



"Who Made God?"

Peter S. Williams

The question 'Who made God?' is an objection to belief in God. It comes from a misinterpretation of an argument for God's existence called the 'cosmological argument'. The cosmological argument says that when we think carefully about how things are caused, we can see that there must be a First Cause (which is then identified as being God). Many atheists attack a false version or 'straw-man' of the cosmological argument that goes something like this:

Every thing has a cause.

The universe (the sum total of material reality) is a thing.

Therefore the universe has a cause (God).

Atheists have raised the following question. If every thing has a cause, then God must have a cause. But if 'God' has a cause, how can he be God?

Can you see the problem? If we deny that God has a cause, then we would *contradict* the statement that 'every thing has a cause'. However, without denying that God has a cause, the argument falls apart. Wouldn't we be better off if we rejected the idea that 'every thing needs a cause', ditch God, and simply say that the universe exists *without having a cause*? This is the point of the 'Who made God?' question.

However, we can formulate a valid cosmological argument that avoids this problem:

Every dependent thing needs something to depend upon.

The universe (the sum total of material reality) is a dependent thing.

Therefore the universe needs something to depend upon (God).

This argument avoids the 'Who made God?' problem by replacing 'every thing needs a cause' with 'every dependent thing needs something to depend upon'. Once this is done, we can answer the 'Who made God?' question by saying that God simply exists *without having a cause, because God is not a dependent thing*. God is an *independent* thing.

In other words, the answer to the 'Who made God?' question is: 'No one made God, because God isn't the sort of being that needs to be made'.

The existence of an un-made maker (God) answers the question: 'What made the universe?' The cosmological argument shows that to avoid accepting this answer, atheists must show that denying the premise 'the universe is a dependent thing' is at least as reasonable as affirming it.

Recommended Resources

Bill Ramey, 'Who Made God and Who Designed the Designer?'

Peter S. Williams 'The Cosmological Argument'