



CREATION

&

EVOLUTION

COMPATIBLE OR IN CONFLICT?



JAY SEEGER

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I would like to dedicate this book to my wife and children; however, I have an even better idea.

I am actually dedicating this book to all those who will be reading it; but more importantly, I am reaffirming my dedication to Christ and expressing sincere gratitude to my wife, Amy, without whose support I would not be in full-time ministry today. She is my biggest cheerleader and I have matured significantly in my Christian walk as a result of her support and Spirit-led insights.

I am also very thankful for my son and daughter, Taylor and Tori, who are truly a gift from God and also a great inspiration and encouragement to me. I pray that God will continue to mature me on my journey as He enables me to be a protection and provider for them in all areas of their lives.

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PREFACE

It is ironic that I should write a preface for my own book. I seldom read prefaces when found in other books because I am too eager to get into the “nuts and bolts” as quickly as possible. However, the point I make in this brief introduction is poignant and foundational to the rest of the book so I am glad you are taking the time to review its message.

When judging art, it certainly is not a straightforward exercise based simply on the dimensions of the painting or the quantitative amounts of color used. It goes much deeper than that. These details might play some role in the final evaluation, but there are other factors that are much more crucial in making an overall assessment.

In a similar fashion, the creation/evolution controversy is not really just a matter of listing the facts on both sides of the argument and making a decision. If it were, the verdict would have been in a long time ago and all scientists would be in agreement. The fact that there are extremely intelligent and knowledgeable scientists in both camps is evidence that it can't just

be about the facts. There's something much broader and more fundamental lurking behind the scenes. I wish it were as simple as just reviewing the facts, because it would have been much easier to write this book. I would start out with chapter 1 being “The Origin of the Universe,” in which I would list the associated facts. Chapter 2



would be “The Origin of Life,” in which I would list those facts, and so on. What this book will provide is a much greater understanding of “the bigger picture” within which lies the key to truly making sense of the controversy.

WHAT’S IN IT FOR YOU?

I realize that not everyone is like me (and that’s a good thing), and how you respond to this book will largely be dependent upon who you are and where you’re coming from. You most likely fall into one of the following general categories:

Already There . . .

You may already firmly believe in the biblical account of creation and are hoping just to refine your understanding, strengthen your faith, and learn a bit more regarding how to defend your belief in the inspiration of Scripture. Given that there are even varying views among Christians regarding the creation account, I believe this book will help you sort through these different positions and be more confident as to which is the most biblically and scientifically sound point of view.

Not Quite Sure . . .

Maybe you lean toward the biblical account of creation, but aren’t fully convinced or don’t know where to start in defending your belief. This book is sure to greatly improve your understanding of the creation/evolution controversy and bolster your confidence in Genesis and Scripture as a whole.

Fairly Skeptical . . .

Perhaps you greatly doubt the biblical account of creation and feel that the theory of evolution is well-substantiated by science. You may, however, at least be open to hearing what the other side has to say so that you can make an even more informed judgment one way or the other. I give you a lot of credit for your intellectual integrity and pursuit of the truth. This book will definitely help you better understand the arguments for the Genesis creation account.

Seasoned Skeptic . . .

It just may be that your mind is made up and virtually nothing will change it. This book merely lays out the case for the accuracy of the biblical account of creation and enumerates various problems, both scientifically and

biblically, within evolution. If you find yourself in this category, I am honored that you are even taking the time to read this and truly pray there were more in your camp that were as open as you apparently are to examining something from the opposition. It is my hope that reading this book will cause you to reexamine your own beliefs and challenge you to think of things that you may have never considered before. It can only help.

Independent of which category you find yourself in, I appreciate your taking the time to read this book and pray that you will also make as much effort to read God's Word, which promises "*to never return void*" (Isaiah 55:11). He rewards those who diligently seek Him! (Hebrews 11:6).



CHAPTER ONE

IN THE BEGINNING: A GOOD PLACE TO START

It was 26 years ago that I found myself wandering through the halls of the Biology Department at the University of Wisconsin–Whitewater. I was in my fourth year of college, but it was my first year at Whitewater. I had attended John Brown University (a Christian college in Arkansas) for the first three years, studying mechanical engineering. As much as I enjoyed my time at John Brown, I decided to switch majors to physics, and John Brown only offered a minor in that field. I was faced with either giving up my interest in physics in order to stay at John Brown or change schools altogether. I opted for the latter and transferred to UW–Whitewater, which was much closer to where I lived in southeastern Wisconsin.

Why was I wandering the halls of the Biology Department? That’s where my story begins.

I was raised in a strong Christian home and believed everything I had ever been taught in church about the Bible. Even in college, I still had the same viewpoint and was not really challenged about any of my beliefs while attending a Christian college. However, transferring from a small Christian university (about 800 students at that time) to a fairly large state school (over 10,000 students) changed my life forever.

When I arrived at the state university, I found that all of my science professors (physics, geology, thermodynamics, etc.) were evolutionists and some were very vocal about their anti-Christian views. I assumed they had a lot of evidence for their beliefs; after all, they were scientists, right? I, on the other hand, was a very shy, soft-spoken undergrad student who believed in creation just the way the Bible teaches. It was then that I finally realized that although I knew *what* I believed, I didn’t know *why*. This was a very

uncomfortable position to be in, but like it or not, that's where I was. The life-changing element originated from the fact that for the first time in my life I was challenged to defend what I believed, specifically regarding the Genesis creation account and the authority of God's Word. During this time, it struck me that if the Book of Genesis was accurate and true in all it taught, there must be a lot of evidence to back it up. Conversely, if evolution was not true, theoretically there shouldn't be any real evidence for it. With this bit of logic forever imbedded in my gray matter, I began my own personal quest to find this "evidence for creation" and, more importantly, reasons to trust in the inspiration of Scripture. Sadly, most Christian students facing this challenge today end up going the opposite direction . . . walking away from their faith. I will share more about this trend throughout the rest of the book.

I wasn't able to find any of this information in the university library or even in the city public library. Fortunately (and looking back, I believe divinely orchestrated) a man from the church I attended in my hometown had already done a fair amount of research on this very subject while pursuing his PhD in medical physics. He was more than happy to lend me whatever I needed. I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of information I found, and my excitement grew with every page I turned.

At this point in my life, I was also very naïve. I had visions of grandeur that once I shared this newly found information, my professors would respond by saying something like, "Wow, I never knew about all this information; I guess the Bible's creation account really is true!" Needless to say, that's not the response I received. Looking back, being older and somewhat wiser, I have a much better understanding of their actual reaction, which was one of irritation, revulsion, and annoyance. I did not realize it at the time, but I was indirectly and unintentionally telling them that they had been completely wrong their entire lives about the origin of life and the universe. This was quite an offense to them, especially coming from a simple undergrad college student. It wasn't my intention to condescendingly point out that they were wrong about their views, but rather to draw their attention to the fact that there was a lot of scientific information in direct opposition to the positions they so confidently held, and that the alleged supportive evidence was extremely questionable or outright invalid. Unfortunately, because of the human psyche (fallen nature), they did not focus on the actual arguments, but simply reacted emotionally to the "attack" on their beliefs.

What does all this have to do with roaming the halls of the Biology Department? As a member of the Physics Club, each student was required to give a speech on some topic related to physics. I was extremely shy and hated speaking in front of anyone, for any reason, but had to think of some

topic to present during one of the meetings. The talks that were given by students usually lasted only ten minutes and were followed by a mere two or three questions. You didn't have to be an expert in the subject; you just had to do enough research in order to deliver your presentation. I initially considered doing a talk on lasers, because I thought they were fascinating and had recently read a few articles on the subject, but God had something else in mind. I had just started my research into evidence for supernatural creation and strongly felt that God was leading me to give a talk along those lines. I was scared to death knowing how controversial it would be and how much my professors would most likely challenge me, possibly making me look like a fool in front of all my peers. Nonetheless, I felt compelled that it was the right thing to do.

As I was preparing for my talk, I realized that if I did not address the alleged best evidence for evolution somewhere in my lecture, it would not be a very effective presentation. I had one problem: I had no idea what those evidences were! I needed to quickly remedy the situation, so I stopped in to see one of my physics professors. Here's a summary of our conversation (I'll never forget it):

Me: "Can you tell me what the best evidence is for evolution?"

Prof: "I don't know."

Me: "But you believe in evolution, don't you?"

Prof: "Of course."

Me: "But you don't know any of the evidences?"

Prof: "No."

Me: "So you just take other scientists' word for it?"

Prof: "Yes."

I was very surprised to hear his responses and they did not make sense to me. I was under the impression all scientists who believed in evolution and publicly proclaimed it would know *why* it was true. I realize that there will always be things that we accept as being true even though we ourselves can't personally defend them, but I thought it should be different with an issue as significant as the origin of life and the universe, especially coming from a PhD scientist. I understand this type of response much more clearly now and will elaborate on it shortly.

Not having had much success with my physics professor, I decided to ask my geology professor the same questions. I was confident he would know, because he not only believed in evolution, he was very vocal about it in his class. He promoted it often, ridiculing the Bible at the same time, getting the other students to laugh about how silly the Scriptures were.

Again, I received the same results; he didn't know either. He did, however, suggest that I ask the biology professors, because in his words, "They teach this stuff every day." Although I was deeply disappointed that he could not address the issue, it at least made sense to follow his advice and seek out someone from the Biology Department.

So I soon found myself wandering the hallways in the biology department. I did not have any biology classes while at Whitewater, so I wasn't quite sure where to go or whom to ask. It wasn't long before one of the professors noticed me walking aimlessly through the halls and asked if he could help me. I simply told him that I was going to be giving a talk on evolution and creation, and that I was trying to find out what the best evidences were for evolution. He didn't know either, but he said there were two other biology professors just down the hall and maybe they could help. Again, I was a bit surprised and disappointed, but at least he was being friendly and willing to assist me.

We got to their office and found the two of them sitting at the same desk working on something together. The professor who brought me there knocked on the open door to get their attention. They both turned around and one of them said, "Can we help you?" The professor at the door said, "This young man is trying to find out what the best evidences are for evolution." They immediately asked, in a very defensive tone, "Why do you want to know?" They did not know me from Adam (no pun intended), but I told them the same thing I had told the initial professor, that I was going to be giving a talk on evolution and creation and was trying to find out what the best evidences were for evolution. They immediately started arguing with me and it didn't take long before it was apparent that I was a believer in the Genesis creation account and a skeptic of evolution. At one point, I turned to the professor at the door to say something and when I turned back around, the two professors had gone back to working on whatever it was that they were doing when we first arrived. The professor who brought me there kindly said to them, "Can you at least answer his question?" to which they replied, in a very unkind tone, "We have nothing more to say to you!"

Their blunt response left me shocked, disappointed, embarrassed, confused, and disillusioned. I honestly did not understand the reason for their response. I didn't then, but I do now. My experience over the past 28 years has shown me that the vast majority of those who believe in evolution either don't know any real evidences or are afraid to state exactly what those evidences are for fear of having them easily rebutted. (By the way, I have another very powerful story regarding an additional confrontation with a college science professor that I share in chapter 14, so be sure to look for it

when you're there!) I also have come to realize that the creation/evolution debate is not really a scientific debate, but a spiritual issue.

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14; NIV).

Because of this truth, I have become much more sympathetic toward those who are skeptical of the creation account and Christianity in general. No matter how great the evidence is that we may present, they often just don't see it. We need to be Christlike examples when we confront others, being "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16; KJV). A key point is that if our beliefs are based on our own human reasoning, they are subject to change over time as we learn more and more and see things differently with each passing year. We will develop this thought much further throughout the rest of this book.

Romans 1:18–25 is a very powerful passage that contains a lot of insight related to this issue.

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator — who is forever praised. Amen (NIV).

Here are a few selections from this passage, including brief comments:

- ***who suppress the truth by their wickedness*** — It is actually man's wickedness that is causing the suppression of truth. When we think of "wickedness" we tend to focus only on those things that are more

morally vile and extreme, but it can also include simple disobedience to God and subconscious rejection of Him altogether.

- ***since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them*** — God has made Himself plain or clear to them, *so that men are without excuse*. No amount of rationalization (no matter how academic it may seem) will serve as an excuse before God.
- ***their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened***. In this state, it is no wonder that they have drawn erroneous conclusions regarding the origin of life and the universe (and that they are so often very resistant to things of a spiritual nature).
- ***although they claimed to be wise, they became fools*** — Many in the academic world are very vocal regarding how wise they are, but in God's eyes their reasoning is nothing short of foolishness. ("For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: 'He catches the wise in their craftiness' " 1 Corinthians 3:19; NIV.)
- ***Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts*** — God allowed them to wallow in the natural consequences of their actions, which made them even more entrenched in their depravity, leading to all sorts of sexual immorality.

Aldous Huxley (grandson of Thomas Huxley, who was nicknamed "Darwin's Bulldog") stated, "I had motives for not wanting the world to have meaning: consequently, assuming it had none, and was able without any difficulty to find reasons for this assumption. . . . The philosopher who finds no meaning in the world is not concerned exclusively with a problem in pure metaphysics; he is also concerned to prove there is no valid reason why he personally should not do as he wants to do. . . . For myself, as no doubt for most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation. The liberation we desired was simultaneously liberation from a certain political and economical system and liberation from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom."¹

- ***They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator*** — Most evolutionists today are much more enamored with the creation (i.e., the natural world) than they are with the *Creator*. We can spend untold amounts of time and energy fighting to save some bug that might go extinct or

trying to secure human rights for gorillas and apes, all the while aborting millions of human babies — and it doesn't even faze this nation. It can also lead to extreme forms of environmentalism. We should certainly take care of the world God has given to us, but it should not take precedence over our relationship with our Creator or each other.

Each person's worldview greatly affects the way they view "evidence." Consider the following two statements, each made by a very brilliant scientist:

Victor Stenger (American physicist, adjunct professor of philosophy, University of Colorado, and professor emeritus of physics and astronomy, University of Hawaii):

It is hard to conclude that the universe was created with a special, cosmic purpose for humanity.²

Owen Gingerich (Harvard astronomy professor and senior astronomer at the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory):

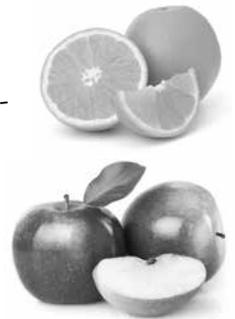
A common sense and satisfying interpretation of our world suggests the designing hand of a super-intelligence.³

Both of these men are looking at the same evidence yet coming up with diametrically opposing conclusions. The explanation lies not in the evidence, but in their dissimilar starting points, their worldviews, which will be explored further in following chapters.

With all this in mind, it is important to note that the remaining chapters of this book are not simply recitations of scientific facts supporting the biblical creation account or disproving evolution. It certainly does include those elements, but it is much broader in scope and will hopefully equip you to respond to this ongoing controversy that has such a profound effect on one's beliefs and subsequent ability to decipher truth from myth.

APPLES AND ORANGES: DEFINING EVOLUTION

Before we can have a meaningful discussion about the creation/evolution controversy, we need to briefly define our terms. I am reminded of the skeptic who felt the Bible could not possibly be true, if for no other reason than the fact that it talks about the Israelites wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, the whole time carrying around the ark (presumably Noah's) on their shoulders! The issue clears itself up after we see from the context that the ark being referred to was not Noah's ark,



which would certainly stretch the imagination beyond reasonable limits, but the ark of the covenant, two completely different things.

The word “evolution” is used in many different contexts with a variety of intended meanings. *The Oxford English Dictionary*, which is the standard reference for word usage in the English language, enumerates 12 different definitions for “evolution,” some of which are as follows:

- unfolding, opening out, emergence
- growth according to inherent tendencies
- rise or origination of anything by natural development
- the process of developing, or working out in detail, what is implicitly or potentially contained in an idea or principle
- biological development
- formation of the heavenly bodies
- origin of species

We even speak of the “evolution of the Corvette,” but it has no real connection to biological evolution, especially since in this case, each model was carefully and purposely designed and crafted by intelligent automotive engineers. On the other hand, “evolution” as taught in the public schools and state universities has no intrinsic purpose or design, as evidenced in the following quotes:

In the evolutionary pattern of thought there is no longer either need or room for the supernatural. The earth was not created: it evolved. So did all the animals and plants that inhabit it, including our human selves, mind and soul as well as brain and body. So did religion.⁴

Let me summarize my views on what modern evolutionary biology tells us loud and clear . . . there are no gods, no purposes, no goal-directed forces of any kind.⁵

For our purposes, we will be focusing on the generally accepted meaning used by most educational institutions and academics, which is along the following lines.



First, a fairly complex definition:

Biological (or organic) evolution is change in the properties of populations of organisms or groups of such populations, over the course of generations. The development, or ontogeny, of an individual organism is not considered evolution: individual organisms do not evolve. The changes in populations that are considered evolutionary are those that are “heritable” via the genetic material from one generation to the next. Biological evolution may be slight or substantial; it embraces everything from slight changes in the proportions of different forms of a gene within a population, such as the alleles that determine the different human blood types, to the alterations that led from the earliest organisms to dinosaurs, bees, snapdragons, and humans.⁶

Second, a much simpler definition:

Common ancestry and descent with modification.⁷

I think we’d all agree that the second definition is a bit easier to comprehend. It basically states that all life has descended from a common ancestor through numerous modifications (and implies a time frame of multiplied millions of years).

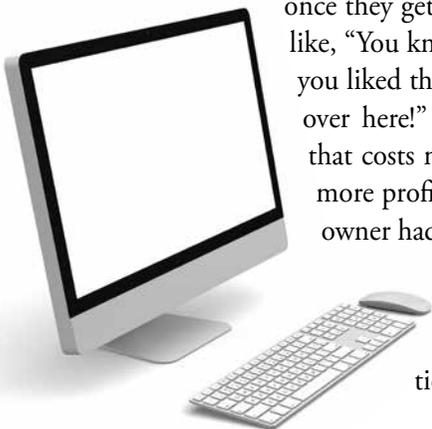
YE OLDE “BAIT AND SWITCH”

A number of years ago there was a sales technique that was fairly effective, but also very deceptive. It was called the “bait and switch” technique. It worked along the following lines. A retail store would advertise an incredible deal on a specific product, let’s say a flat panel computer monitor. The consumer, seeing the ad and feeling it is an unbelievable buy, rushes to the store immediately, not wanting to miss out on the incredible bargain. That’s the “bait.” However,

once they get to the store, the salesperson says something like, “You know, we just ran out of those monitors, but if you liked that one, you’re really going to love this model over here!” after which he shows the customer a unit that costs more, is not as high quality, and makes a lot more profit for the store. That’s the “switch.” The store owner had no intention of selling what was advertised.

Fortunately, this technique is now illegal.

Unfortunately, something similar is used (intentionally or unintentionally) by evolutionists when it comes to discussing evolution.



In the context of our discussion, the “bait” is when students are told that evolution is an absolute fact, and the “switch” occurs when it comes time to discuss the actual evidence. When they state that evolution is a fact or that it is beyond questioning, they are referring to the belief that non-living chemicals produced a living single-celled organism that learned how to replicate itself and eventually produced every other life-form on this planet, including people. (We call this concept “molecules-to-man” evolution. I highly recommend using this term when discussing evolution with others.) However, when they speak of the undeniable evidence for this dogmatic belief, they focus on the simpler, broader definition of evolution that merely refers to “change” or “modification” of various species. The problem is that while these changes are actually very real (and not denied by creationists), they are not the kind of change required by the molecules-to-man of evolution. We’ll discuss this in much greater detail in chapter 6.

One piece of advice when discussing the creation/evolution controversy with a skeptic is to first ask what they mean by “evolution.” Too often what happens is that the skeptic thinks that any kind of change in the living world represents evidence of evolution. In their mind, change = evolution. When you state that you don’t believe in evolution, they think that you are denying “change” and conclude that you are crazy and in complete denial of reality. This situation is quite understandable, because at that point you are talking about two different things! You think of evolution as being a single-celled organism spontaneously arising from nonliving chemicals and subsequently changing into every other life on the planet through a series of undirected accidental mistakes (mutations) and natural selection. They, however, are simply focusing on changes in living organisms, which as a matter of fact do occur and have been observed. So in their mind, for you to reject evolution is to deny real-life changes that scientists have observed and confirmed over and over. Therefore, make it clear that you are talking about the descent of all living creatures from a common ancestor, which itself was the result of the spontaneous appearance of a single-celled organism from nonliving chemicals. That should save one or both of you from wanting to pull your hair out! It will also aid in having a potentially fruitful conversation.

THE “EVOLUTION OF EVOLUTION”: FROM WHENCE DID IT COME?

Now that we’ve defined “evolution” let’s briefly discuss “from whence it came.”

Just after the creation of Adam and Eve, the entire earth’s population (a whopping total of two) would have been considered “creationists.” They

probably didn't belong to any local creationist organizations or attend any conferences, but they were definitely devout believers in creation. Today, with a slightly larger population (just over 7 billion), this is not the situation. Although many polls indicate that a fairly high percentage of the general public believes that God created life and the universe, it is safe to say that many do not, including a fairly high percentage of scientists.

So where did the idea of evolution come from? One of the biggest misconceptions about evolution is that it was "invented" by Charles Darwin back in the latter 1800s. While it is true that he published his book *The Origin of Species* in 1859, which aided greatly in the popularization of evolution, the concept of evolution had been around long, long before his time.

As far as we can tell, organic evolution was postulated by the Greeks as early as the seventh century B.C. It is possible that Greek philosophers borrowed/modified their evolutionary ideas from the Hindus, who believed in a state of perfection called "nirvana" that was achieved by souls transforming from one animal to another.

Darwin's writings were greatly influenced by his predecessors, as is evidenced in the following quote:

Evolution, meaning the origin of new species by variation from ancestor species, as an explanation for the state of the living world, had been proclaimed before Darwin by several biologists — thinkers, including the poet Johann Wolfgang Goethe in 1795, Jean-Baptiste de Lamarck in 1809, Darwin's grandfather, the ebullient physician-naturalist-poet-philosopher Erasmus Darwin, and in Darwin's time anonymously by Robert Chambers in 1844.⁸

What can be said about Charles Darwin is that he was the central figure responsible for popularizing evolutionary concepts that eventually led to the modern models of evolution, primarily through the writing and publishing of *The Origin of Species* in 1859. Richard Dawkins (one of the world's leading evolutionists — whom we will further reference later in this book) stated that "Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist."⁹ The point being that prior to his time, evolution lacked any substantive academic credibility. (Creation scientists and Bible-believing theologians believe that it still lacks credibility and we will spend the rest of the book developing this very point.) It is interesting to note, however, that even with the publication of *The Origin of Species*, the ideas put forth by Darwin were not initially accepted by the scientific community as a whole, much less the church.

The Scopes Trial

In 1925 (66 years after the publication of *The Origin of Species*) the public school system in the United States was still teaching origins based primarily on the biblical account of creation. It was in this year that one of the most famous trials in American history occurred. If you want to get a fairly good picture of what actually happened in this trial, you could watch the movie/play *Inherit the Wind*, with just one caveat: conclude just the opposite of most of what is presented. This play was not intended to be an historical account, but most viewers are not aware of that and assume that they are “learning a bit of history.” It is much more like propaganda and indoctrination.¹⁰

The phenomenon of “learning truth” via movies is all too common in our day, including among Christians. Think of how many people learned about the history of the Jews, not from reading the Old Testament, but from watching Charlton Heston as Moses in the epic film *The Ten Commandments*.

The famous Scopes Trial (nicknamed the “Monkey Trial”) centered around the alleged violation of the Butler Act, which made it “unlawful for any teacher in any of the . . . public schools of the state . . . to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals.” Contrary to popular belief, it was not a trial about the validity of either creation or evolution, but simply whether or not the teaching of Mr. Scopes had actually violated this law.



John Scopes

John Scopes, a high school coach who happened to have substituted for the biology teacher during the last few weeks of the school year, was accused of teaching evolution. He was convicted and later acquitted on a technicality. There are numerous elements to this historical event that are significant, but I wish to point out only a few.¹¹

William Jennings Bryan, prosecuting attorney, foolishly agreed to be cross-examined by defense attorney Clarence Darrow (an agnostic) regarding his belief in the Bible and its associated miracles. Bryan should have seen this as being clearly irrelevant to the reason for the trial, but was apparently temporarily naïve and took the stand,

nonetheless. One factor that aided in Bryan's compliance was that Darrow agreed in turn to be cross-examined by Bryan regarding his personal agnostic and evolutionary views. Both men were great orators, but Bryan did a fair amount of damage to his own cause when responding to Darrow's question about the meaning of the "days" in Genesis 1. Darrow asked if Bryan believed that God created everything in six literal days, and Bryan responded by claiming that the Bible never asserts such a notion. When further asked about the phrases "evening and morning were the first day" and "evening and morning were the second day," etc., he responded with "I do not see that there is any necessity for constructing the words 'the evening and the morning,' as meaning necessarily a twenty-four-hour day." This opened the floodgates to reinterpreting the Bible based upon whatever the current scientific theories are, undermining the authority of Scripture. Chapter 10 discusses the details behind what a "day" actually means in Genesis 1.

At this point, it seemed to at least some of those in attendance that there was reason to doubt the inspiration of the Bible and the historical nature of many of its miraculous events, because Darrow had his chance to attack these claims. But Bryan would have his chance to show the weakness of Darrow's agnostic and humanistic views as agreed, right? Wrong. Darrow, in an unprecedented masterful move, actually asked the judge to instruct the jury to find John Scopes (his own client) guilty of teaching the descent of man from apes, thus eliminating the need for Bryan to cross-examine his own views.

The Butler Act was eventually repealed in 1967 (*Epperson v. the State of Tennessee*). Currently, the only legally permissible view allowed in the public school science classroom is the random and purposeless process of evolution. (See chapter 12 for further details on the battle within the public school system.)

It is interesting to note that in Darwin's day, the predominant teaching was that of biblical creation, which prompted him to state in *The Origin of Species*:

A fair result can be obtained only by fully stating and balancing the facts and arguments on both sides of each question.¹²

Darwin felt that it was unjust to only present one side. Ironically, today the tables have been turned and we still have only one side being presented, but it is the Darwinian view that shares the stage with no one.

WHY ALL THE FUSS? — "LET'S JUST FOCUS ON JESUS"

So why does the whole creation/evolution issue even matter? Aren't there more important things to be concerned about, like abortion, homosexuality,

divorce, world hunger, and racism? Isn't pleasing God and telling others about Jesus all that really matters?

If we can't trust the Bible regarding what it tells us about the beginning, how can we be so confident that we can trust any other part, including those passages concerning Jesus? Put another way, if we can't trust the Bible's history, how can we trust it concerning spiritual matters? The trustworthiness of the Bible's spiritual truths are premised on its historical accuracy. I heard a story of a mother and her nine-year-old daughter who were in church one week and heard the pastor tell the congregation, "You can't take Genesis literally; it doesn't really mean what it says." Afterward, the young girl sincerely and innocently asked her mother, "If we can't trust Genesis, when does God start telling the truth?" Wow — how powerful! That's a good question.

Virtually every major doctrine we hold as Christians is founded directly or indirectly in the Book of Genesis.

- *The Doctrine of Sin.* What is sin? Well, God created Adam and Eve and they were perfect, but they disobeyed God. That was sin (cf. Romans 5:12).
- *The Doctrine of Death.* Why is there death in the world? Because God created Adam and Eve, they were perfect, but they disobeyed God and that brought death and a curse into God's perfect world. Death is the direct consequence of sin (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:21–22).
- *Marriage.* Why is marriage one man with one woman? That's hotly debated in this country today and around the world. The answer: because God created Adam and Eve, and He said it was to be one man and one woman for life (cf. Matthew 19:4–6)!
- *Clothing.* Why do we wear clothes, other than it gets cold out once in a while, depending on where you live? Because God created Adam and Eve, they were perfect, but they disobeyed God and that brought death and a Curse into God's perfect world. Clothing was just a temporal covering for their sin (cf. Genesis 3:21).
- *Work.* Why do we work? Because God created Adam and Eve, and told Adam to till the ground, to work the land. He was commanded to do this even before he sinned. Work is a good thing . . . ordained by God, but it got a lot harder after sin entered into the picture (cf. Genesis 2:15, 3:18–19).

- *The Last Adam.* Jesus is referred to as the “Last Adam.” If the first Adam wasn’t real, what does that say about the last Adam (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:45)?
- *The Gospel Message.* What is the gospel message? We’ll cover that shortly.

RESISTANT TO THE MESSAGE

If you were to take a stroll through an impoverished neighborhood and hand out free lottery tickets or \$100 bills, you would not likely run into any resistance from the local residents.

Likewise, if you visited a beach on a very hot summer day, giving away free bottled water, you would be surprised if your offers were not well-received. You might also think that if you approached a gospel-preaching church, offering a free creation seminar, you would be enthusiastically welcomed with open arms. Sadly, all too often this is not the case. Why is this true?



There are a number of reasons that this has become an all too common occurrence, including the following:

- Some pastors and church leaders have observed creation presentations that were overly dogmatic, condescending and/or arrogant, and not very gracious.
- Some have observed creation presentations that were so deep and highly technical that it just didn’t seem appropriate for a general church audience.
- Some feel that the Church should focus on discussing spiritual issues, while science education is for the school systems to handle.
- Some feel the whole issue is too controversial, too divisive, and overall not all that important. They believe we should just be focusing on Jesus.
- Some have been persuaded to accept evolution as a given and subsequently felt compelled to look at Genesis very differently (generally not as literal history and sometimes even not as authoritative or inspired).

The first two concerns are issues directly related to the specific presenter and not the message itself. We all know that you can deliver the right message in the wrong way and also the wrong message in the right way. The last two

concerns have much more to do with misconceptions about science and the Bible than any actual issues with the message itself. We'll take a minute to delve a little deeper into these two concerns.

SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND ~~STATE~~ SCIENCE

Astronomy, geology, biology, anthropology; if you are hearing about these subjects, you certainly aren't in church, are you? These are areas of science, which is what we learn about in school, right? That's the feeling of many within the Church today, including many pastors. I would agree that if the Bible doesn't talk about a certain subject, then we shouldn't make too big of a deal out of it. You have probably heard people proclaim that "the Bible is not a science textbook!" They're right! My response to this is that I'm glad it isn't, because science books have to be constantly updated and rewritten as we make new discoveries! What we do find in the Bible, however, is a framework for properly understanding science. In reality, the fact that the Bible is true is what even makes science possible! (Otherwise, there would be no reason to expect uniformity or consistency in the laws of nature. If fact, you wouldn't even have a reason to expect to discover "laws" at all. We do not have time to develop this further in this particular book.) Make no mistake, however, the Bible does address these areas.

Astronomy. Psalm 33:6 (NIV) states, "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth." This is a commentary on astronomy. God created the universe, including the stars and galaxies. We don't expect that natural processes can generate these objects. We also read in 1 Corinthians 15:41 (NKJV), "There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory." When this verse was written (~ A.D. 54), we had very limited knowledge of the heavens and most stars looked virtually identical — just small specks of light off in the distance. The Apostle Paul was actually stating something that seemed to go against "common knowledge," that is, everyone could see for themselves that the stars were basically all the same, with a few being a bit brighter or dimmer than others. With today's advanced technology, we now know that each star does appear to be unique! The Bible teaches us about astronomy!

Geology. Genesis 6:17 (NIV) states, "I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish." This helps us better understand what we actually observe when we are looking at the earth's geology. As a matter of fact, we see numerous sedimentary layers containing

billions of fossils all over the earth. Those are just the raw facts. How did they get there? We weren't there to see it so we have to guess. On one hand, we might guess that they formed by the same slow, gradual processes we see today. However, the more we examine this hypothesis the more highly improbable it seems. On the other hand, we could consider the Genesis flood account and conclude that they were produced catastrophically in a relatively short period of time during this monumental event. After all, that's exactly what we would expect to see if there truly was a flood as described in Genesis. The Bible helps us understand geology!

Biology. Genesis 1:24 (NIV) states, "And God said, 'Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds.'" This helps us understand the diversity of animals and other life forms on the planet today. We see a great variety, but creatures are always reproducing after their same kind, just as the Bible describes. This is obviously contrary to current evolutionary thinking, which believes that one kind eventually changes into something very different. Once again, the Bible gives us a framework with which to better understand the world around us. Its explanatory power far exceeds that of evolutionary models.

Anthropology. Genesis 2:7 (NIV) states, "Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." This precludes mankind evolving from an apelike creature over millions of years. Regarding Eve, Genesis 2:21–22 (NKJV) tells us, "And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man." This completely goes against evolutionary models, which really struggle to explain the origin of the sexes, male and female, which we will touch on a bit later. Yes, the Bible even addresses anthropology!

These are just a few of the numerous examples where the Bible directly addresses major areas of science and comments on the origin and history of life and the universe. Since the Bible addresses these areas, as Christians, we should understand them as being wholly inspired by God and not simply relegate teaching in these areas to the educational system, especially not the state school system, which eliminated God and the Bible in the early 1960s. Lest anyone misunderstand me, I am not recommending that we teach particle physics or cell biology in church; I am simply referring to understanding the "big picture," which largely involves something we call "historical science" (a point to be further developed later in the book).

A CONTROVERSIAL MESSAGE

Some assume that because controversy exists when considering the topic of creation, there is ultimately no way of knowing the truth. This has led many to respond by saying something like, “Why does it really matter how or when God created everything, as long as we believe that He is ultimately the ‘Creator’? Let’s just focus on Jesus — that’s all that really matters.” I cannot tell you how many times I have heard similar statements from many well-meaning pastors, church leaders, and laypeople. In fact, just recently the pastor of a large local evangelical church stated from the pulpit, “Whether a day is a thousand years or however long it took doesn’t really matter. We just need to get to the gospel where it really counts.”

In my over 26 years of ministry experience, I have found that most churches resistant to speaking out on creation from the pulpit are hesitant primarily because of how they feel this issue is perceived by others, inside and outside the church. In particular, they feel that if they take a stance on the creation account, it will appear as if their church rejects science and is out of touch with reality, still living in the dark ages. The Ben Stein movie *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed* depicts this phenomenon within the scientific community. Those who would dare question evolution (let alone speak of biblical creation) are more often than not castigated, ostracized, and relegated to ranks of the “unwashed masses.” The resultant effect is that many scientists who question evolution remain very quiet about it throughout their professional careers. Thankfully, many are taking their chances and speaking out in spite of the significant threat to their livelihood.

There’s an interesting corollary passage in Scripture, found in John 12:42–43 (NIV). “Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. *But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue;* for they loved praise from men more than praise from God” (emphasis added). These “believers” were too worried about getting or maintaining the approval of those around them, particularly the academics of their day. Sounds all too familiar with what we see today. There truly is “nothing new under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

Many church leaders are also very aware that there are other views (held by some highly respected Christians) that allow Genesis to be interpreted in a way such that modern astronomy, geology, and biology can be accommodated. This is very comforting to them, knowing that they are in “good company” if they directly or indirectly teach one of these views, or ignore origins altogether, implying that (a) it doesn’t really matter, (b) everyone has to decide for themselves, or (c) you can’t really know for sure. In addition,

they often ask, “Why risk causing division over something that shouldn’t really matter that much?” There is seldom any challenge from the congregation because of the general pervasiveness of biblical illiteracy.

The typical Sunday morning attendee has similar reasoning that the “solution” most likely involves some sort of compromise and that it ultimately isn’t all that relevant to begin with. I do not intend to paint too broad of a stroke here, implying that there are not many diligent students of Scripture within the Church, because there certainly are. However, in general, the level of biblical literacy continues to decline. Too many Christians obtain their beliefs based on what they hear from Church leaders, read in a book by a Christian author, or see in a Christian video, as opposed to coming from personal knowledge of God’s Word through the aid of the Holy Spirit. This is a challenge I face in my own life. I truly enjoy reading what others have written and watching well-produced Christian DVDs, but I continually have to make sure that I am personally spending time in God’s Word, so that I do not go too far astray.

After speaking with one pastor regarding a potential engagement, he stated that it just wouldn’t fit in with his church’s plans right then. I told him that I completely understood and asked about scheduling something for the more distant future, such as anytime within the next year or two. Sensing from him that he really didn’t even want to schedule anything at all, but not having the courage to be direct, I wasn’t surprised when he responded by saying that it really doesn’t fit their “model.” I politely requested permission to ask a few additional questions in order to help me better understand where he was coming from and the general mindset of the church leadership. He graciously agreed, so I proceeded.

My main question was in regard to the fact that surveys have shown that over 60 percent of Christian students end up walking away from their faith before leaving college.¹³ I said that when the students in his youth ministry enter college, they will very likely be confronted by highly intelligent professors who will tell them that the Bible is certainly not the Word of God, being full of errors and contradictions, particularly with its mythical creation account and global flood story, both of which science has utterly disproved. They will also be told that Christianity is just one of many religions, which are all ultimately of human origin, and that Christianity is actually to blame for most of the world’s atrocities. I then asked how his church was preparing them to deal with these types of faith-shaking confrontations. His answer: “We’re not, we’re just telling the students about Jesus.” I was a bit surprised, but I thought to myself, “Okay, now he’s going to say something like, ‘You

know, maybe it would be a good idea to have you come in and speak to the students about these issues.’” Sadly, he was still not interested.

We often hear things that sound great on the surface, but when analyzed a bit further, we realize they just don’t measure up. One example is that “the facts of nature are like a 67th book of the Bible.” It would seem logical to think that if God created the universe and everything in it, then the “facts of nature” should be just as true as the “facts” revealed in His written Word. I would actually agree that the facts of nature are just as true as God’s revealed Word, but this can often be misleading. The problem is that we don’t always know what the “facts” of nature are. You may be aware that “facts” in and of themselves are devoid of meaning and must all be interpreted by some type of filter in order to have any real meaning (e.g., a filter such as a “worldview” or presuppositions in the case of origins, ethics, and morality).

Fairly often various scientists will have diametrically opposing opinions regarding the exact same “facts.” Then there’s the whole question of how we even determine whether or not something should be considered as “fact.” To all of that, add the realization that we are all mortal humans who were not there at the beginning, we make mistakes, sometimes even lie, and are studying a fallen, cursed world (which is not the way God originally created it), all of which makes determining “scientific facts” about the past a bit tricky at best. Therefore, elevating the “facts of nature” to the same level as God’s written Word would not be the wisest thing to do and can potentially be very dangerous.

Another statement that at first blush sounds laudable and is directly related to the topic at hand is: “Let’s just focus on Jesus.” What Christian in their right mind would argue with that? I certainly wouldn’t, but I would also want to explore it a bit deeper and not simply accept its usual intended meaning, which in the context of this book is, “Don’t get all caught up in debating what the Genesis creation account actually means, just focus on telling others about Jesus.”

My response, which I work on conveying in a very gracious manner, is that if we are going to focus on Jesus and the gospel, let’s look into it a bit deeper. The first question is always, “Who is Jesus?” The normal response is, “He’s the Son of God, the Savior of the world.” I agree, but long before He was our Savior, He was our Creator (cf. John 1; Colossians 1; Hebrews 1). If we are truly going to focus on Jesus, we’d better understand who He is, as well as the foundation for the gospel message.

I usually continue with a series of semi-rhetorical questions (listed below with their typical associated answers):

“What is the gospel message?” — That Jesus died, was buried, and rose again.

“Why did He die?” — To pay for the sins of the world.

“Why did He have to do that?” — Because we are sinners.

“What is sin?” — Disobedience to God.

“Why do we sin?” — Because Adam sinned and it affected all of us.

“Who is Adam?” — He was the first human created by God in the garden.

“All right, so we’re sinners, but why did Jesus have to die?” — Because Adam’s sin brought death into the world and the penalty for sin is death.

“So then the gospel is directly related to the creation account?” — Yes, I guess so.

After thinking through this line of reasoning, there is a general consensus that the gospel is related to the creation account, but most people don’t make that connection on their own.

It is interesting to note that Jesus Himself taught that Adam and Eve have been here from the beginning of creation, which has huge implications for the creation/evolution controversy, but we’ll touch on that further in chapter 10.

Jesus also said, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God” (Matthew 22:29; NIV). It has been my own personal experience that whenever I am wrong about a biblically related issue it is generally because I don’t truly understand God’s Word, at least not to the extent I should. Pastors have been given the responsibility of teaching God’s Word to their congregations. I personally encourage each one to study the Genesis creation account and come up with their own personal, Holy Spirit–directed conviction of Scripture, rather than relying on the supposed expertise of other Christians who claim authority in some area of science and teach that the Bible is perfectly compatible with current thinking in modern origins science.

Another pertinent quote of Jesus is, “If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?” (John 5:46–47; NIV). The words of Moses in Genesis 1 and 2 are no less inspired than those of Jesus in the New Testament.

Lastly, Jesus warns us in John 3:12 (NIV), “I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?” While the Bible does not give us all the details in modern “scientific lingo,” it is still completely accurate in all that it asserts and can be used confidently as a framework for understanding science and origin issues today!

When the church doesn’t address Genesis specifically, it is telling the congregation (the Body of Christ in general) that since this issue is so difficult to grasp that not even pastors can really figure it out, there’s no way the average layperson has a chance. And since it is apparently so challenging to sort out, it must not be very important to God, otherwise He would have worded it differently, but He didn’t, so we shouldn’t really worry about it or bother with it. This reveals a very low view of the inspiration of Scripture.

It all comes down to a choice each of us has to make. Do we trust God and His inspired, inerrant Word or do we yield to the temporal ideas of many of today’s secular scientists, who do not have a biblical worldview nor do they have a proper reverence for God and His Holy Word?

It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man (Psalm 118:8; KJV).

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