

Who is Afraid of Scientists?

How a Non-Scientist Can Help Scientists Believe in God

Often Christians don't know how to respond to naturalistic arguments against the existence of God. The youth of the church are left without confidence that the gospel is still true in a world dominated by science. Do you have to understand the function of the bacterial flagellum to be able to discuss faith with proponents of naturalism, or are there easier ways to challenge their premises? Which questions can help? What arguments can a non-scientist use in order to show the plausibility of the Christian faith? Peter Imming is a professor of pharmaceutical chemistry and is also frequently involved in youth ministry. Alexander Fink is the director of the Institute for Faith and Science and also works with students. Apart from sharing their experiences, there will be time for interaction.

Peter Imming received degrees in pharmacy and chemistry and a PhD and *venia legendi* in pharmaceutical chemistry from a German university. He has been involved in drug chemistry teaching and research in Germany, the UK, China, and other countries. Currently, he is head of a pharmaceutical/medicinal chemistry department of a German university. His research focuses on the design and synthesis of new drug substances and on molecular mechanisms of drug action. He has a strong interest in the relation of science and Christian faith, frequently lecturing on related topics by invitation of e.g. universities, churches, and schools.

Alexander Fink is Director of the Institute for Faith and Science (Institut für Glaube und Wissenschaft) in Marburg, Germany (www.iguw.de). He studied physics at the universities of Bayreuth and St. Andrews (UK) and received his PhD at the Institute for Biophysics at the University of Regensburg. After having worked as an industrial product manager, he became director of SMD graduates' ministry (Akademiker-SMD, the German branch of IFES) until 2014. His passion is the dialog of science, faith, and worldviews. Hence he founded the Kepler-Forum in Regensburg, coorganising the annual Regensburger Symposium (www.regensburger-symposium.de) at the University of Regensburg. Since 2008 he has been a member of the ELF Steering Committee and has co-led the Scientists Network. Together with his wife, Alexander enjoys raising his two children.

1. Know the monster – The big fear
 - 1.1 Why many Christians are afraid of scientists – the big bluff
 - 1.2 An appropriate attitude towards scientists – make friends
2. Know the foundations – Why it is essential to know and how to ask about worldview assumptions
 - 2.1 Worldview assumptions in science – everyone believes
 - 2.2 The plausibility argument versus conclusive proof – why you marry your spouse

3. Know the limits - Determining the scope of science and faith
 - 3.1 Science has disproven the existence of God
 - 3.2 Science has made the notion of God superfluous
 - 3.3 Science has shown that religions are just myths and science is the way to truth

4. Know the wonders – Helpful key questions and answers, when discussing with scientists:
 - 4.1 Why do we know anything? - The problem of epistemology and why everyone needs to believe in something
 - 4.2 Why are there rational laws in nature? - The problem of the mathematical language of nature
 - 4.3 Why does the universe exist at all, is it self-explaining? – The problem of the origin of the universe
 - 4.4 Are the universe and planet earth special? Is life an inevitable outcome in a naturalistic universe or a tremendous surprise? – The problem of the notion of purpose in the universe
 - 4.5 In which way is life itself pointing beyond a naturalistic explanation? – The problem of the origin of information in nature
 - 4.6 Does biological evolution refute God's existence? Is evolution a proven fact? – The problem of the scope of a mechanism

4.7 Is consciousness just a function of neurons? Is there an immaterial soul? – The problem of perception and personal identity in nature

4.8 Can moral values be explained by evolutionary variation and selection? – The problem of good and evil in nature

5. Discussion

Suggested Readings:

- + John Lennox, Has science buried God?
- + William Lane Craig, Reasonable Faith
- + Nick Pollard, Evangelism made slightly less difficult