



"The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1)

REASONS TO BELIEVE - SEATTLE AREA CHAPTER

NEWS AND VIEWS

AUGUST 2010

What's Happening?

[Introducing Sound Reasons!](#)

The Seattle-Puget Sound chapter of Reasons to Believe is excited to announce a number of special events coming up. We plan to have three scheduled indoor events; one in the Fall, one in the Winter and one in the Spring. They will occur on Saturday mornings and at Highlands Community Church in Renton. We will have fellowship and food (a delicious continental breakfast) from 8:30-9:00. From 9-11 there will be a meeting and special presentation, followed by a time to peruse educational materials and speak with the presenter(s) from 11-11:30.

The first Sound Reasons titled "RTB Resources" will be October 16 and will provide a comprehensive introduction to all the resources available from RTB, plus a guided tour of the website. We will also address resources available through our chapter.

We will be providing you more information as each event approaches. If you have a question or a suggestion concerning Sound Reasons, contact Mike Brown at apologist2@comcast.

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Thinking as Christians

DAVID PETERSON

When you hear the phrase "Big Bang," you may think of atheistic scientists trying to explain the origin of the universe without God. You may be surprised to know how hard atheists have fought against this idea! Until the early 20th century, scientists assumed the universe was basically static and never changing significantly. Then it was discovered that the stars we see are only one of many "galaxies" in the universe millions of light-years away. The complexity of the universe was far greater than anyone had guessed.

Then, studying light from those distant galaxies, it was found that they are traveling away from one another at great speed; that meant they must once have been very close together. The universe is expanding, and it can't have expanded forever. It must have had a beginning! Einstein had already seen this fact as a consequence of his theory of general relativity, but had adjusted the theory to make it fit the assumed fact that the universe was static. Only after expansion was observed did he realize the mistake he'd made in trusting his assumptions over his theory. He then acknowledged that there was both a creation and a creator (though his idea of a creator was an impersonal god, not one who loves and saves us).

Yet many scientists refused to accept that there was a beginning to everything, because they didn't want there to be a God behind it all. So they opposed the theory of cosmic expansion from a creation event. It was one of these opponents, Fred Hoyle, who coined the name "Big Bang", hoping to destroy it by ridicule. The name, which suggests a random, unplanned, destructive explosion, really does not fit the theory; rather, the theory just says that the universe began from nothing, which suddenly turned into something, and continues to spread out, forming stars and galaxies. Scientists have, in fact, found it was a carefully designed, creative "explosion," more like a rocket launch than a bomb—the "Big Launch."

Opponents of the "Big Bang" developed alternative theories to explain away the observed expansion. One of these, Hoyle's "Steady State Theory," supposed that as the universe expands, new matter is continually being created between the galaxies, so that the expansion can have gone on forever in the past. But both evidence and theory argued against such views, and they have been mostly abandoned today. Other

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Meet Our Members

We are excited to announce a new feature in our monthly newsletter. Each month or so we will highlight one of our members and help you get to know them by having them answer a few questions. Let us know what you think. This month's member is Mike Brown, the incoming chapter president.

What do you do for a living?

For thirty-eight years I have worked in the Puget Sound area representing companies providing physical medicine and rehabilitation equipment. I spend most of my time calling on physical and occupational therapists.

How and when did you become a Christian?

I grew up in a strong Christian family. At the age of nine I made my commitment to Christ. I was baptized by our pastor and my grandfather, who was also a pastor, in a river in southern Ohio—in the winter!

How and when did you discover RTB?



For most of my life I was a young-earth creationist. I was not aware there was an old-earth creationist viewpoint. One day I picked up the book *Creation and Evolution* by Alan Hayward. It was the first book I read by an old-Earth creationist. I was impressed by his arguments, but very uncomfortable with the whole idea. Next I read books by Dr. Ross. This was the deciding factor in my conversion to the old-Earth view.

When and why did you become a part of the Seattle Chapter?

I found out RTB had a Seattle chapter. I contacted Greg Moore and met with him. Shortly after that, Dr. Ross came and spoke to our chapter. I was hooked! I believe that was around 2003.

What is your role in the chapter?

I have done several presentations at churches, schools and conferences. I have helped at the RTB booth at special events. I am on the leadership team, and recently accepted the opportunity to become Chapter president.

What is your favorite pastime?

I like to read books relating to the evidences and arguments for Creation and Christianity (a little over 1,000 so far). I thoroughly enjoy putting together training materials in the form of PowerPoint presentations and handouts. Most of all, I love to share them wherever and whenever the opportunity arises.

What is the most unusual/interesting thing you have ever done?

Two things come to mind. When I was a teenager, I was in the Civil Air Patrol and participated in searching for missing aircraft. I was awarded a flight scholarship which paid for flying lessons through solo. I made my first (and last) solo flight when I was a senior in high school. At the time I didn't have the money to continue lessons. As I got older, my interests turned elsewhere.

From 1991 to 2007, I was a licensed auctioneer and had a part-time business doing fundraising auctions for schools and civic organizations. My youngest daughter worked as a bid catcher, and often my wife worked as the recorder. It was a lot of fun, and a great time of family bonding.

In the NEWS...

[Thank God for Whales](#)

This RTB article by Hugh Ross discusses a recent scientific paper on the role whales play in removing greenhouse gas from the atmosphere. This may explain why God created numerous species as the Sun became progressively brighter on the early earth. Go to www.reasons.org/thank-god-whales#.

[Boundaries of Grief](#)

This Christianity Today article discusses how we often short-circuit the grieving process through medication. While medicine can be appropriate, the Bible encourages us to experience grief in the context of the hope we have in Christ. Go to: www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2010/augustweb-only/43-51.o.html.

[You Beast!](#)

This Salvo Magazine article features an interview with author and bioethicist Wesley Smith about the animal-rights movement and how they have created a moral equivalency between the value of human life and animal lives. Go to <http://www.salvomag.com/new/articles/salvo13/13allen.php>.

[Live Long and Prosper](#)

In this RTB article, apologist James Pattenon discusses a study that found that people who attend church regularly have a longer life expectancy. This seems to echo the formula for a long life in Proverbs 3. Go to <http://www.reasons.org/live-long-and-prosper-going-church-increases-lifespan#>.

[Dethroning the Imperial Inner Self](#)

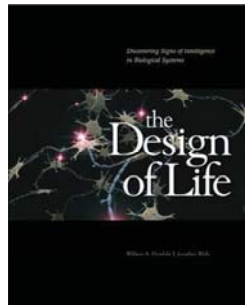
In this tothesource article, Dinesh D'Souza discusses how the culture war that divides our country can be attributed to a decline in a belief of an external moral order that derives from God and an elevation of a belief in self. Go to: www.tothesource.org/8_11_2010/8_11_2010.htm.

Book Reviews

The Design of Life

Wm. Dembski & Jonathan Wells
FDN for Thought & Ethics, 2008

Reviewer: Mike Brown



The original plan was for Dembski and Wells to provide a third edition to *Of Pandas and People*. However, the book took on a life of its own. While the two books overlap in some areas, and even a few of the illustrations are the same, they are very different. *The Design of Life* is almost twice as long (275 pages vs. 148) and covers more subjects, as well as new evidence for design.

The president of the publishing company, The Foundation for Thought and Ethics, states: “More than two-thirds of the material is completely new, and what remains of the original material has been thoroughly reworked and updated. Though there is continuity with the old book, *The Design of Life* is essentially a new book. As a standalone volume aimed at the general reader, *The Design of Life* provides the evidence and conceptual tools necessary to understand the scientific case for intelligent design.”

There are eight sections titled: Human Origins, Genetics and Macroevolution, The Fossil Record, The Origin of Species, Similar Features, Irreducible Complexity, Specified Complexity, The Origin of Life, and one epilog titled The “Inherit the Wind” Stereotype. The book also comes with a CD titled “General Notes” which provides additional information, pictures and illustrations. At sixty-two pages, it is a small book of its own.

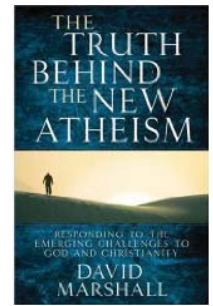
Michael Behe, author of *Darwin’s Black Box* and *The Edge of Evolution*, said: “When future intellectual historians list the books that toppled Darwin’s theory, *The Design of Life* will be at the top.”

Wm. Harris, Director of Nutritional and Metabolic Diseases Research, Sanford Research, University of South Dakota wrote: “*The Design of Life* gives all interested parties in the debate over biological origins the hard scientific evidence they need to assess the true state of Darwin’s theory and of the theory of intelligent design. But it does much more: it carefully fosters the attitude of open inquiry that science needs not only to thrive but also to avoid becoming the plaything of special interests.”

The Truth Behind the New Atheism

David Marshall
Harvest House Publishers, 2007

Reviewer: Jon Greene



This book responds to challenges to God and Christianity by the “New Atheists” -- Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, and Sam Harris. Marshall first addresses “God and science” issues, followed by common questions about the Bible and Jesus, and then ends with chapters on the historical blessings of Christianity, the dark history of atheism, and finally a chapter titled “Consilience.”

The book is well-organized, smartly written, and presents cogent answers to atheist arguments. Marshall notes that 50 of 52 of the greatest scientists living between A.D. 1543 and 1680 were men of faith, in comparison to only 7% of National Academy of Science Fellows and 5% of today’s biologists. Further, many great schools of thought were founded by virulent post-Christian thinkers: Marxism, Freudianism, Social Darwinism, existentialism, and post-modernism.

Marshall states “some churches today set young people up to lose their faith by teaching bad science,” citing as an example Sir Paul Nurse, 2001 Nobel Peace Prize laureate in physiology, who “abandoned religion in secondary school because his attempts to reconcile what he learned about life history to Genesis were squelched by his church.” He adds, “Sam Harris remarked that young earth creationists ask historians to believe the world was created centuries after the Sumerians learned to brew beer! Setting the gospel up for such jibes is not a helpful way to reach skeptics with the gospel or to understand and appreciate the work of God.”

In “Some Riddles on Evolution,” Marshall quotes notable scientists such as Hubert Yockey, Paul Davies, Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinge. He also references David Berlinski on the multitude of scientific problems related to life emerging from non-life, and the intractable difficulty of amino-acid homochirality, which makes “natural” formation of protein molecules a virtual impossibility.

alternatives continue to be explored, such as the “multiverse” model; but the fact that our universe had a beginning is now hard to deny.

Though evidence like this can’t tell us the details of who God is and how He relates to man (that requires “special revelation” in which God tells us directly about Himself), it does show that God exists, and something of His power and nature. As Paul said (Romans 1:20), “since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.” In particular (Psalm 19:1), “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.” These verses describe what is called “general revelation”—the ways in which God reveals facts about himself through means that are accessible to all people, rather than just to those who have His prophets and scripture. And if nature reveals God’s existence and power in a general way to all, it should not be surprising that science, studying nature more closely, can discover more details of that general revelation (including the expansion that is hinted at by Isaiah 40:22, 45:12, and Jeremiah 10:12). The more unbelieving scientists use their theories to cover up what God reveals to all, the more they discover of these very truths!

Why have scientists, for the most part, not acknowledged that their discoveries point to the existence of God? Some, like Einstein, have. Astronomer Robert Jastrow, who calls himself an agnostic, says this about the discovery of the Big Bang, in his book *God and the Astronomers*:

For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountains of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.

But many simply refuse to submit to any god, despite the evidence; faith is a matter of the will, not just of the mind, and those who want to continue in their sin will always find ways to ignore or work around the evidence.

Ironically, many Christians’ emphasis on the apparent Biblical dating of creation persuades many scientists that, even if there is a god, it can’t be the God of the Bible. Christians hold several different views concerning the timing of creation—how long it took, and when it happened. Even if your interpretation of the Biblical account of creation does not agree in detail with what scientists have found, you can at least point out that science now supports the first three words of the Bible: there was a beginning!



Seattle Chapter Reasons To Believe

Who Are We?

The Seattle Chapter of Reasons To Believe is a local extension of the worldwide, interdenominational Reasons To Believe ministry. We exist to support our parent organization and foster local involvement in the ministry. We serve the Puget Sound area and are composed of Christians of different ages and backgrounds.

It is our conviction the same God who created the universe inspired the Bible. Therefore, what God says through His word must agree with the facts of nature. We reject the notion that science and the Bible are at odds and provide a scientifically-sound and Biblically-faithful alternative to Darwinism and young-Earth creationism.

What Do We Do?

Our mission is to remove the doubts of skeptics and strengthen the faith of believers. We provide scientific, historical and philosophical evidence that supports the Christian worldview and helps remove barriers to a belief in God, the Bible and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We carry out this mission by:

- Helping people access RTB and other scientifically and biblically sound resources.
- Bringing nationally-known speakers into the area to promote the scientific reliability of the Bible.
- Assembling a team of local apologists to address questions about science, the Bible and related topics.
- Working with teachers and homeschoolers to achieve a balanced approach to the teaching of origins.
- Building alliances with local churches, ministries and groups to maximize the exposure of the RTB ministry.
- Reaching out to unbelievers with gentleness and respect, encouraging them to evaluate their worldviews.

We welcome your involvement and support. For more information, contact us at seattle@reasons.org. Tax-deductible donations can be sent to: Seattle RTB, PO Box 99683, Seattle, WA 98139-0683.

Questions? Get Answers.

Whether you are looking for scientific support for your faith or answers to questions about God, the Bible, and science, contact us at seattle@reasons.org. You can also call the RTB hotline seven days a week, 5:00 to 7:00 PM at 626-335-5282.