



Austin Tx Chapter Reasons To Believe Newsletter

January 9 2012

Austin@reasons.org



Volume 4 Issue 1

Vibrant Dance II: An Overview

Editor's Note: Dr. Robb Wilson will be our featured speaker at this Saturday's monthly meeting. Here is his description of his topic.

In late October 2011, I attended the Vibrant Dance symposium that looked at various interpretations of Genesis from a theological perspective. The speakers were leading orthodox theologians holding different perspectives and discussing their various strengths and weaknesses. It was extremely gracious in tone. In an email, Larry Linenschmidt gave a great summary of the conference that I'll use here.

"Todd Beall, J. Ligon Duncan III, and John Mark Reynolds presented young earth views. Views which allow for an old earth were presented by Walter Kaiser (day-age), John Walton, and Bruce Waltke. Craig Blaising did an excellent job of moderating the conference."

On Saturday, I will give a summary of each speaker's view and their various interactions. One view I will focus on is John Walton's "Cosmic Temple" viewpoint, as it was the most unique and may be a reasonable symbolic layer on the Genesis account, offering depth to the words God has left us that we
(Continued at right)

RTB Monthly Meeting

Date: Saturday morning Jan. 14, 2012

Place: Hill Country Bible Church near the UT Campus. 405 W. 22nd Street. Corner of San Antonio and W. 22nd

Agenda:

9:00 am Officers Meet

9:30 Fellowship and coffee

10:00 Announcements

10:20 Presentation:

Vibrant Dance II: An Overview by Dr. Robb Wilson

(see speaker's bio on page 3)



have not suspected. From a theological perspective, RTB's concordist view received extremely short shrift, both explicitly and implicitly. As a scientist, it was interesting seeing the discussion couched entirely in theological terms from non-scientists.

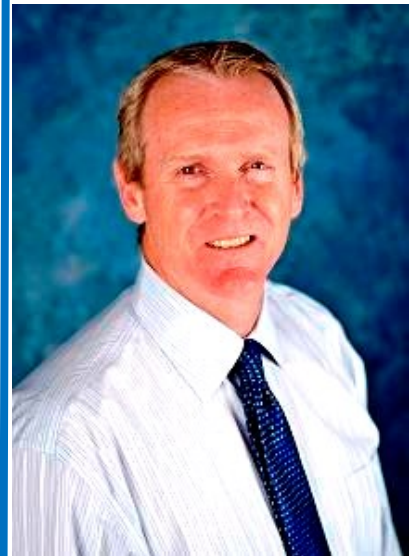
For more information before our meeting, see the symposium website: <http://vibrantdance.org/creation/vision-and-purpose> Also, I have extensively blogged about nearly every session, starting with this post: <http://scholar-redeemer.blogspot.com/2011/10/vibrant-dance-2011-day-1-recap.html>

RTB: A Cure for Cognitive Dissonance

By Bob Davis, Austin RTB Chapter

Cognitive Dissonance: (noun), psychological conflict resulting from incongruous beliefs and attitudes held simultaneously.

For years, Dr. Kurt Frederick, an Austin, Texas family physician, had glibly informed patients of various strange sounding maladies and made them well with treatments and prescriptions provided by modern science.



But he had no name for his own malady, caused, he believed, by what he knew about modern science, on one hand, and what he wanted to continue to believe about the Bible being the inerrant word of God, on the other.

(Continued on Page 2)

Kurt Frederick, (Continued from p.1)

Kurt, now a member of the Austin Chapter of Reasons to Believe (RTB), found that the science-versus-faith crisis was an entirely unnecessary one.

Through his initial exposure to Dr. Hugh Ross, founder and president of RTB, at a local church appearance in the 1990s, and now as an avid reader of science apologetic materials, Kurt no longer sees a conflict between faith and science.

Kurt describes how the leadership in the Southern Baptist church where he grew up told him that “science can’t be trusted” and that “belief in an old earth is tantamount to losing faith and belief in God.”

Since God is the author of the Bible and the facts of nature revealed by science, there can be no conflict, only *wrong interpretations* of one or the other.

In his testimony, Kurt describes how the leadership in the Southern Baptist church where he grew up told him that “science can’t be trusted” and that “belief in an old earth is tantamount to losing faith and belief in God.” “After all, they would say, “ doesn’t Noah’s flood a few thousand years ago explain all of the geologic record?”

“But, how could that be,” I thought when driving through the moun-

tains of Colorado, “when those billions of tons of hard granites right there in front of me clearly contain radiometric signs of age much older than that.”

“My training on modern scientific theory has always stoked my desire to understand, to find an answer, and to reconcile my Christian faith with all this evidence. Could God be trying to fool us into thinking these geographic features just look old, but really aren’t? Why would He do that, and if I can’t trust Him to reveal Himself through the world that He created, how can I trust Him at all? Is He a cosmic jokester scheming in ways to fake us out? God is truth, isn’t He?”

Kurt recalls how his church would bring in “experts” to “persuade the congregation that some new evidence had once again proved that modern science had it all wrong and that their young earth creationism was right.

“They gave the impression that my science teachers were part of some great conspiracy to fool me and drag me and my faith down, or were simply misinformed. But in listening to these folks the church endorsed to explain it all away I always got the uncomfortable suspicion that they were reaching, or maybe even making stuff up, in their desperation to have an answer.

“Where was the peer review of their new data, and why did the preponderance of science just not jive with what the speaker was saying?”

Kurt goes on to explain how his later encounters with professors in college left his “faith hanging by a thread.” (See page 3)

About Saturday’s Speaker: Dr. Robb Wilson



Robb Wilson is a native Texan who earned a BS in Chemistry from UT Austin, an MS and PhD in Chemistry from the University of Michigan. He was an assistant professor of chemistry at Louisiana State University in Shreveport, then worked for a consulting firm in Austin where he served as a contractor in Baghdad for two months, before going on his own for two years and then coming to UT as a lecturer to direct the Physical Chemistry Laboratories two years ago.

He surrendered his life to Christ in high school, was a member of the Campus Crusade student group at UT, was a founding member of a Crusade grad student ministry at UM, led for a time a Crusade Catalytic group at LSUS, and is currently involved with Hill House campus ministry and the Christian Faculty Network, and attends Lost Pines Cowboy Church in Elgin. He is passionate about developing critical thinking in Christians so that they can both intelligently and compassionately engage their culture.

Unbeknownst to him, Kurt was suffering from cognitive dissonance. He resorted to the only defense he thought was available—compartmentalization. Describing this period in his life, Kurt says:

“I once again put my fears and concerns away in a little box. You see separating and confining these doubts let me live my faith in a tentative, albeit weakened, peace.”

Resolution to his dilemma came one Sunday when he heard a pastor and astrophysicist from California, Dr. Hugh Ross.

Kurt describes how this sermon changed his life.

Dr. Ross “was reasoned and methodical, not given to rhetoric, and courteous in his response to those questioners who were threatened by his explanations of things. He used Biblical references for his arguments that seemed not outlandish at all, and he was clearly a man of evangelical faith.

“He never lost his cool, and never seemed to be reaching. His presence in my church must mean that other theories existed that explained creation better than the than the one I was brought up to believe in the little Baptist church in Beaumont.

“His presence caused me a stir of excitement that maybe it did all fit!

So, I began to read John Walton, J.P. Moreland, and Walter Bradley as he suggested. Here were men of science who also clearly struggled with the seeming contradic-

“I once again put my fears and concerns away in a little box. You see separating and confining these doubts let me live my faith in a tentative, albeit weakened, peace.

In this box is my faith in Christ on which there is very little scientific justification or evidence, and over in that box is my training and my career, and how I make decisions, and where my convictions lay.

tions, but arrived at some reasoned conclusions that made sense and allowed them to live their faith with conviction and purpose.

“As I read and digested their thoughts I gradually came to my

own conclusions and convictions. I felt strengthened in my ability to argue with some level of evidence that the best explanation of things, not the weakest, was God. I found that I developed preference for the testable creation model espoused

Resolution to Kurt’s dilemma came one Sunday when he heard a pastor and astrophysicist, Dr. Hugh Ross.

by Hugh Ross and his colleagues at Reasons to Believe.”

Kurt’s experience with cognitive dissonance and compartmentalization parallels that of thousands of us who have been touched by the ministry of RTB. The experience is best summed up by the man who introduced Hugh Ross to Christ, Dr. David Rogstad, another Caltech trained astrophysicist: “The heart cannot rejoice in what the mind cannot accept.”

Kurt is grateful to RTB for removing both the false science/faith dichotomy and the equally false heart dichotomy and therefore restoring the joy of his salvation!

A father of four, and a leader at a large Austin Bible church, Dr. Kurt Frederick is working to bring a systematic series of teaching programs to his church and the wider community at large.



**Not either. Its both.
Think out of the box!
Experience the joy of your salvation with all of your mind.**

