

ISCAST Intensive 2010

Who Says?

The Use and Misuse of the Bible in an Age of Science and Technology

30 & 31 October 2010
Melbourne

Call for Papers

Science and, with it, technology is dragging us steadily into an unexplored world whether we like it or not! We know so much more about our planet. We have the capacity to do so much more. The consequences of what we are now able to do are catching up with us.

It is natural for Christians to appeal to Scripture in responding to these challenges but how can a pre-scientific canon of books still speak to our age? Theologians work hard to engage the resources of the Christian tradition but it is essential that there be an engagement in this with Christians facing the reality of their day-to-day occupation. This is especially so for research scientists and professionals working on the cusp of change.

Further, much of the effort put into elucidating these responses has led to conflict, with Christians appealing to different portions of Scripture (or even to the same passages interpreted differently). Differences are often held with vigour and, sometimes, even rancour.

Given this, ISCAST is holding a weekend intensive entitled "Who Says?—The Use and Abuse of Scripture in an Age of Science and Technology." This will be open to the general public and aimed at a lay audience. It will explore varied approaches to Scripture in tackling issues generated by the advancement of science and seek to develop some general approaches that can be "*useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness...*" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Some of the areas where Christians have used (and abused) Scripture include: agriculture, medical science, addiction medicine, natural resource allocation and conservation, biotechnology, fundamental research and global warming.

The intensive is to be held on the weekend of the 30th and 31st October, 2010, in Melbourne (venue to be confirmed), Melbourne, from approximately 9am-5pm Saturday and 9am-4.30pm Sunday. The keynote speaker will be Prof. Gareth Jones of Otago University, New Zealand. He will also present the ISCAST Annual Lecture on the evening of Friday 29th October from 8pm-9.30pm.



is an Australian organisation dedicated to exploring the interface between science and the Christian faith. Its membership consists of scientists, theologians and professionals with standing in their own fields and a commitment to the Christian faith.

The rapid development of science has left many either to follow blindly where science is taking them or to crawl into a fundamentalist mindset. We argue there is a third way: a dynamic dialogue, critically reviewing both science and religion, allowing each to influence our understanding of the other.

www.iscast.org

Guidelines for Proposals

ISCAST invites those with professional standing in the science and technology fields, as well as those who have taken the opportunity to reflect theologically on these matters, to present papers of 30 minutes duration (exclusive of discussion). These will:

- explore the various theological positions adopted as a result of contemporary theological and scriptural engagement in different scientific fields;
- comment on the use of Scripture in developing these positions; and
- explore the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches, not only relating to their 'orthodoxy', but also their usefulness in providing instruction, guidance and encouragement to practitioners.

The focus should be upon the methodological issues rather than an attempt to actually offer prescriptive theological or Scriptural perspectives on particular issues.

We will set additional time aside for discussion and exploring areas of contention.

This Intensive will assume that participants accept the authority of the Scriptures in dealing with matters of Christian faith. It will also assume that many have drawn on the resources and principles of the Scriptures in helping address the situations faced in professional life and work, recognising that different people have come up with divergent answers and that at times we may disagree.

Particular Guidelines

- Proposals should be received by 30 July 2010. Electronic formats are preferred via the online link on the website or using the contact details below.
- Proposals should be about 200–250 words long and must include:
 - your full name, title, work or institutional affiliation (if relevant), email address, telephone / mobile phone number, and mailing address;
 - title, aim, and an indication of the line of argument taken;
 - any additional information that may help reviewers weigh your submission.
- Accepted papers will be required to submit an abstract of their proposed paper no later than **Friday 24 September** for inclusion in the programme.
- It is helpful if you can demonstrate how the paper fits into relevant discussion, among theologically-informed scientists.
- Presenters are expected to register for the Intensive.
- Please indicate if you have an interest in creating a forum, for example to discuss a significant new book, or to discuss recent trends in science – scripture relationships in a particular field.
- It is important that you indicate whether you wish to use audio-visual equipment for your presentation.
- Selected papers will be invited to submit to be considered for inclusion in the Online Journal.
- There will be a private online forum for paid up delegates to read abstracts ahead of time and engage in the debate.

Please note also that sessions may be recorded and that visual slides should contain material that can be posted on the internet without further approval or copyright complications.

All proposals will be peer-reviewed, and responses made by **Friday 13 August**.

For more information visit: www.iscast.org/intensive

Contact Information:

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Keynote Speaker

Prof D Gareth Jones

University of Otago

Gareth Jones gained degrees from the Universities of London, Western Australia, and Otago, and is currently Professor of Anatomy and Structural Biology and Director of the Bioethics Centre at the University of Otago.

His principal areas of specialisation are in neurobiology and bioethics, in which he has published over 20 books and monographs, and 200 refereed papers. He has held visiting academic positions in universities in Australia the UK and the USA, has given seminars in many countries.

Before coming to the University of Otago, Gareth worked for several years at the University of Western Australia. Within the University of Otago, Gareth has served on a range of senior committees; he was Founding Director of the Bioethics Research Centre, was Director of the Neuroscience Research Centre, and established medical ethics teaching in the Faculty of Medicine. Outside the University, he has served on Ethics and Neurological bodies. He is currently a member of the Advisory Committee on Assisted Reproductive Technology (ACART) in New Zealand.