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One of the interesting developments in the Young earth/old earth debate is the changing foundations from which the young earth proponents argue. In the earlier decades, under the influence of Henry Morris, the young earth position was that true science would support a young earth position without reference to the Bible. Textbooks such as *Scientific Creationism* were initially written for secular classroom use and made no reference to Scriptural support texts. As a result, the scientific evidences used to argue the young earth position were easily discredited. Most of these early arguments (moon dust, missing layers of the Grand Canyon, the canopy theory, the shrinking sun, the decaying magnetic field, salt in the oceans, etc.) have gone by the wayside. In the last two decades, the use of the Bible for young earth arguments has significantly changed. Many so-called evidences of a young earth now advanced primarily through Bible support regardless of scientific evidence. Some YECs automatically reject any age-of-the-earth date from consideration simply because it doesn't agree with their interpretation of Scripture (6,000 years). Scientific evidences for the true age of the earth and universe such as the speed of light, radio-metric dating, the geological column and layering of fossils are summarily dismissed because they are not "biblical" without their having to mount rational counter arguments based on genuine evaluation of evidence. Further, the correct interpretation of many of their arguments cannot be made apart from invoking Biblical texts. For example, the earth's multiple magnetic reversals are considered to have happened fully in the year of the flood; Correct radio-metric dating cannot be properly attained because the decay rates were significantly accelerated during the creation week and the year of the flood; White-hole cosmology is the truth (in contrast to Big-bang cosmology) primarily because it theoretically can be understood in a six days time frame. None of these evidences have scientific support, but because they appear to be congruent with YEC interpretation of the text, they are declared true and certain.

The irony of this approach--the necessity of filtering scientific data through Biblical texts to reach a correct interpretation of the data--is a new idea (at least for scientists) in the relationship between science and faith. At the beginning of the Renaissance, Christianity's contribution to science was grounded in the rationality of the created world and the development of the scientific method as a means of understanding the truth of the natural order. Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton did not read their Bibles, draw a specific conclusion about some aspect of nature and then go about making observations to support their biblical interpretation. The Biblical world-view--a foundation of modern science--was more comprehensive than that; the order of the natural world could be observed, quantified, and understood because of its created consistency and because of man's ability to comprehend it (because humanity was created in the image of God).

Young earth creationists now believe that scientific data cannot be correctly interpreted apart from the Bible. This is a new and much broader definition of *Sola Scriptura* (and not in any way historically accurate in the original intent of the term). In taking this extreme stand, they have had to elevate their interpretation of the Bible to a test of orthodoxy, proclaiming other interpretations as heresy and compromise. Sadly, the weight of popular opinion is giving their propaganda great support. As a result, the hope for genuine dialogue has been greatly reduced. Conservatives Christians who question the YEC interpretations must fall in line or risk being burned at the stake--at least in print! The debate has taken a nasty turn. 😞😞😞