

Apologetics Sunday School  
March 1, 2015  
“Doesn’t Science Disprove Christianity?”  
Rev. Dave Dorst

If someone asks you the question, “Doesn’t Science Disprove Christianity?” this is a real case where you put the burden of proof on them. The only real answer you need to have for them is: “How?” The burden of proof is on them. “What scientific discoveries do you think disprove Christianity?”

### **Evolution?**

Almost no one denies “microevolution” (living things adapt and change over time), but many Christians do not believe in “macroevolution” (species gradually growing into other species). But that disproves a literal reading of Scripture more than it does the Christian God and Jesus’ life, death & resurrection. A Christian can even believe in evolution without believing in “philosophical naturalism” – the view that everything has a natural cause and that life is the result of random forces guided by no one.

Three ways that Christians understand the creation of the world:

- 1) Young-Earth Creationists – each day was a literal 24 hours, every basic type of creature was created, the earth is between 6,000-10,000 years old
- 2) Old-Earth Creationists – each day represents a time period; the earth may be millions of years old, but that doesn’t make macro-evolution true
- 3) Theistic Evolutionists – Earth is millions or billions of years old and God guided the evolutionary process throughout human history

The main thing this rules out is random chance, naturalistic selection.

“Since Christian believers occupy different positions on both the meaning of Genesis 1 and on the nature of evolution, *those who are considering Christianity as a whole should not allow themselves to be distracted by this intramural debate.*” Tim Keller

### **The Big Bang?**

If the universe never had a beginning, then maybe you could disprove Genesis 1; but the Big Bang is just a description of God speaking the universe into existence. Whether it was a Creator or from nothing is where the controversy comes in.

### **Miracles**

Miracles don’t exist, no one can rise from the dead? Really, you can prove that scientifically? Basically, people treat the Bible like Greek mythology or Native American ways of explaining away how the world actually works. For example: Rain is the tears of the Creator rather than a natural buildup of precipitation in clouds; or storms in the ocean are Poseidon’s trying to kill someone. But we have to explain to them the Bible is not like that at all! The Bible (other than the wisdom literature and prophecy) was people accurately, historically writing down what happened. And none of that has been disproven, unless you reject it outright as, “That could never happen.” The fact that hundreds of prophecies written in the Old Testament came true argues strongly for the veracity of Scripture. (But that is getting into the “Is the Bible Historically Reliable?” lesson)

It’s one thing to say that science has proved that you can’t take Genesis 1 literally. It’s another thing to say that science has disproven all of Christianity, or the concept of God. Science would have to

disprove the resurrection of Jesus, and a combination of history and archeology would have to completely discredit the Bible. Archeology has never proved anything wrong in the Bible (ex: the walls of Jericho fell outward, not inward). Historical records only confirm the Bible's reliability and facts.

It is one thing to say that science is equipped to test for natural causes and cannot speak to any other causes. It is quite another to insist that science proves that no other causes could possibly exist.<sup>1</sup>

There is no possibility that science can or cannot prove God beyond a reasonable doubt! Therefore, there is no way to disprove that miracles can exist. Beyond if a Creator God exists, then He can easily bend the regular way things work that He set forth when He first created them.

"Are Science and Religion Allies or Enemies?"

This question is well over 100 years old. This is nothing new. It's not like it started when Ken Ham and Bill Nye had their debate last year. According to the book *The Soul of Science* by Nancy R. Pearcey and Charles B. Thaxton, between 1500 and 1800, science and religion were allies. The great scientists were Christians! Rational logic and the view of the world as God's creation are the Christian worldview that make scientific discovery possible.

Critics point to the church's persecution of Galileo because he dared to say that the world was round. But it wasn't only the church that Galileo was challenging, it was also the existing scientific data at the time.

Possible Ways of Reconciling Science and Christianity:<sup>2</sup>

**Double-Truth Theory:** Something can be scientifically false but theologically true. Ex: science says the universe is eternal and non-created, religion says it has a beginning. That's just post-modern relativism. They can't both be true.

**Complementarianism:** They are non-overlapping; science tells us facts, religion tells us value/meaning. Ex: Science says someone can't come back from the dead, religion says Christ rose from the dead which gives meaning to Christians (even though it didn't actually happen)

**All truth is God's truth:** We as Christians have nothing to hide! Bring it on. No honest scientific discovery has ever disproven something in the Bible! Honest is a big qualifier, though.

"Do not be afraid of being free thinkers! If you think strongly enough you will be forced by science to the belief in God, which is the foundation of all religion. You will find science not antagonistic but helpful to religion." -Sir William Thompson, 19<sup>th</sup> century Irish physicist and engineer; he was also known as Lord Kelvin/Baron Kelvin and units of temperature are named after him (kelvins)

The Bible is not a science textbook, but it records things as they happened. When it says that God made the sun stand still, it's more likely that He made the earth stop rotating and revolving for a moment, but the phenomenon was the same. The writer recorded it from human perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> Tim Keller, *The Reason for God* (New York: RiverHead, 2008) p. 88.

<sup>2</sup> Ravi Zacharias and Norman Geisler, *Who Made God?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003) p. 52.

James Murphy is going to be talking about the “Evidence for Design” over the next couple of weeks, so we’re not going to spend much time on that.

Tips for Talking About this Issue:<sup>3</sup>

1) When talking to people who don’t believe the Bible, we’re wise to focus at least initially on the broader evidence that backs up what we believe as Christians. Be careful not to pretend that you know more than you do. Sometimes Christians come across as dogmatic in these areas in ways that can hurt our credibility and influence.

2) Try not to overreact to what your friends say they believe. A strong commitment to the teachings of evolution, for example, can mean different things to different people. As always, ask questions, and really listen to their answers. Do they believe just in microevolution or in macroevolution too?

3) If your friends do believe in the full Darwinian view, it’s still important to find out, if in their minds, that excludes God. If not, then it’s probably better to focus your energy on helping them to see that this God, regardless of how he got it done, must be incredibly wise, powerful, and creative – to cause the universe and life in all its complexity.

4) If your friends say that evolution rules out the existence of God, ask them to explain why – and while they’re at it, ask them how the universe got started on it own, how life began independently, and how the information in DNA came into existence without any intelligence behind it. If they can answer those questions, they’re ahead of the scientific community as a whole!

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<sup>3</sup> Mark Mittelberg, *The Questions Christians Hope No One Will Ask (With Answers)* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2010), pp. 57-58.