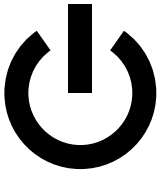
Speaker: Hillary Morgan Ferrer **Title**: Darwinism & Discernment

Key Verses: Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1–2; 2 Cor. 2:14–16; 1 Peter 3:15–16

Summary: Discernment doesn't allow us to be dismissive but engaging.



Power Up: Take a moment to prepare

God created our world with beautiful variety and remarkable stability. Describe a few features of his creation that make your jaw drop.

Replay: Take some time to watch

Note the flow of Hilary's talk: **1)** defining Neo-Darwinism; **2)** noting buzzwords in the discussion; **3)** considering what Darwin got right; **4)** noting what Darwin got wrong

Comment: Take some time to talk

Why is discernment so important? What happens when we lack discernment in our debates? What is the Golden Rule of apologetics?

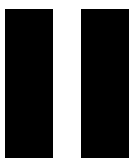
What "buzzwords" does Hilary mention? Why do scientists use them?

Hilary dislikes the phrase, "Science says…" ***What's wrong with it? How should you alter the statement to make it accurate?***

According to Hilary what four things did Darwin get right? What three things did Darwin get wrong?

Without having Hilary's background in biology, how can you speak into discussions about biblical faith and science? Be specific.

Followers of Jesus are often viewed as anti-science. ***Where does this criticism come from? Is it accurate? How should we respond to it?***



Pause: Take a moment to pray

Thank God for our capacity to think critically and discern. Thank Him for insightful teachers who help us learn. Ask Him for the ability to respond to false scientific claims with wisdom and grace.

Take Action: Take a step forward

Watch out for scientific buzzwords. Hilary noted several kinds in her talk. Next time you open a scientific text book or read a scientific article, use a pencil to circle both ambiguous words and buzzwords used to bolster the claims of scientists.

Bonus Features | Additional Notes and Quotes from Hillary Morgan Ferrer

Power Track Summary: Everyone has heard the evolution debate. Secular academia screams, “There’s so much evidence. To deny it is anti-science.” Others espouse, “There’s not a single shred of evidence.” So which is it? This Power Track teaches us to be conversant with both sides, identifying what Darwin got right and what he got wrong, so we can discuss the topic in a balanced, logical, evidence-based, discerning fashion.

About the Speaker: Hillary Morgan Ferrer is a wife, mother, scientist, speaker, writer, and apologist. More information can be found at www.mamabearapologetics.com

“We want to be the aroma of Christ, not the stench. Discernment is more than pointing out flaws.”

“The golden rule of apologetics: treat someone else’s ideas as you would want yours to be treated. And that means treating them fairly. Avoid straw man arguments.”

Four Takeaways from the Darwin and Discernment Talk

1. Understand that belief in evolution is not an “all or nothing.”
2. Learning how to spot buzzwords and ambiguous words (used to mask a mechanism).
3. *Science* us tell us nothing; *scientists* tell us things. (They interpret the data.)
4. Anyone who tells you that there are no limits to the creative power of “evolution” is speaking beyond the evolution.

A Few Key Definitions

Equivocation fallacy: using a term in an ambivalent way to reach a false conclusion

Linguistic theft: purposefully taking a word, changing its definition, and then use it against

Classic Darwinism: basic survival of the fittest by natural selection

Neo-Darwinism: mechanism behind evolution; random mutations in the genetic code, some of which are beneficial.

Naturalism: philosophy that natural causes alone are sufficient to explain everything

Discernment: the ability to spot both truth and untruth in an argument and appreciate the truth (i.e., chew and spit method)

“We do not live in a comic book world. Not everything is in black and white. We need to learn how to identify the good and identify the bad. Accept the good and reject the bad.”

“We have an epidemic in our country of people not being able to admit when the other side has a good point.”

“There is no autopilot in the Christian life.”

the reason. 1 Peter 3:15

Forms of Discernment with Darwinism

1. **Recognize buzzwords** (often teleological = there is a purpose of the words)
    a. Ex. “The **purpose** of the veins in the plants… so it ***evolved***…”
    b. Ex. *development of; learned; adapted; evolved to have*

    The word *development* insinuates a mind was involved.

2. **Spot ambiguous words** (equivocation fallacy = see above)
    a. *Evolution*: Is it microevolution and macroevolution?
    b. *Species*: There is no consensus on the definition of species.

Darwin Got This Right

1. He was unable to hide his understanding of Romans 1:19-20.
    a. He understands worship as he describes the natural world.
2. He had problems with Cambrian explosion.
    a. **Big bang**: a whole bunch happened in a short time.
    b. 2/3 organisms appear without ancestors.
    c. **Punctuated equilibrium**: things happened fast (not slow).
3. He articulated requirements for falsifying his theory.
    a. **Cascade**: when a process in the body triggers another that triggers another, which eventually results in a reaction. It’s very complex.
    b. “We have thousands of processes in our bodies.” You have to be sold to naturalism. There is a spiritual blindness to ignore this.
4. His data collection to support Natural Selection.
    a. This is not controversial. Variations exist within populations. Variations are inherited. Organisms provide more offspring that can survive.
    b. Natural selection is used to explain diversification (circular reasoning).

What Darwin Got Wrong:

1. He wrongly ascribes natural processes to the world, not God.
2. Problem with requiring pre-existing variation to explain the origin of variation.
3. He assumed evolution was limitless.

Limitless variation from natural selection is theoretically possible if all animals could mate indiscriminately but that is not … what is experimentally supported.

the reason. 1 Peter 3:15