



Lesson Guide

Lesson 5 - Science: What is True?

Introduction

In this, our fifth worldview tour, we will head northwest, enter the cavern of nature, gaze upon the jewels of creation, and establish yet another important pillar in the Temple of Truth: *Science*. In the process, we will discover that whereas “the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1) so that the Creator’s “invisible attributes are plainly seen” (Romans 1:20), mankind has nevertheless chosen to ignore the obvious truth, twisting scientific investigation into a vehicle for propagating a godless philosophy of human independence and self-determination.

Themes

Having completed our brief and cursory discussion of the nature and character of God, we turn now to consider a very different question: what does “the stuff in the box” really tell us when we honestly look at it? Dr. Tackett argues that *scientific investigation* – “the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment” – is also a valid way of ascertaining *truth*. For when we open the box, we find that it is filled with voices that speak to us loudly about the majesty and power of the One who has created the physical universe. Everywhere we look – whether up at the grandeur of the stars and galaxies or deep into the tiny and elegantly designed inner workings of a living cell – there is evidence that the cosmos is the handiwork of an intelligent, rational mind. In the contemplation of nature, we come face to face with the truth that *God exists* and that *He has revealed Himself to us*, not only through His written Word (*special revelation*) but also through the works of His hands (*general revelation*).

Our natural reaction to this experience should be like that of a child: wonder, marvel, and praise for the Creator. But because of the effects of the fall and the polarizing influence of the *Cosmic Battle*, man shows a tendency to deny what is plain to the senses and to “exchange the truth of God for a lie” (Romans 1:25). Driven by this impulse, he transforms straightforward scientific inquiry, which properly concerns itself with *particulars*, into an all-embracing *philosophy*, which claims to establish *universals* on the basis of the “stuff in the box.” The result is the propagation of a *worldview* that “scientifically” excludes the Creator, thus “freeing” mankind from accountability to a higher authority.

Central to this philosophy are the assertions of Darwinian evolutionary theory. By keeping the details of creation’s story completely inside “the box,” evolution effectively rules out the existence of God. Herein lies the *heart* of the debate over “Intelligent Design.” Atheist C. Richard Bozarth actually goes so far as to claim that “evolution destroys utterly and finally the very reason Jesus’ earthly life was supposedly made necessary.” It is exactly this kind of *philosophical* assumption that inspires the visceral antagonism of evolutionists toward anyone who dares question the validity of their theory. This is why Darwinists so fervently assert that “evolution is no longer merely a theory, but an established *fact*.” But the truth of the matter, as

Dr. Tackett and his guest experts demonstrate in great detail, is that the theory is *not* supported by the evidence. Many inside the scientific community are beginning to recognize this. But they dare not acknowledge it publicly because of the worldview issues at stake. As Dr. David Berlinski says, “The consequences are serious.”

Points to Watch For

The essence of Dr. Tackett’s message may be summed up as follows: fallen man ignores the plain evidence of objective scientific inquiry and promotes the atheistic *philosophy* of evolutionary theory primarily because he is determined to do as he pleases without answering to a higher authority. This charge may make some group participants uncomfortable precisely because it hits so close to home. Dr. Tackett also illustrates the point that *ideas have consequences* by drawing a historical connection between Darwinian theory and the horrors of Nazi Germany. Some students may feel inclined to debate his assertions in this regard.

Discussion Questions

- 1) **What “jewels” did you see on this tour? Were any of them particularly striking to you? Why?**
- 2) **Have you ever experienced the wonder of God’s creation? If so, share that story briefly with us.**
- 3) **Jean-Paul Sartre said that the Great Philosophical Question is, “Why is there *something* rather than *nothing*?” Is science capable of answering this question? Why or why not?**
- 4) **In Romans 1:20, the apostle Paul tells us that God’s “invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.” How is it possible to perceive *invisible* truths in tangible, physical realities? Have you ever had such an experience?**
- 5) **In scientific terms, what do we mean by the words *hypothesis*, *theory*, and *law*? Given the definitions of these words, is there any basis for Carl Sagan’s assertion that “evolution is a *fact*?” At what point in the scientific process would such a statement become invalidated?**
- 6) **Discuss some of the “imaginative” ways in which scientists have managed to skirt around the problems inherent to evolutionary theory. Are their solutions tenable? Why or why not?**
- 7) **How have evolution-based *philosophical* assumptions led to *social* abuses in our own day?**



Outline

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- I. Introduction
 - A. Psalm 19:1-4 – “The heavens declare the Glory of God” – General Revelation
 - B. Romans 1:18-20 – “God has made it plain to them...”
 - C. Only two possibilities: the cosmos has always existed or the cosmos had a beginning – either one poses a serious problem for those who deny a Creator
- II. Design vs. Randomness
 - A. Earliest scientists were convinced that the universe bore evidence of design
 - B. Scrabble Example – Where does the organized information in the genetic code come from?
 - C. Wald- “Time is the hero of the plot...the impossible becomes possible.”
- III. Examining Darwin’s Theory
 - A. Hypothesis, theory, law – data must confirm investigation of truth claims
 - B. Darwinian Evolution taught as “Fact” – Does his theory match reality?
 - C. Paley’s Argument – Anyone who looks at a pocket watch understands that it was designed with intelligent purpose
 - D. Ignoring the obvious – Francis Crick: You’ve got to keep in mind that all of this was not designed
- IV. Testing Carl Sagan’s Statement – “Evolution is a fact amply demonstrated by the fossil record and contemporary molecular biology.”
 - A. Contemporary Molecular Biology – testing Darwin’s statement that his theory would absolutely break down if it could be demonstrated that a complex organism could not come into existence without numerous, successive slight modifications

1. In the 19th century, the cell was viewed as a simple glob of plasma, a black box; today, micro technology reveals a cell filled with exquisite machinery
 2. Irreducible complexity – The cell cannot exist if one component of the machinery is missing – Examples: mouse trap and the flagellum motor
 3. It is in the realm of molecular genetics where we see the most compelling evidence of design on earth – evolution fails Darwin’s test
- B. The fossil record – testing Darwin’s statement that if one can’t find all of the fine, graduated evolutionary steps in the fossil record, then one can rightly reject the theory
1. If speciation requires many thousands of morphological changes, there should be some fossil evidence of those changes – Darwin agreed they weren’t there, but only because we hadn’t dug up enough fossils
 2. 120 years after Darwin’s time we have a lot more fossil evidence than he did, but we have even less support for his evolutionary theories
 3. Theory of punctuated equilibrium – offered by evolutionist Gould because of the lack of evidence in the fossil record; purports immediate speciation to account for the missing links
 4. Icons of Evolution – used for years as “proof” of evolution – all are inaccurate and outdated
 5. Theory of directed panspermia – purports that the first living cell was sent to earth from another planet – offered by Crick because evidence was overwhelmingly against spontaneous generation
 6. Evolution again fails Darwin’s own test
- V. Conclusion
- A. Lovtrup: “I believe that one day the Darwinian myth will be ranked the greatest deceit in the history of science”
 - B. This is a worldview battle – a battle that is much deeper than a scientific theory - Evolution destroys any foundation for a standard of ethics or morality – man has exchanged the truth of God for a lie (evolution) so that he may be free to follow his inner desires



Key Terms

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Charles Darwin (1809-1882): British naturalist who proposed the theory of evolution through natural selection in his book *The Origin of Species* (1859). This book, and Darwin's theories, have had massive ideological and philosophical effects on our world and humanity.

Darwinian Evolution/Darwinism: A specific area of evolutionary biology involving natural selection proposed by Charles Darwin.

Directed Panspermia: Theory that suggests that highly-evolved life forms sent microorganisms or biochemical compounds from outer space to earth. Francis Crick developed this hypothesis to explain life on earth.

Fossil Record: The fossilized remains of plants and animals that provide the evidential means to understand when those organisms were alive, where they lived, and what they looked like.

Francis Crick (1916-2004): Co-discoverer of DNA who rejected the evidence of design. During the 1960s he became concerned with the origins of the genetic code and in the early 1970s proposed the theory of Directed Panspermia.

Great Cosmological Question: Where did the cosmos come from? The cosmos either had a beginning or has always existed.

Hypothesis: Very early assumption made on the basis of limited evidence used as a starting point for further investigation.

Intelligent Design: Scientific theory that nature and complex biological structures were intelligently designed and, as such, are not the result of chance. Proponents of intelligent design argue that there is empirical evidence that is subject to scientific investigation that complex biological systems and the information bearing properties of DNA could not have been created by natural selection.

Irreducible Complexity: A complex system that could not function if it were any simpler, and therefore could not possibly have been formed by successive additions to a precursor system with the same functionality. An analogy often given in support of irreducible complexity is the mousetrap.

Jonathan Wells: Biologist, senior fellow of the Discovery Institute, and author of *Icons of Evolution*. A prominent spokesperson for the intelligent design movement, Wells' book proves that many of the most commonly accepted arguments for evolution are invalid.

Law: A statement of scientific fact that a particular natural or scientific phenomenon is invariable under given circumstances

Michael Behe: American biochemist, senior fellow of the Discovery Institute's Center for Science and Culture, and author of *Darwin's Black Box*. Behe is a leading advocate and spokesperson for the intelligent design movement who is most well known for articulating the concept of irreducible complexity.

Molecular Biology: The branch of biology that deals with the formation, structure, and function of macromolecules essential to life; in particular the interactions between the various systems of a cell, including the interrelationship of DNA, RNA and protein synthesis and learning how these interactions are regulated

Paley's argument for design: Named after William Paley (1743-1805), this is sometimes referred to as the watchmaker analogy: it is plain to see that the parts in a watch are designed and placed in relationship with each other for a purpose and that the watch therefore must have a maker. In the same way, our universe bears evidence of design and purpose and, therefore, must have a maker.

Punctuated equilibrium: A theory in evolutionary biology that says the appearance of new species occurs suddenly and without continuous slow variations; species will show little or no evolutionary change throughout history

Science: The systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment. Science and philosophy are both attempting to develop truth claims about reality; philosophy in the realm of universals, science in the realm of particulars.

Stephen Jay Gould (1941-2002): American paleontologist and evolutionary biologist who taught at Harvard University and worked at the American Museum of Natural History. He was an influential and widely read author that developed the theory of punctuated equilibrium (see glossary entry) due to the lack of evidence in the fossil record for gradual Darwinianism.

Theory: Idea or belief about something formed by speculation, conjecture, or deduction from certain facts within certain parameters