

## How to Use Science and Ethics in Practical Apologetics

This talk will deal with the philosophical / methodological issues concerning the approaches to science practiced today, and how this relates to the Christian faith which historically has given a very firm basis for scientific endeavour. The question of ethics will also be addressed and how both the arena of science and ethics can be used effectively in practical apologetics to cause academics to rethink their worldview. It is recognised that reason on its own cannot win souls to the Kingdom but being ready to give an answer for the Hope that is within us is very important in academia which is increasingly being dominated by secular humanism.

Both in personal one-to-one witness and in the public square we need to be active in promoting engagement using science and ethics to point men and women to the only reality – Christ and the Gospel.

**Andy McIntosh** now retired from the University of Leeds, holds a Visiting chair in Thermodynamics and Combustion Theory, and has lectured and researched in these fields for over 30 years. He has a PhD in combustion theory from the aerodynamics department of what was then Cranfield Institute of Technology (now Cranfield University), a DSc in Applied Mathematics from the University of Wales and worked for a number of years at the Royal Aircraft Establishment. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, the Institute of Energy, the Institute of Physics and the Royal Aeronautical Society. A chartered mathematician and engineer, and author of over 180 papers and articles, his research has been in combustion in fluids and solids. His work has also included investigations into the fundamental link between thermodynamics and information, and in the last few years he has been involved in research in the area of biomimetics where the minute combustion chamber of the bombardier beetle has inspired a patented novel spray technology. He now lectures widely on origins, and has authored the book *Genesis for Today* (Day One, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2014), and contributed to the books *In Six Days* (Master Books, 2009), *Should Christians Embrace Evolution?* (IVP, 2009), and *Origins – Examining the evidence* (Truth in Science, 2011). He is co-director of the UK education think tank Truth in Science and married with 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

### I. Recognising the Culture

#### A. Postmodernism

##### 1. Art

##### 2. Science

#### B. But there is still a hidden authority...

##### 1. Toleration to everything except Truth!

###### a. Epistemology ends up with no meaning

##### 2. Twisting of Scientific method

###### a. Whatever happened to ‘Nullius in Verba’?

## **II. Science, Mind and Consciousness**

### A. Information systems

1. The elephant in the biology lab – systems design
  - a. e.g. Kinesin walking molecule

- b. DNA and communication

2. Message is transcendent to language and code

### B. Rationality – Mind and the ability to think

1. What is rationality?

2. Writings of Lewis / Schaeffer / Nagel

- a. Mud to Mathematics?

- b. Molecules do not think

### C. Consciousness

1. If I know that a pattern of neurons is in someone else's brain, does one know what he or she is thinking?

## **III. Identity – Who am I?**

### A. Man is more than the sum of physics

### B. Aesthetics

1. True Art

2. Music

3. Beauty

C. Man's true identity

1. Losing God we lose man as well. Man is only defined in relation to God.
  - a. Nietzsche / John Gray / Schaeffer – Whatever happened to the human race?

#### **IV. Ethics, death and suffering**

A. Incoherence of Atheism

1. No basis for reasoning and rationality
2. No answer to major questions of life.
3. No platform for ethics
4. No answer to deep suffering

B. Coherency of Gospel

1. Science
2. Logic / Mathematics / Ability to reason
3. Conscience
4. Ethics
5. Suffering
6. Identity
7. Destiny
8. Christ – the Cross – the Resurrection

## V. Practical apologetics

- A. Discover where the person is
- B. Atheism hides their real position
  - 1. Suffering of themselves
  - 2. Suffering of a relative or friend
    - a. Stephen Fry / Attenborough
  - 3. Pride / Hedonism / selfishness
- C. Drive to Christ
  - 1. Life / Death / Resurrection
- D. Example of Open Air Talk – Only One Truth

### ***Suggested Readings:***

Thomas Nagel, “Mind and Cosmos”, Oxford University Press, 2012

Max Planck “A survey of Physical theory” Methuen & Co., London, 1925, p. 26, republished, Dover 1993.

Francis Schaeffer “Escape from Reason”, IVP Books, 2006

Francis Schaeffer “Death in the City”, Crossway, 2002

Everett Coop and Francis Schaeffer “Whatever happened to the human Race?”, Crossway, 1983

Nancy Pearcey “Total Truth”, Crossway, 2008

Nancy Pearcey “Finding Truth”, David C. Cook Publishers, 2015

C.S. Lewis, “Abolition of Man”, Macmillan, 1947 (reprint 1978).

C. S. Lewis, “Miracles”, Harper Collins, 1947 (recent reprint 2012).