

Session Nine: Why the Great Faith Exodus? 2

Let's talk about the Bible and science in a woke culture ...

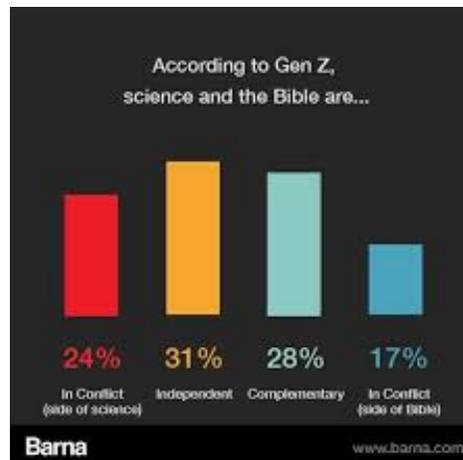


If you want to know where your grandkids' generation is when it comes to religion, you need to google an online post by the Barna Research Group: [Atheism Doubles Among Generation Z](#). It is rich with data on those born between 1998-2015. The most helpful parts of the article are the graphs and charts from a

nationwide survey that shows Gen Zs' biggest stumbling blocks in embracing the Christian Faith. Those under 29 years of age agreed most with the statement: "I have a hard time believing that a good God would allow so much suffering in the world." We covered that issue in our last session.

The second highest percentage of agreement was with the statement, "Christians are hypocrites." We'll deal with that in our next session.

The third highest agreement was on this statement: "I believe the science refutes too much of the Bible." Coming right behind, in fourth place, was "I don't believe in fairy tales." Taken together, those two statements make up the largest complaint about Christianity on the part of



Gen Zs. Because science refutes the Bible, it must be full of fairy tales. That's a mighty big obstacle for us to remove in sharing the gospel with next generation kids. So, let's try to figure out how in this session of *Sharing Your Faith in a Woke Culture*.

First of all, begin with optimism

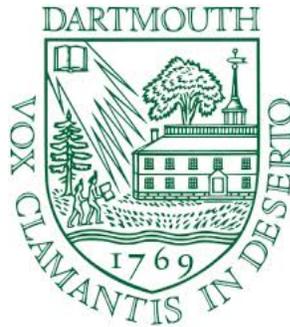
Here's the good news in working with Gen Zs: as a whole, this generation is experiencing isolation, loneliness, depression, and anxiety more than



any other in American history. No generation is more desperate to find a sense of identity, purpose and meaning in life. Gen Zs are open to dialoguing with those they perceive to have practical wisdom, especially people who love, accept and listen to them. That means their beloved grandparents are positioned to shine as guiding lights.

Secondly, studies show that most Gen Zs know almost nothing about the Bible and very little about science. The vast majority are simply parroting what they've heard. They are a blank slate when it comes to religion, the Bible, Jesus, or even the sciences. In my experience, most don't hold a specific world view. This means that anyone with biblical and scientific knowledge has a leg up in dialoguing with kids.

About four years ago, I was on the campus of Dartmouth College. As I rummaged through the bookstore, I picked up a baseball cap with Dartmouth's motto inscribed across it: *Vox clamantis in deserto*. I asked several students standing nearby, "Do you know what these words mean? None did. I responded, "I thought all Ivy Leaguers knew Latin." They giggled uncomfortably. Then I said, "These words are translated 'A voice crying out in the wilderness.'"



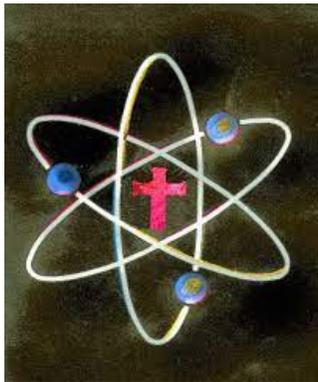
They moved in closer. "Are you a scholar?" I replied, "I have a doctorate, am an adjunct professor, and have written a few books. And I know classical Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. Would you like me to tell you the origin of *vox clamantis in deserto*?" By now they were all ears. "Those are the words of John the Baptist, the one who baptized Jesus. You can find them in the first chapter of the Latin version of Mark's Gospel in the Bible. John was quoting the ancient Jewish prophet, Isaiah." These Ivy Leaguers were even more impressed. Then I asked, "Do you know why

these words are your college's motto?" They didn't. I held them in rapt attention as I told the story about the Great Awakening spiritual revival that had shook the Colonies from the 1730s to the 1760s and set in motion the American Revolution. They knew nothing of that history. Then I informed them that their college had been birthed in that revival to train missionaries to be "voices crying out in the wilderness" to evangelize indigenous tribes.

As I turned to walk away, one of them said, "We were headed across the street to Starbucks. Would you like to join us?" Our next generation kids are hungry for sages who know stuff they don't. However, we have to study to know our stuff; to stay one step ahead of them. So, let's see what we can learn together about the Bible and science.



Five reasons we should never be intimidated by science.



Charles Darwin shook the world with his theories on evolution. The Church was caught flat footed. In many ways, it has never recovered from the onslaught of modern science. New scientific evidence and data come at a dizzying rate. Most scientists can't keep up with the information overload, let alone regular folks whose last brush with science was Biology or Physics 101. We can be easily intimidated when so-called experts, social engineers, or politicians stifle a debate with, "The science says..." But, I would argue that we shouldn't let "experts" or their data intimidate us.

1. Science is not an enemy of Faith.

God spoke both the Bible and the worlds into existence. He is not the author of confusion. Science is a tool for discovering truth about our world and the universe beyond. As a tool, science can no more be in conflict with faith in God than a screwdriver or saw can be. Christians should use the tool of science to better understand the natural world. Science unlocks secrets that show the complexity and enormity of God's



creation. Science should be a tool that exposes God's glory, and causes us to worship him even more, The German scientist, Johannes Kepler, was one of history's greatest astronomers, mathematicians and philosophers. His discoveries were immense. He famously described science as "thinking God's thoughts after him." In exploring the natural world with the tool of science, Kepler believed that he was given a rare glimpse into how God designed the universe to operate." Rightly interpreted, the Bible and science go hand in glove in perfect fit.

2. The Bible never changes, but Science is in constant flux.

The Bible that Galileo Galilei read in the 16th century, and Johannes Kepler read a century later, is the same one you read. Yet, what is scientific truth today is often discarded tomorrow. Today, Galileo is venerated as the father of modern science. Yet, in his day, he was put on trial for heresy. He even quoted passages from the Bible to buttress his views. Isaac Newton was called a quack. Madam Currie won two Nobel Prizes for physics, but her ideas were mocked by the establishment. There was a time when doctors put leeches on their patients and prescribed opium. What was called "the science" during the COVID pandemic is now called into question. Science changes, but the Bible remains fixed. In more than 2,000 years, science has discovered nothing that contradicts the Word of God. Yet, we repeatedly discover new science that contradicts orthodox science.



3. Scientists are not always as objective as they claim.

Dr. John Lennox, Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University, often points out, "Not every statement of a scientist is a statement of science." Or, as I like to put it, there is a significant difference between scientific observations and scientific opinions. Professor Lennox reminds us that many scientists reject supernaturalism, the idea that there is anything

outside of nature. Therefore, they are opposed to any interpretations of data that might point toward a Creator. That's why they lay out their "evidence" to contradict the Bible.



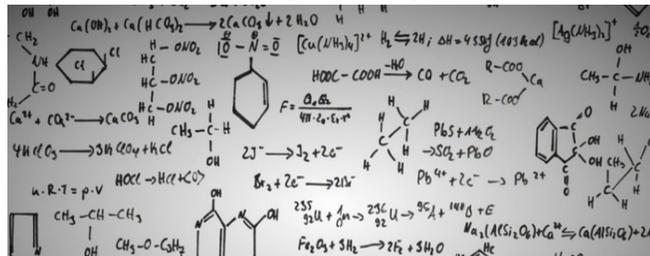
A bias against supernaturalism is not the only thing that contaminates "the science." Much of our research

today—even that in universities—is funded by corporations who pay big bucks to get the answers they need to sell their products. Pressure is put on researchers, particularly in the academic world and government agencies, to go along with woke agendas. Doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists and academicians are promoting junk science and pop psychology to affirm gender fluidity, transgender medical conversions on children, so-called reproductive health care, and other novel ideas that are not backed by good research. Social and political biases are allowed to interpret biological facts. After all, the high priests of science and medicine don't want to lose their jobs, reputations or careers either.

4. Not all scientists or Bible scholars are good at what they do.



This is a key point. We have all screamed in terror while watching Hollywood movies about the mad scientist whose experiments go terribly awry. We have listened to so-called Bible scholars who have butchered the Scriptures. There is incompetence and malfeasance in every area of life. The problem is: most of us don't know enough science or the Bible to figure out when the experts aren't really experts, or their conclusions are faulty. I have a doctoral degree. Believe it or not, it's east to get a doctorate. You just have to pay your tuition, hang in there, take good notes, regurgitate them on tests, and then write a thesis. I don't hang my diplomas on my wall because I am smarter. I do it so other people will think I'm smarter. Don't let people intimidate or bully you by flashing their academic credentials, degrees, pedigrees, titles, or by saying, "The science says..." Contradictions between the Bible and science are usually a result of misinterpretations of the Bible and science. Interpreting correctly, with an unbiased mind, will show there



are no contradictions between either.

5. The Bible isn't meant to be read as a science textbook.

Take the creation account in Genesis. It is told in about 260 words in the original Hebrew. I once read a textbook on the chemistry of water, or the H₂O molecule. It was 250 pages long. The Genesis narrative is so simple that a child can comprehend it, and so profound that philosophers, theologians, and

scientists exhaust themselves trying to plumb its depths. It is written in such a way that it can be translated into any language, or understood by people in the bronze age as well as the 21st Century. It doesn't pretend to be a science textbook about creation, but rather the story of its Creator. Much of what it says is wrapped in poetry and metaphor, and yet nothing it claims contradicts science. As in every stumbling block to the Bible for nonbelievers, our aim as evangelists should be to work our way to the main message of Scripture that science can't duplicate: how the Creator took on flesh and died on a cross to redeem us from sin.

A few reasons why the Bible doesn't conflict with science.

Time and space don't allow us to cover the waterfront or answer all the questions asked by inquiring minds. However, we want to give you a jump start, with the hope that you will be enticed to find more answers to the questions asked by those you love most. Here goes.

1. The Bible is scientific when compared ancient creation myths.

Its creation narrative differs radically from other holy books. The universe had a beginning [Gen. 1:1], in contrast to other ancient myths where the gods created the earth from existing chaos. The Babylonians believed that the gods who created it came from different oceans. Other legends said that it came from a giant egg. Only the Bible agrees with science that the existing universe came from



nothing.



The universe is governed by day-to-day natural laws [Job 38:33, Jer. 33:25] in contrast to other religions around the world that say it is governed by the whims of capricious deities. Most of the pagan myths (including those of the Greeks,

Romans and Hindus) teach that humans are helpless before the unpredictable and often merciless acts of the gods.

The earth is suspended in space [Job 26:7]. Most ancient myths at the time Genesis was written held that the world was a flat disk held up on the back of a buffalo, turtle or Herculean man. In the Bible, rivers and streams are filled with water that evaporated from oceans and other sources and has fallen in the form of rain, hail or snow. [Job 36:27, Ec.

1:7, Isa. 55:10 & Amos 9:6] Ancient Greek myths said that surface waters were fed by underground oceans. That idea persisted into the 17th Century despite the scientific accuracy of Scriptures written in 1400 BC.

Mountains rise and fall, and today's were originally under oceans [Ps. 104:6&8] This is in stark contrast to most creation myths that say the gods created the mountains as they are in their present state. The sanitation laws given by Moses, including washing after touching a dead body, circumcision, quarantining those with infectious diseases, disposing of human waste, and hundreds of other medical commands [Lev. 11:28, 13:1-5 & Deut. 23:13] are as sound in an age of modern medicine as they were 1400 years before Christ. Contrast that with Egyptian remedies that included applying human excrement to open wounds. It took Western doctors some 2500 years to catch up with Old Testament sanitation rules.

2. Science has only recently begun to catch up with the Bible.

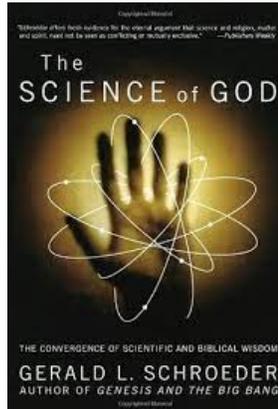
The Bible said that the world was round long before Galileo said it. In Genesis 1:9 we read that all the land "was in one place" while all the waters gathered likewise. Geometrically, this can only happen if the world is round. Until recently, scientists thought the sun sat still and the earth revolved around it. But 3,000 years ago [Ps. 19:4-6] the Bible says that the sun is not stationary. Some 30 centuries later scientists have finally figured out that the sun moves 800,000 kilometers an hour in a trip around our galaxy that takes 225 million years to complete. Yet, only a hundred years ago, most scientists believed that the earth revolved around a stationary sun. And St. Peter spoke of atoms, nuclear fusion and the final explosion that will empty the heavens in the future [2 Pet. 3:10] in words he couldn't have understood, and scientists have only figured out in the past century.



Most scientists and regular folks would be surprised to know that science is still catching up with a Bible that was completed more than 1900 years ago. Only the God who breathed his Spirit on prophets and apostles could have known what scientists are only beginning to figure out now. We can be confident that science, medicine and archeology will ultimately confirm everything the Bible says. This point alone should cause a pause in those who have drunk the Kool-Aid of scientific arrogance.



3. The best science on the origin of the universe matches what the Bible says about God's work of creation.

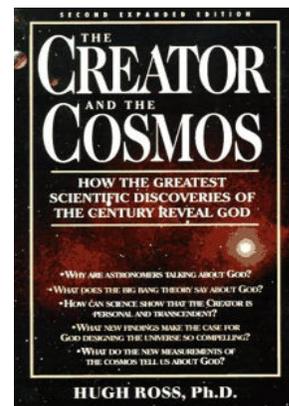


For the fearless among you, I recommend one of my favorite books, *The Science of God*. It was written by a world renowned physicist by the name of Dr. Gerald Schroeder. He is also an Orthodox Jew who believes in the historical accuracy of the Torah, especially when it comes to the Genesis account of creation. He says the universe is 13 billion years old, but time is relative. Following Einstein's Theory of Relativity, he uses mathematical equations showing that 13 billion years here would only be seven days somewhere else. He filters the discoveries of modern science through the Hebrew text to show that they match the Scriptures. You can find his book in the Thinker's section of *Barnes & Noble* bookstores. I need to warn you, it's not an easy read. But it is eye opening and faith building.

I also recommend *The Creator and the Cosmos* by renowned astronomer, Hugh Ross. He says that all present and past scientific observations about the universe are consistent with a cosmic creation event. He points to the evidence gathered from cosmic microwaves, past cosmic temperature measures, the spreading apart of galaxy clusters and galaxies, the absence of black dwarf stars, stellar burning time measurements, white dwarf cooling curves, and many other measurements of modern science that prove there was a beginning from nothing. I don't understand all that he says, but he is convinced, as are many other reputable scientists today, that this didn't happen randomly by chance. The universe is running down like a perfectly timed clock. Both the macrocosm of outer space and the microcosms of intricate DNA and chromosome mechanisms show a Master Plan so perfectly designed there had to be a Master Designer.

4. Science can't compete with the Bible when it comes to the origins of life.

Here, I am indebted to another eye opening book, *Creating Life in the Lab*, by Fazale Rana. Outside of living organisms and their decaying byproducts, scientists have been unable to find ribose, arginine, lysine, or tryptophan—the molecules critical for assembling proteins, RNA and DNA, either on earth or anywhere else in the universe. Even with high tech laboratory facilities,



biochemists cannot make RNA or DNA with genuine self-replication. We can genetically alter DNA and chromosomes, and do reconstructive surgeries to make transgender women with penises, just as Dr. Frankenstein could make a monster out of human body parts. But medical science cannot do what God did with a handful of dust.



Centuries ago, St. Thomas Aquinas said something that forever dooms scientists to play second fiddle to the God of the Bible: "The Creator makes something out of nothing. Creation and its creatures always need something to make something." One of his arguments still confounds evolutionists. It's called Infinite Regression. When we talk evolution (the idea that creation creates itself) we have to keep going back from the higher orders of life to the lowest, in an infinite chain of something creating something else. But, in the end, we come to the first form of life and have to ask, "How did it come from nothing?"

5. The biblical view of human exceptionalism denies the evolutionary foundations of much of modern science.

A wealth of scientific evidence shows that humans (*Homo Erectus*) alone possess the ability for symbolic recognition, for complex language, art, music, and for spiritual and philosophical engagement. Humans alone manifest an awareness of God, sin, moral judgment, and life beyond death. They alone are able to manage agriculture and build civilizations. There may be an infinite chasm between the Creator and humankind, but there is an even greater chasm between *Homo Erectus* and every other species of life.

When I was in Seminary, one of my classmate's five-year-old sons went to a friend's house for dinner. When the family began to eat their meal without saying grace, my friend's boy piped up, "You're just like my dog, Ralph. He always starts eating without saying prayers too." Read the creation narrative in the second chapter of Genesis. It says that the animals were created out of the dust (or elements of the earth), but when God formed Adam out of the ground, he blew his very essence into the nostrils of the first human, and he became, according to the



original Hebrew, “a living spirit being.” Of all the creatures on earth and angels in heaven, only of the human is it said, “So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them.” [Gen. 1:27]. Darwin and those who follow him were wrong. Real science and the Bible agree: the human is exceptionally apart from other species. And all of the science, apart from the Bible, cannot explain how it happened.



6. Fine-tuning requires more than random happenings.

This is such a profound truth when it comes to science and the Bible. I got this from another great book, *The Improbable Planet* by astronomer Hugh Ross. More than 100 different features of the universe and physics must be exquisitely fine-tuned to make advanced life possible. More than 800 different features of our galaxy and planetary system must be fine-tuned for advanced life



to possibly exist: from microbes, to what is needed for plants and animals, to what is needed for humans. For this to happen spontaneously and randomly requires odds that are mathematically impossible. But the Genesis creation narrative shows

the fine-tuning that took place through the intervention of a Master Designer-Creator. And the more scientists learn about the universe, the earth, and its life, the more we see how improbable this planet would be without a mind orchestrating everything.

And yet, only one thing ultimately matters.

I wish we had the time to go on to other proofs that what science rightly observed doesn't contradict a Bible that is rightly interpreted. There are so many more proofs that ought to give us great confidence in our Faith, and allow us to remove stumbling blocks of doubt from those we love most in this world. Take time yourself to dig deeper, and you will find even more wonderful, faith-building truths about the Bible and science.



On the other hand, it matters little if we convince those we love that Genesis makes sense, but don't introduce them to John 3:16—"For God so loved the world that he gave his Only Begotten Son that whoever believes in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." This God who created this universe, and the life in

it, also loves those lost sons and daughters who have been created in his image. He loved them enough to defy the science and become a two-celled zygote in Mary's womb, not by natural means but by the supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit. Then the Incarnate God defied science by becoming sin for us on the Cross, and paying the cost for our redemption. On the third day he again defied science by rising from the dead. Not only has science never found a way to create life, but it has also not found the means to make it last forever, redeem that which is irrevocably broken by sin, or even fix a sin-sick world. Science has given us many advances, but it cannot give us eternal life. Ironically, the same science that created medicines and technologies to prolong life, also creates genetically altered killer viruses and the weapons of destruction that can destroy all humankind several times over.



So I want to end with a secret: when it comes to arguing the Bible and science: **Don't box. Use judo.** It's easy to get into a boxing match when trading blows, as we jab at each other with our arguments. Sometimes we get in a good body blow, only to receive one back. That's the way arguments and debates go—back and forth until we batter the other person into submission.



Or, we can take the judo approach by using our opponent's strength to our advantage. If someone is arguing with me about how the science disproves the Bible, I will often say, "You are a very intelligent person. It's obvious to me that you are well-read. You're not the

sort of person that would dismiss the Bible out of hand without first reading it. Could you please tell me what the central message of the Bible is?"

Almost always, the person says something like, “Earning your way to heaven.” Theirs will invariably be a “works” answer. That’s because very few Bible critics have ever really studied the Bible. So, I respond, “Thank you for your very thoughtful answer. But I must tell you that you not only didn’t state the central message of the Bible, but, in fact, what you said is diametrically the opposite of its message.”

After pausing, I say, “Having dialogued with you, I am most impressed with your intellectual knowledge. You surely know that the Bible has been the most read book in all of history, sold more copies than any other book, and has changed the world.” Usually, I get a nod of agreement. I go one, “I know that you



wouldn’t want to dismiss it without first hearing its central message. May I take a few minutes and share it with you?” Having told them what an intellectual scholar they are (and, frankly, appealed to their pride), I have seldom had a person refuse to listen.

I’ve led many people to the Lord using this judo method of evangelism. You ought to try it yourself.

In the end, it will matter little whether you win the argument of science versus the Bible. But, as the half-brother of Jesus wrote, “Remember this: Whoever turns a sinner for the error of their way will save them from death and cover a multitude of sins.” [James 5:20]

A talk given by Dr. Robert Petterson, Founder and President of Legacy Imperative [legacyimperative.org] in his “Sharing Jesus in a ‘Woke’ Culture” series at Covenant Church of Naples, Fl.