

Does Creation Really Matter?

BY DR. DON DEYOUNG



Above – Dr. DeYoung talks with students at Grace’s Cooley Science Center.

Editor’s Note: Dr. Don DeYoung, chair of the Physical Science Department of Grace College and professor of physics, is an exceptional example of a faculty member who has *raised the bar* for students and the entire campus community through his knowledge of science and his biblical perspective. His writing and teaching ministry has also impacted hundreds of people around the world. We are privileged to include

the following article, written by him, in this issue of *Grace Magazine*.

TESTIMONY

I haven’t always accepted the biblical creation view of history. My training was in schools of science and engineering where the usual assumptions were taught: dinosaurs lived long before people in a distant “land before time.” The earth is 4.6 billion years old and

the universe beyond is older still. People have an animal ancestry and are the product of time and chance.

As a young Christian I sought to combine evolution with Scripture, but without much success. One weekend during graduate studies in Ames, Iowa, a Bible-science conference took place at a local church. The speaker challenged us to consider the radical idea

of a recent, supernatural creation for the earth, the moon, and the entire universe beyond. I simply had not realized that this option was still valid. Three decades later I remain firmly convinced that a literal, supernatural creation is the proper view of science and history. And the topic of creation is more important and has more implications than we realize. Incidentally, the Iowa conference speaker's name was John Whitcomb (BD 51, ThM 53, ThD 57).

After graduate school, my wife Sally and I moved to Winona Lake to begin a satisfying faculty career at Grace College. My purpose has been to research, write, and teach science including the exciting dimension of creation. This includes origins, biblical events including the global Flood, design in nature, the time scale of history, and present-day stewardship. These details are important in understanding science, and also in knowing the Creator and Redeemer that we worship. At this point someone may ask, "Why all the fuss about creation details and the age of the earth? As long as we believe God started it all, does it really matter how or when it began?" Yes, it does matter. Let's consider nine distinct areas where creation has a major impact.

EDUCATION

We begin by considering the classroom at all age levels, from the lower grades through graduate school. All subjects are also included; however, science will be emphasized here.

1. Foundation

No topic is adequately taught without explaining its beginnings or roots. And when one looks at the foundation of science, a strong creation heritage appears throughout. It was the creation worldview, especially in the 1600s, which led to the realization that nature was designed, dependable, and decipherable. Science pioneers, both men and women, were nearly

all strong creationists. These include Robert Boyle, Copernicus, Michael Faraday, Galileo, Caroline Herschel, Johann Kepler, Maria Mitchell, Isaac Newton, Louis Pasteur, and many others. Their common motive in exploring nature was to "search out the secrets of the Creator." These science leaders demonstrate that the Bible and science are entirely compatible. In fact they may have been given unique insights into nature precisely because they were honoring their Lord. Modern science teaching should include this motivation for early research and discovery. When the creation topic is expelled from the classroom, students are short-changed. Science understanding then is left impoverished and incomplete.

2. Clarification

Creation in the classroom can actually help students better understand evolution theory. Discussion of two competing issues, creation and evolution in this case, is better than one since "iron sharpens iron." One example comparison involves the study of biological changes over time in plants and animals, then determining whether these alternations are microscopic or macroscopic in nature. The creation view interprets such changes as variations within the original biblical kinds and not at all evolutionary in nature.

For example, it is obvious that corn seed remains corn, and dog varieties remain dogs. The same limitations in biological change are observed in the fossil record, in our zoos, and in genetic research. Another comparison between creation and evolution involves similarities between animals and people, called homologies. These similarities may be hidden at the molecular level or may be readily seen. Because of certain matching appearances and behavior between people and monkeys, the popular explanation is that both must have a common ancestor. However, our students deserve better than this. An obvious alternate explanation is

that apparent animal-human similarities reflect the common Creator, not a common ancestor. Not that we are in any way animals, but certain design patterns of bones, for example, were created quite uniformly across the living world. After all, these are the structures which function successfully.

3. Correction

Many textbooks contain misleading ideas about evolution evidence. Creationists continue to serve as "whistle blowers" by explaining the weaknesses of embryology, horse evolution, the peppered moth story, vestigial organs, and every other evolution evidence. Also could be added fundamental problems with big bang cosmology and stellar evolution. Creationists are not opposed to science inquiry and critical thinking. Instead we strive to restore integrity to science classrooms and texts. In this way, Grace College provides a rich opportunity to promote truthfulness and excellence in science courses without any loss of rigor.

LABORATORY

4. Budgets

This particular item concerns the support for laboratory experiments. There is a great competition today for limited research dollars. The majority of proposals are turned down today because of a lack of funds. Meanwhile, the evolution mindset leads to some very questionable major expenditures. Consider the Mars meteorite which was found in Antarctica in 1996.



Dr. DeYoung talks with students in the outdoor amphitheater, which is a part of the Grace Creation Center. The Creation Center is located on a five-acre wooded area on campus. Dr. DeYoung was instrumental in developing the center in the mid-1990's, and he continues to be active in its progress and maintenance. The center includes a wetland area, and a variety of trees, plants, and wildlife.



You may remember the headlines, which proclaimed the discovery of Martian life inside this space rock. Seven years later the debate continues over this sample with no convincing evidence for extraterrestrial life yet found within it. The research cost for a fist-sized single rock has reached \$50 million and is increasing daily. In addition, space probes costing more than \$10 billion have searched for Martian life in recent years with zero results. This amounts to more than \$100 contributed from every taxpayer in the U.S. There is a surprising lack of criticism of this futile investment of tax funds. I am fully in favor of space exploration since much of it reveals the glories of creation. Christians can especially enjoy space pictures since we know the Artist. However, some research projects surely could be directed more wisely.

5. Crosscheck

Many doubtful assumptions control the direction of science thinking today. This includes an ancient age for the earth, the spontaneous origin of life, and biological evolutionary progress. Creationists appear to be the only group challenging these questionable ideas. Now, I realize that the majority of scientists accept evolution today, but history shows that the majority is often wrong. Creation provides a much-needed healthy assessment of current science thinking.

6. Biblical information

For the creationist, the Bible is an entirely unique book, inspired and absolutely truthful. Therefore this priceless manual is helpful whenever it touches on nature topics. In medicine, for example, the removal of blood from patients was once a common practice. George Washington was actually bled to death during an illness in 1797. However, written 2500 years earlier, Leviticus 17:11 gives the clear statement that “life is in the blood.” Sometimes, science progress needs to “catch up” with biblical truth.

A far different example involves the dinosaurs. There has long been a mystery regarding these magnificent creatures. Their large footprints in hardened sediments are found in many locations worldwide, and especially in the western states. However, we seldom find any marks made by their tails dragging behind. Scientists long wondered about this lack of expected marks left by the large tails. However, Job 40:17 tells us why these dinosaur “tail drags” are seldom found. Many dinosaurs held their tails horizontally in the air where they swayed side-to-side “like a cedar,” not touching the ground. Newer reconstructions now show some dinosaurs with their tails held aloft for balance. There are dozens more such examples of valuable scientific “anticipations” found throughout Scripture.

THE HOME 7. Outreach

Francis Schaeffer pointed out decades ago the importance of creation in evangelism. The reason is that many people today have a dismal knowledge of the Bible. Furthermore, television, movies, and scandals have given a totally false impression of authentic Christianity. In contrast, Genesis is an excellent starting point in explaining creation, the curse, and our responsibility before God. The message of hope that people desperately need to hear naturally begins with Genesis, where the world began. In reaching out to the Gentiles of his day, the Apostle Paul began by describing the creation of the world (Acts 14:15, 17:24). He then built the Gospel message on this foundation.

8. Family values

Certain teachers and professors are merciless in attacking the faith of students. And just as erosive is the nonstop evolutionary emphasis of the news, entertainment, nature programs, and natural history museums. For anyone who wants to grow in Christian maturity, encouragement is desperately needed. Creation studies can provide a counterbalance to the secularism which surrounds us. Fortunately, there are many excellent creation-oriented books, seminars, and Web sites available today.

9. Society

Modern evolutionary thinking has moved far beyond the biology world. Today, Social Darwinists seek to reform society in some very disturbing directions. For example, selfishness is said to be no one's fault or responsibility because the “reptile portion of our brain is very territorial.” We are programmed by our animal ancestry to be selfish and “cannot help it.” As another troubling example, it is said that violence and assault should be excused since we evolved by dominating other creatures in a natural “survival

of the fittest” mentality. In refreshing contrast to these pathetic and dangerous ideas, creation thinking is surely essential to the future stability of families. Creation does indeed matter greatly in the classroom, in the science laboratory, and in our own homes.

CONCLUSION

Biblical creation is part of the rich heritage of Grace College and Grace Theological Seminary. We continue to promote creation in the classroom, not in a coercive way but with enthusiasm. Our college chapel program welcomes creationist speakers from the Creation Research Society, the Institute for Creation Research, and Answers in Genesis. Our students are delighted and enriched by these classroom and chapel experiences.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Don DeYoung is Professor of Physics and Chair of the Physical Science Department. He joined the Grace College faculty in 1972. He is known internationally for his work in creation science, is president of the Creation Research Society, author of 15 books on Bible-science topics, and well known as a creation science speaker. Dr. DeYoung earned his A.S. degree from Grand Rapids Junior College, B.S. and M.S. degrees from Michigan Technological University, M.Div. from Grace Theological Seminary, and Ph.D. degree from Iowa State University.

BOOKS BY DR. DON DEYOUNG

Astronomy and the Bible
Weather and the Bible
Science and the Bible, vols. 1, 2, & 3
Astronomy and Creation
Physical Science and Creation
Dinosaurs and Creation
365 Fascinating Facts about World History
Our Created Moon
Geology and Creation
Thousands . . . Not Billions

Six Scientific Evidences for Creation

- 1 The universe is governed by basic unchanging laws of gravity, motion, light, etc. These laws cannot somehow arise slowly by mutation or natural selection. They have been established since the beginning of time. Each law bears testimony to a carefully planned creation.
- 2 The two most basic laws discovered in nature both involve energy. The first law states that energy is conserved or constant. Energy takes various forms but can be neither created nor destroyed. This law was established at the completion of the creation week when the Creator ceased the input of energy into the physical universe from his infinite reserves.
- 3 The second basic law describes unavoidable losses whenever energy is dealt with. The energy does not disappear but becomes unavailable. Stated more broadly, all things (including people!) wear out over time. Ultimately, death itself is part of this second law, which is clearly connected with the Fall of mankind in Genesis 3.
- 4 The fossil record does not reveal unlimited changes in living things over a vast time scale. Instead, the fossils show separate created categories of plants and animals, many now extinct. And very few fossils are forming today. The great majority resulted from the global deluge of Noah's day.
- 5 The origin of life remains a fundamental “unsolved mystery.” None of the explanations for life's start, either from chemicals in the sea or from space, are convincing. Actually, scientists cannot agree on the natural origin of *anything*, whether life, the moon, or stars. Meanwhile, creation ex nihilo, from nothing, remains as a refreshing alternative to endless speculation.
- 6 We are surrounded by incredible design in nature. Even in the fallen world we are surrounded by beauty, patterns, symmetry, and order. The current “Intelligent Design Movement” shows that complex items such as the eye or a living cell could never arise by chance. Romans 1:20 further reminds us that there is no valid excuse for disregarding this clear evidence of the Creator's work.

Four Tenets of Young-Earth Creation

- 1 The creation week as described in Genesis 1-2 was literal history with 24-hour days. This was the origin of our present-day calendar.
- 2 The Garden of Eden, our first parents Adam and Eve, the earth, and the universe beyond were established fully functioning with an appearance of maturity.
- 3 Creation took place thousands of years ago, not billions of years.
- 4 The Genesis Flood was global in extent and this water judgment reshaped the entire surface of the earth.