

Bible Special 06-09-19a

This is Tuesday, the 19th of September, 2006. We continue tonight our study looking at world religions. Why we believe the Bible.

Why we are God fearing, Bible thumping, creationist Christians. There is a lot of current in the world today, like a fast flowing river trying to wash us off the face of the planet. The tide of public opinion and of science and a lot of other influences and factors in the world seem to relegate us to darkness and mysticism and we are left over relics of a bygone age and so on.

But we are looking carefully at the foundation for our faith, the nature of this supposedly conclusive evidence that dismisses the Bible as ancient myths and so on. Let's take a moment as we begin our study this evening to go to the Lord in prayer. It's an opportunity to recognize that this is valuable time.

It's time spent with fellow Christians who understand the importance of God's word. It's an opportunity for us to be strengthened and refreshed in our faith. Shall we pray? Father, we are grateful for this time of fellowship and study of our faith in the light of your word.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will give us insight and understanding, help us to have a balanced and intelligent approach to our faith. We ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

I want to talk tonight a little bit about the outgrowth and the implication of our study over the last several weeks, which has been in secular humanism and materialism. This is a movement, the godless approach to life, that has always been around, but in particular got its roots in recent centuries in what they call the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason. If you've studied history of the last five or six hundred years, you know what I'm talking about.

You had the Renaissance, you had the advent of civilization and higher thinking and coming out of the Dark Ages and the Middle Ages and primitive feudalism and so on. You had the bursting forth of art and culture and literature and more sophisticated thinking. You have it reflected, at least according to secular historians, in the Reformation, where people came out from under the oppressive influence of the Catholic Church.

And this liberation of the human mind and the freedom to pursue understanding in the realm of ideas led many people to, at least in this view of history, led people to question the whole idea of religious faith, particularly Christian faith, and to seek answers about the nature and meaning of life in the universe in places other than scripture. Now, there's nothing wrong with this. Inquiring minds want to know.

And intelligent people have inquiring minds. There's not a thing in the world wrong with this. What is wrong is if in the course of looking at life and receiving the witness of God's Holy Spirit about the fact that there is a God who does have a standard of righteousness that we don't meet, that we are inherently corrupt and fallen, if we dismiss that and push that testimony

away and say, I really want to live a life that is separate and distinct from God, this follows in the path of the original sin.

Now, of course, a secular person would say, that's just your old Hebrew-Judeo-Christian-myth-legend thing talking. Okay, perhaps. I think there is a fundamental observation that everyone can make.

As you look around in the world, you look at people, and we look at ourselves, there is one inescapable observation. If we look at ourselves, we have to either conclude that man is essentially good, is essentially kind and loving and altruistic and caring about others, and that it's only bad circumstances and bad factors that cause people to become evil and bad, or we look at ourselves and we look around at the world, and we conclude that we are basically problem-ridden from birth. We are inherently selfish.

We are inherently willing to sacrifice the other guy's benefit so that we can benefit. And if it comes down to between you and me, well, it's going to be me. And we are self-serving and self-seeking, and this is the root of evil and corruption.

We love getting things for ourselves. You remember what the Bible says? It says the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. That's really a profound insight.

It's a profound understanding, because what is the love of money? If you were on a desert island and somebody gave you a big chest of Spanish gold doubloons, what sort of value would that add for you? You might be able to tie one of them onto your fishing line so that you could fish more easily or something. But what would a chest full of money do for you if you were all by yourself in the jungle or on an island? They toyed with this idea a little bit with *Castaway*. You remember Tom Hanks and Wilson and the whole thing where he had those FedEx packages washing up on the shore? What good was a tennis racket? What good is this, that, and the other? When you're all by yourself, even an expensive thing would be meaningless and useless if it didn't confer some survival advantage.

Money enables us to get things that we want from other people and to parade them in front of other people. It goes way beyond survival. The love of money is basically the love of status, the love of impressing other people, the love of gaining things that make us happy or we think will make us happy.

That's the observation you have to make first. Are we essentially good as human beings or are we essentially corrupt and selfish? I think anyone who is objective will recognize that we are corrupt and we need saving from ourselves. This is one of the things that God the Holy Spirit convinces the world of, sin.

We are sinful. We are not good. We are not wonderful God-like creatures who somehow get marred by our environment or who get marred by our experiences.

If society would just be better, then we would all be wonderful people scattering daisies across

the path and walking hand in hand in the sunlight. We are warlike, selfish, corrupt individuals who like to hurt one another. And we need something outside of ourselves.

Well, materialism, secular humanism wants to make the opposite assumption. Oh no, we are basically good and we are getting better all the time. This is a departure, this is a conscious rejection of the message of the Holy Spirit, the message of Scripture, the message of history.

Visualize world peace. Can't we evolve past warfare and crime? Some of the most prosperous and well-off civilizations in the world have also had exceedingly high crime rates. And they are crimes committed by prosperous, well-off people.

Why is that? How do you explain crime committed by prosperous, rich people? Supposedly, if you get everything you want, why you'll have no motive for crime? And yet it's committed all the time anyway. Criminals never seem to get enough to stop doing crimes. Well, this underlies the fabric of our discussion, of this conflict.

You either acknowledge God and look for His truth, or you reject God and His truth, and you have to find a suitable substitute. This is what happened in the Age of Enlightenment, the Age of Reason. Let's find a way to explain the world that has nothing to do with God.

Well, it was tough, because where did life come from? It's exceedingly difficult to explain the proliferation of animals and plants and life as we know it without a creator. And this was a big problem for humanism, until Charles Darwin. You've all heard of Charles Darwin.

Charles Darwin was a Christian. He was a believer in God, especially in his younger days. He never repudiated God.

And even in the closing chapters of his book, *On the Origin of Species*, he mentions God. And he says it's possible that God, he didn't believe in special creation anymore, but he said perhaps God put life on the planet with a few creatures, or one, from which all the others evolved. Because He couldn't get past inanimate matter turning into life.

And even he thought, well, God must have at least gotten the process started. But, once *On the Origin of Species* was published, and it said that through gradual natural processes, life evolved. This was the great boon for secular humanism, because now they could explain biological life apart from any sort of creator, or creation.

And there were many, many gaps in Darwin's theories. If you remember, he was sailing around on the ship, on the *Beagle*, and he went to the Galapagos and other islands, and he observed finches and their beaks, and one thing and another. And he said, look, these have adapted to cracking different kinds of seeds, and different ones on different islands are similar finches, but look how they are different, because they have evolved to solve the problems in their particular environment.

Here the seeds are small and hard, and so they've got one kind of beak. Here the seeds are big

and soft and mushy, and so they've got a different kind of a beak. This and other observations led him to conclude that all of these finches had a common ancestor, and then they had developed into separate species under the pressures of natural selection, survival of the fittest.

And of course, after the work of Gregor Mendel and so on, they began to understand about genetics and heredity and things like this. And so the foundations of the modern theory of evolution, it's more technically called neo-Darwinian evolution because they've added some things since Darwin, but this is what we're going to talk about tonight. What is the nature of evolution? Everybody gets it in school now.

It is taught as fact. Every time you turn on the television and you watch the National Geographic or PBS or NOVA or any of the science-related programs, Discovery Channel and the rest of them, it is assumed to be fact. It is presented as fact.

Anybody that believes anything different than evolution, there's something the matter with you. You're scientifically ignorant. Well, how solid is the foundation upon which this theory rests? In case you haven't already learned it, or if you haven't thought about it in a while, the theory of evolution says that biological life as we know it came about entirely through natural processes, two primary processes.

One is mutation, which is random changes in the DNA, in the genes that program all life forms. You know how this works. You know how a cell has a nucleus and in the nucleus you have the DNA.

You've probably studied the copying process where RNA makes copies and produces new DNA cells through mitosis divide and so on. Well, we're not doing a science class tonight, so rest easy. I know some of you are getting nervous.

You've probably had enough science. But this is one of the driving factors that you start out with a given life form and over the course of many millions of years copying errors occur. Something randomly changes the DNA and most of the time, even science acknowledges, most of the time these changes are destructive.

It would be like having a copy of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Four score and seven years ago, our fathers fought for this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Well, if you make a random change in that text, it's going to corrupt away from Lincoln's original words.

To get the Gettysburg Address, you've got to keep the words intact. And changing them messes it up. Well, nearly always, if you change the genetic programming, this is like putting a scratch in your music CD.

This is like making an unfortunate change in your computer program that's trying to run on your computer and it's going to crash and the organism is not going to be viable. It's going to die. But if you have enough time, millions and millions of years, every once in a while, one of

these changes, according to evolutionary theory, is going to produce a benefit.

So now you've got one creature who, through some cosmic radiation or whatever, got a change in his DNA and now he's got something useful. Maybe he used to have two wings and something damaged the DNA and he ended up with four wings. And the four wings make him able to fly better.

Now, the second part of evolution kicks in. Because in addition to mutation, you have natural selection. And that is survival of the fittest.

The four-winged fly is more survivable. So he's going to live and he's going to breed and his genetic mutation is going to be carried down to his offspring and some of them are going to have the four wings. And the four-winged version, I'm just making this up because it's kind of an absurd example, but these are going to have an advantage and they're going to eventually win out and the two-winged version is going to be minimized or disappear.

The four-winged version is going to go on and then the four-winged version is going to get another mutation and another mutation and another mutation. Gradually, you move from single-celled organisms to multi-celled organisms to those that have a shell and to those that have more and more complex organs and systems and functions and senses. They're going to develop sight, they're going to develop light sensitivity, they're going to develop skin, they're going to develop feathers, they're going to develop scales, they're going to develop legs, and so on.

All the way up until pretty soon. Here we are walking around the product of millions of years of evolution as human beings. And all of this is from accidental processes driven by those two factors.

What are they? Mutation and natural selection. Mutation and natural selection. This is the father and the son of evolutionary theory.

And the Holy Spirit is that magic element that nobody can account for. How did it get started in the first place? Let me tell you what you will be told if you ever make this mistake and talk to someone who believes in evolution. There's a whole separate, what they like to say is separate, question.

How did life come about in the first place? And technically speaking, this is not a part of evolution. Technically, this is abiogenesis. Can you break that word down? A means not, bio means life, genesis means start.

How did life arise from that which is not alive? The primordial soup, lightning strikes, something happens, and what was just a soup of carbon-based molecules and proto-cellular material turns into the first living thing. That's called abiogenesis. Life coming from non-life.

People talking about evolution will say, don't include that in the discussion. We're not talking

about that. That's not properly a part of evolution.

Well, it actually is. Because you had to go from simple molecules to more and more complex molecules and they finally had to get complex enough to be identified as life. Where is that line? Nobody can say.

How did it happen? Nobody knows. Is there even a theory of how it happened? There are very rudimentary theories, but nobody can reproduce it in the laboratory. They can't even come close to getting it to work.

If they do get something to float around, it's not alive. It has no DNA. Where did the DNA come from? You know what DNA is made of, right? You've got your four basic amino acids.

I never can remember them. Cytosine, guanine, thymine, and the other one. Adenine.

Yeah, adenine, cytosine, guanine, and thymine. The four of them. They're arranged in that double helix pattern.

So let's say the DNA evolved. What does that mean? Well, originally it wasn't as big as it is now. So there were fewer genes.

Remember the Human Genome Project and how many years it took them to try to map all of those genes? Well, at some time in the past, it must have been shorter and shorter and shorter and shorter until you get all the way back until it was what? Like four amino acids stuck together? Just one guanine and one cytosine? Well, when you start getting back that far, they can't even make it work. There's not enough of it to reproduce itself. It's kind of like saying, well, I can copy a program, I can copy a screensaver, or I can copy a picture and give it to somebody else, but where did the original come from? It has to come from somewhere before you can copy it.

So what are the two factors in evolution again? Mutation. Natural selection. How does DNA mutate when it doesn't exist? Where does it come from so that it can start mutating? You have to have enough of it creating a viable life form so that it can live, so that natural selection can take place, right? Where does it come from? Well, ask anyone who's trying to talk to you about evolution.

How did life begin? Have they ever reproduced this in the laboratory? Do they have even a faint ghost of a glimmer of an idea of how it happened? They don't. They have no idea whatsoever. They've been working and working and working for decades with intelligence, with knowledge, creating just the right soup and putting in just the right energy and throwing in all kinds of ingredients and doing everything they can to try to cook it up into life.

It never works, and that's with help. But they think it happened with no help whatsoever. So this whole idea of evolution has to start somewhere.

Well, the start is a real embarrassing question for evolution. So they say, we're not going to talk about the start. That's not evolution.

We're only going to talk about evolution after we have something that can evolve. Why? Because they have no explanation whatsoever as to where it came from. Well, we don't call that evolution.

Okay, fine. Let's talk about abiogenesis. How did that happen? Well, we don't really know.

We don't have the first clue. And we can't even make it happen when we're trying with our most sophisticated electron microscopes and biology labs and everything we know about biological life. We can't even get a simple kind going.

And my prediction is they never will because that's something God did. All they can do is take existing parts and play with them. This is the difference.

Think about cars. You could go to the junkyard. Let's say there's been a junkyard that's been in business for 100 years.

And every car from the original Ford Model As and Model Ts all the way up to 2006 models are all in the junkyard. Now, cars are going to be more primitive the further back you go, right? And so all you're working with is the junkyard. And you're looking at it and you're saying, well, look, here's a 1935 model car.

Here's a Ford from way back there. Look, it's got four tires and it's got kind of a primitive steering mechanism here, no power steering. It doesn't have an automatic transmission.

It doesn't have any air conditioning. It's got these essential things. It's got four wheels.

It's got a steering wheel. It's got a windshield. It's got some headlights.

It's got some fenders and bumpers. It's got a lot of the rudiments. And now here's a 1955 Ford car.

And it's got four wheels and it's got fenders and lights and bumpers and steering wheel and all the rest of it. But, look, it's got an automatic transmission, one of the early ones. It's got more wiring.

It's got more features. Look, it's got turn signals, self-canceling turn signals. Well, this 1955 model must have come from the 1935 model.

And the 1935 models got together and reproduced and reproduced. And these features just sort of spontaneously came along. And the first one that had better wiring, why, it survived on.

What it doesn't answer is, who's manufacturing these cars? Who designed them in the first place? And you could go make a case for abiogenesis and evolution in the junkyard for cars on

the same strength of evidence that people do it in biology. Well, this is a huge subject. We're only going to have two 30-minute sessions on it tonight to talk about evolution from a Christian point of view.

And I don't have time to address all of the wide spectrum of it. So I'm going to give you two things. We're just going to talk about two things tonight.

And these are places you can go if you're interested in this subject. And if you want to see this subject from a Bible-believing Christian point of view, here are two good places you can go. One is in print, and one is on the web.

On the web, there is a website called answersingenesis.org. And this is a good starting place. Now, I will caution you. Just because someone says they're a Christian, just because someone says, I believe the Bible, and I don't believe in evolution, and I'm going to write articles, it doesn't necessarily mean that those articles are gospel.

Christians can make mistakes. Christians can be scientifically confused or ignorant, just like anybody else. So I'm not suggesting to you that this is inspired or that it's perfect, but it's a good starting place.

Because the areas that you're interested in, the areas where you have questions, for example, there are a lot of different foundations underneath evolution. Like, what's the most popular place for documenting evolution over the vast eons of time? What do people dig up out of the ground and say, look, it's proof of evolution? Fossils, right? Fossil record is a big piece of the support for evolution. Scientists, paleontologists, go down and find fossils.

They crack the rocks open, and they find different ancient forms of life. Now, how do we know that these are old? Well, it's pretty simple, really. Rocks don't form overnight, do they? At least in our experience, they don't.

How do scientists determine that these things are millions and millions of years old? They have scientific dating methods, right? Richard Leakey is out there in the desert someplace, and he finds a skull. He says, hmm, how old is this skull? How does he figure that out? They look at the layers of rock, layers of dirt, layers in the Earth's crust in which this thing is found, right? They figure, well, it's this far down. They use geology and scientific understanding of how these layers were formed to determine its age.

Is there any sort of scientific confirmation other than just looking at the layers and saying, well, I think this is so many million years old, and this is so many million years old? They have other methods. They use what they call radiometric dating. You've heard of radioactive decay, where a radioactive material loses little bits of itself, and it turns from one element into another, turns from uranium into something else, argon, you've got potassium argon, and these different kinds of dating methods.

Well, there's a lot of certainty about the age of fossils, according to the scientists. They say, well,

we've triangulated this because the layer is just right, the radiometric dating is just right, the surrounding fossils that we found above and below, all of these triangulate to give us this really, really old date. Well, if you look at this evidence more closely, and there are articles in places such as Answers in Genesis that will explain to you that what is given to the public as virtual certainty is actually very speculative and very questionable, and is oftentimes based on circular reasoning.

There's a real classic example of a skull that was in fact found by Richard Leakey in what they call the KBS Tuff, which is over in Kenya. They originally dated this skull as 2.7 million years old, but the skull was much too modern, it was much too human-like. But all of the scientific evidence, radiometric dating and this and the other, all of it came together and said, oh, this KBS Tuff, which is a geological layer, it's a layer of ash laid down by a volcano, supposedly they can date that.

Well, that layer of volcanic ash is 2.7 million years old, and the skull was below it. So this skull has to be more like 3 million years old. The problem is, the skull was very modern and human-like, and it just threw all of the evolutionary scheme into confusion, because wait a minute, back that long ago, there should have just been knuckle-dragging apes and proto-humans, and there shouldn't be anything like a modern hominid fossil that deep.

Well, this threw everybody into conniptions. But the problem is, that layer of ash had already been dated before he found the skull. Well, this caused a problem, and so they had to go in, and suddenly they found a bunch of new evidence and redated a bunch of stuff, and oh, guess what, this Tuff is really only 1.4 to 1.7 million years old.

They cut its age almost in half, and now this was the new certain date. Why? Well, there's an article called The Dating Game on answersingenesis.org, and it explains how this came about, and how circular and how interconnected the assumptions are, so that you basically cook the data to make sure the dates come out the way you want them. So, people will try to tell you that, oh, it's scientifically proven, it's a fact, there's no doubt, all of these things point to it.

If you start looking at the details, and the documentation for this is all in the scientific journals, it's not nearly as certain as people like to believe. It's a convenient belief system, just like they accuse us of having as Christians. They say, well, you just have a convenient belief system based on your Bible.

Well, evolution has just as much faith as we do. We'll pause here and take our break. When we come back, I'll tell you about the other resource I'd like to recommend to you.