

# Science and Faith

## Considerations for a Healthy Relationship

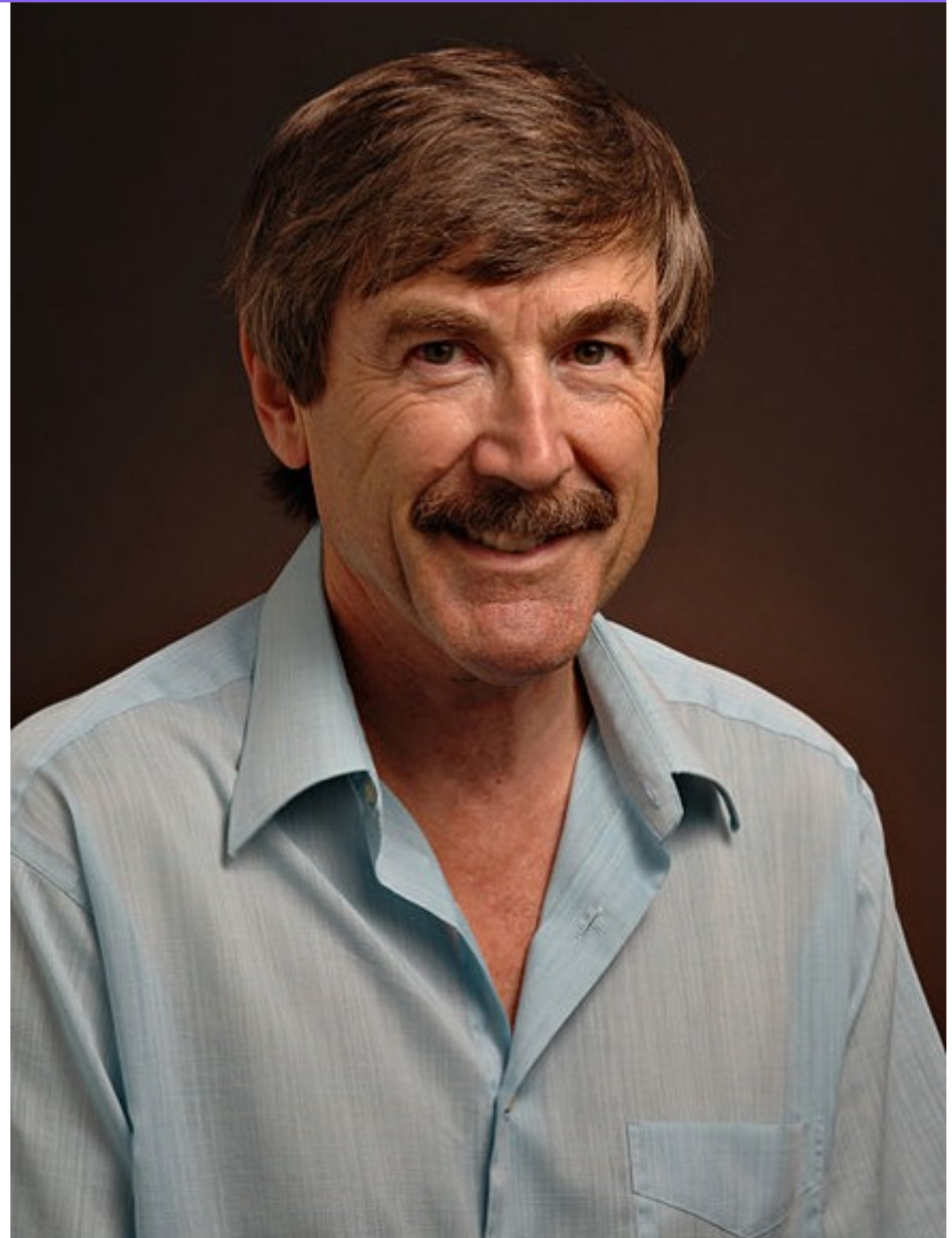
**John D. Mays**



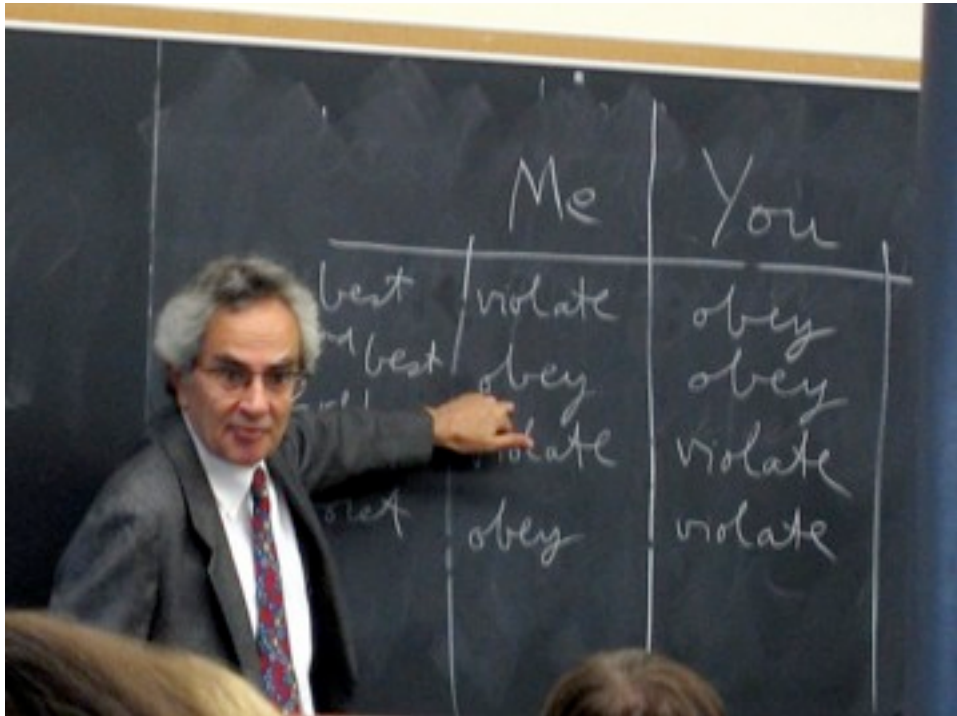
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# The tide is turning...

- Paul Davies
- English physicist, cosmologist, astrobiologist
- There is a transcendent reality; the material cannot be all there is.



# The decline of materialism...



- Thomas Nagel
- American Philosopher
- Critic of reductionism
- Not a theist, but insists that “the materialist neo-Darwinian conception of nature is almost certainly false”

# Science leads to faith...

- Antony Flew
- English Philosopher
- Followed the scientific evidence where it led
- Embraced faith after a lifetime of opposition



# The growing list ...

- The anthropic cosmological principle (fine-tuning)
- Alignment between criteria for life and criteria for exploration
- Existence of purpose
- Existence of non-material ideas
- Fabulous capabilities of humans
- Existence of “triadic” language, self-awareness, love

# The growing list ...

- The “unreasonable effectiveness of mathematics”
- Beauty as a research criterion
- Universal recognition that the universe had a beginning
- The fantastic complexity of life composed self-replicating molecules
- Presence of features beyond what evolution would be expected to produce

# 9 Considerations

# 1. Epistemology is crucial

- Scientific knowledge is provisional
- Good scientists don't make truth claims
- Truth vs. facts; theories as models

**Truth**

**Science**

**Direct  
observation**

**Inference  
from data**

**Revelation**

**Best  
explanation**



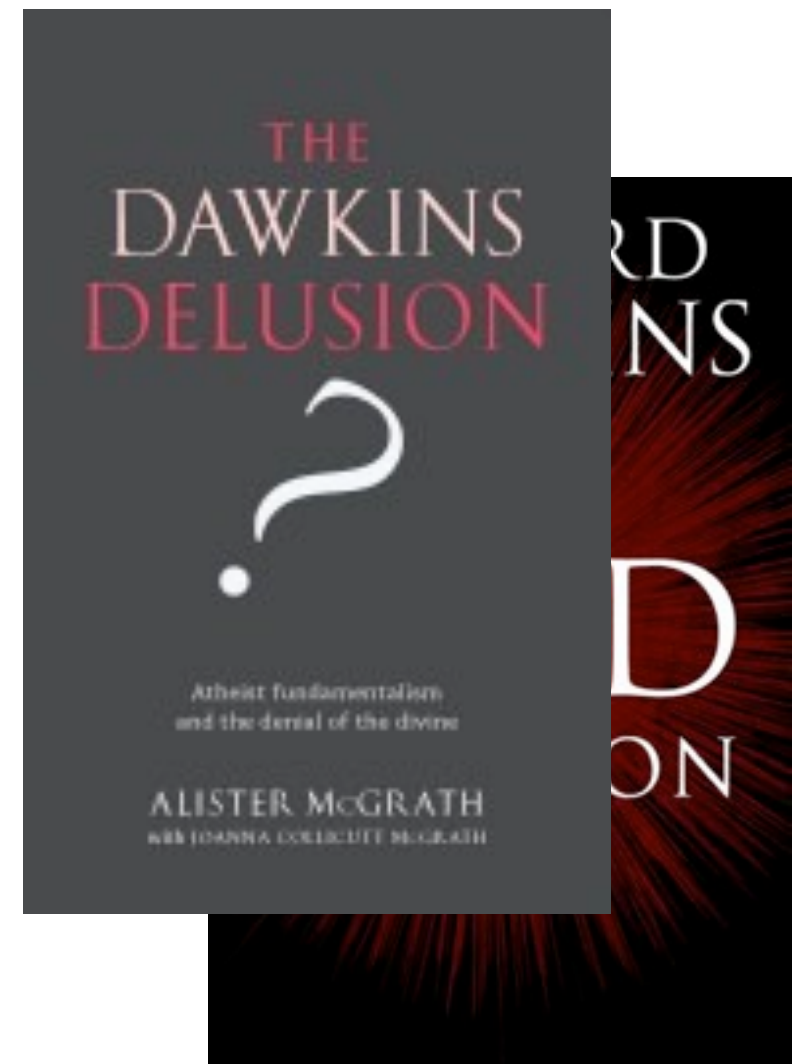
## 2. Be fearlessly scientific

- There can be no conflict between belief in God and study of the world he made
- There can only be conflict between belief and unbelief

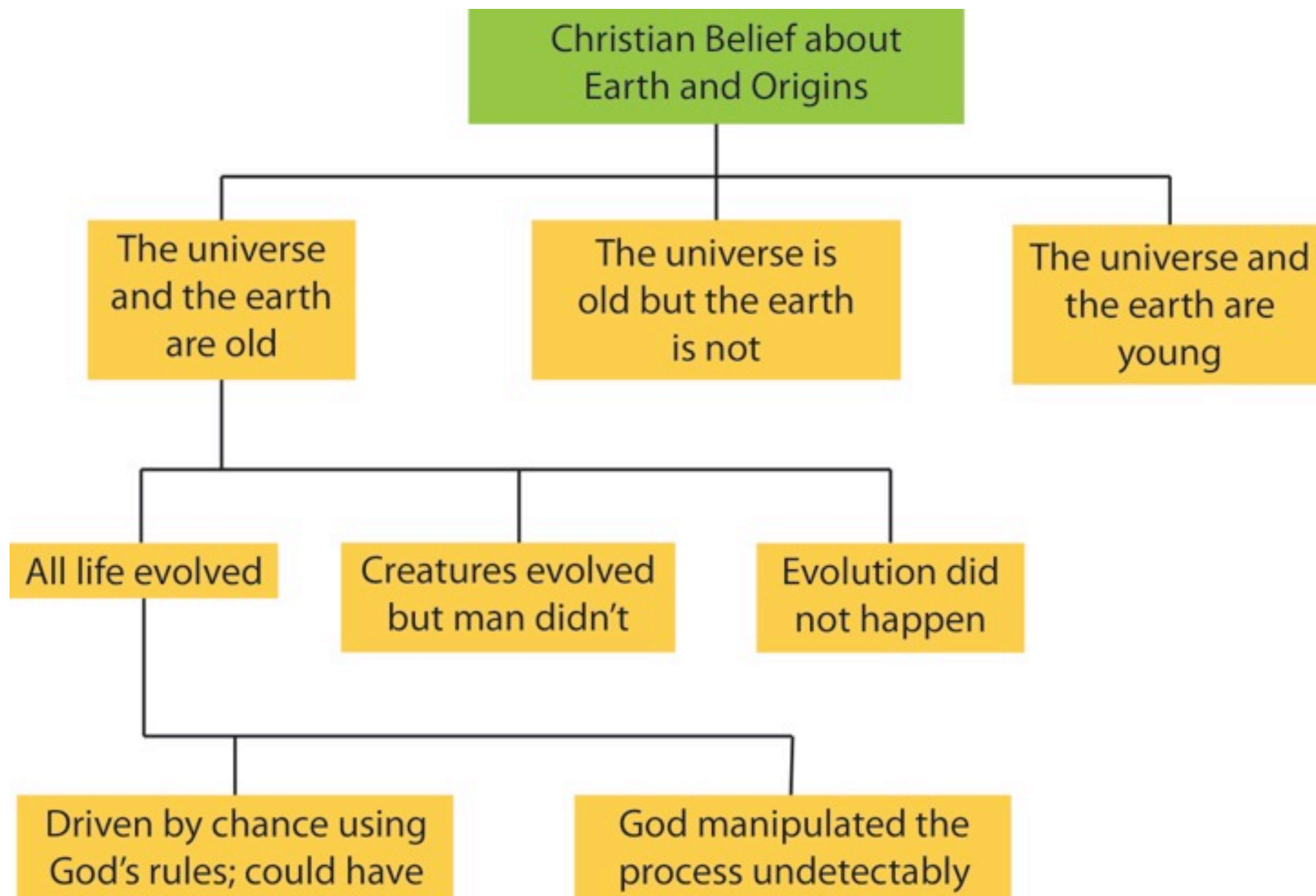


# 3. Filter atheism, keep science

- Scientists aren't out to destroy faith—only a few proud unbelievers are (What else is new?)
- Faith and unbelief: both are faith positions
- Always distinguish between *truth* and *facts*, between *truth* and *theories*

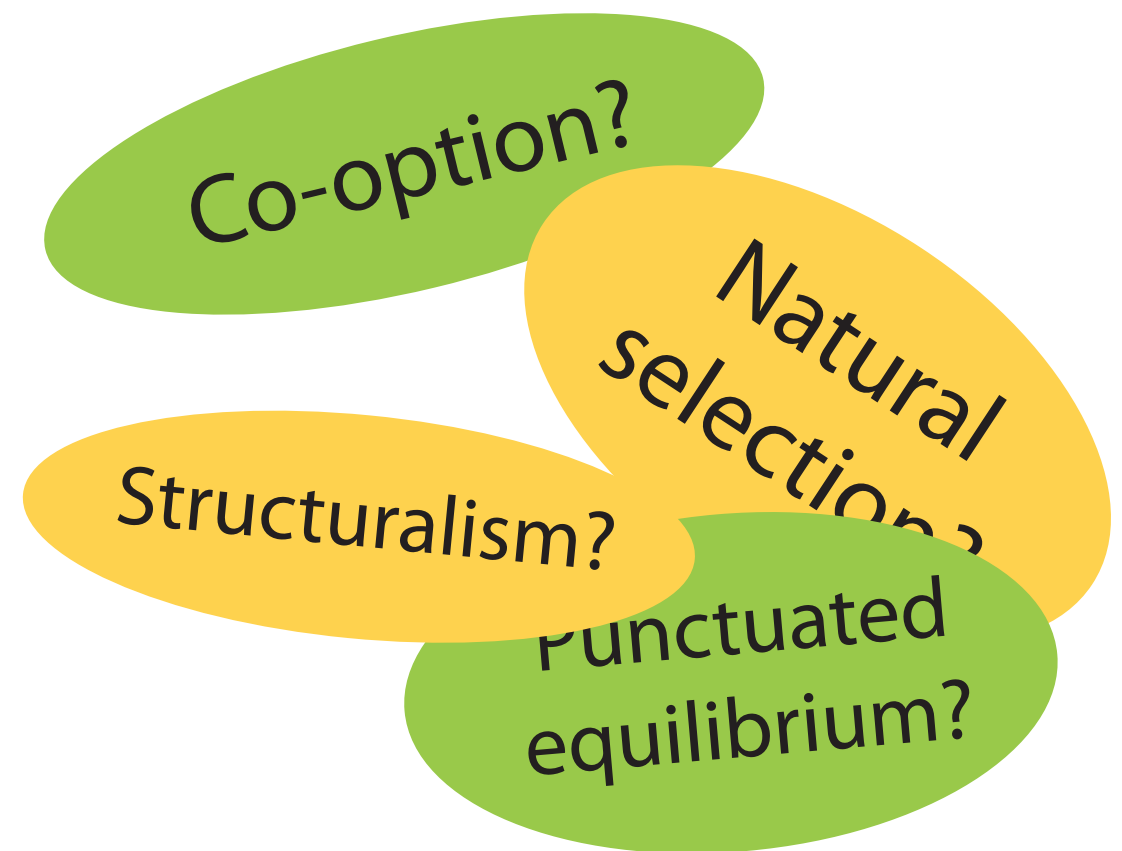


# 4. Recognize the big tent



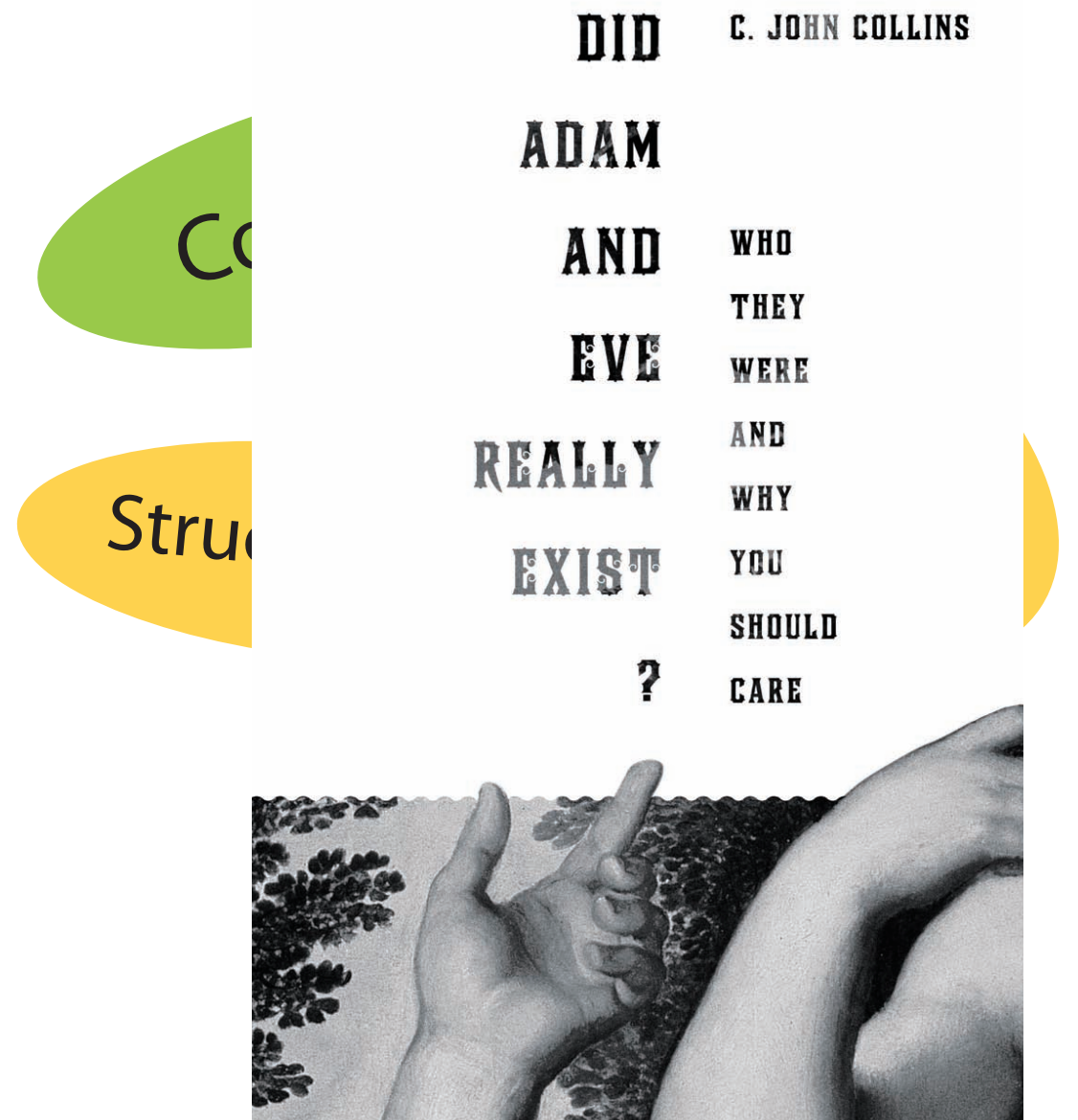
# 5. Accept limitations on both sides

- Evolution may be a “fact” but theories of *how* continue to develop



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- Evolution may be a “fact” but theories of *how* continue to develop
- Genesis may not be a scientific document, but scholarship on how to read it continues to develop



# 6. Discernment and stewardship

- Protecting and caring for the earth is biblical.
- Biblical stewardship of God's creation should trump politics
- Environmental issues should bring science and faith together, not pit them against each other

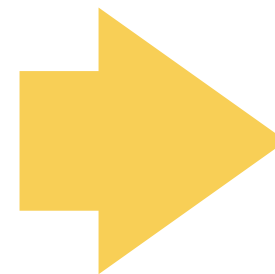
# A sample of contested issues:

- Climate change
- Acid rain
- CFCs and destruction of atmospheric ozone
- Continued dependence on fossil fuels
- Fracking
- Mountaintop removal
- Environmental stewardship vs. economic growth, profit, and private property



# 7. Three interventions

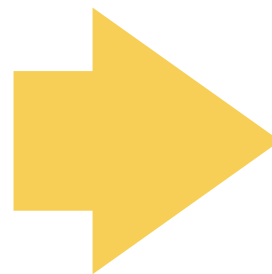
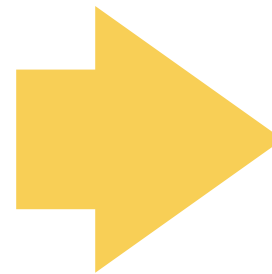
- The Genesis of the universe





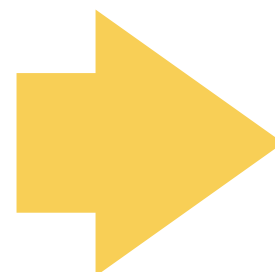
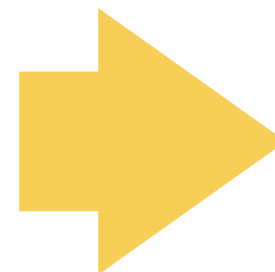
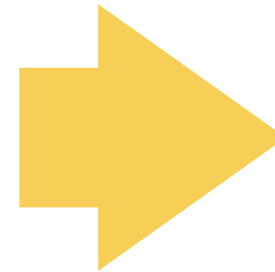
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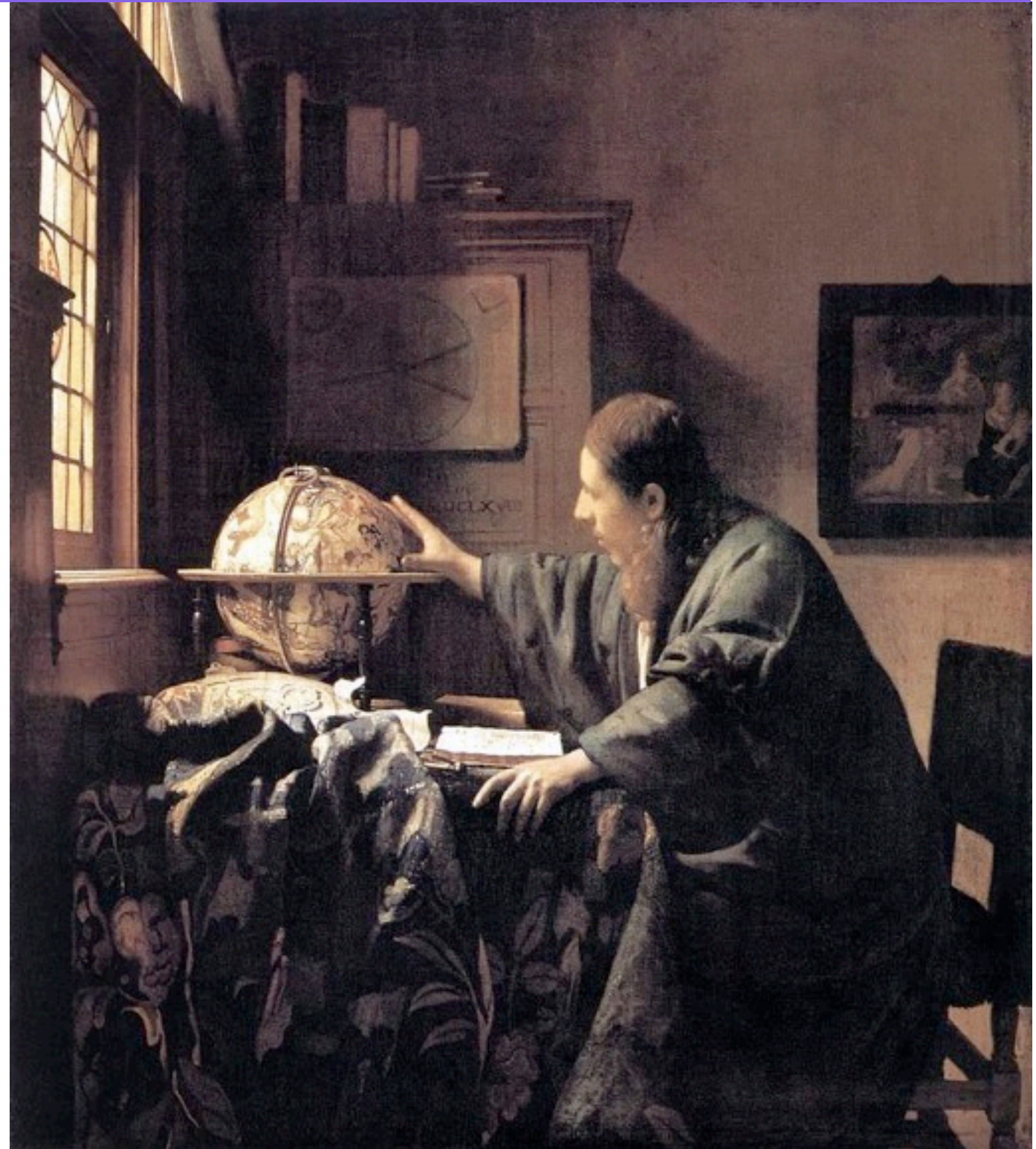
- The ensoulment of man (imago dei)
- The biogenesis
- The Genesis of the universe





# 8. Other voices

- The Poets  
Hopkins, Blake, Wilbur
- The Painters  
Vermeer, Van Gogh, Wright
- The Hymnists  
Babcock, Seiss
- The Composers  
Vivaldi, Holst, Grofé, Whitacre
- The Writers  
Dillard, Berry, Guroian



# 9. Gratitude and worship

- 
- A silhouette of a person with long braids is shown from the back, looking out over a vast landscape of rolling dunes under a warm, orange-hued sky. A bright sun is visible on the right side of the horizon, creating a strong glow. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.
- The right response to an amazing gift is gratitude

- Gratitude for Creation is expressed through worship of the Creator

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