



October 2011 - *We Must Use Our Minds*

Atheistic materialists think that people who believe the Bible's account of God's creation of the earth and human life are self-deceived, engaging in naive, wishful thinking and ignoring plain reason. "If only they would use their minds and look at the facts," they say.

C.S. Lewis's response to this line of thinking is instructive for us today:

For all these reasons, then, I think (though we knew even before Freud that the heart is deceitful) that those who accept Theology are not necessarily being guided by taste rather than reason. The picture so often painted of Christians huddling together on an ever narrower strip of beach while the incoming tide of "Science" mounts higher and higher corresponds to nothing in my own experience. That grand myth which I asked you to admire a few minutes ago is not for me a hostile novelty breaking in on my traditional beliefs. On the contrary, that cosmology is what I started from. Deepening distrust and final abandonment of it long preceded my conversion to Christianity. Long before I believed Theology to be true I had already decided that the popular scientific picture at any rate was false. One absolutely central inconsistency ruins it; it is the one we touched on a fortnight ago. The whole picture professes to depend on inferences from observed facts. Unless inference is valid, the whole picture disappears. Unless we can be sure that reality in the remotest nebula or the remotest part obeys the thought laws of the human scientist here and now in his laboratory—in other words, unless Reason is an absolute—all is in ruins. Yet those who ask me to believe this world picture also ask me to believe that Reason is simply the unforeseen and unintended by-product of mindless matter at one stage of its endless and aimless becoming. Here is flat contradiction. They ask me at the same moment to accept a conclusion and to discredit the only testimony on which that conclusion can be based. The difficulty is to me a fatal one; and the fact that when you put it to many scientists, far from having an answer, they seem not even to understand what the difficulty is, assures me that I have not found a mare's nest but detected a radical disease in their whole mode of thought from the very beginning. The man who has once understood the situation is compelled henceforth to regard the scientific cosmology as being, in principle, a myth; though no doubt a great many true particulars have been worked into it.<sup>1</sup>

Even before he came to Christ, Lewis had seen the fallacy of the atheistic evolutionary hypothesis. If human life is merely the product of random forces in a universe without purpose, how can the mental processes of such life be trusted to give us a reliable account of reality? To the evolutionary atheist then, we must reply that when we do look at the facts and use our minds, it takes more faith to believe their view than to believe the Bible.

*In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers,  
to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory  
of Christ, who is the image of God.  
2 CORINTHIANS 4:4 (ESV)*

<sup>1</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), pp 102-103.