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Faith, Reason and a G.O.P. Hopeful

To the Editor:

There is much to agree with in Senator Sam Brownback's article, particularly when he writes that we should not "drive a wedge between faith and reason." Unfortunately, he also urges us to "firmly reject" aspects of science when they are inconsistent with religious beliefs. That doesn't work.

The purpose of science is to tell us about the nature of the natural world, whether we like the answer or not. To thrive in our science and technology-based society, people really can't pick and choose which scientific facts to accept.

Evolution is a core, well-tested scientific concept that explains how Earth's life forms gradually arose from common ancestors billions of years ago.

Believing in a god and accepting evolution are not inconsistent for many people. But religion should not be substituted for science, nor the reverse, since they deal with different domains.

ALAN I. LESHNER

Washington, May 31, 2007

The writer is chief executive of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and executive publisher of Science.



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