Twenty Arguments for the Existence of God

1. The Argument from Change [An Aspect of the Cosmological Argument]
   - The universe is filled with changing things; as far as we know, the entire universe is changing.
   - All change needs an outside force to actualize it.
   - Therefore, there is some force outside (in addition to) the universe, some real being transcendent to the universe. This being we call “God.”

2. The Argument from Efficient Causality [An Aspect of the Cosmological Argument]
   - All things that exist are the result of some cause.
   - There must be something uncaused, something on which all things that need an efficient cause of being are dependent. This being we call “God.”
   - The idea that something can be caused by nothing is absurd.

3. The Argument from Time and Contingency
   - The universe is filled with things that do not need to exist; their existence is not necessary.
   - There must be something in the universe which must exist; some absolute necessary being. This necessary being we call “God.”

4. The Argument from Degrees of Perfection
   - The existence of degrees of perfection means that there is a perfect ideal.
   - The concept of a perfect ideal applies not only to material things and properties, but also to being.
   - There exists an absolutely Perfect Being, whom we call “God.”

5. The Argument from Design [Teleological Argument]
   - The universe displays a staggering amount of design.
   - This design is the result of either chance or intelligence.
   - Chance is a completely inadequate explanation for design; therefore it must be designed by a Supreme Intelligence. This Supreme Intelligence we call “God.”

6. The Kalam Argument; the Argument from Eternity
   - If the universe never began, then it always was.
   - If the universe always was, then it is infinitely old.
   - If it is infinitely old, then an infinite amount of time must have elapsed before the present time.
   - The idea of an infinite amount of time having a completion is irrational; therefore the universe is not infinitely old, had a beginning, and the “Beginner” we call “God.”
7. The Argument from Contingency [An Aspect of the Cosmological Argument]

- If something exists, there must exist things upon which the existence of that thing depends.
- The universe exists; therefore there must exist something upon which the universe depends.
- That which the universe depends upon cannot be within the universe, or be bounded by space and time.
- That being that transcends space and time, upon which the universe depends, is the being we call “God.”

8. The Argument from the World as an Interacting Whole

- The universe is a dynamic, ordered system of many active, interacting parts.
- The active nature of each part is defined by its relation to the other parts.
- The system as a whole cannot explain its own existence; it needs a planner and a cause outside the system. This planner and causer of the system we call “God.”

9. The Argument of Miracles

- A miracle is an event whose only adequate explanation is the extraordinary and direct intervention of God.
- There are numerous well documented miracles.
- Therefore, there are numerous events whose only adequate explanation is the extraordinary and direct intervention of God. Therefore, there must be a God.

10. The Argument from Consciousness

- We experience the universe as something can be understood, at least in part.
- Therefore, the universe is graspable by intelligence.
- This universe that can be understood and the intelligence by which we understand it are either the products of a transcendent intelligence, or the product of chance.
- Since chance is a completely inadequate explanation, the best explanation is a transcendent intelligence. This transcendent intelligence we call “God.”

11. The Argument from Truth

- Our limited minds can discover some truth about eternal being.
- Truth properly resides in a mind; but our minds are not eternal.
- Therefore, there must exist an eternal mind in which these truths reside. This eternal mind we call “God.”

12. The Argument from the Origin of the Idea of God (Rene Descartes)

- We have ideas of many things; these ideas come either from ourselves or from outside of ourselves.
- One of these ideas is the idea of God.
- This idea of God could not have come from ourselves, because we know that we are limited and imperfect, and no effect can be great than the cause.
Only God has the qualities of God; therefore God must be the cause of the concept of God, and therefore God exists.

13. The Ontological Argument (Anselm)
- It is a greater thing for something to exist in the mind and in reality, more than just in the mind alone.
- “God” means “the ultimate” – that than which a greater cannot be thought.
- Suppose that God exists in the mind, but not in reality. Then a greater than God could be thought; namely, a being that has all the qualities of our thought of God plus real existence.
- But, this is impossible, because God is “the ultimate” – that than which a greater cannot be thought.
- Therefore, God exists in both the mind and in reality.

14. The Moral Argument
- Real moral obligation is a fact. We are really, truly, objectively obligated to do both good and evil.
- The atheistic world view is incompatible with the idea of a true moral obligation.
- Therefore, there must be a God who establishes moral obligations.

15. The Argument from Conscience
- It is good to obey one’s conscience; our conscience has moral authority.
- There are possible sources of this moral authority: nature (less than me), the individual (me), society (equal to me), and God (greater than me).
- Only God is an adequate explanation for the moral authority of conscience.

16. The Argument from Desire
- Every natural, innate desire in us corresponds with some real object that can satisfy that desire.
- There exists in us a desire which nothing in time, nothing on earth, and no creature can satisfy; we desire the eternal and the transcendent.
- Therefore, there must exist something that is greater than time, earth, and all creatures, which can satisfy this desire.
- This something is what we call “God” and relationship with God.

17. The Argument from Aesthetic Experience
- There is the music of Johann Sebastian Bach.
- Therefore there must be a God.

18. The Argument from Religious Experience
- Many people of different eras and of widely different cultures claim to have had an experience of the “divine.”
- It is inconceivable that so many people could have been so utterly wrong about the nature and content of their own experience.
• Therefore, there exists a “divine” reality which many people of different eras and of widely different cultures have experienced.

19. The Common Consent Argument
• Belief in God is common to almost all people of every era.
• Either the vast majority of people have been wrong about this most profound element of their lives or they have not.
• It is more plausible to believe they have been right than it is to believe they have been wrong. Therefore it is more plausible to believe that God exists.

20. Pascal’s Wager
• Logical reasoning can not finally settle the matter of the existence of God. There is some evidence on both sides of the issue.
• If reason itself cannot decide the matter, then we must decide somehow, and we “wager” what we cannot absolutely prove. You must place a bet on either the existence of God or on His non-existence.
• If you place your bet on God, you lose nothing even if it turns out that God does not exist.
• If you place your bet on God’s non-existence, you lose everything if it turns out that God does exist.
• Therefore it is reasonable and logical to believe that God exists, even despite the absence of absolute evidence.