

SCIENCE AND FAITH

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SCIENCE AND FAITH: A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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THE WORD OF GOD



Current view of truth:

- Upper Story: Values, Private Sphere
(Personal Preferences, Nonrational, Noncognitive, Religion)
- Lower Story: Facts, Public Sphere
(Scientific Knowledge, Rational, Verifiable, Science)

Biblical view of Truth:

Gen 1:1, John 1:1, 2 Timothy 3:16; 2:15
(the *rhema* reveals the *logos*)

BIBLICAL FAITH



FAITH

TRUTH
(*rhema—logos*)

Faith always stands on what we believe to be true.
 Biblical faith never acts apart from biblical Truth.

The Limits of Science

1. *Mathematics* and *philosophy* are prior to science.
 - Mathematics (*intuitive* knowledge).
 - Philosophy (*inductive* knowledge).
 - Current scientific method:

Knowledge
evaluate
analyze
experiment
hypothesize
observe
 - Observation: A black crow
 - Unicorns don't exist.
 - Note: science is never capable of proving the non-existence of anything! (unicorns, the soul, or even God)

The Limits of Science

2. Two distinct realms of science: Popperian and non-Popperian.
 - Popperian* (or critical rationalism) – science that is clearly falsifiable and is thus typically considered empirical (at least in a very broad sense).
 - non-Popperian* is science that is not falsifiable.
 - Falsifiability* (or testability) is the logical possibility that an assertion can be shown to be false by a singular observation or experiment.
 - For example, the assertion that "all rabbits are white" could be proven false (falsified) by finding a single black rabbit.
 - Observations that are falsifiable and are never falsified may become a scientific law.
 - Observations that are not falsifiable cannot become a law

The Limits of Science

- Conclusion:
 - Science is only a partial and incomplete insight into the way things really are.
 - Science, by its very nature, can only hint at actual reality.
 - Things we don't really have a solid understanding of:
 - Energy
 - Matter
 - Space
 - Light
 - Gravity
 - Time
 - Information
 - Colossians 2:8** – a very important warning.

Modern Science

1. **Naturalism** – the current presupposition of the scientific method.
 1. **Philosophical Naturalism** – the metaphysical position that nature is all there is and all basic truths are truths of nature.
 - Often referred to as metaphysical or ontological naturalism.
 - Metaphysics – the special branch of philosophy dealing with principles of reality – explaining the ultimate nature of being (cosmology and ontology)
 2. **Methodological Naturalism** – scientific hypotheses can only be tested and explained by references to natural causes and events.
 - The current epistemology and methodological principle foundational to the scientific method.

Modern Science

1. **Naturalism** – the current presupposition of the scientific method.
 - Materialism *denies all concepts* of Special Creation.
 - If physical matter is the only reality, then **everything**, including thought, feeling, mind, and will, can be explained in terms of interacting matter and physical phenomena.
 - Scientists who hold to this epistemology see the universe as a huge device held together by pieces of matter functioning in subjection to naturalistic laws. (determinism)
 - “[W]e are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, . . . Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.” (Richard Lewontin Harvard Professor, evolutionary biology and geneticist)

Modern Science

2. How did **MN** become the foundation of science?

1. History
 - “Most scientists were Christian believers... The stunning complexities of nature unveiled by science were not feared as a challenge to belief in God but hailed as confirmation of His wisdom and design. Scholars as diverse as Copernicus, Kepler, Newton, Boyle, Galileo, Harvey, and Ray felt called to use their scientific gifts in praise to God and service to humanity.” (Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth*, p. 155)
 - “We should remember that there was once a discipline called Natural Philosophy. Unfortunately, this discipline seems not to exist today. It has been renamed science...” (Hannes Olof Gösta Alfvén, a Swedish plasma physicist and Nobel Prize in Physics laureate for his work on the theory of magnetohydrodynamics)
 - “The cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.” (Carl Sagan on PBS’s *Cosmos*)

Modern Science

2. How did **MN** become the foundation of science?

1. History
 - Throughout the Enlightenment, secularizing trends continued to bifurcate truth into **fact** and **value** realms.
 - The final collapse of “the fundamental unity of knowledge” came abruptly in the late nineteenth century:
 - You guessed it – with the publication of Darwin’s theory of evolution.
2. Darwin’s Theory of Evolution
 - It was implacably naturalistic – explaining life’s origin and development by strictly by naturalistic causes.
 - Scientific epistemology moved from a belief that a study of the *particulars* within nature gave rise to their unification into *absolutes* because they were products of a rational Mind to the modern belief that the *particulars* within nature are merely the result of causality (Naturalism).

Modern Science

2. Darwin’s Theory of Evolution

- Darwinism was the key philosophy that ushered in a paradigm shift to the epistemology of science:
- Darwin proposed that a wholly naturalistic process could mimic the effects of a Designer – Nature, acting autonomously from any rational Mind, using only natural law and chance could **mimic** design.
 - Richard Dawkins (Oxford Evolutionary Biologist) commented that Darwin’s theory of evolution “made it possible to be an intellectually satisfied atheist.”
 - “Let us see how far and to what extent we can explain the behavior of the physical and material universe in terms of purely physical and material causes without invoking the supernatural.” (Richard Dickerson, UCLA Professor and Director of the Molecular Biology Institute)

Modern Science

3. The Theory of Evolution

1. Equivocation...
 - What is the *real* definition of “**evolution?**”
 1. “Change over time”
 - No rational scientists doubts this!
 2. “Descent with modification”
 - Of course it does! All organisms within a single species are related through descent with modification.
 - Microevolution – change within a species
 3. “Descent with modification accounting for the origin of new species” – in fact, of every species.
 - This is what true Darwinism claims and nothing less!
 - It claims that descent with modification explains the origin and diversification of *all* living things.

Modern Science

3. The Theory of Evolution

2. The modern paradigm of science (Naturalistic):
 - Everything in the universe must ultimately be explained using two criteria: *chance* and *law*.
1. Chance.
 - Certain events are the result of random processes.
 - A pile of sand on the beach or the rocks on the bed of a river or the distribution of trees on a hillside, etc...
2. Law.
 - Certain events are the result of natural laws – regular, repeatable, and predictable patterns.
 - If you drop a pencil, it will fall. If you put a piece of paper into a flame, it will burn. If you mix salt in water, it will dissolve.

Modern Science

3. The Theory of Evolution

3. So what's the rub?
 - Not everything will or can be explained using these two criteria – at least using reasonable and logical explanations.
 - Darwinism proposes that when random mutations (*chance*) are run through the sieve of natural selection (*law*), then over time, organisms become better and better adapted until they *appear* to have been designed.
 - "Biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of having been designed for a purpose." (Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*)
 - New scientific discoveries in the areas of genetics, biological complexity, cosmological design, quantum physics, and information theory bring these two naturalistic assumptions into serious doubt.

Modern Science

Conclusion:

- Law and Chance working either independently or together are *completely inadequate* and *incapable* of explaining the massive and mounting body of evidence that demonstrates that the universe and its material aspects are connected by a network of energy, design and information.
- Because of this overwhelming evidence, over 700 scientists have courageously stepped forward to sign their names to a list entitled, "A Scientific Dissent from Darwinism," which claims, "We are skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life. Careful examination of the evidence for Darwinian theory should be encouraged."
- The list is growing and includes scientists from the US National Academy of Sciences, Russian, Hungarian and Czech National Academies, as well as from universities such as Yale, Princeton, Stanford, MIT, UC Berkeley, UCLA, and others.

Modern Science

Conclusion:

- What's missing today is *metaphysical accountability*: at some point we need to stop to audit the books and see how adequate a naturalistic assumption is to explaining the data.
- We need a new paradigm in science if we are going to continue to gain knowledge from science.
- ▣ **Enter: Intelligent Design!**