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There are millions of people around the world who are Christians who do not believe that evolution is contradictory to the experience or the practice of their Christian faith. For anyone to claim that the faith of these people is compromised, lacks authority, effectiveness, or authenticity because they do not accept some claimed literal language understanding of any particular biblical passage is bad theology, unloving in the way Jesus lived and taught love, and simply exclusively judgmental in the worst of ways. While Terry Bridgman has every right to believe what he believes, it is neither appropriate nor helpful for him to claim that everyone must believe as he does in order to be considered persons of authentic faith. Over 10,000 clergy have recently signed a letter saying that faith and science are not adversaries, and hundreds of churches around the country are celebrating Evolution Sunday, or Science and Religion Sunday on or near Feb. 12, and for anyone to suggest this means the people of these churches and these clergy cannot experience their faith as having authority, effectiveness, and authenticity is to claim what is not true, and condescendingly disrespectful.

The Bible can be trusted on matters of faith because it is a book of faith, written for those of faith, and it is not a book of science or history. It is a human book, written by humans expressing specific faith understandings about God and God's relationship with humanity and all of creation. It was not intended to ever become an idol, or a book to be worshipped, or a book meant to be thought absolutely, undeniably accurate in every detail. It was inspired by faith and written to inspire faith, but not written to match scientific or historical accuracy, for neither was the essential concern of the writers. People of faith have disagreed over the meanings of the Bible from the beginning of its being put together, and indeed, it was put together in its current form only after one early Christian compiled what he thought were the right scriptures for the faithful to use, but he was soon declared a heretic, and the scholars were brought together to choose what they could agree on were the most appropriate texts to be used, and some disagreed then, and some still do. Jesus did not quote from Genesis as some prescription to assert that all of Genesis was necessary for the faith he taught and lived, Jesus quoted from it to speak to a specific issue the faithful were struggling to live as Jesus thought they should live.

It is the right of any person to believe in creationism, or "intelligent design" and even to teach it--in their church if it accepts it, or in their home, but not in public school science classrooms, because it is not science, and to insist that it should be taught does nothing helpful for the millions of faith who do not believe it, nor the millions without faith who do not believe it, nor does it advance the faith of those who do believe it, for it only antagonizes people, while making faith look sadly uninformed and unwise.

Finally, it is historically quite true to say, though very sadly and tragically so, that religion, including Christianity, has been a root cause of far more killing than any secularism supposedly fueled by evolutionary thought. Faith does not need to be in conflict with science or history, nor to discredit either to be authentic, and no person of faith need apologize for wanting the best scientific and historical understandings possible while remaining a person of faith.

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