

# Conspiracy Theories

By Dave DeWitt

## Definition

**A conspiracy theory is an unproved assumption that there is a secret plan by a group of people to do something considered wrong by another group of people.**

## Some Examples of Conspiracy Theories

- The government is hiding the evidence that the world is flat.
- The government is lying about going to the moon, to get more money for the space program.
- The FBI assassinated Martin Luther King and framed James Earl Ray for it.
- The CIA hired Lee Harvey Oswald to kill President Kennedy (or it was Cuba, or the Russians).
- Princess Diana was murdered.
- The American military Area 51 is researching and experimenting on aliens and their spacecraft.
- We should wear tinfoil hats to shield our brains from electromagnetic mind control.
- The Republicans colluded with the Russians.
- The Democrats colluded with the Russians.
- Vaccinations are not safe and were developed to give profit for big pharmaceutical companies.
- The Chinese intentionally released the COVID-19 virus into the population.
- American doctors paid Chinese researchers to develop and release the COVID-19 virus.

## Corollaries to the Definition

### 1. Conspiracy theories always include a judgment of motives

Businesspeople say, “They are in it for the money, just follow the money.” Politicians say, “They are trying to get more power.” Hollywood actors claim, “They are in it for the notoriety, publicity, or popularity.” Motives are always included in a conspiracy theory (Proverbs 16:2; 1 Corinthians 4:5).

### 2. Conspiracy theories are inevitable because people recognize their own sin in others

We are all sinful, and sinful people suspect others of doing what they are doing or are tempted to do. It’s like the lady who said, “This church is full of gossips!” I wonder where she got that idea? One political party often accuses another political party of doing what they themselves are doing, or would be doing if given the opportunity. We tend to think people are committing the sins we are (Mark 3:2; Luke 23:2).

### 3. Conspiracies are not theories and theories are not conspiracies

Let’s unpack that a bit.

#### Conspiracies are not theories

A conspiracy is a historical reality where a secret plan, which is now no longer a secret, was devised by a group of people to do something considered wrong, illegal, or harmful by another group of people. Conspiracies are a matter of historical record. They are not theories. The Bible records many conspiracies. The English word “conspiracy” is used to describe 9 events in the (NASB) Bible. Here are two examples.

- **2 Samuel 15:12**, *And the **conspiracy** was strong, for the people increased continually with Absalom.*
- **Acts 23:12**, *When it was day, the Jews formed a **conspiracy** and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.*

The Bible records many other conspiracies as historical events that happened in the past. Conspiracies occur regularly in wars, business deals, and politics. But all of these are in the past, and they are no longer secrets. Conspiracy theories are ideas about possible secrets kept by certain groups in the present. There isn’t sufficient evidence (yet) that they are true or false. And they are not (yet) in the public arena where they can be examined and debated.

## Theories are not conspiracies

There are theories with evidence:

- Gravity: Newton (1687), every particle in the universe attracts every other particle.
- Heliocentrism: Copernicus (1543), the Earth revolves around the sun (and the universe is filled with planets that revolve around suns).
- Special Relativity: Einstein (1905), space, time, matter, and energy merge in such a way that speed reduces time, and atomic energy can be used to make bombs.
- Plate Tectonics: Wegener (1912)/Wilson (1960s), the earth's continents are moving plates.
- Quantum Mechanics: the nature of objects, and the cause and effect of events, are influenced by observation.

There are theories without evidence:

- Life spontaneously generates from non-life.
- Lead can be made into gold.
- Bloodletting should be used to heal sick people.
- The universe evolved from a "Big Bang" 13.8 billion years ago.
- Man-made carbon dioxide is responsible for dangerous global warming.

Theories are not conspiracies because they are not secrets. Theories are in the public domain and are open to the public for examination. Nonetheless, a conspiracy theory is a special form of theory, one that has not yet reached the public domain. So, when it comes to evaluation, we can use the same criteria for testing a conspiracy theory as any other theory.

## We Cannot Rely on "Science" to Evaluate a Conspiracy Theory

Much of what is called science today, especially by the media, is often just propaganda of the liberal progressive world view. Real science follows the scientific method. "It involves careful observation, applying rigorous skepticism about what is observed..." [Wikipedia]

The scientific method can be understood as using three steps:

- (1) Actual (systematic, open) observations of something in the real world
- (2) Repetition and skeptical examination of those observations leading to the formulation of a hypothesis
- (3) Modifying the hypothesis as dictated by further observation

Real science is based in actual, real-world observations, followed by a critical analysis and change of hypothesis when new observations demand it.

But what liberal progressives call "science" is circular reasoning. It's based on proclamations not explanations. Some liberal progressive professor or doctor (or maybe just Al Gore with a slide show) makes a speculation consistent with the progressive agenda. That speculation then is quoted by others as evidence, while evidence to the contrary is simply ignored. "Scholarly" journals will only publish articles, and universities will only hire professors, favoring the liberal progressive agenda. Then it is claimed that the progressive speculation (about, say, climate change, evolution, life on other planets, the nature of a virus, biological support for homosexuality) is supported by "a consensus of scientists" and is therefore "settled science."

- **1 Timothy 6:20-21** (KJV), *O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called. Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.*

## Evaluating a Conspiracy Theory

When you hear a conspiracy theory, two basic questions should come to mind:

## **A. Should this Conspiracy Theory Be Evaluated?**

Remember, the Bible tells us truth, the way things actually are. Science, good science that follows the scientific method, gives us theories that change with new evidence. In evaluating theories and conspiracy theories as a Christian, we should initially ask:

### **1. Is there a biblical basis for assuming it is important to spend time and energy evaluating it?**

Before you spend time on a conspiracy theory, make sure the issue being discussed is an application of a biblical principle. Is spending time reading and talking about this something Jesus and the apostles would do (Acts 4:18-20)? Is it something the body of Christ was commanded to do? The world is full of lies and foolish ideas. Is there some reason I should look into this one? For example, I did not examine, or comment on, the conspiracy theories involving either the republican or democrat party involvement in Russian collusion. That's because there is nothing in the Bible that encourages believers to be involved the world's political or cultural issues. No one in the Bible was ever told to attempt to fix the world's cultures.

- **Mark 12:17** *And Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."*
- **2 Timothy 2:4** *No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.*
- **Romans 13:1-2** *Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God.*

### **2. Is the conspiracy theory in question taking people away from a focus on building the Word of God into faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2)?**

Is it distracting believers away from the gospel ministry? For example, I did a short paper on the flat-earth theory because some believers were teaching it in Poland and repeatedly bringing it up. It became a distraction in the ministry, so (as strange as it seems), it needed to be dealt with.

- **2 Timothy 2:17-18** *and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some.*

**3. Does the conspiracy theory attack the credibility of the Bible?** For example, "The DaVinci Code" is a 2003 mystery thriller novel by Dan Brown, that claimed the Catholic Church ignored and covered up manuscripts proving Jesus had a child with Mary Magdalene. This is a blasphemous lie that needs to be addressed because some form of it is being taught by many progressives, at many universities, as a way to discredit the Bible. The truth is, after searching for 2,000 years, only 27 first-century Christian writings have ever been found (ending with Revelation), and they are all in the New Testament. And we have found over 25,000 of those New Testament manuscripts (over 5,800 in Greek, about 10,000 in Latin and 9,300 in other languages). Heretical writings all came after the first century.

- **Titus 1:10-11** *For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families...*

### **4. Does the conspiracy theory take our focus off of the fear of God?**

- **Isaiah 8:12-13** *You are not to say, "It is a conspiracy!" In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, and you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it. It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, And He shall be your dread.*

## **B. If this theory needs to be examined, how should you go about it?**

Having decided that a theory needs to be dealt with, there are four investigative questions to consider:

1. Does the theory use some additional authoritative source for understanding Scripture (Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18)?
2. Does the theory take away some clear biblical teaching (Revelation 22:19; Deuteronomy 12:32)?
3. Does the theory contradict any direct biblical statements (2 Timothy 3:16-17)?
4. Does it deny or alter the biblical author's clear intended meaning of a passage (2 Peter 1:20-21)?

Now, I would like to use these four questions to evaluate the theory of "theistic evolution" which says God used evolution for creation. As a currently published example, I will use these four questions to evaluate the theistic evolution of an organization known as BioLogos. Here is their "Mission Statement":

BioLogos presents evolution as God's means of creation, so that the Church may celebrate and the world may see the harmony between science and biblical faith" (biologos.org).

1. BioLogos adds an additional authoritative source for understanding Scripture—what is today called "science." They claim, the message of Christianity must be understood as "the harmony between science and biblical faith." This can also be seen in their comments on the conspiracies surrounding the COVID-19 virus. They write:

"But the all-consuming urgency of the present crisis gives a stark reminder to why we need both good science and responsible Christian faith."

2. Their Mission Statement says, "BioLogos presents evolution as God's means of creation." That compromises the clear teaching of the Bible on creation. For example, if evolution is what God used for creation, then:

- The animals do not always reproduce *after their kind* (Genesis 1:21).
- God's creating work was not *completed* (Genesis 2:1).
- It's not true that *the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground* (Genesis 2:7).
- Moses was wrong when he said, *in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them* (Exodus 20:11).
- Jesus was wrong when He said, *Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE* (Matthew 19:4).

3. The theistic evolution conclusions of BioLogos contradict direct statements given in the Bible. The Bible says, *through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin* (Romans 5:12; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:21). The Bible says death followed sin, as a curse on creation. But according to theistic evolution, death existed for millions of years before Adam and Eve evolved and is not a result of sin.

4. BioLogos denies the biblical author's clear intended meaning of a passage. Why believe in a six-day creation? How about because Moses did. It is obvious that a six 24-hour day creation was Moses' intended meaning. He even based the Sabbath Day requirement on it (Exodus 20:11). Why believe in a six-day creation? How about because David did (Psalm 89:47), the prophets did (Isaiah 42:5), Jesus did (Matthew 19:4), and the apostles did (1 Corinthians 11:9). How about because not one single author of the Bible assumed anything other than God speaking creation into existence in six, 24-hour days.

## Conclusion

A conspiracy is a historically established past event. A theory is an unproven assumption in the public domain. A conspiracy theory is a suggestion (a theory) that some group of people have a secret, hidden agenda which is, in some way, wrong. When we hear a conspiracy theory, we need to ask, Is the issue being discussed something Jesus and the apostles would have addressed as false teaching which opposes the Word of God, or is a danger to the people of God? If it is, then it needs to be shown how this theory, or what it reveals, is contradictory to the truth revealed in the Bible.