

Modern Scientific Evidence Supports the Biblical Creation Account

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Abstract

This thesis begins by providing an overview of the history of Christian and scientific opinions concerning the question of origins: how life, the universe, and everything in it came to be. After this overview, it advocates for the constructive integration of the Christian faith and natural science. This philosophy mutually benefits both disciplines while remaining consistent with inerrant Scripture and the scientific method. Numerous sources and examples are cited, both new and old, and from each field of study, that display the complimentary natures of Scripture and science—or, more broadly, faith and reason. To accomplish the goal of uniting God’s Word and World, the argument first highlights that there are consistencies between theology and natural science. Next, it describes how the disciplines reinforce one another to create a harmonious worldview. The argument concludes by detailing the fallibility of human interpretation in both fields, using the aggressive age of the earth debate inside and outside of the Christian church as an example. The thesis ultimately explains how this worldview of constructive integration reconciles modern scientific evidence to support the Biblical creation account.

“Science without religion is lame; religion without science is blind.” -Albert Einstein
(Guillen, 2015, p. 14)

The Holy Bible is the most well-known, widely-read, and historically verifiable book of all time. It has been translated into hundreds of languages, distributed across the globe, and has formed billions of believers' moral, spiritual, mental, and emotional foundations. It has been the de facto shared source of truth for countless generations. Its first pages boldly outline the creation of the universe: the heavens, the earth, and all that inhabit them. This description, written for an ancient audience in a poetically abstract language, does not provide minute parameters detailing how and when the world was created. Genesis 1-2 simply and poetically outlines the progression of creation events, emphasizing the theme of good, intelligent design. Moses, the author of the Genesis creation account, was not a scientist writing a detailed historical account, having witnessed the creation event himself; he simply recorded the story of the world's creation utilizing the available vernacular. (Ross, 2014, p. 85) Elsewhere in the Bible (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, 2 Timothy 3:16, Revelation 22:18-19, and 2 Peter 1:21), the divinely inspired and inerrant nature of the Word is affirmed, further emphasized by the Reformational doctrine of *sola scriptura*; that idea describing the infallibility of Scripture. (Mathison, 2013, p. 14)

On a different tack, the remarkable technological advances of the last few centuries have enabled revolutionary new understandings of the universe and allowed humanity to accomplish things our ancestors only dreamed about. In the modern age, there are readily accessible tools to reliably measure age, examine the earth to learn about life and events long gone, and even observe the past by looking at distant light in the sky. These rational and observable scientific accounts of the world around us offer essential knowledge about the laws of nature and the place

of humanity within them. However, many scientists who study these observable phenomena fit what they observe to a model that suits their worldview—a worldview that often runs contrary to the Biblical creation account, creating conflict. Unfortunately, both sides are often too quick to discount the statements of the other, both turning a blind eye to arguments from “the other side.” Considering the previously unified front that Scripture and science presented, this disparity is unfortunate because of the strong history of cooperation and because the two disciplines dogmatically dispute the other’s arguments. Unfortunately, both sides are often too quick to discount the statements of the other, building on a century of vendetta to turn a blind eye to arguments from “the other side.”

Ever since the beginning of what is now known as natural science, those eminent scientists who were renowned in or pioneered their fields possessed a strong faith. Boyle, Newton, Pascal, Kepler, and Gauss—to name a few—were zealous Christians who held God’s Word as the inerrant basis for their belief and took the wonder they witnessed in the Psalms to inform and inspire their observations. Nevertheless, in the last few centuries, Scriptural claims of divinely inspired inerrancy have come under exceptionally aggressive attack. In particular, the modern scientific community has drawn conclusions that seem at loggerheads with the Scriptural creation account in Genesis 1. This divide in perspective has resulted in vehement disagreements within the church (Ham & Ross & Haarsma & Meyer & Stump, 2017, p. 10) and the scientific community. (Ross, 2014, p. 15) Yet this dispute is needless, and both fields can be used as complements to further their individual knowledge.

A Brief History

This idea of religious and scientific harmony, termed concordism by some (Ross, 2014, p. 20), was widely held for hundreds of years by many early Christians and was notably

popularized in the Reformation by John Calvin. (Mathison, 2013, pgs. 15, 20) This way of thinking about science and Scripture should not be alien. A worldview that benefits Christians and those studying the natural world while remaining self-consistent with each field would seem a popular philosophy. Unfortunately, these benefits have been largely ignored: Modern science and Christianity generally conclude that the other contradicts what they hold dear. These contradictions will later be shown to be due not to factual discontinuities but to a philosophical dispute between naturalism and theism. This alienation of the two complementary disciplines began in the 15th century with the publicized persecution of Galileo Galilei, when it seemed apparent that science could only benefit if it were “freed from clericism.” (Ramm, 1955, p. 16) His predecessor Nicolaus Copernicus also provoked church controversy with his proposed heliocentric model of the solar system. (Collins, 2007, p. 85) Many superb men of God and science came after Galileo, but the movement his trial sparked truly came to a head during the 19th century with even more rapid scientific progress alongside unrelated church divisions of that time. (Ramm, 1955, p. 1) This separation is the evidence of a prevalent modern dogma, a sweeping and vast movement of skepticism. While the estrangement of science from faith continued to increase, this hostile campaign had ramifications for the other side of the proverbial aisle. Christians, particularly the subset of Biblical scholars, became increasingly critical of many scientific conclusions because of supposedly heretical implications, such as in the case of Galileo. As science developed exponentially, beginning in earnest in the 17th century, these biases became more prevalent and palpable. Eventually, much of the scientific community drifted from its past ties with the Christian faith, leaving Christian scientists in a predicament. In doing so, it alienated apologists like George Mivart, William Ewart Gladstone, and the notable John William Dawson, who made recognized contributions to both theological and scientific inquiry and

argued for the integration of the same. (Ramm, 1955, p. 16) This schism in both fields increased, driving a wedge between many scientists and theologians over time.

Essential to understanding the argument is a definition of terms and an outline of stances. According to the Presbyterian Church in America's (PCA) Creation Study Committee (1999), creationism "affirm[s] that the universe is a creation of God, and hence that a world-view such as naturalism is untrue." It defines naturalism as "a metaphysical position that the world exists on its own, and that God exerts no influence on any object or event in the world." Lastly, science is described as

disciplines that study features of the world around us, looking for regularities as well as attempting to account for causal relations. In the causal chains we allow all relevant factors (including supernatural ones) to be considered. (Creation Study Committee, 1999, paras. 2315, 2317)

The term science is divisive, often misconstrued, and demands careful treatment. While the PCA's definition allows for Biblical consistency, the modern conception of science is more idealistic than empirical, leading to many disputes between theology and establishments of science. In debates over cosmogony, the word "science" is frequently conflated with "scientism," which J. P. Moreland (2018) defined as "the view that the hard sciences—like chemistry, biology, physics, and astronomy—provide the only genuine knowledge of reality." (Moreland, 2018, para. 6) Many Christians agree that studying the features of the world is something valuable that enhances the appreciation of man for his Creator. However, understanding the confusion between the ideology that cold, hard science is the only real way of understanding the world and this natural wonder and appreciation for what is around us is where the issue lies.

In order to truly appreciate the scope of the argument, the currently prevalent positions must be understood. What are the current stances of Christians and scientists on the issue? In most creation debates among Christians, one of the most basic presuppositions is that Scripture is literal, consistent, and inerrant. A well-worded and widely accepted expression of this belief is given by *The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy* (1978), which states that

Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God's acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God's saving grace in individual lives. (Multiple, 1978, para. 9)

However, this group of assenting Christians does not universally agree. Some hold aspects of reasoned and observable science to be inconsistent with the Bible and argue for their dismissal out of hand. These areas are often disciplines such as geology and astronomy, which advocate for an ancient universe and earth. Contrarily, others believe that the observable scientific evidence of the modern day is also divinely created truth that we can observe, attempt to interpret, and use to uphold and defend aspects of Christianity and the Bible. Here is the point of contention that this thesis champions. The issue is not only with Christians. Many scientists hold faith and reason as two independent realms of study that should not be conflated. To quote the United States National Academy of Sciences, “Religion and science are separate and mutually exclusive realms of human thought whose presentation in the same context leads to misunderstandings of both scientific theory and religious belief.” (Ross, 2014, p. 15)

There are three reasons modern scientific discovery supports the Biblical creation account: the Biblical creation account is consistent with scientific conclusions, Scripture is

beneficial to science as science is harmonious with Scripture, and human interpretation is biased and incomplete.

The Biblical creation account is consistent with scientific conclusions

“All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.” (English Standard Version Bible, 2001, John 1:3)

First, to conclude that science and Scripture are complementary sources of truth that can be constructively integrated, there must be a resolution for established points of contention. Though many disparate issues are hotly contested, the most commonly disputed stances regarding the facts of creation are its timetable, methodology, and nature. The most controversial of these is the debate surrounding the age of the earth. Even among Christians with traditional orthodoxy, many disagree on this fundamental point—some vehemently. Hugh Ross, founder of *Reasons to Believe* and astrophysicist turned old-earth apologist, recounts being deemed a heretic for suggesting that Genesis 1 could be consistent with some new scientific evidence. (Ross, 2004, p. 7) There are ever-increasing points of scientific data constantly emerging, some of which appear inconsistent with the Biblical account at first glance. This increase in precision and academia has brought these fundamental questions of when, how, and why the universe was created to the forefront. For instance, only in the last 50 years has technology emerged to allow us to observe light from 10^{-34} seconds after a proposed creation event. (Ross, 2004, p. 8)

There is vast information to digest and countless interpretational opinions. Arbitrarily espousing a stance without research and careful consideration is foolhardy for Christians called to defend their faith. On the flip side of the coin, both the secular public and scientists find Biblical truth implausible upon hearing Christians unable to defend the Bible with both familiarly factual scientific observations *and* the importance of their faith. While reason does not

make up the whole of the road to faith, denouncing a culture's shared ideas without conversing in specifics only furthers engendering skepticism towards the supernatural. The infighting and conflict within Christian circles over the universe's age alienate those attempting to interpret new observations about the world. Disillusioned, these new naturalists construct models without a prime mover or divine hand and shoehorn observable facts into their worldview. This negative feedback loop is a sectarian wedge, driving these two once-friendly groups further apart and devastating those who dare to bridge the gap.

Yet, the situation has not always been so divided. There is a long and storied history of devout believers who have the drive to learn more about the world around them and document their discoveries. Many young Christians today are taught that the earth can only have been created in six literal days. They are bewildered when they find themselves exposed to the science curriculum of a modern secular university. (Ross, 2004, p. 9) Ought they listen to the profound message of faith they have been raised on or take the word of the knowledgeable and persuasive educators and verifiable facts placed in front of them by the scientific community? This choice is daunting when so unexpectedly confronted. It should not be so stark. This can lead to a rift from the faith: A student might think that if the Bible exclusively supports a creation story that takes place in 6 literal days, and science has demonstrated that the world was created in more than six days, then the Bible must be wrong and the Christian faith invalid. Some denominations have recognized this and formed multiple acceptable stances on the creation days. The best-known exposition of these acceptable positions is a document written by the Presbyterian Church of America. This 95-page document establishes the inerrancy of the Bible and outlines the history of the debate between the beliefs of modern secularism and historic Christianity. It provides data from the denomination on which views are most commonly held and acknowledges the

prevalence of exclusively young-earth curriculum in the church and its consequent disagreements. After a careful study on the premise that the Bible is inerrant, yet with the understanding that hermeneutics is not perfect, the committee concluded that there are four acceptable stances on the age of the earth:

- The Calendar Day Interpretation: The Biblical teaching that the world was created in six days means six literal calendar days. (Creation Study Committee, 1999, para. 2320)
- The Day-Age Interpretation: This stance holds that the six days outlined in Genesis are not necessarily 24-hour periods based on the interpretation of the Hebrew word *yôm*. (Creation Study Committee, 1999, para. 2331)
- The Framework Interpretation: The belief that Moses' account of the creation timeline in Genesis is purely metaphorical: it has no bearing on the actual timing of events and simply narrates their chronology. (Creation Study Committee, 1999, para. 2342)
- The Analogical Days Interpretation: Similar to the previous two, this perspective does not hold that the days were 24-hour periods, but instead God's model for our work week, and conveyed God's general progression and creation and when he rested. (Creation Study Committee, 1999, para. 2348)

While all of these opinions seem contradictory, they are united in the belief that Scripture is inerrant and that God did create the world *ex nihilo*. However, the first verses of Genesis are not explicit in their descriptions. The Hebrew language they were written in is not laden with a bounty of descriptive nouns, adjectives, and verbs—a structure only present in today's sprawling English. Only 8,674 recorded Hebrew words are used in the entire Old Testament. (Ross, 2014,

p. 250) This lack of clarity makes asserting with certainty that one particular model explains precisely how the world was created difficult; stringently arguing for any specific interpretation is not the goal of this thesis. There is a whole world of hermeneutics and interpretation, with many distinguished scholars holding different contentions. (Bradshaw, 1997) Information derived from science is so vast, opinionated, and debatable that pinning down connectable facts with certainty is a challenge.

What is far more critical than finding these causal links that reinforce each other is the *philosophy* behind them. This worldview of curiosity, one that looks for clues of the divine hand in the world and through the divinely inspired Word of God, will lead to the reconciliation of these two complementary fields, perspectives that have so long been at odds. The Bible advocates for the pursuit of truth in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 (English Standard Version Bible, 2001), exhorting the Christian to “test everything; hold fast what is good” and in John 8:32 (English Standard Version Bible, 2001), declaring “you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” Science is the epitome of a reasoned pursuit of the truth. R. C. Sproul, when asked about the questions of origins, publicly aired his uncertainty about the specifics of creation, yet reiterated his certainty that “all truth is God’s truth” and listed examples of natural revelation correcting mistaken Biblical interpretation. (Sproul, 2011, 4:50) This attitude of searching out the truth is essential in supporting the Bible with science, both to better minister to an estranged secular audience and to increase the wonder of Christians at the complexity and beauty of God and His creation. Take, for instance, a scientist. Well-versed in geological records, he reads about new evidence that the fossil record shows an inexplicable explosion of speciation soon after proposed vapor evaporated, allowing the sun to shine on the earth. (Ross, 2004, p. 47) This scientist then reads the Bible and finds that this unlikely series of events is precisely what is

written about in the biblical narrative. Theological scholars and scientists who hold the Bible as their absolute source of truth question the evidence they see in light of a biblical worldview and form models and predictions consistent with a literal interpretation of all Scripture. Moreover, this thought process works in reverse; scientists who trust Scripture have a source of truth on which to build models to explain creation and direct their pursuit of truth towards. Allowing a dialogue between the book of nature and the book of Scripture is incredibly helpful in understanding both.

Scripture and science present a more unified view of the world

Understanding is the reward of faith. Therefore, do not seek to understand in order to believe, but believe that you may understand. (Augustine of Hippo, 2009, 29.6)

The second reason modern scientific evidence supports the Biblical creation account is that scripture and science, in tandem, present a more unified view of the world. In theological circles, these two areas of study—that of the Bible and that of the world—are termed special and natural revelation, respectively. Special revelation was defined by the Creation Study Report (1999) in the following:

[I]t pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal Himself, and to declare that His will unto His church; and afterwards for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God's revealing His will unto His people being now ceased.

(Creation Study Committee, 1999, para. 2315)

In short, the divinely inspired, inerrant Bible. General revelation is also defined in that same document:

General revelation is rooted in creation, is addressed to man as man, and more particularly to human reason, and finds its purpose in the realization of the end of his creation, to know God and thus enjoy communion with Him. Creation Study Committee, 1999, para. 2383)

In both nature and the written word, the creator of the universe has given His uniquely curious creatures mysteries to unravel and ponder. In so doing, His people gained a greater appreciation of their surroundings and worldview of faith. Many well-known discoverers began examining the surrounding world because of their deep, abiding faith in a Creator. Men like Robert Boyle, Isaac Newton, Blaise Pascal, Johannes Kepler, and Carl Gauss are only a few famous examples of the pleasant and consistent relationship science and faith can have in the minds of great thinkers, learners, and writers. (Boorstin, 1985, pgs. 100, 492, 519, 854) (Guillen, 2015, p. 143)

Johannes Kepler once said, “The chief aim of all investigations of the external world should be to discover the rational order and harmony which has been imposed on it by God and which He revealed to us in the language of mathematics.” (Kline, 1982, p. 31) This ideology of integration is classic and sensible and can be easily applied to cosmogony. An extreme example of this need for the unity of science and faith could be found in Alfred Russel Wallace, who collaborated with—of all people—Charles Darwin, a man whose theories have long been glorified by fundamentalist naturalism. Wallace and Darwin worked together to theorize natural selection, but as Wallace delved deeper and deeper into his research, he found his observations inexplicable without a “Higher Intelligence” to justify his unexpectedly ordered findings. (Boorstin, 1985, p. 598) The list of Christian scientists does not only include household names: John Pye Smith,

Pratt, Dana, Hugh Miller, James Orr, Asa Gray, Bettex, Ambrose Fleming, Rendle Short, and Malcolm Dixon are all lesser-known examples of admirable Christians who advanced science while rooting their research in their faith. (Ramm, 1955, pp. 8-9)

All of these people who successfully lived out a life of concordism hold that there is a universal truth. That is not an uncommon opinion among Christians, as the Bible is held to be the ultimate source of veracity. However, the belief in an indisputable truth is far less common among the scientific community. Theories vary year to year and day to day, constantly asserted and disproven upon new evidence coming to light. Scientists learn to hold facts loosely or risk an undermining of their understanding. In light of this variable landscape, how should the Christian desiring to reconcile scientific evidence to their steadfast truths of faith proceed?

The key is to examine scientific evidence and, more carefully, scientific *conclusions* in light of absolute truth. The two fields are not equal; Scripture is divine, and imperfect humans solely interpret science. Yet, whether obtained through revelation or observation, the world's truth should be universal. In an ordered cosmos, there should be consistency, not chaos. There should be a prioritization of what is sure over what is uncertain. The validity of Scripture has been established, and in the light of scientific uncertainty, it is held higher than human observation. But this precedence of the supernatural understanding over the natural, physical perception as an arbiter of truth does not discredit the latter as a whole; it simply dictates primacy. This deficiency of absolute certainty in natural science confounds many Christians. If the Bible is absolute and science more often speculative, the former should be considered exclusively, right? Contrarily, Psalm 19 (English Standard Version Bible, 2001) tells us that the intelligent hand of the creator is very present in His universe.

The heavens declare the glory of God,

and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech,

and night to night reveals knowledge.

With this in mind, the Christian should not discard the more speculative physical evidence the world focuses on but instead hold it against Scripture. Revelation and faith should complement experiment and logic. Scripture provides absolute truth at which the observable world points. An example of imperfect science that supports Scripture when compared is the record of oxygen concentrations on Earth as observed in shale strata. In excavating layers of rock compacted by time, trace reactionary elements can inform scientists about past atmospheric oxygen levels. The evolutionary theory that gives billions of years for life to evolve encounters a lack of usable oxygen in the atmosphere— only between 1 and 4 percent of air, not enough to support complex life. Scripture succinctly explains this gap in evolutionary reasoning by outlining the timing of the creation of the sun and photosynthetic ocean life, which is consistent with the observed oxygen record. (Ross, 2014, p. 61) This is but one instance of the united and consistent disciplines of science and Scripture providing a better environment for examining evidence in light of existing knowledge. If only this reconciliation of antagonistic participants prevailed over an attitude of wilfully discarding aspects of God’s revelation! (Ramm, 1955, p. 21)

Human interpretation is biased and incomplete

“While the Scripture is infallible our understanding of its meaning (that is, our theology) is not.” (Bradshaw, 1997, para. 6)

While the interpretation and reconciliation of hermeneutical and natural scientific conclusions on cosmogony is an ongoing endeavor toward truth, mistakes are inevitably made along the way. Man is imperfect and biased, so his conclusions reflect that fallibility. Regarding

the few Hebrew words that make up the first portion of Genesis, scholars have debated contextual clues and authorial intent for centuries, with many accepted theories and opinions. However, one of the most hotly contested words in the Hebrew *yôm*, which means different things at different places in Scripture: part of the daylight hours, all of the daylight hours, a 24-hour period, or a long but finite time period. (Ross, 2014, p. 35) The fact that human interpretation is biased and incomplete may seem to work against the constructive integration of faith and reason, but the opposite is true! Often humans are not rational but rationalizing. With the divinity and inerrancy of Scripture as a generally accepted conviction for Christians, scientific interpretation can be constrained to Biblically consistent interpretations. However, in areas of abstract language such as Genesis 1-2, science can assist in the dubious interpretation of Scripture, as discussed at length in the second proof. However, Ken Ham points out that twisting Scripture into metaphor to fit a preconceived idea is the start of a slippery slope from which it is difficult to recover. While the words of Genesis are abstract enough to allow for interpretation aided by natural revelation, this does not apply to all of Scripture. (Ham & Ross & Haarsma & Meyer & Stump, 2017, p. 17) The Christian tries to adhere to the original meaning and context of the rest of the book as closely as possible, as 2 Peter 1:20-21 (English Standard Version Bible, 2001) states:

[K]nowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Despite this, the words written down by Moses in Genesis are not filled with modern scientific detail. Moses was not privy to the actual creation event; instead, he transcribed the details which were divinely revealed. The culture of the time did not have the capacity or technology to

comprehend and catalog the minutiae of the physical world or precise details of creation—nor were such details essential to their understanding. (Ross, 2014, p. 36) Neither do modern scientists claim the complete truth about creation and every detail therein—they will simply present the currently leading model. This determination to learn more about the natural world is a worthy goal.

Though this pursuit of truth is noble and a deserving aspiration, it is not a goal easily achieved. Lacking mastery of the universe, the knowledge of the human race is inevitably incomplete. This is not an individual human failing. Being *created* and not *Creator* inevitably carries a lesser understanding. Overlooking human defects is a dangerous path, so human ignorance must be taken into account whenever considering asserted conclusions. For instance, most of the civilized world was convinced for centuries that the Earth was at the center of the universe, and the sun, moon, and stars all orbited about the static world. The Roman Catholic Church had interpreted Biblical passages mentioning immovability without considering the author's frame of reference. Adding to this their failure to examine conjecture in the physical world, the misconception persisted. It was a widely accepted conclusion at the time, and it was not until people like Copernicus and Galileo were willing to challenge tradition with reason that public opinion shifted. (Ross, 2014, p. 234) Though it may initially seem contrary to a firm belief in the inerrancy and absolute truth of Scripture, Christians are called to contemplate their beliefs and come to a better understanding—meaning literally “to stand under”—of their convictions and how to defend them. To quote Thessalonians 5:21 (English Standard Version Bible, 2001) again, the Christian is encouraged to “test everything; hold fast what is good.” Proverbs 14:15 (English Standard Version Bible, 2001) also presents applicable wisdom to the deliberate Christian: “The simple believes everything, but the prudent gives thought to his steps.”

The faults of humanity are uncomfortable to consider; as an inherently prideful race, recognizing defects is not something that comes naturally. Nevertheless, inherent to human understanding of the world is the interpreter's worldview, which inevitably leads to the adoption of conclusions that fit the mold of existing thought. This is not always negative; making judgments based on beliefs demonstrates the consistency of fact better than scattered knowledge. However, awareness of this tendency for partisan exegesis is essential to understanding how humanity interprets factual information, particularly in biblical interpretation. Understanding not only the consequences of ideas but the minds behind the ideas is essential to applying the proper analytical tools to observations. For instance, the rigid empiricism of the scientific method is a perfectly sound approach to categorizing the consistencies of nature. Indeed, some of the first users of the scientific method were Galileo and Kepler. It is a framework that does an outstanding job of providing a structure for scientific pursuit. However, diverging from this rigid examination structure for the sake of agenda leads to dangerous interpretive paths. Scientism is an almost tribalistic belief driven by a certainty that the hard sciences provide the only authentic understanding of the world. Concordism argues that Scripture is the highest authority behind which good science should eventually fall into place when both are considered carefully in light of human interpretive failings.

Common Critiques

“All attempts to harmonize our biblical story of the creation of the world with the results of natural science have been useless and must always be so.” -Friedrich Delitzsch (Ross, 2014, p. 20)

Despite the many arguments for reconciling faith with reason, many debaters like Friedrich Delitzsch still hold that there remains an insurmountable division that cannot be

bridged. By examining common critiques of concordism first from scientists, then from the church, the argument's validity for constructive integration will be better strengthened and understood.

First, many scientists and educators find that the Bible is utterly inconsistent with their beliefs about how the world came into existence. Many who advocate for a naturalistic coincidence—commonly the theory of evolution—that resulted in all life today argue contrary to this worldview of constructive integration. To refute this argument, the concordist could attack the commonly espoused theory of evolution. In Michael Behe's book *Darwin's Black Box* (1998), the numerous scientific inconsistencies in Darwinian evolution are addressed, particularly in cellular microbiology. As more and more research is done in that field and greater and greater complexity is revealed in the most microscopic component of life, the theory of evolution has no answer. This book contains highly detailed, researched, and articulated attacks on the theory of evolution and demonstrates the lack of response from the community of staunch naturalists:

[N]o one at all can give a detailed account of how the cilium, or vision, or blood clotting, or any complex biochemical process might have developed in a Darwinian fashion.
(Behe, 1998, p. 221)

This and other evidence is particularly incriminating for the theory of evolution. All good scientists should hold their theories lightly, conforming to consistently observable facts. Nevertheless, the majority are unwilling to relinquish some of their views at the cost of their ego.

Among the theologically strong arguments, similar quarrels appear. The Roman Catholic Church exemplifies this in Pope Pius XII's 1950 encyclical, *Humani Generis*. It was an early church document arguing for a separation between things of the church and things of science.

(Ross, 1985, p. 16) This is a stance that the Catholic Church has since backpedaled from, but it remains an excellent example of church doctrine condemning science's close integration with Scripture. Yet as the three proofs of this thesis have demonstrated, there are numerous benefits to the worldview of concordism. Those proofs are the same reasons this argument is flawed, but let us take one specific critique as an example. Ken Ham, a prominent young-earth creationist, denounces most modern scientific conclusions on the ground of bias:

The development of the idea of millions of years of earth history was not, as the scientific majority wants us to believe, the result of the unbiased, objective pursuit of truth and interpretation of the empirical evidence. [...] Science has been controlled by an anti-biblical philosophical/religious worldview for almost two hundred years. (Ham & Ross & Haarsma & Meyer & Stump, 2017, p. 27)

This thesis has already belabored the failings of human conclusions, as Ham does here. However, because of two centuries of naturalist-driven discovery, he argues that Christians can accept few modern scientific conclusions. Such a stance throws the baby out with the bathwater. Because many scientists in the business of quantifying the world are biased does not mean the evidence they are examining is likewise partisan! This is the critical distinction between *evidence* and *conclusions*. Some scientific conclusions are unacceptable to the Christian because of blatant Scriptural conflict, but the foundational beauty of God's natural revelation reflects His consistent nature. Pope Paul John II begins his encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (1998) by setting it like so:

Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth – in a word, to know himself – so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves. (John II, 1998, para. 1)

Conclusion

The present division is saddening because it alienates many Christians from wondering at aspects of science that Christians like Ken Ham reject entirely. It separates them from a uniquely integrated perspective for learning about the world. Even more severe, a consequence of rejecting excessively dogmatic aspects of science can be rejecting other aspects of analytical discovery or the scientific method simply because some in the field impose their atheistic worldviews. Shoehorning evidence into a model that eliminates the need for a deity—one with revolutionary consequences for sinners—is not science but selectivity. This suspicion towards science seems alien to Scripture; the wonders of the created world are repeatedly emphasized in the Bible, and man is exhorted to seek out those wonders. Job 12 (English Standard Version Bible, 2001) is one of these many examples:

But ask the beasts, and they will teach you;
the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you;
or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you;
and the fish of the sea will declare to you.

Who among all these does not know
that the hand of the LORD has done this?

What excuse does the Christian have for failing to wonder and revel in the beauty in the world and the truth and goodness it communicates?

The human search for meaning is as old as time; from the time of Adam, humanity has not been content to plod through an unexamined life—one not worth living, according to Plato's *Apology*. This adherence to the supernatural is of utmost importance to the modern Christian in a society of increasingly alien ideals. With such a firm conviction also comes the need to weather

adversity and weigh arguments with care and conviction. Without conviction, few ideas would ever be fully explored. Pursuing a concept when the going gets tough is a virtue with a name: perseverance. An example of discovery born of conviction is found in the life of Michael Faraday. He was fascinated with magnetism and electricity, then two disparate research areas. However, Faraday became convinced that a unifying law governed the two phenomena. He spent five fruitless years pursuing the concept we now know as electromagnetism with no apparent progress. At such a point, most would have given up the theory as groundless, yet he persisted. After even more experiments and dialogues with others who likewise believed in the integration between light, electricity, and science, he finally made a breakthrough demonstrating electromagnetism's laws to a heretofore skeptical scientific community. (Boorstin, 1985, p. 712)

Like Faraday, Christians pursuing science should hold to their *examined* beliefs in the face of ridicule and struggle. There are times when the evidence seems inconsistent with existing conclusions. Those existing conclusions should not go unquestioned, especially when they make up a worldview. Christians must closely examine what they believe in, ensuring their conclusions are Scripturally consistent and not simply historical ideas that they have adopted without thought. There is immense value in reading the words and ideas of the great thinkers of the past. However, even Aristotelian reasoning cannot be accepted without first tracing its logic to the Christian's source of absolute truth. The textbook example of such a preconceived idea not held to Scriptural or scientific scrutiny is the geocentric model held by the Roman Catholic church for centuries. (Ramm, 1955, p. 38) Ultimately, the fact of literal, consistent, and inerrant Scripture must be acknowledged by the Christian, for prioritizing human interpretation over divine revelation that is not ambiguous is foolish in the extreme.

In conclusion, this thesis has defended the assertion that modern scientific evidence supports the Biblical creation account on the ground that the Biblical creation account is consistent with scientific conclusions, Scripture is beneficial to science as science is harmonious with Scripture, and human interpretation is biased and incomplete.

Harmonious communication between Christianity and science benefits both Christianity and natural science. The world is not a place of segregated, self-aggrandizing categories; a place of subjects neatly divided. It is a world of wonder, discovery, and mystery. The crux of human life is how to go about that examination and define the lens through which each member of mankind sees. This thesis does not discuss a trivial issue; how we treat truth is foundational. As C.S. Lewis put it:

“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen: not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else” (Lewis, 1980, p. 119)

Can not then the wise Christian see God’s creation through His Word? The scientific observation of God’s world should not contradict his divinely inspired world. Ultimately, the harmony of truth in the face of moral relativism is good. Not only is it good, but it is also possible—and something worth striving for.

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