

**Religious audiences and the topic of evolution- lessons from the classroom: Coming from a community where evolution was dismissed, I tried to lead discussions about evolution in high school and Sunday school. What are your experiences in discussing evolution with religious people in your families and communities?**

This video was recorded at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History on April 30, 2017

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| Wes McCoy:       | 00:27 | I would like to invite you to Thanksgiving dinner at my brother's house.   |
| Audience member: | 00:35 | What's the address?  |
| Wes McCoy:       | 00:37 | You're all invited.  |
| Briana Pobiner:  | 00:38 | That's great. Thank you.   |
| Wes McCoy:       | 00:39 | She's a really good cook. Anyway, it's a difficult thing if people that you love somehow think you've gone off the deep end, so I admire your courage for leading the groups that you've led. That's for sure. Even though people don't have the same religious ideas, there can still be an amazing amount of friendship and love between them, so I promote that idea with my family frequently.   |
| Lee Meadows:     | 01:17 | Thank you for your comments. One thing that you've made me think of is that in working with teachers across the South, as I've been able to do, one of the things that I bring up and then Connie and Briana have been working in is the idea of role models. That you can take kids from almost any faith background, and show them there are scientists from that same faith background. I think that's one thing that a lot of kids... If they're like a kid like you were there, the only kid in their high school who's thinking about this stuff and wondering. Then they're in this place, especially if that place becomes, "What if this causes me to have to exit my faith and then I lose all of my community? Or, "What if that causes me to lose part of my racial identity or my cultural identity? Then for them to realize, "Oh, there are a bunch of people out there who are still |

holding true to my faith who are deeply involved in science. I think that's powerful.

Betty Holley: 02:23 I truly applaud you because young people truly are seeking truth when it comes to understanding evolution. That's why I mentioned that you can't start helping students understand evolution right in high school. It has to start early, really early for them to have that within them to move forward because I think truth is what young people truly are searching for, wherever it comes from.

Wes McCoy: 02:52 There's a young man who wrote me a letter just a few months ago, Ken [Winn 00:00:02:56], who is a junior in Oklahoma City, served as a page in the Oklahoma State Legislature and was completely appalled by the fact that they were going to try to put laws into the books that would stop the teaching of evolution. He started writing to all of these people in the Legislature to please not do that. He became... I don't know if notorious is the right word, but he came very well-known for being... people called it being outspoken. He said, "I'm just a normal kid. I'm just trying to be a normal kid and get a normal education." There are lots of people who are facing the same kind of issues you are and feel a great deal of relief when they get to college.

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