

Christianity and Hot Button Issues

Biblical and Cultural Challenges Christians Must Face

#4 – DOESN'T SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE CONFLICT? NOTES

I. Introduction

History of Modern Science

Enlightenment, Modernism, Rationalism, Empiricism, Naturalistic Materialism, Darwin.

Christian roots of Modern Science: Copernicus (1473-1543), Galileo (1564-1642), Newton (1642-1726) predate the Enlightenment.

II. Different Views on Origins

1) Naturalism, Materialism, and Empiricism:

Darwinian Evolution

2) Supernaturalism:

A) *Intelligent Design*

B) *Creationism*

i) *Day Age Theories*

ii) *Young Earth Creationism*

3) Syncretistic Worldview:

Theistic Evolution

III. Fundamental Problems with Modern Science and Evolution

1) Hume on Miracles and Laws of Nature

David Hume (1711-76) defined miracles as a violation of the laws of nature which cannot be violated. Assumes what he sets out to prove. Laws of nature are descriptive not prescriptive.

2) Biblical Defining Laws of Nature and Miracles

A) *Laws of Nature* – God's ordinary providence. Secondary causes.

B) *Miracles* – God's rare and extraordinary acts of providence.

3) Chance, Nothing, and Spontaneous Creation

- *Chance* = fundamental belief in natural causes for origins.
- Universe is self-created. Something came out of nothing.
Keith Mathison, "If there was ever a 'moment' when there was *absolutely nothing* then there would be absolutely nothing now."

4) Kuhn's Paradigms

Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962, 1970, 1996) demonstrated that all scientific theories are structured around a set of presuppositions (paradigms).

- Ptolemaic Cosmology (geo-centric) shifted to the Copernican model (heliocentric)
- Newtonian Physics to Einstein's Physics

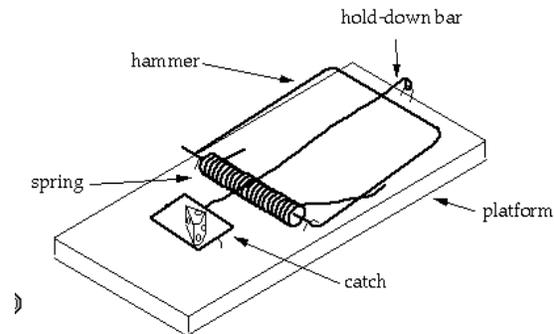
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IV. Intelligent Design

1) DNA – Instructional manual containing information to build organisms. No known way information can come from anything but a mental/ non-material, intelligent source (i.e., a mind).

2) Irreducible Complexity – Even the simplest single cell organisms contain extremely complex little biochemical machines that are interdependent. Each component needs the other to survive or have any use. If one malfunctions, the whole organism fails.



The Irreducibly Complex Mouse Trap

V. Biblical Creationism

1) Interpretation of 24-Hour Days in Genesis 1-2

- A) Genesis 1-11 has all the literary hallmarks of historical narrative.
- B) Day (Heb. *yom*) always mean a 24-hour period when marked with an ordinal (first, second, etc.) See Gen. 1:5b, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31; 2:2.
- C) The pattern of “Let there be...and it was so” (1:3, 6-7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 24).
- D) The pattern of “evening” to “morning” = Hebrew 24-hour day. Gen. 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31.
- E) Genesis 20:11 explicitly grounds sabbath in six days of creation.

2) Mature Creation (Appearance of Age)

Compare to Jesus turning water into “good wine” (John 2:10).

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VI. Defending Biblical Creation

1) Worldview – Set of presuppositions (lenses) about the world that informs the way you see the world and interpret data/ evidence. We all interpret facts in light of our worldview. Facts/ evidence do not speak for themselves. Facts are not neutral things that lead naturally to one conclusion.

2) Pretended Neutrality Fallacy. There is no neutral/ common ground (Matt. 12:30). Everything must be judged by an ultimate standard that cannot be compromised or give ground to a different standard. The natural mind is blind to the things of God (1 Cor. 1:18-31; 2:14-16; Eph. 4:17-21).

3) Judging the Truth of Worldviews

In order to judge any worldview it must:

A) **Be Logically consistent.** If it has internal contradictions, it fails.

Laws of logic: Universal, invariant, inviolable laws of reasoning

The laws of logic undermine modern worldviews. For example:

Relativism: “There is no objective truth.” Is that statement objectively true?

Empiricism: “All knowledge/ truth is gained by observation.” Is that truth gained by observation? Since when do we observe knowledge? Knowledge is mental not physical.

B) **Provide the Preconditions for Intelligibility.** Without establishing the very foundation and source of coherent truth claims then we cannot justify what we claim is true.

- Basic reliability of memory and our senses.
- Laws of logic are true and trustworthy.
- Uniformity of nature: consistent, predictable, repeatable, and do not arbitrarily change given specific conditions. How do we know future will be like the past?
- Laws of nature. What are they? Where do they come from? Will they change?

Scripture/ the God of the Bible provide justification for knowledge, laws of logic, the uniformity of nature, and the laws that govern nature. See Prov. 1:7 (also 2:5; 9:10).

True knowledge is justified belief. Need ultimate standard/ authority.

Some might say, “I don’t believe I need God or the Bible to reason logically, I can reason without them just fine.” But this is no different than saying, “I don’t believe I need air to breathe, I can breathe without it just fine.” Unbelievers must assume the standards that are only justified in a Christian worldview, but then turn around and seek to undermine that worldview by those standards. Unbelievers borrow from the Christian worldview to try to destroy it.

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VII. Answering the Critic:

Challenging the Evolutionist (See Jason Lisle, *The Ultimate Proof of Creation*)

- 1) Arbitrariness:
 - a) Mere Opinion. Statements made without any argumentation or rational/ scientific evidence.
 - b) Relativism. There is no need for debate if there is no objective truth.
 - c) Prejudicial Conjecture. Guessing at what must be true without really knowing.
 - d) Unargued Philosophical Bias. Assume without even knowing what their presuppositions/ worldview is. Naturalism is true without arguing for it.
- 2) Inconsistency:
 - a) Logical Fallacies. Learn to detect.
 - b) *Reductio Ad Absurdum*. When an argument is taken to its logical conclusion and leads to an absurd result. EX: Empiricism – truth/ knowledge only gained thru senses. This assertion cannot be proved by the senses and so it means we could know nothing at all.
 - c) Behavioral Inconsistency. Says one thing but really believes another. EX: humans are mindless collection of molecules and nothing more/ rearranged pond scum. Then goes home to kiss his wife and kids.
 - d) Presuppositional Tensions. EX: Belief in objective morality but also naturalism.
- 3) Preconditions (things we assume and take for granted and are necessary for science):
 - a) Laws of Logic.
 - b) Uniformity of Nature (and Laws of Nature).
 - c) Objective Morality.
 - d) Basic Reliability of Senses. How do we know this? Do we test using senses? How do we know we are not living in a *Matrix* world (an illusion)?
 - e) Basic Reliability of Memory. Do we take a memory test to test memory?
Truth: God put us in charge of creation and gave us all the resources we need.

Resources:

Book: R. C. Sproul, *Not a Chance*. Shows how scientific naturalism is irrational.

Intelligent Design:

Book: Lee Strobel, *The Case for a Creator*. Interviews top ID proponents.

Website: The Discovery Institute – www.discovery.org. Flagship ID organization.

DVD: *The Privileged Planet*. Shows how earth is uniquely designed for life.

DVD: *Unlocking the Mystery of Life*. Shows the amazing design and complexity of human cells.

Young Earth Creationism (YEC):

Book: John MacArthur, *Battle for the Beginning*. Gives careful explanation of Genesis 1-3.

Book: Jason Lisle, *The Ultimate Proof*. Shows how to defend Biblical creation.

Book: Paul Garner, *The New Creationism*. Shows evidence from all scientific disciplines for YEC.

Website: Answers In Genesis: <https://answersingenesis.org>.

Website: Institute for Creation Research: www.icr.org.

Website: Creation Ministries International: <http://creation.com>.

DVD: *Is Genesis History?* Amazing evidence for YEC by top YEC scientists.