Chelsea Rhodes’s class at a Christian school included an eighth-grader who openly shared his skepticism. “Mrs. Rhodes,” he said, “I don’t believe Jesus was a real person.”

He challenged her constantly, raising “stumper” questions about string theory and other science topics. “I can’t answer all these questions,” she told him, “but I know someone who can.”

Chelsea invited RTB scholar Jeff Zweerink to her school’s Career Day to describe his work as an astrophysicist—and as a Christian. Jeff expressed that he sees science as an ally to his faith.

“My skeptical student was amazed,” Chelsea says, “to meet a scientist who believes in God. Jeff answered many of his questions that day.”

Afterwards, she encouraged her student to explore RTB’s books and website. For months she prayed as she watched him wrestle with doubts. Finally, on the last day of school, he was ready to trust Jesus with his life. You can imagine the joy of that moment!

We often hear how teachers influence their students in an enduring way. Because of you, a devoted teacher was equipped to help a bright young man—and all those he will one day impact—come to confident faith in Christ!
Can We Escape the Beginning?

Excerpt from Escaping the Beginning? by Jeff Zweerink

Some of the most pressing questions for Christians and non-Christians alike center on cosmic origins.

Did the universe begin to exist—or has it existed forever?

If this universe has existed forever, then perhaps it stands as the "uncaused cause" that ends the chain of what-caused-this questions. Scientists could continue to investigate how things form, how long it takes, and the processes involved, but eventually they run into a sobering realization. The universe is a brute reality. It has no conscious thought. It has no will. It has no personality. It knows nothing of us and has no regard for our existence.

If the universe began to exist, then it must have a sufficient cause. Something beyond the universe must exist. Perhaps that something is physical and impersonal, capable of generating a universe (like gravity is capable of making things fall). Or perhaps scientists encounter another sobering option: Something nonphysical, conscious, and personal created the universe for a purpose.

This "sobering option" moves our investigations beyond understanding the process to understanding this powerful being. As a result, a whole host of other questions arise. Who is this being? Why did it create the universe? Does the purpose of the universe include us? If so, does this being care about us? How would we relate to such a being?

For centuries, the only tools to investigate the beginning of the universe (or lack thereof) were philosophical and theological. Over the past few hundred years, however, scientists have developed tools that address this question. Although these tools allow scientists to probe farther and farther into the past, they don’t offer the certainty that comes with the deductive arguments of philosophy or the declarative statements of theology. They do offer us the possibility to make measurements, perform calculations, and evaluate which model provides the best explanation of all the data.

Based on my studies to date, the models that best account for all the data are those where the universe begins to exist. Moreover, history leads me to conclude that I need not fear claims that scientists have discovered something that counters the biblical description of the universe.

Scientists have developed models to escape a beginning, only to have the universe force them back toward models with a beginning.

I NEED NOT FEAR CLAIMS THAT SCIENTISTS HAVE DISCOVERED SOMETHING THAT COUNTERS THE BIBLICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE UNIVERSE.

In the months of September and October, we’ll send you a copy of Escaping the Beginning? in appreciation for your gift of support. Jeff’s careful examination of theories challenging the idea that the universe has a beginning (and a Beginner) will reaffirm your confidence that the book of nature always points to Scripture’s truth. If you’ve already sent your gift this month, thank you! If not, please visit give.reasons.org or use the enclosed response form to make your gift today.

Visit reasons.org/monthlypartners to see what’s new or to join this community today!
Cruising with RTB

By Sarah Chan

“You never run out of conversation topics on an RTB cruise!” says Nina Dunton. “We’ve made RTB our unofficial travel agency.”

Nina and Ray Dunton have become expedition regulars after joining us on four previous trips. After their first trip they were eager to connect more deeply with the ministry and they certainly have done so!

Nina, who now serves on our board of directors, shares how that experience has led to enduring relationships:

We met people on the 2009 Alaska Cruise who remain friends today. . . . I first met Kathy on that trip, and she took the time to have a private conversation with me. That’s when I saw the importance RTB places on reaching people for Christ.

Now, you have the opportunity to join Nina, RTB scholars, and like-minded believers on the 2020 Hawaii Cruise Conference. You’ll enjoy spiritually enriching fellowship as we travel from island to island, learning about the latest connections between science and Scripture as we go.

You’ll also marvel at God’s gorgeous handiwork, whether you venture to hidden waterfalls, soak up the tropical sun, or swim with vibrantly colorful fish. Reserve your spot today and join us on this adventure!