

CHAPTER ONE

STRATEGIC INSTRUCTION

A heated battle is being fought throughout the world today. Unlike military combat fought with the armament of guns and missiles, this battle is waged using powerful ideas as weapons. Unlike civil unrest demonstrated in public, this conflict is played out in classrooms, churches, and universities. And unlike soldiers who train via marksmanship and physical exercise, troops in this war must be prepared through prayer, patience, and remarkable wisdom.

The battle is over the truth of the origin of life and the universe. It's a battle about beginnings — about identifying the birthplace of everything that exists.

Yet this all occurred some time ago. So why is it important today to understand how it all began? In short, knowing the truth about our origin is essential because of how it affects our understanding of human nature. Our attitudes toward ourselves and toward other people, and the way we treat them, are profoundly influenced by where we believe we came from. If people are actually just the end result of billions of years of chance biochemical reactions, as evolution proposes, then the inherent value of human life is very low. People can justifiably view themselves and others as no different or better than any other animal.

But the truth is that people were specifically designed by an intelligent Creator, with care and attention to each cell, organ system, and individual person. Human beings possess far more inherent value and complexity than any other object that could possibly be designed or built.

The truth about our origin also has a great impact on our concept of God and on our interaction with Him. If humans are, as evolution says, an accidental by-product of biological mutations, it's a strong argument against the existence of any superhuman power or intelligence.

But in truth we are actually the craftsmanship of an astounding God who planned the universe, humans, and all other creatures. This is a person whom everyone simply must learn about and get to know.

We are in a war — evolution's war against the truth about creation. The stakes are extremely high, and virtually every person on the planet is at risk. It's a war which touches on people's most inner convictions. It's a war where passions flare. It's a war over life — physical life, spiritual life, and even eternity.

WHY ANOTHER BOOK?

The war against evolution is being fought by people from all walks of life: students, professors, scientists, teachers, writers, parents, and pastors. The most important soldiers in this war are people like you and me — individual Christians who take advantage of opportunities to speak up and explain the truth about creation.

Yet, mounting an effective defense and answering people's legitimate questions can be very challenging. The issues are complex, and often demand that we draw upon information from the fields of cosmology (study of the universe), geology, relativity, chemistry, physics, statistics, biology, genetics, paleontology, and archaeology — information that few Christians have readily available. Too often we neglect to speak up or to take a stand because we feel inadequate to defend the truth. But this need not continue!

The objective of this book is to give Christians easy access to the most useful resources to defend the reality about creation. Used in conversations, presentations, and research papers, this book will help make the explanation of the truth more complete, compelling, and convincing. It will also help to greatly reduce the necessary preparation time.

ORGANIZED RESOURCES

A great wealth of information has been written on the vast subject of creation and evolution. My intention has been to survey the information, identify the major concepts, and provide the best supporting evidence available. *Creative Defense* organizes information on several levels:

- **Chapters.** Each chapter contains a group of related concepts.
- **Concepts.** The major themes of the creation/evolution debate.

- **Rationale.** An intentionally brief discussion of the reasoning and explanation behind the concepts.
- **Evidence.** Quotes from recognized authorities that lend credibility to the concepts and rationale.

Please note the following information with regard to the selection and use of quotes and references:

- Every effort has been made to include evidence from the most recognized leaders in their fields, published in the most widely respected scientific journals.

- Some quotes and references are older than those commonly used on other topics. This is intentional. First, they help to provide an important historical perspective on the subjects. They also represent conclusions of some of the best thinkers and researchers of all time. And in some cases, they present the only evidence available on certain themes.

- Most quotes contained herein could be included under more than one concept heading, although in most cases I have limited them to the single one most useful. However, a few quotes are so beneficial that they are included under more than one heading.

- When an asterisk precedes the quotation, the information enclosed is a direct quote from the publication. If there is no asterisk, the information listed is a summary of the publication.

- Care has been taken to assure accuracy of the quotes and references. Any corrections or additional resource recommendations would be gladly received.

CREATING YOUR PRESENTATION

Through excellent preparation you can take full advantage of your opportunities to speak out. The general principles for planning a written or spoken presentation should always be followed, including these:

- Start well in advance.
- Thoroughly research your subject and select the concepts to present.
- Create an outline for your presentation.
- Have others edit your writing or critique your speech.

In addition, a paper or lecture on creation will be more successful if the following special guidelines are also used:

1. Be appropriate for your audience.

Become familiar with the people you are going to address. Your presentation must be appropriate to their level of understanding and to their felt needs. Otherwise, they may not clearly comprehend your message, or they may disregard your address as irrelevant. It is especially important in advance to know your audience's understanding of:

- *Creation.* If your audience is chiefly made up of people who already trust in the biblical account of creation, then your aim will likely be to increase their understanding, answer specific doubts, and enhance their own ability to communicate the truth. But if they are uncertain about creation, or are committed to evolution, then your approach must be quite different. You'll likely need to first describe the concept of creation, explain its evidence, and show the flaws in evolution.

- *God.* If your audience already has faith in Jesus, or at least in the concept of a personal God, then you can more readily quote the Bible as evidence, for they already recognize its authority. But if your audience does not have this foundation, then you will likely need to back up and first explain a rationale for faith. Then you can more effectively refer to the Bible as reliable evidence.

- *Science.* Discussions surrounding creation and evolution regularly involve reference to some concepts in science. Be certain to tailor your presentation to the scientific understanding of your audience. They may, for example, already know how to use exponential numbers or how to calculate probability. But if they don't, you'll likely need to first explain these concepts if you're going to use them as evidence in your presentation.

By understanding the makeup of your audience, you can select and present the most appropriate concepts, and do so in a way they will best understand.

2. Be aware of bias.

A major obstacle to accepting the truth about creation comes from each person's bias. *Bias* means our tendency to find what we first decided we want to find, rather than what's actually present. It means our inclination to see what we really desire to see, rather than observing the trust about what actually exists.

Bias is everywhere. For example, many people still erroneously believe that whites make better students, and blacks make better athletes,

or that men should be pilots and women should be flight attendants. Bias keeps people from seeing the truth.

Investigating ideas of creation and evolution tends to magnify people's bias even more sharply. Some individuals don't want to be confronted with a truth that may force them to rethink their entire perspective on God, history, science, and the value of human life. They find it easier to just dig in their heels, hanging onto ideas that have little support, rather than to look at the facts and reconsider.

Help your audience overcome the obstacle of bias. In your presentation, it is important to:

- Point out that each person has an individual bias.
- Ask them to identify their bias regarding creation versus evolution.
- Challenge them to disregard their bias and reconsider the evidence.
- Ask them to be willing, if necessary, to change their views about creation.

Denying reality has its costs. We may dispute the existence of gravity or electricity on the grounds that we cannot see them. But they will nevertheless make us fall or give us a jolt. Similarly, clinging to false ideas about origins causes people to totally miss some of the most remarkable aspects of life. Be certain to help your audience to recognize and overcome the power of individual bias.

3. Work within the allocated space and time.

Your presentation will almost always need to fit within a certain number of minutes or pages. Know in advance what is your allotment. This way, you can adjust the length of your discussion so that you cover the material successfully. Creation is an extremely broad subject. If you do not have much time or space to work with, it is usually better to focus a presentation on a small component, such as one or two key concepts, rather than attempt to address the entire subject.

4. Use visual aids.

In our media-driven culture, your ability to convince an audience may depend more upon the quality of your presentation than on the quality of your arguments. Employ creative visual aids such as photos, illustrations, and charts to draw attention, add vividness, and make your presentation easier to understand and remember. Make full use of the innumerable ready-to-use visual aids then can be downloaded via the Internet. The extra time invested will likely lead to a greater impact upon your audience.

WATCH YOUR ATTITUDE

Be very clear about what you wish to accomplish. Certainly we intend to help people understand the truth about creation. We want them to be convinced of the facts, and to pass on these truths to others. But there is much more at heart. We want them to also understand and personally trust in the Creator.

Attitude is essential. Our objective is to ultimately point people toward Jesus — not simply to win an argument. An audience has a keen way of knowing whether or not the speaker or writer is really concerned about them, or is just trying to dominate the discussion. If they believe it's the latter, they will often dismiss the speaker, in spite of his or her skill. For this reason, Peter reminds us:

But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence (1 Pet. 3:15, NASB).

Gentleness and reverence is particularly essential, for some people's strongest passions are kindled through debates over creation and evolution. By maintaining a content, honest, and caring attitude — in spite of others' arguments and accusations — you will earn respect and credibility.

So pray about your opportunities, that both your temperament and your words will be trustworthy, that your audience will be receptive and open-minded, and that the Holy Spirit will be at work. These notes and quotes, joined with a healthy attitude and prayerful preparation, will help you to motivate people to both understand the truth about creation and to personally trust the Creator.