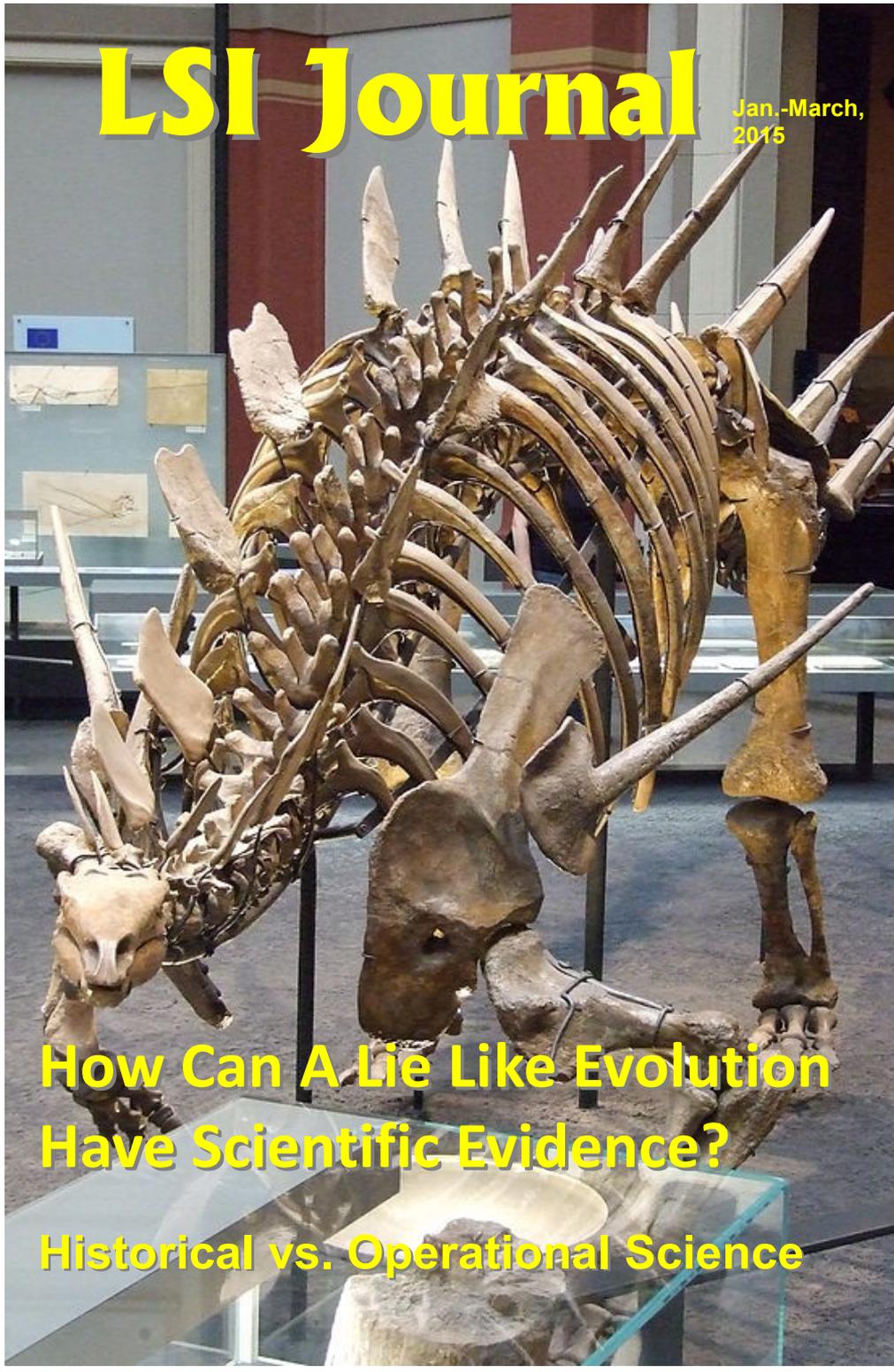


LSI Journal

Jan.-March,
2015



**How Can A Lie Like Evolution
Have Scientific Evidence?**

Historical vs. Operational Science

LUTHERAN SCIENCE INSTITUTE, INC.

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The Annual Meeting of the Institute is held the 2nd Saturday of each month. Meetings are open to the public and announced in the LSI JOURNAL and/or on our website.

MEETING SCHEDULE*

- ◆ 2nd Saturday in January, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday after Easter, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday in June, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday in October, 1:00 p.m.

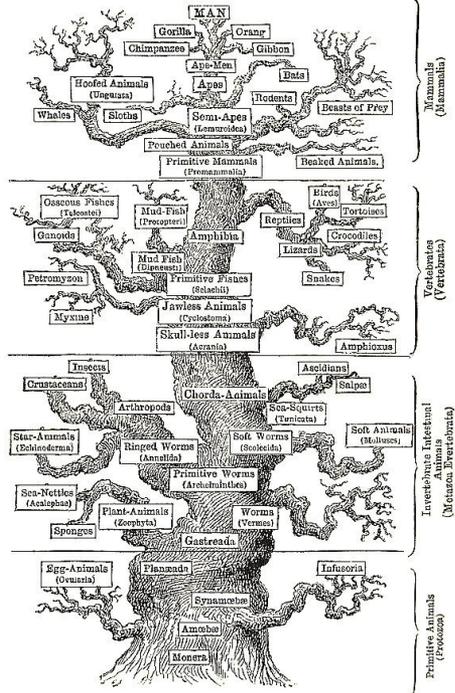
*Dates, times, and locations subject to change. Additional meetings may be scheduled. Check with the president to verify.

Cover: *Kentrosaurus dinosaur*, from *Wikimedia Commons*

PEDIGREE OF MAN.

How Can A Lie Like Evolution Have Scientific Evidence?

by Mark Bergemann



Ernst Haeckel's (1834-1919) Evolutionary Tree of life

Evolution is a Lie
 We can be certain that evolution is wrong when it claims the universe is billions of years old. We can be certain that evolution is wrong when it claims one kind of animal changes into a new kind of animal. We can be certain that evolution is wrong when it claims hydrogen gas changed into people all by itself. Why are we certain? Christians who trust God and His Word know with certainty that these claims are wrong, because these things are contrary to Scripture. Evolution is a lie used by Satan to shipwreck the faith of many.

Our sinful nature desires to detach God from his creation.

Evolution is Incompatible With The Christian Faith

The evolution story is contrary to God's revealed truth in Genesis 1-11. Beyond

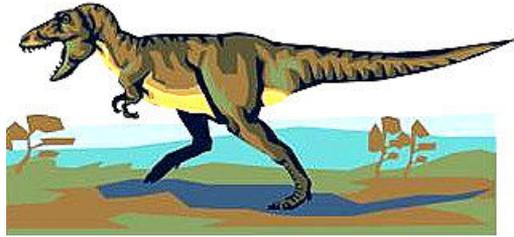
Mark Bergemann serves as president of LSI and Evangelism Board Chairman at Good Shepherd's Evangelical Lutheran Church. He holds a BS in electrical

Genesis, creation and Noah's Flood are taught as true history throughout Scripture. The prophets, Jesus, and the Apostles spoke about Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Enoch, Noah, the flood, Eden, creation, the fall into sin, and the curse, as real people and true events. Death and suffering are the result of the sin of Adam and Eve, not the means God used to create animals and people.

So, how can a lie like evolution have scientific evidence?

Parts of the Evolution Story are True

Some parts of the evolution story are true. In this article, we will take for granted that there is evidence for the parts of evolution which are true. Much of modern science has been woven into the evolution story. Let's list some parts of the evolution story with which a creationist might agree. Natural selection (and selection by humans) does produce new species of plants and animals (but not new Biblical kinds). Many animals (such as dinosaurs) and many plants have gone extinct. A waterfall can erode rock, and in doing so, the waterfall moves upstream. Massive ice sheets probably once covered much of the North American continent, sculpting the landscape. Mountains can increase and decrease in height.



Continents seem to be moving on tectonic plates. There may have been only one continent on earth in the past. Our earth and moon seem to have numerous impacts from asteroids. We have watched stars go supernova. It may be that most of the universe is made of dark matter, which we cannot detect. There may be a super massive black hole at the center of every one of a hundred billion galaxies, including our own Milky Way galaxy. Dark energy may exist and be pushing our universe ever larger in size. None of these conflict with Scripture or with a young universe. In fact, the earth and universe are very much as expected from the creation and flood accounts God has revealed in Scripture.

Evidence as Absolute Proof

Evidence as absolute, complete, and certain proof is rather rare. Some of the few places where there can be absolute proof is in mathematics, geometry, and formal logic. In mathematics, we can provide absolute proof that y

$= 5$ in the statement, $3y + 7 = 22$. In geometry, we can provide absolute proof that the Pythagorean Theorem is correct (for calculating the length of the hypotenuse of a right triangle). In formal deductive logic, the claim of a formal deductive statement is true, if the premises are true, and if the conclusion actually does follow from the premises (a valid deductive argument). We can provide absolute proof for the argument: 1) All dogs are mammals. 2) Beagles are dogs. 3) Therefore, beagles are mammals.

Evidence is often presented as a claim that something is likely to be true, not as absolute proof. For instance, in science, evidence supports a claim that something is likely to be true, not absolute/final proof that something is true. The National Academy of Science writes:

Scientists never can be sure that a given explanation is complete and final. Some of the hypotheses advanced by scientists turn out to be incorrect when tested by further observations or experiments. Yet many scientific explanations have been so thoroughly tested and confirmed that they are held with great confidence.

False Things Can Have Evidence



In the courtroom, both sides present evidence. One side is wrong (false), but even the false side presents evidence, sometimes very convincing evidence.

False things in science can have evidence too. Scientific theories and laws which are not true can have evidence, sometimes very convincing evidence. A cover story in the *Scientific American* states:

Copernicus famously said that Earth revolves around the sun. But opposition to this revolutionary idea didn't come just from the religious authorities. Evidence favored a different cosmology. ...Observable evidence supported a competing cosmology –the “geoheliocentrism” of Tycho Brahe. ...This new “geoheliocentric” had two major advantages going for it: it squared with deep institutions of how the world appeared to behave, and it fit the available data better than Copernicus's system did. ... Those opposed to Copernicanism had some quite respectable, coherent, observational based science on

their side. They were eventually proved wrong, but that did not make them bad scientists.

For more than a millennium, science understood that the earth was the center of the cosmos. There was evidence for this false understanding. The epicycles of that Ptolemaic system even seemed to explain retrograde travel of the planets. Then there were three competing cosmologies, and each had evidence, but two of them had to be false. The same *Scientific American* article states:

The Cosmos Three Ways. Seventeenth-century astronomers had three models for the universe. The geocentric model featured an unmoving Earth circled by the sun, moon, planets, and stars. Astronomers accounted for the retrograde motion of the planets with “epicycles,” smaller loops added to the main orbits. Nicolaus Copernicus’s heliocentric universe appeared simpler, but it presented new conceptual problems –stars had to be unthinkably distant, for example. Tycho Brahe’s geoheliocentric model split the difference – the sun, moon and stars orbited the Earth, the planets orbited the sun, and the stars came back close.

The scientific evidence so

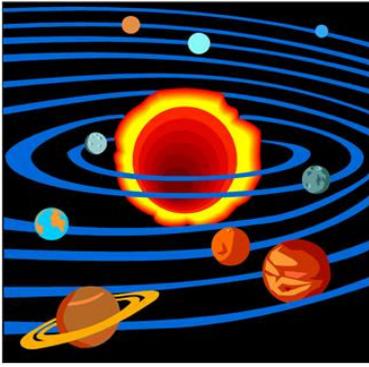
strongly supported Brahe’s Earth centric system, that the supporters of the correct sun centric Copernican system had to appeal to God. From the *Scientific American* article:

Rather than give up their theory in the face of seeming incontrovertible physical evidence, Copernicans were forced to appeal to divine omnipotence.

Both Earth centric solar system theories were wrong, in that they misrepresented the way the natural world actually is. The Earth orbits the sun, not the other way around. Even though wrong in their understanding of the physical world, the two Earth centric models had evidence, and explained the motion of the planets rather well.

Closer to Complete and Final Truth?

Brahe’s Earth centric system correctly explained more observational evidence than the previous Ptolemy’s Earth centric system explained. For this reason we can say that Brahe’s theory was an improvement over Ptolemy’s theory. But does the ability of a model to explain more evidence mean that model is closer to correctly representing the natural world, closer to having complete and final truth?



Was Brahe any closer to the complete and final truth than Ptolemy? Both theories were wrong, in that they misrepresented the natural world, having the Earth, instead of the sun, at the center of the cosmos. The sun, planets, and stars moved, while the Earth did not move.

We tend to think that each successive scientific explanation is closer to complete and final truth, sometimes simply because it correctly explains more evidence than previous models. A new scientific explanation may be closer to complete and final truth, but could it be that sometimes the newer explanation is no closer to complete and final truth than the old?

Science Is Often Wrong

Both Earth centric solar system theories were wrong, in that they misrepresented the way the natural world actually is. Many other scientific explanations (theories, laws, models, etc.) have also been found to be wrong, in that they too misrepresented the

way the natural world actually is.

Phlogiston Theory, Caloric Theory, and Newton's Law Of Gravity correctly explained observational evidence. Each was better at doing this than any previous explanation, but all three were wrong, in that they misrepresented the way the natural world actually is.

Just as Brahe's Earth centric system correctly explained more observational evidence than the previous Ptolemy's Earth centric system explained, Caloric Theory correctly explained more observational evidence than the previous Phlogiston Theory explained. Unfortunately, phlogiston does not exist, and neither does its replacement, caloric.

Phlogiston

Phlogiston Theory was proposed in 1667 and soon became the generally accepted explanation for combustion, metabolism, and rust. Matter which is burning releases a substance called phlogiston. Phlogiston Theory explains why air is needed for combustion, why an enclosed area only supports so much combustion, and why we need to breath fresh air (not air filled with phlogiston). The gas we now know as oxygen was considered air that contained no phlogiston. There is

experimental evidence for phlogiston. Phlogiston Theory remained the dominant theory until the 1780s, when new evidence was discovered. Phlogiston was solid science, and it was useful in making correct predictions, but is wrong in that it misrepresented the natural world. There is no such thing as phlogiston.

Caloric Theory

Phlogiston theory was discarded and replaced by Caloric Theory. Caloric Theory taught that heat is a fluid called caloric which flows from hotter bodies to colder bodies. Caloric Theory explained everything which Phlogiston Theory explained but much more, including why a cup of hot coffee cools while on your kitchen table. Caloric Theory was discarded the 1850s. There is plenty of experimental evidence for caloric. Caloric is solid science, and it was useful in making correct predictions, but is wrong in that it misrepresented the natural world. There is no such thing as caloric fluid.

Law Of Gravity

Isaac Newton presented his Law Of Gravity to the Royal Society in 1686. Two bodies attract each other with a force that can be calculated using Newton's famous formula. There is plenty of solid

experimental evidence for the Law Of Gravity. Newton's Law Of Gravity was replaced in 1916 by Einstein's General Theory Of Relativity. General Relativity states that gravity is due to curved space-time, not due to a force between two bodies. Newton's Law Of Gravity is solid science, and it is still used today to make correct predictions in many applications, but is wrong in that it misrepresented the natural world. Gravity is not a force between two bodies.

For a list of over 50 obsolete scientific theories see:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Superseded_scientific_theories

In some ways evolution is similar to these abandoned scientific theories and laws. Like these obsolete explanations, evolution has evidence. Like these obsolete explanations, evolution is wrong, in that it misrepresents the natural world. One kind of animal does not descend from a different kind, the universe is not millions or billions of years old, etc. In another way EVOLUTION IS NOTHING LIKE these abandoned scientific theories and laws. Evolution will never make any progress at reaching any truth, wherever it is attempting to explain the result of a miracle through natural means.

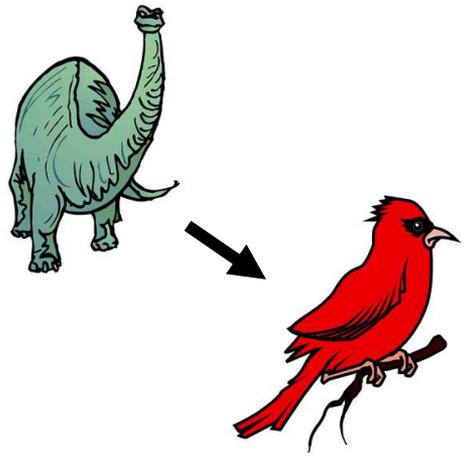
Evolution will never make any progress at reaching any truth, wherever it is attempting to explain the result of a miracle through natural means.

Evolution Has Evidence

As evolutionists write the evolution story, they incorporate much of our scientific understanding about the universe into that story. They utilize math, physics, biology, geology, astronomy, and many other branches of science. The evolution story they write is well thought out, but it is based on countless atheistic assumptions, and it has many unsolved problems. I see the evidence for evolution as unbelievably weak, but it is still evidence. Many see that weak evidence for evolution as compelling. They see evolution as true, even though evolution is false. Even weak evidence can convince. Incredibly, most Christians are also deceived into believing the lie of evolution. Our sinful nature desires to detach God from his creation.

Natural Selection

Evolutionists claim mechanisms which we observe making small changes, are also able to make large



changes. For example, it is reasonable to conclude that natural selection produced several different species of finches from a common ancestor (a finch). Evolutionists then claim that natural selection can do far more. They claim natural selection can enable one kind of animal (like dinosaurs) to evolve into a completely different kind of animal (like birds). However, in the finch example, we started with finches and ended with finches (the famous Darwin finches of Galapagos). All observable examples of natural selection start with one kind of plant or animal, and end with the same kind. We know that new genetic information must be added to the genome to produce offspring of a different kind. There is no known natural (evolutionary) method for this new information to appear, so evolutionists continue to propose possibilities. They have yet to actually demonstrate any proposed

method. Natural selection is presented as evidence for evolution, and although extremely weak evidence, it is compelling evidence to many.

Poor Design

Evolutionists claim that some things in nature are poorly designed, an expectation of natural selection, but not of creation. Creationists point out that many of these so-called poor designs work exceptionally well, so they are not poor designs. In other cases, effects of the curse, or genetic degeneration, may be in play. The poor design argument is evidence for evolution, even though it is weak evidence. Evolutionist Eugenie Scott writes,

Either the direct hand of God or natural selection could explain well-designed structures. ... More difficult for the supporters of the argument from design was explaining those structures that just barely worked or were obviously cobbled together from disparate parts having their functions in related species. ... Nature is full of oddities like antennae modified into fishing lures, or jawbones turned into hearing structures –things that don't so much look engineered as tinkered with. ... For God to have created jerry-rigged, odd, or poorly designed structures is of

course possible, but it is theologically unsatisfying and empirically untestable.

Evidence For Both Evolution and Creation

Some of the evidence which is presented supporting evolution equally supports creation. For example, humans and many animals have exactly four appendages (such as two arms and two legs, two wings and two legs, or four legs). This is evidence for both evolution and for creation. While this is certainly evidence for evolution, it does not invalidate the alternative to evolution (does not invalidate creation). Evolutionists belittle this type of evidence when it is used to support creation, yet they regularly use that same evidence to support evolution.

Evolution: Many animals having four appendages, instead of two or six, is evidence of common ancestry, which is evidence for evolution. Evolutionists consider similarities between animals, when they claim that one kind of animal descended from a different kind. Birds (which have four appendages) descended from dinosaurs (which also have four appendages). Humans (which have four appendages) descended from ape like creatures (which also have four appendages).



Creation: Many animals having four appendages, instead of two or six, is evidence of common design, which is evidence for creation. God used similar body plans for many of the creatures he created. Humans do the same thing all the time. When we design something, we often use similar plans. Most cars look similar, with four wheels, a windshield, left and right rear view mirrors, and room for at least two people.

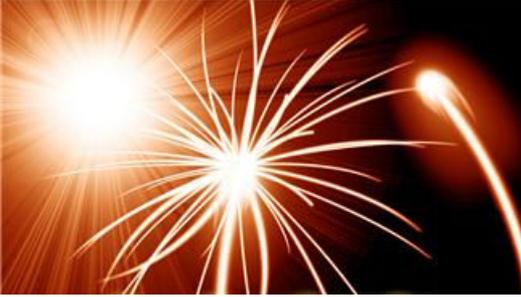
If the Math Works Out, It Happened That Way

Evolutionists use science to write a story about how they think things might have come into existence without a creator god. Their claim seems to be: if they can construct a story, then it probably happened that way. This is the case even in instances where there is no observational evidence at all. For example, evolutionists claim the

solar system is billions of years old, yet it contains comets with a lifespan of maybe 100,000 years. (Comets lose mass through melting every time they pass near the sun.) Evolutionists require a source of new comets to support their claim that the solar system is billions of years old. So evolutionists invent the Oort Cloud as a source of new comets. The Oort Cloud is purposely placed beyond the outermost planet, so far away we cannot see or detect it in any way.

Inventions like the Oort Cloud are completely arbitrary. Such arbitrary conjectures are not the best science. There is no reason at all to have an Oort Cloud, because there is NO evidence for it. Evolutionists accuse creationists of having blind faith, but arbitrary conjectures like the Oort Cloud are examples of blind faith.

Mathematical models of the Big Bang have been calculated with great precision. So have the life cycles of various sized stars, and how they might turn hydrogen into heavier elements such as iron. These are some of the many proposed models incorporated into the evolution story. Parts and pieces of such models can be tested, but the whole model cannot be tested, for we cannot make a Big



Bang, or even study a star to see that it really does produce iron. Even so, this is science, and it is evidence for evolution.

I Am Not Convinced

At this point some readers may say to themselves, “I am not convinced by this article. I still think there is NO evidence for evolution.” My response may surprise you. What you and I believe about evolution and evidence does not affect whether or not evolution has evidence. You and I do not define science, the greater scientific community does, and that community overwhelmingly says that evolution is science and has evidence.

Who Defines Science?

The greater scientific community defines science. That community overwhelmingly says that evolution is science and has evidence.

Question: But aren't these scientific bodies filled with evolutionists?

Answer: Yes. That is precisely the point. The scientific community only accepts natu-

ral causes. The scientific community rejects creation as an explanation of origins, because creation is not based on natural causes. They embrace evolution, which is based on natural causes.

Question: Why do scientific bodies speak for science?

Answer: The origin of the word “science” is from words meaning “to know,” and “having knowledge.” The particular meaning of science discussed in this article is that which scientists practice (physics, chemistry, geology, biology, astronomy, paleontology, etc.). Science is a way of gaining knowledge about nature. It is a human activity. As a human activity, those who practice science work to define and redefine science.

Summary

We have seen that evolution is a lie, because it is contrary to Scripture. We've looked at the nature of evidence, and found that false things like evolution can have evidence. We've considered how science is sometimes wrong, and how evolution is one of the places where science is wrong. Next we surveyed several of the countless pieces of evidence for evolution, and the weaknesses of that evidence. Creationists see similar weakness in all evidence for evolution. Finally, we evaluated who defines sci-

ence, and that the scientific community overwhelmingly accepts evolution as having evidence.

Evolution has evidence: Because evolution is a widely accepted scientific theory, and by definition a scientific theory has evidence, or else it would not be scientific. Evolution is science, because it fits the definition of science. Science is defined by scientists, and the scientific community overwhelmingly defines evolution as science and as having evidence.

Evolution has evidence: Just because evolution is false, does not mean it cannot have evidence. False things like evolution often have evidence.

Evolution has evidence, but this is not absolute proof. Science is sometimes wrong, and it is wrong about evolution.

Evolution has evidence: While creationists see this evidence as very weak, many people find the evidence compelling. Even weak evidence can convince.

Evolution has evidence, but evolution will never make any progress at reaching any truth, wherever it is attempting to explain through natural means, the result of a miracle.



Blunting The Temptation Of Evolution

Evolution truly is a deception of Satan, which he uses to pull God's children (you and me) away from trust in Jesus. It is through faith that we believe in creation. Even so, our human reason can help us to see the logical weaknesses of evolution. The temptation of evolution is blunted when we know how weak the evidence for evolution is. The world around us is often as we would expect, based on the Biblical account of creation. The world around us is often not as would be expected, if evolution were true. Our LSI website has many resources showing logical problems with evolution. Take some time to look through our collection of 200 LSI Journal articles, 900 LSI Blog entries, and dozens of articles by other Confessional Lutherans. www.LutheranScience.org LSI

Historical vs. Operational Science: Why Knowing the Difference Between the Two Matters

by Warren Krug



One of the most talked-about events in the field of religion in 2014 must have been the creation-evolution debate on February 4 between TV personality, Bill "The Science Guy" Nye, and Answers in Genesis CEO Ken Ham. AiG estimates at least three million people saw the debate live via the Internet and millions more later watched an archived version of the event.¹

Of the many topics discussed during the debate, one that especially drew the attention of some viewers, was Ham's discussion of the difference between two kinds of science. One of these two types of science is known as

Historical or Origins science. The other has been called Operational, Observational or Experimental science.

A Catholic priest by the name of the Rev. Patrick Sloneker, who witnessed the event, expressed his opinion that Ham won the debate "hands down" because of this issue. While denying that he is a creationist, Sloneker said Ham scored points by showing that evolutionists, like creationists, depend upon in-

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terpretations and have their own brand of faith. ²

So, what is the difference between Historical science and Operational science and why is understanding these terms important?

A secular website, Rationalwiki, understands Historical science as "a term used to describe sciences in which data is provided primarily from past events and for which there is usually no direct experimental data, such as cosmology, astronomy, astrophysics, geology, paleontology

and archaeology."³ Because Historical science is involved in investigations of such topics as evolution and abiogenesis, it also has been called Origins science by creationists.

In defining Operational science, Rationalwiki quotes Answers in Genesis.⁴ Operational science, AiG says, "deals with testing and verifying ideas in the present and leads to the production of useful products like computers, cars, and satellites." Because Operational science involves experiments and observations, creationists also

	OPERATIONS SCIENCE	ORIGINS SCIENCE
Based on:	The senses (assuming they are reliable)	Assumptions about the past
Uses:	Experiments	Extrapolation
Deals with:	The present	The past
Results in:	Repeatable conclusions, technology	Unrepeatable stories about the past

Figure 1: A Peter Galling table.

1. "Over 3 Million Tuned In Live for Historic Bill Nye and Ken Ham Evolution/Creation Debate," Answers in Genesis [February 5, 2014], <https://answersingenesis.org/creation-vs-evolution/over-3-million-tuned-in-live-for-historic-bill-nye-and-ken-ham-evolutioncreation-debate/>
2. Warren Krug, "Who Won the Debate? Catholic Priest Says Ham," LSI Blog [February 21, 2014], <http://lsiblog.blogspot.com/2014/02/who-won-debate-catholic-priest-says-ham.html>
3. "Historical and operational science," RationalWiki [November 12, 2014], http://rationalwiki.org/wiki/Historical_and_operational_science
4. Roger Patterson, *Evolution Exposed: Biology*, [Petersburg, Kentucky: Answers in Genesis, 2006]

refer to it as Experimental science (a term evolutionists also use) or Observational science.

A. Peter Galling in an article on the Answers in Genesis website, displays a table [Figure 1] showing some differences between the two types of science.⁵

Rationalwiki slams Operational science as being merely a creationist invention (the name apparently is) while claiming that Historical science has been misinterpreted by creationists. Yet, it is short on providing specific reasons for taking this position. This secular website does quote author Michael Shermer (*Why People Believe Weird Things*) as writing:

Science does deal with past phenomena, particularly in historical sciences such as cosmology, geology, paleontology, paleoanthropology, and archeology. There are experimental sciences and historical sciences. They use different methodologies but are equally able to track causality. Evolutionary biology is a valid and legitimate historical science.



Thus, here is an admission that Historical science and Experimental or Operational science use different methods, but the suggestion is made that they are equally able to arrive at the facts. But is that true?

A paper published in 2002 on a Georgia Southern University website says:

Science has many limitations, but probably its worst shortcoming involves history. For example, if scientists did not know about the Battle of Waterloo, a turning point in history, what could they tell us? If we showed them the battleground, they could dig up bones, teeth, spent bullets, some corroded weapons, and other miscellaneous items to analyze. But they could not tell us much about the battle itself. They could only guess at the most important thing: who won it. ...

These examples show

just how poorly science handles history. The beginning of life and the origin of living things are historical events. They are not happening now and scientists cannot observe them. We have no time machine to ascertain what really occurred. Yet we find evolutionists claiming to have the correct insights into these important historical events. Many assert that we came from chemicals and evolved from a common ancestor. Are these assertions based on science, or a naturalistic worldview?⁶

Yet, Historical science need not be objectionable. Creationist scientists do Historical science when they theorize about the Flood or engage in archaeology. It is evolutionist Historical science to which Bible believers must object because it contradicts the Bible.

Evolutionist Historical science has given us the Big Bang theory, an alleged event in which nature supposedly created something out of nothing without benefit of the natural laws needed to make such a happening even re-

motely possible and also an alleged event which the most brilliant scientists have not been able to duplicate in their laboratories.

Evolutionist Historical science has given us abiogenesis, the imagined creation of life out of inanimate matter, a phenomenon which the most intelligent scientists have not yet been able to accomplish in their labs.

Evolutionist Historical science has given us macroevolution, the idea that single-celled organisms developed over time into humans, a feat which appears to contradict the principles of genetics and which does not really find support in the fossil record, a record which provides not a single example of a series of fossils showing one animal slowly changing into a different one.

Evolutionist Historical science has given us the radiometric dating systems which have suggested the Earth is billions of years old but which depend heavily on assumptions that cannot be tested and which also are

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5. A Peter Galling, "Do Creationists *Reject Science?*" *Answers in Genesis* [February 4, 2008], <https://answersingenesis.org/what-is-science/do-creationists-reject-science/>
 6. Emerson Thomas McMullen, editor, "No Evidence For Evolution: Scientists' Research and Darwinism," Georgia Southern University [2002], <https://sites.google.com/a/georgiasouthern.edu/etmcmull/no-evidence-for-evolution->

contradicted by other dating systems, such as the slowing of the Earth's rotation and the amount of salt in the oceans.

When one considers the major accomplishments by scientists today, Historical science seems to play little if any role. What do medical researchers, rocket scientists, automobile engineers, nutritionists etc. need to know about radiometric dating, abiogenesis, macroevolution or the Big Bang when it comes to new breakthroughs in their fields? And only Operational science and not Historical science can make full use of the acclaimed scientific method.⁷

So, should we just declare evolutionary Historical science to be irrelevant and ignore the whole subject? We might like to, but we can't. Evolutionary Historical science is proving to be a real threat to the faith of many Christians who are taken in by the misleading statements of leading evolutionists and their disciples. If evolution is factual, that poses a problem for understanding what Genesis means by the repeated



phrase: "according to their kinds." If the world is billions of years old, that poses a problem when it comes to understanding biblical history and its testimony regarding the first sin and promise of a Savior. If we and the universe have arrived here purely by natural means, why do we need God?

But we absolutely do need God. He is the only answer to why we or anything exists. He alone has provided us the means by which we can live in eternity. He has given us His Son, Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and opened the door to heaven through faith in Him. And we can be thankful for the work of creation scientists who have shown us how to understand the difference between the science which threatens our faith and the science which doesn't. *LSI*

7. . Anne Marie Helmenstine, "Scientific Method Steps," About Education [June 23, 2014], <http://chemistry.about.com/od/lecturenotes13/a/sciencemethod.htm>

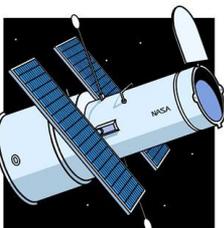
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October 15, 2014

Would the Discovery of Alien Life Destroy Religion?



Such an event could affect the thinking of some, but not all, believers.

In a new book, *Religions and Extraterrestrial Life*, author David Weintraub, an astronomer at Vanderbilt U., considers what a discovery of extraterrestrial life might do to religious thinking. Apparently, it all depends upon the religion. Public polls show many people believe in the existence of alien life. In one recent [survey](#), 37% of the 5,886 Americans polled said they believed in extraterrestrial life, 21% did not, and 42% were not sure. Atheists (with 55% believing) are more likely to agree with the idea than are Muslims (44%), Jews (37%), Hindus (36%), or Christians (32%).

Evangelical Christians with an Earth-centered viewpoint were found to be less likely to believe in alien life because many think that if God had created life elsewhere, He would have said so in Genesis. However, religions which began after the invention of the telescope and before astronomers discovered the barrenness of the planets and moons of our solar system are more likely to accept the notion of alien life. These groups of more-likely believers in aliens include Mormonism, Seventh-day Adventism, Jehovah's Witnesses and the Baha'i Faith. Conversely, religions that began thousands of years ago including mainstream Christianity and Judaism have little to say about the idea.

Weintraub thinks that with advances in exoplanet research and astrobiology, scientists could be getting closer to finding evidence of life far from Earth, even if it is not intelligent life. So, he says we

should be prepared for the spiritual questions that would follow such a discovery. Furthermore, he believes astronomers should now participate in the discussion because the question of whether or not there is other life in the universe belongs in the scientific domain and not just in the world of philosophy.

Weintraub opines that if we would find aliens, it would be a mistake to try to convert them to Christianity, as the European missionaries tried to do with the Native Americans they found in the New World. "Once you think about this enough, it's worth recognizing that if it's OK for somebody in a different part of the universe to have a different religion, maybe it's OK for somebody else in a different part of the Earth to have a different religion," he adds.

A couple of Weintraub's comments deserve extra attention. He thinks that with the advances in exoplanet research and astrobiology, we are getting closer to discovering extraterrestrial life. I believe the exact opposite is true. If we have spent many more years looking for that proverbial needle in a haystack using increasingly more sophisticated instruments and still are unable to find it, that increases the odds that there really isn't any needle in the haystack to be found.

Also, he thinks the European missionaries were wrong, and we should allow every group to have whatever religion it wants. That's a nice democratic position to take. The problem is that God's religion is not a democracy. It's a kingdom. We recognize we cannot find out anything about the spiritual world on our own. We must rely entirely on what God has told us in His Word. Therefore we submit humbly to what our King—our gracious, loving, generous King—has told us. We don't and can't vote on what we think should be the way of salvation. But we believe Jesus when He says, **"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"** (John 14:6).

Of course, we can't and shouldn't force our religion on anyone, as Muslim extremists currently are trying to do at the point of a gun. Yet, we obey Jesus when He has commanded us to **"go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you"** (Matthew 28:19-20a). Such a conversion though must involve an actual change of heart and not just an appearance of a conversion. May God have mercy on all those who have not yet discovered the one and only way to heaven.

Reference: Megan Gannon, "Would Finding Alien Life Change Religious Philosophies?," Livescience (October 9, 2014).

WELL DESIGNED: THE KINGFISHER AND THE KNOBCONE PINE

The Kingfisher

THE world's fastest train is the Japanese "Bullet train", reaching speeds of 200 mph (322 kph). Although fast, these trains are very noisy, especially when emerging from tunnels, when the compressed air creates a shock wave, resulting in a noise like a loud thunderclap. People living near the railway often complained about this.

Eiji Nakatsu, the bullet-train's designer, and a keen bird-watcher, asked: "Is there something in nature that travels smoothly and efficiently between two very different mediums?" He thought of the kingfisher which makes hardly a splash as it dives into the water to catch a fish. His engineers created computer models based on the shape of the kingfisher's beak, and discovered that designing the nose of the train to mimic the shape of the kingfisher's bill would reduce tunnel boom. The newest bullet trains now



Kingfisher eating

have the "kingfisher look" and are quieter and faster and use 15% less electricity. Even the recessed headlights of the train are modelled on the kingfisher's nostrils!

The Japanese engineers used their intelligence to model their bullet-trains on the pattern of the kingfisher's aerodynamic beak. Fossil kingfishers have been found in rocks claimed to be "40 million years old", but there's no evidence they evolved from anything else. Surely intelligent design by a wise Creator is the best explanation for the

kingfisher's origin — a design which humans have been pleased to mimic.

Knobcone Pine

FOR many trees, forest fires are disastrous, but for one tree, the Knobcone Pine, fire is essential to allow new trees to grow. Knob-cone Pines, which grow in the western United States, are tough trees, often reaching a height of 23 meters (75 feet). They will grow in poor soil, and up to 1,390 meters (4,500 feet) above sea level, often in areas where forest fires are common.



Knobcone Pine

When the cones form, they stay closed, even though some may fall to the forest floor. The cones — which are the hardest in the world — stay viable for up to 50 years, even after the tree they came from has fallen and decayed. Birds and other animals

which eat seeds are unable to open them, and they

will even withstand a hammer blow! Sometimes cones become embedded in the tree as the trunk grows around them. Only when a forest fire occurs do the cones release their seeds so that they can germinate and replenish the forest. But why aren't the cones and their seeds destroyed by the fire that destroys the forest? The answer lies in the cones' ingenious design. They are sealed with a hard resin that requires high temperatures in excess of 177° C (350°F) to open. When they begin to open, they produce a gas which protects the seeds from the fire. Only when the fire has gone out will the cones open fully, allowing the winged seeds to be scattered so that they can produce more Knobcone Pines.

Can evolution by natural selection explain how the cones of this tree got their wonderful ability to withstand forest fires? They not only need the heat to open them, but also the gas which prevents the seeds from being destroyed until the fire dies down. Surely random, chance processes could not do this? The evidence points to Design by a Wise Creator! *LSI*

—*Original View* (#70 and #75), Creation Resources Trust, England, Geoff Chapman, editor (Photos from Wikimedia Commons; Kingfisher by Pierre Dalous; Knobcone Pine by Crabtree13)



Theistic Evolution Discredits Adam

“A HERESY MAY soon trickle down to a church near you. The belief that Adam was not a historical person (which undermines the atonement message of Jesus, who came to earth to offer redemption to Adam’s descendants) has already become a prominent view in many Bible colleges and seminaries. These are the institutions that produce many of our pastors.

“This nonhistorical view of Adam is being pushed in a book by influential scholar Karl Giberson. In *Saving the Original Sinner*, this theistic evolutionist argues against a real Adam. He attempts to show how Genesis-believing Christians have no one to blame but themselves for being isolated from the intellectual community because they refuse to acknowledge the evidence for molecules-to-man evolution and instead vigorously defend the creation account of Genesis.

“If Adam was not a real person, modern humans obviously are not his descendants and so could not have inherited his sin nature. This calls the whole plan of redemption into question. The Bible clearly states, ‘For as by *one man’s* disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous’ (Romans 5:19, emphasis added), but this is meaningless if the first man was not a real individual.

“Christian scholars like Giberson are ultimately placing evolutionary ideas in authority over God’s clear teaching in the Bible on origins. Even more concerning, their views undermine God’s atonement message, which begins in Genesis 3 with the fall of a real Adam.”

—“Good-bye Adam,” *Answers* [Jan.-Mar., 2015]

Do our two ears hear in exactly the same way?

Scientists had long assumed that our two ears hear in the same way, and all decoding of sounds takes place entirely in the brain. Now we know that auditory processing starts in the ears. The right ear seems geared more toward speech while the left ear is tuned more to music. Hint: if listening to music through a single earpiece, place the earpiece in your left ear.

Source: Marilyn vos Savant, “Ask Marilyn,” *Parade* (September 21, 2014)



MORE EVIDENCE OF THE INTELLIGENCE OF ANCIENT HUMANS

"By cleaning away mold from a set of 21 ancient bamboo strips, researchers have revealed a mathematical surprise: the world's oldest decimal multiplication table. Unlike the times tables that Western schoolchildren memorize, the bamboo table even multiplies fractions.

"The bamboo strips are part of a roughly 2,500-strip collection that dates to 300 B.C., before China was unified. In January 2014, historians and paleogeographers at China's Tsinghua University announced that the calligraphy on them forms a matrix with rows and columns of numbers from 1/2 to 90 that, like modern multiplication tables, yield a mathematical product where they intersect.

"Bureaucrats and businessmen would have used the table to quickly tally payrolls or taxes. No other ancient civilization multiplied numbers in this way, says paleogeographer Wen Xing of Dartmouth College: 'It is an amazing discovery.' "

—Connor Walters, "The Bamboo Calculator," *Discover* [January/February, 2015], page 78.

Body's Immune System Compared to National Defense System



"The body's immune surveillance system does everything covered in the United States' \$750 billion national defense budget, and a hundredfold more. It hires new personnel, continues training existing personnel, retires aging soldiers, funds ongoing and new operations, monitors old threats and identifies new ones, replaces worn-out equipment, and researches and develops new weapons and intelligence-gathering tools.

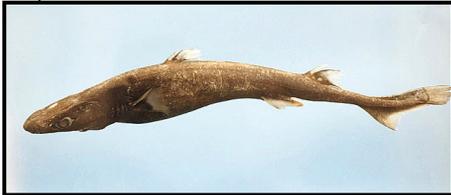
"While the brains at the Pentagon and Washington struggle to coordinate multiple branches of the military and Homeland Security, your body does all this without your even thinking about it (except perhaps a few nudges to eat, rest, or care for a painful inflammation).

—Joe Francis, "Combatting A Constant Threat," *Answers* magazine [Oct.-Dec. 2014], page 67.

Sharks That Light It Up

About 50 species of sharks, called lantern sharks, can produce their own light. This feature allows them to glow in the dark. They live in the ocean's twilight zone, where little light penetrates. Using specially designed super sensitive eyes, the sharks seem to be able to measure the color and intensity of the sunlight above them. They then mimic this light by flashing similar lights on their bellies. The ability to blend in with the light above them protects these sharks from predators below which think they see only sunlight. When light conditions change, the sharks can even change their light camouflage. This is obviously another design feature by the Creator of all life.

—“Sharks in a New Light,” *Answers* [Jan.-Mar., 2015], page 14.



Blurred Smooth Lantern Shark
(Wikimedia Commons)

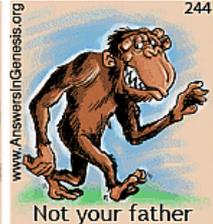
Good News—Childhood Obesity Reversed.

“Public health officials call it an epidemic. The American Medical Association calls it a disease. During the past 30 years, obesity rates in the U.S. have more than doubled among adults (to 35 percent) and tripled among children and adolescents (to 17 percent). The problem seemed unstoppable – until this year [2014]. For the first time in decades, reported the enters for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), obesity rates declined among low-income preschool children, a particularly vulnerable demographic group.. No magic diet was involved. This public health success seems to be the result of promoting healthier foods and physical activity.”

—*Discover* (January/February, 2014)

AFTER EDEN

by Dan Lietha
244



—<http://www.answersingenesis.org>

“ From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.

Acts 17:26-27

WHEN TO BE SUSPICIOUS OF NEW PRESCRIPTIONS

1. You're prescribed multiple drugs, but your doctor doesn't tell you why.
2. You're given a prescription for every symptom.
3. Your doctor's office is full of pharmaceutical logos.
4. You are prescribed antibiotics, but all you have is the common cold.
5. Your doctor fails to ask about nonprescription drugs and supplements you are taking.



—Orly Avitzur, M.D., M.B.A., "Is your doctor Rx-happy?", *Consumer Reports on Health* (September, 2014)

In 2012 the U.S. Armed Forces consumed ...

- 24,884,000 pounds of cooked chicken
 - 6,072,000 pounds of ground beef
 - 5,250,000 gallons of milk
 - 3,100,000 pounds of cooked bacon
 - 765,000 pounds of coffee, and
 - 214,000 gallons of ketchup
- Source: *Parade* (May 19, 2013)



Hail the Mouse Brain

"The tiny mouse brain is packed with more than 86 million neurons, each with more than 1,000 connections, clustered into different nodes – similar to a complex highway system. In April, researchers led by Hongkui Zeng of the Allen Institute for Brain Science in Seattle assembled the first road map of neural pathways – called a connectome – inside the mouse brain. It's the most comprehensive guide ever assembled of the mammalian brain. Scientists imaged more than 1,700 mouse brains (injected with a tracer virus) at resolutions less than a micrometer, or 50 times smaller than a human hair. They assembled the 1.8 petabytes of data – equivalent to running HD video continuously for 26 years – into a 3-D map."

–Carl Engelking, "Mouse Brain Mega Map," *Discover* [January/February, 2015], page 29.



Compass and Directions

“The heavens are yours, and yours also the earth; you founded the world and all that is in it. You created the north and the south.”

Psalm 89:11-12 (NIV)

We all know that God created the world, but we probably haven't thought much about the fact that this creation included such things as directions on the earth, just as our Bible text points out.

What is a compass? A compass is a tool for showing the directions on the earth. It has a needle that can turn freely, so that it always points north, and under the needle a card that shows the directions.

How does a compass work? The needle is magnetized so that it turns in a



north/south direction. The north end of the needle will point toward a spot on the earth called the north magnetic pole. This point is near but not the same as the true North Pole.

Who uses a compass? A compass is used by airplane pilots, ship pilots, hikers, travelers, and others who need to know what direction they are going. To use the compass a person heads in the direction he wishes to go as marked on the compass. He must make sure the needle continues to point north.

What directions are shown on a compass? A compass will usually have four “cardinal” points

showing the four main directions -- north, east, south and west - and four “intercardinal” points showing the intermediate directions - northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest. Up to 24 other directions may be shown on a compass. A compass may also show the 360 degrees of a circle on its face.

Is a compass always accurate? A compass needle will not be accurate if it is not allowed to turn freely or if it is affected by some nearby metal or magnet. Also, it must be remembered that the needle points at the north magnetic point. This is not usually the same as the true North Pole. This difference is normally not important. There are experts though who have ways of figuring out this difference, which they call the “declination.”

A compass is an important tool for finding directions, but it can't show us the way to heaven. Only the Holy

Bible, which tells us that Jesus is the way to heaven, can do this.

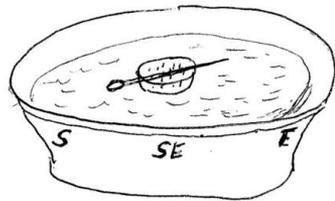
Activity: You Can Make Your Own Compass

You will need a magnet, a steel sewing needle, a flat piece of cork, a knife, and a dish or bowl full of water.

First cut a groove across the cork. Then magnetize a needle by rubbing it slowly IN ONE DIRECTION several times along one end of the magnet. Lay the needle in the groove. Float the cork and needle in the center of the dish or bowl. The needle now should turn until it points north. Note: the needle soon will lose its magnetism.

You might try marking the cardinal and intercardinal directions on the side of the bowl or dish.

Reprinted from the January/February, 1990 *LSI Journal*



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My View

Shaking the Faith of Atheists

One of the most frequently quoted Bible passages by Bible scholars who wish to counter the anti-biblical comments by atheists and agnostics is Romans 1:20:

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 people are without excuse.

This passage suggests that there is powerful evidence in nature that ought to lead open-minded people to be looking for the Creator, if they don't already know Him. On Judgment Day, no atheist will have any valid excuse for his or her lack of faith.

So, it is gratifying but not surprising to read opinion pieces in secular publications that would agree with this understanding.

Writing in the December 26, 2014 *Wall Street Journal*, Eric Metaxas says that science is increasingly making the case for God.

Metaxas focuses on what we now know about what is

required for life to originate. The famous atheist Carl Sagan once said there were only two criteria for a planet to support life—the right kind of star and the right distance from that star. Scientists now know that statement was a gross understatement.

Metaxas says that as our knowledge of the universe has increased, Sagan's two criteria have now grown to more than 200, thus drastically reducing the number of potential life-supporting planets.

If the big bang really happened, the values of the four fundamental forces—gravity, the electromagnetic force, and the “strong” and “weak” nuclear forces—had to have been set in the first one millionth of a second! Thus, a secular origin of the universe and life seems incredibly unlikely.

Even SETI (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence) proponents have been sounding less optimistic lately.

Well-known astronomer Fred Hoyle once said his atheism was “greatly shaken” by these developments.

So, here is the key. While only the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God can convert unbelievers into Christians, the hardened hearts of skeptics can in some cases be softened by first pointing them to the evidence of God's existence in nature. Then the Holy Spirit can work on their hearts.

—Warren Krug, editor

Significant Changes in Lizards, But It's Not Evolution

"In 1971, some lizards were moved from one island to another off the coast of Croatia. Although similar in climate, the two islands afforded very different types of food. The island from which the lizards were taken provided a diet mainly of insects, whereas the new island provided a diet mainly of plants. In less than 38 years, the lizards that had been moved to the new island had changed significantly. Remarkable changes were seen in their head shapes and head sizes, which scientists think arose to increase their bite force. Significant changes were also seen in their gut morphology (the internal shape of their stomachs). In fact, they had even grown a new ring of muscle in their stomachs to slow down the passage of food to aid digestion of the plant material. All this in less than 38 years! Such rapid changes clearly have nothing to do with Darwin's theory of evolution, which requires that

lucky, useful
mutations
accumulate over
hundreds of
thousands or
millions of years,
gradually changing
the animals' form.



"So that's another way that speciation could have occurred—by programmed change, that is by changes driven by the program in the DNA which God put into animals when he first made them, and triggered by changes in the environment—in this case, a new food source."

—Dominic Statham, "Only the Bible Explains the Diversity of Life," *Creation* [January-March, 2014], pages 41-42