

Topics for the next several weeks

Jan. 10, 12 John 1
Does the Bible recognize the role of science?

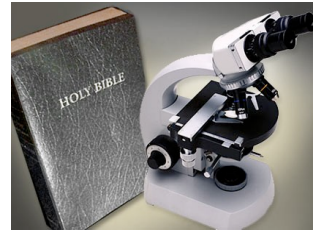
Jan. 17, 19 Psalm 8
Why the tension between science and Christianity? #1

Jan. 24, 26 Romans 1:18-25
Why the tension between science and Christianity? #2

Jan. 31, Feb. 2 Genesis 1-2
Is the Biblical account of creation compatible with modern scientific observations?

Feb. 7-21 Panel discussion? (3+ sessions)
What are we to make of the science of origins?

Christianity and Science



Natural theology

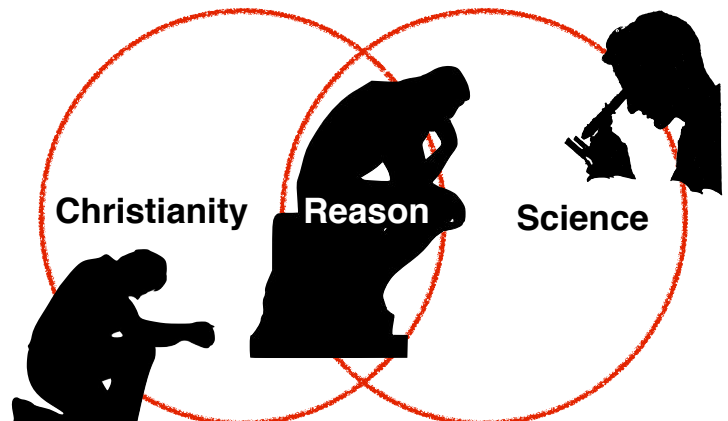
Does the Bible recognize the role of science?

Christianity reads from Two Books

Scripture & Nature



Empirical reason is where Christianity and science meet.



Profile of a Christian mind

It is purpose driven - seeking wisdom not just knowledge.



It is social - listening to others.



It is integrated - connected to the heart.



It is sound - rational in its assessment of data.



It is reverent - respecting both Creator and creation.



Wisdom grows in the soil of sound minds and sensitive hearts.



The path of "fools" (soft mind / hard heart)

- ✓ Disrespect the presence and revelation of God.
- ✓ Ignore the limits of one's own understanding.
- ✓ Fail to learn how to listen and observe.
- ✓ Force data and ideas to serve ego.
- ✓ Divorces "truth" from soul-life.
- ✓ Confuse majors and minors.

Christians must respect both worlds

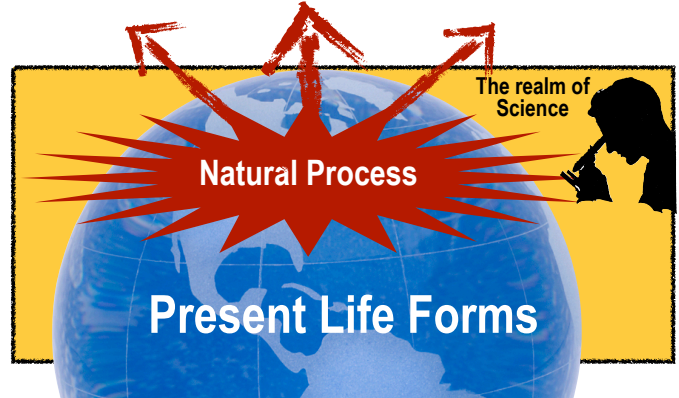
God's Works	God's Words
General Revelation as seen in nature and history	Special Revelation as seen in the Bible and experience
Nature	Scripture
Science	Hermeneutics
Christian Theology	



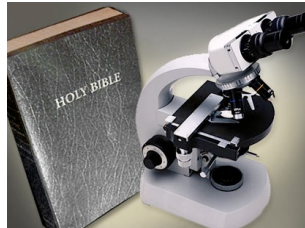
Scientists must
respect both
worlds.



Data sometimes points
beyond the purview of
science.



Christianity and Science



Understanding the ~~conflict~~ (WAR)?

Christianity and Science

Must we choose?



Overview - How are we to understand the conflict between science and Christianity?

1.

Psalm 8

Data (objective observation) requires
Interpretation (faith presuppositions).

2.

Psalm 19:1-2

Empirical reason can point to God.

3.

Rom. 1:18-25

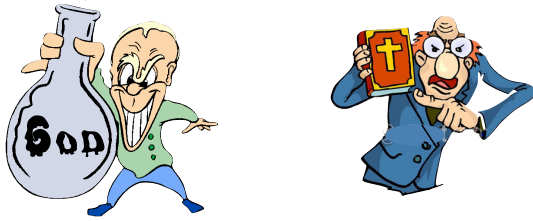
Naturalism is an idolatrous faith.

1.
Psalm 8

*"When I consider Your heavens,
the work of Your fingers,
The moon and stars, which You have ordained;
What is man that You take thought of him,
And the son of man that You care for him?
Yet You have made him a little lower than God,
And You crown him with glory and majesty!
You make him to rule over
the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,"*

*It is natural & proper for
man to observe himself in
his environment and seek
a rational understanding.*

The conflict (war) is not between science and Christianity but between scientists and Christians (who are not reasonable).



scientism verses religiosity

Science as it is viewed by most scientists today

Science is a game that scientists play that has one overriding and defining rule:

Let us see how far and to what extent we can explain the behavior of the physical and material universe in terms of purely secondary (physical and material) causes, without invoking primary (supernatural) causes.

Some things science does not do.

- make moral judgments.
- make aesthetic judgments.
- tell you how to use scientific knowledge.
- draw conclusions about supernatural (primary) explanations.
- address many of the most important questions of life - (ethics, meaning, purpose, virtue, character, etc.)

The limited scope of scientific understanding

Sphere of inquiry

- Science looks only at the natural (material) world.

Sphere of data

- Science never has access to all the data nor does it have the tools to evaluate all that it sees.

Way of knowing

- Science knows only by common sense observations that are open to peer review.

Degree of certainty

- Science can never be absolutely certain of its claims.

Degree of objectivity

- Science is vulnerable to human presuppositions, politics, etc.

Tension point: Two applications of naturalism

METHODOLOGICAL NATURALISM

- how the universe usually works. (Secondary causes)
- (Science)

The supernatural is not considered.

Christianity respects this methodology

PHILOSOPHICAL NATURALISM

- how the universe exclusively works. (Secondary - primary)
- (Scientism)

The supernatural does not exist.

Christianity rejects this philosophy

2.

Psalm 19:1-2

“1 The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. 2 Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.”

Empirical reason can point to God.

Job 12

“⁷ But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ⁸ or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, or let the fish of the sea inform you. ⁹ **Which of all these does not know that the hand of the LORD has done this?** ¹⁰ **In his hand is the life of every creature and the breath of all mankind.**”

Have ears to hear as nature speaks.

Science and Christianity conflict when they take a “closed” vs. “open” view toward a full understanding of truth.



open versus closed

Tension point: Two scopes of inquiry.

OPEN

The best **rational** explanation of all the evidence.

Supernatural answers are possible if the evidence leads there.

CLOSED

The best **materialistic** explanation of all the evidence.

Only naturalistic answers are permitted.

Example of a closed system - faith in science - when science alone claims to answer all the important questions.



Secular Humanism is
“Defining reality and making decisions as though God did not exist or matter.”

- ✓ **Total temporality**
- ✓ **Comprehensive contingency**
- ✓ **Absolute autonomy**
- ✓ **Radical relativity**
- ✓ **Metaphysical materialism**

Sr. Arthur Keith
(anthropologist)

“The only alternative to some form of evolution is special creation, which is unthinkable.”

William of Occam

“The best explanation is that which is most straightforward and simple, requiring the fewest assumptions.”

Example of a closed system - cultural fundamentalism - when Christian tradition is arrogant, unreasonable, and ignoring science.

“God said it, I believe it,
that settles it.”

- ✓ **Don’t ask too many questions.**
- ✓ **“I don’t interpret the Bible I just believe it.”**
- ✓ **Science is the enemy of faith.**
- ✓ **The Bible is a book of science.**

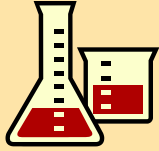


Tension point: *Hard and Soft science*

Experimental

(operation science)

Present regularities
Running the universe



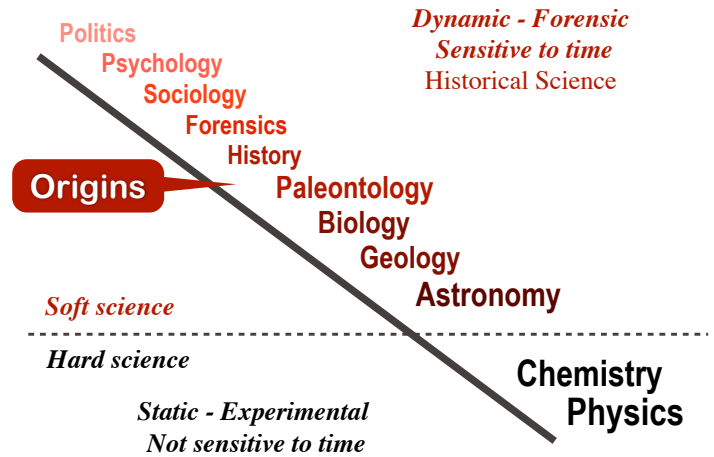
Forensic

(origin science)

Past singularities
Beginning of universe



Varieties of science



**We are all called to honesty
and humility in our truth claims.**

Christianity -
God's Revelation is perfect
but man's reading of it is not.

Science -
Human observations always come
with faith assumptions and are often
influenced by personal, economic
and political agendas.

3.

Romans 1:18-25.

"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 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. . . . For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever.**"

Naturalism is an idolatrous faith.

1 Corinthians 1:19-20

"¹⁹ For it is written, "***I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will set aside.***" ²⁰ Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?"

**"Science" that does not help us see
the hand of God in nature
is an idol for destruction.**

The Magi

"Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?
For we saw His star in the east and have come to
worship Him."

Francis Collins

"Today, we are learning the language in which God created life. We are gaining ever more awe for the complexity, the beauty, and the wonder of God's most divine and sacred gift."

Matthew 16:26

“For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”

**True wisdom is that
which glorifies God
and nourishes the soul of man.**

Matthew 4:4

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”

Tension point: Seeking two types of wisdom

**Worldly
wisdom**

(Creation centered)

Secular Humanism

- ✓ total temporality
- ✓ comprehensive contingency
- ✓ absolute autonomy
- ✓ radical relativity
- ✓ metaphysical materialism

**Divine
wisdom**

(Creator sensitive)

Christian Humanism



**Glory of God
Dignity & Depravity
of man**

**Science and Christianity
conflict when they are driven by
different faith systems.**



**Worldly
wisdom**



**Divine
wisdom**

Scientific data
does not come
with instructions
or interpretation,
which are
introduced
through faith
assumptions.



**Data
sample
#1**

Made in China

Warning

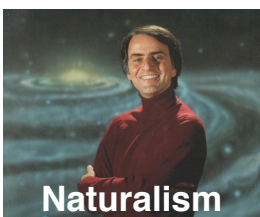
- a. The O.T. terms (y'r 'ah, yare' - packed) all have a broad meaning ranging from "reverence" to "fear" or "awe" (high anxiety and insecurity). There are other Hebrew words that are used for "fear" (such as kalal).
- b. The possible meanings of "fear" can be seen through Hebrew parallelism where knowledge and obedience are emphasized. a. The O.T. terms (y'r 'ah, yare' - packed) all have a broad meaning ranging from "reverence" to "fear" or "awe" (high anxiety and insecurity). There are other Hebrew words that are used for "fear" (such as kalal).
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Instructions for proper use

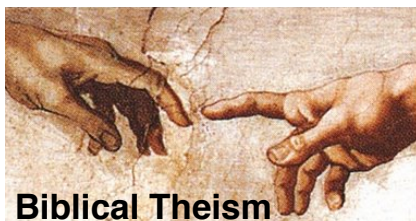
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The point:

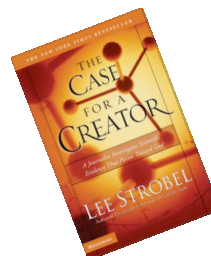
**The conflict is not between Christianity
and empirical reason but between people
with differing world and life "faith views" -
creation centered vs. Creator sensitive**



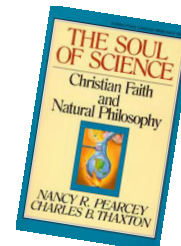
Naturalism



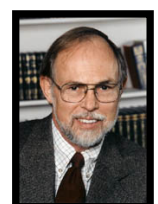
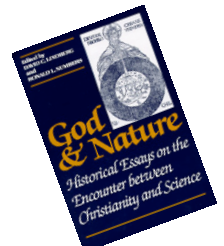
Biblical Theism



Lee Strobel



Charles Thaxton



David C. Lindberg