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Apologetics for Parents, Session #2

Topics Covered:

- A) Some Big Questions,
- B) Evidence & Hierarchy of Evidence,
- C) Presuppositions & Worldview,
- D) Logical Fallacies Basics & Examples

Session Video: Equivocation & Evolution (9-min): <https://youtu.be/swfwJgla2nl>

A) Some Big Questions (of Life):

- **Q1: Why is there a “universe” versus “no universe”?**
 - It would logically be simpler for “nothing” to exist than for “something” to exist; so why does something (the universe) exist?
 - Since the universe does exist, which is the more complex option (versus nothing existing), is it not more logical to believe that something (i.e., a Creator) outside the universe wanted it to exist?

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- **Q2: What does the Bible say as to why we don't visually see God at this time, even though His evidence is everywhere and He is ever-available by His Spirit?** [Psalm 139:7-9, Jer. 29:13; John 3:3, John 16:8, Eph. 1:13, Acts 17:27-28]: [Spoiler Alert: Things will change in the future]
 - Before Adam's sin and the Fall, Adam and Eve both saw and walked with God (Gen 3:8)
 - God is holy and therefore there is no darkness in Him (1 John 1:5), and since mankind sinned and became unholy and in darkness, God's full and holy presence would be too intense for fallen human beings to bear in their fallen state. (Exodus 33:20)
 - For over 2000 years, God spoke to and thru the Old Testament Prophets, who proclaimed God's words to mankind: Abraham thru John the Baptist. (Hebrews 1:1, 2 Peter 1:21, Luke 24:27)
 - At the right time, God historically showed Himself to mankind, thru His incarnation, death, and resurrection in the person of His eternal Son, Jesus Christ, 2000 years ago. (John 14:8-9; 2 Corinthians. 4:6, Hebrews 1:2; Galatians 4:4; Rev. 22:12-13)
 - Through-out time, God has left humanity with abundant evidence of His existence, so much so that the Bible says we "are without excuse" if we deny the Creator's existence (Romans 1:19-21). [We will survey this evidence in detail in upcoming sessions]:
 - God is presently close and available to everyone by His Holy Spirit; to touch, convict, and change all who respond to Him (Jer. 29:13, John 4:24, Acts 17:27-28; John 16:8-11).
 - In Heaven (and at Christ's return), the Redeemed will forever see and be with God forever (Rev. 21:3-4; Rev. 22:3-4)

Q3: What are the Answers to "the Questions of Life" that everyone must Ask?

Life's Questions	Creationist/Theism	Naturalists/Atheism
Where did I Come From?	Created by God	Unplanned Accident
Why Am I Here?	Purposed by God	Accident & Arbitrary
What Happens After Death?	Eternity with God	Decay & Extinction

B) Types of Evidence and Hierarchy:

Definitions (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/evidence>):

- **Evidence:** An outward sign, something that furnishes proof, testimony or one who bears witness, or something legally submitted to a tribunal to ascertain the truth of a matter.
- **Proof:** The cogency (compelling reasonableness) of evidence that compels acceptance by the mind of a truth or a fact.
- **Fact:** something that has (or had) actual existence, an actual occurrence, or a piece of information presented as having objective reality.

Evidence Hierarchy

- **Observable Evidence, Ranking**

1. Something observed, measured, repeatable today, and recorded by a credible and capable eye-witness or observers,
2. Something observed, repeatable today, and recorded by an eye-witness or observers,
3. Something observed, and repeatable today by eye-witness or observers

- **Historical Evidence, Ranking**

1. Something observed, measured, and historically recorded by a credible and capable eye-witness and accepted as factual by their contemporary community,
2. Something observed and historically recorded by a credible and capable eye-witness
3. Something observed and historically recorded by an eye-witness

United States Federal Rules of Evidence, Law: ([Merriam-Webster](#))

- Body of procedural rules governing the use of evidence in both civil and criminal cases in federal courts. The rules establish the methods by which evidentiary information may be presented, **covering such elements as relevance, admissibility, competency of witnesses, privileges, confessions and admissions, expert testimony, physical evidence, and authentication.** The rules of evidence have been founded on both case law and state statutes **and are shaped by understandings of what constitutes admissible and sufficient proof.**

EXCERPTS FROM THE 2023 U.S. RULES OF EVIDENCE [Table of Contents](#) | [2023 Federal Rules of Evidence](#)

Rule 602 – Need for Personal Knowledge

A witness may testify to a matter only if evidence is introduced sufficient to support a finding that the witness has **personal knowledge of the matter.** Evidence to prove personal knowledge may consist of the witness’s own testimony. This rule does not apply to a witness’s expert testimony under [Rule 703](#).

Rule 702 – Testimony by Expert Witnesses

A witness who is qualified as an expert by knowledge, skill, experience, training, or education may testify in the form of an opinion or otherwise if:

- (a) the expert’s scientific, technical, or other specialized knowledge will help the trier of fact to understand the evidence or to determine a fact in issue;
- (b) the testimony is based on sufficient facts or data;
- (c) the testimony is the product of reliable principles and methods; and
- (d) the expert has reliably applied the principles and methods to the facts of the case.

Rule 901 – Authenticating or Identifying Evidence

- (a) **In General.** To satisfy the requirement of authenticating or identifying an item of evidence, the proponent must produce evidence sufficient to support a finding that the item is what the proponent claims it is.
- (b) **Examples.** The following are examples only — not a complete list — of evidence that satisfies the requirement:

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(1) Testimony of a Witness with Knowledge. Testimony that an item is what it is claimed to be.

(2) Nonexpert Opinion About Handwriting. A nonexpert's opinion that handwriting is genuine, based on a familiarity with it that was not acquired for the current litigation.

(3) Comparison by an Expert Witness or the Trier of Fact (someone responsible for determining facts from the evidence provide). A comparison with an authenticated specimen by an expert witness or the trier of fact.

(4) Distinctive Characteristics and the Like. The appearance, contents, substance, internal patterns, or other distinctive characteristics of the item, taken together with all the circumstances.

... **(5 & 6 omitted [telephone, etc.])** ...

(7) Evidence About Public Records. Evidence that:

(A) a document was recorded or filed in a public office as authorized by law; or

(B) a purported public record or statement is from the office where items of this kind are kept.

(8) Evidence About Ancient Documents or Data Compilations. For a document or data compilation, evidence that it:

(A) is in a condition that creates no suspicion about its authenticity;

(B) was in a place where, if authentic, it would likely be; and

(C) is at least 20 years old when offered.

(9) Evidence About a Process or System. Evidence describing a process or system and showing that it produces an accurate result.

(10) Methods Provided by a Statute or Rule. Any method of authentication or identification allowed by a federal statute or a rule prescribed by the Supreme Court.

c) Presuppositions (Bahnsen, [*Pushing the Antithesis*](#))

- **Presuppositions:** Our elementary assumptions about life developed from our personal reasonings from which our opinions are formed.
 - **Presuppositions** are personal values that were not verified by procedure in natural science,
 - **Presuppositions** were developed by our personal experiences and preferences as to how we believe the world is, or should be.

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- **Presuppositions** form the starting point from which we interpret and evaluate everything else (they create our “worldview”).
- **Presuppositions** have the greatest authority in our thinking and are treated as our least negotiable beliefs.
- **Examples of some Presuppositions:**
 - The reality of the reliability of our memory regarding the past
 - The reality of an objective external world (does it really exist or not, and is it predictable?)
 - The reality of consistent cause and effects relationships
- **Worldview:** Our personal network of embraced beliefs that we developed from our presuppositions and through which we see and interpret the world.
- **Hypocrisy:** Behavior that contradicts what one claims to believe or feel; an action or feeling that is contrary to or unsupported by their worldview. (Romans 2:1)

D) Logic Basics, Types of Logical Fallacies, and Examples

Source: [Introduction to Logic, Lisle, Jason, 2018](#)

Logic: The study of the principles of correct reasoning; drawing reasonable conclusions from available information.

Note: If correct reasoning leads to a religious belief, then it would be illogical to reject that belief.

Fallacy: An error in reasoning

Inductive Reasoning: Drawing a general inference from many specific instances; the conclusion is likely to be true if the premises are true.

Deductive Reasoning: The conclusion is certainly true if the form and premises are true.

Formal deductive arguments can be put into a symbolic notation with letters representing the propositions.

Consider the proposition, "If it is snowing (p), then it must be cold outside (q)." This proposition has the basic form:

"If p, then q."

Since "p" is true (snowing), then "q" is true (it is cold outside).

Formal Logical Fallacies:

Deductive Reasoning Fallacy: "Affirming the Consequent" (reversal of the proper logical flow)

Invalid Form: If p, then q. When "q" is true, then "p" is true

Formal Fallacy Example1:

"If it is snowing (p), then it must be cold outside (q).

Since "q" (it is cold outside) is true, therefore "p" (it is snowing) – this is a fallacy.

Formal Fallacy Example2:

“If evolution is true “**p**”, we would expect to see similarities in DNA of all organisms on earth “**q**”. Since, “**q**” is observed (we do see similarities in DNA of all organisms on earth), Therefore, evolution is true “**p**”.

The argument is invalid because it has failed to recognize that creationists also expect to see similarities in the DNA of all organisms, since that would be expected from a common Designer (the same Creator).

1. Informal Logical Fallacies:

1) Begging the Question (circular reasoning) Fallacy: Occurs when the person assumes what they are attempting to prove.

Example1:

Proposition:

I believe in Alien spaceships.

Circular Answer:

How else would Aliens get here?

The Error:

The person assumes Aliens exist, but did not yet prove the existence of Aliens.

Example2:

Proposition:

It makes no sense to deny Macro-Evolution.

Circular Answer:

Because Macro-Evolution is a well-established fact.

The Error:

The person assumes Macro-Evolution is a fact, but has not yet provided proof.

Example3:

Proposition: This BOOK is the Truth.

Circular Answer: Because this BOOK says it cannot Lie.

The Error: This person is assuming this BOOK is the Truth, but has not yet provided any proof. Each statement requires the assumption that the other is true.

2) Complex Question Fallacy: Attempting to persuade by presenting a loaded question that tries to force an answer in a certain direction.

Example1: Have you stopped beating your dog?

Is actually two questions:

Q1: Have you ever beat your dog?

Q2: If so, have you stopped?

Example2: If the earth is young, why do we find rocks 4 billion years old?

Is actually two questions:

Q1: Do we “in fact” find rocks 4 billion years old?

Q2: If so, why would we find them if the earth is truly young?

Note: Rocks don't come with birth-certificates or date-labels; assumptions are made to estimate their age, which we will discuss age-dating models in future sessions.

3) Bifurcation Fallacy: The false claim that there are only two mutually exclusive possibilities for the specific context; the either-or fallacy.

Example1: The traffic light is either green or red.

Error: The traffic light could be yellow

Example2: Either you have faith or you are rational.

Error: these are not mutually exclusive, you can have both.

Example3: Either the earth runs on uniformitarian processes or catastrophic processes.

Error: These are not mutually exclusive, you can have both, at different times and different places; and you could also have accelerated and decelerated processes.

4) False Analogy: The arguer makes a comparison between two things that are alike only in a trivial way.

Example1: Believing in creation is like believing in a flat-earth.

Error: The arguer is trying to falsely link one belief to another belief that is demonstrably false and not held by the other.

5) Slippery Slope: Occurs when a person falsely argues that a particular action will set off an undesirable chain of events.

Example1: If we allow the possibility of miracles, then science will come to a halt.

Error: Miracles are by definition unique events which temporarily suspend or supersede natural laws; so continued interest in natural laws remains required and important.

6) Ad Hominem: To direct an attack against the person making the claim, rather than the claim itself.

Example1: Dentist John's expert testimony on "tooth decay" is not reliable because he is a registered "Republican/Democrat."

7) Appeal to Authority: The appeal to authority is to try to endorse a claim (rather than to prove the claim itself) on the basis of the branding of a person or group who makes the same claim:

Example1: Bill Gates believes global vaccines are the answer. Therefore global vaccines are the answer.

Error: No actual proof has yet been offered that global vaccines are the answer, only an appeal to a like-minded person.

Example2: The National Academy of Sciences says Macro-Evolution is true. Therefore Macro-Evolution is true.

Error: No actual proof has yet been offered in this statement, only an appeal to a like-minded group.

Example3: The majority of university scientists who were trained in evolution, believe in Macro-Evolution. Therefore, Macro-Evolution must be true.

Error: Again, no actual proof has yet been offered in this statement, only an appeal to a like-minded group.

8) Strawman Fallacy: Occurs when your opponent mis-represents or re-states your position with a weaker or incorrect version, and then only refutes the faulty version.

Example: Creationist believe that animals do not change over time, but surely this is observed, so creationist have faulty science.

Error: Creationists do believe that animals can change over time, but that they remain within their “kinds” (genus/families), never go outside of their “Kind,” and that changes are informationally lateral or deleterious. Some change is actually expected from a Creator who said, “be fruitful and multiply.”

9) Equivocation Fallacy: Many words have a range of meaning, but only one that fits the context in the moment. The “fallacy of equivocation” occurs when someone shifts from one meaning of the word to another meaning of the same word, either accidentally or on purpose. Also, known as “Bait & Switch” when done deliberately.

Example1: Mr. Lisle is a doctor. Doctors know a lot about medicine. Therefore Mr. Lisle, knows a lot about medicine.

Error: Mr. Lisle is a PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) in Astro-physics and knows very little about medicine.

Example2: Change in living things is an observable fact. “Evolution” is “change in living things over time.” Therefore, the “evolution” of man from simpler organisms is a fact.

Error: The word “Evolution” can have several different definitions:

- 1) Change in living things over time, or
- 2) Organism sharing a common ancestor from a difference and lower family, or
- 3) The source of all diversity of life on earth from a common simpler ancestor.

Note:

“Change in living things over time” ≠ “Organism sharing a common ancestor from a difference and lower family”

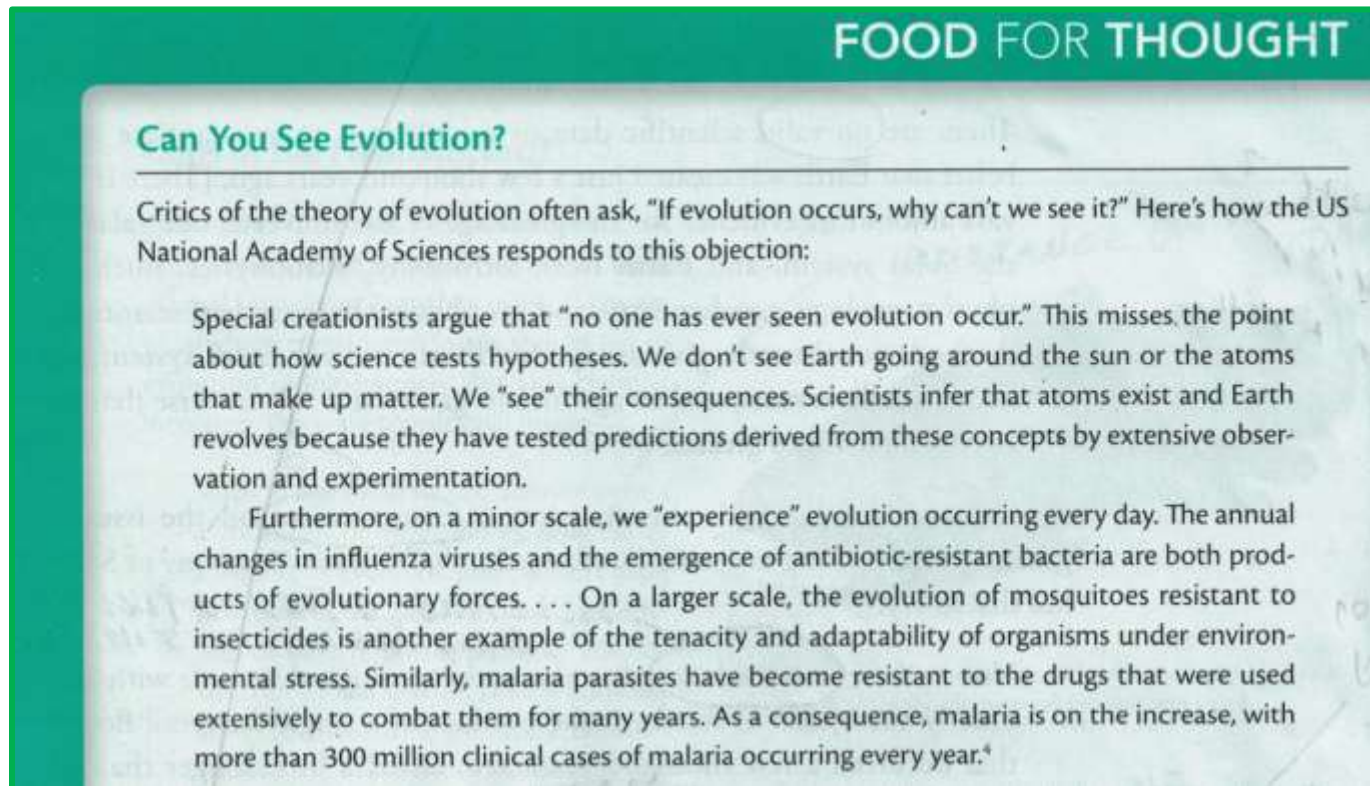
“Change in living things over time” ≠ “The source of all diversity of life on earth from a common simpler ancestor”

Some Qualifying examples of “Change in living things over time”:

1. Growth
2. Aging
3. Disease
4. Variation of progeny within the boundaries of their Species/Genus/Family

In the Article below (taken from the secular college textbook on “[Critical Thinking](#)”), evaluate whether the Authors’ secular worldview may have distracted them to commit a logical fallacy or two:

- A) Equivocation?
- B) Appeal to Authority?



[The Power of Critical Thinking, MacDonald](#), 4th Canadian Edition
(2016, secular, college level logic textbook, page 407)

Did the Fallacies of “Equivocation” and “Appeal to Authority” occur? You be the judge:

A) Equivocation: To “Bait and Switch” the meaning of a word that has a range of meanings.

- a. In the Textbook article above, the Authors state that *“Special creationists argue that ‘no one has ever seen evolution occur.’”* The use of the term “Evolution” here is clearly understood to mean Macro-Evolution (i.e., Molecules to Man, a proposed process where all the bio-diversity of life came from a simpler, lower organism).
- b. Yet, the Authors/NAS try to answer the “creationists” challenge, but only by switching the meaning of the word “evolution” to only “micro-evolution,” which is simply, “variation and adaption within their species, genus, or family.” A concept fully embraced by all creationists.
- c. Therefore, there is an Equivocation event being done here by the NAS, since:
 - i. Macro-Evolution \neq “variation and adaption within a genus” (micro-evolution)
 - ii. While “Variation and adaption” have been observed within species/genus, Macro-Evolution and abiogenesis have never been observed at all.
 - iii. Furthermore, the Authors/NAS seem to be confusing “natural selection” (a genome variety-reducing process), and mutations (a genome corrupting process) as evidence for “macro-evolution” when they describe the changes in in viruses, or chemical resistance in bacteria and mosquitos. Yet, no higher-level information content has been shown to have been added to their genome.

B) Appeal to Authority:

In this article, the Authors' appeal to the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) as their "authority" in an attempt to support their claim that Evolution ("Macro-Evolution") is true, but this was not supported with any Macro-Evolution evidence.

As stated above, the best that is shown in the Article is that bacteria remains bacteria, viruses remain viruses, and mosquitos remain mosquitos. We will address the topic of "mutations" in an upcoming session.

Note: To avoid any future confusion of equivocation with the use of the term "evolution," in all further sessions we will refrain from using the phrase "micro-evolution" and replace it with our intended phrase "variation and adaptation within a Kind" for clarity and content.

"micro-evolution" is "variation and adaptation only within a Kind"

A "Kind" can taxonomically be considered as a Genus or a Family, but never beyond.