

## Truth is Falling Everywhere Except...<sup>1</sup>

*"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all .... who by their wickedness suppress the truth."* (Romans 1:18)

Young-earth creationists (YEC) and philosophical materialists (PM) ironically share one common posture with respect to *scientific* knowledge; they both implicitly, yet habitually, employ it *selectively* insofar as it advances the agenda behind their respective *isms*. For example, even though PMs commonly boast of their rigorous commitment to scientific facts and reason,<sup>2</sup> their silence in the current disputation over transgenderism-shower arrangements implies their tacit approval of the redefinition of sexual identity according to a candidate's *subjective* "self-awareness," in contradiction to the *objective* scientific data of genetics and genitalia.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, although YECs eagerly embrace scientific data under the condition that it is perceived to support their interpretation of Genesis 1, they dismiss out-of-hand other facts indicating that the cosmos is ancient. Each party then, despite the dissimilar motives which respectively drive them, effectively demotes the authority of scientific knowledge to that of a pragmatic tool<sup>4</sup> that may or may not be useful in a given instance for advancing their agendas. The consequence of this ploy is that they each further the disintegration of the authority of objective truth in our day; the former by their denial of truth as a legitimately-binding criterion of judgment,<sup>5</sup> while the latter do so by revising the very meaning of the term. Yet for Christianity especially, this ploy is self-defeating. What both parties (PM and YEC) fail to understand is that the *Bible* forbids such indifference toward empirical facts. The Apostle Paul declares in Romans 1:18- 20 that, in terms of the convicting aspect of the law (Rom. 3:19-20), the testimony that is manifested by "*the things that have been made*" must not be suppressed for the reason that they constitute a major standard by which unbelievers will be judged to be "*without excuse*" for reason of dismissing the Creator.<sup>6</sup> Consistent with this point, St. Paul states that God additionally employs the facts of nature for the purpose of witnessing to the entire world of His own existence and power (Psalm 19:1f.). Consequently, to the extent that this evidence is suppressed or marginalized, the case for God's existence is weakened.

Whenever personal beings, irrespective of their status,<sup>7</sup> make assertions about phenomena and events which can, in principle, be investigated, the only possible means by which such claims can be *substantiated* is to measure them against the pertinent empirical<sup>8</sup> facts of the case. Not even the God of Holy Scripture exempts Himself from this necessity.<sup>9</sup> This doesn't mean that in the absence of evidence Christianity can't be true, but rather that bare *assertions* of God's existence do not constitute evidence. For this reason it is futile for Christians to shield the Bible from the scrutiny of the knowable facts of science and history,<sup>10</sup> especially so since it addresses both of these aspects of reality. Of course it isn't Christians who are gleefully announcing that truth as a category of thought that demands our moral

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<sup>1</sup> My paraphrase of Isaiah 59:14 for prophetic purposes. Consider also Romans 1:18f.

<sup>2</sup> My essay, "Scientism is Not Science," can be accessed at my website: [www.christianityontheoffense.com](http://www.christianityontheoffense.com).

<sup>3</sup> This is especially ironic for the reason that philosophical materialism by definition denies the existence of the soul.

<sup>4</sup> I reject the distinction between the magisterial/ministerial use of reason on the grounds both that it is neither sanctioned nor employed anywhere in the Bible, and that it contradicts a first principle in logic, namely the law of non-contradiction.

<sup>5</sup> This is not to say that materialists deny the consideration of relative factual correlation altogether. What they instead implicitly reject is a sense of moral obligation to *obey* the truth that nature indicates.

<sup>6</sup> Access my paper, "The Bible Expressly Forbids the Suppressing of the Testimony of Nature," Op.cit. (2).

<sup>7</sup> Whether they be humans or God Himself.

<sup>8</sup> The word "empirical" refers to data of a kind that is capable of being verified either by observation or experience.

<sup>9</sup> Access both of my essays, "Truth Must be No Less than One," and \*\* "The Pervasive Employment of Apologetics," at Op.cit. (2).

<sup>10</sup> John Warwick Montgomery. *The Suicide of Christian Theology*. (Bethany, 1970). One reviewer stated, "John Warwick Montgomery was ahead of his time. His writings here forecast the current state of the church and the increase in emotional experience as authoritative instead of the written word. As applicable as ever for the current church apostasy." ([https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_suicide\\_of\\_Christian\\_theology.html?id=p6cRAQAIAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_suicide_of_Christian_theology.html?id=p6cRAQAIAAJ)). \*\* I personally would add the category of objective facts (historical and scientific) to "the written word."

submission is dying, but instead secularists of every stripe.<sup>11</sup> In actuality PM by definition has no conceptual room for truth as a *metaphysical*<sup>12</sup> entity that elicits obligation. As surprising as it may seem, the concept of truth as a standard that is to be obeyed has its foundation not in science (even though science depends on the commitment of scientists to that criterion), but instead in *religious* convictions of a theistic kind. In spite of this however, Christians in their peculiar fashion commonly fail to embrace truth according to this full-bodied definition that follows logically from biblical theology. Indeed, insofar as YECs insist on subordinating scientifically-attestable facts to the “final” authority of the Bible (so long as former appears to conflict with the latter) they are violating a first principle of logic identified as “the law of non-contradiction.” Yet, again, in doing so, they are thereby committing an intellectual transgression that Scripture never encourages.<sup>13</sup>

Now I anticipate strong objections to my suggestion that YECs neglect scientific evidence. It is obviously true that in *some* manner they *do* appeal to scientific data. But as I stated at the very beginning, this happens only *selectively* in the sense of “cherry-picking” for those “fruits” that they deem desirable. Yet the filter they employ for discriminating between good and bad fruit<sup>14</sup> is sourced in Gen. ch. 1. In other words, on their assumption that that passage teaches a 6-10 thousand year old earth, then only scientific evidence that harmonizes with that time-frame is afforded consideration, which effectively means that only evidence of a kind that is already supported by Scripture is admitted. This amounts to an *oxymoron* in that the “facts” that they allege support Gen. 1 are judged to be validated solely on the basis of the passage they seek to substantiate. Yet in order data of any sort to qualify as evidence, it must stand independently from the authority that it is intended to undergird. The Second error YECs commit is the *bait and switch* fallacy in that it heralds Genesis 1 as absolutely true by means of a dubious method of redefining truth.

As I stated earlier, no other means for substantiating a given assertion as true exists than by submitting it to the scrutiny of the data it purports to address. My suggestion that even God obligates Himself to that challenge, then, is not disparagement of His majesty. To the contrary it is a profound affirmation of the character of the Triune God of Truth (John 16:13) in that what His word declares will in *actuality* correlate with the facts of the world it describes. And so it demonstrably *is* the case, that “*The heavens declare the glory of God [even as] the firmament proclaims His handiwork*” (Psalm 19:1).

When such a celebrated thinker as Stephen Hawking by contrast declares that the cosmos can easily be accounted for apart from the existence of an all-powerful and intelligent creator,<sup>15</sup> secular culture is quick to suppose that the case for God’s existence is thereby discredited. Pronouncements such as these also tempt believers in God to suspect that the security of Christian belief requires us to insulate our convictions from the scrutiny of the facts of science. Yet in actual fact, Dr. Hawking isn’t appealing to science, but instead to a philosophical commitment, and that of a kind that is deeply biased and inconsistent.<sup>16</sup> While the brilliance of his mathematical mind cannot be contested, two factors need to be understood: Firstly, his competence in mathematics doesn’t automatically translate into his philosophy. And secondly, mathematical conjectures that are based on *theories* as opposed to scientific

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<sup>11</sup> Francis Schaeffer. Both *Escape from Reason*. (Intervarsity, 1968), \*\* and *The God Who is There*. (Intervarsity, 1968).

<sup>12</sup> The term *Metaphysical* describes conceptions and values which can’t be measured by scientific instruments (e.g. truth, beauty, purpose, etc).

<sup>13</sup> Access my essay, “Truth Must Be...” at Op.cit. (2).

<sup>14</sup> Evidential data.

<sup>15</sup> “Stephen Hawking Declares that Science can Prove God Does Not Exist.” <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/stephen-hawking-confirms-non-existence-god-by-offering-scientific-proof-1467528>

<sup>16</sup> John Lennox. *God and Stephen Hawking*. (Lion, 2011).

facts, don't necessarily equate with empirical<sup>17</sup> reality. Hawking's attention is focused on conjecturing over abstract conceptions which cannot be proven by scientific observations, even in principle.<sup>18</sup>

Observational and measurable data from Big Bang cosmology indicate, to the contrary, that the entire cosmos (matter, energy, space, and time) had an absolute beginning out of nothing<sup>19</sup> in a manner that is entirely consistent with the opening declaration of the Bible: "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*" (Genesis 1:1). Consequently this miraculous creation event, fully documented as it is by scientific methodology and fact,<sup>20</sup> utterly overthrows atheism, even as it powerfully affirms the existence of the God of the Bible. On the other hand, Dr. Hawking's fixation on *theoretical* as opposed to empirical (testable) physics<sup>21</sup> is just another example of employing data *selectively* in service to a preferred materialistic paradigm<sup>22</sup> which, in the end, cannot be sustained by the empirical data.

This ploy is additionally an indicator of that logical outcome which follows from denying the existence of a standard-bearer of truth (namely God). That is, the habitual dismissal of PMs from any sense of *obligation* to follow facts where they lead. In reaction to that illegitimate tactic, Christians dare not follow them into the same miry abyss in which the very notion of truth is digressing into irrelevance and dissolution. For the fact is, there does remain a place where truth marches forward in full conviction. Building as we do on the foundation of God's Word of truth (John 17:17) which embraces His own revelation<sup>23</sup> even as it at the same time elevates His works (Psalm 111:7), we can expect them to harmonize. With respect to the proclamation of the Gospel, the biblical grounds for assurance that our message is true rests on more than bare assertion; it is grounded on that body of facts which can fully withstand scrutiny under the most rigid investigational standards. Consequently, in the name of the God of *all* truth, we may boldly highlight the reality of the harmony between word and our world under the *banner* of the God's providence. Consider three essays of mine which illustrate that the unadorned facts of science and history indeed point to the truth of God's revealed Word.<sup>24</sup> Christians have nothing to fear from the principle of the unity of truth, while on the other hand, we have every-thing to gain by highlighting these truths in our proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

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<sup>17</sup> Op.cit. (8).

<sup>18</sup> "Unfortunately, we don't know [whether such scalar fields exist]. There is no direct evidence for their existence. This lack of evidence ought to temper the confidence with which the Many Worlds Hypothesis is put forward." William Lane Craig. Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Crossway, 2008), p. 169.

<sup>19</sup> William Lane Craig has stated, "...No cosmogonic model has been as repeatedly verified in its predictions and as corroborated by attempts at its falsification, or as concordant with empirical discoveries and as philosophically coherent, as the Standard Big Bang Model. A watershed of sorts appears to have been reached in 2003 with Borde, Guth, and Vilenkin's formulation of their theorem establishing that any universe which has on average over its past history been in a state of cosmic expansion cannot be eternal in the past but must have a spacetime boundary.", Ibid, p. 140.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Hawking and Mlodinow state, "*This book [the Grand Design] is rooted in the concept of scientific determinism, which implies that there are no miracles or exceptions to the laws of nature.*" Stephen Hawking and Leonard Mlodinow. The Grand Design. (Bantam, 2010), p. 34.

<sup>22</sup> Dr. Hugh Ross's reply to my expressed concern that theoretical physicists are usurping the authority of empirical data with respect to cosmology at Biola University, La Mirada, CA on June 21, 2016.

<sup>23</sup> "The Biblical Demand to Take Another Look." Op.cit. (2).

<sup>24</sup> Consider my essays, "Was the Big Bang the Big Beginning?" \*\* "Why Information in the Cell is Fatal to Darwinism," and \*\* "Hoax? Myth? Or Literally True?" at Op.cit. (2).