

*thought, while the causal relation governs spatio-temporal structures and active agency.* For the most part, it is *about* spatio-temporal structures and active agency that apologetics does its thinking.

The importance the causal order has for human knowing is enormous. We can know partially without knowing exhaustively not because of a mysterious epistemic efficacy that attends an act of presupposing, but because of the lawlike and causal regularity of the world we have been designed to investigate. Presupposing within a *chaotic* or *unruly* world (were this even possible) would do us no good, and presupposing within a well-behaved world is profitable *only when that presupposing is antecedently informed by data—and hence by learning!* (More on this later.)

Moreover, *successful learning* in our well-behaved world requires that both the law structures facilitating the rational processes of the mind/brain and the law structures governing the environment *are in phase*. Causal laws are operative and evident everywhere we are able to look, and they secure *patterns* among data (including the vital neural patterns that implement our very looking). These patterns, in turn, secure the basis for *sampling* data. Having said this, return with me to the "problem" of infinite data. Let it be granted that in physics, say, our actual contact with all relevant data is quite small in relation to what an indefinitely extended scientific research might turn up. Even though we are not able to exhaust the data in a piecemeal observational fashion, the law structures of the data we *are* able to examine bring the promise that the *unexamined* universe is governed by those *same* laws! Of course, concluding that we inhabit a universal causal order is an inductive generalization; but it is a *rationally responsible* generalization in two ways: (1) it is massively evidenced in our every waking hour, and (2) it does *real work* in our apologetic foundation by accounting for our perceptual and rational success in the world.

In a word, it is the causal integrity of the creation that secures partial knowledge and not a presupposing by which *each* rationalized datum—one by one—perspicuously declares its place in the plan of God *merely be being factual*. The rational whole that constitutes the entire plan of God is simply not available to finite minds with anything like the concrete specificity that would be required by Van Til's rationalism. It is far better to say that it was God's plan to anchor our inductive and rational