

The Solution's Content

What Young People Need to Hear to Reverse the Trend Toward Unbelief

Let us now proceed to some highlights in the first four of the above "7 Essential Modules."

1. Proof of a Soul. We have found that contemporary medical studies of near death experiences are particularly persuasive for both high school and college students. Three dimensions of these studies made a "crucial" impact on students' faith:
 - 81% of blind people can see for the first time when they are clinically dead through souls that have left their physical bodies (which is virtually impossible to explain physically since there is no visual image in their brains to project or hallucinate). This is reported in several peer reviewed medical studies -- e.g., Ring, et. al., van Lommel, and Greyson.
 - Highly unusual or technical data occurring during clinical death is reported 100% accurately by a large percentage of clinically dead patients. This is reported in all major medical studies of NDE's.
 - Complete loss of subconscious death anxiety by virtually all people having an NDE throughout their lives – by comparison with high death anxiety in the normal population. This is reported in several medical studies – e.g. Morse, Greyson, and Moody.

It is noteworthy that virtually every person who goes "to the other side" has an experience of a loving white light, Jesus, or deceased relatives and friends who express two common themes about heaven consistent with Jesus' teaching – spiritual transformation and an ambience of love – even unconditional love.

Medical studies of terminal lucidity – where Alheimers and dementia patients with severely atrophied cerebral cortexes suddenly attain lucid consciousness one week to one hour before death – have also been persuasive because of patients' incapacity to think through their physical brains. For more information on these studies, see www.magiscenter.com -- "Science, Medicine, and Near Death Experiences."

2. Scientific Evidence of an Intelligent Creator. A large percentage of students (post ninth grade) are aware of scientists' conjectures about the possibility of a multiverse, a bouncing universe, or a higher dimensional space string universe, causing them to conclude that physical reality can be eternal and therefore uncreated. This has made the Borde-Vilenkin-Guth Proof (from three top physicists at MIT, Tufts University, and UC Santa Barbara) very important, because it shows the necessity of a beginning of all hypothetical multiverses, string universes, and bouncing universes, leading to the conclusion that physical reality is probably created by a causative agency beyond space and time. Contemporary fine-tuning evidence – such as the Penrose Number for low entropy at the Big Bang -- also provides convincing evidence of the intelligence of that Creator. This evidence, along with that of near death experiences, has been

so convincing that many students (tenth grade and above) consider it to be a vital foundation of faith.

3. Explanations of Pressing Scientific Questions. Strange as it may seem, nearly half of our students are misinformed about the Catholic Church's position on evolution, "the bible and science," aliens, and Galileo. This causes considerable tension with what they are learning in their science classes, causing many of them to "detach" from their religious beliefs. The third module is vital for warding off these tensions. Students need to know that the Catholic Church not only permits belief in a 13.8 billion year old universe, but also that a priest – Fr. Georges Lemaître – was the first to discover the Big Bang theory in 1927. They need to know that the Catholic Church permits belief in evolution in its contemporary form, and that Pope John Paul II declared that "Today... some new findings lead us toward the recognition of evolution as more than an hypothesis... the convergence in the results of [many] independent studies...constitutes in itself a significant argument in favor of the theory" (presentation to Pontifical Academy of Sciences, October 22, 1996).

Millennials also need to know that the Catholic Church does not require a literal interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis, but rather has provided an interpretation compatible with contemporary science in 1943 by Pope Pius XII (*Divino Afflante Spiritu*). They also need to know that the Church is open to the existence of aliens—even intelligent aliens—and that there are reasonable explanations for Galileo's censure and treatment. If we do not correct these misimpressions, we allow the Church to be marginalized as "unscientific" when in fact 27 priests have been instrumental in major scientific discoveries—e.g. Gregor Mendel (genetics), Nicolas Steno (stratigraphy), and Georges Lemaître (the Big Bang theory) – see Matthew Bunson "Fathers of Science."

4. Evidence of Jesus and His Resurrection. Students viewing the History Channel and YouTube videos are very likely to get the impression that Jesus was at best a prophet and at worst a mythical figure, and that His Resurrection was a fantastic story designed to win over converts. Thus, students must be made aware of the important arguments for the historicity of Jesus and His Resurrection (from, for example, N.T. Wright and John P. Meier). Of particular importance is the scientific evidence for Jesus' Passion and Resurrection on the Shroud of Turin. Many students believe that the Shroud was debunked in a 1988 carbon dating that showed the Shroud to have originated in the 15th century. In 1998, it was shown by several researchers that the sample used for that dating could not have come from the original Shroud (which is linen) because the sample had cotton fibers (which were not available until the 11th century in Europe) embedded in it. The sample had come from a controversial corner that had been patched by Sisters after the fire of Chambery in 1471. Throughout the last decade four additional dating tests have been performed that position the Shroud at around 50 AD plus or minus 150 years with 95% confidence level. There are 3 other indications that also confirm an origin in Jerusalem in the first century—roman coins on the man's eyes, pollen grains embedded in the cloth, and 124 similarities in blood stains to the Face Cloth of Oviedo.

What is most important is that this completely unique perfect 3-dimensional photographic negative image had to be produced by light radiation (not heat, chemicals, vapors, etc.), because it is restricted to the surface of the fibrils – not penetrating to the middle of the fibers. In order to produce such an image, the dead body would have had to become spiritual (mechanically transparent) and would have to have emitted several billion watts of light energy lasting only one forty-billionth of a second (to prevent the Shroud from being vaporized). This can only be replicated by lasers in a laboratory, and there is no known physical cause that would have enabled a dead body to do this. This implies a supernatural cause which may well be a relic of a spiritual resurrection in glory (much like that described in the gospels and St. Paul). For more information, see www.magiscenter.com – “Science and the Shroud of Turin.”

When the students hear this, their faith in Jesus’ existence, His Passion and Resurrection (as reported in the Gospels and by St. Paul) is galvanized and greatly increased. The majority of students indicate that this has a “crucial” impact on their faith.

The other 3 modules – contemporary scientifically validated miracles, the Four Levels of Happiness, and “Why God Allows Suffering” – are also important to help students complete the foundation for their intellectual conversion. To obtain information on these three areas, go to www.magiscenter.com and proceed to the free articles and videos on the second landing page – “Happiness and Suffering.”

