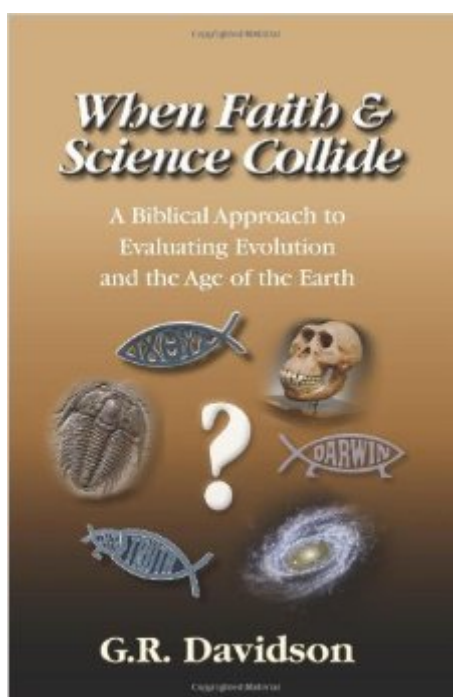


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# When Faith And Science Collide: A Biblical Approach To Evaluating Evolution, Creationism, Intelligent Design, And The Age Of The Earth



## Synopsis

When scientific evidence or theories appear to conflict with the Bible, how should Christians respond? Should traditional interpretations always be maintained regardless of physical evidence to the contrary, or are there occasions when it is appropriate to adopt a different interpretation of scripture that fits scientific understanding better? Answering these questions is not a simple matter of whether one believes the Bible to be true or not, for there are many who claim belief in the authority and inspiration of the Bible who fall on opposite sides of the debate over evolution and the age of the earth. In this book, G.R. Davidson offers a simple three-step approach for examining scripture and science any time the two appear to clash. The approach honors scripture first and addresses the strength of scientific evidence only after satisfying scriptural constraints. When applied to evolution and the age of the earth, the result reveals far more harmony than discord!

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## Customer Reviews

Dr. Davidson's book "When Faith & Science Collide" is a refreshing addition to the spectrum of work that has been recently published on the subject Science and Creation. Davidson has focused his book on a Christian audience caught up in the warfare dichotomy stemming primarily from the interpretation of Genesis 1-11. The issues encompass the history, science and concordism of scripture written about God's act of creation in the first book of the Bible. There are a variety of positions Christians choose on the subject, but the warfare exists primarily between Christians in the field of natural science (Evolutionary Creationists) and those that adhere to strict Biblical

interpretation of the six day creation (Young Earth Creationists). The book sets the stage with a young scientist torn between accepting the academic training he received in college vs. a literal interpretation of scripture offered by a friend. As with most individuals schooled in various fields of science, the young former Christian made what he thought was the only logical choice and went with reason rather than a "fundamental" Christian worldview. Here lies the purpose of the book. Davidson developed the following simple model to evaluate the conflict, "There are three questions that should be asked any time a scientific theory appears to conflict with scripture. 1) Does the infallibility of scripture rest on a literal interpretation of the verses in question? 2) Does the science conflict with the intended message of the scripture? 3) Is the science credible?" Dr. Davidson is a respected Geologist residing at the University of Mississippi.

A very close friend recently told me: "One of the primary reasons I abandoned my faith was seeing Christians trying so hard to use science and logic to prove their beliefs ... and failing completely." As believers, we work hard to find and remove the rough edges in our lives that might be a stumbling block for non-believers who are considering our faith. Often, the hardest ones to find are flaws in our own character that make these edges so abrasive. But if we truly want to effectively share our faith, we keep asking God to help us find and remove them. Based on my friend's comment, I think we also need to ask God to help us find and remove the abrasive flaws in our theology. Obviously, there are certain stumbling blocks found in scripture, like the existence of a loving God while we live in a world that is full of evil, disease and death; or the message that salvation comes only through faith in Christ. These are absolutely non-negotiable and essential to our faith. But there are others, like the timing of the rapture, that are based on our personal interpretation of scripture. And despite the fact that they aren't really essential to the faith, they have caused irreparable damage within the church, for as long as that church has existed. The issues of evolution and the age of the earth clearly fall into this second category. But for many non-believers the idea that we don't believe in evolution is the only thing they know (or think they know) about what we believe. Given that, it's imperative that we, as believers, carefully study the scriptures and the scientific evidence to see what they really have to say to us.

I'm a Reformed Christian whose understanding of the whole creation/evolution controversy has (pun intended) "evolved" over the years. Like another reviewer, my vocation has nothing directly to do with these issues, and I admittedly struggle with grappling scientific concepts; however I have long had an interest in holding a basically true understanding about the issues in question in this

controversy, even if I don't have an exhaustive understanding. Until my college years approximately, I was a young-earth creationist, because at the time, I thought this was the only valid option for a Christian who takes the Bible seriously. Later I began reading enough old-earth creationist literature (Hugh Ross, Alan Hayward, Don Stoner) to convince me that a lot of YEC arguments were not only weak, many of them were dishonest. I began to think that YEC apologists were in large part NOT interested in pursuing TRUTH at any cost, but only in defending their BELIEFS at any cost; there is a difference. In the process, their Christian witness, I'm afraid to say, was largely destroyed, as many apologists have resorted to dishonest tactics, mockery and outright slander. Old earth creationists like Hugh Ross may still be wrong about some things, but my impression from the tone of their writings is that they are much more respectful and fair when dealing with the arguments with which they disagree. This book well disarms the so-called arguments of the YEC movement. And now, after reading Dr. Davidson's fine book, I can see in ways I could have never have seen before, that evolution is quite possibly compatible with the Bible. I am not sure I am a convinced "theistic evolutionist" (or however you would like to term it), but I admit that the evidence is considerable.

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