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I am often asked if I believe in evolution. Sometimes the question comes from either evolution-denying religious persons or faith-disparaging scientific ones attempting to trap me into failing whatever faith- or logic-based purity code they are burdened with.

Most times, though, it is asked with no ulterior motive other than to quell an existential dilemma. It is a question born from the confusion of faithful and modern people who have been led to believe that religion and science, especially evolution, are completely incompatible. The anti-science religious voice is a minority, but a well-funded and vocal one, and thus much louder than the religious majority who have quietly accepted scientific discoveries for centuries. Some from the anti-religion school (such as Richard Dawkins and the late Christopher Hitchens) receive far more media time than religion-tolerating scientists. And thus those in the grand middle – from the faithful who accept science to the scientific who are not anti-religion – can be easily confused.

I like to answer by saying it is the wrong question. Evolution is not something for belief but for acceptance. Much as I accept that my car will obey the theory of gravity when going downhill or that the GPS satellites orbiting our planet obey the theory of relativity. I also like to remind people that the Bible writers used story, poetry, and metaphor to talk about God's relationship to us and creation. They did not intend a scientific treatise on that process, and so attempting to use it as such is an abuse of the text.

The self-described biblical-literalists become incredulous because evolution goes against their interpretation of the first creation story in Genesis 1 (which, it is worth noting, is much different than the second creation story in Genesis 2). Hard-line atheists are surprised that a person of faith is not shunned from his church because their vision of Christianity is that of the fundamentalists. Neither group understands the other very well even though their literalist approach to scripture and penchant toward dogmatic absolutism is the same.

And so we in that grand middle are growing our voices. This is Evolution Weekend. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities in the US and elsewhere offer our witness of faithful reason against the spiritual, political, and intellectual noise of the creation science/intelligent-design industry and from the anti-faith crowd. Through articles, sermons, and special events, we proclaim that science and religion are not enemies. I speak to my fellow faithful especially to say that we need not fear or deny the reality that is shown to us through scientific inquiry, but that it is another level of God's self-revelation to us. And thank God for it.