
Creation Answers

Who writes this newsletter?

This newsletter is produced by Wayne Spencer on a Quarterly basis. Its purpose is to bring creation research within the reach of Christians and provide up-to-date reliable information on creation issues. Wayne Spencer is a creation author and former teacher who has presented papers at the International Conference on Creationism and has published in various creation publications, such as the Creation Research Society Quarterly, Creation magazine, the Journal of Creation, and Origins (from the Biblical Creation Society, UK).

This newsletter is meant to help people plug into creation resources and get informed about creation and evolution. It is provided free of charge on request. Using the free Adobe Acrobat Reader is necessary for viewing the newsletter. There are no restrictions in copying this newsletter or passing it on to others. To request to be placed on the e-mail list, send a request to wspencer@creationanswers.net.

More information on Wayne Spencer's education and publications can be found on the creationanswers.net web site. You'll also find many other resources.

<http://creationanswers.net>

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A Personal Note from Wayne Spencer

Greetings,

Hello everyone and thank you for your interest in my newsletter. This is the 16th year for my newsletter. I would like to hear any comments you have or if you have suggestions.

I am beginning a new series on Evolution and Society. This may seem familiar but I'm finding when I look into it afresh, I learn a few new things. I had not heard of the term "anti-humanism" until recently. My main article will explain what this is. We need to be alert to the ideas that are around us.

An article I wrote was recently published in the Journal of Creation. It is called "Magnetized moon rocks, impacts, and the Precambrian - a response to Humphreys." Creationist researchers debate a lot of issues in print, where different views can be presented in detail. This one has to do with the formation of certain rocks, impacts from space, and radioactive decay and how to tie them together. It is a set of unsolved puzzles.

My blog, called AnswersBlog, has been fixed and I put an article on it called "Jesus and the Sword" on February 4th. The blog also has a new look. See what you think. You don't have to register to read my blog but to post something you do, and I must approve it. This is to prevent a lot of spam and phony posts. Blogs are constantly bombarded with spam.

God bless . . .

Wayne Spencer, M.S., Physics

Evolution and Society, Part 1

How does the concept of evolution influence people today, in 2015? It is not only science that has a commitment to the idea of evolution. This will begin a series on how evolution is relevant to issues in society we deal with today. There are many controversies and conflicts of opinion today. There is a kind of elitism that the academic world is sometimes guilty of as University Professors treat the public as the “ignorant masses” while they are the ones who are enlightened. Today sometimes there are ideas taken to extremes that shock and puzzle the average person, because they don’t know the reasoning behind the extreme actions taken by certain groups. As Christians we should be aware of where ideas come from but also be aware that the average person on the street may not accept the extreme ideas any more than we do. I hope this series will help us be aware of how evolution influences society in various ways today.

Evolution is an idea used to nudge people away from Biblical faith and values. Believing evolution doesn’t make someone a bad person, but I believe it does make them a misled person. On the other hand, evolutionary ideas have sometimes been used to justify murder and other kinds of immoral and destructive behaviors. In the past, in World Wars I and II Germany used ideas based on natural selection and “survival of the fittest” to justify killing people they considered to be “inferior” races and people groups. Even in America, racist ideas were based on evolution in the 1920’s and 30’s and were used to justify the forced sterilization of certain people groups. This has been thoroughly documented. The terrible racist ideas and evil acts done in World Wars I and II by the German military exposed the dangers of such ideas and today even anti-christian individuals would generally not approve of such racist hatred.

Well known scientists occasionally make statements about the far reaching

application of evolutionary ideas. As a well known example consider Theodosius Dobzhansky, who died in 1975. He was a geneticist originally from the Ukraine. He became well known and over his career was on the faculty of Columbia University, Stanford, and the University of California at Davis. Dobzhansky said **“Evolution comprises all the stages of the development of the universe: the cosmic, biological, and human or cultural developments. Attempts to restrict the concept of evolution to biology are gratuitous. Life is a product of the evolution of inorganic nature, and man is a product of the evolution of life.”**

Science and Religion

There have been some interesting polls of scientists to determine their views on the relationship between religion and science. In 1914 and 1933, two polls were done by a sociologist named James Leuba from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. These polls were directed to scientists in various fields of study who were listed in the American Men of Science. Only scientists marked in American Men of Science with a star for “greater” in their accomplishments were polled. Two key questions in this survey were whether they believed in a “personal God” and whether they believed in immortality. A “personal God” was defined as a “God to whom one may pray in the expectation of receiving an answer.” Results of these two polls are below. A follow up survey was also done in 1998 by other researchers, for direct comparison to the two done by Leuba.

| Survey Year | Personal God | Immortality |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1914 | 32% | 37% |
| 1933 | 13% | 15% |
| 1998 | 10% | 10% |

Thus this shows a general decreasing trend for belief in God among scientists.

Note that the 1998 survey showed biologists having only 5% believing in a personal God or immortality. Also, in 1933 only 2% of psychologists indicated a belief in immortality.

In 2003 a dissertation research project polled 271 well known evolutionist scientists who were members of 28 national academies around the world. A short article about this study was published in *American Scientist*, July-August 2007. It was written by Gregory Graffin and William Provine of Cornell University. Of 149 respondents, all of them indicated that some aspect of biological evolution was among their research interests. A smaller subset of these respondents, 12 scientists, were interviewed about biological evolution and religion. This survey was designed to distinguish between a theistic viewpoint and a deistic viewpoint. Participants marked a chart which was shaped as an equilateral triangle with "naturalist," "theist," and "deist" at the three vertices of the triangle. The deist viewpoint was defined as belief in an impersonal God that created the universe but does not intervene in daily events. This poll was made up of 17 questions and allowed the participant to add comments.

The results strongly lean toward strict naturalism (essentially atheism or humanism). The greatest number of respondents, 78%, indicated naturalism as their view. Only two out of 149 showed themselves as theists near the "theist" vertex. Several indicated their beliefs as intermediate between naturalism and theism. A larger number (21) indicated their beliefs were varying combinations of naturalism and deism than those who indicated some measure of theism (7).

The 2003 Cornell survey presented evolutionist scientists with four choices regarding the relationship between evolution and religion. This may be one of the most interesting results of the 2003 poll.

A. Evolution and religion are non-overlapping magisteria (or NOMA) and thus are not in conflict.

B. Religion has developed through the biological evolution of humans. Therefore religion is a social adaptation subject to change and reinterpretation.

C. That evolution and religion are mutually exclusive magisteria with implications that contradict each other

D. That evolution and religion are harmonious - evolution is one means of elucidating God's designs

These four options represent various common opinions of people in the sciences. Option A was a concept suggested by the late Dr. Stephen J. Gould of Harvard. If you consider Christianity as equivalent to the word "religion" in the above statements, then I would vote for option C. The article from *American Scientist* says Dr. Richard Dawkins also answered C. The researchers doing this survey expected C to be the most common answer but that was not the case. By far the most common answer was option B, representing 72% of respondents. Thus, most well known evolutionists regard religion as something that has evolved in human society for social benefits. It is part of our sociobiology and not tied to moral or spiritual absolutes. There have been a few well known scientists who advocated views like option D above, such as Asa Gray for example in the 1800's. Charles Darwin came to disagree with Gray's view more and more over the course of his life. Today some scientists and some Bible teachers may take a view like options A or D. But in the secular scientific fields and in secular universities options B or C would be most common. The Cornell poll did show about 10% of respondents indicating option C and less than 10% indicating the other answers.

Notice that the above polls targeted a narrow group of well known evolutionist scientists who do research on evolution. For some interesting poll findings of broader groups of scientists compared to the general public see this [webpage](#) from the Pew

Research Center. The Pew Center has done some similar surveys. They indicate the proportion of scientists claiming to believe in God or be involved in a church is about half that of the general public.

Evolution and Free Will

Did you choose to read this article, or are you reading it only because of evolution and a complex set of chemical and electrical impulses in your brain? This seems like a totally absurd question to most people. But taking evolution to its logical conclusion leads some to reject the idea that humans have free will. They would say that what appears to be a “free will” is really an effect caused by the environment and a complex process in the brain.

Why would people want to deny that we have free will? If we have been caused to make the apparent “choices” we make by complex natural processes, then this removes moral responsibility for our actions. This is one way that evolutionary ideas have been worked into psychology, law, and social policies. Criminals are often viewed as disadvantaged, not as individuals who are morally responsible for their actions. Biblically, people are morally responsible for immoral actions regardless of whether they are “disadvantaged” or not. So if there is no free will, then there is some unidentified physical or natural process that has caused you to read this article. Also, if there is some natural process that caused it, then why should you deserve any praise for it? This is something philosophers, psychologists, and evolutionists have considered for years. But because I believe our choices come from real free will I believe there is reason to thank you for reading this article.

Sometimes bad behaviors and crimes have been related to evolution. A book published in 2000 said “**There is obviously some evolutionary basis to rape just like there is some evolutionary basis to all aspects of living things . . . There might have been selection favoring males who raped under some circumstances in the past.**” Again this

kind of argument avoids dealing with moral responsibility.

Problems in society often do not have merely one cause. Also, for an individual one idea like evolution will not cause all the problems in their life. But I think once someone chooses not to believe in God, then they want something to justify their unbelief. Evolution then becomes a justification for rejecting a Biblical world view. To someone in the sciences, there is much pressure to accept evolution. For many other people, especially those with less education, the pressure on them to accept evolution is less. Pressures that influence what people believe come in many forms and so evolutionary ideas can manifest themselves in a variety of ways. In many ways the academic institutions (and other organizations) try to promote an evolutionary view of man to the public.

Today there is a growing skepticism about many kinds of “authority” and many academic institutions. There is an increasing number of young people who are deciding that a college education is not worth it. This is partly due to the greatly rising costs, but not only due to costs. There is also some skepticism regarding the content and ideas promoted by a college education. There is often a philosophical or political agenda behind some college course work that is not appropriate. The surveys discussed earlier show that the academic world is becoming more and more out of touch with the thinking of many in the general public. The public is losing trust in academic institutions being able to prepare young people for life and successful careers.

Deep Ecology and Anti-Humanism

Evolution has always tended to devalue human life. Creationists and various Christian writers have written much about secular humanism, which makes man the measure of and center of everything. Humanism is essentially atheism and explains away moral issues with the argument that we came from animals so we

are just smarter animals. There is no god that we must answer to, according to Humanists. Humanists vary in how they approach social issues because they may view 'moral' issues as related to what harms others. Or they may look at things more in terms of humans being a stronger species. Since we are the smartest and the strongest species on the planet we should be the ones in control.

Beginning in the 1960's and 70's there were various environmental pollution problems that were caused in various industries that led to groups organizing around environmental causes. In those years most of the environmental causes were very legitimate because there were clear adverse health effects on people that required action. But those kind of problems became fewer in number due to preventive laws that were passed. Over the years the environmental movement changed so that it's aims became more philosophical and political. It has today sometimes taken on an agenda that desires to change how we view ourselves as human beings in relation to our planet and other living things. Sometimes environmental ideas have been taken to an extreme that is shocking. These new ideas are also based on evolution but they take the implications of evolution in a somewhat different direction than the secular humanists.

In Genesis 1:26-28 it says (NIV) **“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground’...God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.’”**

There are several consequences of this I think. First, because humans are made in God's image human life is of more value to God than other life forms. It's also because

we are made his image that it is fitting that we rule over the Earth God made. Second, the Earth and the living things on it are all resources for us to manage. We can use them to our benefit and enjoyment but we should do so responsibly. Third, because of the unique value of human life, we must always consider human life more important than any other form of life on Earth. Genesis is clear about giving humans right to rule over animals of all kinds. I think there are two sides to this. On one side there is the fact that we have the right to decide if animals live or die. But on the other hand we are also responsible for caring for them. These are two sides of the same coin, they are not in contradiction. Animals are here for our benefit so cruelty to animals is not justified. Animals have limited intelligence so we can train them and enjoy them. Plants are also here for our benefit but plants are not described in the same terms in the Hebrew as animals. In the original Hebrew plants are not described as living in the way animals or humans are. The life of plants is of a different nature and plants were specifically given for food. So there is no issue biblically with “killing” plants.

The Deep Ecology movement started from a Norwegian philosopher who rejected human exceptionalism. The Biblical view definitely makes human life exceptional compared to all other life on Earth. So the Deep Ecology concept emphasizes that humans have no more right to the planet than anything else on the planet. This would also say that humans have a duty care as much for the natural world (including other living things) even if it comes at significant human expense. This means that humans should not grow in number at the expense of other life but should actually decrease in population to allow other life forms to thrive more. This view claims that the human population is much too large. To be clear, it is not because of starving people in Africa that the human population should be reduced, according to Deep Ecology. It is so there could be more wild animals and plants. It also claims that

humans exhibit too much “interference” with the natural world. The Deep Ecology movement also frowns on the advancement of technology that has helped people have a higher standard of living and allowed the human population to grow so large (now 7 billion). This movement may even be against medical advances that help people live longer lives because more people use too many natural resources, as the argument goes. This movement is so against human life that it has been dubbed “anti-humanism.” This movement has led to absurd efforts. One demonstration had a woman carrying a sign saying “Save the planet, kill yourself!” This would be funny if it were not serious. Absurd laws protecting “animal rights” or even “plant rights” have been proposed because people have abandoned a biblical view of what it means to be a human being. To read more on animal and plant rights [see this article](#).

Human life has meaning and purpose as we live in a way that fits what God has designed for us. Earth and the life on it are not products of evolution but were created for our benefit. But because the first human beings sinned this had many negative effects on creation. We need to keep the Biblical view in mind to keep a balanced understanding of our own value and our place on planet Earth.

The ‘Killing Jesus’ Movie

Recently a best-selling book was published, written by Bill O’Reilly and Martin Dugard. A movie based on the book was just released on the National Geographic Television channel. I would recommend caution to Christians regarding the movie. There is much that I liked in the movie and the actor who portrays Jesus is a Muslim, which is interesting. I think he does a good job for the most part portraying Jesus but there are a couple of things in the movie I did not agree with. I have not read the book.

First, when Jesus first went to the Jordan river and met John the Baptist he

seemed to not know that he was going to be the Messiah. And, when he was baptized there seemed to be no one present watching. John the Baptist and Jesus seemed to be alone in the river. This is clearly contrary to the gospels. Jesus knew he was the Son of God when he was 12 years old. Right before going to the Jordan river he was tempted by Satan, as the gospels present it, so he was deliberately beginning his ministry when he went to be baptized. This was how he was introduced to Israel, being baptized by John.

Secondly, the movie does not show that Jesus rose from the dead bodily. It has Peter fishing after Jesus’ death. Peter prays and this is followed by many fish coming into the net. So Peter concludes from this that “He’s back.” It is not acceptable to not show the risen Jesus. Jesus rose bodily. He appeared to a number of people over a 40 day period. When Peter encountered the risen Jesus while fishing, Peter was not praying. Jesus was on the bank of the river and called to Peter and the others in the boat. Jesus then cooked fish and bread for the men (see John 21). On another occasion, the risen Jesus ate fish in the presence of some of the disciples (Luke 24:42-43).

The movie has good aspects but it comes across to me as being somewhat incomplete. I rather liked the way it portrayed the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman rulers (Pilate and the Herods). But, it seems odd what was chosen to be left in and what was left out, in comparison to the gospels. There are also places where there are what I would call speculative details added that may or may not be true. I’m not too against this as long as it doesn’t contradict the gospels but it’s worth noting some details are different than the New Testament and different from other movies about Christ. There are many ways in which archeology and history confirm the historicity of the gospels in the New Testament. Thus I think a movie based more on the New Testament would be a better presentation about Christ and would be no less historical.