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# Biblical Authority

#### 12 - BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

The Bible teaches that the earth is only thousands of years old. If people believe in billions of years, can they still be Christians?

On a live radio talk show, a man called up and said, "I object to the way you say that people HAVE to believe in a young earth to be a Christian." I immediately replied, "Sir, I've never said that. If people are born again as the Bible defines, no matter what they believe about the age of the earth, they're saved."

This man then went on and said, "Well do you recognize that it doesn't matter what you believe about the earth's age?"

I then stated, "Now wait a minute, sir. I didn't say that. You see, ultimately, it does matter what you believe about the age of the earth. One of the reasons is that as soon as you allow for billions of years, you've also allowed death, suffering, bloodshed, and disease BEFORE sin. The Bible teaches that death is the penalty for sin. It's the foundation of the gospel."

I went on to explain to him that if you're a Christian and believe in an old earth, that won't stop you from getting to heaven. But it WILL stop you from correctly explaining the gospel message to someone.

As I read the Bible, I certainly don't get the idea that the Jews believed in evolution—is that correct?

You're right about that. You see, when Peter spoke to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost, he was preaching to a culture that believed in God — they believed in creation. They had the law of Moses and understood about sin. It was a creation-based culture. Therefore, Peter didn't have to convince them about creation or that they were sinners. He had to help them understand that Jesus Christ was the Messiah.

But when Paul preached to the Greeks, he was speaking to a TOTALLY different sort of culture. They had no concept of the God the Jews understood. In fact, the Greeks believed in a form of evolution. They didn't believe in God as Creator, and had no concept of the meaning of sin. As an evolution-based culture, Paul had to first teach them about the true Creator God and an understanding of sin BEFORE they could understand the gospel.

In our Western world, as students come through an education system devoid of the knowledge of God, they're more like Greeks than Jews, and that's how we need to approach them if we're going to be truly successful in evangelism.

### 14 - BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

The Bible tells us that "without faith it is impossible" to please God. What sort of faith is this? Surely it doesn't mean that Christians should just BLINDLY believe God's Word.

The exciting thing about being a Christian is that it's not blind faith. In fact, it's the evolutionist who has the blind faith.

Sadly, I've found many Christians who don't see this. I've often found that when I've asked Christian young people how they know God is Creator, usually one of them will tell me that they have to have blind faith.

But I explain to them that we're commanded by Peter to give reasons for what we believe. We're also told in Scripture that the evidence that God is Creator is so great, if anyone doesn't believe, they're without excuse (Rom. 1:20). I then teach these youngsters how to defend their faith logically; that design means a designer. The information in our highly complex genes couldn't arise by chance — an intelligence had to be responsible. The evidence fits with the Bible, not with "chance" evolution!

What kind of faith is the Christian faith? It's a logical, defensible faith, right from the very first verse.

We constantly hear people say that the Bible is only a religious book, not a science book. Is that true?

Actually the Bible teaches us many things, including science. For example, in order to do any science at all, you must be able to start with energy, matter, and time.

Evolution assumes that time was already in existence. Then it makes the assumption that there was a sufficient amount of energy and matter within that time that caused the big bang. What evolution can't explain is where that time, energy, and matter came from. They have to have it already there.

Well, Genesis 1:1 tells us, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

The Bible is the ONLY religious book that starts with a scientific statement and explains the origin of everything that we know to exist. The rest of Genesis 1 goes on to list the rest of the acts of creation and many of the physical laws that we use in science. Therefore, the Bible is not only a religious book, but it's also a book of science!

A Christian told me recently that the days of creation can't be ordinary days because the Bible says that "a day is like a thousand years." Did he have a valid point?

I feel like tearing my hair out every time I hear this argument. The passage that likens a day to a thousand years is found in 2 Peter 3. In this passage, Peter is explaining that God is OUTSIDE of time. So the context of this chapter has nothing to do with the days of creation.

That's not all. You can't use a passage from the New Testament, which was written in Greek, to determine the meaning of a word in Genesis written in Hebrew! The meaning of the word depends upon its context according to the rules of that language!

Besides, if people were consistent, then they should reinterpret the day everywhere else it's used in the Old Testament. Why not say that Jonah was in the whale three thousand years instead of three days! Of course, that would make nonsense of the text.

No, the word "day" in the context of the language of Genesis 1 has to mean an ordinary day!