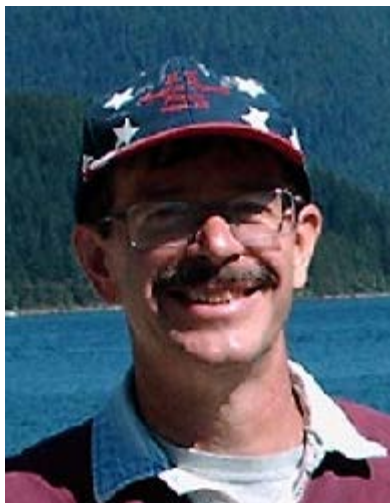


A PROFILE OF TRANSFORMATION



Name: Steven Ball

Hometown: Longview, Texas

Profession: Professor of Physics

ASA Affiliation: Member since 2009

Hobbies: Basketball, Reading, and Astronomy

Favorite Pro Sports Team: San Antonio Spurs

When did you first discover American Scientific Affiliation (ASA)?

My long-time LeTourneau colleague Gary DeBoer had been an ASA member and reviewer of manuscripts for some time. I occasionally enjoyed reading *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*. When Baylor hosted the annual ASA meeting in 2009, I decided to join him and find out what the ASA people were like. I was very impressed at how they were willing to engage in real science and relate it to faith.

How has your personal and spiritual life been changed because of your involvement with ASA?

I've been challenged to see how the input of science not only fits with genuine and deep faith, but also actually strengthens that faith. When I heard Dennis Venema speak on the genetic evidence for common ancestry of humans and apes in 2009, I could sense he had a deeply held faith that he'd personally wrestled with before he found a way for both his science and faith to grow. When the climate was ready, we invited him to come to LeTourneau University to speak. He graciously came, with no honorarium, because he knew the need was great. We bathed his visit in prayer, knowing how some would feel threatened by his message. God used his coming to open many eyes to see that evolution is not the enemy of Christian faith. It was a true turning point at LeTourneau. Today the climate is much more open to discussing origins issues, and we have had to live peaceably with differing views. I've been supported by the administration in hosting several forums to expose our students to the different views on how science and faith relate. Through this experience, I've grown personally, trusting God to prepare the way. And I have remembered Proverbs 3:3-4, "Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and man."

What is the tangible evidence of the growth you've experienced?

Through my connection with Dennis Venema, I received an invitation to come to Trinity Western University (TWU) in the fall of 2014 as a visiting scholar. I needed a sabbatical to get away and experience some personal renewal. My colleagues at TWU, especially Arnold Sikkema, were very kind and supportive to me. I hosted a weekly seminar on science and faith, inviting the faculty to speak on different topics. It was a great time, as I reached out to colleagues with different views and made them feel welcome, respected, and valued. We are first and foremost Christian brothers and sisters, and the origins questions must take a backseat in comparison. They saw my heart and in a way, they saw God's heart, who doesn't want to see his people divided by our limited understanding of his creation. I continue to serve as a voice that Christian love is greater than all our differences.

How long have you been a member/donor and what has ASA meant to you?

I have belonged to the ASA since 2009 and have attended four annual meetings. I find the annual meetings to be so important for making the personal connections with like-minded, like-spirited individuals. Just this summer I got to connect with Gary Fugle, biology professor and author of *Laying Down Arms to Heal the Creation-Evolution Divide*. He is not only a great writer but also a wonderful Christian man and leads worship at his home church. Even though we just met, I felt a real kinship and have maintained my contact with him. Also, I really enjoyed meeting Dick Fischer,

author of *Historical Adam*. His research is of great interest to those who wonder about the world of the Ancient Near East. I could list many others I've met, but the list is too long here. I value and respect these individuals because they all take the testimony of nature seriously as they hold on to faith in the testimony of God's Word. I have found the personal faith of many to be refreshing and encouraging.

What do our friends and financial partners need to know about how ASA is making a difference?

The ASA is making a big difference as a support network for Christians who uphold the truth found in scripture and nature. The diversity of denominational backgrounds and scientific disciples is great and enriching. We are learning from each other, and more importantly, supporting one another as Christians. We do not have to feel isolated, especially when we are in the midst of tensions arising over science-faith matters in the institutions where we work.