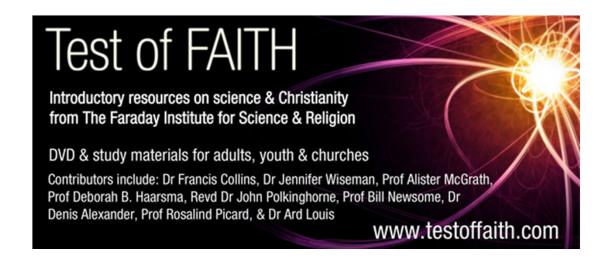




# From the Dust and Test of Faith: Catalyzing Deeper Conversations on Science and Faith through Film

David A. Vosburg, Harvey Mudd College



#### **Motivation**

- Inform and stimulate healthy conversations about science and Christian faith
- On campus: students, faculty, and staff
- Churches: small group Bible studies
- Bridge science and faith communities
- Remove barriers to the spread of the gospel
- Students are hungry for this!

#### Film vs. Other Media

- Books
- Articles
- Blogs
- Audio
- Event with speaker or panel

# **Advantages of Using Film**

- Engaging (sight + sound)
- Inexpensive
- Portable
- Flexible
- Quick
- Easy

From the Dust: Conversations in Creation	Test of Faith: Does Science Threaten Belief in God?
Highway Media, BioLogos (2012)	Faraday Institute (2009)
67 min (4 x 17 min)	87 min (3 x 29 min)
Focus on Genesis, creation, evolution	Universe, evolution, environment, brain, free will, ethics
fromthedustmovie.org	testoffaith.com

#### **Film Trailers**



conversations in creation

A new documentary film from BioLogos and Highway Media



## Test of FAITH

Introductory resources on science & Christianity from The Faraday Institute for Science & Religion

DVD & study materials for adults, youth & churches

Contributors include: Dr Francis Collins, Dr Jennifer Wiseman, Prof Alister McGrath, Prof Deborah B. Haarsma, Revd Dr John Polkinghorne, Prof Bill Newsome, Dr Denis Alexander, Prof Rosalind Picard, & Dr Ard Louis

www.testoffaith.com

## Test of Faith Resources

- DVD with bonus footage
- Website (testoffaith.com)
- Leader's guide
- Study guide
- Book: Spiritual Journeys with Scientists



#### From the Dust Resources

- DVD with bonus footage
- Sample discussion questions in DVD insert
- Website (fromthedustmovie.org)
- Leader's guide available from me



## Ways to Use a Film

- Entire film at once
- Entire film at once with additional structure

- Segments of film over several sessions
- Segments of film with additional structure

#### **Considerations**

- Time available
- Worldview(s) of audience
- Age group
- Scientific background
- Biblical/theological knowledge
- Interest in topic(s)
- Willingness to do homework

#### Sample Groups

- Christian students from secular colleges
- Christian faculty & staff from secular colleges
- Bible study/small group
- General audience at Caltech event



# Using Test of Faith

- General audience: show a 30 min segment, group discussion or panel Q&A—can be good as an outreach event for non-Christians
- Christian audience: use study guide, include some scripture, songs, and prayer
- Very conservative Christians may tune out without a significant emphasis on the Bible

### Using From the Dust

 Primarily targets a Christian audience, but ok for the spiritually curious, too

Easy to include scripture, songs, and prayer

 Respectfully juxtaposes views of evolutionary creationists and young-earth creationists

## Sample From the Dust Curriculum

- Orientation/expectations meeting
- Genesis 1
- From the Dust part 1
- From the Dust part 2, Genesis 1
- From the Dust part 3
- From the Dust part 4
- Genesis 1-3



## Sample From the Dust Curriculum

- Read a short article before the meeting
- Open with a song of praise and brief prayer
- Discuss the article
- Watch film clip or read from Genesis
- Discuss
- Close with prayer and/or song



#### **Selected Articles**

1. Joseph Lam "The Biblical Creation in its Ancient Near Eastern Context"

2. Tim Keller "Creation, Evolution, and Christian Laypeople"

3. Ernest Lucas "Interpreting Genesis in the 21st Century"

#### **Selected Articles**

- 4. Ian Hutchinson "Warfare and Wedlock: Redeeming the Faith-Science Relationship"
- 5. Dennis Venema "Genesis and the Genome: Genomic Evidence for Human-Ape Common Ancestry and Ancestral Hominid Population Sizes"
- 6. Ard Louis "How Does the BioLogos Model Need to Address Concerns Christians Have About the Implications of its Science?"

#### **Conclusions**

- These films are good conversation starters
- A sense of community is important
- Small groups are better than large groups
- Gradual pace minimizes overload
- Articles extend and deepen engagement
- Reading Genesis honors biblical authority
- Song & prayer set the tone and promote unity

### Acknowledgments

- BIOLOGOS: Darrel Falk, Kathryn Applegate
- Highway Media: Dean Smith
- Faraday: Ruth Bancewicz
- Tremper Longman III, Ken Fong, Jason Price
- Science & Faith summer student group
- Claremont Christian Scholars
- CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
- HARVEY MUDD