CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALS PART II:

WHY WE BELIEVE

CHRISTIAN FUNDAMENTALS:

Remaining Schedule

5/18/21: Why does God allow suffering?

5/25/21: What about other religions? / Is Christian experience valid?

6/1/21: How to defend our faith with non-believers.

1. Do science and scripture agree?
2. Misunderstandings:
3. Background of Conflict Between ‘Science’ and ‘Religion’
4. On the one hand, Christians tend to say things in scientific debates that the Bible does not really say, thereby making statements that are seemingly at odds with some claims of science.
5. On the other hand, Scientist tend to make statements through their philosophical interpretation of scientific evidence that seem to conflict with what the Bible says on matters of science.
6. We have seen this clash throughout the centuries:
7. The Church’s persecution of Galileo for claiming the earth revolves around the sun rather than the other way around.
8. Slavery, and the debate between William Wilberforce and Huxley
9. Creation and Evolution, from the Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925 to the recent Debate between Bill Nye and Ken Ham.
10. The Limits of Science:
11. A scientist who makes pronouncements is generally trusted (although the Pandemic has shown the degree of distrust for any institutional establishment figure)
12. Carl Sagan is an example the author brings up, who in an interview crossed the line between *science* and *philosophy* when he made the following statement: “The Cosmos is all there is, all there was, and all there ever will be.”
13. Conflict has arisen over whether things that cannot be verified by the scientific method are real and valid, but the truth is there are many things that are real that cannot be scientifically proven. (Example: Falling in love, the essence of truth, etc.)
14. Science can tell us how something works but not why it works in a particular way. Whether there is any purpose in the universe cannot be answered by science. Science can give us the “know-how” but not the “know-why”.
15. God is a different kind of reality from the world of nature, who cannot be empirically investigated yet while He exists outside of time and space, He has revealed Himself in both time and space.
16. Faith is no detriment to scientific investigation, in fact, a science itself rests on presuppositions that must be accepted by faith:
17. The universe is orderly and operates according to a pattern.
18. Objective truth exists and is knowable.
19. The reliability in the sense of perceptions
20. The repeatability of a laboratory experiment.
21. Both Sides Have Presuppositions
22. All people have a worldview, a set of presuppositions through which we interpret information. There are plenty of examples of this in the world all around us.
23. Christians believe science is one avenue for discovery of Truth, but not the only way.
24. Christians believe God exists and is active in our creation and that is the center of our lens through which we view the world.
25. A Christian sees no conflict between reason and faith in a supernatural God, in fact, the founders of modern science were believers in God.
26. William Paley’s watchmaker analogy serves as an example for how Christians have a presupposition that there is a Creator who existed before creation who formed it and made it.
27. The agnostic/atheistic scientist on the other hand, presuppose that all things are ultimately reduced to its material base, and that all of life came about because of evolutionary mutation, natural selection and must have occurred because of a natural process.

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1. Dealing with Darwin
2. Background of Darwin’s theory and observations
3. Defining terms: *Microevolution=* A continual process of change or development within a species. *Macroevolution=* A continual process of transfer of genetic information to a higher, more complex classification, by cross mutation and natural selection.
4. The law of Biogenesis states that life can only come from life, this directly contradicts ‘abiogenesis’ which is the claim that life came from non-living matter.
5. Mutations in nature have limits to the degree of genetic change that is possible. (Example: Breeders, The Miller-Urey Experiment).
6. The Fossil record remains the biggest problem for Darwinian gradualism. For something to be fossilized requires a rare set of circumstances, whereby an organism is buried rapidly.
7. Irreducible Complexity: Michael Behe, author of *Darwin’s Black Box,* argues that on the molecular level, nothing can be left out, and therefore, Darwinian gradualism is inadequate.
8. Are we following a God of the Gaps mentality or Following the Evidence where it leads?
9. Dangers of Darwinian thought can be seen in things such as the Holocaust, which were partly justified by Hitler and the Nazis using the tenets of Darwinian evolution.
10. Can God and Darwin get a long? Some Christians believe God used the process of evolution to create and sustain life. The Bible allows for evolution to an extent, but the picture we get of God is as of a God who is involved, which does not seem to fit with Darwinian evolution. True Neo-Darwinian thought is to exclude the role and possibility of a Creator.

“We civilized men . . . do our utmost to check the process of elimination; we build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed, and the sick; we institute poor laws; and our medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of everyone to the last moment. Thus, the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind. No one who has attended to the breeding of domestic animals will doubt that this must be highly injurious to the race of man. It is surprising how soon a want of care, or care wrongly directed, leads to the degeneration of a domestic race; but excepting in the case of man himself, hardly anyone is so ignorant as to allow his worst animals to breed.”- Charles Darwin

1. Reconciling Science and Scripture
2. The Universe has been confirmed to have had a beginning.
3. Time had a beginning.
4. God caused effects even before time. We are finite, but He is infinite. He has no beginning or end. And that is the only plausible explanation for the origin of all things.
5. The Fine Tuning of Cosmic Constants. Hugh Ross cites at least 25 cosmic laws of balance in the universe that make it so that life can exist on our planet.
6. The Human Genome: The mapping of all the nucleic acid sequences for humans, encoded as DNA, which reside in the 3 billion base pairs, which reside in our cells. It is the instruction manual for life.
7. Human Origins
8. According to the author, when we consider the creation-evolution debate, it is important to remember two indisputable truths of Scripture: 1. God intentionally and supernaturally created the heavens and the earth, and 2. God intentionally and supernaturally created the first man and first woman, Adam, and Eve.
9. Adam and Eve are presented in the Old and New Testament as historic people not as spiritual allegory (see *Romans 5:12, 1 Corinthians 15:22)*
10. The origin of man and the fall of man are pillars of understanding the Gospel because the fall of man, and the introduction of sin into the world leads us to Christ and our need for redemption.

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G. Misc. Thoughts on Genesis

1. I personally believe God created life and the universe in six twenty-four-hour days. I personally believe this because of the following reasons:
2. It fits with the repeated phrase, *“there was evening, and morning.”*
3. The Hebrew word for day, ‘Yom’, when combined with a number, always means a twenty-four-hour day.
4. Creation week established a pattern we follow to this day.
5. Death we are told did not enter the picture of Creation until after the fall of man in Genesis 3, and death is linked with the evolutionary tale of the development of life and us.
6. The Bible does not tell us how old the Universe is, so while I lean toward a ‘Young Earth Creationist’ perspective, I do not believe we can say with authority that the Universe is 6-10,000 years old.
7. Personally, I believe God created a ‘mature’ Universe.
8. Genesis indicates a worldwide flood in Noah’s time, not a local flood.
9. *Job 40 and 41* indicate dinosaurs existed alongside man.
10. The ultimate reason Genesis should be taken seriously.
11. Final on why Science and Faith can co-exist peacefully.
12. You can believe in God and do good science.
13. As Christians, we believe that all knowledge comes from God and therefore should welcome scientific achievement and development (*Romans 11:33-36*)
14. Properly understood, religion and science should be allies not enemies.
15. Additional Resources:
16. Ben Stein’s documentary, *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* watchable on YouTube for free
17. Books like *Darwin On Trial* by Philip Johnson, *The Case for a Creator* by Lee Strobel, *Darwin’s Black Box* by Michael Behe

“The God of the Bible is also the God of the genome. He can be worshiped in the cathedral or in the laboratory. His creation is majestic, awesome, intricate and beautiful.”- Francis Collins, Director at the NIH

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