

Questions of Science and Faith

Abstracts

How Can We Live Out Our Faith Day to Day in the Lab?

Dr Rhoda Hawkins, Sheffield University

What do our colleagues think of us? What do we think they think? In this talk I will explore issues we may face as Christians working as scientists. I will consider how we counteract stereotypes, have conversations with our colleagues about our faith and how we behave at work in the lab. How does our faith affect our working relationships, our integrity and our insecurities? How can we walk into work each morning in step with our God?

Can We Develop a Christian Toolkit for Dealing with Bioethical Dilemmas?

Prof John Bryant, Exeter University

The question 'What would Jesus do?' challenges us in several ways. This interactive session will start by considering how (or even whether) Christian ethics is distinctive. This will involve looking at and evaluating the various ways in which ethical decision-making is conducted, with some focus on Virtue Ethics. We will then attempt to apply Christian ethical thinking to the regular ethical issues that crop up in our lab research and our interactions with colleagues. Finally we will look at a series of case studies in the more contentious area of Bioethics where our increasing scientific knowledge is giving us unprecedented choices. Is it actually possible to decide what Jesus would do?

Suggested Reading

John Bryant, 'Learning to Play God' Third Way, January 2012

John Bryant and John Searle, Life in Our Hands, IVP, 2004

John Bryant, Linda Baggott la Velle and John Searle, Introduction to Bioethics, Wiley, 2005

Richard Hays, The Moral Vision of the New Testament, Continuum, 1997

C. Neal Stewart, Research Ethics for Scientists, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011

Tom Wright, Virtue Reborn, SPCK, 2010

How do I Engage Others?

Part 1 - Exploding Fountains, Chemistry Cluedo and Discussions in the Pub

Dr Clare Foster, Durham University, outgoing CiS student Rep

There are many ways to get involved with CiS and the science-faith dialogue. I hope to explain a little about how CiS works and how students can get involved through attending meetings and organising events. I also plan to talk about outreach talks for children and teenagers, showcasing some of the easy demonstration experiments that can be done at these events.

Part 2

Dr Ruth Bancewicz, The Faraday Institute for Science and Religion and Test of FAITH

Questions of science and faith are raised in the lecture room, the lab, and the pub. How can we use these opportunities to have a helpful dialogue? What are the best conversation starters, and the pitfalls to avoid? What part do awe and wonder play? And what resources are out there for taking things further? Ruth will share some ideas on having fruitful discussions, and ways in which you might use the Test of FAITH resources to do that. This will be an interactive session - bring your ideas and your questions!

Can We Believe Genesis Today?

Rev Dr Ernest Lucas, Bristol Baptist College

Some vociferous atheists reject what Genesis says about creation of the world and humans as simply 'outmoded science'. Some vociferous Christians insist that what it says must be interpreted in a 'literal' way and therefore reject current scientific understanding of the origins of the universe and humans. Both approaches are too simplistic. Scientists need to recognise the limitations of scientific explanations. Christians need to take seriously the doctrine of incarnation and apply it to how we interpret the Bible in order to understand properly what Genesis does say about creation. When we do this we find there is a way to believe Genesis today which accords with a long-standing Christian tradition of interpretation of Genesis and which does not conflict with science.