Are you an apologist?

by[Matt Slick](https://carm.org/matt-slick)  
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Yes, you are an apologist because you give answers about Jesus when you tell people about him.

Sometimes, when I do seminars after I introduce myself, I give a very brief history of what got me started in [apologetics](https://carm.org/dictionary-apologetics) and what keeps me going.  Usually, those who are there are there to learn about [Christian](https://carm.org/dictionary-christian)doctrine; evangelism; witnessing to Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, or other cult groups; or are simply there to ask questions on different subjects.  Invariably, I introduce the term 'apologetics' to the group and define it as "that field of Christian study that defends biblical truth against anything that opposes it." Also, I state that apologetics is as varied as people and subjects and that no one can master all areas. As God calls people into study, they will become proficient in what interests them according to the gifts and interests that have been entrusted to them by Him

But one of my concerns when doing seminars is what I call "The Speaker Effect." Basically, when a group gathers to hear a speaker, it is assumed that the speaker knows his material and is very experienced in the subject. Given the fact that public speaking is America's number one phobia, the mere fact that a person can get up there and speak for an hour on a subject (and enjoy doing it) has a psychological effect of distancing the learner from the teacher. The speaker is often elevated to the status of "A Special Teacher Called of God." Actually, in my case, the speaker is just someone who likes to blab about what he knows. I'm no different than anyone else, and that is important. People need to realize that they are called by God to study and show themselves approved ([2 Tim. 2:15](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/2%20Tim.%202.15)). Furthermore, this "effect" tends to make people think that they can't be good apologists since they aren't up there speaking. This is not true, and I always try to motivate people to study and master those areas that the Lord calls them to study.

Apologetics is the attempt to make a defense for the Christian faith. If you do that in any way, then you are an apologist. In fact, you are commanded to be an apologist by Peter: "But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence," ([1 Pet. 3:15](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/1%20Pet.%203.15)).

If God commands you to make a defense, then He is commanding you to be an apologist.  So you are, whether you like it or not, called to be an apologist.   But don't worry.  God is not in the habit of sending people to accomplish His will without equipping them.

Now, what I am going to tell you is true. I've experienced this many times. But please understand that this is the work of the Holy Spirit, not me. There would be times in varying situations when I would be discussing something with an unbeliever. He would ask a difficult question that would give me pause. I'd nod, trust God, and inhale to begin to answer. The answer would come as I began to speak. In other words, I didn't know what to say until I started to say it. I am reminded of Jesus' words in [Mark 13:11](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Mark%2013.11), "And when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not be anxious beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but it is the Holy Spirit."

I say this because I want you to learn to trust the Lord. He said He will be with us always to the end ([Matt. 28:20](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Matt.%2028.20)). I believe it. He is there when we need Him. So, you need to study, be ready, and trust the Lord to provide what you need when you need it. Trust God and Go!

Apologetics and the Family



by [Ryan Turner](https://carm.org/ryan-turner)

**Why Apologetics is Important**

The Bible commands us to give a defense of our faith ([1 Pet. 3:15](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/1%20Pet.%203.15)) and to contend earnestly for the faith ([Jude 3](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Jude%203)). This discipline of giving answers to people’s questions about [Christianity](https://carm.org/dictionary-christianity) is known as Christian [apologetics](https://carm.org/dictionary-apologetics). However, apologetics is integrally related to discipleship and evangelism. Jesus commanded us to evangelize the lost by making disciples. Since apologetics is known as pre-evangelism, it is important that we engage in apologetics.

**The Importance of the Family**

First, I strongly believe that the family is the bedrock of the Christian Church. If families are strong, the churches will be strong; if the churches are strong, communities will be strong; if communities are strong, nations will be strong; if nations are strong, then our world will be strong.  As a result of the vast importance of the family, it is extremely important to make sure that your family is grounded in the truth. This is the case whether you are a single parent or a two-parent household.

**Important Foundations**

You must make sure that you are saved and trained yourself. As mentioned in a [previous article](https://carm.org/how-to-do-apologetics), the foundation to proper apologetics is [salvation](https://carm.org/dictionary-salvation) and spiritual maturity, critical thinking skills, and sound theology. You do not have to have a Ph.D. in philosophy or theology to teach your family, but it is important that you at least have the willingness to learn. In fact, you will probably do most of your learning as you teach and [disciple](https://carm.org/dictionary-disciple) your family.

**So how do we do apologetics with the Family?**

**#1: Take Personal Responsibility**

First, take personal responsibility yourself to train your kids. Do not depend on the church or the school system to train and equip your kids. You must be willing to do it yourself. Unfortunately, many churches do not equip young kids to know their faith and how to share it.

**#2: Personal Devotions and Prayer**

Second, you must lead your family in personal devotions (Bible reading and prayer) on a regular basis. There is no magic formula of “You must have devotions as a family every day” or “You must have devotions as a family twice a week.” However, just make sure that it is something that you engage in on a regular basis. All you have to do is read basic passages from the Bible in a slow manner and (depending on your children’s ages) discuss the passages with your children afterwards. You could start with the book of Proverbs or the Gospel of John. You also could use a number of helpful children’s Bible study material such as the material from Children’s Bible Hour: http://www.cbhministries.org/home.php. Children’s Bible Hour Ministries actually provides a number of illustrative stories which help explain Biblical teachings or themes. This helps your children to think about applying what they hear from the Bible.

After or before reading the Bible, you could spend some time praying with your children. Teach your children to be able to pray out loud and in public. Teach them to have confidence to pray and have a relationship with God. This is extremely important as they grow up and get into the public square. If their faith is extremely private, they will never make a difference in the world.

Make sure that you read the Bible in a translation that your children can understand. The best Bible translations would be the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the English Standard Version (ESV), or the New King James Version (NKJV). Again, do not worry about being perfect--just make an effort and you will have good results.

**#3: Talk to your Children about God**

Third, talk with your children about God and their spiritual life. It is amazing how many parents do not even talk to their children about spiritual things or explain to their children the gospel message. Though your child must personally trust [Christ](https://carm.org/dictionary-christ) as his or her Savior, I strongly encourage you to invite your children to get saved. Do not leave it up to the pastor or youth minister of your church. You must personally talk to your own children about the Lord.

Once your child is a believer, teach him how to share his faith with non-believers. Training your child how to evangelize others will build confidence and maturity in your child's walk with the Lord. It will also make him way more effective to reach others in the world.

**#4: See that your Children Receive an Excellent Education**

Fourth, make sure that your children receive an excellent education. There is much debate among Christian parents today regarding homeschooling vs. private schooling vs. public schooling. I honestly think that there are excellent public and private schools, but I think that homeschooling is the best means to train and equip your kids. I was homeschooled from Kindergarten through 12th grade; and if I had to do it over again, I would do the same.

Homeschooling places the burden of discipleship and teaching upon the parents where it belongs. It does not leave it up to a teacher or the public system to mold and shape your child’s life.

If your child spends about half of his waking hours per day at a public school where he is not taught the fear of the Lord, is spoon-fed secular ideologies like evolution and socialism, and does not receive much training from his parents or church, it is not surprising that he will “lose” his faith and become a non-believer. If he is taught to think like an unbeliever and act like an unbeliever, then it is not surprising that he will start *being* an unbeliever.

If most of a child’s young life is spent at a secular public school, he will spend most of his time being influenced by his peers. Who do you want to be the biggest influence on your children: yourself or his ungodly peers?

**The average Christian kid’s life:**

* 168 hours per week (24 hours per day x 7 days per week)
* 63 hours: Sleeping (9 hours per day x 7 days per week)
* 56 hours: Time at School (8 hours per day x 7 days per week)
* 12 hours: Extracurricular Activities (Homework, Sports, etc.,) (2 hours per day x 6 days per week)
* 21 hours: Entertainment (TV, video games) (3 hours per day x 7 days per week)
* 2-3 hours: Church Activities

If a child receives a public education, does not receive family discipleship training while in the home, and only receives a menial Christian education from the Church, he basically will know nothing about Christianity. As a result, he will not be able to effectively share his faith and impact the world.

**Clarification**

I am not saying that parents should isolate their kids from the world and hide them in a homeschooling bubble where they do not receive any interaction with the world. There are extreme instances where homeschooling is done in a wrong manner. Kids do need socialization, and they should be around children their own ages. However, the primary influence on their life should be godly adults--not immature children.  
  
Also, there are a number of good private and public schools. Many teachers in these schools work extremely hard and have a desire to teach children to read and write. They often work for low wages and are extremely committed to helping children. I definitely admire that.  
  
**Private Schools**

There are also a number of excellent private Christian schools where children can receive solid Christian training from godly teachers. In many Christian schools, there is a strong emphasis on learning a Christian worldview with classes on [Bible](https://carm.org/dictionary-bible), history, science, government, etc., and all from a Christian perspective.  
  
**What if I can’t home school or put my kids in private school?**

Nevertheless, for many people it is just not feasible for them to homeschool or put their kids in private school. However, if such is the case, you can still apply the steps listed above: taking personal responsibility, having personal devotions, talking to your children about God, and seeing that your child receives an excellent education whether he receives public, private, or home education.

Though you may not be able to choose the curriculum that your child uses, you can still discuss with your child what he or she is learning in public school and equip him or her to reach out to their classmates. God has children in public schools to be salt and light ([Mt. 5:13-16](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Matt.%205.13-16)).  
  
**#5: Use a number of helpful resources to train your kids.**

Finally, get access to a number of helpful resources related to apologetics and worldview training.

Resources for Apologetics and Worldview Training for Children

The following is a list of resources that I found on the Internet related to Apologetics and Worldview material that is suitable for children. Please let me know if you are aware of other resources which I did not list.

***Teen Only (14 and up)***

* Summit Ministries - A great wealth of information available to equip teens for college. A two-week intensive summer training session available in Colorado Springs, CO.
* Focus on the Family's Truth Project (http://www.thetruthproject.org) - A simple overview of the various areas that compose a worldview and how a Christian can think correctly.

***Kids (4-13) and Teens (14 and up)***

* [CARM’s Online Theology, Apologetics, and Critical Thinking schools](https://carm.org/online-schools).
* Answers in Genesis: Scientific Apologetics for the Family (http://www.answersingenesis.org)
* Answers in Genesis: Kids Apologetics (http://www.answersingenesis.org)
* Christian Book Distributors: Kids Apologetics Resources
  + Christian Book Distributors: Excellent kids book resources

Logical fallacies or fallacies in argumentation

by [Matt Slick](https://carm.org/matt-slick)  
5/18/2008

There are different kinds of logical fallacies that people make in presenting their positions.  Below is a list of some of the major fallacies.  It is a good idea to be familiar with them so you can point them out in a discussion thereby focusing the issues where they belong while exposing error.

It is true that during a debate on an issue if you simply point out to your "opponent" a logical fallacy that he/she has just made, it generally gives you the upper hand.  But then, merely having the upper hand is not the goal: truth is.  Nevertheless, logical fallacies hide the truth; so pointing them out is very useful.

1. **Ad Hominem** - Attacking the individual instead of the argument.
   1. Example:  You are so stupid your argument couldn't possibly be true.
   2. Example:  I figured that you couldn't possibly get it right, so I ignored your comment.
2. **Appeal to Force** - Telling the hearer that something bad will happen to him if he does not accept the argument.
   1. Example:  If you don't want to get beaten up, you will agree with what I say.
   2. Example:  Convert or die.
3. **Appeal to Pity** - Urging the hearer to accept the argument based upon an appeal to emotions, sympathy, etc.
   1. Example:  You owe me big time because I really stuck my neck out for you.
   2. Example:  Oh come on, I've been sick.  That's why I missed the deadline.
4. **Appeal to the Popular** (argumentum ad populum)- Urging the hearer to accept a position because a majority of people hold to it.
   1. Example:  The majority of people like soda.  Therefore, soda is good.
   2. Example:  Everyone else is doing it.  Why shouldn't you?
5. **Appeal to Tradition** - Trying to get someone to accept something because it has been done or believed for a long time.
   1. Example:  This is the way we've always done it. Therefore, it is the right way.
   2. Example:  The Catholic church's tradition demonstrates that this doctrine is true.
6. **Begging the Question** - Assuming the thing to be true that you are trying to prove.  It is circular.
   1. Example:  God exists because the Bible says so.  The Bible is inspired.  Therefore, we know that God exists.
   2. Example:  I am a good worker because Frank says so.  How can we trust Frank?  Simple:  I will vouch for him.
7. **Category Mistake** - Attributing a property to something that could not possibly have that property. Attributing facts of one kind are attributed to another kind.  Attributing to one category that which can only be properly attributed to another.
   1. Example:  Blue sleeps faster than Wednesday.
   2. Example:  Saying logic is transcendental is like saying cars would exist if matter didn't.
8. **Cause and Effect** - assuming that the effect is related to a cause because the events occur together.
   1. Example:  When the rooster crows, the sun rises.  Therefore, the rooster causes the sun to rise.
   2. Example:  When the fuel light goes on in my car, I soon run out of gas.  Therefore, the fuel light causes my car to run out of gas.
9. **Circular Argument** - See Begging the Question
10. **Fallacy of Composition**- Assuming that what is true of the part is true for the whole.
    1. Example: That engine is blue.  Therefore, the car is blue.
    2. Example:  You are weird.  That means that your family is weird, too.
11. **Fallacy of Division** - Assuming that what is true of the whole is true for the parts.
    1. Example:  That car is blue.  Therefore, its engine is blue.
    2. Example:  Your family is weird.  That means that you are weird, too.
12. **Fallacy of Equivocation** - Using the same term in an argument in different places but the word has different meanings.
    1. Example:  A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.  Therefore, a bird is worth more than President Bush.
    2. Example:  Evolution states that one species can change into another.  We see that cars have evolved into different styles.  Therefore, since evolution is a fact in cars, it is true in species.
13. **False Dilemma, False Dichotomy**- Giving two choices when in actuality there could be more choices possible.
    1. Example:  You either did knock the glass over this morning or you did it this afternoon.  Which is it? (Someone else could have knocked the glass over).
    2. Example:  Do you still beat your wife?
14. **Genetic Fallacy** - Attempting to endorse or disqualify a claim because of the origin or irrelevant history of the claim.
    1. Example:  The Nazi regime developed the Volkswagen Beetle.  Therefore, you should not buy a VW Beetle because of who started it.
    2. Example:  Frank just got out of jail last year; since it was his idea to start the hardware store, I can't trust him.
15. **Guilt by Association** - Rejecting an argument or claim because the person proposing it likes someone who is disliked by another.
    1. Example:  Hitler liked dogs.  Therefore, dogs are bad.
    2. Example:  Your friend is a thief.  Therefore, I cannot trust you.
16. **Non Sequitur** - Comments or information that does not logically follow from a premise or the conclusion.
    1. Example:  We know why it rained today: because I washed my car.
    2. Example:  I don't care what you say.  We don't need any more bookshelves.  As long as the carpet is clean, we are fine.
17. **Poisoning the Well** - Presenting negative information about a person before he/she speaks so as to discredit the person's argument.
    1. Example:  Frank is pompous, arrogant, and thinks he knows everything.  So, let's hear what Frank has to say about the subject.
    2. Example:  Don't listen to him because he is a loser.
18. **Red Herring** - Introducing a topic not related to the subject at hand.
    1. Example: I know your car isn't working right.  But, if you had gone to the store one day earlier, you'd not be having problems.
    2. Example:  I know I forgot to deposit the check into the bank yesterday.  But, nothing I do pleases you.
19. **Special Pleading** (double standard) - Applying a standard to another that is different from a standard applied to oneself.
    1. Example:  You can't possibly understand menopause because you are a man.
    2. Example:  Those rules don't apply to me since I am older than you.
20. **Straw Man Argument** - Producing an argument about a weaker representation of the truth and attacking it.
    1. Example:  The government doesn't take care of the poor because it doesn't have a tax specifically to support the poor.
    2. Example:  We know that evolution is false because we did not evolve from monkeys.

**Impact of a young-earth creationist apologetics course on student creation worldview**

***by Tom Henderson, Steve Deckard and***[***David A. DeWitt***](https://creation.com/dr-david-dewitt)

**Summary**

Science educators holding an evolutionary worldview are concerned about the teaching of young-earth creationism (YEC) and generally oppose its presentation in public schools. This paper examines the influence of a YEC apologetics course on creation and evolution worldview attitudes of Liberty University students. The Creation Worldview Test (CWT) was administered and a total scale score, along with three subscales scores in theology, science and age, were analyzed. Student pre-test scores indicated some weaknesses, suggesting departure from a solid YEC worldview. Following the course, students shifted significantly toward stronger agreement with the YEC position in total score, science and age. The results demonstrate that when Christian college students are taught from a YEC perspective, they shift toward stronger beliefs in YEC.

Scripture mandates that Christians ‘Train up a child in the way he should go’ ([Proverbs 22:6a](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Prov%2022.6a)). Yet, today in American public and private schools, most students are being bombarded on a daily basis with naturalism and an evolutionary perspective. This worldview impacts nearly every aspect of these students’ lives as it is trumpeted through the media and both public and private school curriculum. Even though some of the above mentioned students are brought up in Christian homes and somewhat insulated from the influence of the evolutionary naturalism, many go off to secular colleges and universities and lose their Christian worldview. For these reasons a sound apologetic based on a young-earth creationist (YEC) worldview should play a vital role in the curriculum of Christian colleges across America and around the world.

One way to determine the status of young peoples’ view on the key issues related to evolutionary and creationist worldviews is through assessment. The Creation Worldview Test (CWT) is an instrument that enables the measurement of student YEC worldview. Measuring this construct before entry and after taking an apologetics course may give the instructor a picture of the views of the students and an indicator of the teaching effectiveness toward the goal of teaching from a YEC worldview.

Recently it has been shown that courses taught from a YEC perspective show significant improvements in student creation worldview attitudes.1–5 DeWitt teaches apologetics at Liberty University. Since Fall 2001 he has pre-/post-tested his students with the CWT tool. This paper discusses the results of the assessment for the Spring 2002 classes.

**Purpose and focus of the study**

The CWT was used to determine Liberty University student creation worldview attitudes before and after taking an apologetics course, which was taught from a YEC perspective. Three specific subscales are measured by the CWT along with an overall score. These three subscales are theology, science and age aspects.

**Null Hypotheses**

H1—There will be no significant difference in measured student attitudes between the CWT pre-test *theology* subscale score mean and CWT post-test *theology* subscale score mean.

H2—There will be no significant difference in measured student attitudes between the CWT pre-test *science* subscale score mean and CWT post-test *science* subscale score mean.

H3—There will be no significant difference in measured student attitudes between the CWT pre-test *age* subscale score mean and CWT post-test *age* subscale score mean.

H4—There will be no significant difference in measured student attitudes between the CWT pre-test *total* scale score mean and CWT post-test *total* scale score mean.

**Definitions**

*Creation Worldview Test (CWT)*—an instrument developed by Deckard to measure attitudes and beliefs related to the creation/evolution controversy.6

*Construct*—an abstraction at a higher level than a concept used to explain, interpret, and summarize observations and to form part of a conceptual content of a theory.6

**Review of literature**

**Background related to the worldview construct**

A number of authors have defined/described the worldview construct. Wisniewski states ‘A worldview is an internal belief system about the real world—what it is, why it is, and how it operates. Within a person’s mind, it defines the limits of what is possible and impossible.’ He adds, ‘The worldview is all encompassing, there is NOT ONE area of interpretation that the worldview does not affect’ (emphasis in original).7

Noebel states,

‘The term worldview refers to any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement, or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man’s relations to God and the world. Specifically, a worldview should contain a particular perspective regarding each of the following ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, law, politics, economics, and history.’8

‘A worldview is a way of viewing or interpreting all of reality. It is an interpretive framework through which or by which one makes sense of the data of life and the world.’9

Jeeves and Berry ‘described a worldview as primarily concerned with the ultimate nature of reality, and is a set of beliefs that produces a framework of meaning for interpreting life as a whole.’10

**Evolution worldview**

The ‘Science Establishment’ in the USA consists of organizations such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), National Education Association (NEA) and the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT)—all assume evolution as a fact. They hold an evolutionary worldview. Dobzhansky quotes Teilhard de Chardin:

‘Is evolution a theory, a system, or a hypothesis? It is much more—it is a general postulate to which all theories, all hypotheses, all systems must henceforth bow and which they must satisfy in order to be thinkable and true. Evolution is a light which illuminates all facts, a trajectory which all lines of thought must follow—this is what evolution is.’11

Dobzhansky also states,

‘Evolution as a process that has always gone on in the history of the earth can be doubted only by those who are ignorant of the evidence or are resistant to evidence, owing to emotional blocks or to plain bigotry. … the mechanisms that bring evolution about certainly need study and clarification. There are *no alternatives* to evolution as history that can withstand critical examination’ (emphasis added). 12

**Christian creation worldview and science education**

Henry Morris defined elements of a Christian YEC worldview and his biblical creation model (see Table 1).13

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Table 1.* Evolution, Creation, and biblical Creation models. | | |
| **Evolution model** | **Creation model** | **Biblical Creation model** |
| 1. Continuing naturalistic origin. | 1. Completed supernaturalistic origin. | 1. Creation completed by supernatural processes in six days. |
| 2. Net present increase in complexity. | 2. Net present decrease in complexity. | 2. Creation in the bondage of decay because of sin and the curse. |
| 3. Earth history dominated by uniformitarianism. | 3. Earth history dominated by catastrophism. | 3. Earth history dominated by the great Flood of Noah’s day. |

Deckard proposed ten tenets for a creationist-based science education.14 Points 2 and 3 were later slightly modified. These tenets are summarized as follows:15

1. *Worldview development* should be an integral part of true science education.
2. A YEC worldview can be viewed in terms of three measurable domains: *theological*, *science* and *age* aspects*.* (This paper uses the same three.)
3. Learning encompasses senses *(hands-on),* intellect *(minds-on)*, and spiritual discernment *(hearts-on*). Effective teaching should address *all three* components of this three-fold nature.
4. *Testing* should cover factual knowledge, understanding of creation, aspects of worldview development, and the learning components as stated in 3.
5. Biblical and scientific creationism should be *fully integrated* into textbooks.
6. Evolutionary philosophy exposure should occur *after* a thorough grounding in a creationist worldview.
7. Both creation and evolution are *belief systems*.
8. *God* is the source of all knowledge.
9. Creationism must be taught *systematically* (7 principles noted).
10. Student *spiritual* beliefs parallel their *scientific* beliefs.

**Previous reported testing using the CWT instrument**

DeWitt conducted CWT pre-testing and post-testing around his Apologetics 290 course at Liberty University. He taught this fall 2001 course from a YEC perspective. Analysis revealed statistically significant upward shifts in CWT *science* subscale score 50â†’59, CWT *age* subscale score 36â†’59 and CWT *total* scale score 58â†’68. The *theology* subscale score began and remained at a high level 81â†’83.2 Scientific creation and age-related issues are less well understood by the students. This is true for all groups tested with the CWT, not just Liberty University.1–5

Deckard conducted CWT pre-testing and post-testing around his apologetics and creation-evolution classes plus two biology classes at Trinity Bible College. The biology classes were team-taught with a theistic evolutionist. Analysis by Deckard, Henderson and Grant showed statistically significant shifts toward a stronger creation worldview occurred in the apologetics and creation-evolution classes but not in the freshmen biology classes where there was a mixed message.16 The CWT statements were grouped in six subscales: creation, creation age, theology, new age, evolution and evolution age. See Table 2 and shaded TBC column in [Appendix 1](https://creation.com/impact-of-a-young-earth-creationist-apologetics-course-on-student-creation-worldview#appendix1).

Ray studied Atlanta high school students from a wider variety of backgrounds: Christian schools, church youth, public school and homeschool. Ray utilized both the CWT and PEERS tools to help answer questions concerning education, religion, and social issues, views towards God and Christianity, and influence of high school background. He used scaled scores (–100 to +100) and worldview attitude classifications shown below as defined by the PEERS. He also applied these descriptors to the CWT. Correlation of the PEERS with the CWT showed the two instruments were measuring something very similar (Ï = 0.79).17 For a concise summary of his dissertation see Deckard and Smithwick.1

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Table 2.* Trinity Bible College (TBC) creation worldview preâ†’post course tests. | | | | |
| **TBC scores** | **Apologetics** | **Creation-evolution** | **Biology 1** | **Biology 2** |
| Total scale | 63â†’76 | 68â†’82 | 54â†’59 not sig. | 52â†’55 not sig. |
| Creation issues | 62â†’79 | 62â†’88 | 48â†’61 not sig. | 46â†’53 not sig. |
| Evolution issues | 53â†’68 | 63â†’76 | 48â†’49 not sig. | 46â†’52 not sig. |
| Theology scale | 81â†’82 not sig. | 84â†’78 not sig. | 77â†’72 not sig. | 75â†’60 not sig. |
| New age scale | 60â†’71 not sig. | 80â†’79 not sig. | 62â†’65 not sig. | 62â†’65 not sig. |
| Creation age | 67â†’71 not sig. | 69â†’80 | 41â†’58 not sig. | 43â†’55 not sig. |
| Evolution age | 44â†’59 | 66â†’72 | 46â†’42 not sig. | 37â†’41 not sig. |

**Development of tools to measure creation worldview**

**Creation Worldview Test (CWT)**

The CWT is an instrument for measuring attitudes and beliefs related to the creation/evolution controversy. It was developed by Deckard in 1995 and field-tested in 1995–1997.18 The ICR tenets of biblical and scientific creationism were used as a basis for instrument development.13

The CWT instrument was unveiled to the creation community at the Third International Conference on Creationism by Deckard and Sobko. This paper also detailed the instrument validity and reliability analysis.19

In 1998–1999 the CWT contained 49 statements on creation-evolution. In 2000 two questions were dropped and others edited. Four new ones were added, bringing it to the current configuration of 51 statements (see [Appendix 1](https://creation.com/impact-of-a-young-earth-creationist-apologetics-course-on-student-creation-worldview#appendix1)). Eighteen statements (35% of 51) are categorized under *theology*, twenty-two (43%) under *science*, and eleven (22%) under *age*.

**Methodology**

Students entering the Liberty University *History of Life* course were pre-tested on their creation worldview attitudes using the CWT instrument. The 14-week course (eleven 50-minute lectures plus 3 tests) met once a week. Course topics included: limitations of science, genetic limits of evolution, fossil record, human evolution, origin of matter and energy, age of the Earth, origin and complexity of life, science and Scripture.20 The data set combines two classes taught by DeWitt. Students who had only taken the pre-test or the post-test were excluded from the study. The classes were taught back to back to minimize any teaching differences between them. The textbook used for fall 2001 and spring 2002 classes was *Scientific Creationism*.21 At the end of the course the students were post-tested with the same CWT instrument. Students who had only taken the pre-test or the post-test were excluded from the study. The 51 CWT statements were used to discern student creation worldview in three component areas (theology, science and age aspects). Data gathered from these two tests were processed using the SPSS statistical analysis program.

A Likert 5-step scale was used for students to choose their level of agreement with each statement (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree). The answers were accordingly scored 5, 4, 3, 2 or 1. Scoring for negatively worded statements were reversed by the SPSS to maintain a 5 score being the strongest creation worldview attitude. The scale score was then converted to a 200-point scale with 100 being a perfect score for a creationist worldview and –100 a perfect score for an evolutionist worldview.

**Data analysis and findings**

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| *Table 3.* Liberty University apologetics paired pre/post test statistics. TH=theology score; SCI=science; AGE=age; TSS=total scale score. | | | | |
|  | **Test** | **Mean** | **N** | **Std. Dev** |
| Pair 1 | THPRE | 82.41 | 195 | 15.683 |
| THPOS | 87.55 | 195 | 17.945 |
| Pair 2 | SCIPRE | 52.94 | 195 | 21.522 |
| SCIPOST | 62.57 | 195 | 26.564 |
| Pair 3 | AGEPRE | 42.16 | 195 | 27.510 |
| AGEPOST | 65.82 | 195 | 29.528 |
| Pair 4 | TSSPRE | 61.03 | 195 | 17.904 |
| TSSPOST | 72.13 | 195 | 21.509 |

The four pairs of pre-post apologetics course test results in Table 3 are the *theology*, *science* and *age* subscales, followed by the *total* scale scores. PEERS designated scores of 70+ as *biblical theist*, 30–69 as *moderate Christian*, 0–29 as *secular humanist*, and <0 as *socialist*. The post-test *mean* scores all increased. *Theology* stayed at a solid *biblical theist* level. Greatest increase was in *age*-related issues. Overall, the *total* scale score moved from a *moderate Christian* level to a *biblical theist*.

All scores were slightly higher than results from the fall 2001 classes, but showed the same trend. (See previous reported testing using the CWT instrument.)

The *standard deviation* shows there was a greater spread of answers concerning age-related issues. This indicates the students, as a whole did not grasp YEC science and age aspects. Some scored well, while others scored low. In spite of significant increase, the science and age apologetics scores are weak.

The differences in the means of Table 3 are shown in the *mean difference* column of Table 4. The t-values show that none of the differences in the pre-test /post-test means are due to chance. Increases in these already high theology scores may have also been limited by *statistical regression*. This is the ‘tendency for subjects who score extremely high or extremely low on a pre-test to score closer to the mean (regression toward the mean) on a post-test.’22

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Table 4.* Liberty University apologetics paired pre/post t-test. | | | |
| **Test pairs** | **Mean difference** | **t** | **Sig. (2-tailed)** |
| Pair 1 THPRE – THPOST | –5.14 | –3.553 | <0.0005 |
| Pair 2 SCIPRE – SCIPOST | –9.63 | –5.575 | <0.0005 |
| Pair 3 AGEPRE – AGEPOST | –23.66 | –11.924 | <0.0005 |
| Pair 4 TSSPRE – TSSPOST | –11.10 | –7.687 | <0.0005 |

All four null hypotheses are rejected and their alternates accepted, indicating that there are significant differences in measured student attitudes between CWT pre-test total scale score means and the science, age, and theology subscale score means. Therefore these observed differences are not likely to be due to random or chance factors.

Table 5 indicates a positive correlation of all pre-test scores with all post-test scores. The squared correlation coefficient is called the *coefficient of determination*. It shows the percentage of correlation between the two variables.23 The significance figures show that there are less than 5 chances out of 10,000 that these correlations are due to chance. The theology scores, while high, show weak pre-/post-test correlation. The other three pairs have moderate correlations of 24–28%.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Table 5.* Liberty University apologetics paired pre/post test correlation. | | | | |
| **Test pairs** | **N** | **Correlation** | **Corr2%** | **Sig.** |
| Pair 1 THPRE – THPOST | 195 | .284 | 8 | <0.0005 |
| Pair 2 SCIPRE – SCIPOST | 195 | .514 | 26 | <0.0005 |
| Pair 3 AGEPRE – AGEPOST | 195 | .530 | 28 | <0.0005 |
| Pair 4 TSSPRE – TSSPOST | 195 | .489 | 24 | <0.0005 |

**Conclusions**

The study showed the value of conducting courses in YEC Apologetics. Significant improvements were achieved in all aspects of student YEC worldview. *Theology* scores while high showed some inconsistency. These Spring 2002 classes scored slightly higher than the Fall 2001 classes but both exhibited the same trend.

The study shows that Christian college students have weaknesses in science and age aspects of a YEC worldview. Instruction to form the YEC perspective is effective in strengthening the creation worldview of the students. These results should encourage educators and administrators from Christian colleges and schools to include YEC apologetics instruction in their curriculum.

Compromise with establishment science views by many Christians, especially Christian educators, will continue to hinder shifting educational curriculum to a YEC viewpoint. Continued creation research, such as that by the RATE (Radioisotopes and the Age of The Earth) research group, is crucial to establish the base in solid science that supports the YEC position.24

**Recommendations for further research**

Appendix 1 shows that answers to all 11 CWT age statements improved post-test. In science, 4 of 22 worsened and in theology, 3 of 18 worsened slightly. Answers to particular CWT statements can be analyzed to uncover additional insights as well as to improve statement clarity. For example, noting which questions had significant improvements can show the subject areas that could use more emphasis in related courses taken prior to the apologetics course. Noting the statements which did not show improvement can be useful in evaluating those subject areas in the apologetics course, as well as evaluating CWT statement clarity.

Effects of pre-course demographics can be further studied. The data affords the opportunity to partition responses according to gender, class status, high school and church background, previous science and creation classes, and GPA.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Appendix 1.* CWT statements and question subscales. Item analysis of pre-test /post-test means. Item means pre/post-test: answers have been recoded so that higher values reflect six-day, young-earth creationism with a high value of 100 and low value of –100. [Return to main text](https://creation.com/impact-of-a-young-earth-creationist-apologetics-course-on-student-creation-worldview#r_appendix1). | | | | | |
|  | **Liberty U. subscale** | **Trinity BC subscale** | **Mean-pre-test** | **Mean-post-test** | **Post-pre diff.** |
| 1. Space, time and matter have always existed. | Age | Evolution Evol. Age | 26.0 | 54.5 | 28.5 |
| 2. An eternal Creator supernaturally made the physical universe. | Theology | Creation Cr. Age | 94.0 | 96.5 | 2.5 |
| 3. Biological life developed by a series of natural processes. | Science | Evolution | 59.5 | 71.0 | 11.5 |
| 4. Biological life came from nonliving matter by chance. | Science | Evolution | 92.5 | 90.5 | –2.0 |
| 5. Each of the major kinds of plants and animals were made functionally complete. | Theology | Creation | 80.0 | 90.5 | 10.5 |
| 6. Genetic mutations have caused beneficial changes in living things. | Science | Evolution | 1.0 | 15.5 | 14.5 |
| 7. The first humans were specially created different from all other life on Earth. | Theology | Creation | 77.5 | 82.5 | 5.0 |
| 8. The rocks and fossils show that the Earth is millions of years old. | Age | Evolution Evol. Age | 52.0 | 74.5 | 22.5 |
| 9. Great quantities of sedimentary rock layers and fossils were deposited by a worldwide flood. | Science | Creation | 76.5 | 89.0 | 12.5 |
| 10. The Creator continuously maintains all laws of nature. | Theology | Creation | 79.0 | 86.0 | 7.0 |
| 11. The original creation did not include disease, aging and extinctions. | Theology | Creation | 80.0 | 93.0 | 13.0 |
| 12. The competent Creator made the universe for an ultimate purpose. | Theology | Creation | 93.0 | 96.5 | 3.5 |
| 13. It is appropriate in scientific studies to consider creation. | Science | Creation | 91.0 | 89.5 | –1.5 |
| 14. Evolution can be proven as a scientific fact. | Science | Evolution | 82.0 | 84 | 2.0 |
| 15. Examples of special design in nature can be explored scientifically. | Science | Creation | 54.0 | 53.5 | –0.5 |
| 16. A triune God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—all participated in the work of creation. | Theology | Theology | 59.5 | 76.0 | 16.5 |
| 17. There is only one eternal God who is the source of all being and meaning. | Theology | Theology | 98.0 | 98.0 | 0.0 |
| 18. Nature reveals itself as the creator. | Theology | New Age | 66.5 | 66.0 | –0.5 |
| 19. The Bible is scientifically correct. | Science | Theology | 82.0 | 82.0 | 0.0 |
| 20. All things in the universe were made by God in six twenty-four hour days. | Age | Creation Cr. Age | 70.0 | 90.0 | 20.0 |
| 21. Man’s sin brought God’s curse of death and separation to all of His creation. | Theology | Theology | 85.5 | 92.5 | 7.0 |
| 22. Genesis chapters one through eleven lack historical truth. | Theology | Evolution | 80.5 | 86.0 | 5.5 |
| 23. Man’s separation from God can only be remedied by Jesus Christ’s death and bodily resurrection. | Theology | Theology | 92.5 | 96.5 | 4.0 |
| 24. Fellowship with the Creator requires belief and personal trust in Jesus Christ. | Theology | Theology | 96.0 | 97.0 | 1.0 |
| 25. There is not a real place of permanent suffering which is known as hell. | Theology | Evolution | 91.5 | 88.0 | –3.5 |
| 26. Those who refuse to put their trust in Jesus Christ will spend eternity in hell. | Theology | Theology | 86.0 | 86.0 | 0.0 |
| 27. Not all Christians have to share the Gospel of Christ. | Theology | New Age | 85.5 | 88.0 | 2.5 |
| 28. Christians participate in subduing the Earth for God’s glory. | Theology | Creation | 53.0 | 76.0 | 23.0 |
| 29. Dinosaurs and man lived at the same time. | Age | Creation | 53.0 | 83.0 | 30.0 |
| 30. God created land dinosaurs on the sixth day of creation. | Age | Creation Cr. Age | 17.5 | 63.5 | 46.0 |
| 31. Dinosaur fossil graveyards are evidence of catastrophic burial. | Science | Creation | 37.0 | 65.5 | 28.5 |
| 32. The rock layers in the Grand Canyon show evidence of being rapidly laid down. | Age | Creation | 36.0 | 67.0 | 31.0 |
| 33. Fossils in the Grand Canyon layers reveal the exact geologic column proposed by most scientists. | Science | Evolution | 9.5 | 28.5 | 19.0 |
| 34. Formation of sedimentary layers and canyons caused by the eruption of Mt. St. Helens supports a creationist model. | Age | Creation | 28.0 | 48.0 | 20.0 |
| 35. Entropy (increasing disorder) and evolution are compatible. | Science | Evolution | 33.5 | 41.0 | 7.5 |
| 36. The Creation model and the Second Law of Thermodynamics are compatible. | Science | Creation | 27.0 | 64.0 | 37.0 |
| 37. It is important to recognize Jesus Christ as the Creator. | Theology | Theology | 85.0 | 81.0 | –4.0 |
| 38. Man has taken millions of years to get to his present form. | Age | Evolution Evol. Age | 83.0 | 89.0 | –6.0 |
| 39. The universe has gone through many changes since it exploded into existence billions of years ago. | Age | Evolution Evol. Age | 84.5 | 91.0 | 6.5 |
| 40. Life evolved slowly from a “primordial soup.” | Science | Evolution | 88.5 | 91.5 | 3.0 |
| 41. Life evolved from a simple cell to more complex organisms. | Science | Evolution | 80.5 | 85.5 | 5.0 |
| 42. There is no evidence that life is continuing to evolve today. | Science | Creation | 16.5 | 28.5 | 12.0 |
| 43. The fossil record provides examples of transitional forms. | Science | Evolution | 29.5 | 55.0 | 25.5 |
| 44. Fossils should be dated according to the rocks in which they are found. | Age | Evolution | 5.5 | 32.0 | 26.5 |
| 45. Rocks should be dated according to the fossils found in them. | Age | Evolution | 9.0 | 31.0 | 22.0 |
| 46. Geologic evidence indicates there was once a worldwide flood. | Science | Creation | 83.5 | 90.0 | 6.5 |
| 47. In modern geology the present is the key to the past is an established fact. | Science | Evolution Evol. Age | -17.5 | –23.5 | –6.0 |
| 48. Micro-evolution (small changes within a particular species) is evidence that macro-evolution (changes from “kind to kind”) has happened. | Science | Evolution | 48.5 | 64.5 | 16.0 |
| 49. Plant life can experience emotions like anger and joy as humans do. | Science | New Age | 74.0 | 80.0 | 6.0 |
| 50. Animals have the same reasoning ability as humans, but on a lower level. | Science | New Age | 48.5 | 55.0 | 6.5 |
| 51. In time, humans will likely develop into a higher life form than what is known of now. | Science | New Age | 68.0 | 77.0 | 9.0 |

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