

The Heretical “Christian” Flat-Earth Movement

By Dan Jensen (2023)

(In order to fully benefit from this essay, I recommend reading through my “works for beginners” first. They can be found on my website.)

When I first started to go to church regularly, I had some vague ideas about Roman Catholics, the LDS (we of course just called them “Mormons” back then), the Jehovah’s Witnesses, etc. But, I had no idea they were not truly Christian. That was a shock to my system and I refused to believe it for a very long time. After the Lord powerfully saved me and eventually showed me that this was true (despite how hard it was for me to come to grips with this reality at first even after truly being given the Spirit), I realized that I then needed to preach the gospel to them. And I have done so for over 2 decades now. In that process, I also came to realize that I had to work to understand these religions and to understand how to refute them rationally. I have also labored at this for over 2 decades now as well. If you had told me at any time in those early years that down the line in my Christian walk I would also have to address flat-earthers, I would have laughed involuntarily. If you had told me this even 10 years ago, I would have had the same reaction. And yet here we are today.

This heresy is growing rapidly among “Christian” Fundamentalists and others. Even worse, many Christian leaders believe that the position is woefully wrong, but cannot bring themselves to call the movement heretical. Therefore, very few churches in our day are willing to discipline their members for holding to this pernicious lie. And thus these heretics are allowed to continue attending most orthodox churches, where in their zeal they often create tremendous amounts of confusion and division, and in some cases even converts. The American church, as usual, is being very, very slow in its response to this rapidly growing problem.

I have consistently seen those who profess to be Conservative Evangelical and hold to this heresy, only become more and more radical. Many say that dinosaurs never existed, many believe in the Illuminati, and many believe in countless other conspiracy theories. One woman, whom I was very close with at one time (only as friends and what I thought was as a sister in Christ), eventually adopted this heresy. This then led her to adopt a number of very bizarre conspiracy theories. She then became a pacifist and said that my son's boxing was of the enemy. She then said that churches don't need pastors. She then said we don't need the church today at all. She then said that pantheism is true because "god" must be everything because "he" calls "himself" a shepherd. Therefore, the argument went, in order to take the Bible completely literally, we must say that "god" actually is all of the shepherds. Then she denied the Trinity because the word is not in the Bible. Then she said that Arius was just misunderstood. Her story is not unique today.

You can say all you want that she must be crazy and the church cannot help the fact that there are crazies out there. But, she is not crazy. She is an extremely intelligent woman, who is also very successful. She is a self-made woman who is fairly wealthy. She owns a very nice home in the very city in which I live, which she bought with her own hard earned money. She has not been fired from her job because she is still so good at it. Once people believe that all of the experts are lying to them, they become susceptible to almost everything under the sun. As long as the YT presentation sounds very intelligent, well-researched, and professional, they will believe whatever is being pushed by that particular YouTuber. This is dangerous territory, and the longer the church allows this, the worse things are going to become. And the more our enemies will only use this against us, especially in their arguments against young earth creationism.

Many in the church will retort that we cannot condemn our brothers and sisters in Christ, no matter how much we may hate one of their doctrines, of heresy if they do not deny an essential of the faith. The church must stop insisting on this incorrect doctrine that the list of essentials of the faith must be exceedingly short. I understand that this

sentiment is far easier to explain to the average Christian in the pew, and makes us look far more winsome to the world and to the heretical groups that accuse us of being overly harsh in our condemnations of their groups. But, this sentiment is misguided in the extreme, and it is becoming increasingly problematic. For more on my thoughts on this very important topic, please read chapters 1-5 of my *The Idolatry of Progressive Christianity: A Response to Randal Rauser*. It can be found on my website.

With that made very clear, it is indeed heretical to deny any absolute fact. I carefully define what I mean by that concept in the chapters just referenced above. I want to be very plain when I say that I am very skeptical of the dogmatic claims made from empirical data, from those within any field, from those within any worldview including my own. However, there are indeed some absolute facts of philosophy, math, history, and science. And the sphericity of the earth is one such absolute fact if there ever was one. Therefore, its knowledgeable and persistent denial constitutes heresy. Plain and simple. The biblical basis for this claim comes from numerous highly transparent texts: Gen 1:26-28; 1 Ki 3:5-15; 4:29-34; Ps 19; Prov 1:1-7; 2:10-11; 18:15; Isa 1:18; John 1:1; and Rom 1-2. According to the Scriptures, we do not live in a matrix world. We live in the real world and we can investigate and understand this world to a certain degree. When an investigation of this world yields absolute facts, we as Christians are duty bound to submit to those facts.

Many will respond to this by saying that this places general revelation on a par with special revelation. It absolutely does not and I have much more to say about this in my essay on faith and reason. It can be found on my website. Many will respond to this by saying that this would mean that we would have to capitulate to the evolutionists who say that the full theory of evolution is an absolute fact. This also is not the case whatsoever. Most evolutionists do not actually say this. They simply assert that our understanding of the concept of theory is inaccurate. And they say that as far as theories go, the full theory of evolution is about as established as a theory can get. I do think there is some truth to the statement that most lay Christians don't fully understand how the language of theory is used in academia. But, I don't agree that the full theory of

evolution is nearly as established as they say. Even if it were though, it would still be a theory. Even the most highly backed theories by the data cannot be called absolute facts. If there is any chance, however small, of a theory being overturned down the line, we cannot be entirely dogmatic about it.

Comparing flat-earth theology to young earth creationism is woefully erroneous. They may be the minority, but there are hundreds of highly credentialed young earth scientists. Nathaniel Jeanson, as just one example, has a PhD in cell and developmental biology from Harvard University. Many similar examples could be given. I personally know science professors at fully accredited secular universities that reject the full theory of evolution. I have not been able to find a single credentialed scientist that holds to the flat-earth. And I have looked. Even a few of them would still not prove that the viewpoint should be taken seriously, but I honestly have not been able to find a single one. Hence, again, the comparison between flat-earthism and young earth creationism does not hold in the slightest.

The “Christian” flat-earth movement is heretical. It is for the most part becoming a large subset of what I have termed the “Christian” Fundamentalist movement, and I have been very clear that I consider that broader movement to be deeply heretical. Let us stop coddling flat-earthers in our churches and start calling them out as lovingly as possible, and when necessary, engaging in proper biblical discipline with them if they refuse to repent.