

## Why Anything at All?: Robin Le Poidevin

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### Transcript - Short

#### Robin Le Poidevin:

It's a perfectly legitimate question to ask why is there anything at all? Some people have said it's, it's an illegitimate question, it's based on a misunderstanding, I think it's perfectly intelligible. You and I are what we might call contingent beings; we exist, we might not have existed. I think a lot of the things that we encounter in our everyday lives are similarly contingent things; they might not have existed. The universe as a whole might not have existed, there might have been nothing. So, why is there something rather than nothing? Now we have to be careful how to answer that kind of question; we can't simply help ourselves to the existence of something else, and that might seem to rule out an explanation in terms of God because we're helping ourselves to the idea of an existent thing, God. But God is different arguably. You and I may be contingent beings, traditionally God has been regarded as a necessary being, he could not fail to exist. So, if the universe exists because God wills it, that's a, that's a, that's a necessary state of affairs. God couldn't have failed to exist and couldn't have failed to bring the universe into existence.

#### Robert Lawrence Kuhn:

That's a, that's a statement, but is there any substance behind it? Is there any way that you can justify it other than to make the statement that God was a necessary being?

#### Robin Le Poidevin:

Yes, to say that God is a necessary being is something that really, really requires quite, quite a lot, a lot of our unpacking. So, it's not the same kind of necessity as the necessity of  $1 + 1$  is, is 2. We would say God is a necessary being, we're not just making a point about language, we're making a point about reality. And here it's very difficult to understand how a being can be necessary. I can contain the reason for their, their own existence in their own, their own person. My own view of, of, of divine necessity is to take it not as a property of God as a feature of our own attitude towards God that the committed theists takes the existence of God as something non-negotiable, that it underlies everything, it colors their view of the whole of reality. It's necessary in that sense. It tells us more perhaps about the nature of belief than it does about the nature of God. If that's the case, though, it's no longer satisfactory to say there's something rather than nothing because God exists of necessity.

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