

Lessons in chemistry

Making connections with schools by exploring faith and science



Michael Harvey is the developer of 'Back to Church Sunday' and has been instrumental in developing the God and the Big Bang project from its beginning.

When children start to learn about space, evolution, and the Big Bang theory in school science lessons, it can bring up some big questions about faith. 'Does science contradict what I've been taught about God creating the world?' 'Is there a scientific explanation for miracles?' 'Can I believe in both God and science?' These questions stretch beyond the science curriculum into philosophy and ethics, meaning schools find them challenging to address. There is a packed curriculum to get through and often teachers feel anxious around presenting the 'right' response.

As a local church, engaging with the big questions about faith and science is a fantastic way to build or strengthen relationships with schools in your area, and to help children discover more of God.

New science-themed holiday club

This year, Roots and God and the Big Bang have partnered to create a science themed holiday club, exploring five big questions around faith and science: **Can science support faith in God? Can science answer all our questions? Can faith be based on evidence? Does science make it hard to believe in God? Does science solve all our problems?** Through games, crafts, experiments, Bible stories and learning about historic and current scientists who have a deep faith in God, children can explore the intersectionality of science and faith. Engage children in your community by running the **Whizz! Bang! Wow! Holiday Club** – these resources are part of your Roots subscription, see pages 8-9 and rootsforchurches.com/whizz.

God and the Big Bang (GatBB) is a nationwide project that helps start the conversation around science and faith between churches and local schools. For over a decade, GatBB have run interactive workshops with children and young people between the ages of nine and 18, in schools, churches and cathedrals, giving them the opportunity to discover, discuss and debate the compatibility of science and faith.

Wrestling with big questions, especially around science and faith, is key to the faith formation and growing spiritual maturity. **43 per cent of 10-11 year olds and 56 per cent of 15-16 year olds agreed with the statement 'science makes it hard to believe in God'.¹**

Questions and curiosity

When the local church facilitates an opportunity for cross-curricular, curious and challenging discussion, children, young people and their teachers experience a safe space for questioning and reflective thinking. But the conversation doesn't stop there.

Through GatBB, children and young people are equipped with the tools they need to form their own opinions and engage in well-reasoned discussion about the part science plays in God's world throughout their academic career.

Giving space for honest, thought-provoking discussion on how science and faith can work together has a huge impact on children and young people in their personal faith journeys. After experiencing a GatBB day, one young person said 'My faith is now questioned just from today. I was sure I was a total believer in science and reasoning, but now I want to make room for Christianity'.

Connect with schools

If you already have or want to start a connection with your local schools, GatBB offer lots of different options for workshop sessions in schools. In the 'Creation Sings' workshops, GatBB use science, faith and music as an opportunity for children to reflect on their learning and respond in worship, with families being invited to join in a celebration service at the end of the day. Find out more about having GatBB come to your church or a school near you by emailing Sarah Moring at contact@gatbb.co.uk



Challenging questions?

If you're a little anxious about how you would answer some of the science and faith questions that might come up through the holiday club, listen in as Roots' MD Melanie Cave and Sarah (from GatBB) take a deep dive into the topic on the Roots podcast: <https://rootsforchurches.podbean.com>

¹ data collected from GatBB workshops.