

CREATION OR EVOLUTION: DOES IT REALLY MATTER?



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Drugs, depression, premarital sex, broken families, homosexuality—today's youth are faced with so many urgent problems, so many challenges to their faith. Why add yet another issue to the ones that beset the church today?

Anyway, isn't the creation-evolution debate just a peripheral issue? We're here by whatever means, so let's just deal with the immediate problems, and not create division. We need to preach the love of Jesus and get on with the business of presenting the gospel and strengthening families, right?

Besides, science prides itself on being "self-correcting" and the issue will eventually sort itself out. At some point truth will win out.

But taking this approach ignores one of the fundamental reasons why we face many other issues. The creation – evolution issue is part of a concerted effort to weaken the authority of Scripture that goes back at least 300 years. The most telling attacks began in the early 1800s with the introduction of uniformitarianism—the assumption of long geological ages. This notion was popularized by Charles Lyell, who hated the Bible and wanted to destroy belief in the Genesis Flood.

The introduction of long ages of time set the stage for Charles Darwin's Origin of Species, because evolution demands eons of time to bring it about. The effect of evolution is to destroy belief in a literal six-day period of creation.

The net effect of these attacks has been to relegate Genesis to the status of near mythology in the minds of many. That is to say, it may contain spiritual truths, but it's "unscientific," therefore is not to be interpreted literally. Indeed, most Christian colleges and seminaries have abandoned a literal interpretation of Genesis in favor of some form of theistic evolution.

What has been the effect of evolutionary thinking on our culture? The root of many of the problems faced by our youth today may be traced to the teaching of evolution.

Evolution postulates a universe that arose by itself through random processes for no apparent reason, and that we're living on an insignificant speck of dust in a run-of-the-mill galaxy in a far corner of the universe. If this is true then life is meaningless and purposeless. It's little wonder that we're battling low self-esteem, suicide, drug abuse, relative morality, and disregard for God's commandments.

If life has no purpose, why try to excel in school or anything else? We may as well eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die (or in today's parlance, "if it feels good, do it").

The hottest battleground in the evolution question is in the public school classroom. Due to the rulings on separation of church and state, Christianity has been effectively outlawed in public schools. In such a spiritual vacuum, something will take the place of Christianity. By default, evolution has become a sort of substitute religion in the public schools. According to evolutionist Prof. Michael Ruse, "Evolution is a full-fledged substitute for Christianity." Evolution implies there is no God with whom we have to deal. Without any moral absolutes, each becomes free to do whatever seems right. If kids are taught that they're just highly evolved apes, then they'll act like it.

The basis of marriage and family was established in Genesis (Gen. 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh). But if Genesis isn't true then God didn't define marriage, and we're free to redefine it any way that seems convenient: between two men or two women or even a group. The family can then become any group of "committed, loving" individuals. The family is the basic unit of society. As the family goes, so goes the culture. Without the stabilizing influence of the traditional family, society as a whole becomes unstable.

Evolutionism has even lent justification to abortion. In the late 19th century German zoologist Ernst Haeckel devised the "gill slit" theory, which says the human fetus goes through all the lower stages of evolution during its development. Therefore it's no problem getting rid of an unwanted baby since it's not really human yet—just something in the process of evolving.

The Christian church isn't immune from these influences. The philosophy of moral relativism has deeply affected the church. A recent survey by George Barna revealed that more than 4 out of 5 Christian teenagers don't believe in absolute truth. With such a weak foundation they become easy prey for atheist professors to convince them that evolution is fact, and the Bible is just superstition. This is why, to the dismay of Christian parents, many students jettison their faith while in college.

Many Christians attempt to embrace both evolution and creation. Why compromise with such a destructive doctrine? Perhaps one reason is because we want to have our cake and eat it too—that is to say we want to do it our own way. This is nothing new. Cain was upset that his sacrifice of produce wasn't accepted by God. His bitterness and resentment led to the first capital crime.

Yet evolution and Christianity are mutually contradictory—they cannot be compromised. Why? Because if evolution is a fact, then Genesis is just allegory, and Adam and Eve weren't literal persons. They weren't tempted to disobey God, and they didn't introduce sin to the world. Sin is therefore just a remnant of the lower stages of evolution, which we'll eventually outgrow. If we're not burdened by sin, then why do we need the Redeemer?

Evolution is not just a side issue! It's one of Satan's schemes to get us to compromise our faith. We do well to heed the advice given in Colossians 2:8: Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.