

McGrath, The Big Questions:

Lecture Listening Guides

by David Capes

Lecturer: Alister McGrath

Title: The Big Questions: Richard Dawkins versus C.S. Lewis on the Meaning of Life

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1. In answering the question “Is faith reasonable” how would Dawkins and Lewis respond?
2. How would Dawkins describe faith?
3. Why does McGrath reject Dawkin’s assertion that faith is superfluous when there is good supporting evidence?
4. According to McGrath, why did Lewis become a Christian?
5. What two reasons did Lewis give for his atheism earlier in life?
6. Where does McGrath say Dawkins gets it right and where does he get it wrong?
7. What are the three broad categories of human belief according to Isaiah Berlin?
8. What are some ideas you cannot accept on the basis of Dawkin’s criteria?
9. Why does McGrath say that the things that really matter to us have to be accepted by faith?
10. What are Lewis’ main points about science?
11. What was William Lane Craig’s main argument concerning

the existence of the universe?

12. Why would Lewis not agree with Dawkins that a “scientific explanation trumps everything?
13. Frank Rhodes suggested two reasons for a boiling kettle. What are they and why do they matter?
14. How do science and religion work together in that way?
15. What is the point of life according to Dawkins?
16. Where does this kind of scientific reductionism leave us according to McGrath?
17. What are “ultimate questions” that science is unable to answer?
18. What is the importance of the story that Christianity tells, according to Lewis?
19. What is Peter Medawar indicating when he says “science has its limits”?
20. What does Christianity supply that science cannot?
21. McGrath says atheists need to face up to something. What is it?
22. Where does McGrath believe atheism is going?
23. What are the four criteria for interpreting evidence based on inductive processes?