

# THE BIBLE vs. EVOLUTION

## LESSON 1. HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW?

### Preparing to Teach the Lesson:

The object of this course is to show your students that the Bible is absolutely reliable - not just in spiritual matters, but in everything. However, unless they have been living under a rock they have no doubt heard skeptics say that science disproves the Bible. When asked which parts of the Bible, doubters point to the Creation account in Genesis. Evolution, they say, is proven scientific fact.

### Today's Aim:

This lesson is foundational in responding to such skepticism. At its completion, students should:

- Understand the basic concepts of creation and evolution.
- Understand what science is and is not, as well as what it can and cannot do.
- Understand the difference between science, history, and belief.
- Understand that evolution has no scientific advantage over creation.
- Understand that even atheists have to believe in something that has many of the same characteristics as the Christian's God.

### Introducing the Lesson:

In this lesson we are going to see that:

- Science is limited in its ability to deal with past events.
- When it comes to evolution, much of what passes for science is really storytelling based on very little evidence. We will learn how to tell the difference.
- Evolution is not proven scientific fact; it is every bit as religious as creation.
- The only way we can be absolutely sure of what happened in the beginning is to start with an eyewitness account.
- Belief in a Creator does not put us at any scientific disadvantage. Even atheists - though they strenuously deny it - have to believe in some sort of force that has many of the same characteristics as God.
- Science can tell us nothing about the character of God. We can only know Him if He gives us a revelation about Himself.

In past centuries Christians often gave their lives because of their belief in the Bible. Since persecution could arise again at any time, we too should be prepared to die in defense of our faith. But how do we know the Bible is really the Word of God and not a book of fairy tales? If it's nothing but a myth, it's certainly not worth dying for. In fact, how do we Christians know what we know about anything? Our source, the Bible, is under attack. Many scientists tell us that it is wrong from the very beginning - the creation account in Genesis. This is nothing but a religious myth, they say, while evolution is proven scientific fact. So how do we respond?

Any time we deal with a controversial subject, we should begin by making sure we understand exactly what the controversy is about. We should start by defining our terms. When most people think of evolution they think of Darwin, scientists, and apemen; "creation" conjures up vague images of Adam and Eve eating an apple in the garden. However, the words have more specific meanings, each with scientific implications.

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1. Evolution is the concept that the universe, earth, and life were **disorganized** when they came into existence. Later changes tended toward increasing organization and complexity.

If we were to graph the history of life according to evolution we would see what looks like an enormous tree. The single root represents the first living cell; the branches represent all the types of living things that evolved from it.

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2. Creation is the concept that the universe, earth, and life were already **complex** when they came into existence. Later changes might result in diversification, but there should be a built-in tendency toward deterioration throughout nature.

For instance, we can selectively breed dogs to get Chihuahuas, Great Danes, and everything in between. The dogs have diversified, but they are all still dogs. If we were to graph the history of life according to creation we would see a whole forest of trees, each representing a created “kind.” (Gen. 1:11-12, 21, and 24-25 say ten times that everything reproduces only “after its kind.”) The branches of one tree would never connect with the branches of a different one.

Even if genetic experiments such as cloning were to ever succeed in producing hybrids between two kinds, it would be only because of intelligent intervention. When allowed to operate according to natural law, everything reproduces only after its kind.

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3. There are two main variations of evolution:  
a. **Theistic** (evolution occurred under God’s guidance)

This is what most people believe.

and  
b. **Atheistic** or materialistic (everything happened by Random Chance).

This is a very small minority view. Unfortunately, many of those who believe it are textbook authors or influential scientists, e.g. Darwin, Isaac Asimov, Carl Sagan, Harvard’s Stephen Jay Gould, and many others.

4. When it comes to living things, there are two opposing beliefs about evolution:  
a. Neo-Darwinism: evolution occurred by the accumulation of thousands of **gradual** changes.

This belief is named after Darwin. More and more scientists are abandoning it because it requires fossil transitions that are nowhere to be found in the fossil record. More and more of those who believe in evolution are turning to the following:

b. Punctuated Equilibria: evolution occurred in **sudden jumps**.

This belief says that living things remain essentially unchanged throughout periods of equilibrium lasting millions of years. Suddenly a “punctuation event” such as a volcanic eruption occurs, causing new species to evolve within a few hundred years. The most extreme example of Punctuated Equilibria, proposed by a German paleontologist named Schindewolf, is that one day a reptile laid an egg and a bird hatched. He did not propose this to make fun of evolution; he really believed it. Of course, the biological evidence against such a possibility is overwhelming - but atheistic evolutionists have nowhere else to go.

Just as not everybody believes the same thing about evolution, likewise not everybody believes the same thing about creation.

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5. There are three main variations of creation:

- a. Recent creation, within the last few **thousand** years.
- b. The **Gap** Theory: an original creation billions of years ago, followed by complete destruction and re-creation within the last 7,000 years or so.

This is an attempt to compromise between the obvious implication of Genesis that creation was fairly recent versus the geologic ages claimed by evolutionists. The Gap Theory has been around since the early 1800s but was little known until Scofield and Dake included it in the footnotes of their reference Bibles.

c. Progressive Creation or the **Day-Age** Theory: The “days” of Genesis really lasted millions of years. God gradually created new types of creatures by modifying existing ones.

This is not creation in the same sense as “a” and “b;” it is actually the Punctuated Equilibria version of theistic evolution.

Throughout this series of lessons, make sure that your students always keep in mind that evolution implies initial disorganization with later increase in complexity, while creation implies initial complexity with later deterioration -- that is, “simple to complex” versus “complex to simple.” The two concepts are exactly opposite.

### How Science Works.

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Many people think that science proves evolution. This is because they are rather fuzzy in their understanding of what the word “science” means. Nowadays we say that if a person does something well, he has it “down to a science.” Some even call the sport of boxing the “sweet science.” We use the word in so many ways that it doesn’t mean much any more. However, in this class we will use “science” to refer to those areas of study to which we can apply the scientific method. Use the transparency to clarify and demonstrate the scientific method.

Take an object such as a pen out of your pocket and go through the steps of the scientific method.

- (1) You can ask, “What happens when we put a pen on a table?”
- (2) Tell the class they can study to find out what a pen is, what a table is, what experiments have been done, etc.
- (3) Formulate a hypothesis such as “I think a pen will stay on a table when I put it there.”
- (4) Devise a way to test the hypothesis. An easy way to do this is to set up a table on which you can place the pen.
- (5) Perform the test and observe the results by putting the pen on the table as the students watch. Repeat the process as many times as you want. Point out the fact that you can vary the experiment: use the left hand, reach around behind your back, have somebody else put the pen down, tilt the table, etc.
- (6) They can now report their observation that a pen stays on a table when you put it there, as well as their conclusions about why it stays (friction, gravity, etc.). If they were writing a report, they would give as many details as possible so that others could repeat and build upon their work. For instance, others might want to see how far the table can be tilted before the pen slides off.

Though this is an extremely simplified example, it's how science works. You have performed a REPEATABLE action; you can put the pen down over and over and it acts the same every time. This action takes place in the PRESENT in the presence of OBSERVERS. These are necessary characteristics of science.

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6. The scientific method requires **observation**. Since a process or event must be **repeatable** in order to allow testing and since we cannot repeat the past, science has to do with the **present**.

Let's consider a situation that has to do with the past. How do we know George Washington was the first President of the United States? We can't put his presidency in a test tube; instead, we have to rely on the testimony of eyewitnesses.

7. History occurred in the **past** and cannot be **repeated**. It requires at least one **eyewitness** account.

Yet another situation occurs when we deal with past events for which there are no available eyewitness accounts.

8. When we deal with a PAST event or process which is NON-REPEATABLE and for which we have NO EYEWITNESSES, all we can do is express our **belief**.

#### **Science vs. Storytelling.**

Just because something is a belief doesn't automatically mean it's wrong, but the best we can do is search for circumstantial evidence to support it. We can never be sure our belief is correct without an eyewitness to back it up. Let's say, for example, that we want to know how a bone turned into a fossil. Even if we could make an exact copy, we could never be sure that the process we used was the same process that happened to the original. Perhaps there is more than one way to achieve the same result. In order to be absolutely certain, we would need an eyewitness account.

So how does this bear on the creation/evolution controversy?

9. Creation is either **history** or **belief**, depending on whether the Bible is reliable. Evolution is only a **belief**.

Genesis claims to be God's eyewitness account. There are no eyewitness accounts of evolution. There is no possibility of ever obtaining one, because our primitive apelike ancestors wouldn't have been intelligent enough to write down what they saw!

10. Recorded human history goes back only a few thousand years. Anything anybody tells us about events that took place millions of years ago is nothing but a made-up **story**.

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Most of what we hear about the prehistoric past is nothing more than a made up story. We see beautiful dinosaur dioramas on TV and in textbooks, but all scientists find are jumbled up bones that they put together and make up stories about!

Sometimes there is a bit of science mixed in with the storytelling. Suppose a paleontologist (a specialist in fossils) discovers a bone of a previously unknown

species. He searches the scientific literature to see what it is most similar to, then publishes an article saying that he believes it belongs to a new species of dinosaur. He describes where it was found and what he thinks the complete skeleton will look like if we find one. He also says that the animal had a nasty temper and bad breath.

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Use the transparency to show your class that part of what he is doing follows the scientific method. He decides what he wants to know (*What kind of animal did this come from?*). He gathers information. He formulates a hypothesis. He devises a way to test it - digging. (Nobody said it had to be easy.) He does his best to perform the test by digging himself. He tells others about his work so they can participate in the search for a complete skeleton. However, the part about the nasty temper and bad breath has nothing to do with science. There is no way to test it.

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Likewise, some things that have to do with the past can be tested at least indirectly: trends and tendencies in nature that have continued until the present, or processes that left direct evidence. However, other things cannot be tested at all. Since we cannot experiment on God, science cannot tell us who He is nor why He created everything. Nor can we test specific details such as whether the first man was really named Adam, whether he understood the consequences of disobedience, etc. Such topics are in the realm of theology, not science.

Creation and evolution are not just matters of intellectual curiosity, though; they are the foundational beliefs underlying opposing world views.

11. A belief on which we build a system of values and ethics becomes a **religion**.

We will see in Lesson 2 that both creation and evolution lead to value systems by which people live their lives. Despite evolutionists' claims that their belief is "proven scientific fact," it is every bit as religious as creation is. (We will look at the scientific flaws of evolution beginning in Lesson 3.)

Since these opposing beliefs are ultimately religious in nature, to what do believers on each side look for support?

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12. Creation is a religion that claims to be based on **revelation**;  
Evolution is a religion based on **speculation**.

Even those who reject the Bible have to admit that it at least claims to be the eyewitness account of an almighty God Who was there at the beginning. Those who teach evolution have no such source of revelation to appeal to, only the ideas of men who were not there.

### **Science and the Need for God.**

Evolutionists try desperately to conceal the fact that creation and evolution are on an equal footing. They scoff at creation because they say its requirement for a creator removes it from the realm of science. This is nothing but an attempt to hide the weakness in their own belief.

- First, those who believe in theistic evolution are no better off, because they also believe God has intervened in nature.
- Second, though they don't want to admit it, even atheists have to appeal to something that has many of the same characteristics as God.

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We are going to show the class how to pull the proverbial rug out from under an atheist by attacking his anti-God beliefs head on. We will use the transparency to list one at a time the characteristics of God atheists find objectionable. Start by covering

the transparency, then uncover it one line at a time. (On the PowerPoint version, press a key for each new line.)

1. Almost every Christian has been asked at some time, "You mean you believe in something you can't see?" Indeed, God cannot be directly seen; His presence can only be detected by what He does. He is *invisible*.
2. If God brought the laws of nature into existence, He is not subject to those laws. He is above nature, or *supernatural*.
3. God has existed since before what we call "time" began. He is *eternal*.
4. God's influence, at least, extends throughout the universe. He is everywhere, or *omnipresent*.
5. If God brought matter and energy into existence and then brought laws of nature into existence to govern how they operate, He is either directly or indirectly responsible for everything that has ever happened in the physical universe. He is all-powerful or *omnipotent*.
6. "Who made God?" Nobody. He is *self-existent*.

It would seem that creationists are in trouble. However, theistic evolutionists have to believe in a God Who has exactly the same characteristics. Since atheists don't need God, then, are they the only true scientists? Not at all. They have a god too; they just don't realize it or won't admit it.

Tell the class to pretend that an atheist is standing in front of you. Ask this imaginary person how the universe and each of us came to exist if there is no God. As if you were an atheist, reply to yourself that it was all just an accident. Now, back in your own personality, show the class that whatever we call it - accident, quantum fluctuation, or even evolution - atheists have to believe that the universe is the result of some unknown collection of forces, processes, and events operating without any particular purpose for billions of years. For the sake of convenience we can call the whole collection "Random Chance," with the understanding that when we use the term we are referring to the the whole collection of forces, processes, and events.

Cover transparency #1-14, which shows the characteristics atheists have to attribute to Random Chance. Uncover it one line at a time just as you did when showing the characteristics of God. Start by asking your imaginary atheist friend what Random Chance looks like. Use the transparency to show it would have to be invisible, then ask, "You mean you believe in something you can't see?" Uncover and explain one line at a time as you show that Random Chance would have to have the same six characteristics as God.

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13. Whether we believe in God or Random Chance, either one would have to have at least six identical characteristics:

- |                       |                        |                         |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <b>Invisible</b>   | 2. <b>Supernatural</b> | 3. <b>Eternal</b>       |
| 4. <b>Omnipresent</b> | 5. <b>Omnipotent</b>   | 6. <b>Self-Existent</b> |

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Emphasize that there is no possibility that God does not exist. According to Romans 1:19-20, nature itself points to the invisible power and eternal nature of the Godhead. In other words, there has to be something or Someone who has at least these six characteristics. Even atheists have a god, though they never realized it - Random Chance. Whether you believe in a personal being such as the God of the Bible or an impersonal force such as random chance, you have to take a step of faith. The difference is that God loves you so much that He sent His Son to die for your sins, while random chance doesn't know or care that you exist.

The greatest service you can perform for an atheist is to make him realize that he

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depends upon an impersonal force that takes the place of God in his life. Challenge him: If there is no personal God and you believe in Him anyway, your mistaken belief in Him doesn't matter. But if there is a God and you reject Him, God help you! "Those who would come to God must first believe that He exists." (Heb. 11:6) You have to take a step of faith either way. By believing in God you can't lose; by believing in no God you can't win! Which step of faith is more reasonable?

It is evident that there has to be a God. But since science is limited to things we can test, we can only learn a few things about Him by studying nature. How can we know Him personally?

14. Though nature can show us a few things *about* God, We can only *know* Him if He gives us a **revelation** about Himself.

Has God revealed Himself anywhere? It makes sense to start looking with the books that claim to be divinely inspired. Though we might expect that there would be dozens throughout the world, there are actually only three.

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15. The only three books in the world that make the specific claim to be divinely revealed are the Bible, the **Koran**, and the Book of **Mormon**.

Though this course does not deal with cults and world religions, we note that Mormons also believe that the Bible is divinely inspired, and that the Koran says dozens of times that it was sent to confirm God's earlier Book, the Bible. The Bible makes no such complimentary statements about these other "holy books." Instead, it says that it is the Word of God and that anyone who tries to add to it is cursed. (Rev. 22:19)

What about the books of other religions besides the Koran and the book of Mormon?

16. All the rest of the world's "Holy Books" claim nothing more than to be the wisdom of the "**ascended masters**."

These include the books of Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Taoism, Daoism, etc. The "ascended masters" are religious leaders (e.g., Buddha and Confucius) who are supposed to have advanced to a higher spiritual plane than the rest of us

17. The religions based on these other books all accept evolution. According to their own religions, then, the ascended masters (like all humans) are nothing more than highly evolved **apes**.

18. If evolution is true, we are thinking with modified **ape brains**. We may have just invented the concept of "God" as we were evolving. We can never be sure about anything.

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Imagine a psychology experiment in which we observe two highly intelligent apes through a one-way mirror. They communicate with each other using sign language and grunts. Their discussion concerns a concept that to them is very deep and significant: *What is the meaning of bananas?* We, of course, are practically rolling on the floor with laughter. While they are proud of their intelligence, we find their stupidity hilarious. They are too stupid to know how stupid they are!

Their problem is that they have no standard by which to judge their thought

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processes. But if we evolved from apelike ancestors, we are no better off. We can't be sure that our deep questions of philosophy and theology - *What is the meaning of life? Why are we here?* - make any more sense than their search for the meaning of bananas. Only if we have an absolute point of reference - a revelation from someone who knows everything - can we be sure about anything.

19. We can only be sure about what happened in the beginning if we have an **eyewitness** account. God was there and knows what happened; the scientists were not, and are only guessing.

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Nevertheless, some continue to pretend that the religious roots of creation render it invalid and useless in science. They should think carefully about where science itself came from.

- There are two main schools of religious thought in the world: Eastern (e.g., Hinduism and Buddhism) and Western (e.g., Christianity and Judaism). According to eastern religions, our sense of personhood and our perception of an objective physical universe are deceptions. Each person creates his or her own version of reality. Since each person's universe is different, there is no hope of accurately observing or measuring the universe.
- According to western religions, there is indeed an objective physical universe which can be measured and known with a certain degree of accuracy. The logical consequence? The scientific method.

There is no way a follower of eastern religion can logically convince one from the western school of thought to change his mind, and vice versa. Either position is a matter of faith. Ultimately, then, science itself is a religious concept that grew out of western religious thought.

Let's not be intimidated by those who try to persuade us that creation must be eliminated because of its religious roots. *Everybody's* ideas are grounded in some sort of religion or philosophy. If we eliminate one we should eliminate all; if we allow one we should allow all.

**Challenge:**

Are you putting your trust in the word of men who were not there, or the word of God, who was?