meaning in life almost forces itself upon us because of the meaning that we can perceive in the natural world around us. In other words, when we ask ourselves, "Is there any meaning to this? Is there any point in it all? Why are we here? Is it not the result of just time plus chance?" There is no sense in it at all.

Our mind rebels against that, because of the meaning, and the order, and the design that we see in the natural world itself. In other words, why does the earth not bump into the sun? Why does Mars not bump into Venus? How come they have orbited each other for centuries without colliding with one another?

How come the movements of the planets and stars in space are so absolutely reliable that we can foretell when Haley's Comet is going to come into view from the earth? How come we are so sure that the sun will rise at a certain time in six days that we can adapt our watches by that?

How come the eye is able to photograph on the brain the images that come by virtue of the light around us into it? How come the 500 muscles in your body operate so perfectly without impeding one another's operation? How come your heart keeps on beating even though we can't really tell where the electrical charge comes from that keeps it beating? You know yourself that when we mumble things like "survival of the fittest", and "adaptation to environment", and "evolution", we're just mumbling words. Because they all beg the question, "Where did the evolution come from?" or "Where did what originally evolved come from?" or "If it's adaptation to environment, what programmed it to adapt to its environment? What created the creature itself, and what created the environment to which it adapts?"

If it's survival of the fittest, what decided that the fittest would survive? What determined that there would even be a "fit" to survive?
So, all around us we are faced with amazing evidence of order and design -- so much so that all our scientific endeavors are based on the fact that there is order and design in the universe. Of course, what we are really saying, is that there is meaning in the universe. It's all around us. The fact that we can perceive chance and arbitrary hazard is because we can distinguish between them and order. There is order against which we can set those other things.

So, it's not that our mind creates the order. Our mind simply perceives order that is already there. That's why, of course, the outstanding brains and intellects of our era have drawn certain conclusions from that order. It's really like someone coming outside their home, perhaps you. One morning you come outside your home, you walk out through the front door, and there, at your front gate you see a soccer ball in mid-air spinning around an absolutely regular orbit. But round it, are orbiting two or three tennis balls, a cricket ball, a baseball, and then, as well as that, a golf ball. They are orbiting, at different speeds, round the soccer ball.

You don't just look at it casually, and go on to work and say "That's interesting. Must be just chance, or maybe an explosion caused that. It's happening all the time. I'm always seeing soccer balls spinning around regularly, in revolutions, and tennis balls and golf balls orbiting round them in mid-air without any visible

means of support. It's the kind of thing that's always happening here."

You don't. You know that. You immediately think to yourself, "This is some guy who is an enthusiastic model plane owner who enjoys controlling things by remote control. He set those things going, and he's sitting in the house opposite with a little set of buttons, and he is pressing them, and controlling those objects because that doesn't happen by chance, I know that."

It's difficult enough for me to get a soccer ball to curve in a certain arc if I kick it. Or, to throw a certain cricket ball in a way that will make it curve, without the extra problem of getting it to revolve on its own axis, and at the same time orbit other objects regularly, time after time, after time. Especially, of course, if you come ten years later and find they're still there, you realize this is somebody who has a very persistent will, and has, certainly, some clever control of electronics. In other words, when you see the kind of phenomena that we observe in our universe, then natural common sense rises to the conclusion: there is an intellect, or a mind behind this.

That's exactly what the greatest intellect in our era has said. Here are his words. Of course, it's Albert Einstein. Einstein says this, "My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe forms my idea of God." In other words, if you say to yourself, "Well, it does seem good sense to me, but, what about the intellects, what do they think?" that's what the greatest intellect in our era thinks.

He is saying, "I am able to perceive with my little mind enough order and design in this universe to make me respect incredibly the intellect and the mind that produced it. Indeed I myself call that mind God."

Some of us who have been brought up on evolution forget that the very last sentence in Darwin's "Origin of Species" runs like this: "There is a grandeur in this view of life with its several powers having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or into one. And that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity from so simple a beginning, endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being evolved." In other words, Darwin says there is a grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one.

Darwin himself knows full well that evolution is no explanation of creation. Evolution is only an explanation of how things might have developed once it was created. But even the evolutionary process itself has to have been directed by some intelligent mind.

Some of us, of course, say, "Well, wait a minute, not all of them think that, you know. Not all the great intellects think that. In fact, one of the reasons I have trouble with the whole belief that there is any kind of intellect or reason behind the universe is not only the chaos that I see around me at times, which I agree with you has been so often created by us human beings, rather than the originator of the universe. But also, that there are many intellects that oppose the whole idea that you're talking about. There are many who say 'No, there is no reason,there is no intellect.' Now, why do they say that?"

Why do some great intellects not believe that there is an intelligent mind, or an intelligent reason behind the universe? Can you explain that? Why do some of our great intellects not believe that there is a God, not believe that there is any sense in anything today, that it's absolute chaos?" That's what I'd like to talk about tomorrow.

So, will you listen in? We'll discuss that. Why do some great intellects in our era not agree with Einstein

that there is a reasoning, intelligent mind behind the universe?