

Saturday, March 18, 2023

Ch. 33-36 KYKOGS Young VS Old Earth Creationism

Ch. 33 - Why do Christians have varying views on how & when God created the world?

- Young-Earth Creationism Basics:

- God created Earth in 6 24-hr periods about 6-10k years ago

- Old-Earth Creationism Basics:

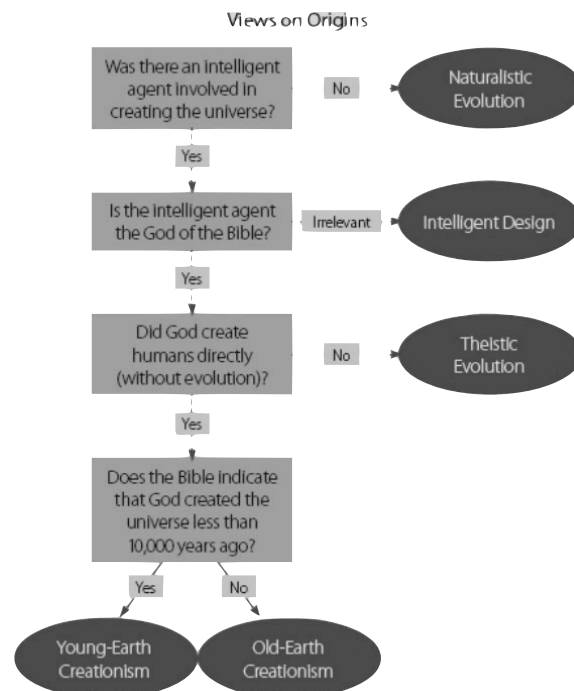
- Overwhelming scientific evidence points to earth being billions of years old & Scripture shows that Bible does NOT require a young earth POV

- Common Ground: God created humans DIRECTLY, evolution was NOT the mechanism

- Theistic evolution (third view): belief that the Holy Spirit accommodated Bible authors by working within their own limited understanding to communicate spiritual truths

- Intelligent Design: only says “life, or the universe, cannot have arisen by chance and was designed and created by some intelligent entity.”

- Intelligent agent (which God) is NOT specified by scientists
- ID is compatible w/ Christianity, but NOT a strictly comprehensive view
 - Doesn't address identity of designer
 - Doesn't address how that identity relates to any religion or religious text



- Why it matters:
 - “The science involved in the origins debate is very frequently the sole dividing line between Christian faith and atheism—for kids and adults alike.”
 - Our kids WILL encounter views in school, college/university, and culture (news, social media, etc.) that strongly oppose a cursory reading/understanding of the Bible that is limited to an ignorant and uninformed young-earth view (***note: it is POSSIBLE to hold a WELL-FOUNDED and FULLY INFORMED young-earth view that appreciates & understands an old-earth and opposing views***)
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Ch. 34 - What is young-Earth creationism?

- Young-Earth Creationism Basics:
 - God created Earth in 6 24-hr periods about 6-10k years ago
 - Gallup poll: 42% of Americans hold this view
 - This view is the conclusion based on the most “obvious reading” of Genesis
 - Question: Is the “obvious reading” the “right reading?”
- Astronomy, geology, paleontology, biology, and archaeology ALL assume an old earth
- Four biblical pillars of young-Earth creationism:
 1. Genesis plainly describes God created universe in six 24-hour periods
 - Hebrew *yom* (day) used 1704x in OT, overwhelmingly referring to 24-hr period (especially when used w/ counting numbers like first day, second day, etc)
 - Scriptures outside of Genesis: Exodus 20:11, Mark 10:6, Luke 11:45-52
 2. Age of the Earth can/should be calculated based on biblical genealogies & chronologies
 - Step 1: Dating to the Exodus — 480 yrs before Solomon’s 4th year of reign (1446 BC)
 - Step 2: Dating from Exodus back to Abraham — ages of patriarchs given in Bible (1951 BC)
 - Step 3: Dating from Abraham back to Adam — Genesis 5 & 11 show 2130 years from Abe to Adam (4081 BC creation date...results in approx. 6000 years total when adding 2023 to 4081)
 - Several ministries/organizations support young-earth, research is called *creation science*
 3. Noah’s flood was a global, catastrophic event responsible for creating Earth’s geological formations

- Pits largely secular scientific understanding called ***uniformitarianism*** (e.g. water erodes rocks slowly at a fairly steady rate) vs ***catastrophism*** (e.g. events like a global flood, volcanic eruptions, violent storms/droughts)
4. Belief in an old Earth undermines the entire Gospel message (regarding the implications of death being present in creation prior to the fall of Adam & Eve)
 - Implication of old-Earth view: God allowed death, disease, and suffering BEFORE Adam sinned
 - Romans 5:12, Romans 8:19-20, Genesis 1:29-30 (were all created beasts herbivorous?!?)

Ch. 35 - How do mainstream scientists estimate the age of the Earth?

- Methods:

1. Tree-Ring Dating: Methuselah tree (Bristlecone pine in CA) is nearly 4,800 years old
 - By aging living and dead trees in spaces like these, a composite minimum age can create a timeline leading back 11,000 years
 - Y-E Objection: trees have been shown to sometimes grow more than one ring/year
 - Appearance of Age Theory (God created Adam as a mature man, why not the environment?)
2. Ice-Core Dating: similar to tree rings, ice caps have layers of ice over years that can be observed and measured
 - Estimated as many as 800,000 continuous layers of ice in Antarctica (implying a few hundred thousand years of age at a constant rate)
 - Y-E Objection: Ice Age by creation scientists around 2250 after Flood; a post-Flood Ice Age (700 yrs long) would cause thick annual layers of ice, which is what we see at the bottom of ice cores we get today)
3. Valve Dating: sediment deposits in layers at the bottom of some lakes
 - Up to 6 million valves in western US have been observed (Earth is at least millions of years old if layers form at constant rate)
 - Y-E Objection: Catastrophic events can cause multiple valves (floods, rapid ice age, volcanic eruptions, etc.)
4. Radiometric Dating: measurement of radioactive decay of specific elemental isotopes (e.g. carbon-14, uranium-235, lead-207) that have better/worse observable rates of decay
 - Example: similar to determining how long you've been driving if you know where you started your journey, where you are now, and know your average rate of speed

- Meteorites (as well as other Earth rocks) have a radiometric age of 4.56 billions years old
- Y-E Objections: 3 assumptions MUST be true for RD to yield these results
 1. Initial rock conditions accurately known
 2. Amount of original isotope & element it's becoming haven't changed by other external processes
 3. Decay rate has remained CONSTANT since rock was formed (could God's curse in Gen. 3 or the Flood have affected this???)
- Also, rocks of ACTUAL KNOWN ages have been dated radiometrically and the resulting dates have been in error

5. Distant Starlight

- Sun is 93 million miles from earth, light travels @ 186,000 mi/sec, 8 minutes for light to reach Earth (sun is 8 light-minutes away from Earth)
- We can see light from galaxies that are BILLIONS of light years away from Earth
- Y-E Objections:
 1. God could have created light already on its way
 2. Time dilation (rate of light flow may NOT be constant), affecting our current calculations

6. Expansion of Universe

- Our universe IS expanding, & using rate of expansion & avg. distance of galaxies leads to 13.8 billion years of universe existence
- Y-E Objections:
 1. God stretched out heavens (Job 9:8, Isa. 40:22), affecting the amount of time we THINK it took for the universe to get to its current point

Ch. 36 - What is old-Earth creationism?

- Old-Earth Creationism Basics:
 - O-E & Y-E both agree the Bible is NOT in error!
 1. Most obvious reading of Genesis is not necessarily right
 - Example: Matthew 16:28 must be harmonized (when/how was the Son of Man coming in His kingdom to be seen by THAT generation who wouldn't pass away???)

- Day Age Theory/Progressive Creationism: long periods of time, chronological accuracy intended in Genesis account
 - Framework Theory: poetic reading of Genesis, NOT chronology
 - For instance, how can plants exist on Day 3 BEFORE the Sun is created on Day 4??? (Gen. 1:11-19)
2. Genesis was NOT intended to be read as an account of six 24-hour days
 - Heb. *yom* NOT necessary for 24-hr days
 - “Evening & morning” verbiage is used BEFORE creation of Sun...are these figurative terms like in Psalm 30:5; 49:14-15; 90:6?
 - God’s Sabbath rest on Day 7 has NOT ended? (See Psalm 95:7-11, John 5:16-18, Hebrews 4:1-11)
 - If Adam only named 2500 different animals in 24 hours, he is naming more than 100 animals/hour!!!
 - Sabbath in OT is applied not only to 1/7 days, but also 1/7 years as a pattern
 3. Death of animals for millions of years before humans existed is not a theological problem for Christians
 - Only human death entered the world upon the sin of Adam & Eve
 - Genesis 2:17...did Adam already know what death was to understand this threat?
 - “Beasts of the earth” Hebrew *chayah* most often refers to carnivores...would this show God’s design for animals to include death?
 - Just because I don’t see animal death as “very good” in pre-Fall creation, doesn’t mean God might not?!?

BOTTOM LINE:

We should have a full-orbed understanding of both faithful, Christian views and be able to fairly & accurately convey both views (even the “other” side for us!), understanding that both Y-E & O-E creationists ARE concerned w/ the Gospel, and neither preclude ***Darwinian evolution (teaser for next week)***!