

VBS Science and the Bible – By Thailer Jimerson

Well, I am must be talented because I can maintain simultaneously both the feelings of exhaustion and excitement. I'm excited because of our Vacation Bible School that is actually starting tomorrow (if you can believe it) but I'm exhausted from being bogged with the weight of preparation necessary to pull this year's theme off! What is that theme? *Science and the Bible*.

Here's the truth though: *Everyone* has been working hard for this VBS – not just me. You can see the evidence for it in all the great decorations we have hanging around the building here, the volunteer hours spent in the classrooms (and on facebook), not to mention those of us laboring to inform and invite those around us. On behalf of the Brownsburg Church of Christ, Thank you, Thank you, Thank you – to all who have been involved in this effort.

What I wanted to do in this article though is to inform those interested about what I've been cooking up for the adult classes.

I have to confess that after I started, I wondered what I had gotten myself into. If this puts it in perspective any – I have a friend who got a degree in Biology (and who's also well-versed in the Bible) who said he never would have tackled this topic. And considering how this is a huge current and, unfortunately, polarizing issue in our increasingly secular society, it will be difficult any way you cut it. But, as you know, I tackled it. Whether I made a bad choice, only time will tell. However, so far I'm tempted to say it wasn't. Why? Because despite the difficulty of such a topic this is something that needs to be addressed. *Badly*. In fact, I read just the other day from statistician David Kinnaman, "50% of Christian teens aspire to go into science related careers. [However] 1% of Youth Leaders address issues of faith and science." This, my Christian friends, is an unfortunate disparity. It's time it ends.

So, taking the theme of Science & the Bible, here are the planned talks for this year's VBS:

1. **Science and the Faith: The Conflict – Competition or Cooperation?**

In this talk I hope to address adequately the common myth that the media spoon-feeds to us that science and faith will always be locked in mortal combat till the end of days. In other words, that they are irreconcilable, that they naturally contradict each other and no harmonious synthesis of both faith and science can exist. This is a false dichotomy. Neither one of these fields can stand alone. And both will cease to mature each in their respective ways if forced to live on opposite sides of the house. They need each other.

2. **Science's Case for the Creator**

The second talk will primarily be focused on what many have come to refer to as the "fine-tuning" argument. This argument basically says that the universe we live in is finely tuned to promote organic life, and specifically to support a species as complex as human beings. The odds against such a universe and planet like ours existing are amazing. You'd

have a better chance winning the lottery 10 times in a row, basically. It's almost as if someone created the universe this way. Hmm.

3. **Science Alone is Insufficient**

Here we hope to gain more depth in our understanding of the inadequacies of a purely scientific/materialistic worldview that divorces itself from any hint of God. To put it in few words, if God doesn't exist (and science and reason are all that's left) then we have a HUGE moral problem on our hands. Why? Because if there is no God, i.e., no transcendent and absolute moral law, then anything goes. We have no leg to stand on when condemning any injustices or evil in the world. In the end, though, we know we can't live this way. Even scientists (including staunch atheists) admit this – we live as if moral obligation is true and there are truly evil things out there.

4. **Science, Miracles and the Resurrection**

A very common argument is that the Bible can't be true because it talks about the miraculous, and since we can't reproduce a miracle in a lab, they therefore cannot exist and since they don't exist and the Bible talks about them, the Bible must be false. It's not that simple. If the miraculous is the suspension of natural order from the outside, and all science is designed to do is to test the natural and repeatable, then how can we verify miracles? It's simply outside our jurisdiction. So here we'll talk about the supernatural and why accepting them, and especially the resurrection, is not illogical.

5. **Scientist's Rational Choice: Christianity**

Finally, in this talk we're going to use the tools of science to show why out of all the faiths, Christianity is the most rational choice the scientist can make. We'll discuss many factors varying from the history of Christianity, why many scientists make this their faith of choice, and we'll ultimately delve into the Author of reason himself, the λόγος, that is, the Word and Reason of God made manifest in Jesus Christ our Lord (John 1.1f).

As you can see, the talks are designed to take a person (perhaps a skeptic) from point A to point B addressing, fairly, all of the doubts and arguments against the faith along the way. It's a talk that will teach Christians to engage with contemporary issues. And it's also a talk that will be a fair synthesis of two things we need in this world: faith and science.

In case you're curious, I've included below most of the sources that will be used for this series. I hope you find them helpful:

1. The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism – Timothy Keller
2. Finding Truth: 5 Principles for Unmasking Atheism, Secularism and Other God Substitutes – Nancy Pearcey
3. Life, God, and Other Small Topics: Conversations from Socrates in the City – Eric Metaxas
4. The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief – Francis S. Collins
5. The Truth Behind the New Atheism – David Marshall
6. Surprised by Scripture: Engaging Contemporary Issues – N.T. Wright

7. The Case for Faith – Lee Strobel
8. The Case for Christ – Lee Strobel
9. Theology in the Context of Science – Sir John Polkinghorne