

The Lowedown

A monthly update from the life and ministry of Dave & Jennifer Lowe

February 2005

Evolution vs. Intelligent Design

A few weeks ago, we had our big outreach of the year—a two day event centered around the topic of Evolution vs. Intelligent Design.

The highlight of the outreach was to be a Skeptics Forum where Drs. Ross and Rana, from Reasons to Believe (www.reasons.org), were to present their testable Biblical creation model and then would be critiqued and questioned from a panel of skeptical UC Davis professors.

The hardest part of planning the whole event was finding professors who were willing to be a part of our panel. As if to underscore the fact that scientific naturalism is the ruling philosophy within the scientific community, most professors did not even respond to our invitation to take part in the panel. Those who did respond weren't exactly gracious.

One professor who *did* respond is the chairman of the Evolutionary Biology Department. He referred to our event as a "theatrical sideshow" and claimed that we were doing a "disservice" to the university by promoting ideas that he referred to as "pseudo-science".

As I wondered what he meant by that term, I saw it again in a column written in the student newspaper that came out the same day as our featured event. The columnist claimed that lecture halls at UC Davis were being "converted into pulpits for pseudo-science." He went on to say that these "evangelists" (i.e. Ross and Rana) have lost an audience with their peers (i.e. other scientists), so they come to campuses like ours to "to convince the unwary in what usually turns into a staged theatrical farce."

As it turned out, the columnist had helped create a stir on campus by promoting our event in his column. The place was packed. The auditorium held 1300 people and many were turned away because of

the capacity crowd.

Drs. Ross and Rana began the evening with a presentation giving scientific evidence to support their creation model for Intelligent Design. The professors were then given exclusive opportunities to question and critique what they heard.

The only problem was, there was never any critique of what was presented. Right away, the first professor made the claim that what was presented was not science. I thought that was an amazing statement since both presentations were filled with scientific information.

"the fact that the Campus Crusade for Christ has such influence on a college campus should be of deep concern to all students and faculty members."

The second professor claimed that what was being presented was religion and not science. Thus, the event became a discussion of science vs. religion instead of evolution vs. intelligent design.

Many of our students expressed disappointment that the evening had not turned out how they envisioned. However, as I thought about it, I believe that the discussion that transpired was not only beneficial, but inevitable.

In the days that followed the event, there were 3 more columns written in the campus newspaper that bashed the event. In addition, there were two separate letters to the editor expressing concern over the event. One student was particularly upset that Campus Crusade for Christ was able to exert so much influence on the campus community. I took that to be the ultimate compliment.

In each negative column or letter

to the editor that was written, the writer demonstrated an inability to distinguish between science as a methodology and science as a philosophy. This is the underlying problem in our efforts to reach those who are science-minded.

It's clear that the professors and columnists that objected to the event are operating from a philosophical grid that tells them that the natural world is all that there is. To them, science is the study of the natural world and the minute someone tries to introduce a supernatural element into the discussion, it is immediately classified as "religion" and discarded.

This is why the professors kept saying that science and religion cannot overlap. My question is "Why not?" Who says that they cannot overlap? The only reason that one would believe that they could not overlap is if they believe that science deals with facts while religion is a personal thing that deals only with feelings. And this is exactly what most science-minded people believe.

In the end, I believe that our event was a huge success. Of course, there were many people whose minds were not changed. But we are praying and trusting that a few will see the evidence for what it is and not make the fatal mistake of relegating it to the fantasy of "religion". For those who are able to integrate the scientific evidence without the biased foundation of scientific naturalism, I believe the idea of an Intelligent Designer will make sense to them. From that point, it is merely a small step to seeing Jesus as the Intelligent Designer who created the universe.

Thank you for your prayers and please continue to pray with us that this ministry would make inroads on this campus, helping students to ultimately find Jesus!