

Biblical Worldview Scope for Science 4 (5th ed.)

Introduction: This document is an attempt to answer (in the form of a scope) the question, “What must a student comprehend and value in order to understand science from a biblical worldview?” What follows is a list of the themes that we believe are essential for students of science to understand and internalize. We anticipate that early in the course students will be asked to *recall* and *explain* these themes. However, as these themes recur, we plan for students to *evaluate* ideas, *formulate* a Christian understanding, and *apply* what they have learned to real-life situations. We will achieve high levels of internalization wherever students *apply* their learning.

1. History of Nature explores the origin and history of nature from a Biblical viewpoint.

Creation: God created all things. The book of Genesis provides a completely reliable history of the world. Because this primary source comes from the only eyewitness of Creation, God Himself, it can be trusted in every aspect of its description. That includes its timeframe of six

24-hour days. Using biblical genealogies, people can confidently consider the earth to be only thousands of years old. The Bible also explains that the Flood drastically changed the surface of the earth. Evidence of these changes can be observed in geological strata today. Countless fossils buried all around the world demonstrate the variety of living things at the time of the biblical Flood.

Fall: Modern scientific theories reject God’s supernatural creation of the world as the antithesis of science. Most scientists or textbooks simply ignore God and assume the world appeared by natural processes. The scientific community argues that the only valid source for understanding the past is scientific research. They claim that breathtaking mountains, valleys, and canyons are obvious products of billions of years of erosion. Most scientists also speculate that a mysterious biogenesis followed by billions of years of natural selection produced all life forms.

Redemption: The Bible helps Christians to evaluate these views of nature. It stands alone as a perfect standard of truth, allowing them to definitively reject claims that the earth is billions of years old. The biblical Flood explains the drastic changes apparent on the earth’s surface. The biblical account of Creation and the Fall in Genesis 1–3 counters the naturalistic view that life evolved over billions of years. The biblical teaching that death entered the world after sin (Rom. 5:12) precludes the idea that primitive hominids evolved into modern man and woman.

Sample Objectives:

- Compare and contrast views of the origin of bioluminescence (141.3).
- Explain how the Genesis Flood helped to shape the earth’s surface (154.2).
- Evaluate different views of the origin of glaciers (156.2).
- Develop a scriptural response to the origin of vertebrates, predators, and prey (CO4.2).

2. Design in Nature shows that only the Bible’s revelation of God as Designer can adequately account for the appearance of design in nature.

Creation: The all-wise God created the world with a marvelous design. The many parts of nature intricately work together in ways that defy coincidence and point to a Designer. By effortlessly balancing a host of factors, God created various climates which house plant and animal life perfectly suited to them. Animals are designed with the

structures needed to thrive. Plants have all the structures needed to reproduce and scatter their seed. These marvels point to the Designer. God repeatedly affirms the excellence of His work (Gen. 1:31).

Fall: Modern science claims that the world only seems to be designed. This prevailing view denies that there is a designer. Instead, it argues that nature itself produced this appearance of design through time and chance.

Redemption: The Bible teaches that nature appears designed because it *is* designed (John 1:3). The Bible teaches that God, from the beginning, made the world to function beautifully (Jer. 31:35–36). Christians do not attribute the incredible structures of plants and animals to gradual evolution but to an omniscient Designer. When observing God’s design in nature, Christians respond by praising Him (Ps. 19:1). This glorifies God, fulfilling the ultimate purpose of His marvelous designs in nature.

Sample Objectives:

- Explain how God designed some organisms to survive and grow in harsh environments (142.2).
- Compare and contrast how humans, animals, and plants get their energy (48.1).
- Draw conclusions about how bones and muscles work together (63.3).
- Apply the engineering design process to a real-life problem related to vertebrates (CO4.4).

3. Importance of Humans emphasizes the unique value of humans as image-bearers of God and the resulting implications on the ethical practice of science.

Creation: Humans are the most important aspect of creation. They are special because God made them in His own image (Gen. 1:26–27). People represent God’s likeness in the world. Therefore, science should focus on the needs of humans.

Fall: Naturalistic science teaches that humans are highly evolved animals. Similarities in humans and animals is considered proof that they share a common ancestor. Naturalism assumes that human dominance in nature is only due to additional evolution. It denies that people are inherently and qualitatively different from the rest of nature. This devalues humans by making them equal with all creatures, which invites unethical treatment of people.

Redemption: The Bible teaches that people are important because they reflect God’s image. While humans do share characteristics with animals, it is not due to a common ancestor but rather to a common Creator. A biblical understanding that humans are created in God’s image (James 3:9) encourages people to make right decisions, especially in how they treat other people. Christians should harness science to benefit others out of love for God and their neighbors.

Sample Objectives:

- Explain why understanding refraction and lenses is beneficial (103.5).
- Infer why knowing about the friction of various surfaces is beneficial (80.4).
- Propose a plan for using an inclined plane to help others (85.3).
- Recommend one way to improve healthy food choices (54.3).

4. Purpose of Science shows how science applies the Creation Mandate and demonstrates the necessity of wisdom while still requiring a commitment to the supernatural.

Creation: Science is the systematic study of God’s world using observation, an exploration of God’s wonderful works. Science enables people to obey God’s first command to humans, which is to rule over the earth (Genesis 1:28). Humans must study nature to be good stewards of it. Science provides a powerful tool for ruling over God’s world.

Fall: Some people put too much confidence in science. They believe that science frees people from what they consider superstitious beliefs and traditions. In fact, they believe that the further science progresses, the less belief in the supernatural is necessary. Thinking science will one day grant complete control of the material world, they seek to replace God as absolute rulers of creation. Thus, they consider religious ideas irrelevant and childish.

Redemption: Christians understand that science is a useful tool with God-given limitations. Science enables people to accomplish tasks and to exercise dominion. A Christian practices science with the realization that the Fall has cursed the earth and man's mind has been twisted by sin (Gen. 6:5). He cannot fully rely on himself or his senses, and he must work hard and use wisdom to make progress. Science does not eliminate the need for biblical truth but helps humans to apply its commands and to rule God's world effectively.

Sample Objectives:

- Explain how the wheel and axle and the pulley are beneficial (84.5).
- Communicate how the design solves the problem (119–120.4).
- Compose a statement that shows how you could use the knowledge of motion and energy to obey God's commands (73.4).
- Suggest ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle resources (175.3).

5. Modeling in Science shows how human attempts to describe God's world are useful, but only when models' assumptions match the teaching of Scripture.

Creation: God made humans in His own image with the ability to understand creation. However, humans will never perfectly understand the world as God does (Isa. 55:8, Job 38–41). People use models in an attempt to better understand God's world and use it as He intends. These models also help people to solve problems. Good models closely reflect reality, and this quality makes them the most useful for understanding and ruling nature.

Fall: Sin has made fallible both senses and human reasoning so that people cannot fully trust their observations and conclusions (Jer. 17:9). People place too much confidence in science when they believe it produces truth. Scientific models can never be totally accurate. Despite these weaknesses, many believe that science alone can determine what is wrong in the world and dictate moral solutions. Even knowledge of the Earth's origin is believed attainable with the right models.

Redemption: The Bible teaches that Scripture itself is truth (John 17:17). Every word God has revealed about the world is true and should be a starting point for science. Science, then, must attempt to model nature in a way that harmonizes with Scripture. A Christian scientist should use only the models that best describe nature while also agreeing with God's Word.

Sample Objectives:

- Draw conclusions about bones of the human skeleton using the model (60.4).
- Model the organs that make up the digestive system (52.1).
- Communicate how the graph compared to the ocean floor model (137–138.4).