A Church Course for Adults on Science and Faith

Fred and Thresa Hickernell
Phoenix, Arizona

American Scientific Affiliation
Baylor University
Waco, Texas
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The Wednesday Night Forums – Eight Weeks

let God's light refresh your life

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

Spring Forums

April 2 - May 21, 1975

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
7000 North Central
Phoenix, Az 85020
944-9656
The Wednesday Night Forums - Topics

- “Is It Up In The Air” – Mass media for the church
- “Concertino Ensemble” – Expand church music
- “Faith and the Physical World”
- “Devils and Demons” – Witchcraft and magic
- “You are the Body of Christ” – Bible study
- “Bringing the Bible Alive” – Scriptural events
- “Contemporary Issues in Biblical Perspective”
- “The Christian Family”
Science and Faith mutually enrich and complement one another. This harmony is achieved by accepting the basic tenets of Christianity and by keeping an open attitude to all aspects of science. The course should be helpful to those who fear and distrust modern science as an obstacle to Christian faith and equally to those who have abandoned vital aspects of Christianity because of their views of science.
The Purpose of the Course

- To gain a perspective of what Science does.
- To discuss scientific and biblical perspectives.
- To let the students participate in some scientific calculations and data gathering.
- To ask the students to gather cartoons which portray scientific and biblical truth.
- To present a balanced view of what science and scripture tells us.
“Great are the works of the Lord; they are studied (pondered) by all who delight in them.”

Psalm 111:2

“The Lord teaches the humble in His way.”

Psalm 25:9
Outline of Presentation

- Introduction to the course
- The students and their backgrounds
- The topics chosen
- The homework
- Course summary
- Course discussions
- Comments
- Concluding remarks
Students and Their Backgrounds

- The students were members of the church
- They came from various work backgrounds
- The ages varied from 20’s to 70’s
- A total of 30 were enrolled and attended one or more sessions
- 12 were in attendance for all eight weeks
- 18 were in attendance for the first session
- 15 filled out the first questionnaire
The Questions I Asked

- Look in the Bible for things which could be interpreted as scientific pronouncements.
- What was the stage of development of science at the time of Jesus?
- What questions should science be answering for you?
- What questions do you expect scripture to answer?
- Are some of them the same questions?
The Questions They Asked

- Are many scientists Christians?
- Does scientific knowledge strengthen faith?
- Can science bring a person closer to God?
- Can science be used to prove religious miracles?
- Can evolution and creation be related?
- Which is supreme – science or religion?
- Is the universe infinite?
- Were Adam and Eve cave people?
- Do you believe in flying saucers?
Faith and the Physical World - Topics

- Physical Reality – The Nature of Science
- Christian Faith – The Nature of Christianity
- Persons of Faith and Science
- Natural and Biblical Revelation
- Hebrew – Christian Influence on Science
- Christianity and Science in Conflict
- Origin of the Universe and Man
- Selected Topics from Science and Christianity
- Class Presentations
Science goals were given to them under the following topics. The class filled out the Christian perspective.

- Goal, Scope, Purpose, and Tools
- Method, Development, Fact, and Law
- Basic Assumptions
- Human Element and Habit
The Science and Christian Perspectives

Science
Respect for the laws of the natural world
Appeal to experience
Hypothesis, abstraction, and observation
Statistics and vulnerability

Christian
Respect for God and His laws
Appeal to experience
Respect for individuals
Love, forgiveness, joy, peace, patience, kindness, etc.
Basic Assumptions

Science
Physical reality exists and is objectively observable.
Physical reality is consistent. (i.e. logic applies)
Causal relationships exist.

Christianity
God is real and in our lives.
God’s laws are consistent (i.e. logic applies).
Christ’s example of love can exist in our world.
The Human Element
Science and Christianity

Personality
Communication
Ethics
Community
Faith
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientists Who Were Professing Christians</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Lister</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louis Pasteur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Boyle</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Clerk Maxwell</td>
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<td>Lord Kelvin</td>
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<td>Gregor Mendel</td>
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<td>Blaise Pascal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bernard Riemann</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Homework Assignment

1. From the tabular data of distance in megaparsecs, $r$, (1 mpc=3 million light years) and the velocity of recession in kilometers/second, $V$, calculate Hubble’s constant, $H$, given as $V=Hr$.

2. Estimate the age of the universe, $(1/H)$.

3. Contrast this to Ussher’s estimate of ~6000 yrs. (Bishop Ussher calculated the world began on or about October 23, at 9 am in 4004 BC)

4. Draw a picture of the universe from Genesis 1.
The Calculation of Hubble’s constant, \( H \), and the Age of the Universe, \( T \).

\[ H = 74 \text{ km/sec/mpc} \]

\[ T = 12.6 \text{ billion years} \]
Faith and the Physical World
Historical Background

From Greek early thought through Nicholas Copernicus to Charles Darwin, man learned not to impose his beliefs upon nature but instead to ask questions of her and apply reason to her answers.
An Assignment
Throughout the Course was to Collect Articles and Cartoons from Newspapers and Magazines Which Related to Faith and the Physical World
Cartoons from Newspapers and Magazines which Related to Faith and the Physical World

“The whole universe is expanding, so why be surprised that we’re drifting apart?”

1982 January 24th

When you said things originally I thought it was just for show.
A Plethora of Articles from Newspapers and Magazines with the Following Titles:

- Can a Scientist Believe in God?
- Technology and the Quality of Life
- The Challenge of Creationism
- Extraterrestrial Intelligence: Where is Everybody?
- Science, Anti-science, and Human Values
- Faith versus Reason
- Creationism: A Battle Evolves
- Faith is more than a Feeling
Insight into Sites for Scientists
4000 Industrial Research Magazine Readers

Most important factors
- Climate
- Good Schools
- Taxes and municipal services
- Recreation
- Community attitudes
Insight into Sites for Scientists
4000 Industrial Research Magazine Readers

- Least important factors
  
  Church
  
  Well-stocked stores
  
  Repair and maintenance services
  
  Youth centers and programs
  
  Proximity to resource centers of professional interest
The Certificate Given to Each Participant for Course Attendance at Least 4 Times

FIRST BAPTIST COLLEGE
of
COSMOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

PRESENTS TO

THIS CERTIFICATE FOR HAVING COMPLETED A COURSE IN

FAITH and the

PHYSICAL WORLD
A faith which does not continually examine and test its own assumptions is a dead faith.

"Do not find fault before examining the evidence; think first, and criticize afterwards. Do not answer without first listening, and do not interrupt when another is speaking."

Ecclesiasticus 11:7-9
I DID IT HIS way

A collection of B.C. Religious comic strips
by Johnny Hart