**Three-Step Conflict Resolution**

Script

1. Three-Step Conflict Resolution
2. At various times throughout history, science has challenged the Christian understanding of the Bible. The questions raised by science have sometimes shaken the confidence of many in the reliability of Scripture
3. In Choose You This Day, the authors start by assuming that the Bible is the inspired word of God and we do not need to fear that honest investigation will disprove it. / The Bible is the standard against which all the elements of our belief system must be assessed.
4. Then they describe a three-step process for handling the apparent conflicts between science and scripture.
5. Step 1 is conflict and confusion; / step 2 is research and study; / and step 3 is resolution and insight
6. In step 1 a conflict appears between the claims of science and scripture. / This can happen when science asks a difficult question of the Bible….
7. …or when the Bible asks a difficult question of science.
8. To solve the apparent conflict, / scientists collect more data and analyze it in ways they might not have thought of before. / Bible scholars compare scripture with scripture, analyze linguistic data, and work to understand the context of the passage more carefully than ever before.
9. In a thoughtful interfacing of scientific and biblical interpretations, we seek resolution to the conflict. / Sometimes it’s possible to come to a resolution rather quickly. / Other times we may have to wait a long time to fully understand both scientific evidence and the Bible.
10. During Galileo’s lifetime, a geocentric universe—where the sun orbits the earth—was both standard science and orthodox Christian belief. Before Copernicus and Galileo, there had been no reason to question it.
11. But the new scientific claim that the earth turns on its axis and revolves around the sun instead, created a conflict.
12. It appeared that the heliocentric model of the universe conflicted with verses from the Bible that seemed to indicate that the sun moved but the earth stood still.
13. For example, Ecc 1:5 describes the sun rising and setting, / and multiple verses in Psalms describe the world as not moving
14. Scientists continued to collect more data and it was eventually determined that the earth, in fact, does orbit the sun. / Quite a while later, Bible scholars used the tools of their trade to examine what information the author intended to convey in the text.
15. Bible scholars determined that in their immediate context, these verses simply describe the way the sun appears to rise and set—just like we continue to describe it today. / The verses about the earth being established and not moving are found in passages about the greatness and majesty of God, and refer to the power of God in keeping the world safely and securely in its place. They are not describing the motion of the world, but the fact that the world is under God’s control.”
16. In the end, scholars determined that the idea of a geocentric universe did not originally come from the Bible at all. / Because of Greek influence, the errors of their cosmology were actually being read *into* the Bible. The perceived conflict between science and the Bible hadn’t really existed at all. / The resolution to this perceived conflict took time.
17. In this case, hard questions asked by science helped us understand the Bible better.
18. The same thing happened later when science challenged another commonly held belief./ The fixity of species, as it was called, stated that “every animal and plant species was created fixed and unchangeable.” Many people believed the fixity of species was taught in the Bible, / but it was clear from their observations of the natural world that species of animals and plants had changed and continued to change. Once again, there appeared to be a conflict between science and scripture.
19. In stage two, / continued scientific research demonstrated that species change. / After deeper study of the Bible, scholars realized that Genesis does indicate changes would occur, particularly in the curses pronounced in Genesis 3.
20. Just like the geocentric universe, fixity of species originated in Greek philosophy and was being read into the Bible. Once again, the original conflict didn’t really exist at all, / but it took time to figure that out.
21. Once again, questions asked by science helped us understand the Bible better.
22. Now let’s look at some examples where belief in the Bible has contributed scientific insights
23. The Bible describes life on earth as recent—only a few thousand years old. / But the fossil forests in Yellowstone National Park appeared to conflict with this idea. / Scientists claimed that each fossil forest would have grown for up to a thousand years, been killed, buried by volcanic eruptions, and fossilized. Then another forest would grow and the cycle would be repeated. Scientists concluded this cycle had been repeated more than a hundred times. / The many thousands of years associated with the fossil forests was in conflict with the few thousand years of the Bible.
24. In-depth Bible study continued to indicate a short time span for life on earth. / Creationist researchers continued to examine the evidence and concluded that instead of successive forests growing in place, it was more likely that the fossil forests resulted from uprooted, dead trees being transported by repeated volcanic mudflows and deposited in the upright positions in which they are found.
25. Once again, it took time to resolve the apparent conflict.
26. Another example of how belief in the Bible has contributed scientific insights is found in the Coconino Sandstone in the Grand Canyon. / Fossil tracks found there are usually interpreted as having been formed on desert sand dunes. / But some scientists who believe in the Bible wondered how those tracks fit with the story of the flood.
27. These scientists performed laboratory experiments, / demonstrating that the tracks were likely made underwater instead.
28. Eventually, more research resolved what appeared to be a conflict between science and the Bible. These, and other examples from the book can give us confidence while we wait for current conflicts to be resolved.
29. One current conflict is over the age of the earth. / Using radiometric dating, scientists claim that the earth is millions of years old, / while the Bible indicates that creation week was only several thousand years ago.
30. In-depth Bible study continues to indicate a short time span for life on earth, / and scientists continue to study the process of radiometric dating to try to resolve the apparent conflict.
31. Scientists who believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God and the standard against which all elements of our belief system must be assessed, continue to research and study./ They can rest assured that—however long it takes—the apparent conflict will eventually be resolved.