

Department of Biology and Chemistry
Faculty Publications and Presentations

Liberty University

Year 2008

The Words of the Lord is Flawless

David A. DeWitt
Liberty University, dadewitt@liberty.edu

Persuaded ↳ by the evidence

True Stories of Faith, Science, & the Power of a Creator



VIRGINIA BEACH PUBLIC LIBRARY
4100 VIRGINIA BEACH BOULEVARD
VA BEACH VA 23452

Compilation Editors

DOUG SHARP & DR. JERRY BERGMAN



“The Words of the Lord Are Flawless”

Chapter 3
Dr. David A. Dewitt

I grew up attending church and went to a Roman Catholic school. Although I believed in God, I also believed evolution was true. I considered myself to be a creationist because I thought that God created us — He just used evolution to do the job. I didn't sense any conflict between my religious beliefs and the evidence for evolution.

I went to Michigan State University and majored in biochemistry. When evolution came up in my biology class, the professor had an exercise at the beginning of the section. He placed an object on the front desk and asked students to draw the object from different points in the room. Of course, the students — although looking at the same thing — drew very different pictures because of their perspective. The professor made the point that evolution was similar — depending on how you looked at the evidence, you would come to different conclusions. Even though he never mentioned the Bible or God, the conclusion was obvious: if you believed in God, then you would interpret the evidence in line with that belief. This simply reinforced my belief at the time that there was no conflict between the Bible and evolution.

During my sophomore year, I attended a Bible study in the dorm with Matt Shantz and Mike Sochay. Matt had given me a Bible, and Mike gave me a book about creation called *The Revolution Against Evolution* by Doug Sharp.¹ He said, “David, I know that you are majoring in science. I thought that you should take a look at this book.” I read the back cover and placed it on my bookshelf, where the book sat for about a year.

1. Doug Sharp, *Revolution Against Evolution* (Lansing, MI: Decapolis Books, 1986, 1993).

Over the summer, I came to understand the gospel and that salvation was a free gift by grace through faith rather than by works. My faith became real, but I still held to the false belief that God had used evolution to create. In fact, I would share this view with my friends when I would tell them about my faith in Christ. I even said that I didn't think you could take the Bible literally because it had been translated and retranslated so many times!

A little later, I read a passage from an old book that talked about how important the Word of God was. It emphasized that Jesus had submitted himself to the Scriptures, quoted from them repeatedly, and fulfilled every word of prophecy in them. This stuck with me as I later read in Psalm 12:6: "And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times" (NIV). This passage was reinforced when in the book, minutes later, I read Psalm 18:30: "As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him" (NIV).

These words pierced my heart as I realized that I had been taking a distorted view of God's Word. I claimed to believe the Bible — that God could change water into wine; heal the blind, lame, deaf, and mute; and even raise the dead. Yet I was hesitant to believe that God created everything in six days. This conflict hit me like a ton of bricks. I realized that if I was going to accept the Bible, I had to accept all of it. Moreover, if God said He had made everything out of nothing in six days, who was I to say otherwise?

Another concept later cemented my creationist views. I realized that there was a major conflict between the Bible and the theory of evolution. Evolution requires death — millions of years of death, bloodshed, and survival of the fittest. In fact, natural selection with the death of the less fit is the explanation for the evolution of man. This runs contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned" (Rom. 5:12; NIV). It became obvious to me that the Bible taught that death was not the means that God used to create. It is the last enemy that Christ came to destroy. I saw that millions of years of struggle for survival, bloodshed, and death was incompatible with a loving God — whose eye is on the sparrow — who saw all that He had made and called it "very good."

Thus, I became convinced from Scripture that young-earth creationism was true and believed it with all my heart.

I later remembered the *Revolution Against Evolution* book that my friend had given me. I pulled it out and began to study it very carefully. It was amazing how much evidence there was that refuted evolution and supported the biblical account of creation. I felt that I had been lied to about the subject for my whole life. I read this book over and over many times because it was the only creation book that I had then, and I started making notes from my textbooks and classes of things that supported the creation account.

I continued with my studies in biochemistry and pursued a PhD in Neurosciences at Case Western Reserve University. While I was at CWRU, some of my fellow students (and a few professors) came to know of my creationist beliefs. Although they would often criticize me or make fun of me for these beliefs, for the most part, they respected my work. One friend who had collaborated with me on three papers told me that I "could never be a good scientist." I said, "How can you say this? We have published papers together." He said that a good scientist would not begin with a conclusion and hold on to it in spite of the evidence against it. He seemed oblivious to the fact that the same could be said about those who believed in evolution! In the end, in spite of the occasional ridicule, I was able to complete my PhD.

As I was considering what to do after I graduated, my advisor suggested that I think about a teaching position at a religious school where I would fit in with the other "fanatics." He was serious and thought that I would be a good fit in a Christian college. So I began to pursue a teaching position at a Christian college. This was an eye-opening experience for me.

I spoke to one chair of biology from a Christian college in Kentucky who told me, "You won't find much difference between what we teach and what is taught at a state university . . . we teach evolution here." When I interviewed at a Christian college in Ohio, I got the impression that they were theistic evolutionists. The chairman asked me what my views were about creation and evolution. I was completely honest and told him where I was coming from, although I expected him to disagree. Instead, he told me, "I agree with you 100 percent, David. But I am probably the only one on campus who would."

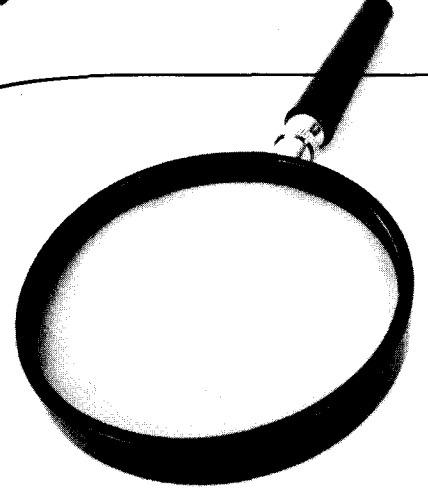
This was a shock to me. Even at Christian colleges there were few people who believed the Genesis account of creation. I began to wonder if I would find a college where young-earth creation was accepted.

Then, Liberty University published an ad for a biology professor who “must be compatible with a young-earth creationist perspective.” I was absolutely delighted and found out that all of the graduates were required to take a course in apologetics that covered the creation/evolution controversy from a young-earth perspective. The department chair told me that if I were interested, I could probably teach that course. In 1996, I started teaching at Liberty University and began teaching the History of Life course in the second semester (and every semester since). Through teaching this course, I have learned more about evolution than I did throughout my entire college and graduate studies.

Since joining the faculty at Liberty, I have been very active in the creation community. I taught cell biology at the Institute for Creation Research and have also worked with Answers in Genesis. I have given presentations on creation at colleges and churches across the country and have now taught thousands of Liberty University students about the evidence for biblical creation.

On one speaking trip, I went back to Michigan. While there, I thanked Doug Sharp for writing his book on creation. It was a privilege to tell him how God had used his book. Doug invited me to give a presentation at his church and did an interview with me on his cable TV show. I also met with Matt Shantz, who was serving as a pastor for a campus ministry group. I showed him the Bible that he had given me more than a decade before. When I spoke to his group on campus, I told the students about the Bible and the creation book. “I have heard that you give out Bibles on campus and hope and pray that God will use them to change a life. I want to show you one Bible, given at a campus Bible study, that has changed a life. Let me encourage you in your efforts.” Had I not been given that first creation book, my life would be completely different.

Now, when I give out creation books and materials on campuses, it is my prayer that the Lord might use them in someone’s life and that they will have an even greater impact than they had in my life.



Cultlike Characteristics of Atheism

Chapter 4
Dr. Jerry Bergman

Ever since I can remember, I have been interested in science — especially biology, astronomy, and chemistry. No doubt, this interest stemmed in part from my father’s lifelong involvement in science. In the 1950s, when I was a young child, I remember how my dad designed and drew by hand (no computer-assisted design technology existed then), using only ink and drafting tools, an 8' x 10' wall chart of the elements known today as the periodic table. He then silk-screened the charts and sold them to colleges and universities throughout the United States.

Like the stereotypical nerd, when growing up, I never attended sporting events as did most people my age. Rather, my father took me to the Astronomical Society of Detroit, the Engineering Society of Detroit, and other science organizations to attend the many science events that they sponsored. One of our first projects was to make a six-inch reflector telescope for which we ground the mirror by hand. The astronomical society met on the Wayne State University campus in Detroit (the alma mater of my father, my brother, and myself). The campus later became a familiar place where I would study for my bachelor’s, master’s, and doctorate degrees. After nine years on that campus, you get to know the place pretty well!

My religious upbringing was pulled primarily in two contradictory directions. My mother became an active Jehovah’s Witness (usually called “Witnesses”) in the early 1950s, as did also many members of her side of the family. I remember as a child going to hear hour-long talks given by my cousins, and “Witness talk” was common in our household for years.

On the other side of the family, my father was an agnostic and was very involved in various humanist movements and activities during his