

The Language of Science and Faith: Straight Answers to Genuine Questions

Karl W. Giberson and Francis S. Collins Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2011. 251 pp.

Can Christians affirm the general theory of evolution and believe God is Creator? A new book from Karl Giberson and Francis Collins answers this question with a resounding yes! The Language of Science and Faith offers straight answers to genuine questions about contemporary science and Christian theology. This is the type of book for those wrestling seriously with evolution and Christian faith. It's not a book written in technical language only academicians could understand. The prose is accessible and the language lucid.

Suppose you're having a conversation about some issue related to God and contemporary science. In the conversation, your friend asks, "So what do you mean by evolution?" Or your friend wonders, "What actually is the evidence for evolution?" You could refer this friend to a biology textbook, but few textbooks offer concise answers with the questions of faith in mind. What you need is a book that gives understandable, brief, and informed answers to pertinent questions. Enter The Language of Science and Faith, by Giberson and Collins. The questions above are only the tip of the iceberg. Discussions of science and faith move in a myriad of directions and raise dozens of questions. Giberson and Collins's book answers many of the most common: Is there proof of macroevolution? Can we really know the earth is billions of years old? Does the Bible teach the world is young? Can religion contribute to science or can science contribute to religion? How should we read Genesis? What should we do when science and Christian faith seem to conflict? What role might God play in evolution? Does evolution worsen the problem of evil? Does evolution disprove God? Why are Darwin's theories controversial? Do thermodynamics disprove evolution? Does the mystery of the origin of life undermine evolution? How are the Big Bang, fine-tuning, and God as Creator related? What is Intelligent Design? Did humans come from monkeys? Is human evolution an accident? What about Adam and Eve?

The final chapter of the book offers a contemporary story of creation – a grand narrative. This narrative uses the language and ideas of both contemporary science and Christian faith. It's a brief summary of the issues addressed in the book. Throughout the book, Giberson and Collins make a convincing case that a Christian can affirm both the general theories of contemporary science – including evolution – and the general doctrines of Christian faith. Along the way, they address problems they see in Young Earth creationism, Intelligent Design, and atheism.

Specialists in the science-and-religion discussion will not find detailed or

nuanced arguments in this book. The authors did not write *The Language of Science and Faith* for an academic conference. The dearth of sophisticated arguments doesn't mean the book is erroneous. But it does mean those wanting to go deeper to answer questions such as those I've listed above should consult a more extensive science-and-religion bibliography. This book plays a very important role. It is perfect for cross-disciplinary conversations, university seminars on science and faith, and Sunday school discussions. It promotes a particular perspective – often called “theistic evolution” but herein labeled “biologos” – that I personally find most plausible overall. Although the book may not convince those strongly predisposed to atheism or young earth creationism, it can help people open to serious discussion about contemporary science and Christian faith. This book should convince those sitting on or near the fence on questions of evolution and Christian belief. In this context, I heartily recommend *The Language of Science and Faith*.

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