

Pastors Need to Hear from Christian Geologists

**Psalm 104:32b: He touches
the mountains, and they smoke**

**Ken Wolgemuth, Ph.D.
and
Gregory S. Bennett**

**ASA Annual Meeting
August 1, 2009**





**Psalm 104:32b: He touches
the mountains, and they smoke**

Ken Wolgemuth –

- ❑ Christian: heart, mind, and soul
- ❑ B.S. in Chemistry
- ❑ Graduate degrees in geochemistry
- ❑ Worked in oil industry for 30 years

Greg Bennett –

- ❑ Christian: Passion for sound apologetics
- ❑ B.S. and graduate degree in geology
- ❑ Past Earth Science teacher



What do we believe?

- ✚ Scripture – Inspired and without error
- ✚ Scripture – Source of absolute truth
- ✚ Creation – Preserved & Provided for by God
- ✚ Both Scripture & creation tell the same story
- ✚ We humans have limited knowledge.
- ✚ We can understand natural laws and processes



May 18, 1980
Mt. St. Helen's
Eruption



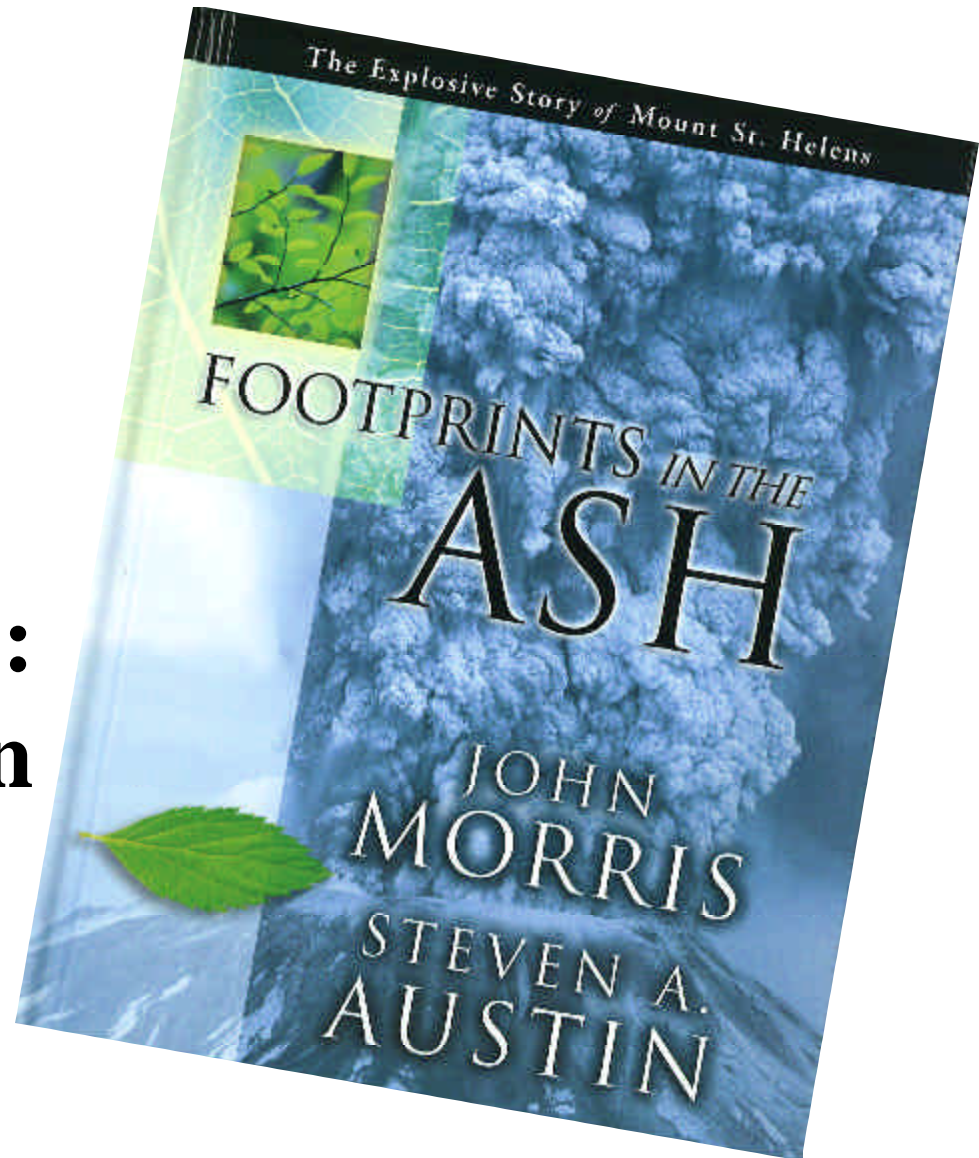


“Proof” that K-Ar Dating No Good

“No liquid lava flowed out in this 1980 volcanic eruption.” (p.33)

**K-Ar dated minerals:
Ages up to 2.4 million
years. (p. 67)**

Full Disclosure?





Radiometric Dating

- ✚ 1. Ozark Christian College
- 2. First Baptist Church, McAlester, OK
- 3. Pinnacle Hills Baptist Church, Rogers, AR

✚ AiG speakers:

“See, radiometric dating methods do not work!”

- ✚ AiG email on March 8, 2008: “the team has based their conclusions on radiometric dating, which time and time again has been shown to result in unreliable dates that conflict with other dating methods.”

This is pseudo-science - lack of full disclosure



Pseudo-Science

A system of theories, assumptions, and methods erroneously regarded as scientific. (Merriam-Webster*)



Pseudo-Science

A system of theories or assertions about the natural world that claim or appear to be scientific but that, in fact, are not. For example, astronomy is a science, but astrology is generally viewed as a pseudoscience. (American Heritage*)



Pseudo-Science

A pseudoscience is a belief or process which masquerades as science in an attempt to claim a legitimacy which it would not otherwise be able to achieve on its own terms; it is often known as fringe- or alternative science. The most important of its defects is usually the lack of the carefully controlled and thoughtfully interpreted experiments which provide the foundation of the natural sciences and which contribute to their advancement. (Online Chemistry Curricula)*



Pastoral Knowledge

"I believe that a preacher of the Gospel should know something about everything."

How does a pastor know whether he or she is passing on truthful information. That pastor trusts his sources.



What Happens with Misuse

- ✚ Concern for use of factual geologic information
- ✚ Concern about lack of knowledge of geological creation
- ✚ Concern about use of pseudo-science
- ✚ Some lost in the wilderness of pseudo-science
- ✚ Young people especially vulnerable



Speaking the Truth

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.
Ephesians 4:25 (NIV)

If you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of infants, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth—you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself? Rom 2: 19-21a (NIV)

You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? For "THE NAME OF GOD IS BLASPHEMED AMONG THE GENTILES BECAUSE OF YOU," just as it is written.
Romans 2: 23-24 (NASB)



Dual Approach

- ✚ Create 11x17 posters for coffee-table conversations for various types of geological evidence showing the earth is older than 6,000 years
- ✚ Develop a one-day creation workshop for seminaries and other Christian institutions.



Standards for Presentations

- ✚ Present truthful information regarding scientific evidence for an old-earth
- ✚ Respect time constraints in presentations
- ✚ Communicate with sensitivity towards differing theological positions
- ✚ Create a tool for flexibility in conversations



Goals for Communications

- ✚ Increase ability to detect “pseudo-science”
- ✚ Increase influence of factually correct information
- ✚ Bring honor to the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to his world, and to his Word



Poster Presentations



Mt. St. Helens

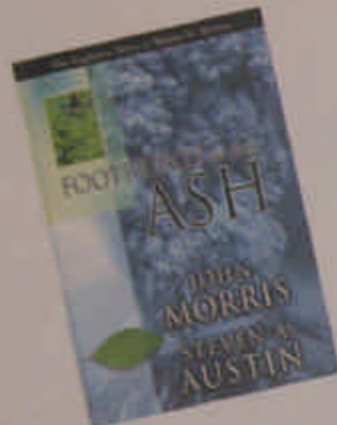


On May 18, 1980, at 8:32 a.m., a magnitude 5.1 earthquake shook Mount St. Helens. It was followed by a gigantic rockslide that ripped 1,300 feet from the volcano's top. An avalanche of debris and ash swept down the slopes of the volcano.



Drs. John Morris and Steven Austin have written a book about Mt. St. Helens, with lots of pictures. On page 33 they write: **"No liquid lava flowed out in this volcanic eruption."**

Dr. Austin collected samples to determine Potassium-Argon age dates of the samples. On page 67 he reported mineral ages of **2.4 million years**, and combined ages of **340,000 years!** He writes that this is preposterous, because the volcano erupted in 1980.



At Ozark Christian College, First Baptist Church (McAlester), and at Pinnacle Hills Baptist Church (Rogers, AR), AiG speakers Dr. Terry Mortenson and Dr. Tommy Mitchell tell non-scientific church audiences:

"See, radioactive dating methods do not work!"

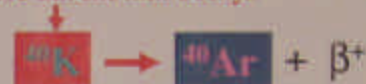
Answers in Genesis email on March 8, 2008: **"the team has based their conclusions on radiometric dating, which time and time again has been shown to result in unreliable dates that conflict with other dating methods."**

Potassium-Argon Radioactive Dating

Timers in God's creation – some igneous rocks

God created the universe so that most atoms are stable for long times. But some atoms have excess neutrons and slowly decay away. The rate at which this happens is called the half-life. **Potassium-40** is one.

Radioactive Parent that decays

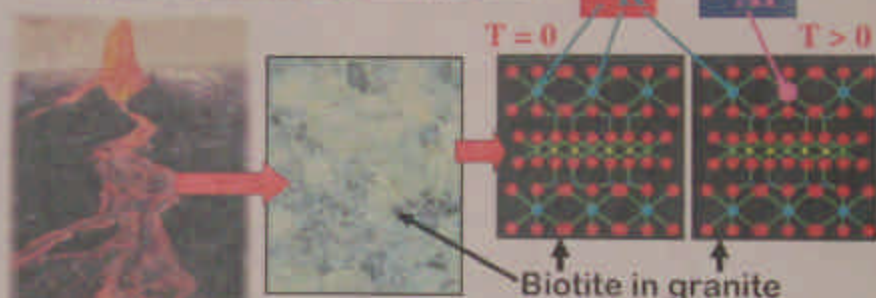


Radioactive Daughter – product of the decay

Half-life of ^{40}K = **1.3 billion years**

For the **Potassium-40** timer to be set to

T = 0, the rock **MUST** be molten lava!



Two Different Kinds of Volcanoes



Remember Steve Austin wrote: **"No liquid lava flowed out in this volcanic eruption."**

The timer had started when the solid rocks formed from liquid lava, many years before 1980. Therefore **the measurement tool used was invalid!**

This is blatant misrepresentation of the total evidence found in the creation – and deceives church folks to believe that all radioactive dating methods are worthless. This is simply not true!

Ephesians 4:25 calls believers to lay aside falsehood and speak the truth with others. This includes hiding the truth in silence. John MacArthur's Master's College student handbook calls deception a sin!



Topics for Presentations

- 1. Tree rings – Dendrochronology**
(biology and geology)
- 2. Ice layering in ice cores – Greenland, Antarctica** (meteorology and geology)
- 3. Sedimentary varves – Annual sediment layers in lakes** (geology)
- 4. Corals – Great Barrier Reef** (biology and geology)
- 5. Continental drift and plate tectonics**
(geophysics and geology)



Topics for Presentations

- 6. Radiometric dating of rocks – applied to some minerals and rocks** (chemistry, physics and geology)
- 7. Radiocarbon dating – applied to biological material and the few rocks with carbon** (biology and geology)
- 8. Fission track dating** (physics and geology)
- 9. Extinct radioactive nuclides** (geochemistry and astronomy)
- 10. Amino acid racemization** (chemistry, biology, and geology)



Topics for Presentations

- 11. Lack of DNA in fossils** (biology and geology)
- 12. Human Y-chromosome ancestry** (biology)
- 13. Distant starlight** (astronomy)
- 14. Cosmogenic nuclide dating** (astronomy and geology)
- 15. Helioseismology** (astronomy)



Topics for Presentations

16. Impact craters (astronomy and geology)

17. Geomagnetic reversals
(geophysics)

18. Erosion (geology)

19. Length of prehistoric day
(astronomy and geology)

20. Lunar retreat (astronomy)



Topics for Presentations

- 21.Naica megacrystals** (geology)
- 22.Oxidizable carbon ratio dating**
(chemistry and geology)
- 23.Permafrost** (geology)
- 24.Petrified wood** (geology)
- 25.Rock varnish** (geology)
- 26.Space weathering** (astronomy)



Topics for Presentations

- 27. Relativistic jets** (astronomy)
- 28. Stalactites** (geology)
- 29. Thermoluminescence dating**
(geology)
- 30. Weathering rinds** (geology)
- 31. Diversity of the biosphere** (biology
and geology)
- 32. Quantity of bio fuels (oil, gas,
coal, etc) used by man and stored
in the earth's crust** (biology,
chemistry and geology)



Pseudo-Science Tests





1. Tree Rings





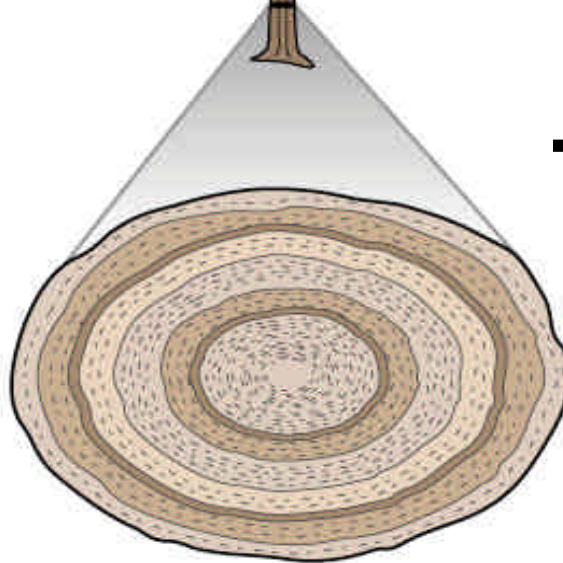
1. Tree Rings – Pseudo-Science

✿ Re: Bristlecone Pines, "It would seem that if these trees grew before this time (4,000 yrs), it would take something of a catastrophic natural disaster to wipe them out. This is seen as strong evidence for Noah's Flood having occurred a little more than 4,000 years ago."

(Creation Magazine, December 1987)

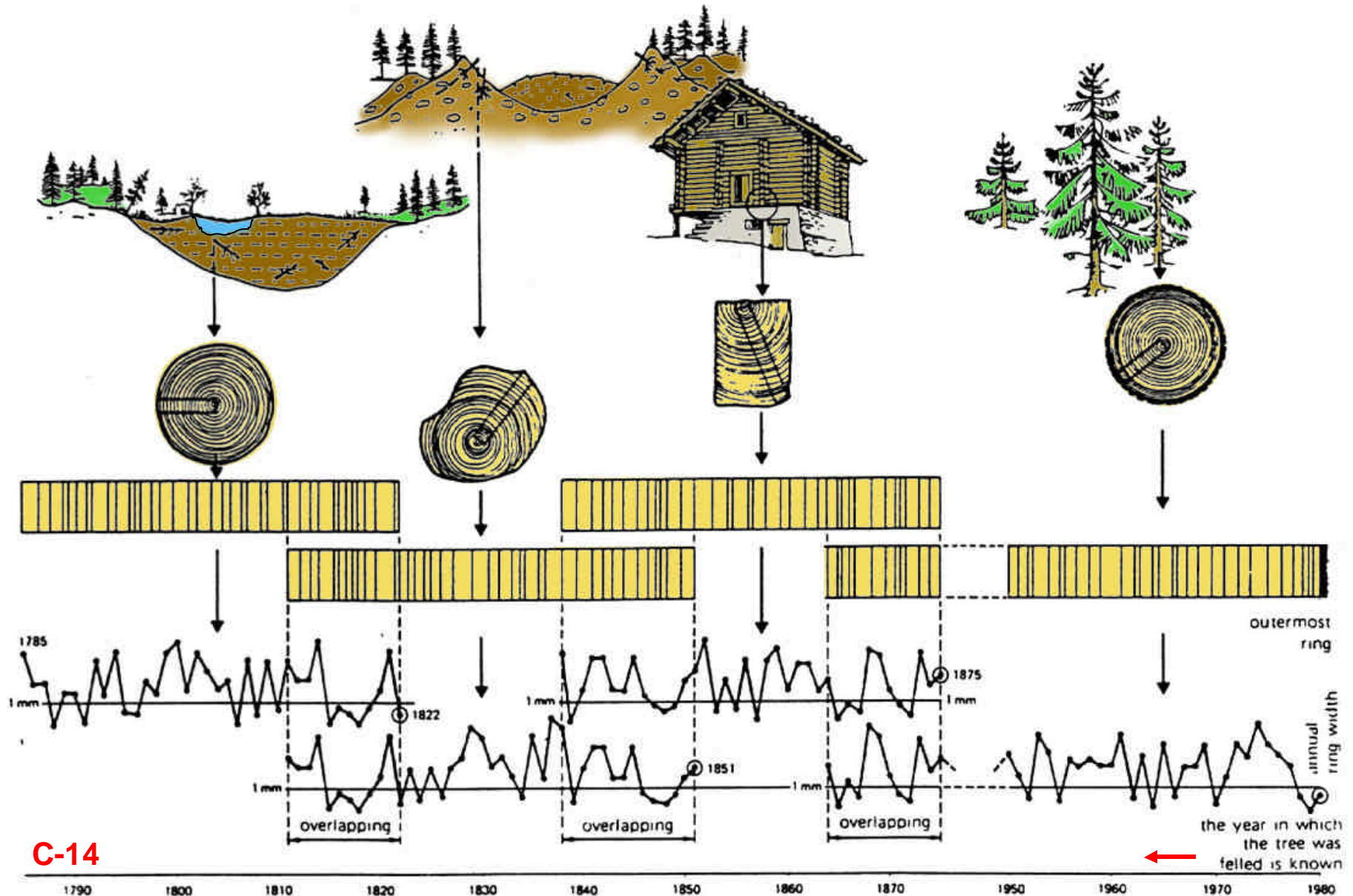


1. Tree Rings



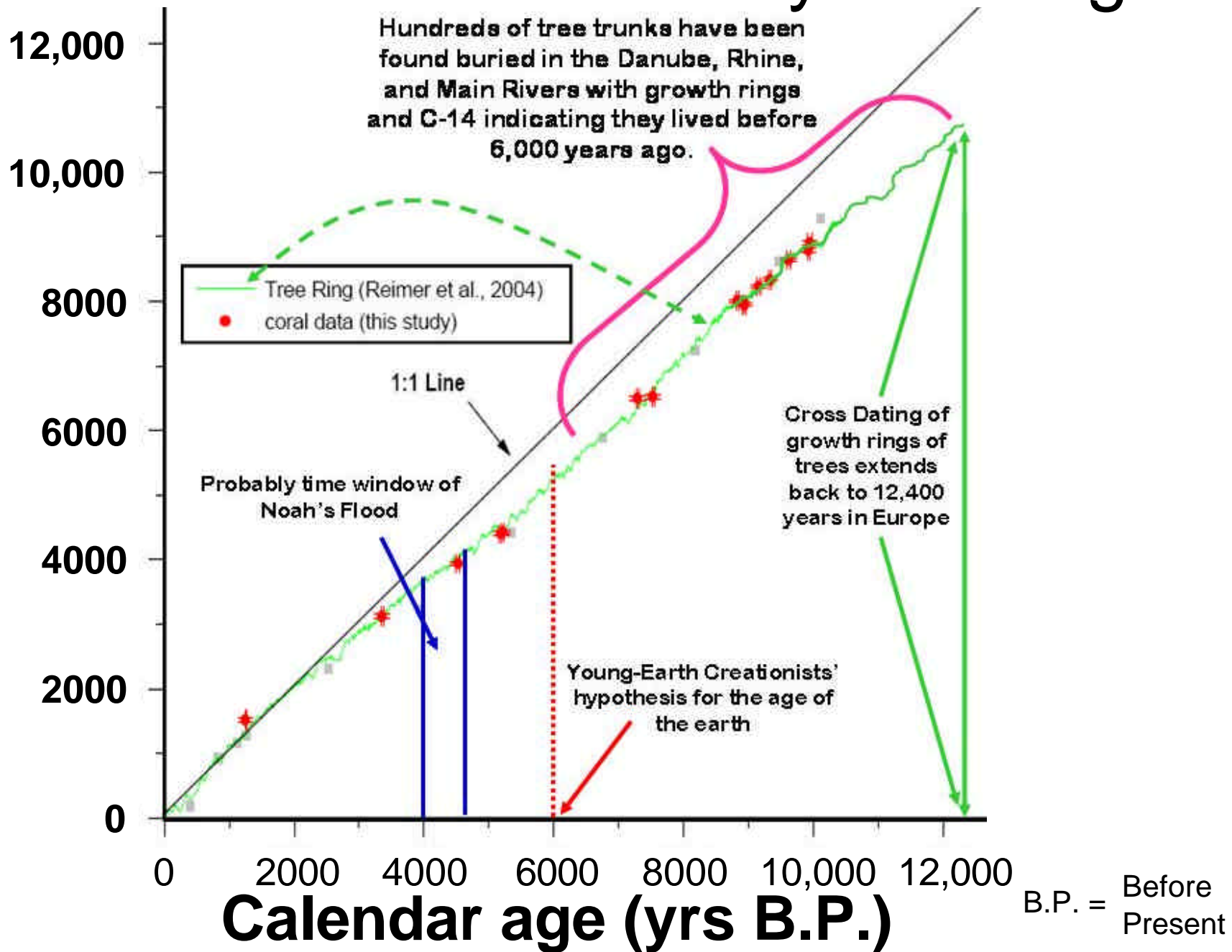
Tree Rings

1. Cross-Dating of Tree Rings



1. C-14 calibrated by tree rings

Conventional C-14 age (yrs B.P.)





2. Ice Cores





2. Ice Cores - Pseudo-Science

- ✚ Young-earth proponents claim only 1 ice age
- ✚ Answers in Genesis:
"Scientists claim the ice layers were laid down over millions of years."

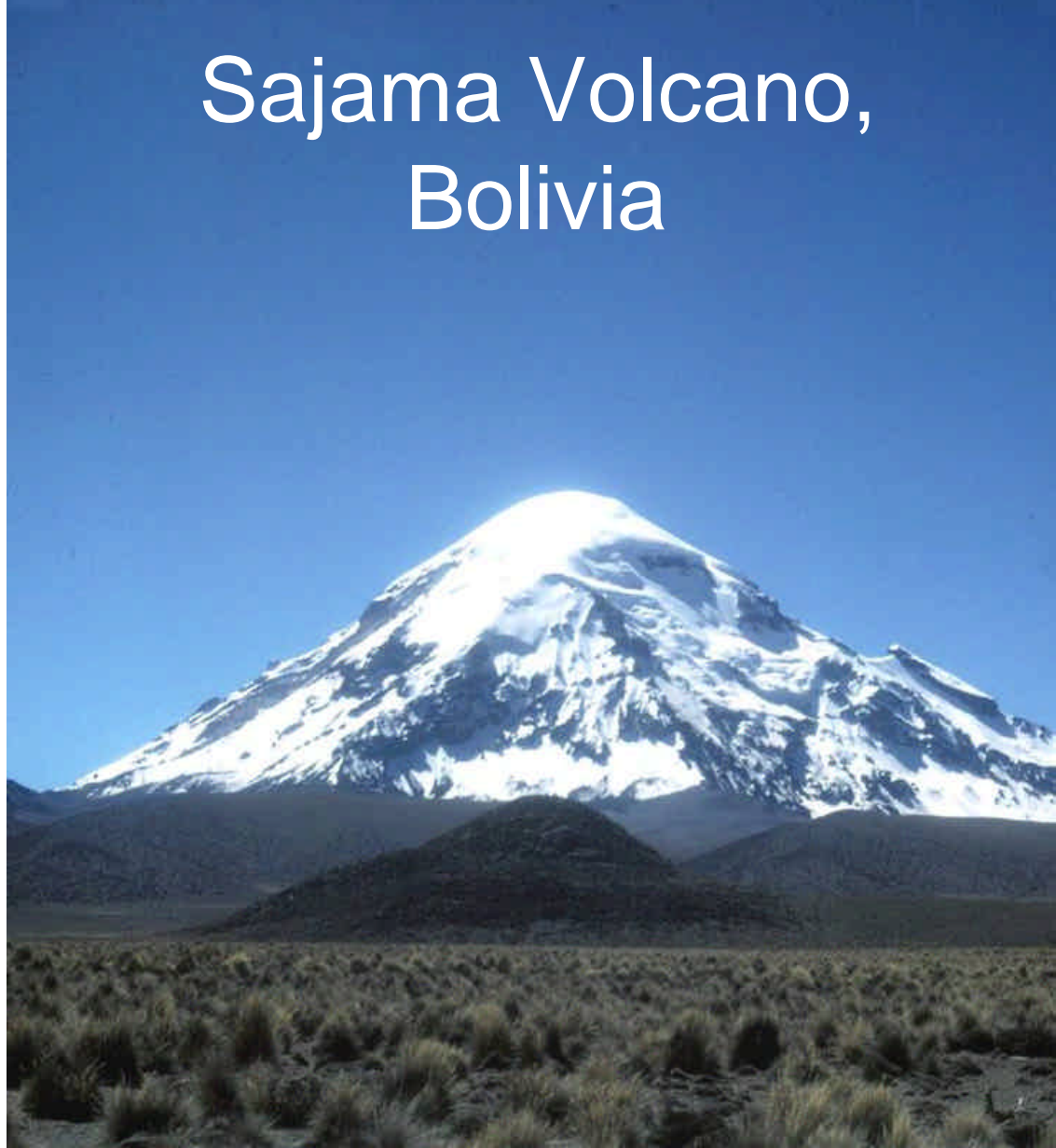
(Referring to Greenland)

2. Ice Cores

**Cliff in Peruvian Andes
at 16,000 feet elevation.
Individual layers are
annual accumulation.**

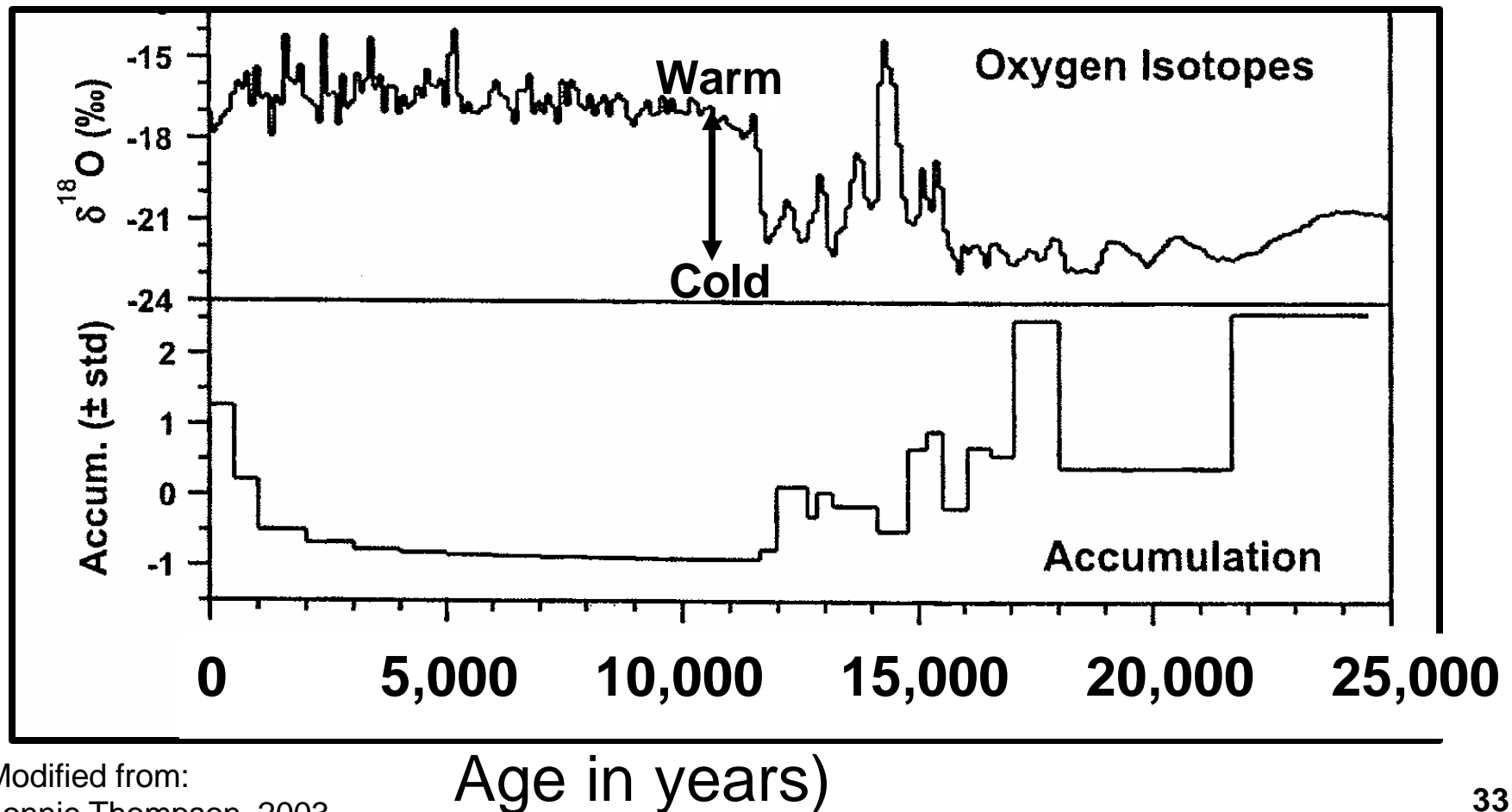


Sajama Volcano, Bolivia



2. Ice Cores: Sajama Volcano

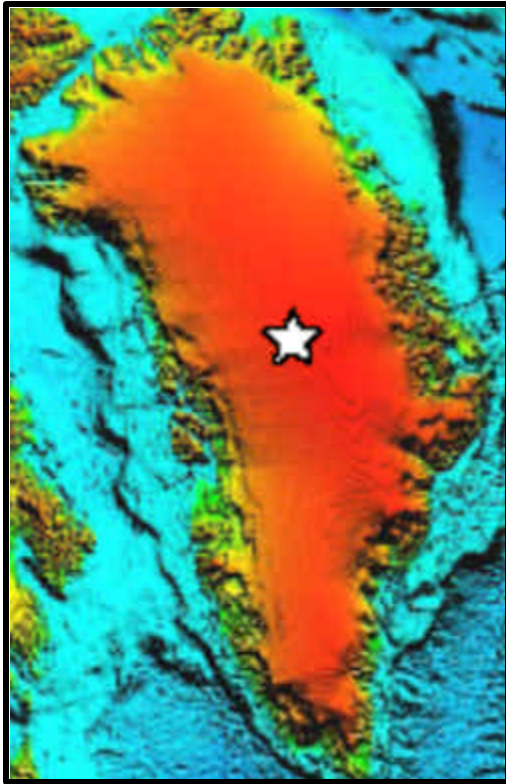
25,000 calendar years of
reconstructed climate history





2. Ice Cores

Greenland Ice Core



Age (Years before present)

10,000

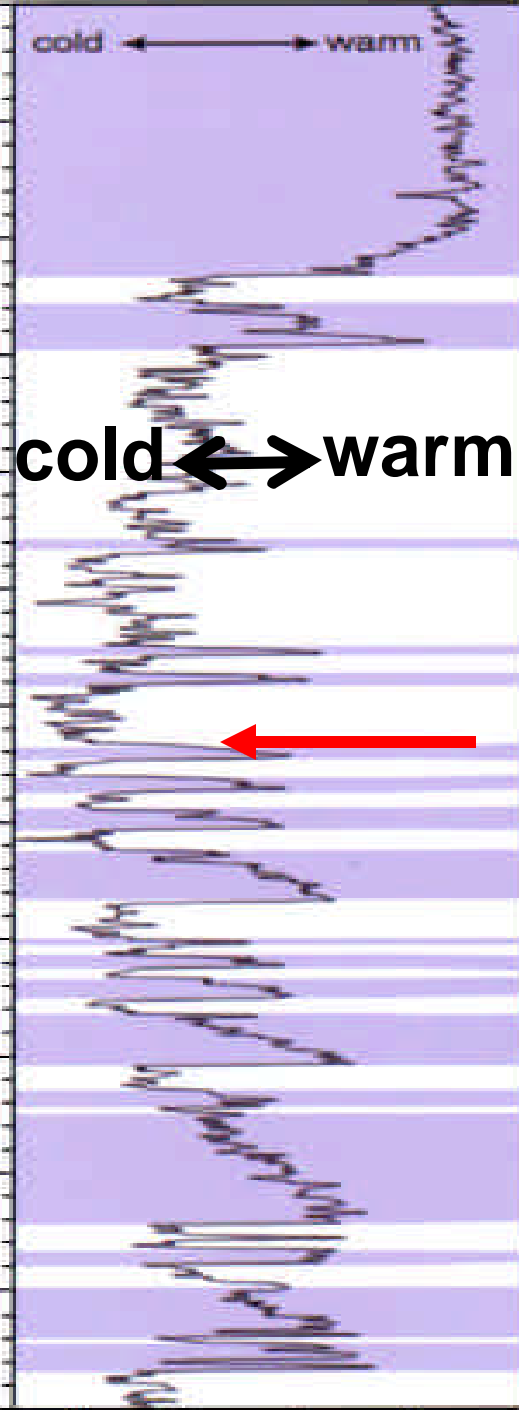
20,000

30,000

40,000

50,000

60,000



Courtesy of Jeff Fox, Texas A&M Univ.
Dansgaard et al., 1993



2. Greenland Ice Cores



GISP 2D - 6,936 Feet

31,500 years before present

Courtesy of Todd Hinkley, USGS, 2007

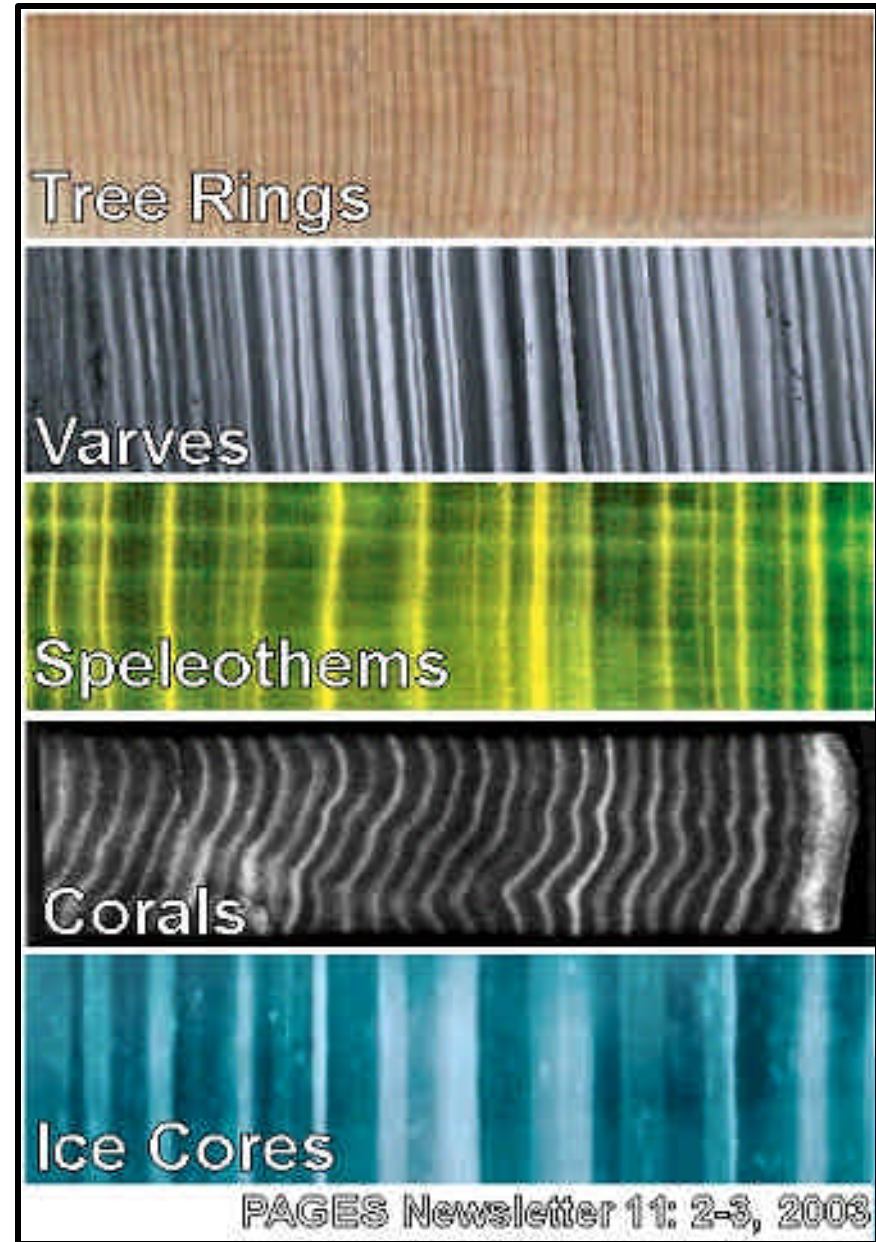
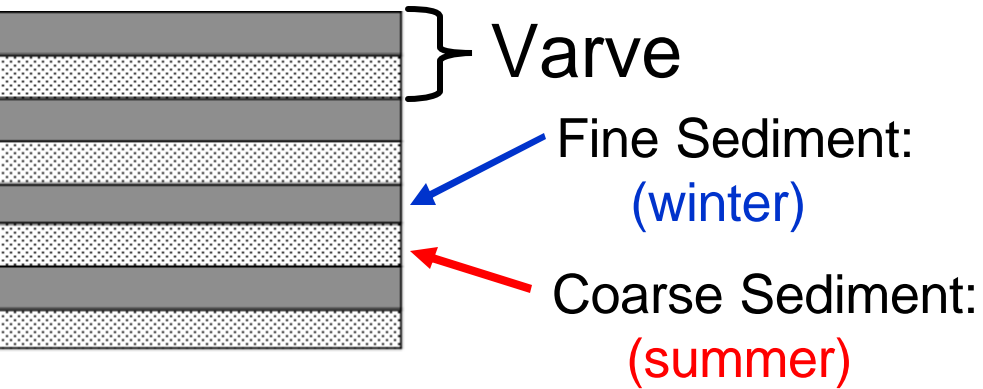


3. Lake Sediment - Varves





3. Lake Sediment - Varves



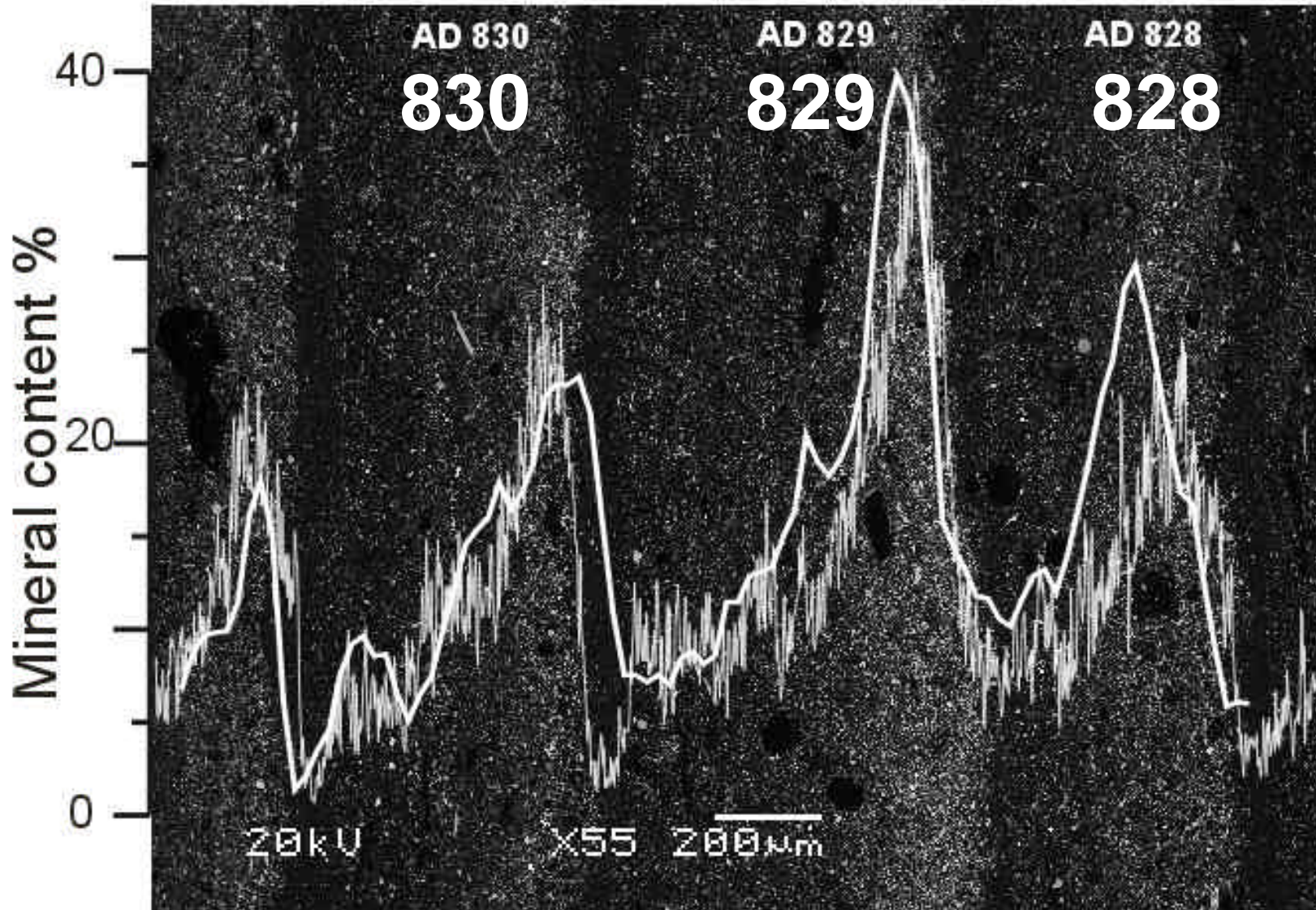


3. Lake Sediment - Varves

~ 1/16 inch



18 yr



>150 yr



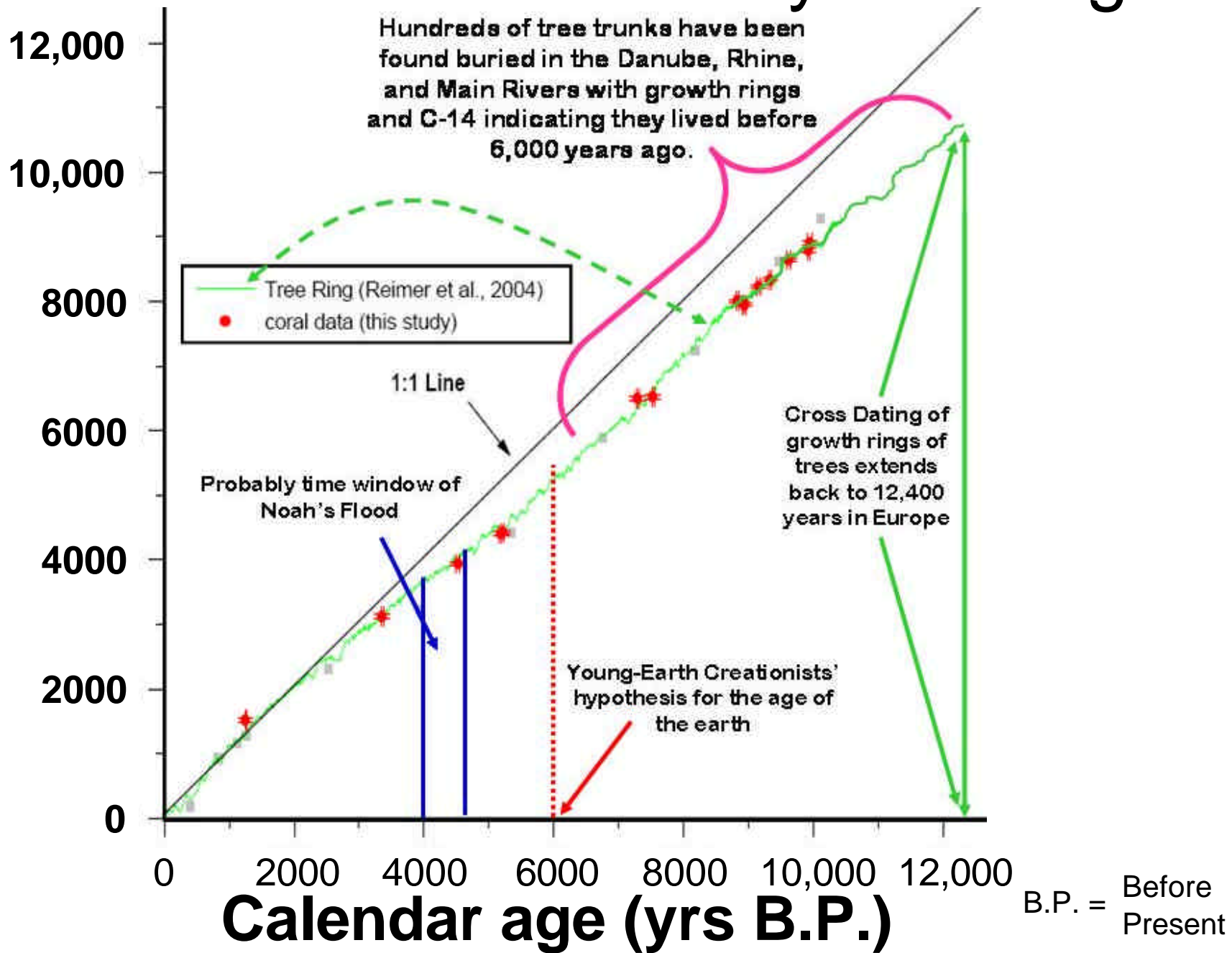
3. Lake Sediment – Varves – Pseudo-Science

✚ “The Flood disrupted the carbon reservoirs on Earth. During the Flood, volcanic eruptions blasted carbon dioxide (low in carbon-14) into the atmosphere, vast quantities of vegetation (containing carbon) were buried under sediment, carbon dioxide was dissolved in the oceans, **carbon was incorporated into the vast formations of carbonate rocks** and changes in the earth’s magnetic fields affected the cosmic shield, changing the rate of production of carbon-14.”

(Tas Walker, Creation Ministries International, 2009)

1. C-14 calibrated by tree rings

Conventional C-14 age (yrs B.P.)

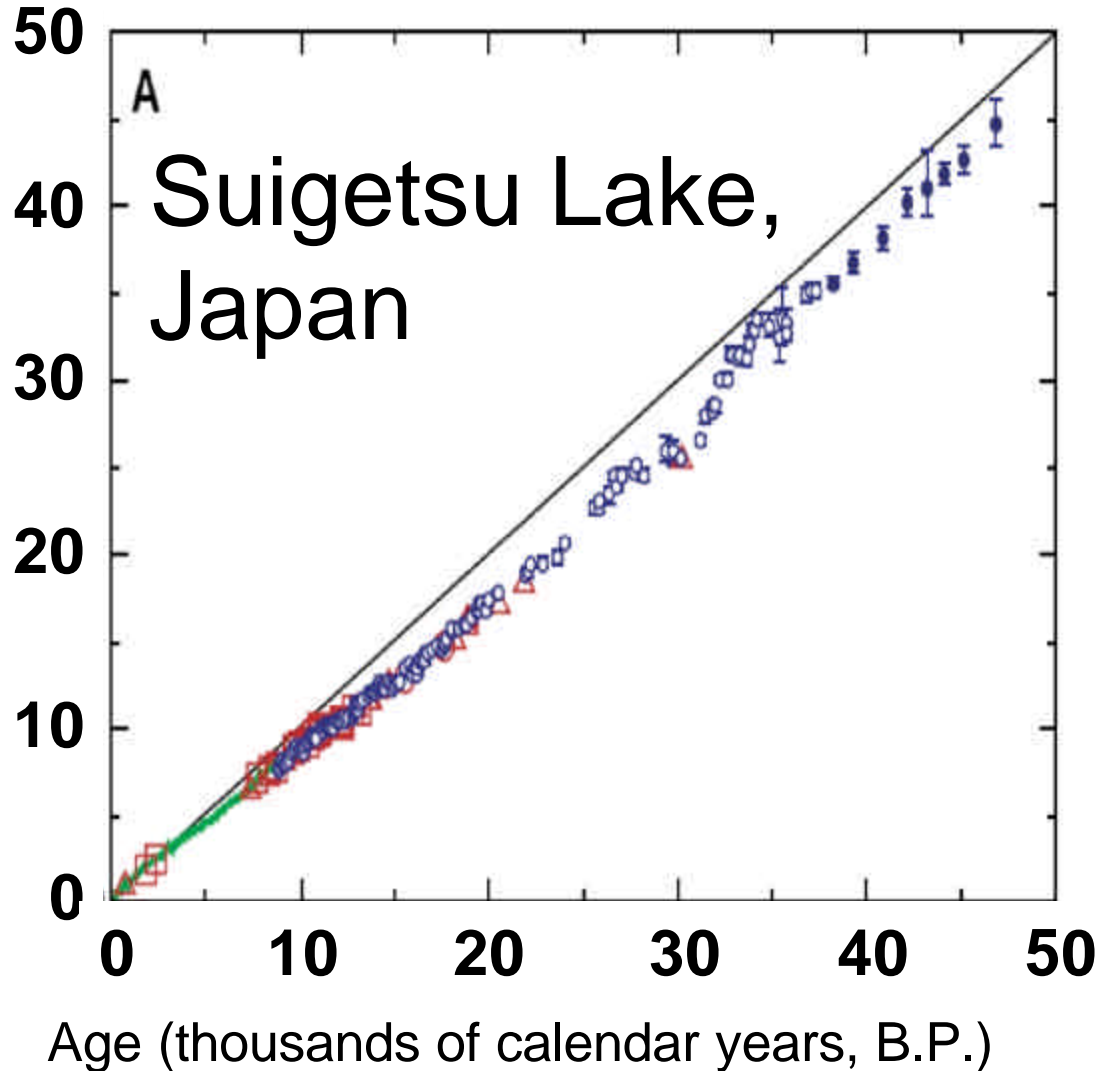




3. Lake Sediment - Varves

Carbon-14 Calibration curve up to 45,000 yr B.P.

Radiocarbon age (thousands of years, B.P.)





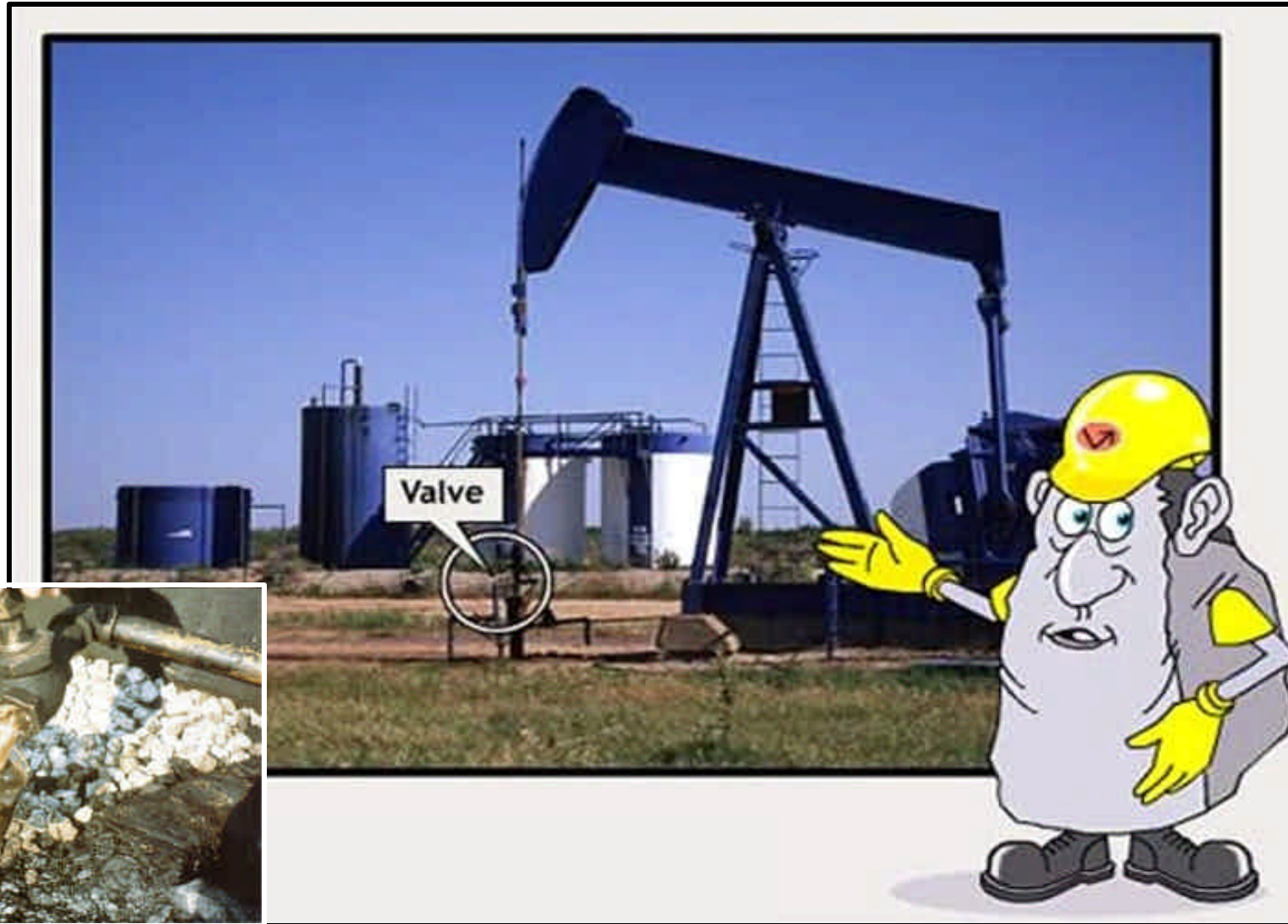
Dual Approach

- ✚ Create 11x17 posters for coffee-table conversations for various types of geological evidence showing the earth is older than 6,000 years
- ✚ Develop a one-day creation workshop for seminaries and other Christian institutions.



Creation Workshop

“Geology for Pastors”





Creation Workshop

- ✚ “Creation Workshop” to present at seminaries and Christian Institutions
 - ✚ 1-day workshop
 - ✚ Biblical interpretation and Creation
 - ✚ Tree Rings, Ice Cores, Varves, Radiometric Dating methods and the age of the earth
 - ✚ Co-presenter: Gregg Davidson

When Faith & Science Collide

A Biblical Approach to
Evaluating Evolution
and the Age of the Earth



G.R. Davidson

**A Biblical Approach to
Evaluating Evolution
and the Age of the Earth**

by
Gregg Davidson
Department of Geology
and
Geological Engineering,
University of Mississippi



Follow-up

Don't want to see our youth risk having their faith shipwrecked with pseudo-science.

- ✚ Please pray for us and our audiences
- ✚ Help us get into seminaries and other Christian Institutions



Thanks


- ✚ Greg Bennett
- ✚ Helen Wolgemuth
- ✚ Jim Keener – Univ. of Utah
- ✚ Gregg Davidson – Ole Miss.



Thanks – Roger C. Wiens

☐ "Joe Christian Needs to Hear From Us" Affiliation of Christian Geologists

- ☐ Show that Evangelical Christians work in geology – many believers have no idea
- ☐ Many conservative Christians believe there is no valid evidence for an old earth
- ☐ Balance the message in evangelical Christian circles
- ☐ The Christian community is deservedly held up to ridicule by scientists for its ignorance – hinders coming to faith



**Psalm 104:32b: He touches
the mountains, and they smoke**

Augustine volcano viewed from the west. Picture Date: January 12, 2006 14:00:00 Image Creator: McGimsey, Game. Image courtesy of U.S. Geological Survey. Source : Alaska Volcano Observatory (<http://www.avo.alaska.edu>) URL: http://www.avo.alaska.edu/image_full.php?id=5927 8/12/2009