

# Study Guide for Defeating Darwinism

by Phillip E. Johnson

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## Intro:

Why is Johnson writing this book? What is he trying to accomplish?

## Ch 1. - Emilio's Letter

Common misunderstandings about the relationship of Christ and Science and ways that well meaning Christians have made mistakes in compromising Christianity to try to fit with the prevailing scientific understanding.

What are the three common mistakes and how does Johnson suggest they can be answered/corrected?

What is the "Better Idea" about how Emilio should approach this issue?

What does it mean to "define words like evolution and science in such a way that naturalism is true by definition."?

## Ch. 2. Inherit the Wind

Exploration of how our society typically thinks of the controversies between the Bible and "science" and how we got to this point.

What is the problem/question that parents often ask Johnson after his lectures?

How did we as a society get to this place?

What is "inherit the wind"?

What is scopes trial?

What is the story according to the play/movie?

What really happened in the real scopes trial?

What is the approach of the play and what impact has it had?

What is the point that Johnson makes by retelling the story in Jesus mold?

What two events did Johnson leave out of his summary of Inherit the wind?

What is the point that he makes in bringing them up in the "Owning the Microphone" section?

Who is Danny Phillips and what part does he play in Johnson's argument?

How as Christians should we respond to the phenomenon of controlling the microphone?

## Ch. 3. Tuning up your Baloney Detector

What we as Christians can/should do about it. How to think well about these issues. Includes a description of several categories of bad thinking that are to be avoided because they obscure truth rather than finding truth.

Describe these fallacies in your own words:

- Selective Use of Evidence
- Appeals to authority
- Ad Hominem arguments
- Straw Man arguments
- Begging the Question
- Lack of testability
- Vague terms and shifting definitions
- Original sin

What are the qualities of an expert you can trust?

Describe the difference between how Sagan treats people who disagree with him and how Johnson suggests good teachers should?

What is the difference between education and indoctrination? How should an education system deal with these disagreements?

According to Johnson, how does typical science education handle this? Do you agree with his assessment?

## **Ch. 4. A Real Education in Evolution**

List and describe the 7 things that Johnson would like students to learn

## **Ch. 5 Intelligent Design**

Define and understand the concept of "reductionism"

What is the point in describing the separation of matter and information?

Understand how evolutionists tend to make Berra's Blunder (review in ch. 4) in dealing with DNA information, and the point Johnson makes from this.

Understand the concept of "irreducible complexity" and the conclusion Johnson reaches from it.

Pay close attention to the Lewontin quote and the conclusion Johnson reaches from it.

## **Ch. 6 The Wedge**

What is the problem with the conciliatory strategy?

What is the problem with naturalistic thinking and how does it impact our everyday lives if not actively challenged?

What is the problem with the taking a stand strategy?

Describe "the wedge" and some practical ways in which this strategy can be employed.

Describe the program of "theistic realism" and describe its results.

## Ch.7 Modernism

What are the 3 significant events that Johnson describes? What underlying event does he illustrate with each of these events?

What is Johnson's evaluation of "Liberalized Christianity" and how it plays into this debate? Do you agree with his evaluation? Why or why not?

What were the practical effects of the "New Declaration of Independence"? And how were they connected with the underlying philosophy?

According to Johnson, why is politics not the answer?

What hope does Johnson give for positive change? How can we be a part/force in this change?

## Ch. 8 Stepping Off the Reservation

Describe the different approaches taken by Templeton, Graham and Spong. Which approach does Johnson favor and why? What are the implications/effects of each approach?

What does Johnson think of the charge that Graham committed "intellectual suicide"?

What conviction, shared by Templeton, Graham and Spong, does Johnson emphasize? What point is he making in this?

What point is Johnson making in comparing Darwin to Marx and Freud?

What point is Johnson making in comparing Darwinism to the Soviet Union?

What is the "one simple question" that will bring the end to Darwinist materialism?

What can Christians (especially parents) do to prepare for good Christian thinking in the 21st century?

Why and how should Christians, according to Johnson, step off of the reservation?