

The Fact of Evolution

"A growing body of evidence, amassed by Darwin and the early evolutionists who were his intellectual forebearers, indicated that both fossilized and living organisms were derived with modification from either a single common ancestor or a few. The evidence was indirect and the interpretation startling, but Darwin's argument was so compelling that scientific debate over descent with modification virtually ended by the mid-1870s. Evolution was, and is, an established fact.

Evolutionary Analysis, 4th edition, by Scott Freeman and Jon C. Herron, (2007) p. 73

Continuum



Continuum



Faith, Reason, & Earth History, 2nd edition, by Leonard Brand, page 127.

SDA Fundamental Belief #1

The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to man the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the **infallible revelation of His will**. They are the **standard of character**, the **test of experience**, the **authoritative revealer of doctrines**, and the **trustworthy record of God's acts in history**.

From *By Design* training manual...

"The Adventist worldview accepts the Bible as the standard by which everything else is measured. Four key concepts...emerge from a biblical worldview that can be used as a lens for the Adventist curriculum development process:

- Creation (what is God's intention?)
- Fall (How has God's purpose been distorted?)
- Redemption (How does God help us to respond?)
- Re-Creation (How can we be restored in the image of God?)

What about compromise?

- Is the Bible really compromised if we bend a little on the literal interpretation of the first few chapters of the book of Genesis?
- What's really at stake?
- It's important to be aware of the implications of compromise.

Genesis claims God created the world



The rest of the Bible agrees

The creation account is reaffirmed, either explicitly or implicitly

- throughout the Old Testament,
- by every New Testament writer, and
- by Jesus Himself



["A Reaffirmation of Creation"](#) Southern Adventist University School of Religion

God created everything in 6 days

- The fourth commandment says that God created the earth and all life in six days.



God created everything in 6 days

- "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy... For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them ..."
Exodus 20:8,11 (NIV)



God wrote it in stone

- The author of Deuteronomy and Exodus (Moses) states that God wrote the Ten Commandments with His own finger on stone tablets.



God wrote it in stone

- "He declared to you His covenant, the Ten Commandments which He commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets."
Deuteronomy 4:13-14 (NIV) (See also Exodus 31:18)



If...

God told Moses that's how He created the world but He really didn't do it that way, then **God's truthfulness** comes into question.

If...

Moses said God wrote, "...for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth..." but God really didn't, **Moses's truthfulness** comes into question, and with it the truthfulness of the entire Bible.

- To believe in the Bible as the Word of God means accepting that God created life in six days, as He said He did.

Plan of Salvation

- The Bible teaches that death came as a result of sin.

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graph LR
  A[People sinned] --> B[Death]
  
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Plan of Salvation

- Evolution interprets the geologic column as millions of years of death before people even existed.

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graph LR
  A[Millions of years of death] --> B[People sinned]
  
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Plan of Salvation

- If there was death before sin, death is part of the plan, not something to be saved from.

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graph LR
  A[Death] --> B[Sin]
  
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The doctrine of creation interlocks with the following doctrines:

- Scripture
- Nature and character of God
- Nature of man
- Great Controversy
- Atonement
- Remnant and mission
- Unity of the church
- Gift of prophecy
- Law of God
- Sabbath
- Stewardship
- Christian behavior
- Marriage
- Second Coming
- Death and resurrection
- The new earth.

"A Reaffirmation of Creation" Southern Adventist University School of Religion

What you believe about creation matters!

- Without the belief in God as Creator, not only Adventism, but Christianity itself, unravels!



End-time issue

Church	Description of Jesus	Significance
Smyrna (for example)	The first and the last, who was dead, and has come to life says this...	This church was facing persecution and was being encouraged to remain faithful
Laodicea	The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning (which means Origin or Source) of the creation of God says...	The Creator is addressing His end-time church!

End-time issue

- First Angel's Message: Rev. 14:6-7
- "Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters."



Notice what else was happening around the same time that early Adventists were spreading the Three Angels' Messages.

- Charles Darwin wrote the first manuscript of *The Origin of Species* in 1844.
- Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* was published in 1844.

Evolution attacks:

- The foundation of God's worship (Rev. 14:6, 7)
- God's identity as Creator (Rev. 4:11)
- The foundation of Sabbath (Exodus 20:8, 11)

End-time issue



Apparently last-day loyalty issues involve the worship of God as Creator!

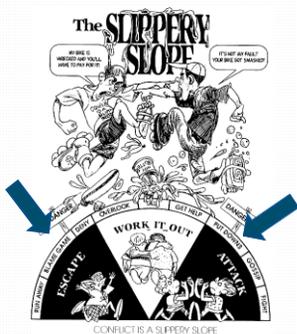
Essential Answer #1

At a time when the Biblical creation story is under attack, how should Christians relate to science?

- With the Bible as our standard, value science as a creation of God, but
- Guard against idolatry

Determining to accept the Biblical creation story doesn't make all the questions magically disappear.

- When conflict seems to arise between scientific data and the Bible, we sometimes resort to unhealthy responses.
- We can ignore it (*escape*) and refuse to consider it.
- Or we can belittle, accuse, and judge motives (*attack*).



Essential Question #2

How do we keep our balance on the slippery slope?

A deeper understanding of scientific inquiry can help:

- diffuse defensiveness to perceived threats
- clarify convictions about creation
- provide us with tools to use as we teach from the new inquiry-based textbooks

All there is to know about Scientific Inquiry

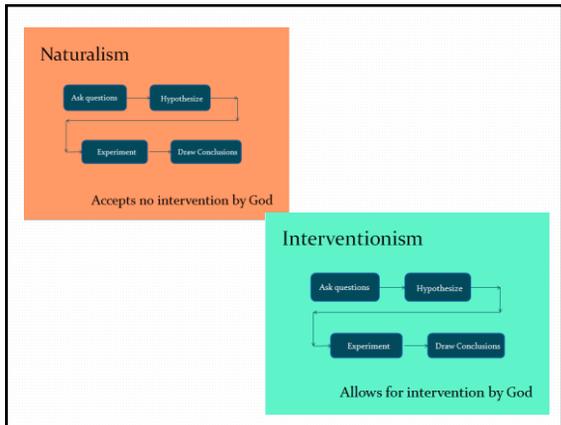
We have 4 points to share to expand our knowledge of scientific inquiry.

What we normally teach about scientific inquiry at our different grade levels

1. Recognize that all scientists work from a world view.

World View





2. There is a difference between data and interpretation.

Data

- Young woman—interpretation
- Old woman--interpretation

Interventionist Interpretation

The cave was formed by lots of water in a short amount of time (like the Flood)

Naturalistic Interpretation

The cave was formed by a little bit of water over a long period of time

Interventionist Interpretation

Formed by a lot of water in a short amount of time

Naturalistic Interpretation

Formed by a little bit of water over a long period of time

Practice

- Bill Nye says there is lots of iridium in the layers where dinosaur bones are found. Iridium is found in meteorites.
- Dinosaurs became extinct when the earth was hit by meteorite.

← Data

← Interpretation

Practice

- This drawing exists on a cave wall
- This is a dinosaur/dragon

← Data

← Interpretation

Geologic Column



Data

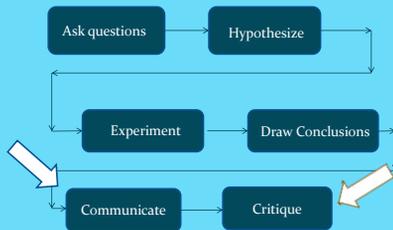
Interpretation: **Naturalism**
record of the evolution and extinction of life forms over time

Interpretation: **Interventionism**
record of the death and burial of life forms during the flood

3. Science is not as cut and dry as we might think. (Science has limitations.)

- In one way, there is **more** to scientific inquiry than we usually do with our students.
- In another way, there may be **less** to science than we think!

Worldview



Examples of scientific interpretation of data changing over time.

- In Plato's day, scientists thought the earth was the center of the universe.
- Ptolemy agreed and also thought it was stationary.
- Doctors used to practice blood letting.

They were no less scientific than scientists today. We just have more data now. Science, by its very nature changes its conclusions over time. We don't want to base our theology on the latest scientific interpretations.

- The success of science has encouraged a tendency to believe whatever science claims.
- But science has limitations...

Limitations of Science

- Sample size
- Experimental design
- Bias
- Flawed logic



Many of these human limitations can be corrected over time through peer-review and critique, and incorrect theories are often "weeded out."

Limitations of Science

- Science works best **in the present**, with things that can be **tested** and **repeated**.
- When dealing with something like how the universe began, creationists and evolutionists are on equal ground, scientifically. No one can test it. No one can repeat it.

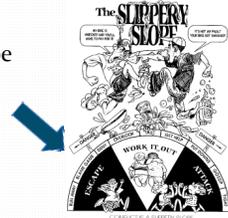
Limitations of Science

- Other things outside of the realm of science:
 - Beauty
 - Poetry
 - Music
 - Morality

Without minimizing the value and contributions of science, we need to recognize its **limitations**.

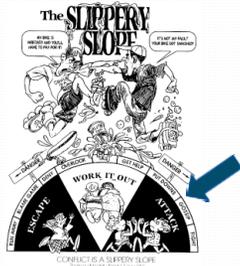
4. Participate in the scientific process respectfully and to the glory of God

- We don't need to be afraid of the data.
- It's ok **not** to have all the answers.



4. Participate respectfully and to the glory of God

- Treat evolutionists respectfully and with Christian love
- Don't judge their motives



- The strongest argument in favor of the gospel is a loving and lovable Christian. (Ellen White)



- I wonder how far the attitude of a "loving and lovable creationist" would go in breaking down prejudice against creationists in scientific circles.

4. Participate respectfully and to the glory of God



Do good science!

- Observe accurately
- Ask creatively
- Experiment thoroughly
- Think carefully
- Interpret faithfully
- Share respectfully

Imagine if...

Adventist schools produced students so excellent in science that they could:

- think deeply about the issues of faith and reason
- thoroughly understand origins issues including evidence on both sides, and
- stand firmly on the side of divine revelation

Imagine if...

Many of those students went on to be scientists, bringing glory to God by participating respectfully and productively in the scientific process!

What an exciting opportunity to inspire our kids!



#1 How we should relate to science:

- Value it as a creation of God
- Guard against idolatry

#2 Four things that help us think clearly:

- Remember all scientists have a worldview
- Know the difference between data and interpretation
- Recognize that science has limitations
- Participate respectfully and to the glory of God

The last word...

(Idea taken from 1 Corinthians 13)

- Though I believe in a recent, literal creation
- Though I believe creation was six, 24-hour days just like the Bible says
- Though I avoid the idolatry of placing science above God, Himself
- What does it matter if I fail to have a **daily, deepening** relationship with my Creator?