



SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE



BIBLE CONFERENCE

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INTRODUCTION

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In this presentation on Science and the Bible I will discuss how the Bible has influenced science and scientific thought. I will make the case, and show from history, how modern science was made possible because of a Biblical "world view." I will show how modern science really "took off" during the Renaissance and Reformation period (1400-1700 A.D.) when the printing press increased the availability of information, and more importantly, provided a Bible in the vernacular language of the people. I will show that many of the foundational discoveries of science during this period and shortly thereafter were made by men with a theistic background, many who were professing "Bible Believing" Christians.

It was during the mid 18th century however, that the scriptures were put under attack from philosophy, (notably German Rationalism) and by "naturalistic science" as well. In particular, the Genesis accounts of creation and Noah's flood were attacked based on the so-called scientific methods and discoveries of the naturalistic scientist. By the mid-20th century, it actually became "unscientific" to include God or "the creator" in discussions within the "scientific community." These "scientists" typify the fool found in Ps 14:

Psalm 14:1-3 The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

Although naturalistic science became the norm in the mid-19th century until today, science based on a Biblical perspective, what I call, "Theistic Science," has within the last fifty years or so mounted a significant counterattack in support of the Biblical viewpoint of creation, the Genesis flood, and of science in general. As a result, these scientists are following the Biblical admonition given by the

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Apostle Paul close to two thousand years ago:

1 Tim. 6:20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

THEME VERSES:

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Psalms 19:1-3 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where there voice is not heard.

1 Timothy 6:20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

1. What is Science?
2. Systems of Unbelief and Belief
3. A Short History of Science
4. The Counterattack

OVERVIEW OF WHAT WILL BE COVERED:

Science, the gathering of facts and the understanding and comprehension of the truth about them, never had an opportunity to blossom under pantheistic and polytheistic belief systems that developed after Noah's flood. Ample proof of this can be seen in the world today. Those regions that have lived for centuries under those belief systems are not only poor, but they are considered "backward." The industrialized West calls them "Third World." To be sure, there were advances in some technologies of the early pagans, but for the most part, most of the ancient world prior to Christ was relegated to a rather crude subsistence technology. Science, having rejected the revelation found in the Old Testament, was mired in pagan philosophies and superstition.

With the advent of Christ, and the preaching and dissemination of the gospel, science was given another chance. Unfortunately for science however, early Christians spent most of their time in the first two centuries after the resurrection either hiding out from the soldiers of pagan Rome or fleeing to the outskirts of the Roman Empire. The early Christians, for obvious reasons, had very little time to

be scientists.

The persecution of the Christians was all supposedly stopped with Emperor Constantine but of course it was not. Constantine's moratorium against the Christians was a shrewd political move to consolidate his power. The church state which he erected did nothing more than to put a Christian veneer on the old Roman paganism. Eventually this false church state religion became known as the Roman Catholic Church.

The Roman Catholic Church, whose science was based on a philosophical Greek method of speculation about the physical world they received from Aristotle (approx 300 B.C.), ushered in a period of history called the Dark Ages. The Dark Ages lasted approximately 1000 years (500 - 1500 A.D.) During the Dark Ages Christians were persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church, just as they had been persecuted under pagan Rome. Those who would dare to claim the Bible as their final authority were imprisoned, tortured, and some even burned at the stake. It was also during the Dark Ages that true scientific discovery and research was strictly curtailed by the dogmas, superstitions, and edicts of the Roman Church. Science was "grounded" once again.

The Dark Ages were followed by a time that is called in history the Renaissance and Reformation. (1300-1600 A.D.) Key to the birth of this period was the invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg¹ in the mid-15th century. With the invention of the printing press, information, and in particular a Bible in the vernacular language of the people, were made more readily available. It was during this period that theologians like Erasmus, Luther, and Calvin, and scientists such as Copernicus, Galileo, Copernicus, and Kepler began to question the status quo of the Roman Catholic Church on two fronts, first, in what the Bible had to say about theology, and second, in what science had to say about the physical universe.

On the theological front, the Roman Catholic Church could not answer the arguments put forth by the reformers, so it used intimidation, force, and murder to try and bring the "heretics" into line. On the science front, discoveries made through observation and practical experimentation began to put pressure on the Roman Catholic Church to explain the differences between what "the Bible said" and what science had "discovered." People looked to the Roman Catholic Church to answer their questions because, the Roman Catholic Church having a theological and governmental monopoly, was the only one that could do so. The Roman Catholic Church had eliminated all other contenders.

Unfortunately for the Bible and for true Christianity as a whole, the Roman Catholic Church wasn't anywhere near up to the task of answering the new discoveries in science because what "it" said it believed didn't necessarily always line itself up with the Bible. Neither did what it believe line up with some of the newest "scientific" discoveries. The established Roman Church, seeing itself as primarily a political organization and a conservative one at that, was unable to contend for the "faith" because science had all "the facts" and it, the "Church," had

only tradition and a poor understanding of the scriptures with which to battle the adversary.

The major event in the "battle for the Bible" came when the Roman Catholic Church put Galileo on trial for proposing a heliocentric (sun-centered) theory of the solar system as opposed to a geocentric (earth-centered) one. Galileo's observation of four moons orbiting Jupiter didn't help him or the Roman Catholic Church. Underlying the fight between Galileo and the church was the fight to keep the science of Aristotle and fight off a "new" science based upon Biblical principles. The Roman Catholic Church's solution to Galileo, which they were using with some degree of success on the theological front, was to offer Galileo the opportunity to recant or go to the rack. Galileo chose to recant. If the Roman Catholic Church thought they had put a stop toward the new science with Galileo's house arrest, they were sadly mistaken.

Scientists, most all who were grounded in biblical beliefs, began to make discovery after discovery, many of which formed the foundation of today's "high-tech" society. Advances in mechanics, mathematics, chemistry, and astronomy were commonplace. Probably the apex in Reformation science was found in Isaac Newton (1643-1747), who among other things, worked out the laws of motion. But even as all the advances were taking place, the seed of naturalistic science was planted.

Newton's method of scientific discovery had little to do with God, but much to do with human reason. So too, philosophers began to make man once again the "measure of all things" rather than God, and scientists began to see what appeared to be contradictions between what it was observing in the natural world, and what it read in the scriptures.

As a result, by the mid 18th century, science became a major tool of agnostics and infidels to attack the Bible, and by default, Christianity. In time, "theistic" science became the exception rather than the rule. Continued scientific findings that apparently contradicted the Bible, and a desire on the part of unregenerate man to explain the unexplainable, brought about a continued drift from a "theistic" worldview to that of naturalistic and atheistic science.

In time, scientists began to see the scriptural viewpoint and even the thought of God as outside the realm of "real science." The attack on the scriptures culminated in German Rationalism, Darwinism, and Communism. Eventually, this attack resulted in science having a totally naturalistic view of the universe. Any discussion of the supernatural became "out of bounds," because science relegated the supernatural to "superstition" and "magic."

The Scopes "Monkey" trial in the 1920's, instigated by the Americans For Civil Liberties (ACLU), where a science teacher was convicted of teaching evolution, focused American attention on the battle between the Bible and science. During the trial, those who believed the Bible account were "humiliated" by the so-called facts presented by science. As a result, George Price, a Seventh-Day Adventist, who had written a book in 1923 defending the Genesis flood on scientific grounds,

took up the challenge and became the leading critic of evolution. Price, and others like him, became the forerunners of what is today's "creation science" movement.

In the last 50 years, and particularly in the last 25 years, a massive counterattack by Christians using "theistic science" has been launched. The new breed of theistic scientist uses science, which is so highly esteemed by the naturalist, to prove the scriptures are true. In the past 25 years dozens of "Christian creation" organizations have sprung up whose sole purpose is to use science to defend the scriptural account of the universe, its origins (including life), and its future. Unlike the theological apologists of the past, these scientists have not only the scientific qualifications, but the ability to communicate their message to the "church" and to lost academia as well.

In the last 20 years another group of scientists, from various religious and non-religious backgrounds have come forward questioning Darwinian evolution based on what they call "Intelligent Design." Their argument is that many biological and physical systems show the mark of a designer (for example the information contained in DNA or the "fine tuning" of the constants throughout the universe that make the universe and life possible).

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