Reconsidering the Criteria for Scientific Success: *Love over Truth?*

Rob Barrett
THE Colossian Forum

on Faith, Science and Culture
It’s Ugly Out There

We Can Do Better

It Takes Practice:
Not Only Information, But Formation
in Christ all things
[including our conflicts]
hold together

Colossians 1:17
Colossian Forum = Worship + Difficulty
Standard Response to a Problem

How can we quickly solve this problem and get on with things?
A Changed Question

How can we be faithful while this problem remains?
A Changed Question (2)

How can we become the kinds of people who can handle this problem faithfully?
Measure of Success

The resolution of the problems
Measure of Success

Living out Christ-like faithfulness to God and neighbor amidst the problems
Measure of Success (2)

Obedience to the Great Commandment
TCF Vision

• Not of a church free of persistent, nagging, complex issues
• But living as Christians in the midst of them
• Receiving divisive issues as opportunities for faithful discipleship
Christianity Today cover photo

Darrel Falk and Todd Wood
(July 2012)
The Three “Shareds”

• Shared Commitment
• Shared Understanding
• Shared Practices
Kum Bah Yah
Are We Wrongly Subordinating Truth to Love in Scientific Inquiry?
Increase Love, Deepen Truth?

• Origins Forum Evaluation

“There was remarkably consistent feedback that the ‘increase love’ portion of the TCF mission was accomplished in unique and exciting ways while the ‘deepen truth’ aspect of the mission was a clear contrast and broadly noted as neglected.”
Increase Love, Deepen Truth?

• Participant Quotes
  “Increase Love: without question. Deepen truth - on our way but have a ways to go.”
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“One out of two is good in baseball - increasing love happened in spades, but NO deepening of truth of biological or biblical issues.”
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“Truth took a far back seat on the bus.”
Are We Wrongly Subordinating Truth to Love in Scientific Inquiry?
Claim: Our Pursuit of Love *Enables* Our Pursuit of Truth

- 1. What Counts as Truth?
- 2. Experts and Truth
- 3. Lay Communities and Truth
What Counts as Progress in “Truth”?
In the Upper Room

Jesus said, “I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.”

John 16:12-13
Claim: Our Pursuit of Love *Enables* Our Pursuit of Truth

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The Assumed Goal

CONVERSION
Alasdair MacIntyre
Whose Justice?
Which Rationality?
Reasoning within Traditions
Separated Traditions
“It is not then that competing traditions do not share some standards....

“Were it not so, their adherents would be unable to disagree in the way in which they do.

“But that upon which they agree is insufficient to resolve those disagreements...

Alasdair MacIntyre
Stages of Development

1. Unquestioning
2. Handling Inadequacies
3. Reformulation
4. Epistemological Crisis
Our Own Epistemological Crises

They will come.

Will we have friends in other traditions?
Claim: Our Pursuit of Love Enables Our Pursuit of Truth

1. What Counts as Truth?
2. Experts and Truth
   - 3. Lay Communities and Truth
Broader Lay Questions

• “Did that really happen?”
• Does God intervene in my world?
• Should I leave the Bible to experts?
• What happens when a Christian becomes a scientist?
• Is the faith true?
• Who can I trust?
Public Planning Successes

Paved Roads
Public Planning Successes

Eradication of Smallpox
Public Planning Successes

Clean Water
Poverty
Crime
Crime
Define Problem
Gather Data
Analyze Data
Formulate Solution
Implement Solution
Jeff Conklin

“Wicked Problems and Social Fragmentation” (2005)
Fragmentation

Wicked Problem

Social Complexity
Coping Strategies

1. Authority
Coping Strategies

1. Authority
2. Competition
Coping Strategies

1. Authority
2. Competition
3. Collaboration
Virtues for Participation

- Deliberative Wit
- Friendliness
- Temperance
- Courage
- Sincerity
- Humility
Virtues for Progress

• Self-Confidence
• Attentiveness
• Dependability
• Reasonable and Fairness
• Generosity
• Patience
• Resilience
Wow... this is beyond absurd. The author seems to have 'cherry picked' sentences from an actual reputable paper, then used those selections to try and make it line up with his own superstitions.

I'm pretty sure you don't want this, and likely won't read it, but here is the actual paper from OXU http://gbe.oxfordjournals.org/content/6/8/2088.full sure it may be a bit dry, but at least it's scientific.

Restriction and Recruitment—Gene Duplication and the Origin and Evolution...

GBE.OXFORDJOURNALS.ORG

September 3 at 5:16pm • Like

I actually read every article you post in response to the ICR articles I post. The conclusion to your post does not contradict the main point of the ICR article. I really enjoy reading articles where scientists follow the truth wherever it leads to, even if it contradicts their fellow scientists preconceived ideas.

September 3 at 9:53pm • Like

The main point of every ICR article is "God did it." Which is hardly scientific. The OXU article doesn't come to a conclusion, as you should notice most scientific papers don't. I think the biggest issue is the icr people are cherry picking sentences from sci papers, then inserting their own interpretation to that data, supplementing any dead ends with the work of other christian scientist, which often has been refuted, and more often than not is completely unprovable.

September 3 at 10:36pm • Edited • Like

I really do not want to be argumentative but is that any different "evolution did it" even as the article you posted suggested that when that is the under lying go it gets in the way of finding the truth?

September 3 at 10:38pm • Like

The article itself is the answer to that question, I've never meet a biologist who in their field of study, are content with 'evolution did it.' That's why the science moves on, because curiosity coupled with permission (encouraged) to verify every thing. See More

September 3 at 10:46pm • Like

Did you not read the article you sent? The authors clearly state that their fellow evolutionary scientists have hindered scientific progress because of
Virtues for Wicked Problems

Participation
• Deliberative Wit
• Friendliness
• Temperance
• Courage
• Sincerity
• Humility

Progress
• Self-Confidence
• Attentiveness
• Dependability
• Reasonable / Fairness
• Generosity
• Patience
• Resilience
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3. Lay Communities and Truth
What If I’m Wrong?

What if we end up with love, but without truth?
“If it seems to you that you have understood the divine scriptures...in such a way that by this understanding you do not build up this twin love of God and neighbor, then you have not understood them.”

Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*
“If on the other hand you have made judgments about them that are helpful for building up this love, but for all that have not said what the author you have been reading actually meant in that place, then your mistake is not pernicious, and you certainly cannot be accused of lying.”

Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*
“Any who understand a passage in the scriptures to mean something which the writer did not mean are mistaken... But if they are mistaken in a judgment which is intended to build up charity, which is the end of the law (1 Tim 1:5), they are mistaken in the same sort of way as people who go astray off the road, but still proceed by rough paths to the same place as the road was taking them to.”

Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*
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