

Science and the Bible – Friends or Foes?
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

"Religion without science is lame, but science, without religion is blind." Albert Einstein.

Many seem to think that science and religion are at war. This is unfortunate because they are intended to be complementary disciplines, not opposing views. Let's do a brief true or false quiz.

True or False – The Big- Bang theory takes the place of God in creation-False!
Actually, this widely accepted theory threatens atheism more than Biblical faith. More and more atheists are reluctant to use it as evidence because it shows that the cosmos is not eternal, it had a beginning and it reinforces Genesis 1:1 –"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The big- bang theory is not an alternative to God. It is only offered as a method God may have used to reveal His- "Creation moment" when time itself, the universe and its laws came into existence.

True or False – The Bible does NOT disclose the actual age of the earth –True!
The Hebrew word for day can describe a period of time other than 24 hours. Our 24 hour day is measured by earth's interaction with the Sun. But the Bible reveals that the Sun was not created until the fourth era (Genesis 1:14 – 19). Debates over the age of planet Earth have been based on estimates from a few thousand to a few billion years. I have friends on either side of this debate but we have agreed that the Who and the why of creation are far more important than the when. I haven't discovered that many devout believers and the majority of Evangelical Bible scholars view the six days of creation as long periods of "Geological Epochs," rather than 24 hour days.

True or False- Evolution explains life, so God isn't needed – False!
In recent years at least 6 theories or interpretations of evolution have been set forth and not all of them are atheistic by any means. At Acadia University I took a course in Geology under Prof. Merrill F Bancroft. He was a professing Christian who classified himself as an Theistic evolutionists. For him, evolution with all its limitations did not replace God, rather our Creator was involved and guided the process at all levels- "The hand that made us is Divine."

Later, I took a course in Anthropology under Dr. Alexander Grigolia from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. He taught that the missing links were still missing. He saw each order or family as a special creation, allowing for change within the species, according to their kind, but no proof of one species moving over into another. When rightly understood he saw no real conflict between anthropology and Christianity.

In recent years, scientists have become increasingly aware that the universe is fine – tuned both at its origin and in it's unfolding. We now know that life could not exist if a variety of gravitational, nuclear and electromagnetic forces were changed to the slightest degree.

"If you study science deeply enough and long enough, it will eventually force you to believe in God." -Lord Kelvin

