

# *Smoky Mountain Bible Institute*

## *Biology Dating Methods 104*

Welcome back to the lab – put on your lab coat, take a seat and get comfortable. We are going to talk about biology again today, and we will do this from the perspective of a biblical Christian worldview. Last time we did not have time, to take the time, to address the topic of time. As a matter of fact, we will probably not have enough time to fully treat the topic of time in one lesson, but we will take all the time it takes!

So, for those of you who "**believe**" the world to be approximately 4.7 billion years old and that the universe is over 13 billion years old, or that millions of years are even a possibility—I would say that this is a position of faith in human deductive powers based on observable or verifiable empirical data. As most of us defer to the experts in their respective fields, it would seem to make sense to defer to them in this area as well. However, the experts in most scientific disciplines are not in lockstep agreement on this topic, as many in the education community would have you believe. So, let's open-mindedly examine some simple empirical data and basic assumptions to determine for ourselves how currently-accepted dating methods can support relatively young earth concepts that are in full harmony with Scripture's historical narrative. While at the same time, it calls into question the commonly held old-earth concepts based on those same methods, and taught as fact.

We will have to take a short detour from the topic of biology and touch on a number of disciplines to give time a thorough treatment here. Carbon 14, radiometric, and isochron dating methods are all relatively new in the world of science, all of which having been invented and refined only in the past century.

While I will treat each of these dating methods and some others individually, I would first like to address the topic of dating method assumptions. There are three clear "**assumptions.**" These are:

#1: **A known initial quantity** of whatever is being measured, in order to apply the formulas that turn the decay of one substance into any other substance, making that a reliable clock to measure time. These assumptions are made based on sound scientific computations, but they are still "**assumptions**" based on computations—not known observable facts.

#2: **A constant rate of decay** which assumes that what we have been able to observe and measure over the past decades, and in a few cases over a century, can be projected through time to get back to the assumed known initial quantity. So now we have one assumption on top of another.

#3: **A closed system**, which is the weakest of the three. It assumes that over time, no event of any kind has influenced the constant rate of decay. We can observe in known world history great catastrophes, some which can be shown to affect elements within some of these dating methods. This would include occurrences such as exposure to extreme temperatures, or the introduction, or even commingling, of other elements into the tested sample. This then puts a third assumption on a stack of assumptions that call into question the dependability of these methods. I do not argue that these are bad methods of determining the age of things. I simply argue that the numeric assumed values call into question the validity of the conclusions. So, to say that trust in those doing the calculations based on these assumptions is not a position of faith is intellectually dishonest.

Why is the issue of time so important? You can make a direct correlation between the realizations in the scientific community that studies life, "Biology" in the late 1800 to early 1900's. As they began to understand the complexity of life, they saw that many evolutionary change assumptions, especially those that transitioned from one species to another, could not have happened in thousands of years. So, they needed greater amount of time, and those sympathetic to their plight in the fields of chemistry and geology, were all too happy to use the **assumptions** of greater periods of time when approaching their calculations. In short, evolution needs millions of years to be even remotely plausible, so that in the last 100 years the estimated age of the earth has slowly climbed from some untold millions to its current estimated age of over 4.7 billion years. It seems the assumptions listed above would not work on the age of the earth because in the time span of less than 100 years the earth has aged by over 3 billion years. We will spend more on time next time.