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A young Earth—it's not the issue!

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Time and time again I have found that in both Christian and secular worlds, those of us who are involved in the creation movement are characterized as 'young Earthers.' The supposed battle-line is thus drawn between the 'old Earthers' (this group consists of anti-God evolutionists as well as many 'conservative' Christians) who appeal to what they call 'science,' versus the 'young Earthers,' who are said to be ignoring the overwhelming supposed 'scientific' evidence for an old Earth.

I want to make it VERY clear that we don't want to be known *primarily* as 'young-Earth creationists.' AiG's main thrust is NOT 'young Earth' as such; our emphasis is on **Biblical authority**. Believing in a relatively 'young Earth' (i.e., only a few thousands of years old, which we accept) is a *consequence* of accepting the authority of the Word of God as an infallible revelation from our omniscient Creator.

Recently, one of our associates sat down with a highly respected world-class Hebrew scholar and asked him this question: 'If you started with the Bible alone, without considering any outside influences whatsoever, could you ever come up with millions or billions of years of history for the Earth and universe?' The answer from this scholar? 'Absolutely not!'

Let's be honest. Take out your Bible and look through it. You can't find any hint at all for millions or billions of years.

For those of you who have kept up with our lectures and our articles in [Answers magazine](#), you will have heard or read quotes from many well-known and respected Christian leaders admitting that if you take Genesis in a straight-forward way, it clearly teaches six ordinary days of Creation. However, the reason they don't believe God created in six literal days is because they are convinced from so-called 'science' that the world is billions of years old. In other words, they are admitting that they start *outside* the Bible to (re)interpret the Words of Scripture.

When someone says to me, 'Oh, so you're one of those fundamentalist, young-Earth creationists,' I reply, 'Actually, I'm a revelationist, no-death-before-Adam redemptionist!' (which means I'm a young-Earth creationist!).

Here's what I mean by this: I understand that the Bible is a revelation from our infinite Creator, and it is self-authenticating and self-attesting. I must interpret Scripture with Scripture, not impose ideas from the outside! When I take the plain words of the Bible, it is obvious there was no death, bloodshed, disease or suffering of humans or animals before sin. God instituted death and bloodshed because of sin—this is foundational to the Gospel.

Therefore, one cannot allow a fossil record of millions of years of death, bloodshed, disease and suffering before sin (which is why the fossil record makes much more sense as the graveyard of the flood of Noah's day).

Also, the word for 'day' in the context of Genesis can only mean an ordinary day for each of the six days of Creation [see Q&A Genesis: [Days of Creation](#) for more information].

Thus, as a 'revelationist,' I let God's Word speak *to* me, with the words having meaning according to the context of the language they were written in. Once I accept the plain words of Scripture in context, the fact of ordinary days, no death before sin, the Bible's genealogies, etc., all make it clear that I *cannot* accept millions or billions of years of history. Therefore, I would conclude there must be something wrong with man's ideas about the age of the universe.

And the fact is, *every single dating method* (outside of Scripture) is based on fallible assumptions. There are literally hundreds of dating tools. However, whatever dating method one uses, assumptions must be made about the past. *Not one* dating method man devises is absolute! Even though 90% of all dating methods give dates far younger than evolutionists require, none of these can be used in an absolute sense either. [See [Q&A: Radiometric dating](#) and [Q&A: Young age evidence](#) for more information.]

Question: Why would any Christian want to take man's fallible dating methods and use them to impose an idea on the *infallible* Word of God? Christians who accept billions of years are in essence saying that man's word is infallible, but God's Word is fallible!

This is the crux of the issue. When Christians have agreed with the world that they can accept man's fallible dating methods to interpret God's Word, they have agreed with the world that the Bible can't be trusted. They have essentially sent out the message that man, by himself, independent of revelation, can determine truth and impose this on God's Word. Once this 'door' has been opened regarding Genesis, ultimately it can happen with the rest of the Bible.

You see, if Christian leaders have told the next generation that one can accept the world's teachings in geology, biology, astronomy, etc., and use these to (re)interpret God's Word, then the door has been opened for this to happen in *every* area, including morality.

Yes, one can be a conservative Christian and preach authoritatively from God's Word from Genesis 12 onwards. But once you have told people to accept man's dating methods, and thus should not take the first chapters of Genesis as they are written, you have effectively undermined the Bible's authority! This attitude is destroying the church in America.

So, the issue is not 'young Earth' versus 'old Earth,' but this: Can fallible, sinful man be in authority over the Word of God?

A 'young-Earth' view admittedly receives the scoffing from a majority of the scientists. But Paul warned us in 1 Corinthians 8:2, 'And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.' Compared to what God knows, we know 'next door to nothing!' This is why we should be so careful to let God speak *to* us through His Word, and not try to impose our ideas *on* God's Word.

It's also interesting to note that this verse is found in the same passage where Paul warns that 'knowledge puffeth up.' Academic pride is found throughout our culture. Therefore, many

Christian leaders would rather believe the world's fallible academics, than the simple clear words of the Bible.

At *Answers in Genesis*, we believe this message needs to be proclaimed to the Church as a challenge to return to Biblical authority, and thus stand tall in the world for the accuracy of God's Word. Ultimately, this is the only way we are going to reach the world with the truth of the Gospel message.

Let's start 1998 by putting more and more pressure on our Christian leaders to take a long, hard look at how they are approaching the question of the authority of the Bible! Please help us fulfill our mission statement: to bring about reformation in the Church!

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