

“that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”

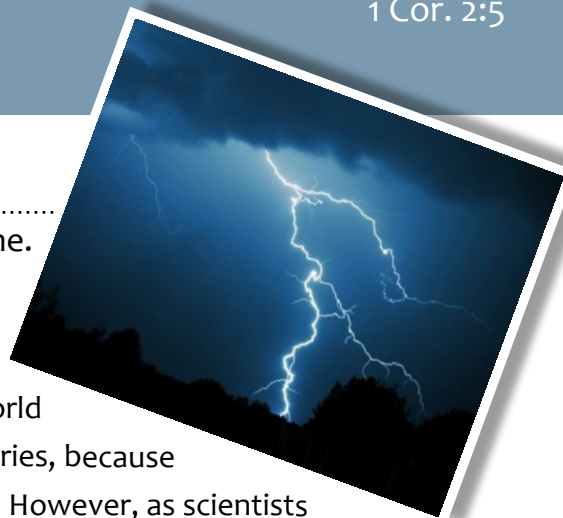
1 Cor. 2:5

Science & the Bible (part 2)

Theme: Scientific discoveries help us understand what God has done.

Review of Lesson 26

God designed humans to have an inquisitive mind and to seek truth since all truth is from God. Science is the pursuit of truth as found in the world around us. At times believers have stood in the way of scientific discoveries, because they misinterpreted the Bible. Scientists have also made major blunders. However, as scientists continue to unravel what God has done and how He did it, and as Bible interpreters become more knowledgeable of the world around us, the greatness of God becomes more obvious. The number of stars is beyond our understanding, yet God calls them all by name and is familiar with each one. The heavenly bodies reveal the glory of God and that should make everyone aware of the need to seek Him. The life-cycle of stars is awesome and fascinating. God revealed that the earth was hung upon nothing millennia before scientists knew. The findings of science make our lives richer and create excitement.



Introduction

We can absolutely trust in His Word. The Bible is primarily concerned with spiritual matters, i.e., things of the spirit which are eternal. It alone holds the truth on such matters. When it comes to science, good biblical interpretation and true science should agree; there should be no conflict between the two. Conflicts can occur when there are wrong beliefs or there is poor science, **but the Bible itself is never wrong**. In general, science is nothing more than humans discovering what God has done and how He did it. This lesson will first consider some hoaxes and misunderstandings to see how both science and biblical interpretations have been wrong. We will then consider some marvelous agreements between science and Scripture.

Please remember, the truth of God's Word stands upon its own merit and does not depend upon us or science to prove it. While we can tell others of its accuracy, it is not our logic and knowledge that will convince someone to believe it, **"that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God"** (1 Cor. 2:5).

Hoaxes and Misunderstandings

Clever people, including scientists and religious people, have perpetuated hoaxes (deceptions in order to make a point) for many years. People do this to advance their cause, or sometimes just to have fun. Some examples are shown below.

1. **Giants:** Oftentimes Christian zealots want to provide proof for Genesis 6:4, which notes that at the

time of Noah, **“There were giants on the earth in those days,”** In the last couple centuries people have claimed they have found giant skeletons, but for some strange reason none of the skeletons can be located today (good clue they never really existed). Today there are many references on the internet and in books of giant human skeletons being discovered. What is generally used for proof is the result of a photo contest designed to purposely make convincing photos of improbable things. One such contest's rules were: *"The rules of this game are thus: You are to create an archaeological hoax. Your job is to show a picture of an archaeological discovery that looks so real, had it not appeared at (name withheld), people might have done a double take. As always, quality is a must."* No real giant(s) were discovered, but great hoaxes were devised, Pictures 1 and 2. Sadly, Christian blogs, websites, and literature have promoted these hoaxes as proof of the Bible's reliability. Learn more at: www.truthorfiction.com; put "biblical-giants" in the search bar, then see "Archeologists Discover The Ancient Bones Of Biblical Giants."

2. Piltdown man: In the early days of the creation-evolution debate, a creature somewhere between ape and man was need to promote evolution. This "in-between" creature would be the "missing link" for evolutionists, providing evidence that evolution was correct. In 1912, in Piltdown, England, the skull of the missing link was said to be found. Hardly so. In time (40 years later) scientists did discover the skull was fake and corrected the error. It was nothing but the lower jawbone of an orangutan combined with the skull of a fully developed modern human, Picture 3. This was an especially evil hoax because of its intentional deception by a scientist(s), to prove evolution. It was not a missing link, just an embarrassment for science.

3. Human and Dinosaur footprints: According to evolutionary theory, dinosaurs and humans did not live in the same time period (millions of years separated them). Thus, it would be impossible to find dinosaur and human fossil footprints next to each other, side-by-side, in the same rock strata. Interestingly, such a discovery seemed to have been made in the 1900's in the Paluxy River area near Glen Rose, Texas. What looked like human and dinosaur footprints were found together in the same rock layer, Picture 4. If true, this would mean they existed during the same time period, and this would cast doubt on the whole evolutionary theory. Then, in the mid-1900's, religious groups made movies and wrote books about this, showing the side-by-side footprints. Most scientists did not agree that there were human footprints in the rocks, and when honest, properly trained Christian supporters examined the site, they had to agree that the supposed man footprints were not human at all. The books and movies were taken off the market because of this error. However, to this day new claims of the same old myth continue to be made. How unfortunate it is that Christian organizations still promote such error. At G4U we try hard to not promote questionable findings. For excellent discussions and pictures go to: <http://paleo.cc/paluxy.htm>

Discussion: What does promotion of a hoax really do? (Answer: if we try to "prove" the reliability of the Bible based upon a hoax, then when the truth finally comes out the validity of the Bible may also be questioned.)

Bible Truth

"Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind." Albert Einstein

Below are just a few examples of some great agreements between the Bible and science.

Hygiene

Throughout history the lack of proper hygiene was the cause of major pandemics (large areas or worldwide outbreaks of infectious disease). One pandemic killed 20-30 million people in Europe alone. It is hard to believe, but even doctors would go from one patient to another without washing their hands; they were often a primary cause for the spread of disease. Louis Pasteur (1822-1895 AD) is credited with proving that "invisible" germs were the cause of many diseases. However, long before anyone had an idea of germs, the Bible established dietary laws and hygiene principles (Lev. 15:13 and Deut 23:12-13) to protect His people. The Bible taught there were ways to prevent germs from spreading and causing outbreaks of disease, i.e.; the isolation of the infected, destroying contaminated items, washing, bathing, cleaning cloths in running water, and disposal of waste. Only the God of creation knew about germs and how to prevent them from harming His people. Today we know that what the Bible taught (and Pasteur recognized) was correct and disease outbreaks can be prevented by personal hygiene, clean water supplies, and proper sewage disposal.

Clouds and Rain

One of the marvels of our world was the creation of the firmament (the atmosphere), clouds, and rain (the basic effort of the second day in Gen 1:6-8). As you know, without an atmosphere and rain, life on earth

could not exist. Job 36:27 says, **"For He draws up drops of water, Which distill as rain from the mist."** He established that this cycle (of evaporation and then the clouds condensing to form rain) would exist forever, Psa. 148:4-6. Because it is so important, God mentions many times the creation of water vapor and the formation of rain (Gen. 2:5-6; Jer. 10:13, 51:16; Psa. 135:7; and Job 28:26). Thus, the Bible teaches the hydrological cycle, which is, water evaporates and condenses to form clouds, clouds form rain, rain waters the ground, water runs into rivers which empty into the oceans, and then the whole process repeats. The oceans never fill-up because the water evaporates to start the cycle again (Eccl. 1:7 and Isa. 55:10). When the Bible speaks of scientific things it speaks with authority because the Creator knows!

Life is in the Blood

Blood is the source of life and health, without it we would die. **"For the life of the flesh is in the blood ..."** (Leviticus 17:11). Up until the late 1800's, sick people were often "bled" (had blood intentionally removed, supposedly to help them get better). Many died as a result, e.g., this may have led to George Washington's death. Today we know that healthy blood is necessary to bring life-giving nutrients to every cell in the body. It truly is the life of the flesh, but if it becomes contaminated (germs, disease, waste products) it cannot do its job properly and can even infect others. God declared that blood is the life of all flesh and sustains life long before science understood its function.

There was a Beginning

A steady-state universe is one that is neither expanding or contracting (static). Such a universe suggests neither a beginning or ending; it implies it always existed. In the early twentieth century many people liked the idea of a steady-state universe because it suggest there was no Creator. Albert Einstein was possibly the most brilliant scientist of all time and he believed in a steady-state universe. Then, in 1916 Einstein introduced a "fudge factor" (an arbitrary number to make the results turn out the way he wanted) into his theory of general relativity. Without this factor his theory predicted the universe would eventually collapse upon itself due to the force of gravity. He later reportedly referred to this factor as, "... the greatest mistake of my life." He referred to it as a mistake because it ended up proving just the opposite of what he wanted. His work, and that which continues today, point to the fact the universe is not static, just the opposite; it is expanding. Not only is the universe expanding, but it is expanding faster and faster.

Since the universe is expanding, and since the rate of expansion can be estimated, scientists have been able to "reverse the clock" to estimate when the universe began. However, a beginning point implies a creative event. Whether you believe in an old universe or a young universe, it is clear the Bible's proclamation of a beginning is correct, **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"** (Gen. 1:1). God created it out of nothing, it did not always exist. Science again agrees with what the Bible has always taught. Not only did the universe have a beginning (Hebrews 1:10-12), but God has given us a glimpse of what will happen to the earth in the future, i.e., there will be a new heaven and earth (Rev. 21:1).

Creation of Humans

The Bible makes it clear that humans are unique in God's creation. We are the only created beings with three distinct parts. We are made of a body, a soul (our mind, emotions, and personality), and a spirit (that part of us which knows there is a God), 1 Thes. 5:23. Only our body is composed of material things, the other two parts are unseen. The invisible parts of us are the most important. Our body will die, but our soul and spirit live forever (our body will be resurrected and made new when Christ comes at the Rapture). What makes us unique and different from animals is the fact we have a spirit. Our spiritual nature required a special creation by God, Genesis 1:27 reads, **"So God created man in His own image ..."** No one can explain how a human spirit can come into existence by evolution. Only the Creator can explain our whole and complete origin.

Age of Human Beings

The difference between biblical beliefs and science is nowhere more apparent than on the topic of the origin of humans. This is a controversial topic, but please understand that teenagers need some guidance on this important matter. First, evolution is totally incapable of explaining the unique spiritual nature of humans. No amount of evolution can make an animal aware of God, that awareness comes only from our spiritual nature. Second, scientists cannot find a spirit in living humans, so there surely cannot be any evidence in the fossil record. Finally, anthropologist (those who study humans, past and present) indicate that modern homo sapiens (humans) originated around 200,000 years ago. How could this be, and how can we reconcile this with Scripture?

What evidence could anthropologists use to estimate the date of human (Homo sapiens) origin? Since we are the only creatures with a spirit, evidence of spiritual activity would be a clue. Things that would

not be not good measures of human origin would be things related to our physical make-up (because they are not things of the spirit), e.g., the use of hand tools, opposing thumbs, or burial of the dead. Spiritual things would relate to God and worship. So, evidence of a spiritual nature would be artifacts related to worship: religious relics, altars, and temples. Anthropologist searching for evidence of

religious artifacts find such evidence dates to as recently as 8,000 years ago (using their dating methods). Thus, it seems the first true spiritual beings (humans) did not come on the scene hundreds of thousands of years ago, but quite recently. The difference between our understanding of the Bible and science may be less than previously thought.

Life Applications

Future Scientists: This lesson has dealt with natural science (verses social science), which is the study of natural phenomena which govern our universe. Science is grounded upon the belief that knowledge must be based on observable phenomena and capable of being tested for validity. The list of natural sciences is large, a few of them are: physics, astronomy, chemistry, biology, geology, and climatology. The study of mathematics is a formal science and engineering is an applied science. All these and similar studies are worthy of consideration as a profession for Christians. All the scientific and engineering fields need the input of believers in Christ. It is critically important that Bible believers be trained in these disciplines so they can properly influence the direction these disciplines take. Christianity needs trained scientists, mathematicians, and engineers to authoritatively teach and encourage people, to establish quality programs in Bible schools,

etc. Consider furthering your education in one of these fields of study if you believe the Lord has given you special talents and abilities in this area.

Our Role: Our faith can be encouraged by the findings of science. However, faith itself is a personal decision to believe in Christ. While science is based upon observable phenomena, faith is not observable. However, the results of our faith should produce spiritual fruit and actions which are observable. Scientific findings may both help an unbeliever see there is a God and also enhance a believer's understanding of the Bible. Our job is to get to know God more and to better understand His creation, i.e., what it is, how it works, why it works. Science may help show there is a God, but Scripture is needed to bring people to Christ. It is the Holy Spirit and the Word that have the power to change hearts and to illuminate minds.

Take 2 Heart

Summary

There are many hoaxes in this world, scientific and biblical training will help keep you from believing them. The Bible and science agree on the need for, and workings of, the hydrologic cycle. Scientists have shown the universe had a beginning, and a beginning implies a Creator. The understanding of hygiene and the role of blood in our lives was revealed by God thousands of years before humans understood it. Humans are unique in all of creation; we alone have a spirit. Our spirit knows there is a God and desires a relationship with Him. Anthropology and Christian beliefs are in closer agreement than before on the possible dates of human origin. Knowing science helps a person appreciate and stand in awe of the greatness of our God. A Christian can be a scientist/engineer and still maintain a strong faith in Christ and be a blessing to humanity.

Gospel

Every person can know there is a God through the testimony of the natural world (Rom. 1:20). Do not be fooled, the natural world is not God; it is His creation. Deep inside (in your spirit) you know you need a special relationship with God, but you may be afraid of what that means. That relationship will be created by God through faith in Jesus Christ; it brings an unknown peace to your spirit, so there is nothing to fear. Faith is nothing more than hearing the Word and believing it. The good news (the gospel) is simply this: **"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received:**

that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1Cor. 15:3). When you believe Christ died for your sins you are forgiven, which means you are saved and have begun a new life and relationship with Christ. The Bible goes on to say, **"... and that He was buried (in a tomb), and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures"** (1Cor. 15:4, parenthesis added). Not only did He die, but He rose again and is alive in Heaven today. Someday soon He will return to take His special group of believers home with Him.

Encouragement

May the Lord guide your thoughts and plans as you prepare for the future. Knowing what to do after the teenage years can be a big decision. Some are gifted/talented in one area and others in different areas. If you have special talents and abilities in the natural sciences please pray about a career in one of those disciplines. The studies will be hard but rewarding. You can serve the Lord by using the gifts and abilities He has given you. Thus, you can serve the Lord in a field of science if that is where your natural tendencies and God-given desires lie. The main thing in life is to love the Lord and to walk with Him with an understanding of the Word. Be assured you can do that and study the sciences. May the Lord lead you to make good decisions regarding this. His love and grace will continue to uphold you, and He will use you in whatever you decide to do.



Picture 1. Example of supposed giant, but it is fake. (crystalmarylindsey.blogspot.com)



Picture 2. Reportedly this is a biblical giant, but really it is only an entry in a photo contest. (National Geographic)



Picture 3. Piltdown man skull. The human and orangutan bones are darker in color and the reconstructed areas are lighter (so you can distinguish the two). However, the entire specimen is a hoax. (theargus.co.uk)

Picture 4. Taylor Site, Paluxy Riverbed, 1984, Glen Rose, TX. The Taylor Site contains several track ways of largely in-filled, metatarsal dinosaur footprints, once considered human by many Christians, and a trail of deeper, more typical digitigrade dinosaur tracks. Photograph (C) 1984, Glen J. Kuban. (<http://paleo.cc/paluxy.htm>) (by permission of Glen Kuban) (Note: digitigrade footprints are made when an animal walks mostly on the toe part of the foot; cats and dogs make digitigrade tracks. Metatarsal footprints are made when an animal walks with more of its foot on the ground and thus a longer footprint is made. If the soft "mud-like" material collapses or fills-in from the edges, a metatarsal track may look "sort of" human to the untrained eye.)



digitigrade track

metatarsal track