

WERE WE CREATED?

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?

Genesis 1:1-3, Hebrews 11:3

June 2, 2002

Wesley J. Gabel

Bethany Church

Some graduates were arguing about the oldest occupation on earth. One maintained it was hunting, another farming, still another said that it was engineering, creating this world out of chaos. Another joked that the first profession had to be politics, "After all who created the chaos?" Overhearing the conversation, a young student said, "You're all wrong. The first vocation was baseball." "How do you figure that?" the graduate asked? "Read the first verse of Genesis, chapter one. It starts, 'In the big inning!'"

Today we are in the big inning of this series on what you believe. It is the big inning because the tension between the biblical account of creation and the naturalistic Theory of Evolution has resulted in more erosion of confidence in the Bible and God than any other development in history. The Theory of Evolution claims that nature generated itself over a lengthy amount of time. Therefore, people no longer need to recognize the existence of God. Belief in God is strictly optional. This is the big inning in the battle for truth. It is pivotal.

The theory of evolution first asserted by Charles Darwin has literally changed the landscape of our culture. Before this theory you could not discuss the origin and operation of our world in academia without reference to some deity. Theology was considered *the Queen of All*

Sciences. All that we studied somehow reflected on the creator and the creator's purposes, and understanding the creator and those purposes was the highest of all academic pursuits.

However, evolutionary theory not only provided an alternate explanation for our origins that seemed reasonable, it also claimed exclusivity on reason. Any other conception of our origin is now considered anti-intellectual. Since God is no longer necessary to understand our origin or our world, theology is considered an unnecessary and illegitimate diversion. In the academic world theology has fallen from queen to bastard! As evolutionary theory gained acceptance, the need to discuss God disappeared. Simply put: pre-Darwin, "*the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*" (Solomon), post-Darwin, the fear of the Lord is irrelevant to knowledge. Christians need to recognize that **the exit of God from our schools has less to do with a Supreme Court ruling than it does with our culture's new and secular creation story.**

That story has become the keystone for understanding all of life. In the other disciplines we ask how cultures evolve - anthropology, how the human mind has evolved - psychology, how groups evolve - sociology, how rock formations evolve - geology, how human civilization evolved - history, and so on. The word *develop* or *mature* could be substituted, but the term *evolve* more accurately describes the influence of evolutionary theory. In the west, we depend so heavily on it that any challenge to it disrupts all disciplines and their knowledge. Therefore, **to attack this theory is to desecrate the holy grail of our culture.** When you hear of creationist scientists, you are told that they are irrational ideologues. Even conservative columnist George Will ridiculed a presidential candidate for his superstitious belief in creationism.

The Theory of Evolution is so influential and deeply embedded in our culture that we must come to terms with it. We have three alternatives. We can accept the whole theory; we can accept some parts and reject other parts, or we can reject the entire theory.

That second alternative described me for a long time. I accepted the idea that species may have evolved over millions of years, but I rejected any notion of natural selection or of life somehow spontaneously coming from non-living things. I reasoned that biblical accounts of creation, though truthful, are not meant as scientific descriptions. The six-day creation in Genesis 1 represented a framework of development rather than a detailed timeline of God's work. I figured that I'm not a scientist and can afford to be non-committal about the details while I point to who is responsible. More recently, however, I have reconsidered how much of the evolutionary theory is worth embracing.

First, there is a tremendous problem in accepting the whole theory. The notion that this world came about without the intervention of God requires a tremendous leap of faith. In life, we observe no complex thing that is generated by chance. Odds are against you and me being accidents of nature or products of chance. Would you say one in a million is slim odds, how about one in a billion, or one in a trillion? Those are extremely high odds compared to the mathematical chance this world evolved into its present state.

I hold an issue of the **New York Times**. Suppose this paper was typeset in a New York printing shop, and that each letter came from the meticulous work of a typesetter who carefully aligned the type of each page. Suppose then an explosion occurred at that shop, and all the type came back down in random order. Some mathematicians calculated that it is more likely that such a random act would reproduce this same paper than for this living world to have evolved from one without life. *Mathematically speaking, naturalistic evolution is a highly improbable explanation of our existence!*

If it is so improbable, why do you think the theory gained acceptance? Bertrand Russell, an avowed evolutionist and atheist, was asked that question. This leading thinker did not suggest

that the facts were so compelling or the logic impeccable. He suggested lust was the primary reason. People want to throw off sexual restraint and be answerable to no God. He felt that eliminating accountability to God was more motivating than logic. Russell is not a spiritual man, yet he fingers something very important. There is a spiritual aspect to truth. There is a spiritual and moral aspect. Truth is not grasped by reason alone. We are spiritual and moral beings who are as much influenced by those aspects of our life as we are by reason. That is why faith is a gift not an achievement. We must pray for the veil of darkness to be lifted off people so they can see and believe. We cannot argue people into faith.

Second, I'm increasingly skeptical of evolution as a mechanism of creation. There are a number of reasons. In truth, **evolution is not the best explanation of how the world came to be; it is the only reasoned explanation not dependent upon God!** Evolution is the best explanation of how the world came to be only when you eliminate God! Consequently, evolution is not necessarily the best way to explain the data; it's the only way for those who assume no involvement by God! That's the presupposition: *given no involvement or intervention by God, how did things come to be?* Evolutionists compile all their evidence and interpret all their data with that assumption.

Suppose we did the same thing with the assumption that it gets colder the farther north you travel. We could amass great evidence this side of the equator. However, as we traveled south of the equator we would begin collecting data that doesn't support our assumption. If we refused to reexamine our assumption we might come up with creative explanations. Cooler weather may be due to trade winds, geographical oddities and coincidences until finally, we may even question our compass and theorize that the compass encounters problems south of the equator. Hopefully, the accumulating data will force us to alter our understanding, but that

assumes there is no moral or spiritual component in our reasoning. That's the problem we encounter with the Theory of Evolution. The assumption of no God involved drives how experts look at the evidence. Therefore evidence pointing to intelligent design is ignored, dismissed or set aside. Anything discovered that bolsters a naturalistic progression is seized upon as important despite the truth that more scientists see incontrovertible evidence of intelligent design.

Furthermore, the **World Book Encyclopedia** estimates that there are around 2 millions species of animals today. Yet, as correctly noted in their article on creationism, there is not one single chain found in the fossil record where less complex life transitions into different and more complex life. In the fossil record, dogs are always dogs; horses are always horses. There's no transition of something to a horse. *To this day, there's not a single chain of fossils that shows the evolution of any species.* Yet there should be millions of fossils and thousands of chains.

Science is always tentative and changing, and in the past decade it has actually provided more confirmation that we are created than evidence we are coincidences. God's word, however, is unchanging. The Hebrew writer said, ***"By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command."***

The universe was not the only thing formed at God's command; you were too. You were planned by God and made in his image. You were created to reflect God and to be his letter to the world. We fail at that, don't we? Yet, God wants to reveal his goodness not only in creating you, but also by remaking you. The good news is that the God who made this world has not stopped working. He's here today ready to remake your life. He really loves you. In Christ his love and remaking work can be tasted right now. Whether you just graduated from school, or whether you just trying to make it through the day, your creator extends his loving hand to you. Don't push him away. Accept him and his hand. It will change everything for you.