

Christ Cosmology

Joel Hinrichs

Words With a Mission (Dec 6, 2021)

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Christ Cosmology is a thoughtful, reasoned, and documented examination of the apparent conflicts between science and religion.

Joel Hinrichs's *Christ Cosmology* is a religious study of science, faith, and the controversies that drive Christians apart.

Christ Cosmology identifies the misunderstanding of the creation stories in Genesis as one of the primary causes that divides Christian churches, engendering bitterness and distrust. The refusal to accept scientific evidence for evolution and the great antiquity of the earth is also seen as a reason for fundamentalists' alienation from much of contemporary society. In response, Hinrichs asserts that "no single Christian body owns all of the Truth." His book seeks to demonstrate how a group's belief that they have access to unquestionable knowledge is a stumbling block.

The book goes on to discuss stories in the Bible and explain how they are not always as simple as literalists would like to believe. The point is made that believing in God shouldn't prevent anyone from believing in science, and that taking the Bible seriously is not always the same as taking it literally. To help bridge the gap, extensive, clear explanations of the mechanism of evolution by natural selection are made, and scientific proof of evolution, from DNA evidence to the fossil record, is examined. Arguments from both Young and Old Earth creationists are refuted—but first, both groups are quoted at length, and their arguments are given a charitable hearing, helping to strengthen the book's case.

From this perspective, the Genesis creation stories are inspired fables, with the divine influence lifting them above other traditional origin stories. The argument is made that the fabulist elements are what all stories have in common; the moral dimension is what separates them. Hinrichs suggests that God, in Genesis, acts with moral intention, calling upon humanity to learn and do better; in many other creation myths, he asserts, gods are unconcerned with human spiritual progress. Such arguments are made with meticulous care, and are complemented by charts and graphs describing relationships between the scientific data for evolution and the anthropological data behind creation stories. Several lengthy appendices combine with end notes and citations, bolstering the book's credibility.

However, the book's appendices are overwhelmed by links to online articles and videos, and many of these URLs are too long and complex for print. Further, the book makes use of unwieldy formatting, with distracting underlining, bullet points, and inconsistent spacing. The book's occasional typographical errors are also distracting.

Still, *Christ Cosmology* is a thoughtful, reasoned, and documented examination of the apparent conflicts between science and religion.

MATT BENZING (March 4, 2022)

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