

Clearly perceived

Without Excuse

Werner Gitt, in cooperation with
Bob Compton and Jorge
Fernandez

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“For God’s invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So that men are without excuse” (Romans 1:20).

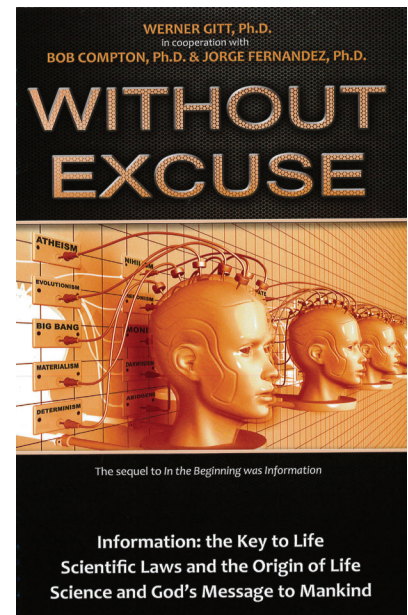
Perhaps more than any other verse in Scripture, Romans 1:20 has formed the backdrop for Christian apologetics in the realm of creation science. It has long been maintained by creationists that the deeper one delves into the physical universe, the more the glory and nature of God is revealed. From astronomers plumbing the vastness of the galaxies to biologists discovering seemingly infinite levels of organized biological complexity, the study of natural science proclaims truth. Information theorists in particular have focused on the reality that the design and information contained in the universe must necessarily give testament to an all-powerful creator, forming an integral and vital part of Christian apologetics today.

Despite the crucial contribution that the arguments from information and design have made to apologetics, few have deeply explored the foundational questions these arguments raised. What *is* information? Is information material or is it non-material? What implications would the answers to these questions have on the assumptions of materialism? Can it be demonstrated with reasonable

certainty that an eternal being has sent us information? If so, is there any scientifically valid evidence that the existence of information leads us specifically to the God of the Bible? Delving into these primary questions is vital to a scholarly and truly irrefutable apologetic, yet, to a large degree, these questions have remained unanswered. It is precisely this void that the authors, Werner Gitt, Bob Compton, and Jorge Fernandez intended to fill in their book, *Without Excuse*.

Few people are as qualified as Gitt to lay this foundation. As a recipient of the prestigious Borchers medal and *summa cum laude* graduate from the doctoral program at the Technical University of Aachen, Germany, Gitt’s expertise in information theory has long been recognized. Gitt then spent several years as head of the Department of Information Technology at the German Federal Institute of Physics and Technology (Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt [PTB], in Braunschweig), with the high rank of director and professor¹ before transitioning into writing and speaking full-time.

To date, Gitt has lectured on five continents as well as published a significant number of original research papers and books related to information science, numerical mathematics, and control engineering. While proponents of materialistic evolution may not like the conclusions reached by the authors, their work cannot be dismissed. *Without Excuse* relies upon undisputed laws of science and logic, and draws from a wide range of mainline, peer-reviewed scientific publications both in formulating the premises of the book as well as in representing the claims of scientific materialism. The authors’ commitment to represent accurately the positions of materialistic evolutionists,



as well as their own commitment to academic integrity and precision is evident throughout the book.

While this work is of the highest academic calibre and must garner respect by those in this field, it is also of utmost importance to any Christian desiring to better understand the claims of materialistic evolution and follow the biblical command to “tear down strongholds and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God”. Thus, for the scientist and the stay-at-home mother, the information theorist and the businessman, *Without Excuse* contains essential information for all in understanding and engaging the culture.

Without Excuse, premised on the truth of Romans 1:20, decisively confronts the foundational issue of defining information and its properties with methodical precision. From this foundation, the authors proceed to formulate a logical and valid series of deductions demonstrating how the existence of Universal Information (UI) must necessarily lead one first to the existence of a ‘god’, and then specifically to the God of the Bible. In the realm of Christian apologetics and worldview, this irreplaceable

work lays out foundational levels of information theory in a way hitherto not achieved.

Chapter one

A vital portion of the book can be found in the introduction, where the authors open *Without Excuse* by bringing the debate between creationists and evolutionists into the realm where both properly belong: the realm of religion. The authors note:

“Many people are convinced that this war is based upon the concept of ‘religion vs. science’, ‘blind faith vs. confirmed facts’, or ‘emotion vs. rationality’. This is a misconception which results only in arguments that are tangential to the central issue. If the main issue is not framed properly and addressed directly, it will never be dealt with in a rational manner. ... it is vital to understand that this is not a ‘science vs. religion’ matter. Both sides are unquestionably ideological and, as such, can be defined as religious. If this is not understood, people will continue talking past each other and addressing matters that never deal with the primary issue” (p. 19).

By properly framing the issue and emphasizing that this ‘ancient war’ between creationists and evolutionists is ultimately one of competing worldviews, the authors wisely refuse to give ground where it matters the most—in the area of defining the conflict. In a few brief pages, they clearly lay out the foundational clash of worldviews and the consequences which flow from the acceptance of one or the other, establishing a critical framework for the remainder of the book.

Chapter one focuses simply on bringing to our attention the immense level of detail and organized complexity in the physical world. Gitt’s presentation of marvels such as spider’s silk, the spinnerets of an arachnid, the delicate beauty and structure of a butterfly wing, and the awesome nature of

human embryonic development, must capture the imagination of anyone who encounters these intricacies. The accompanying photographs and diagrams will instill a sense of wonder in readers of all ages and backgrounds. It is this sense of wonder that Gitt uses as a springboard for the next seven chapters of the book, where the majority of the authors’ work in information theory can be found. As Gitt rightly notes in the close of the first chapter, these intricacies could not exist without some source of information. Further, if this information is what drives and explains our world, understanding what this information is, from whence it comes, and what we may conclude from its existence, is of paramount importance.

Chapters two to five

Chapters two to five build off this reality by delving deeply into fundamental questions of information theory. Gitt begins by exploring the definition and characteristics of information at a level that, to date, had never been achieved, explaining why previous theories of information fall short and proposing three necessary conditions for information alongside five levels of information. In this discussion, Gitt proposes 23 empirical statements which define the characteristics and effects of what he refers to as ‘Universal Information’. While chapter two does signal a shift into the technical aspects of the book, there is also a concerted effort made to make the material accessible to non-technical audiences through the use of graphics, diagrams, and real-life examples of the concepts being discussed, significantly lightening an otherwise heavy discussion.

After establishing this definition, Gitt proceeds systematically through concepts of information theory, laying out the necessary effect the existence of information has on one’s perception of reality and interweaving clear explanations of how the concepts being

discussed both impact the prevalent view of materialism and shape a Christian apologetic. By the close of chapter three, readers will have gone through a comprehensive summary of basic information theory, including a critique of a materialistic view of information and a discussion of what might be called Universal Information.

Chapters four to five lay the final pieces of groundwork by discussing the characteristics and limitations of science and then applying these principles to information theory to formulate scientific laws which govern the realm of UI. These laws form the basis for much of today’s Christian apologetics, and the importance of understanding this foundation cannot be overstated. Gitt’s discussion of the characteristics and limitations of science will also be of both interest and importance to any Christian wishing to engage the culture and understand the conflict of worldviews at the heart of the debate between creationists and evolutionists. Indeed, the common misunderstanding of ‘science’ as a whole is arguably the centre of the controversy, and until Christians gain a proper understanding and definition of science it will be difficult, if not impossible, to make significant progress. The authors’ continued emphasis on understanding the foundational issues at play makes *Without Excuse* unique in its approach, as well as vitally important for readers in all walks of life.

Chapters six to nine

The remainder of the book focuses on drawing out the necessary implications and conclusions regarding UI and its accompanying scientific laws. As in the previous sections, the authors are careful to avoid unmerited leaps in their reasoning. Instead, they engagingly apply the concepts discussed in the first portion of the book to biology and the existence of life, emphasizing the vast levels of information found in living organisms and making well-founded arguments that, given this

level of information, the essence of life is necessarily non-material in nature.

Chapter eight signals a shift to the final step in their work—moving from a discussion of science and the technical aspects of information theory into its application to a Christian apologetic. They begin first by demonstrating eight ‘far-reaching deductions’ that the Universal Information Theory requires, including the existence of an intelligent sender and what characteristics this sender must necessarily have, leading to the logically inevitable conclusion that there must, indeed, be some sort of deity standing as the creator of life. Each truth statement regarding this ‘sender’ is supported by the laws of science and logic and arrived at by careful deductive reasoning, leaving no gaps in their argument, and making the case for a creator with academic precision.

Gitt’s work culminates in chapter nine, where he uses the same eight deductions to demonstrate that the creator established in chapter eight must necessarily be the God of the Bible. Through principles of information theory, logic, and statistical probability, Gitt provides a strong and compelling argument that the God of Scripture is, and must be, the source of life and, furthermore, that the claims of Scripture are truth for all humanity. The level of detail and precision with which Gitt builds his argument reaches far beyond most apologetic works and provides a depth of understanding which is absolutely vital to understanding and engaging in the war of worldviews that dominates today’s culture.

Conclusion

Taken as a whole, the most appreciated and essential feature of *Without Excuse* is undoubtedly the manner in which the authors are able to weave solid academic material in with worldview analysis. Too often apologetic or academic work fails to address the foundational issues at

stake, unwittingly giving ground by accepting either an improper framework for the debate or flawed definitions of key terms. The authors make neither mistake, instead providing a work that addresses both the foundational aspects of the culture war and vital tools for engaging in it.

It should be noted that the layout of the book is much more in line with technical publications, rather than the contemporary writing style with which many readers may be more familiar. *Without Excuse* employs a moderate use of abbreviations and acronyms and formats each chapter as an outline, with section and subsection headings used throughout the text. Readers will also find that main points or argument synopses appear in text boxes throughout the book, a formatting choice more often seen in textbook-type materials. As a result, some may find that it takes some adjustment and time to grow accustomed to the alternate style. However, once this transition is made, those readers will also likely find the format helpful in navigating the material and grasping key concepts. Thus, individuals desiring to grow in their understanding of, and ability to defend, the Christian worldview should not be intimidated by the stylistic differences, as they will undoubtedly prove to be beneficial once there is more familiarity with the different format.

Because aspects of *Without Excuse* are fairly technical in nature, some readers may also find themselves becoming weighed down in chapters two to five, where the bulk of the detailed discussions on information theory are found. While the authors do a commendable job of making the material accessible through examples, explanations, and text boxes containing the main points and synopses, it is nonetheless fairly heavy subject matter in parts, which may be difficult for some to work through. In this case, it may be helpful to read the introduction and chapter one, and move immediately to chapters six to nine to gain

a better framework for the relevance and direction of the heavier concepts in chapters two to five.

On the other side of the spectrum, readers desiring more in-depth discussions of many of the concepts laid out in *Without Excuse* will find the appendices most helpful and engaging. Gitt includes substantial additional material covering the statistical view of information, further evidence for the energy and information in biological systems, a more in-depth discussion of scientific laws, and a brief work on the scientific advances that have been made since Darwin initially posited his theory of evolution. Much as in the main text of the book, Gitt is careful to use academically sound sources and accurate science, while providing adequate diagrams and explanations to illustrate the concepts. Additionally, the second appendix, containing further evidence for the energy and information in biological systems, cannot help but make any reader sit back in amazement at the organized complexity of life.

Without Excuse is an excellent tool for every Christian, providing invaluable insight into the clash of worldviews present in today’s culture, as well as excellent tools for understanding and defending the claims of Scripture and existence of The Creator. Moreover, Gitt’s work is highly recommended for any individual willing to genuinely investigate the claims of Christianity—anyone who examines the evidence and arguments presented therein truly will find themselves *without excuse*.

References

1. There are three requirements which must be met before the title ‘Director and Professor’ will be awarded at a German research institute on the recommendation of the Praesidium. First, the person recommended *must* be a scientist. Second, they must be a published author of a significant number of original research papers in technical literature. Finally, the department the recipient is to oversee must be a department within the recipient’s area of expertise, and also must employ several working scientists.