Creation, Evolution, and Scientific Facts

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Science Basics

- Scientia (Latin root word): knowledge or truth
  Natural science: Study of truths found in nature
  Computer science: Logical/computational truths
  Social science: Study of truths found in society
- Science can be Exact/Inexact (e.g. -- probabilities) and Operational/Historical (e.g. -- forensics)
- "**Science is the search for truth, the effort to understand the world; it involves the rejection of bias, of dogma, of revelation,but not the rejection of morality... One way in which scientists work is by observing the world, making note of phenomena, and analyzing them**." Linus Pauling

Intelligent Design vs Creationism

- ID "**holds that certain features of the universe and of living things are best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection. Through the study and analysis of a system's components, a design theorist is able to determine whether various natural structures are the product of chance, natural law, intelligent design, or some combination thereof.**" (Discovery Institute Website)
- **Creationism holds that the Bible is true, and science must conform to the facts presented in the Bible, with any disparity due to incomplete human understanding.**

Pertinent US Court Rulings

- Supreme Court (1980) held that the implications of material alone do not make a religion even though those implications "coincide or harmonize with the tenets of some or all religions."
- Supreme Court (1961) held "Among religions in this country which do not teach what would generally be considered a belief in the existence of God are ... Secular Humanism."
- "Atheism is religion, and the group... was religious in nature even though it expressly rejects a belief in a supreme being." (2005 Appellate decision)

Bad Decisions

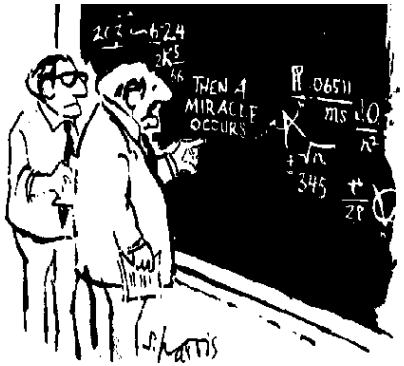
- KITZMILLER V. DOVER: Started to get creationism in school, changed to ID when creationism ruled unconstitutional; ID ruled as religion since it's purpose was creationism.
- 9/16/08 "Brunswick County school board is looking for a way for creationism to be taught in the classroom": clearly unconstitutional, and this consideration prevents a positive ID decision
- Avoid any implication of supernaturalism – stick to science as the first and only consideration

Evolution and Religion

- "As the creationists claim, belief in modern evolution makes atheists of people. One can have a religious view that is compatible with evolution only if the religious view is indistinguishable from atheism." Will Provine, "No Free Will,"1999, in Catching Up with the Vision, pS123
- Evolution is "a full-fledged alternative to Christianity... Evolution is a religion. This was true of evolution in the beginning, and it is true of evolution still today." Michael Ruse, "Saving Darwinism from the Darwinians," National Post, 5/13/00

The Scientific Concern of Science and the Supernatural

- "The creationist can easily explain any phenomenon by simply saying 'God did it.' This approach, though it may be perfectly correct in the absolute sense, does not foster further inquiry and is therefore intellectually emasculated." (William Stansfield, The Science of Evolution, 1977)



"I think you should be more explicit here in step two."

Christianity and Science

- "The sheer act of faith that the universe possessed order and could be interpreted by rational minds..That is was dealing with a rational universe controlled by a creator who did not act upon whim nor interfere with the forces He had set in operation. The experimental method succeeded beyond man's wildest dreams but the faith that brought it into being owes something to the Christian conception of the nature of God. **It is surely one of the curious paradoxes of history that science, which professionally has little to do with faith, owes its origins to an act of faith that the universe can be rationally interpreted**, and that science today is sustained by that assumption." (Loren Eisley, Darwin's Century: Evolution and the Men Who Discovered It, 1961)
- **Many great scientists were Bible-believing Christians.**

Isaac Newton

- World's greatest scientist
- Laws of motion and gravity
- "Gravity explains the motions of the planets, but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done."
- "I have a foundational belief in the Bible as the Word of God."
- Newton spent more time studying Scripture than studying science.

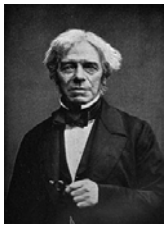
Johann Kepler

- Father of Physical Astronomy
- Kepler's Laws: Three mathematical laws of planetary motion
- Defended sun-centered solar system
- "I was merely thinking God's thoughts after him. Since we astronomers are priests of the highest God in regard to the book of nature, it benefits us to be thoughtful, not of the glory of our minds, but rather, above all else, of the glory of God."
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Johannes_Kepler

Robert Boyle

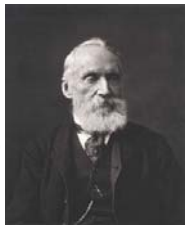
- Chemist, physicist, inventor
- Boyle's gas law: PV = constant
- Boyle Lectures founder, intended to defend the Christian religion
- As a director of the East India Company he spent large sums in promoting the spread of Christianity in the East, contributing liberally to missionary societies, and to the expenses of translating the Bible or portions of it into various languages.

Michael Faraday



- Discovered electromagnetic rotation, electromagnetic induction, and dynamo.
- Made advances in electrochemistry
- His science was inseparable from his religion.
- He believed in a literal interpretation of the Bible.
- His whole life, both inside the laboratory and out, was dominated by his faith.

William Thomson(Lord Kelvin)



- Mathematical physicist and engineer
- Developed the Kelvin scale of absolute temperature measurement
- A devout believer in Christianity throughout his life
- Saw his Christian faith as supporting and informing his scientific work

Sir Frederick William Herschel

- Discovered infrared radiation and made many other discoveries in astronomy.
- He believed that God's universe was characterized by order and planning. His discovery of that order led him to conclude that "the undevout astronomer must be mad."
- A diary entry includes “we shall be led to Nature and Nature’s God.”

Blaise Pascal

- Mathematician, physicist, calculator inventor, and religious philosopher
- Development of probability theory was his most influential contribution to mathematics.
- "Belief is a wise wager. Granted that faith cannot be proved, what harm will come to you if you gamble on its truth and it proves false? If you gain, you gain all; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation, that He exists."
- "Faith is different from proof; the latter is human, the former is a Gift from God."

Biblical Basis for Science and the Bible

- "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Mt. 22:37
- "For the Lord gives wisdom, and from His mouth come knowledge and understanding." Pr. 2:6
- "'Come now, let us reason together,' says the LORD" **Is 1:18**
- "Paul …reasoned with them from the Scriptures" **Acts 17:2**
- "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15
- "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32 **(all NIV unless indicated otherwise)**

Creation Evidence

- "By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations, by understanding he set the heavens in place" Pr 3:19
- "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles." Rom 1:20-23

Creation Evangelism

- "We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them." Acts 14:15
- "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth." Acts 17:24
- "Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." (1 Tm 6:20-21 KJV)

Future Sessions in Series

#2 The origin of mass and energy: science, pseudoscience, and Biblical perspectives

#3 Life and its origin: what does known science demonstrate

#4 Evolution, species, and "kinds": what changes are known to science

#5 The flood, catastrophism, fossils, and time (e.g.--ages of the earth and early men)

#6 Scientific reliability of the Bible in a number of scientific fields, including statistics of prophecies

Goals of This Series

- **The Bible IS reliable and can be trusted – "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching…" (2 Tim. 3:16)**
- **Christian faith is fact-based, not "blind" or "anti-logic" – "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (Jn. 8:32).**
- **Our knowledge on any subject is limited – "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror." (1 Cor 13:12).**
- **The world is blind to many truths (Rom. 1:18-32, 1 Cor. 1:18-2:16) – "They exchanged the truth of God for a lie."**
- **Proven reliability increases confidence in accuracy of predictions (Heaven, Hell, judgement, salvation, etc. are based on faith).**

Why are scientists hard to reach?

- **Education dismisses anything except "undirected"**

"Our willingness to accept scientific claims that are against common sense is the key to understanding the real struggle between science and the supernatural. We take the side of science in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, in spite of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for the unsubstantiated just-so stories, because we have a prior commitment to materialism.... materialism is absolute for we cannot allow a divine foot in the door." *Richard Lewontin* in The New York Review of Books (1/9/97)

- **Peer pressure/funding/employment**
- **Creator implies purpose and accountability**
- **God is faithful: "Seek and you will find" Mt 7:7**