

Belleville First Assembly of God

Defending Your Faith - 2017

Topic 9: The Life Sciences

Class Goal: Equip the believer to respond to common challenges to Christianity in order to evangelize the lost and to disciple those with doubts.

Objectives for Meeting Our Goal: Upon completing this class, the believer should be able to...

1. Recognize common challenges to Christianity, categorize them, and...
2. Prayerfully and gently respond to these challenges (2 Tim 2:23-26; 1 Peter 3:15)

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1. Questions from previous discussions or challenges from skeptics?
 2. Biology and Anthropology: Progressive Creationism: When interpreting Scripture from an “old earth” view, the following predictions are made:¹
 - a. Humanity should trace back to one woman (Eve) and one man (Noah).
 - Verified by molecular anthropology.
 - b. The origin of female lineage (Eve) predates the origin of male lineage (Noah).
 - Verified by molecular anthropology.
 - c. Humanity’s early population size was relatively small.
 - Verified by molecular anthropology.
 - d. Humanity’s origin dates between 40,000 and 150,000 years ago.
 - Verified by molecular anthropology, paleoanthropology, and archaeology.
 - e. Humanity originated in a single location near the Middle East.
 - Verified by molecular anthropology and paleoanthropology.
 - f. Humanity spread from this location to around the globe in a relatively short time.
 - Verified by molecular anthropology and paleoanthropology.
 - g. God created humanity at the perfect time in earth’s history.
 - Verified by geology, ecology, and oceanography.
 - h. Human culture appears suddenly and expands rapidly.
 - Verified by paleoanthropology and archaeology.
 - i. Humans behave distinctly from other animals due to “the image of God”.
 - Verified by paleoanthropology and archaeology.
 - j. Humans share some physical similarities with animals, but are not descended from them.
 - Verified by molecular anthropology and paleoanthropology.

Fossil, archaeology, and genetic records support predictions made from the Scriptural account!²

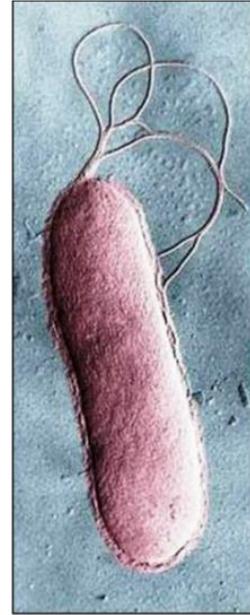
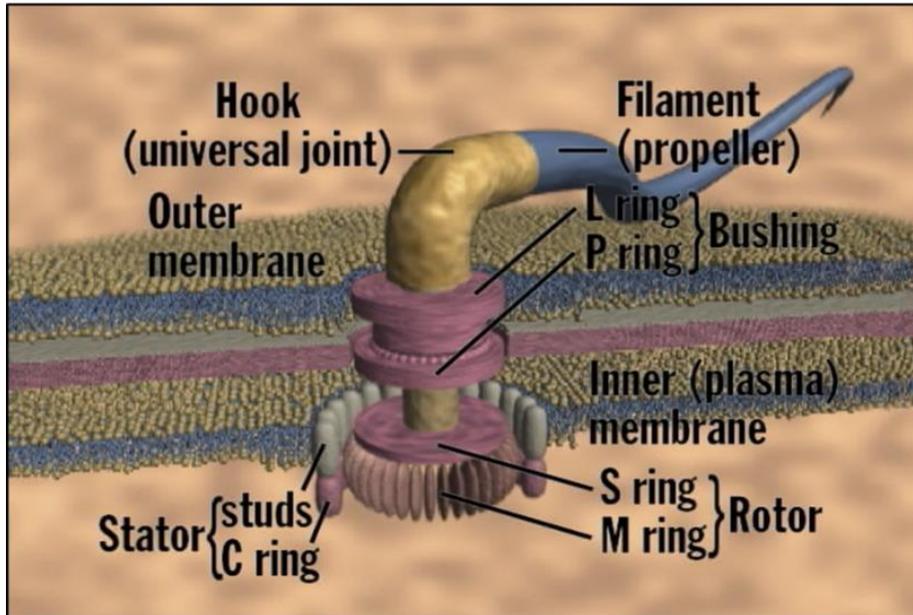
3. Biology: The Teleological Argument: (*telos* = purpose, design) A watch is obviously designed and constructed by an intelligent and capable agent, not by blind, natural forces and chance. How much more of an intelligent Agent is necessary for our universe? The universe evidences too much complexity and preciseness (fine-tuning) to be the product of random

¹ Rana, Fazale, and Ross, Hugh, *Who Was Adam? A Creation Model Approach to the Origin of Humanity* (Covina, CA: Reasons to Believe Press, 2015), 47-56.

² Rana and Ross, 252-254.

chance, thereby leaving an intelligent Designer as the sole explanation. From Topic 7, we found that this Designer is YHWH of Scripture. An honest review of science reveals close accordance with Scripture (Colossians 1:15-17; Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1-4; etc.). Such fine-tuning in biology may be seen in the principle of “irreducible complexity”.³

- a. vertebrate blood clotting
- b. bacterial flagellum



4. Medicine and Hygiene: Around 1500 BC, the Egyptians were recording medical treatments in the *Ebers Papyrus* prescribing such dangerous remedies as “the urine of a faithful wife” and “worm blood mixed with donkey dung”. Around 100 years later, Moses was born and became “educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians...” (Acts 7:22). God later revealed to Moses many hygiene and nutrition rules that proved to be far healthier than the best learning of the time.⁴

- a. Quarantine from corpses (Numbers 19) and diseased (Leviticus 14): verified in the 1840s
- b. Washing hands in running water (Leviticus 15:13): verified in the 1840s
- c. Circumcision (Genesis 17; Leviticus 12:3): verified in the 1840s

5. Conclusion: No other faith system opens itself to the scrutiny of secular biochemistry, genetics, paleoanthropology, and medicine, and comes out in strong agreement. As Galileo reminds us, one would expect the “two books” of God (nature and Scripture) to agree with each other because they both have the same Author. When coupled with our previous discussion on philosophy, we therefore have strong justification that our Biblical beliefs are true.

³ Behe, Michael, *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York: Free Press, 2006).

⁴ McMillen, S. and Stern, D., *None of These Diseases: The Bible's Health Secrets for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Books, 2000).

6. Defend your faith: How would you respond to the following scientific challenges?

a. **Challenge**: Variations must be “gradual”. “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed, which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.”⁵

Refutation: Lehigh University professor Michael Behe demonstrated that multiple anatomical structures and physiological processes in nature must have appeared suddenly, in a completed state (irreducibly complex), and therefore could not have gradually developed over multiple generations.⁶

- Anatomy example: the bacterial flagellum
- Physiology example: mammalian blood clotting

b. **Challenge**: The fossil record will eventually prove gradual variation. “...the number of intermediate varieties which have formerly existed on the earth (must) be truly enormous. Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? Geology assuredly does not yield any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and gravest objection which can be urged against my theory. The explanation lies, as I believe, in the extreme imperfection of the geological record.”⁷

Refutation: The “Cambrian Explosion” of the sudden appearance of multiple, complete body plans cannot be explained via gradual variation. With over 155 years of global geological research since Darwin’s time, there has been no discovery of pre-Cambrian intermediate forms in the fossil record. Therefore, this “gravest objection” to Darwinism still exists.⁸

c. **Challenge**: The ancient age of the earth provides enough time for macroevolution. Darwin required “millions of years” for macroevolution to transpire, “The mind cannot possibly grasp the full meaning of the term of a hundred million years; it cannot add up and perceive the full effects of many slight variations, accumulated during an almost infinite number of generations.”⁹

Refutation: In 1990, Douglas Axe examined the probabilities behind Neo-Darwinism (the inclusion of genetics and mutations). He concluded that the number of functional protein folds of a given length divided by the number of sequences of a given length is $1/1.0 E77$. Therefore, the probability of randomly generating one novel functioning protein equals the number of trials in the history of life ($1.0 E40$) divided by the number of sequences to be searched ($1.0 E77$) = $1/1.0 E37$.¹⁰ Secular statisticians call this number “statistically impossible.” So if it’s impossible for just one functional protein to randomly arise, then entire organs and body plans are even more impossible.

d. **Challenge**: A jump may be made from microevolution (adaptation) to macroevolution (common ancestry). “Thus the small differences distinguishing varieties of the same species,

⁵ Darwin, C. *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, 1st ed., London: John Murray, 1859, A Facsimile of the First Edition, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, 1964, p. 189.

⁶ Behe, Michael, *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*.

⁷ Darwin, p. 280.

⁸ Meyer, Stephen, *Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design*.

⁹ Darwin, p. 481.

¹⁰ Meyer, Stephen, *Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design*.

will steadily tend to increase till they come to equal the greater differences between species of the same genus, or even of distinct genera... all animals and all plants throughout all time and space should be related to each other in group subordinate to group...which we behold”¹¹

“I believe that animals have descended from at most only four or five progenitors, and plants from an equal or lesser number. Analogy would lead me one step further, namely, to the belief that all animals and plants have descended from some one prototype...Therefore I should infer from analogy that probably all the organic beings which have ever lived on this earth have descended from some one primordial form, into which life was first breathed”¹²

Refutations: (1) “But it is at the level of macroevolution—of large jumps—that [Darwinian] theory evokes skepticism... With the advent of modern biochemistry, we are now able to look at the rock-bottom level of life... [and] make an informed evaluation of whether the putative small steps required to produce large evolutionary changes can ever get small enough... unbridgeable chasms occur even at the tiniest level of life.”¹³

(2) “It seems to me that Richard Dawkins constantly overlooks the fact that Darwin himself, in the fourteenth chapter of *The Origin of Species*, pointed out that his whole argument began with a being which already possessed reproductive powers. This is the creature the evolution of which a truly comprehensive theory of evolution must give some account. Darwin himself was well aware that he had not produced such an account. It now seems to me that the findings of more than fifty years of DNA research have provided materials for a new and enormously powerful argument to design.”¹⁴

(3) “A minimally functional cell would contain at least 250 genes and their corresponding proteins. The odds of a primordial soup randomly burping up a concoction even half [this] length are vastly lower than one chance in 10^{150} . The universe isn’t big enough, fast enough, or old enough to generate the probabilistic resources to tame an improbability that large.”¹⁵

e. **Challenge:** Life emerged naturally from non-life. “[the first spark of life may have taken place in a] warm little pond, with all sorts of ammonia and phosphoric salts, light, heat, electricity, etc., present, that a proteine [*sic*] compound was chemically formed ready to undergo still more complex changes.”¹⁶

Refutation: “In the May 2, 2003 issue of *Science*, Jeffrey Bada and Antonio Lazcano, [Stanley] Miller’s long-time collaborators, acknowledged... even as they commemorated the 50th anniversary of that famous experiment... [that] ‘Contemporary geoscientists tend to doubt that the primitive atmosphere had the highly reducing composition used by Miller in 1953.’... Scientists recently uncovered unequivocal evidence that as soon as Earth became even remotely capable of sustaining life, life appeared... What’s more, these first life-forms, though single-celled bacteria, were metabolically and biochemically complex... While early, sudden, and complex life makes little sense from an evolutionary perspective, a creation explanation seems reasonable. If God introduced the first life on Earth, it would appear instantaneously and

¹¹ Darwin, p. 128.

¹² Darwin, p. 484.

¹³ Behe, Michael, *Darwin’s Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York, Free Press, 2006), 15.

¹⁴ Flew, Anthony “My Pilgrimage from Atheism to Theism: An Exclusive Interview with Former British Atheist Professor Antony Flew” *Philosophia Christi* 6, no. 2 (2004), <http://epsociety.org/library/articles.asp?pid=33>, 201.

¹⁵ Wiker, B. and Witt, J., *A Meaningful World: How the Arts and Sciences Reveal the Genius of Nature* (Downers Grove, IL, InterVarsity Press, 2006), 18-19.

¹⁶ Darwin, C., in a letter to Joseph Hooker, 1871.

abundantly in a complex form.”¹⁷

f. **Challenge:** Profitable variations tend to be permanent. “...every slight modification, which in the course of ages chanced to arise, and which in any way favoured the individuals of any of the species, by better adapting them to their altered conditions, would tend to be preserved; and natural selection would thus have free scope for the work of improvement...unless profitable variations do occur, natural selection can do nothing.”¹⁸

Refutation: Besides the careless use of the statistical term “tend” (which was disproved through Axe’s more detailed analysis above), Darwin’s quote ignores his own observed phenomenon of reversion (when breeder selection ceases, animals revert back to their original form in only a few generations). In fact, in Darwin’s classic example of macroevolution (the Galapagos finches), one population of these birds (the medium ground finch, or *Geospiza Fortis*) has already reverted back to its “pre-evolutionary” form.¹⁹ Not only does this violate the evolutionists’ own Dollo’s Law (i.e., evolution is irreversible), but it also proves the Biblical account of the immutable, independent creation of “kinds” (which also happen to possess the God-given ability to adapt, survive, and adapt back again (i.e., revert) according to environmental changes).

g. **Challenge:** Evolution is a scientific fact. “The theory of evolution, like the theory of gravity, is a scientific fact.” - Neil deGrasse Tyson

Refutation: The accepted steps of the Scientific Method include observation/research, hypothesis, prediction, experimentation, and conclusion. However, evolution:

- Has not been observed (compared to fossils, no mutations detected in at least 40,000 years).
- Cannot be used to make predictions:
“Darwin's theory of evolution is a framework by which we understand the diversity of life on Earth. But there is no equation sitting there in Darwin's 'Origin of Species' that you apply and say, 'What is this species going to look like in 100 years or 1,000 years?' Biology isn't there yet with that kind of predictive precision.” – Neil deGrasse Tyson
- Cannot be reproduced, recreated, or duplicated in experiments.
- Cannot be proven.²⁰
- Contradicts other scientific facts, like the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

h. **Challenge:** The multitude of high school biology textbooks cannot be wrong.

Refutation: Jonathan Wells reveals ten false “evidences” commonly found in textbooks [the Miller-Urey experiment for abiogenesis, Darwin’s “Tree of Life”, homology in vertebrate limbs, Haeckel’s embryos, *Archaeopteryx* (the “missing link”), peppered moths, Darwin’s finches, four-winged fruit flies, fossil horses (directed evolution), and the “Ape-to-Man” parade].²¹

CONCLUSION: Darwinian evolution is poor science.

¹⁷ Rana, F. and Ross, H. “What Darwin Didn’t Know” (Glendora, CA, Reasons to Believe, 2012), 3-6.

¹⁸ Darwin, C. *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*, 1st ed., London: John Murray, 1859, A Facsimile of the First Edition, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA and London, 1964, p. 82.

¹⁹ Hendry, Andrew, “Disruptive Selection in a Bimodal Population of Darwin's Finches”, *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, 2008.

²⁰ Hurd, James, “Hominids in the Garden?” *Perspectives on an Evolving Creation*, Kieth B. Miller, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), p. 230.

²¹ Wells, Jonathan, *Icons of Evolution: Science or Myth*, 2000.