

A Case for the Divinity of Jesus

By Dean L. Overman

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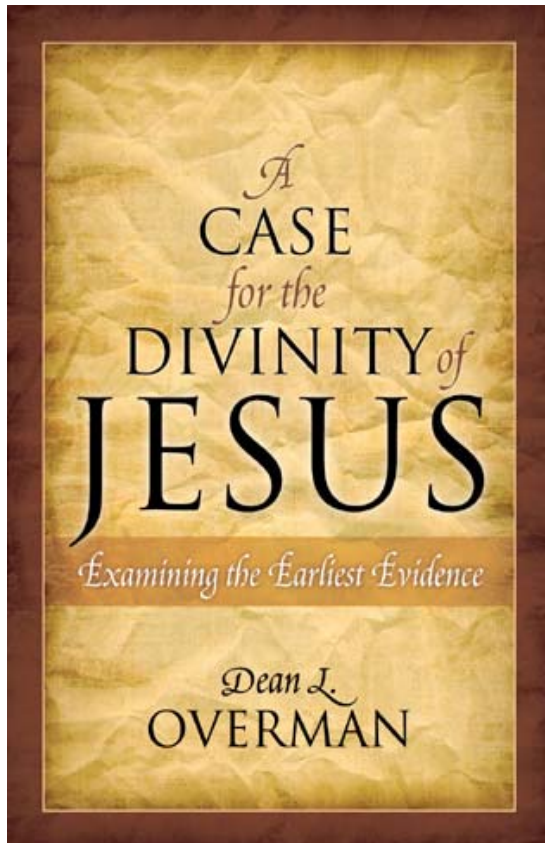
Also by Dean L. Overman

A Case for the Existence of God

A Case Against Accident and Self Organization

A Case for the Divinity of Jesus

by Dean L. Overman



Whether Jesus was really the Son of God or not is a central question for Christians—and one that has provoked heated debate since the time of Jesus' birth.

Dean L. Overman examines the earliest Christian records to build a compelling case for the divinity of Jesus.

Overman analyzes often-overlooked evidence from liturgies and letters written in the years immediately following Jesus' death—decades earlier than the Gnostic gospels or the New Testament gospels. Addressing questions raised by books such as Bart Ehrman's *Misquoting Jesus* and Elaine Pagels' *The Gnostic Gospels*,

Overman presents powerful evidence from the earliest Christian communities that will be new for many modern Christians and builds a carefully reasoned case for Jesus truly being the Son of God.

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

October 2009

ISBN-13: 978-1-4422-0322-8

320 pgs/Cloth \$24.95

"Dean Overman covers a lot of very important ground in this well organized and easy to read book. He makes a solid case for the divinity of Jesus, as seen especially in the historically credible accounts of the resurrection. But Overman deals with many other important topics, such as the reliability of the New Testament Gospels and the unreliability of the second-century gnostic Gospels and the complicated question of how other religions of the world fit into the picture. Students, clergy, experts and non-experts alike will benefit greatly from this book. "

**—Craig A. Evans, Payzant Distinguished Professor of New Testament, Acadia Divinity College;
author of *Fabricating Jesus***

Dean L. Overman is former senior partner of the international law firm Winston & Strawn. A former Templeton scholar at Oxford University in religion, information theory, and physics, he has also studied theology at Princeton Theological Seminary and Harvard University. He lives in Washington, DC, and is the author of *A Case for the Existence of God*. and *A Case Against Accident and Self-Organization*.

To order visit www.rowman & littlefield.com or call 717) 794-3800

For review copies (for media), exam copies (for potential classroom use) or to interview the author please e-mail Bob Todd at bt@bobtoddpublicity.com

About the Author

For several decades Dean L. Overman was a senior partner of Winston & Strawn, a large international law firm. At age thirty-four he was appointed the partner-in-charge of the firm's Washington office, practicing corporate law on behalf of multinational clients in a broad spectrum of legal areas.

He is presently co-chair of the Advisory Board of First Trust Portfolios, L.P., an asset management firm, and a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at The Van Raalte Institute.

While practicing in the area of international law, he taught a secured financing course as a member of the faculty of the University of Virginia Law School and also served as a Visiting Scholar at Harvard University. He was a White House Fellow and served as Special Assistant to Vice President Nelson Rockefeller and as Associate Director of the White House Domestic Council for President Ford.

He is the author or co-author of several law books and many law review articles. He is the author of *A Case Against Accident and Self Organization*, for which he was selected as a Templeton Scholar at Oxford University for seminars in religion and science, and *A Case for the Existence of God*. He received his Juris Doctor from the University of California at Berkeley (Boalt Hall) and did graduate work at the University of Chicago and Princeton Theological Seminary. He is a member of the Triple Nine Society and the International Society for Philosophical Enquiry.

For further information about the author and his synopsis of this book
visit www.DeanOverman.com

What People Are Saying

"Dean Overman covers a lot of very important ground in this well organized and easy to read book. He makes a solid case for the divinity of Jesus, as seen especially in the historically credible accounts of the resurrection. But Overman deals with many other important topics, such as the reliability of the New Testament Gospels and the unreliability of the second-century gnostic Gospels and the complicated question of how other religions of the world fit into the picture. Students, clergy, experts and non-experts alike will benefit greatly from this book. "

—**Craig A. Evans**, Payzant Distinguished Professor of New Testament, Acadia Divinity College; author of *Fabricating Jesus*

"Dean Overman has produced a carefully written, helpful book that investigates this exceptionally important issue in a persuasive and convincing manner."

—**Rev. Dr. John Polkinghorne**, Cambridge University, author of *Belief in God in an Age of Science*, Templeton Prize recipient

"Dean Overman brings the investigative skill of a brilliant lawyer together with the insights of an outstanding Christian intellectual leader to make a compelling case for the divinity of Jesus and his resurrection. The careful argument he makes needs to be taken seriously by all who want to examine the foundations for the astonishing claim that Jesus uniquely is the Son of God. No assertion of truth is more revolutionary in the world's history than this. Overman presents an accessible, persuasive case for why this assertion is historically grounded and intellectually trustworthy."

—**Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson**, General Secretary, Reformed Church in America; Co-founder, *Sojourners*

"Skillful lawyer Dean L. Overman has carefully marshalled the earliest evidence available from the early church's earliest confessions and set out a compelling case for the divinity of Jesus. What results is not just an enjoyable 'good read'--it is an excellent and perceptive 'must read' for laypeople and scholars alike, which calls for an intelligent response in the court of public opinion."

—**Richard N. Longenecker**, Professor Emeritus of New Testament, University of Toronto, author of *The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity*

"A clearly written presentation against the proposition that early Christians freely constructed the words and traditions of Jesus. The reader is in good hands."

—**Birger Gerhardsson**, Lund University, author of *The Reliability of the Gospel Tradition*

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Also by Dean L. Overman

A Case for the Existence of God

Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

ISBN-10: 074256312X

ISBN-13: 978-0742563124

9.1 x 6 x 1.2 inches/ 229 pgs

\$24.95

Some of the brightest scientific minds of our time, from Albert Einstein to Stephen Hawking, have made incredible insights into the earliest origins of the universe, but have failed to ultimately discover why there is something rather than nothing—why we exist.

In *A Case for the Existence of God*, Dean L. Overman examines the latest theories about the origins of the universe and explains why even the most sophisticated science can only take us so far. Ultimately we must make a leap of faith to understand the world, and Overman argues that a leap into theism provides the most satisfying conclusions.

Overman explores fundamental questions about why our world exists and how it functions, using principles of logic, physics, and theology.

In a time when religion and science are often portrayed as diametrically opposed, *A Case for the Existence of God* presents a refreshing view of the interplay between science and religion and makes a compelling case for the existence of God and his role in our world.

“What would St. Anselm think? Centuries after the medieval saint framed his famous proof for the existence of a deity, a philosophically minded attorney offers a far more compelling and scientifically sophisticated argument for belief in God. Drawing on modern cosmology and information theory, Overman exposes fallacies that have infested skeptics’ thinking since Hume and Kant. Clearer reasoning establishes an astonishing harmony between quantum physics and religious orthodoxy, so providing a credible defense for free will and moral judgment. Still, readers looking for certainty will not find it here: Overman acknowledges that the believer must make a leap of faith. But consistent analysis demonstrates that atheists likewise must embrace unprovable premises, albeit premises barren of hope and meaning. Willing to challenge the logic of unbelievers such as Dawkins and Dennett, Overman goes far beyond such logic, insisting that those searching for religious truth must remain open to non-rational modes of knowledge. After all, God beckons the perplexed as a loving person, not a merely intellectual precept. The intensely personal character of spiritual conversion emerges in the lives of the nine remarkable believers—including St. Augustine and Pascal, Dostoevsky and Weil—whose testimonies resonate with passionate conviction. A book for readers willing to wrestle with the largest questions.

— **Booklist**, Starred Review, January 01, 2009

“Why is there something rather than nothing? Why is the universe deeply and beautifully transparent to scientific enquiry? Dean L. Overman argues with clarity and care that theism offers the most illuminating response to such profound questions. His book will be found helpful by many thoughtful seekers after truthful understanding.”

—**Rev. Dr. John Polkinghorne, Cambridge University, author of *Belief in God in an Age of Science*,
Templeton Prize recipient**

"Overman's attention...offers a fresh approach to the case for God's existence."

—January 2009, **Publishers Weekly**

"Like a rare wine, Dean Overman is to be savored, not gulped. Crystal clear in his thinking and wide-ranging in his reading and discussion, he is a shining example of those who believe in thinking and think in believing."

—Os Guinness, **Oxford University, author of *Long Journey Home***

In *A Case for the Existence of God*, Dean L. Overman clearly explains the importance of understanding our worldview and the presuppositions that form the basis of that worldview. Readers will find the book to be a window into their lives and thus, difficult to put down."

—Armand Nicholi, **Harvard Medical School, author of *The Question of God***

"A lucid and wide-ranging positive argument for the existence of God, based on a wide range of data from modern science and also on the cumulative testimony of many reported spiritual experiences. It is an excellent antidote for those who may think that science cannot make a rational case for God."

—Keith Ward, **Oxford University, author of *The Big Questions in Science and Religion***

"As it is the nature of God that he should be humanly apprehensible, while also incomprehensible--outside of the universe we live within--it is appropriate the knowledge of God requires multiple levels of 'knowing.' Indeed, religious or mystical experiences of God may be more telling witnesses than the rationalist or metaphysical approaches. Brilliantly Dean L. Overman, as a wise and skilled lawyer, puts the reader in the dock to test the validity of his or her atheism, deism, or unreflective secular mind-set. This is a challenging book that will not only stretch the mind but deepen the heart, to experience both the mind and heart of God."

—James M. Houston, **former fellow, Hertford College, Oxford; founder of Regent College**

"Modern science has been immensely successful describing nature, but as Albert Einstein put it, 'the most incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible.' Dean L. Overman offers an explanation that is at once simple and profound. As befits an experienced lawyer and deep thinker, his book presents a lucid and convincing case for a God who has revealed His existence through His creation."

—Dr. Robert Kaita, **Plasma Physics Laboratory, Princeton University**

Dean L. Overman is also the author of *A Case Against Accident and Self Organization*, for which he was selected as a Templeton Scholar at Oxford University for seminars in religion and science.

A Case Against Accident and Self Organization

Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group

ISBN-13: 978-0847689668 **Hardcover:** 240 pages \$24.95

ISBN-13: 978-0742511675 **Paperback:** 272 pages \$18.95

In this illuminating book, Dean L. Overman uses logical principles and mathematical calculations to answer the questions that have long perplexed biologists and astrophysicists: Is it mathematically possible that accidental processes caused the formation of the first form of living matter from non-living matter? Could accidental processes have caused the formation of a universe compatible with life? Are current self-organization scenarios for the formation of the first living matter plausible?

Overman reviews the influence of metaphysical assumptions in logical analysis, and discusses the principles of logic applicable to these questions, examining the limitations of verbal and mathematical logic. He proceeds to demonstrate that it is mathematically impossible that accidental processes produced the first living matter.

The author also examines other issues related to the creation of the universe, including Stephen Hawking's no boundary proposal, the need for a Creator as the preserving cause of the universe, and the explanations offered by the weak and strong anthropic principles. Acclaimed by theologians and scientists alike as well-argued, coherent, and persuasive, ***A Case Against Accident and Self-Organization*** is a fascinating study of the origins of life and our universe.

"...impressive work."

—Philosophia Christi

"A valuable contribution to the discussion about the relationship between natural science and theology."

—Wolfhart Pannenberg, University of Munich

"For entertainment, Mr. Overman likes to ponder the origins of life on Earth, the mysteries of quantum mechanics and the nuances of particle physics. His mastery of these fields has earned him the respect and admiration of scholars from Cambridge to Harvard."

—Mona Charen, The Washington Times

"Overman's Brilliant book *A Case Against Accident and Self-Organization* will demonstrate to any reader that the universe we know could hardly have arisen by chance."

—The American Enterprise

"The writing is very clear, with hierarchic organization of numbered sections and subsections. Overman writes for the intelligent layperson, making this fine presentation of the argument for Design accessible to a wide audience."

—Charles E. Chaffey, *Universtiy of Toronto, Book Reviews*, Vo. 51, No. 1 March 99

"Overman's 'brief' finds implausible the claims that life evolved from nonlife by chance and that the conditions for life in the universe are without cause. . . . As clear and straightforward an argument as one can find."

—**First Things**