

Can Faith and Science Co-Exist? World Class Scientists Reconcile Their Work and Their Faith in New Book

As the civil war between science and faith rages on, evidence—via the lives of some of the world's most brilliant scientific minds—that the two can co-exist

What is it?

A deeply informative look at Christians working in science.

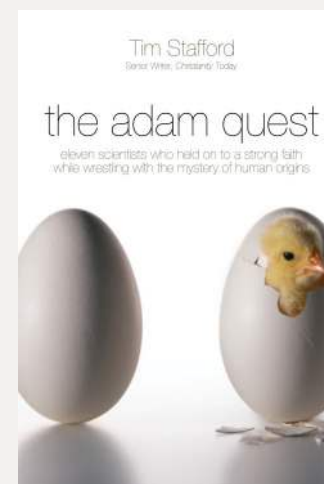
It is no easy task to reconcile the history taught in the Bible with the discoveries of the scientific community. Author Tim Stafford watched the tension between the beliefs of Darwin and the teachings of Genesis shake the faith of his family, ruin friendships and leave Christians in the field of science feeling as though the doors of the church were closed to their profession. He believes this civil war can stop.

The Adam Quest offers a compelling new look at the beginnings of life as Stafford puts questions of dinosaurs, genealogy, and the age of the earth to eleven world-class scientists. A sweeping book – touching everything from advances in genetics to the life of a particle physicist striving to become an Anglican priest – Stafford uses the stories and journeys of these remarkable men and women to provide a new diversity of answers.

How is it different than other books on the topic?

- No other book on the market helps see the overall picture from a personal, faith-based perspective. It's a book about science and faith driven by *story*.
- Stafford takes readers into the personal lives of eleven gifted men and women. He lets them tell the story of their faith and how they arrived at the scientific convictions they hold today.
- It allows readers to examine these controversial issues from a wide variety of deeply-held perspectives. And it lays the groundwork for the body of Christ to come together, if not in perfect agreement—when has that ever happened on any significant issue?—then in shared commitment to the truth that is in Jesus and belongs to Jesus. The scientists profiled have profound disagreements, but they share a deep faith commitment and a powerful love for science.

Stafford says: "Almost all the books on creation and evolution set out to explain everything from one point of view. They are preoccupied with correct answers. That's good, and I've learned a lot from those books. But *The Adam Quest* is preoccupied with *people*. It lets you get to know them. It lets them speak for themselves, without judging them. In the process of learning their stories, you learn a lot about the issues. Those issues are not bloodless or disembodied, they are caught up in these scientists' lives. I hope many people who have been put off by the rhetoric on all sides will find in *The Adam Quest* an accessible, enjoyable way to re-examine these complex and extremely important issues--and at the very least, will come away knowing that there are good, godly people on all sides."



by Tim Stafford

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Why is it important/relevant?

- The subject of origins is incredibly important and divisive. The ability of Christians to articulate their faith in a way that shows appreciation for science will be vital to Church's mission in this century.
- It's important to Christians who are involved in science and feel misunderstood and even attacked. *The Adam Quest* brings a new perspective that gives faith and science space and understanding. Even more, it's important that the church shed its instincts of distrust and alienation toward science, since scientists are at the forefront of so many important developments of modern life. Otherwise, we risk becoming cult-like, cut off from society.
- It's important to science. A science that has no room for God has no room for humanity.
- It's important to the church. A church that has no room for science risks becoming a dead end, a place for anti-science zealots.
- Christians are in a state of war over Genesis. The subject of human origins is extraordinarily important, as we seek to understand fully what it means to be created beings made in the image of God.
- Christians on all sides hold their positions adamantly, often with the imputation that anyone with a different view must be either a fool or a heretic.
- At the same time, many Christians complain of weariness with the contentious and dismissive tone that accompanies many discussions.
- The controversies have grown more heated and adamant in the last few years, both inside and outside the church. New Atheists like Richard Dawkins scornfully target Christians for following Scripture rather than science. Their books have been best sellers and are widely acclaimed. On the other hand, outspoken Southern Baptist Seminary president Al Mohler recently warned that there could be no tolerance for Biologos views among Southern Baptists. Prominent theologians and Bible scholars (such as Bruce Waltke) have been dismissed from their positions for advocating an old earth, as have some biology professors at Christian schools. All thinking Christians know that these are important issues theologically. They are also extremely significant in terms of our mission in the world. Increasingly, scientists and believers treat each other as the enemy.

Who wrote it?

Tim Stafford is Senior Writer for *Christianity Today* Magazine, where he has published many profiles of significant Christian leaders including Tim Keller, N.T. Wright, Lesslie Newbigin, Phillip Johnson, and Jack Hayford. He has won two Gold Medallions for his work on *The Student Bible* (with Philip Yancey, Zondervan) and *Comeback* (with Dave Dravecky, Zondervan). His most recent publications are *Miracles: A Journalist Looks at Modern-Day Experiences of God's Power* and *Birmingham* (a novel). Tim and his wife, Popie, have three children and live in Santa Rosa, California.

Why he wrote it and what he hopes it accomplishes:

"I wrote *The Adam Quest* when I saw how the enmity between science and faith was affecting younger Christians. The two sides don't talk, they throw bombs at each other. I hope my book, at a minimum, introduces people to Christians doing science from a wide variety of perspectives, from Old Earth Creationism to Evolutionary Creationism, and everything in between. I want people to hear their fascinating stories of science and faith, to understand the issues as they experience them, and to grasp that there are faithful, believing, intelligent and well-educated scientists on all sides. These folks have really interesting stories to tell.



-Tim Stafford-

Among the 12 brilliant scientists whose stories are told:

John Polkinghorne was professor of mathematical physics at Cambridge University, and on first-name basis with many of the famous physicists who developed quantum mechanics. He has stories to tell of participating in one of the most astonishing and fruitful scientific revolutions of all time. At the age of fifty, having become a member of the Royal Academy, the highest honor in British science besides the Nobel Prize, he quit physics to become an Anglican priest.

Fazale Rana was raised as a Muslim by his immigrant, physics-professor father. Rana now serves as Executive Vice President of Research and Apologetics for Reasons to Believe, a Christian apologetics organization specializing in origins issues. He has written several books advocating an Intelligent Design position, with particular emphasis on abiogenesis, the study of the origin of life. Rana received a PhD in biochemistry from Ohio University.

Michael Behe is a devout Roman Catholic who came to doubt evolution through his work in the laboratory. He jumped into controversy when he read Phillip Johnson's *Darwin on Trial* and subsequently wrote a letter to *Science* defending Johnson. Behe then published the bestselling *Darwin's Black Box*, which laid out the theory of irreducible complexity. Because he was a working biochemist in an academic position, his beliefs had instant credibility. Johnson befriended him and introduced him to the nascent Intelligent Design movement, where he became a mainstay. Behe also became the target for vehement criticism. His own colleagues at Lehigh disowned his opinions on the university website. He testified for ID at an acrimonious trial in Dover, Pennsylvania regarding the teaching of ID in schools as an alternative to evolution. Perhaps more than any other scientist, Behe has stood at the apex of controversy regarding origins.

Denis Alexander grew up in a Christian home in England. Shortly after graduating from Oxford, he felt God's calling to serve in the non-West through Operation Mobilization. He spent much of his early career teaching biochemistry in Turkey and Lebanon, where he was an active participant in small house churches. In both situations, he was forced to leave very suddenly when his life and his family were threatened. After Lebanon he had to start all over again, forging a successful research career in molecular biology in the UK. Concerned about the antagonism between faith and science, he helped found the Faraday Institute for Science and Religion, St. Edmund's College, Cambridge, which considers issues of religion and science. His book, *Evolution or Creation: Do You Have to Choose?* is one of the best treatments of origins issues from a Christian evolutionary creationist point of view.

Ard Louis spent his early years in Gabon, Africa, where his parents were medical doctors in a remote clinic. Louis attended missionary boarding schools in western Africa where he experienced charismatic revival. He went to university in Holland, his home country, and did his PhD at Cornell University. While there, he was a national leader in the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship graduate student movement. Louis is a physicist doing research in biological physics at Oxford University, specializing in self-organizing systems. He is a young and winsome proponent of evolutionary creationism.

Darrel Falk grew up in the Nazarene church, where he committed his life to Christ as a boy and learned a heartfelt love of Jesus. Because his faith was so precious to him, he avoided biology classes, because he felt sure that evolution would undermine his faith. However, he intended to be a doctor, which meant he was required to study biology. He was completely surprised by the beauty he found in the cell; he fell in love with biochemistry. But since he knew of no way to integrate evolution with the Bible, he drifted away from faith.

Through his PhD. studies in genetics at the University of Alberta and through several post-doctorates, he grew in his longing to regain faith, for his own sake and for the sake of his children. He was miserably sure that there could never be space for someone like him in the warm, evangelical churches he longed to be part of. Eventually, after becoming a professor at Syracuse University, he gathered his courage and visited a Nazarene church. He was astonished that they accepted him and loved him. Falk's faith and his scientific understanding gradually came together in the warm embrace of that fellowship.

Falk now teaches biology at Pt. Loma Nazarene University and also directs Biologos, the organization founded by Francis Collins dedicated to a Christian advocacy of evolutionary creationism.

Simon Conway Morris grew up gathering fossils in Britain as a hobby; he would sometimes take his finds to the British Museum for identification. As a graduate student he did some of the early work on fossils in the Burgess Shale in Canada, which is the foundation for our understanding of the Cambrian explosion. Because of that work, he became famous and was lauded by evolutionary theorist Stephen Jay Gould in his book, *Wonderful Life*. Conway Morris took exception to Gould's interpretation of his work, however. He insists that the development of life was not random and pointless, as Gould suggested. Conway Morris has written extensively on convergence, the tendency of life to evolve via different pathways to one common solution. Conway Morris believes that the evolution of intelligence was inevitable. He is extremely well known as an expert on evolution, and frequently quotes from C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien and G.K. Chesterton in his biological tomes. He is a professor of paleontology at St. John's College, Cambridge now writing a history of evolution. He represents an evolutionary perspective that is far more amenable to the Christian understanding than the random, pointless evolution of atheistic scientists.

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