Deep Time and Beliefs

I do think it's difficult for people to conceive of the age that we have here for a number of reasons. One is that, if you are a literal believer in certain sacred books, you believe that the earth is no older than written history. Now, as a geologist, my predecessors, back mostly in the 1700's, faced this. These were people who really believed in the sacred books and who, at the same time, had to look at the rocks and make sense of them. And some of them ended up, no, I don't believe the rocks.

Some of them ended up actually renouncing their religious beliefs. Many of them said, no, I can be a religious person and I can believe the rocks. But we're going to have to let a day be a little longer than 24 hours in the very beginning. They had to find some compromise between the two. People who absolutely believe, word for word, literal interpretation of certain particular sacred books simply cannot believe the age of the canyon.

I'm a religious person. I won't subject you to my beliefs. I am a religious person. And I belong to a very large religion that has several million members. And we have no problem with the age of the canyon.