

Josh McDowell on Using Redeeming Darwin With Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed

Over the last 50 years, those with a Christian worldview have been the focus of condescension and exclusion in the academic community. As has happened throughout history, these attitudes from the academic community have gradually permeated our mainstream culture. Today, evangelical-bashing is the accepted standard position for all forms of mass media from news reporting to books and movies. Over the last decade, this trend has accelerated to the point that many people believe Christian principles and beliefs should not be recognized in our public policies and culture. We are all experiencing these efforts to relegate the Christian faith to an irrelevant sidelight of American culture.

One of the root causes of this trend is the teaching of naturalistic Darwinism as dogma within our public education system from grade school through our universities. The reasoning is that educated people know that science has proven there is no evidence for a creator. Therefore, there is no place for religion and moral authority in our public life. This attitude directly affects public policies on abortion, euthanasia, education, sexuality, etc.

Although Darwins theory of life originating and evolving to its current forms strictly through random events and natural selection may have seemed plausible 50 years ago, our current understanding of the nature of the universe and the complexity of even the simplest life forms bring up huge issues for which the current state of evolutionary theory has *no* answers. For example, over 700 scientists at our universities and research

institutions have signed a statement expressing their doubt that Darwinism can adequately explain our current understanding of life in this universe (See dissentfromdarwin.org for the current list).

In a desperate attempt to protect the dogma upon which their naturalistic/humanistic worldview is based, the scientific/educational establishment is systematically and viciously attacking those who would dare to research alternative theories that may better explain the current evidence. They have mounted a public relations campaign to paint any scientific research or publications which expose the issues with Darwinism as not science, but rather religiously based dogmatism or creationism. What is absolutely amazing is that while aggressively pursuing their campaign of persecution and spin-doctoring, the Darwinist community steadfastly denies that they are doing any such thing. Sadly, this campaign has been successful to date in keeping our public education system and most of our scientists captive to this worldview-motivated attempt to defend the dogma of Darwinism in the face of all evidence to the contrary.

[Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed](#) (starring Ben Stein) is a documentary scheduled to be released in April 2008. It exposes the blatant attempts to squelch academic freedom in defense of outdated Darwinist dogma. By chronicling the stories of well-qualified scientists who have dared to question Darwinism as a comprehensive explanation for life and interviewing people on both sides of these events, this documentary presents a strong case for restoring academic freedom allowing scientists to follow the evidence where it leads. Both the content and the involvement of Ben Stein (who is Jewish) make it clear that this documentary was not created to directly promote the teaching of creationism. This documentary calls Americans to stand up for academic freedom and integrity. It says that we should not allow the misguided notion that science and religion must be in conflict to keep scientists from exploring

all reasonable hypotheses to explain the latest evidence.

The producers of *Expelled* are making a large financial investment to create a documentary targeted for wide release in thousands of movie theaters. They are taking this risk because they believe that the American public needs to understand what is really happening. It is only through public awareness and pressure that the current climate of repression and persecution can be changed. *Expelled* is intended to bring this issue to the forefront of public thought. Promoting an open public debate could well lead to unshackling scientific research in this area and opening the door for students to receive more in-depth education in evolutionary theory including those areas where evolutionary theory currently has no viable explanation.

The content of *Expelled* creates a natural opportunity for Christians to discuss the evidence for a creator and the reasons for our faith in Jesus Christ as Creator and Savior. *Expelled* will draw wide public attention to these issues and will create media attention and controversy even among those who do not see it. It would be a shame for believers to miss this opportunity to promote this public discussion and to engage our friends, neighbors and co-workers in making a defense for our hope in Christ.

So how can we go about doing this?

1. Let me encourage you to take the time to review the excellent, cutting-edge materials available through our website and our online store. Make the effort to equip your people with the information and encouragement they need to communicate that the scientific evidence points to a creator and to share the relationship they have with the Creator. Again, this foundational issue is critical and will get more intense in the days ahead. The Redeeming Darwin material from [Probe](#) and [EvanTell](#) is ideal for this purpose.

2. Make sure that they know that *Expelled* will bring this topic to the forefront in peoples conversation whether they have seen the documentary or not. We need to equip believers to look for opportunities to interact intelligently. You may want to make available the Viewers version of *Probes Discovering the Designer* DVD/booklet as a cost effective tool for your people to share with others ([found in our Store](#)).

3. Encourage people to see this controversial documentary:

Expelled does not directly promote a Christian view. In fact, it does not even take the position that Intelligent Design has been shown to be a better theory than Darwinism. This helps establish a non-threatening, neutral starting point to engage in a thoughtful discussion. You are not asking people to watch a Christian film. You are encouraging them to become informed on an important issue.

Expelled is a documentary. It is not for entertainment. It will require the audience to think about what they are watching. Although it includes some humor (how could Ben Stein keep from adding humor?), it is a very serious documentary. Be sure people understand that they are attending for the purpose of learning not for a night out at the movies.

After you view the movie, you may want to think about how you could use the DVD version when it is available. If you are showing *Expelled* in a small group or some other venue, you can better focus peoples expectations.

4. Plan to offer small group opportunities to learn more about this controversy and how it ultimately points us to Christ. Once again, the *Redeeming Darwin* material is an excellent resource for this purpose.

What's Happening to Our Youth? – Christians Should Be Concerned

You've probably heard for some time that the youth from our churches have been having a tough time when they make the transition from high school to adulthood, whether that is to college, the workforce or the military. Josh McDowell addressed this in his latest book, [*The Last Christian Generation*](#), where he documented that research indicates that anywhere from 69 to 94 percent of our youth are leaving the church after high school. And few are returning.

Other organizations suggest the figure is between 55 and 88 percent. Either way, the picture isn't good. Our youth are in trouble and we need a vigorous and coordinated response. Recently I attended a meeting of national youth and college ministry leaders to help forge a response to this growing problem. Hosted by the folks at Youth Transition Network, YTN, (www.youthtransitionnetwork.org) some troubling observations emerged.

Many in our youth culture are living double lives. One life is meant to be invisible at church (they know the right behaviors and speak "Christianese" to pass as good kids). In the other life they follow worldly pursuits in secret, away from parents and church leaders among friends who accept them as they are. This is motivated by what YTN director Jeff Schadt calls a

triangle of discouragement (see: www.liveabove.com/NewsReadyText.aspx?thispage=1)

One leg of the triangle is the burdensome sense of guilt over their moral failures coupled with a sense of isolation. They don't feel free to talk with anyone about their guilt. Basically they feel like a spiritual failure.

The second leg of the triangle involves what they feel is a disconnect between a gospel of grace and expectations of perfection from parents and church leaders. They're not smart enough, spiritual enough, attractive enough, etc. They just don't feel like they measure up.

The third leg brings all this together in an overall sense of not feeling trusted, believed in or accepted, warts and all. That's a pretty nasty triumvirate.

Add to this the fact that 93% of graduating high school seniors can't name even one college ministry. Therefore, they mistrust what they don't know and fail to get connected. Most college freshman also feel unprepared for the level of freedom college affords and are frequently overwhelmed by the level and difficulty of work the university expects.

As Josh McDowell also points out, the majority of our graduating youth don't believe Jesus is the one true Son of God, don't believe Jesus rose from the dead, don't believe in Satan and don't believe the Holy Spirit is real.

I learned a lot at this meeting. What struck me the most was the universal reaction from both high school youth leaders and college ministers. They all admitted that the problem was not new, but that they didn't realize how large and universal it was. One college worker asked Jeff Schadt if any of the 800 students he interviewed said anything about being motivated by love. Without hesitation, he said "No!" This only increased my resolve for Probe Ministries to be a part of the solution and not part of the problem. Our week-long [Mind Games Conference](#)

will continue to prepare high school juniors and seniors for the challenge of college—but with a greater emphasis on the available resources and an even bigger helping of trust, acceptance and love.

Check out these additional resources for more information and help in making this critical transition easier and more fruitful:

- www.youthtransitionnetwork.org: Official site for Youth Transition Network.
- www.liveabove.com offers resources for youth leaders to help their students make the transition and offers help for students in locating a campus ministry and even a Christian roommate.
- college101seminars.com offers informational programs for churches and secular institutions on helping their students make a profitable transition.
- [Conversations CD](#) this information page introduces a tool designed to help navigate the pitfalls of higher learning, construct a biblical worldview, answer life's toughest questions and make great grades. The well-done sections on making better grades hosted by Dr. Walter Bradley are worth their weight in gold.
- www.boundless.org/college contains links for articles designed to help Christians survive and thrive in college (and beyond). "Ask Theophilus" is particularly helpful.
- TrueU.org is a general site for students of faith.