

Answers for Chris Lesson 6

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Answers for Chris

Course Overview

- ▶ Lesson 1 - Chris' World – Values, Meaning and Truth in Our Culture
- ▶ Lesson 2 - Questions About God, Suffering and Pain
- ▶ Lesson 3 - Questions About Christian Exclusivity, Judgment and Hell
- ▶ Lesson 4 - Questions About Genocide and Slavery in the Bible
- ▶ Lesson 5 - Questions About Sexism and Homosexuality in the Bible
- ▶ Lesson 6 - Questions About the Bible and Science
- ▶ Lesson 7 - Questions About the Bible, Superstition, and Mythology
- ▶ Lesson 8 - Questions About the Message and the Messenger

The Bible and Science

Part I



- ▶ Faith is irrational because it believes in something that cannot be tested or verified. Since science relies on verification and evidence, why shouldn't we use it as the basis for all true understanding?

Agreements and Differences

- ▶ We affirm the value of scientific discovery and application, particularly when it leads to the understanding of creation and improvement of human life
- ▶ We do not accept that natural science is the basis for evaluating all truth and reality
 - ▶ This is a philosophically self-refuting claim
- ▶ We maintain that philosophy and natural science are inextricably linked and that materialism is inadequate to fully explain reality or “do science”

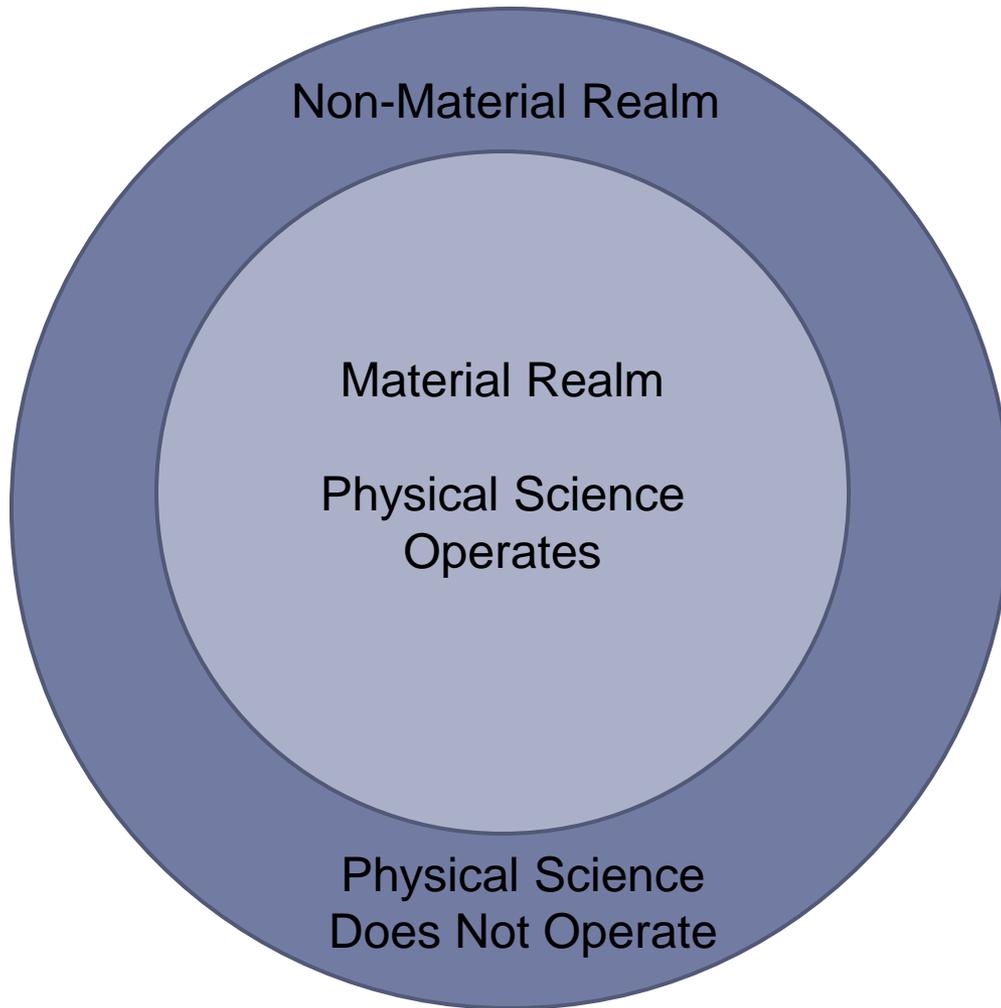
The Changing Definition of Faith

- ▶ Pistis (Greek NT) - conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervour born of faith and joined with it (Thayers Dictionary)
 - ▶ Belief (pisteuo) – conviction of something being true and worthy of being trusted
- ▶ Faith (modern definition) - belief or trust: belief in, devotion to, or trust in somebody or something, especially without logical proof (Bing Dictionary)

The Changing Definition of Science

- ▶ Science – In a general sense, knowledge, or certain knowledge; the comprehension or understanding of facts by the mind. The science of God must be perfect (Websters Dictionary, 1828)
- ▶ Science (modern definition) - knowledge about or study of the natural world based on facts learned through experiments and observation (Merriam-Webster online)

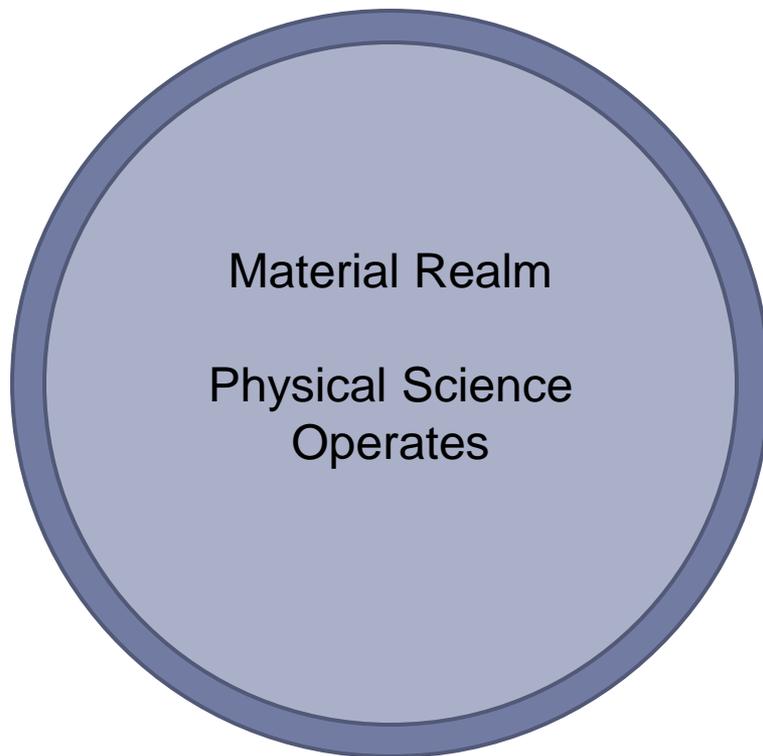
Historic View of the Material and Non-Material Realms



Material realm: God operates
potentia ordinata

Non-material realm God operates
potentia absoluta

Modern View of the Material and Non-Material Realms



Asserted change: If physical science cannot evaluate something, it does not exist

Actual change: Philosophy (materialism) uses natural science to redefine reality

This is analogous to saying light doesn't exist if we can't see it

Materialism is self-refuting and insufficient to fully explain reality

- ▶ The claim that something can only be true if it is materially provable (i.e., via natural science) is itself not materially provable
- ▶ Materialism does not adequately account for immaterial laws like logic and mathematics
- ▶ Materialism does not appear to adequately account for consciousness and transcendent themes such as love and justice
- ▶ Materialism does not account for our understanding of properties such as “redness”

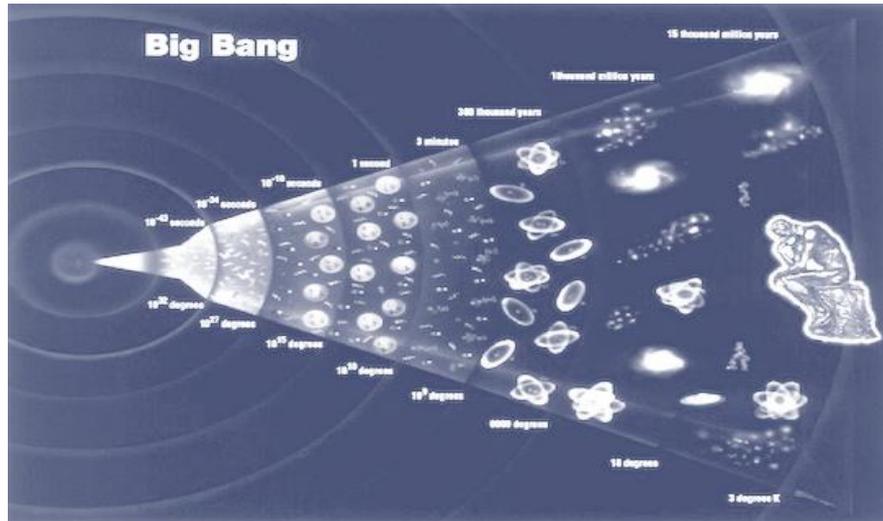
Materialism is philosophically insufficient to “do science”

- ▶ The scientist assumes the reliability of sense data. Materialism cannot support that assumption
- ▶ The scientist assumes repeatability and order to conduct physical experiments. Materialism cannot support that assumption
- ▶ Science relies on higher laws of logic to conduct experiments and derive conclusions. Materialism cannot explain transcendent logic

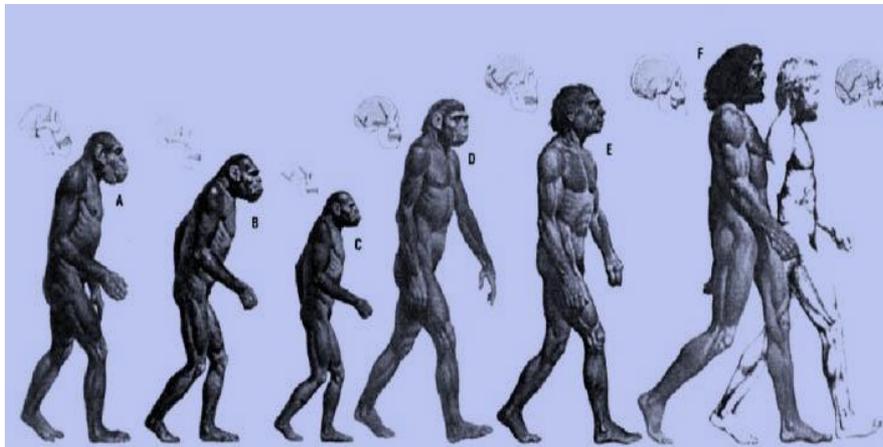
Science relies on the very system that many scientists in turn seek to refute

The Bible and Science

Part II



- ▶ Hasn't science disproved most if not all of Christianity?



The Bible and Science

- ▶ The vast majority of tension between Christian and dominant scientific opinion surrounds origin science
 - ▶ Origin of the universe (cosmology)
 - ▶ Origin of humanity (paleontology, biology)
- ▶ Origin science is unique inasmuch as there is no exact experiment to reproduce original events
 - ▶ Conclusions must be inferred based on existing data, analysis, and “gapfiller” assumptions
 - ▶ Historically, even though assumptions change, ultimate conclusions do not i.e., no real falsification
- ▶ Therefore, modern equivalences between repeatable observable phenomena (e.g., gravity) and origin theories (e.g., macroevolution) are categorically false

The Bible and Science

Comparison of Origin Opinions

Position	Age of Universe	Origin of Universe	Age of Earth	Origin of Humanity
Majority Science	13.7 billion yrs	Big Bang (alternate theories exist)	4.5 million yrs	Evolution from common descent via natural selection
Special (144 Hour) Creation	6,000-10,000 yrs	God's direct creation "ex nihilo"	6,000-10,000 yrs	God's direct creation
Progressive Creation (6 "long" days)	13.7 billion yrs	God's direct creation via Big Bang	"Old Earth" ~ 4.5 million yrs	God's direct creation
Theistic Evolution	13.7 billion yrs	Big Bang	4.5 million yrs	Evolution from common descent as directed by God

Most Americans including Christians do not fit squarely in any one camp

The Genesis Record

- ▶ Although there are many opinions on the details of the Genesis record, the following elements are essential to the Christian gospel and hold up very well in any discussion with Chris
 - ▶ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth
 - ▶ God created mankind innocent and uniquely in his image
 - ▶ Male and female he created them to be joined together, multiply, and “subdue the earth”
 - ▶ Humanity sinned against God and fell into moral corruption
 - ▶ Humanity was cursed as a result of sin
 - ▶ God initiated a plan to redeem his creation and his people from the curse of sin

In the Beginning...

- ▶ There are dozens of variants of cosmological theories
 - ▶ Most center on static, oscillating, or expanding/contracting universe
- ▶ From enlightenment era until Einstein, the “Kantian” steady state, infinite universe was most popular non-theistic model
 - ▶ Problem of actual “infinite time”
- ▶ With introduction of Einstein’s theory of general relativity, Hubble’s “red shift” and cosmic microwave radiation, majority opinion shifted to Big Bang
 - ▶ There is no uniform opinion amongst scientists about what “started” the Big Bang or what the universe is expanding into

Male and Female He Created Them...

- ▶ While “Origin of Species” (1859) represents origin of modern evolution ideas of human evolution existed in ancient Greek philosophy
 - ▶ Although the theory has been adapted since Darwin, core elements include: (a) diversity of species evolved from (b) common descent, via (c) natural selection
 - ▶ Distinction should be made between adaptation (aka microevolution) and transitional life forms (aka macroevolution)
- ▶ Core areas of debate
 - ▶ Complexity of the cellular structure – probability of random occurrence of genetic sequencing
 - ▶ Not all evolutionists defend pre-biological evolution (i.e., theistic evolution or extra-terrestrial “seeding” of earth)
 - ▶ Fossil record and transitional forms
 - ▶ “Power” associated with natural selection

The dogmatism of the debate takes on a religious proportion because it is

Some “Sniff Test” Questions We Might Ask Chris

- ▶ Do you believe something can come from nothing via natural causes?
- ▶ Do you believe everything you know about humanity can be explained via a natural evolutionary process?
- ▶ Do you believe order naturally comes out of disorder?
- ▶ Do you believe there is a natural “force” that is driving selection of more advanced species along the “evolutionary tree”?
- ▶ Do you believe male and female variants of a species stayed “lock stepped” through millions of years of evolution so that continuous reproduction could occur?