

The Newsletter of the
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF
CHRISTIAN
APOLOGETICS



Keeping ISCA Members Informed on All Things Apologetic

Winter 2017

ISCA Conference Is Soon Upon Us!

On March 24-25, 2017, ISCA will be meeting at **The Hope Center** (<http://www.thehopecenter.org>), in Plano, TX (north Dallas area). There are several options for hotel reservations. See the listings below. When inquiring about a room at any of the hotels, please mention that you would like to receive The Hope Center rate.



The Hope Center, Plano, TX

Hotel Options for the 2017 ISCA Conference

Hilton Garden Inn Dallas/Richardson

1001 W President George Bush Turnpike, Richardson, TX 75080 / 1.0 Miles from THC / 972-792-9393 / Rates: Monday-Wednesday \$128.00; Thursday-Sunday \$92.00 / Rate includes Breakfast for 2 people and Shuttle Service.

Homewood Suites Plano-Richardson

2601 E. President George Bush Turnpike, Plano, Texas, 75074 / 4.0 Miles from THC / 972-881-3339

/ Rates: One bedroom suite: Monday-Wednesday \$132.00; Thursday-Sunday \$92.00 / Rate includes Breakfast, Internet, Shuttle Service, and dinner Mon-Thurs. Each suite includes a kitchen.

Hampton Inn Dallas/Plano-East

2813 E. President George Bush Turnpike Plano, TX 75074 / 4.5 Miles from THC / 972-509-4500

Rates: One bedroom suite: Monday-Wednesday \$122.00; Thursday-Sunday \$92.00 / Rate includes Breakfast for 2 people and Shuttle Service.

Courtyard by Marriott Plano/Richardson

1805 E President George Bush Hwy, Plano, TX 75074 / 3.0 Miles from THC / 972-516-2949 / Rates: Monday-Wednesday \$132.00; Thursday-Sunday \$99.00 / Rate includes Breakfast for 2 people and Shuttle Service.

Hyatt Regency North Dallas

701 E Campbell Road Richardson, TX 75081 / 3.5 Miles from THC /



Northdallas.hyatt.com / 972-619-1234 / Rates: Monday-Wednesday - Please call for rates; Thursday-Sunday Single room without concessions \$79.00 (Social Rate Code 16SR; Single room including breakfast for 2 and Wi-Fi \$99.00 (Social Rate Code SRBK) / Rates include Shuttle Service.

Fairfield Inn and Suites Dallas/Plano

4712 W Plano Parkway Plano, TX 75093 / 4.2 Miles from THC / 972-519-0303 / Rates: Monday-Wednesday- \$99.00; Thursday-Sunday- \$79.00 / Rates include breakfast. Shuttle service not provided.

Staybridge Suites Plano

301 Silverglen Rd, Plano, TX 75075 / 2.2 Miles from THC / 972-612-8180 / www.staybridgeplano.com / Rate: \$109.00 / Rate includes Full, Hot Breakfast, and Buffet Dinner Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Also includes Shuttle Service. Each Room has a full kitchen and fold out sofa.

Wingate by Wyndham Richardson/Dallas

1577 Gateway Boulevard Richardson, TX 75080 / 4.4 Miles from THC / 972-234-5400 / www.wingaterichardson.com / Rate: \$85.00 King Room with Pullout Couch or Double Queen Room / Rates includes a Full, Hot Breakfast and Shuttle Service from 7:00am-10:00am and 4:00pm -10:00pm.

When inquiring about a room at any of these hotels, please mention that you would like to receive The Hope Center rate.

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2017 ISCA Conference FAQ

Where/When will the conference be held?

The Hope Center, 2001 W. Plano Parkway, Plano, TX 75075 on March 24-25, 2017.

Does one have to be a member of ISCA to attend the conference?

No. However, only active members are allowed to participate in Q & A and discussion during the sessions.

Does one have to be a member of ISCA to be a break-out presenter at the conference?

All break-out session presenters must be either full members or student members with dues paid to present.

When is the paper proposal due?

The due date for paper proposals for breakout sessions has passed. However, all the decisions have not been made yet. If you submit right away, it is possible that your proposal may be considered.

How do I submit my paper proposal?

Your paper proposals for the breakout sessions should be sent to ISCA Vice President William C. Roach (Bill) at roawil@gmail.com.

When will I know if my paper is accepted?

Our target date for decisions on papers is as soon as possible after Feb. 1, 2017, with notification by email being sent out to individuals immediately.



What is the conference theme?

The conference will seek to highlight the vast range of issues that constitute the defense of the faith. To that that end, papers can be on any topic that deals with an apologetic issue.

What is the conference schedule?

The conference schedule is being worked on. When finalized, it will be posted to the ISCA website.



What's On Your Nightstand?



What Your Fellow ISCA Members Are Reading

Bernard J. Mauser.

Sailhamer, John. *NIV Compact Bible Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999; Webster, William David. *Church of Rome at the*

Bar of History. Carlisle: Banner of Truth, 1997.

Richard G. Howe. Kerr, Gavin. *Aquinas's Way to God: The Proof in De Ente et Essentia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Ed Payne. Pinker, Steven. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. London: Penguin, 2012.

Kurt Theodore Wise. Kendall, R. T. *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649*. Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1997; Vance, Laurence. *The Other Side of Calvinism*. Pensacola: Vance Publications, 1999; Thomson, Rich. *The Heart of Man and the Mental Disorders*. Alief, TX: Biblical Counseling Ministries, 2013.

Your Fearless ISCA Leaders

Richard G. Howe, President, Conference Coordinator, and Newsletter Editor
Ph.D., University of Arkansas
Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Apologetics
Southern Evangelical Seminary, Charlotte, NC
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William C. Roach, Vice President and Journal Editor
Ph.D., Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

Dan Guinn, Treasurer
Founder and owner, Francis Schaeffer Studies
francischaefferstudies.org
Personal Website: danguinn.com

Phil Fernandes, Secretary
Ph. D., Greenwich University
Institute of Biblical Defense: instituteofbiblicaldefense.com
Personal Website: philfernandes.org

Tim Adkisson, Webmaster
Software Engineer



What's Happening in the World of Apologetics

February 25, 2017. Tactical Evangelism. Adaumont Farm, Trinity, NC.

March 10-12, 2017. Ratio Christi Spring Retreat. Boone, NC.

March 17-18, 2017. Defending the Faith Conference. Pleasant Valley North, Rome, GA.

March 24-25, 2017. International Society of Christian Apologetics Annual Conference. The Hope Center, Plano, TX.

April 28-29, 2017. Evangelical Ministry to New Religions National Conference. New Hope Community Church, Palatine, IL.

August 10-12, 2017. Cross-Examined Instructor Academy. North Dallas Community Bible Fellowship Church, Plano, TX.

October 2017. National Conference on Christian Apologetics. Sponsored by Southern Evangelical Seminary. Held on the campus of Calvary Church, Charlotte, NC.

November 15-17, 2017. Evangelical Theological Society / Evangelical Philosophical Society. Rhode Island Convention Center and the Omni Providence Hotel, Providence RI.

January 8-12, 2018. Defend Apologetics Conference. New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA.

ISCA Intelligence Report: What Your Fellow ISCA Members are Doing

Bernard J. Mauser. *Reading to Grow: A Field Guide to the Bible.* Eugene: Wipf & Stock, forthcoming fall 2017.

Richard G. Howe and Norman L. Geisler. *Religion of the Force.* 2nd Ed. CreateSpace, 2016.

Mark Tabladillo. Weekly YouTube videos for Midwest Christian Outreach including "The Mandela Effect or What is Truth" "The Sufficiency and Authority of Scripture and the Mega Church" [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCK4TLxG_1ZabHloT-FRLE7g/videos]

Donald Williams. "Anselm and Aslan: C. S. Lewis on the Ontological Argument" (reprinted by permission from Touchstone), *Global Journal of Classical Theology* 13:1 (April 2016); "Discerning the Times: Why We Lost the Culture War and How to Make a Comeback," *Journal of the International Society of Christian Apologetics* 9:1 (2016): 4-10; "Printing Error: Elizabeth Anscombe's Final Word on C. S. Lewis's Miracles, Chapter 3," *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity* 29:3 (May-June 2016): 20-22; *Deeper Magic: The Theology behind the Writings of C. S. Lewis.* Baltimore: Square Halo Books, 2016.



Bernard J. Mauser. Apologetics Conference, Westlake, OH, Feb. 23-24, 2017.

Richard G. Howe. Feb. 25, Tactical Evangelism Weekend, Adaumont Farm, Trinity, NC; Mar. 1, "In Question" GraceLife Church, Pineville, NC; March 10-12, Ratio Christi Spring Retreat, Boone, NC; March 17-18, Defending the Faith Conference, Pleasant Valley North, Rome, GA; March 24-25, International Society of Christian Apologetics Annual Conference, The Hope Center, Plano, TX; April 24-25, Evangelical Ministries to New Religions Annual Conference, New Hope Community Church, Palatine, IL; August 10-12, 2017. Cross-Examined Instructor Academy, Dallas, TX.

Donald Williams. Paper Presentations: The Southeastern Regional Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Louisville, KY, March 17-18; The International Society for Christian Apologetics in Dallas, TX, March 24-5; The C. S. Lewis and Inklings Society Meeting at Oral Roberts University April 6-8. Speaking: The Campus Church in Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire, UK, May 20 on "Doctrine and Discernment in Reading C. S. Lewis."

“Howe About That!”

Musings from ISCA President Richard G. Howe



In our last newsletter, I observed that no one told me that I couldn't use my tenure as President of ISCA in as self-serving a way as I wanted. Continuing in the same (facetious) vein, I thought I would exploit this platform to offer for your consideration some (no so facetious) thoughts about theistic arguments.

I have benefited greatly from the array of arguments for God's existence that apologists have used over the years, including the cosmological, teleological, and moral. In fact, I did my Master's thesis at Ole Miss on William Lane Craig's *Kalam Cosmological Argument*. I thought then as I still think today that the argument is sound. What is more, not only have I benefited from these arguments, I have taught them in my apologetics courses and have used them in debates.

With my increasing understanding of the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas (particularly his metaphysics), my focus and emphasis has changed over the years vis-à-vis the theistic arguments as reflected in the fact that, for the subject of my doctoral dissertation at the University of Arkansas I wrote on Aquinas's "Second Way" (the second of his famous "Five Ways")—his efficient causality argument for God's existence.

I am in no way repudiating the more standard arguments as they are commonly found in contemporary apologetics. I have, however, grown quite sympathetic to the opinion of the philosopher Joseph Owens when he said "Other arguments may vividly suggest the existence of God, press it home eloquently to human consideration, and for most people provide much greater spiritual and religious aid than difficult metaphysical demonstrations. But on the philosophical level these arguments are open to rebuttal and refutation, for they are not philosophically cogent." [Joseph Owens, "Aquinas and the Five Ways," *Monist* 58 (Jan. 1974): 16-35. The quotation is on p. 33.]

What might Owens mean by these words? Consider certain versions of the more commonly found theistic arguments. The Kalam cosmological argument says that whatever begins to exist has a cause. Since the universe began to exist (instead of having existed from eternity) then the universe has a cause of its coming into existence. Arguments that the universe had a beginning go back for centuries. While in the past these argument have focused on mathematical issue such as the possibility of traversing an actual infinite length of time in the past, in their contemporary forms, these Kalam type of arguments marshal scientific data to demonstrate that universe has not always existed. Such scientific data include the big bang theory, the expansion of the universe, and the second law of thermodynamics.

Other types of theistic arguments have to do with the design of the universe. Again, in making such arguments, contemporary apologist often marshal scientific data showing features both of the universe and *within* the universe such as fine tuning (making

biological life possible), information theory (indicating intelligent design of biological life), and irreducible complexity (indicating intelligent intervention in the history of life in contradistinction to the random mutation and natural selection of Darwinism).

Such arguments certainly enjoy a number of strengths. They appeal to common sense notions such as something can only begin to exist by being caused and the notion that anything that exhibits evidence of sufficient design is caused by intelligence. What is more, these arguments appeal to data from contemporary science with all its social, etc., clout.

It would seem, however, that these arguments also exhibit certain elements of weakness (if 'weakness' is too strong of a term, perhaps 'challenges' might be better). First, certain aspects of the science are disputed. To be sure, the fact that aspects of a given argument are disputed is not necessarily in itself a weakness. In this instance, what I am thinking is that because the science is disputed at certain points, the arguments are harder to defend for someone who is not scientifically adroit. While I am all in favor of a scientist (or someone sufficiently knowledgeable in the data) giving these scientifically rich arguments, being myself largely a secondary or tertiary source on the science, I am more comfortable giving philosophically based arguments.

Second, many of these arguments fail (in and of themselves) to demonstrate that the cause or designer of the universe still exists. What seems to follow, strictly speaking, is that the cause existed at the time it caused the universe to come into existence or at the time it instilled design into the universe. Of course, apologists who marshal such arguments do not intend to leave the issue there. Many are aware that further argument is called for in answering the "Dawkinsque" Who-Created-God-or-Who-Designed-the-Designer objections. It would seem to me, however, that any attempt to shore up these arguments cannot but delve more and more into the realm of the philosophical.

Third, from a strictly Thomistic perspective, these arguments do not demonstrate that the cause or the designer of the universe is God. In other words, they do not (in and of themselves) demonstrate that the cause or designer of the universe has the attributes of classical theism. Now this might not be a problem for those apologists who deny certain of these attributes. Not all evangelical apologists agree that God is simple, immutable, impassible, or certain other of these classical attributes. This is especially true of those evangelical apologists who come to the question of God from an analytic philosophical perspective.

It remains, nevertheless, that these classical attributes have found their most robust defense in the context of the philosophy that has arisen in the Ancient Greek thought of Plato and Aristotle, and which has been incorporated into the Christian thinking of Augustine, Aquinas, and others. Just what the contours of these theistic arguments are in this tradition is something to which I will direct my attention in the next "Howe About That!" God willing. ☩

*New festschrift in
honor of ISCA founder
Norman L. Geisler!*

I Am Put Here for the Defense of the Gospel

Dr. Norman L. Geisler: A Festschrift in His Honor

edited by
Terry L. Miethe

With personal tributes to Dr. Geisler and articles covering apologetics, biblical studies, philosophy, ethics, other religions and cults from contributors such as J. Kerby Anderson, John Ankerberg, Winfried Corduan, Wayne Detzler, F. David Farnell, David Geisler, Mark Hanna, Joseph M. Holden, Richard G. Howe, Thomas Howe, Walter C. Kaiser, Terry L. Miethe, William E. Nix, Paige Patterson, R. Phillip Roberts, Patty Tunnicliffe, Donald T. Williams, Ravi Zacharias, and more!