

Jesus Devastates an Old Earth

Introduction. Many people believe in Jesus Christ. They believe He existed. They believe He was the Son of God. They believe He was a great teacher of truth. Given all these wonderful truths, how do you think they would respond to these questions: “In the context of the first marriage between Adam and Eve, do you think Jesus was wrong in Mark 10:6 when He said that God made them male and female at the beginning of creation? Or do you believe that the creation has been around for 13 billion years and marriage first came about at the end of creation a few thousand years ago with Adam and Eve?”

So many naturalists or evolutionists don’t want to deal with these questions. They want to talk about what they believe is testable and provable about the Universe, as well as what secular scientists believe about the age of the earth. But they need to address what Jesus said.

Was Jesus wrong in their view? Over the next several minutes we’re going to see the real crux of any issue of the origins of the Universe: either you trust God’s Word or you don’t. Naturalists and evolutionists aren’t standing on what Christ said in His Word, but are clinging to outside influences and are reluctant to address what He said.

I. Why Is Mark 10:6 So Powerful?

- A. Mark 10:6 and Matthew 19:4 form the basis of our objection to an old-Earth scenario. If one believes Christ is Lord and is dedicated to following the words of Jesus, then accepting billions of years becomes an enormous problem.
- B. Jesus, the Creator, makes it clear that the first marriage between man and woman (Adam and Eve) came at the beginning of creation.
 - 1. From the chronological information given in Genesis 5 and 11 and in other biblical passages, Jesus was speaking about 4,000 years after this creation — and most chronologists agree on this point.
 - 2. Since the days in Genesis are regular 24-hour days and Jesus was speaking about 4,000 years later, then the first marriage on the sixth day was at the beginning of creation, speaking in non-technical language as Jesus was.
- C. If the earth is indeed 13 or so billions of years old, then the first male and female came nowhere near the beginning of creation but the tail end of creation. This is a major scriptural problem because it calls into account the truthfulness of Christ in any old-Earth/Universe scenario.

II. Possible Responses to Mark 10:6

- A. Those who religiously and unquestionably believe in the evolutionary timescale over against God’s Word, yet profess Christ as Lord, have tried to respond because they understand this is a devastating argument from Christ Himself against a “billions-of-years-ago” creation. There are three common responses that need to be examined:
 - 1. Some say biblical creationists have the same problem by appealing to Mark 10:6 because Adam and Eve were created on the sixth day, not the first day of creation, which they claim is the “beginning of creation.”

2. Some insert words into Mark 10:6 to change the meaning to “beginning of the creation of marriage.”
 3. Some suggest that “beginning” is referring to an entire figurative “six-day” creation period or creation week regardless of its length.
- B. Looking at Response 1.
1. This argument incorrectly makes the assumption that the “beginning of creation” means the “first day of creation.”
 - a) The Bible doesn’t say the first day of creation; it says the “beginning of the creation” (or simply, “the beginning” in the parallel passage of Matthew 19:4).
 - b) If you were to watch a movie and then tell a friend about the beginning of the movie, would that consist of the first word or frame of the movie only? Of course not. It would be a range of time surrounding the beginning of the movie and the events that get the movie going.
 2. There are other places in the New Testament that affirm “the beginning” was near the events of the beginning that range from the absolute beginning to the events that even occurred soon after creation week, such as the beginning of sin. Let’s consider a few of these:
 - a) The absolute beginning (John 1:1-2).
 - b) Upon the creation of Adam and Eve — the first marriage (Matthew 19:8).
 - c) After the “very good” creation was completed (Genesis 1:31), but prior to Adam’s sin (1 John 3:8).
 - d) When Jerusalem would be destroyed (Mark 13:19).
 3. The entire Bible stands or falls on Christ’s truthfulness. If an old-Earth proponent uses response 1, then he’s conceding that Jesus was wrong.
 - a) Can Jesus be wrong? No. But for the sake of argument, if Jesus erred on this point, then perhaps Jesus erred in passages concerning salvation.
 - b) If this were the case, then it would undermine the gospel, which a professing Christian claims to believe.
- C. Looking at Response 2.
1. Who is fallible, sinful mankind that they should try to add to Scripture to change the meaning of that Scripture in order to “correct” God’s Word to fit with mankind’s fallible ideas about the past? There have been brethren who’ve tried to add billions of years into Genesis 1-2, but ultimately they’re “reinterpreting” God’s Word over and over again to mean something other than what it plainly says.
 2. When someone adds to Scripture in order to make it align with views not clearly expressed in Scripture, it’s like John 1 and the Jehovah’s Witnesses.
 - a) What do the “Witnesses” do?
 - (1) Jehovah’s Witnesses view Jesus as a created archangel, named Michael. So John 1 becomes a major problem for Jehovah’s Witnesses because Jesus, the Word, is the Creator of all things that have been created. They change the Scriptures in their New World Translation (NWT) to align a little closer with their religion:
 - (a) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1 NKJV).

- (b) “In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god” (John 1:1 NWT).
- (2) Notice how the change is that the Word was “a god” as opposed to “God.” Sadly, this is done to change the Bible to conform to Jehovah’s Witnesses’ erroneous Unitarian doctrine; they must demote Christ from being God.
- (3) This obvious example causes problems for Jehovah’s Witnesses because a created Christ (in their view) really can’t satisfy the wrath of an infinite God to produce redemption for mankind. The only person that could do that is Christ. The Jehovah’s Witnesses have a false created Christ who can’t save them, since that created Christ could never take away sin any more than we could.
- b) Should we do the same as the “Witnesses”?
 - (1) Both Jehovah’s Witnesses and old-Earth creationists have taken outside ideas and imposed them on the Bible to mean something other than what the text says.
 - (a) In the instances of our study, they essentially insert “of marriage,” which changes the meaning and mixes the Bible with secular humanistic religious beliefs (e.g. millions of years) to make it consistent with the majority view in the scientific community.
 - (b) Unlike Jehovah’s Witnesses, they don’t add this to a new translation nor does it affect the character of Christ, so I wouldn’t dare call my old-Earth brethren cultic, but this tactic is identical to what many cultists do.
 - (2) This handling of Scripture, like that of cultists, undermines the truth and authority of the Bible. Let’s briefly examine how this is done.
 - (a) Proponents of this view argue that *ktisis* (which is actually the noun “creation” not the verb “create”) in Mark 10:6 should be translated as “institution” so that Jesus should be understood to be talking about the beginning of the institution of marriage, not the beginning of creation.
 - i) This interpretation is based on the fact that in 1 Peter 2:13 *ktisis* is translated in the NIV as “to every authority instituted among men” or in the NASB as “to every human institution.”
 - ii) But they haven’t paid careful attention to the presence of “among men” (NIV) and “human” (NASB) in this verse.
 - (b) The Greek text is clear. The adjective *anthrōpinē* (“human”) modifies *ktisei* (“creation”).
 - i) An institutional authority (such as kings, governors and slave masters, which Peter discusses in the context) is indeed a “human creation.”
 - ii) But this is a very different contextual use of *ktisis* than in Mark 10:6, where no adjective is used to modify “creation.”
 - iii) Furthermore, in Mark 10:6 Jesus could’ve easily said “from the first marriage” or “from the beginning of marriage” or “since

God created man” or “since God created Adam,” if that’s what He meant.

- (c) Additionally, if we give *ktisis* in Mark 10:6 the meaning “authority” or “institution,” it makes no sense. What does from the beginning of authority or beginning of institution mean? To make it meaningful scholars would have to add a word to the text, which would have no contextual justification.

D. Looking at Response 3.

1. If you conclude that “from the beginning of creation” (and likewise “from the beginning” in Matthew 19:4) means “all of the creative period, regardless of its length,” then this is saying that there are 13 billion years of time in the “creative period,” which is the beginning, middle, and even encompasses the bulk of the end of the creation by the time Jesus made this statement.
2. It’s strange that someone would think that 13 billion years or so have passed and that all of it’s the beginning of creation — and now suddenly we’re at the end after a few “measly” thousand years.
3. Going back to our movie illustration, this would be like telling someone that the end was the last second of a movie and that the other two hours of it were only the beginning.
4. So here old-Earth advocates are changing the definitions of the words “middle” and “end” to also mean “beginning,” trying to making them align with their old Earth/old Universe view. Such a redefinition of terms is unwarranted.

Conclusion. Jesus’ words devastate the concept of an old Earth or Universe. Jesus’ statement in Mark 10:6 is reasonable and accurate in the young-Earth view, and any view of an old Earth fails when trying to deal with marriage of man and woman being at the beginning of creation.

You need to be prepared to give an answer, rebuking and correcting with gentleness and patience (1 Peter 3:15; 2 Timothy 2:24-25), because many people are sadly more than willing to try to reinterpret Christ’s plain meaning in Mark 10:6 because of their absolute adherence to billions of years. Mixing secular religious ideas like billions of years with your faith undermines the authority of the Bible, and in many cases it directly undermines the gospel itself.

I am deeply indebted to Bodie Hodge for the use of his material.