

LSI Journal

The Lutheran Science Institute

July-September, 2010



Essential Tools for the Creationist

- ◎ **A Case for Creation Science**
- ◎ **'Artificial Life' Breakthrough Worries Some Scientists**

LUTHERAN SCIENCE INSTITUTE, INC.

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The mission of the Lutheran Science Institute is to learn, share, and promote the glory of God as revealed in His holy Word and demonstrated in His created world, beginning with the pastors, teachers, and laity of the WELS (Wis. Ev. Lutheran Synod) and the ELS (Ev. Lutheran Synod).

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The Annual Meeting of the Institute is held the Saturday *after* Thanksgiving. At least three other meetings are held during the year at locations selected by the president. Meetings are open to

the public and announced in the LSI JOURNAL and/or on our web site.

MEETING SCHEDULE*

- ◆ 4th Saturday in January, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ 2nd Saturday in June, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Last Saturday in October, 1:00 p.m.
- ◆ Saturday *after* Thanksgiving in November, 1:00 p.m.

*Dates, times, and locations subject to change. Additional meetings may be scheduled. Check with the president, secretary, or editor or see our web site for verification.

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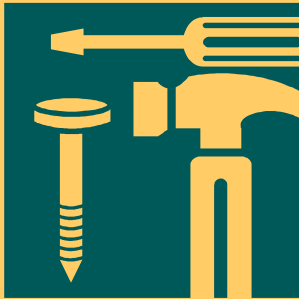
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Essential Tools for the Creationist



by
Patrick Winkler

I have often asked myself: What is it that God's people really need with respect to creation and evolution issues? What tools do they need in order to help them evaluate things such as creation models and points of evolution from a Lutheran perspective?

It is absolutely imperative that Christians begin by making cer-

tain fundamental distinctions in order to enable them to assess creationist models and evolutionary viewpoints adequately. Therefore, what is of great help

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to God's people is not necessarily providing a new creation model, but rather — and more importantly — providing a way of evaluating such models using certain important distinctions.

Let's look at some of these important distinctions which are essential to our evaluation process.

A. Thoroughly and persistently distinguish between scientific¹ issues and theological² issues.

This distinction is necessary because the answer will determine the criteria by which assertions and conclusions are to be properly evaluated. For example, the criteria by which we evaluate scientific assertions and conclusions would include such questions as: Is the hypothesis testable, measurable, and repeatable? Is the phenomenon observable? Are the conclusions logi-



cal? On the other hand, the criterion by which we evaluate theological issues is the whole of Scripture, i.e., both the Old and New Testaments.

When exposed to creation and evolution literature, Christians often find themselves asking only one question: "Is this right/wrong?" A better approach is to maintain the distinction between the scientific and the theological by asking two separate questions instead of only one:

1. "Is this conclusion theologically permissible?" and
2. "Is this conclusion scientifically logical and valid?"

This is a worthwhile practice because something that is theologically permissible may have more than one scientific opinion. It is even possible that two scientific opinions which are diametrically opposed to one another may both be theologically permissible.

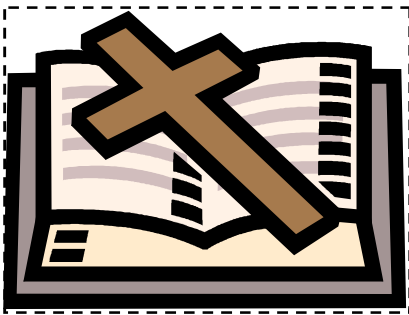
1. This author defines "science" and "scientific" as they are commonly used, namely, that which is understood solely from observations and measurements of the natural, physical world and universe around us.

2. There are differences in theological definitions among the different Christian denominations. This author takes the Lutheran Confessions, as expounded in the *Evangelical Lutheran Book of Concord* of 1580, as expressing the true doctrine of Scripture.

As we make this distinction between science and theology, it is also necessary to ...

B. Clearly distinguish between what the Bible says and, especially, what the Bible does not say.

To clearly distinguish between what the Bible says and does not say is especially important because, on those issues where God has spoken, the matter is already settled for us. On those issues where God is silent we must allow for differences of opinion. On matters where God



is silent, he leaves it to our Christian freedom³ to explore and observe, and to use our human logic and reason, to come up with models which describe this universe. We realize that to a large extent such models are merely human conclusions and are not derived from God's inerrant Word. In scientific issues about which God's Word is silent, we not only allow for differences of

opinion, but in Christian love we also understand that a Christian may in good conscience feel free to select any position that he/she sees fit.

A method which may be used to evaluate the existence or absence of Christian freedom in creation/evolution issues might consist of something like the following thought process:

- First, ask, "Is this mentioned directly in the Scriptures?"
- Then, "Is this implied by Scripture?"
- Then, "Is this permissible by Scripture? If so, which parts are permissible by Scripture and which parts are not?"
- Then, "Do the scientific conclusions have a theological basis that needs to be evaluated?" The answers to these first four questions will enable the Christian to evaluate whether or not Christian freedom is involved by emphasizing the specifics

3. "Christian freedom," "Christian liberty," and "adiaphora" are related terms. For further explanation on the topic of Christian freedom, the reader is encouraged to look at the book of Galatians (especially 5:1-4) and Article X, Formula of Concord, in the *Book of Concord*.

about which Scripture speaks, or does not speak, on a given issue.

- Finally, evaluate scientific conclusions based upon the science itself.

Failure properly to make this distinction between what the Bible says and what it does not say may result in a number of undesirable deficiencies:

- It may result in subtracting from or minimizing what the Bible states (sometimes referred to as “a half-truth”).
- It may result in adding to what the Bible says (e.g. “a truth-and-a-half”).
- It may result in a misapplication of the Scriptural doctrine of Christian freedom. This misapplication may unnecessarily bind the consciences of others with scientific conclusions as though they were theological conclusions. This binding might happen if someone takes a scientific question and presents what should be a scientific answer but rather passes it off as a theological answer. In so doing, he would be presenting the issue as theologically settled, whereas

in reality the matter is open to Christian freedom of assessment and discernment.

This last point is certainly something to keep in mind as Christians apply the Gospel to their lives when creation and evolution issues are discussed. The latitude of Christian freedom to hold varying scientific conclusions about matters in which God's Word is silent is something that is often overlooked. This consideration needs to be emphasized regularly so that consciences are not unnecessarily bound in such matters when information is presented as though Scripture were speaking when, in fact, it is not.



Also understand that confessional Lutheranism offers some unique insights into the Scriptures --- insights which enable Christians to deal effectively with paradoxes between what God's

Word says and our observations of the natural world. A Lutheran approach does not inherently seek to resolve everything the Bible says with our observations of the natural world. An example familiar to many is the Lutheran understanding of the Lord's Supper, where the communicant receives the body and blood of Christ in addition to the bread and wine. This sacramental presence is certain, not because our observation and logic are conclusive, but because the words of Christ are conclusive. It is because of confessional Lutheranism's unique approach — one which does not find the need completely to understand and rationalize everything that God's Word says, but simply accepts it by faith, and an approach which applies Christian freedom properly — that we Lutherans may potentially offer some new approaches to creationism.

How might we apply these first two principles? To begin, let's itemize a sampling of questions so that the reader may better understand the science/theology distinction involved. First, here are examples of theological questions which the Bible definitively answers:

- Were Adam and Eve the first humans and special

creations of God?

- Was there only one creation event?
- Did creation occur during six consecutive 24 hour periods of time, called “days”?
- Did matter exist before creation?

Next are some examples of scientific questions which the Bible does not address:

- What is the circumference of the earth?



- How deep are the oceans?
- What is the life cycle timeline of a star?
- How far from earth is the Large Magellanic Cloud?
- Are the sedimentary layers which we see in the Grand Canyon a result of the biblical Flood?
- What is the measured age of the earth?

Now let's continue with a

specific example by looking at this last question and analyzing it further. In keeping with these distinctions, we will note that “What is the measured age of the earth?” and “When was the earth created?” are two separate questions. The former is a scientific question requiring scientific measurement while the latter is a theological question requiring us to search the Scriptures.



Somewhat analogous to the treatment of the Lord's Supper, a confessional Lutheran would not necessarily need to have the same answer for both questions since, as was mentioned previously, we do not need to resolve everything the Bible says with our observations of the natural world. Our observations in nature may correlate well with the Scriptures but they don't have to. And if we discover that there is a lack of correlation between our observations in nature and the Bible, it is still the Bible which is more certain.

A rough approximation to “When was the earth created?” may be obtained by looking at the genealogies in the Bible. However, since internal evidence⁴ reveals that the Bible's genealogies are incomplete and the time periods are not necessarily consecutive, we are not able to determine from the Bible the definitive date of creation any more specific than some “multi-thousands of years ago.”

We will also recognize that, while Genesis describes the condition of God's creation as being “very good,” without sin and death, and fully functional, it stops short of providing many specifics. For example, the Bible neither gives us the distances to the stars nor radioactive decay parameters. Therefore, the question “What is the measured age of the earth?” is a scientific one, the assessment of which we have the Christian freedom to use our

4. That is, evidence from Scripture itself. To the point, the Scriptures do not reveal the length of time which transpired between the lives of Noah's sons and Abram's father Terah. Most confessional Lutheran commentators allow for between a couple hundred years and a couple thousand. Supplying that information and adding up the years which the Bible does supply in the genealogies renders the universe to be between 6 and 10 thousand years old. But faithful Lutheran commentators leave this matter as an open question, unsolved by the Scriptures themselves.



scientific tools.

From a confessional Lutheran perspective, an aged universe — that is, a scientifically measured age which may be orders of magnitude older than the elapsed time since God created the world⁵ — may be theologically acceptable with respect to some aspects of creation as long as those aspects do not contradict what the Scriptures specifically say.

The late 20th century Lutheran theologian Siegbert W. Becker properly applies these distinctions when he comments:

The point that ought to be clear to all of us is that, entirely aside from the theory of evolution, we are taught by the biblical revelation of creation to expect to find a world that seems to be much older than it really is. If scientists would be truly scientific and say that the universe seems to be millions of years old, or even that it is millions of years old unless at some time in the past the whole natural world came

into being in a supernatural, miraculous way, or that some catastrophic event or events speeded up certain processes of nature at one time or another, we would have no reason to quarrel with them; in fact, we would agree and say that the earth appears to be far more ancient than it is. We know that it is much younger than it seems to be only because God, who is the only one who really knows how all things came to be, has shared this secret with us in Genesis one and two.⁶

Another late 20th century Lutheran theologian, Carl Lawrenz, also cautions: “The creationist, in opposing the billions of years invoked by the evolutionist, needs to be conscientious in asserting nothing further concerning the age of the world on the basis of Scripture than is actually said there.”⁷

Finally, an additional tool

⁵ As described in Genesis 1 and 2

⁶ Siegbert Becker, “Evolution and Genesis,” page 7. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Online Essays, <http://www.wlssays.net/node/106> (accessed May 15, 2010). Dr. Becker was a professor of systematic theology at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin.

⁷ Carl Lawrenz, “Darwin, Evolution, and Creation.” *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 57:3 (July 1960), 223. Prof. Lawrenz was a professor of Old Testament theology at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and also served for many years as the school’s president.

which can be beneficial for the creationist when used consistently is to ...

C. Clearly and fully understand the definitions of terms which are being used.

The creationist needs to understand that there are often differences between the Scriptural definitions of words and definitions used in science or in colloquial speech. One example is the word "truth." There is a difference in the definition of "truth" between science and theology because the *criteria* for determining a "truth" are different. Scientific truth is, to a large extent, based on repeatable observation, whereas in theology, truth is centered on the certainty of God's promises to us in Christ rather than what we observe and feel. The Christian is certain of God's revealed truths in Scripture not because of the Christian's own abilities to perceive and observe, but through faith worked by the Holy Spirit (2Co 2:5-13; Jn 8:31-32). Scripture is, therefore, the basis of absolute certainty for Christians.

An interesting side note illustrative for our purposes of pointing out the importance of distinctions and definitions was the much publicized court case con-

cerning Intelligent Design (ID) (Kitzmiller v. Dover, 2005). In that case, the question before the state Supreme Court was not "Is Intelligent Design true?" Rather, the question was "Is Intelligent Design science?" Those are two completely different questions. The first would answer "What is objectively true and certain?" The second would be "Does ID meet the criteria which science has defined for itself?"⁸

Second, science and theology define "truth" differently because the *permanence* of truth in the scientific realm is viewed

⁸ "After a searching review of the record and applicable case law, we find that while ID arguments may be true, a proposition on which the Court takes no position, ID is not science" (p. 64); "To conclude and reiterate, we express no opinion on the ultimate veracity of ID as a supernatural explanation. However, we commend to the attention of those who are inclined to superficially consider ID to be a true "scientific" alternative to evolution without a true understanding of the concept the foregoing detailed analysis. It is our view that a reasonable, objective observer would, after reviewing both the voluminous record in this case, and our narrative, reach the inescapable conclusion that ID is an interesting theological argument, but that it is not science" (p. 89), in THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, KITZMILLER v. DOVER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT, Case No. 04cv2688, MEMORANDUM OPINION, December 20, 2005, http://www.pamd.uscourts.gov/kitzmiller/kitzmiller_342.pdf (accessed May 15, 2010)

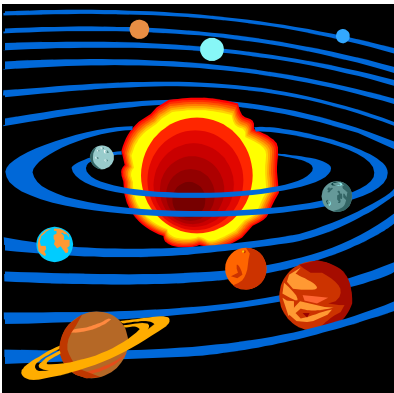
differently than in the theological realm. In the Bible, we are assured that our God is unchanging (Ja 1:17) and that his words of truth are permanent (Jn 17:17; Mt 24:3).

On the other hand, in science there is no such thing as a “final truth” as the National Academy of Sciences points out when they define “scientific fact”: “In science, an observation that has been repeatedly confirmed is for all practical purposes accepted as ‘true.’ Truth in science, however, is never final, and what is accepted as a fact today may be modified or even discarded tomorrow.”⁹ Also, “...the statements of science should never be accepted as “final truth.” Instead, over time they generally form a sequence of increasingly more accurate statements. Nevertheless, in the case of heliocentrism as in evolution, the data are

so convincing that the accuracy of the theory is no longer questioned in science.”¹⁰

The University of California Museum of Paleontology also explains that “Science is based on the principle that any idea, no matter how widely accepted today, could be overturned tomorrow if the evidence warranted it.”¹¹ “In science, ideas can never be completely proved or completely disproved. Instead, science accepts or rejects ideas based on supporting and refuting evidence, and may revise those conclusions if warranted by new evidence or perspectives.”¹²

They also note that “science is always a work in progress, and its conclusions are always tentative.” This means that scientific



9. “Science and Creationism: A View from the National Academy of Sciences, Second Edition” (National Academy of Sciences, 1999): 3, <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/6024.html> (accessed May 14, 2010).

10. “Teaching About Evolution and the Nature of Science” (National Academy of Sciences, 1998): 30, <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/5787.html> (accessed May 14, 2010).

11. “Misconceptions about Science,” *Understanding Science*, University of California Museum of Paleontology, <http://undsci.berkeley.edu/teaching/misconceptions.php#b2> (accessed May 14, 2010).

12. *Ibid.*

conclusions are “not tentative”¹³ in the sense that they are temporary until the real answer comes along. Scientific conclusions are well founded in their factual content and thinking and are tentative only in the sense that all ideas are open to scrutiny. In science, the tentativeness of ideas such as the nature of atoms, cells, stars or the history of the Earth refers to the willingness of scientists to modify their ideas as new evidence appears.”¹⁴



It is important that Christians neither overestimate nor underestimate this tentativeness. When you board a flight in Chicago bound for L.A., you are fairly certain that you will arrive at your destination on time and intact. This is due to a certain level of understanding about aerodynamics, metallurgy, structural forces, electronics and software. If you undergo a medical

procedure, it is often the case that the medical professionals have a fair grasp of the risks and benefits involved, based upon a certain level of understanding about biochemistry, cellular biology and metabolic pathways.

I would not be employed as an engineer if science were not, to a large degree, reliable. On the other hand, it is the tentativeness in science due to incomplete knowledge, the uncertainty caused by how much one does not know and the misinterpretation of correlation instead of causation, that make an engineer constantly concerned about potential product field failures and recalls. It is not necessarily what you know that catches you unaware, it is what you don't know — and you never know what you don't know.

Scientific knowledge is often perceived by people who do not work directly in scientific fields as an impenetrable monolith of certainty. Rather, and more realistically, I have often represented scientific knowledge as a ball of varying porosity since the known

¹³. “Characteristics of Science,” *Understanding Science*, University of California Museum of Paleontology. <http://evolution.berkeley.edu/evo-site/nature/11characteristics.shtml> (accessed May 14, 2010).

¹⁴. *Ibid.*

and unknown are intermixed and outside of the ball there are an unknown amount of unknowns. There will always be some unknown variables, the existence of which are why scientists and engineers continue to be employed. There will always be an unknown number of scientific questions which have never been posed because not enough is known yet to ask those questions. In fact, if all the unknowns were to be answered, science would cease to exist since science thrives at the interface between the known and unknown in the physical world.

The primary reason why there is no “final truth” in science and why science is considered tentative is because science, by its very nature and definition, will always consist of an incomplete body of knowledge.

This even applies to so-called “creation science,” that is, scientific evidence used to support Biblical creationism, and Christians would do well to remember to give appropriate qualifiers when presenting scientific evidence in creation models. Therefore it is of the utmost necessity that the reader keeps this incomplete and tentative nature of scientific conclusions in proper context — especially when applied

to creation science issues. If this is not understood, it is my experience that our sinful nature¹⁵ will begin to take the scientific evidence which favors creation and substitute it for faith in God’s Word, and, if the science which was incomplete in the first place is later falsified, despair will prevail.

It is because science is always incomplete that it should always be a necessary goal of every confessional Lutheran creation model to lead the Christian into the following mindset: If there is scientific evidence in favor of creation and it correlates well with the Scriptural account, that’s great! And if such evidence is later falsified, that’s okay too, because in the end it really doesn’t matter — the promises of God in Christ are certain. LSI



¹⁵ Cf. Romans 7:18,23; Galatians 5:17

A CASE FOR CREATION SCIENCE

**BY WARREN
KRUG**



If you belong to a typical congregation, you have undoubtedly noticed many of your recently confirmed young people conspicuous by their absence from worship services. This is not a new phenomenon, of course, and it is not confined to Lutheran churches or to the United States.

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This opinion piece is based on a presentation delivered to the WELS Metro Milwaukee Teachers' Conference in March of this year.

A Barna Research Group survey a few years ago found that 2/3 of Christian young people expect to stop participating in church activities once they begin living on their own.¹ Now, according to an Australian creationist group, the figure may be closer to 80%, at least in some denominations. In January, 2000, Creation Ministries International said that it did a survey to try to find the answer as to why churches seem to be losing their young people. CMI was not surprised by the most common reason given by the youth for dropping out of church: “science (dinosaurs, fossils, etc).”²

A conclusion we might reach from these statistics is that we as parents and church leaders might be able to do a better job of helping our youth confront the stumbling blocks which secular science may be putting in front of them. Here is where the movement known as creation science or scientific creationism needs to be considered. Many have found it very helpful in answering the questions about science which young people are asking.

Objections to Creation Science

We who have been involved in the Lutheran Science Institute

for years have at times noticed among some fellow Christians – even fellow confessional Lutherans – a resistance to creation science. Their objections generally seem to come in one of three forms:

1. Creationists are trying to prove the Bible. While it may be true that some writers within the movement have at times given this impression, we at LSI would strongly deny that this has ever been our intention. Our faith in the inerrancy of the Scriptures is not so weak that it needs science to give it support. The Bible is the Word of God and God is incapable of error.³ Nevertheless, when the Bible comes under attack, an activity in which many secular scientists have long been engaged, a Christian response to these assaults is very appropriate. Defending the Bible when it is under attack is known as *apologetics*, a practice that has a long and noble history within the

1. Barna Research Group, “Teenagers Embrace Religion but Are Not Excited About Christianity,” Rep. Barna Research Group, January 10, 2000. Web. accessed May 20, 2010.

2. Creation Ministries International. *Creation Ministries International Newsletter* (January 2010). ~Print.

3. Cf. Numbers 23:19: “God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind.”

Christian church.

2. *Students may learn something in their study of science which will hurt their faith.* However, how could this happen if science is properly understood and correctly presented? The God who created nature and the laws of science, and the God who inspired the Scriptures, is one and the same God. How could God contradict himself? Thus, one of the aims of creation science is to show Christians that we need not fear studying science because there is nothing in true science which can hurt their faith. Nevertheless, creationists do need to be careful not to present their own scientific theories as if they were absolute fact.



3. *The Bible's creation account must be accepted, and evolution consequently rejected, by faith alone in the words of the Bible alone.* Those who present this argument often mention Hebrews 11:3: "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." Cer-

tainly the Bible's creation account must be accepted by faith alone – *creation ex nihilo* in six consecutive 24 hour days, Adam and Eve, the fall into sin, etc. However, this is not the same thing as demonstrating that nothing in science really contradicts the creation account. Much of God's creation can also be observed as we study the universe using scientific methods.

The Bible and Creation Science

In any discussion involving science and Christianity, we must begin with God's word or at least have it always at our fingertips. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword..." It would be foolish to ignore this powerful weapon, a means by which the Holy Spirit converts us and sustains our faith.

Does the word of God itself have anything to say about creationism? Neither the words "creationism" nor "science" appear in the Bible (NIV), but if we consider the study of nature as being a form of creationism, the concept of creation science is certainly there. In fact, it appears that on Judgment Day the case against the unbelievers will include the truth that they ignored the evidence of God's existence

in nature. In other words, they were not creationists. In Romans 1:20 we read: “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 men are without excuse.”

This evidence for God’s existence can be ignored, but it cannot logically be denied. Even secularists on occasion will admit this. In the December, 2008 issue of the pro-evolution magazine *Discover*, one can find an article entitled “A Universe Built for Us.”⁴ The author of this article readily admits that the universe is so finely tuned that it has



the appearance of having been designed by a Creator. But, alas, he can’t quite bring himself around to confessing faith in God as Creator! Instead, he mentions the fantastic theory called the “multiverse,” the wild idea that there are practically an infinite number of universes. So, guess

what? We are the lucky ones who, thanks to the law of averages, happen to live in the one universe where everything worked out just right for life to exist.

God’s Word Discusses God’s World

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” Thus says St. Paul in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. We can learn quite a bit about God’s created world from the study of his revealed Word.

For instance, there is a lot of nature study in the book of Job, especially in chapter 38. As Job’s faith began weakening, God directed him to consider who created the earth (“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation?”), who created the oceans (“Have you journeyed to the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep?”), and who created the natural phenomena (“What is the way to the place where the lightning is dispersed, or the place where the

⁴ Tim Folger, “A Universe Built 4 for Us.” *Discover* (December, 2008), 52-58.

east winds are scattered over the earth?”).

By referring to God’s created world, the Psalms are another storehouse of passages which inspire us to acknowledge God as our Creator worthy of our praise. Psalm 19:1 reminds us of God’s greatness: “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.” Psalm 33:5 helps us to consider his justice and love: “The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.” Psalm 29:7-8^a encourages us to remember God’s power: “The voice of the LORD strikes with flashes of lightning. The voice of the LORD shakes the desert.”

Jesus himself also often referred to nature in his teaching, such as when he encouraged his listeners not to worry so much about their everyday lives in his



Sermon on the Mount: “Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these” (Matthew 6:26-29).

Conclusion

I believe the Bible itself makes the case for creation science. Many humble scientists who are looking at the world with their scientific instruments in one hand and the Bible in the other are appreciating more and more that whatever God said in the book of Genesis that he did, he really did do. God wants us to understand the biblical creation account as literal and historical.

Think about it! If Genesis is a myth or an allegory, as liberal Christians maintain, then out the window goes original sin, the need for salvation, and the first promise of a Savior. God forbid that we should ever fall into that trap! We do need to remember that theories, even by creationists, can never be as reliable as the Scriptures. Yet we would do well to continue studying God’s creation in light of his precious Word. Let’s also help our young people to do the same! 🙏



NUGGETS

Francis Collins vs. Richard Dawkins



How did geneticist Francis Collins (*left*), who teaches that Christianity and evolution are compatible, make out in a debate against militant atheist, Richard Dawkins (*right*). You decide who got the best of the following exchange.

Collins: By being outside of nature, God is also outside of space and time. Hence, at the moment of the creation of the universe, God could also have activated evolution, with full knowledge of how it would turn out ...

Dawkins: I think that is a tremendous cop-out. If God wanted to create life and create humans, it would be slightly odd that he should choose the extraordinarily roundabout way of waiting for 10 billion years before life got started and then waiting for another 4 billion years until you got human beings capable of worshipping and sinning and all the other things religious people are interested in.

Question: does compromising with error ever work?

Source: *Creation* (July-September, 2010). Photos from Wikipedia.



Are the footprints on the moon left by astronauts years ago still visible?

Yes, and there is no natural way for them to fade away. There is no water or wind on the moon that could cause them to disappear.

Source: *Our Created Moon* by Don DeYoung and John Whitcomb

Those who insist on accommodating the geological ages, despite all the biblical, theological, and historical arguments against them, do so on the grounds that "science" requires it. "God would not deceive us," they say, "by making the earth look so old, if it were really young." But it is really the other way around. If the earth were really old, God would not deceive us by saying so clearly and emphatically that He created it all in six days. For that matter, the earth does not really look old anyway. Evolutionists have tried to make it look old by imposing the unscriptural and unscientific dogma of uniformitarianism on the geologic record of earth history as preserved in the rocks of the earth's crust.



— Dr. Henry Morris, *Acts and Facts* (June 2010)
(photo from Wikipedia)

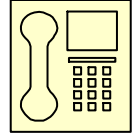
TELEPHONE CALLS — STRANGE BUT REAL

Caller: Can you give me the telephone number for Jack?

Operator: I'm sorry, sir, I don't understand who you are talking about.

Caller: On page 1, section 5, of the user guide it clearly states that I need to unplug the fax machine from the AC wall socket and telephone Jack before cleaning. Now, can you give me the number for Jack?'

Operator: I think it means the telephone plug on the wall.



Caller: Does your European Breakdown Policy cover me when I am traveling in Australia ?

Operator: Does the policy name give you a clue?

Caller (enquiring about legal requirements while traveling in Europe): If I register my car in France , and then take it to England , do I have to change the steering wheel to the other side of the car?

Source: a private e-mail message

May 21, 2010 post

'Artificial Life' Breakthrough Worries Some Scientists

New synthetic cells could lead to new medicines and fuels but could also poison the environment.



SUMMARY: Researchers say they have developed the first synthetic living cell. A team led by Dr. Craig Venter of the J Craig Venter Institute constructed a bacterium's "genetic software" and transplanted it into a host cell, causing the resulting microbe to look and behave like it should have according to the synthetic DNA.

The scientists hope the breakthrough might lead to bacterial cells that will produce medicines and fuels or even absorb greenhouse gases. Venter's team had previously made a synthetic bacterial genome and also had transplanted the genome of one bacterium into another. Now they have combined both methods to create what they call a "synthetic cell," although only its genome is truly synthetic.

The researchers took an existing bacterial genome, sequenced its genetic code, and then used "synthesis machines" to construct a copy

which they transplanted into a recipient cell. This cell read the "new software" and then transformed into the new species specified in that genetic code. The new bacteria replicated over a billion times thanks to the synthetic DNA.

But there are critics to this development. Dr. Helen Wallace of Gene-watch UK, an organization that monitors genetic technologies, says that synthetic bacteria could be dangerous. New organisms in the environment could do more harm than good, she said, and even if they are designed to fight pollution, they are actually a new kind of pollution themselves.

"He isn't God," she said of Venter. "He's actually being very human, trying to get money invested in his technology and avoid regulation that would restrict its use." Dr. Venter and his colleagues are already collaborating with pharmaceutical and fuel companies to develop chromosomes for bacteria that could produce useful fuels and new vaccines. He defended his work, but other scientists also have spoken out about the risks involved.

The article summarized here was found originally at
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science_and_environment/10132762.stm

COMMENT: Only time will tell if this breakthrough will prove beneficial, will lead to a dead-end, or could perhaps beget a "Frankenstein monster." One thing seems sure. They have not created life out of non-life, a goal evolutionary scientists would desperately like to reach. As admitted in another report on this development, the accomplishment of the Venter team was "more a re-creation of existing life — changing one simple type of bacterium into another — than a built-from-scratch kind."

Also it appears appropriate to point out that while it might be said that a new variety of bacterium was created, it was not a new kind of organism, and it was the result of intelligent design, not the product of blind natural processes. Until it can be shown how life can evolve out of non-life, natural evolution remains more fantasy than fact.

If God allows it, the work of these scientists will lead to better medicines, fuels, and/or less pollution. Yet, mankind can never completely eliminate the problems in nature which have resulted from sin entering

the world. This will happen only when the present universe is replaced by a much better place, in fact a perfect place, that all followers of Jesus will recognize as being heaven.

1 Comment

Dr. Bruce Holman wrote: Thank you, Warren for identifying important research and bringing up important points of the work. This work has been recognized as possible for quite a few years. We have known how to synthesize DNA for about 50 years, and have analyzed the detailed primary structure of the DNA for many organisms. We also have known how to insert DNA into a variety of cells for over 35 years. One might wonder why it took so long to take this obvious next step: Take the synthesized DNA of an organism and put it into another cell. The reason is that all of this is very difficult. With all our technology, a God given working model to copy, and literally tens of thousands of man years, we can now to make -- not a whole synthetic cell, but just the synthetic genetic information of a cell work properly. No serious researcher in his wildest dreams imagines that we could actually construct a cell from scratch. We should be amazed that anyone could imagine that such a thing as a cell could come about by accident. Yet that is what many imagine in their heart. They live in a fantasy world where they hope God can't find them. But God came gently seeking them; reconciling them by the sacrifice of his son Jesus Christ; providing an account of the peace God offers in almost every language on earth. There is still time to turn to the one who knows how to make cells and find true life, but time is short.

Question of the Day

Why isn't it a good idea to have pets sleeping in your bed?

Pet dander or dirt could exacerbate allergies, the pet may have bad toilet habits, and young puppies could fall off the bed and get injured. However, sleeping in the same bed can help a dog bond with its owner.

Source: *USA Weekend* (May 14-16, 2010)



► LSI News

Call for Candidates

Elections are scheduled to be held later this year. The positions to be filled include president, secretary, and three members of the Board of Directors.

Candidates do not need to have a degree in science, just a willingness to serve. They should be able to attend all or most of the meetings, which generally are held on Saturdays, four or five times a year.

Our website, www.lutheran-science.org, lists the duties for each of the offices. If you are thinking of maybe running for one of the positions and do not have Internet access, please write for more information. Don't be shy!

President, Executive Director Speak to Teachers

Executive Director, Dr. Bruce Holman, and President Warren Krug were co-presenters for a sectional at the March meeting of the WELS Metro Milwaukee Teachers' Conference. They presented a topic titled "Teaching Students About Creation & Evolution" to about 70 teachers over two sessions. We thank this conference for their donation to LSI resulting from the presentations.

► Book Review

DeYoung, Donald, and Derrik Hobbs. *Discovery of Design*. Green Forest, AR: Master Books, © 2009, 236 pages.

Examples of Biomimicry

Biomimicry refers to the practice of inventors and design engineers looking to nature for inspiration. Biomimicry plays a role in the debate over intelligent design because it would appear to be difficult to argue against the idea there is design in nature when so many people are borrowing ideas from nature for their own intelligently designed inventions or new techniques.

This book provides numerous examples of biomimicry taken from the insect world, birds, the ocean, the world of land animals, vegetation, nonliving objects, and people themselves.

While there is nothing objectionable in this book, I was a little disappointed that the authors did not take more opportunities to offer praises to God for His wisdom and the love He has shown to His creatures in the amazing gifts He has given to us and the rest of creation. Only infrequently do the authors mention God or the Bible.

Stem Cells in Hair Can Morph Into Skin Cells

Scientists have found a type of stem cell in hair follicles capable of morphing into all three types of skin cells. Professor Paul Sanberg said the stem cells can lead to making epidermis, sebaceous tissue and hair follicles. "These cells in adult hair follicles are, in fact, helping to make new skin." Sanberg hopes the research will lead to treatments for repairing skin or even hair replacement.—*HealthDay News* (3/11/10)

Creation Museum Sees Millionth Visitor

One month before the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky could celebrate its third birthday, it already passed the one millionth visitor mark. At about 10:30 a.m. on Monday, April 26, the Joe Brown family from Dayton, Ohio was welcomed by Answer in Genesis' president, Ken Ham, as the millionth visitor and was presented were several gifts. The museum, which accepts a literal interpretation of the Genesis creation account, had expected about a quarter-million visitors a year but is averaging more than 330,000.—*cincinnati.com* (4/26/10)



Shingles Linked to Strokes

People who have had an attack of shingles may be at increased risk of a stroke. The medical journal *Stroke* reported patients who had a shingles rash around the eyes or on the forehead were four times as likely to suffer a stroke within a year compared to those who never had the disease.—*Consumer Reports OnHealth* (January, 2010)

New Prostate Cancer Vaccines

Prostate cancer vaccines are under development that are different from traditional vaccines. Rather than offering protection to people who don't have a disease, these vaccines are therapeutic. They are designed to train the immune system to attack cancer cells in men who already have prostate cancer. One vaccine, Provenge, has been found by one study to be as effective in extending life as chemotherapy without as serious side effects.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (December, 2009)

Old as Good as New

A newer method of heart-bypass surgery has not proven better than the older method. The older method which used heart-lung machines that allowed doctors to stop the heart for the surgery was thought to contribute to occasional strokes or memory loss. In the newer method doctors worked directly on the beating heart without the machines. A study of over 2,000 men showed slightly fewer complications when heart-lung machines were used.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (April, 2010)

China Now Has The Most Diabetics

China has overtaken India and is now facing the world's biggest diabetes epidemic with 92 million diabetics. One in 10 Chinese now has the disease and another 16% are close to developing it. The rate nearly equals the U.S. rate of 11% and surpasses other Western nations including Germany and Canada. The epidemic is blamed on lifestyle changes such as unhealthier diets and less exercise which is common in developing nations—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (3/25/10)

Beans Recommended For Diabetics

Beans may be one of the healthiest foods for diabetics to consume. A recent review suggests eating beans can have a significant impact on fasting glucose levels, insulin levels, and on A1C levels, which help measure blood sugar control over time. The study involved legumes such as garbanzo, black, pinto, white and kidney beans. A half-cup of beans a day can lower blood sugar measurements.—*Mayo Clinic Health Letter* (March, 2010)

Well-Preserved Mammoth on World Tour

A baby woolly mammoth named Lyuba has left frosty Siberia and has begun a world tour that will include a spring stop in Illinois. The extremely well-preserved animal is the size of a large dog and died at the age of about one month. Secular researchers dated her current age at 40,000 years, but creationists think the infant mammoth died around 2,000 B.C.—*Answers* (April-June, 2010)

Stopping Smoking Good For the Arteries

The arteries of ex-smokers show signs of improvement a year after people stop smoking, a big new study has shown, even though a weight gain of 9 pounds on average was noted. Dr. James Stein of the U. of Wisconsin, Madison said many people are afraid to quit smoking because of the fear of gaining weight. However, the reduction in risk of getting heart disease and cancer was verified by the study despite the gain in weight which hopefully can be reversed when ex-smokers have gotten more used to not smoking.—*The (Racine) Journal Times* (3/16/10)



Minnesotan is Tallest American

Igor Vovkovinsky of Rochester, Minnesota has been recognized as the tallest man in the United States by Guinness World Records. He was measured on NBC's "The Dr. Oz Show" on May 24 and found to be 7 feet, 8.3 inches tall. Vovkovinsky is 27 years old and moved to Minnesota with his mother from Ukraine when he was 7 so that he could be treated at the Mayo Clinic for a pituitary disease that spurred his rapid growth.—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (5/25/10)

What's Next for NASA?

The space shuttle fleet is due to be mothballed soon and the White House has nixed a plan to return to the moon, so what's next for NASA? The space agency has lots of places it wants to go but no specific place as of now. The moon, asteroids, and eventually Mars are all future destinations. Meanwhile NASA is waiting on new technology: electric-hybrid rockets, nuclear thermal rockets, an in-orbit gas station, and/or methods of beaming power between Earth and space.—*myway.com* (2/23/10)

Landing Astronauts on Asteroid Difficult Job

Sending men to land on an asteroid will be harder and trickier than sending men to the moon, space experts say. Although the project has been given a green light by the Obama administration, such a voyage could take several months longer than a moon journey and be more dangerous. However, such a journey could provide training for an eventual trip to Mars and might help "unlock secrets of how our solar system was formed."—*usanews.com* (4/19/10)

Ozone Hole Mending: Good News & Bad News

The hole in the earth's ozone layer is mending, say scientists. But now they are worried this may lead to warming in the atmosphere. Many countries have stopped using chlorofluorocarbons in refrigerants and aerosol cans which are thought to contribute to the growing hole. That improvement though may cause global warming to increase.—*Bottom Line Personal* (May 1, 2010)

Father-Daughter Fall 13 Floors and Live

Alberto Rozas and his 7-year-old daughter plummeted 13 stories as their new apartment building collapsed during Chile's earthquake earlier this year. The two were able to climb to safety with only a few cuts, scrapes and bruises. Rozas' neighbors who lived on the other side of the hall found themselves trapped beneath the structure and not all survived.—*The (Racine) Journal Times* (3/1/10)

Remove Ammo from Soldier's Brain

A live round of ammunition that could have exploded at any time was safely removed from the skull of a young Afghani soldier by Lt. Col. Anthony Terreri in Afghanistan. The surgery was risky because dropping the explosive, pricking it with a scalpel or exposing it to electricity could have set it off. The doctors wore flak jackets and operated with all electronic machinery disconnected from the patient.—*cnn.com* (4/15/10)

Ethiopia Splitting

Ethiopia is splitting into two. Volcanic activity in 2005 opened a 35-mile long, 20 foot wide rift in just a few days. Scientists are speculating that a new ocean may be forming as the African continent splits apart.—*Answers* (April-June, 2010)

More News Briefs Online

Why is Samsung warning about 3D television sets?

What animals can live without oxygen?

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www.lutheranscience.org

Soil

For as the *soil* makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations. Isaiah 61:11

God here compares His work of turning sinful people into righteous or holy people to how soil can turn seeds into sprouts (young plants). People of any nation will become righteous if they believe in Jesus as their Savior from sin.

What is soil and why is it important? Soil is the thin layer of the ground made up of loose materials in which plants can grow. Soil along with sunlight and water is absolutely



necessary for plants to exist, and plants, of course, are necessary for animals to eat and survive.

What materials make up soil? There is a lot in soil. Soil is made up of tiny pieces of rock or minerals along with bits of decaying *organic matter*. Organic matter refers to something that once was living, both plants and animals. Soil also contains water and oxygen and other things including living organisms.

What is the life cycle of soil? Soil goes through stages or a “life cycle” just like living organisms do. Soil begins as *parent* soil or bits of matter laid down by water, wind, or glaciers. When organic matter becomes part of the soil, it becomes richer and is called *immature* soil. As plants begin growing in the soil, the soil is broken down into smaller pieces becoming even richer. Then it can be called *mature* soil. Sadly,

the soil in time can lose its minerals or pick up acids which are bad for it. When this happens it is less valuable for plants and is called *old-age* soil.

What things can affect the type of soil found in an area? Climate, especially the temperature and amount of rainfall, is the most important factor affecting the soil. Other factors include the types of living organisms present, the kind of parent materials that helped form the soil and the height and slope of the land. Time is also a factor since soil can change over time.

Why are earthworms important to soil?

Earthworms are important to soil because their tunnels help water and oxygen to get deeper into the soil. Also, as they eat soil and organic matter, they leave behind nutrients that make the soil richer for



plants.

What other living organisms are in soil?

These organisms might include rodents such as ground moles, various insects such as ants, other small animals, tree roots, and tiny living things called algae, protozoa, fungi and bacteria.

Source: 1999 Grolier Multimedia Ency.

We thank the Lord for creating our earth with valuable soil, and we thank Him even more for making us new creatures through faith in Jesus as our Savior.

Activities:

1. To show that soil contains air, place soil in a glass jar or bottle. Then slowly pour water over it. Do you see air bubbles rising from the soil?

2. To show that some soils are better than others for plants, try growing plants in both dark, moist soil and in sand. See if there's a difference.

► My View



Kindness, Creationism and Christianity All Go Together

According to the current issue of *Creation* magazine, Richard Dawkins, arch-enemy of religion and creationism, finally had a kind word to say about Christianity. In his mind Christianity is not nearly as bad as religions which sponsor terrorism.

“There are no Christians, as far as I know, blowing up buildings,” he said. “I am not aware of any Christian suicide bombers. I am not aware of any major Christian denomination that believes the penalty for apostasy is death.”

He thinks Christianity might be a bulwark against something worse, although his own zealous attacks against the religion haven't helped.

Thus, this prominent opponent of believers has noticed something different about Christianity compared to at least one other major religion.

That Christianity should be seen as different from other relig-

ions is as it should be. Jesus once said to His followers, “You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16)

It is easy to get angry with secularists who teach that we are evolving upward out of the animal world and consequently have no need for a Savior.

But kindness and patience along with solid reasoning from both Scripture and science may be the best way to win minds and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, perhaps souls as well.

It does get difficult at times reading the sarcastic, deeply insulting remarks evolution-minded people often make about Christians and creationists in magazines or on the internet. Yet, if we respond in kind, we are being just like them and likely will cut off any hopes of breaking down the walls they have erected around themselves. However, the testimony of many former evolutionists shows if God wills these walls can indeed fall. 🙏

—Warren Krug, editor

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