

**Atheism and Biblical Interpretation**  
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As an atheist, you may be asking yourself “Why should I believe in the Bible?” You may have been alienated from the Bible for many different reasons. Maybe you have studied it long and hard, and can’t reconcile differences in what you see in science, and what the Bible claims is true. Maybe some Christians in the past have alienated you by their insistence in your belief in a young earth, when you know that the earth is old. Or, maybe you haven’t investigated it fully for yourself, and are merely taking the sayings of others for the truth.

For years atheists have claimed that the Bible is not accurate in scientific matters. Does this describe your position? You may be saying, “How can I believe in the Bible if it says the earth is only 6,000 years old?” This is one of the most common excuses used by atheists. However, it is completely unfounded.

Nowhere does the Bible say the earth was created 6,000 years ago. While it does claim that God created the heavens and the earth, it does not specify an age...that determination is left to us.

The main reason why young earth creationists insist on belief in a young earth stems from an incorrect interpretation of the first chapter of the Bible, Genesis 1. They claim the word “day,” in the original Hebrew, can only refer to a 24-hour day. However, if you look it up in a dictionary, it can also mean a long period of time. Therefore, we must ask, how long is a day?

It is first important to consider whom the word “day” refers to in the creation story. According to Genesis, there were no humans until the last minute of the last creation day, as mankind was the last created thing. So there were no human witnesses to these days of creation. God alone witnessed these days. So, what is a day to God.

God does not count time as we count time. We get several indications of this in the Bible. In Psalm 90:4 says,

*For a thousand years in your sight  
Are like a day that has just gone by,  
Or like a watch in the night.*

This is repeated in II Peter 3:8. The point here is this...if you are an eternal God, what meaning does time have? You could make the statement, “Oh, there goes another million years.” So what if a million years has gone by...you have billions and billions more years. Time has no meaning to someone who is eternal.

Likewise, it makes no sense to insist (as young earth creationists do) that the days of creation are 24 hours long. Considering the evidence from science, they are completely wrong, yet they dogmatically insist that they are right.

Here you must distinguish between young earth creationists and the rest of the church. People who insist in a young earth appear to be in the majority in the church because they are the most vocal about their beliefs. In reality, these creationists are relegated to a few denominations, especially the independent, fundamental Baptist churches. They do not represent the majority...far from it, they are a small, vocal minority.

The majority of the church falls into one of two belief categories concerning the creation. Either they are old earth creationists, and proclaim this to others, or they have not made a decision or don't care about the age of the earth. In either case, they claim it doesn't matter what you believe in the creation. God does not say "Believe in a young earth and thou shalt be saved." God does not care how old you think the earth is. The only thing that matters is that you believe in Him.

Does not simple belief that He exists enough, or do we need to learn more? If you believe that God exists, and that He created you, then you will want to find out all you can about Him. The Bible is the place to learn about Him and His plan for mankind. Be careful, though. If you are an atheist, Christians insisting on a young earth have probably turned you off in the past. Their mistaken interpretations of the Bible should not deter you from discovering for yourself the truth. Give God a fair chance by investigating His Word on your own. He empowers each person with the ability to make up his or her own mind. Exercise that ability.

If this interests you, read more about God's creation on this website. Young earth ministries have done much damage to drive people away from the God. The articles on this website attempt to counter their claims, righting their wrong, in an effort to uphold God to all people, not just to those who believe in a young earth.

So, if God is true, then why is it important to believe in Him? If you are ready to learn about God's plan of salvation, and why you need it, [click this link](http://www.answersincreation.org/salvation.htm) (http://www.answersincreation.org/salvation.htm). Otherwise, check out our many articles on this site. May God Bless You as you consider His creation.