

a young-earth view.¹ They must therefore ignore or reject the great mass of scientific data which can not logically be interpreted as fitting into a young-earth model. This position among evangelical Christians has, in turn, greatly perplexed our nation's educators, and caused them to assume that the Bible (our "handbook") has anti-science and illogical characteristics.¹ The widely publicized young-earth teaching usually causes public leaders to forget that there are many old-earth, special-creationist teachers who accept carefully-collected scientific data.

How can churches and individuals begin to correct this bad situation which has developed? At least two basic patterns of thought and action will be necessary. First, we must go back to the Bible and observe that it does not really give us any definite statements which limit the age of the earth. Genesis 1:1 says that God created the heavens and the earth "in the beginning," and most conservative Bible scholars and teachers of the past two centuries have admitted that the Bible does not really state when "in the beginning" was. Evidently God was pleased to withhold that information, and to allow mankind to make investigations later on, which would at least work in the direction of answering that question.

The second basic step which we need to take in alleviating the present-day creation controversy is to make a reassessment of our attitude toward scientific research. We of course can not accept all the beliefs of scientists. Many of them have beliefs which deny God and his creation, and which contradict the fact of the divine inspiration of the Bible. All research scientists have been taught to attempt to be objective in their investigations, not allowing their personal opinions to influence their conclusions. But, unfortunately, most of the scientists who specialize in investigating the theories of evolution are lax in their attempts to be objective--because they have a personal, philosophical "reason" for holding onto a full belief in evolutionary origins.

However, in branches of science which are not at all dependent upon a belief in biological evolution, immense amounts of excellent, reliable research results have been accumulated--especially during the past 40 years. Geology and oceanography are two of the sciences which could be continued and expanded almost indefinitely without needing to depend on a belief that life originated by evolutionary processes.² Thus, Christians should feel free to use the immense amounts of non-evolutionary data which geologic and oceanographic research have produced, and to recognize the validity of the age-indicating features contained in that body of data. We recognize that God's creation of Adam and Eve as the parents of the human race was only thousands (not millions) of years ago, but this does not indicate that the earth and all the fossils it contains are young.