

Good evening. This is Tuesday, the 26th of September, 2006. We continue tonight our study on why we hold our Christian faith.

We've looked at world religions. We look at the very prominent and growing movement toward secular humanism based on materialism and its expression in the theory of evolution tonight. We'll take a moment at the outset to ask God's blessing on our time of fellowship together. Shall we pray?

Father, it always reminds us of how grateful we are for your grace when we assemble as believers with a common view and a common understanding and a common appreciation for your work on our behalf as expressed through the Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you that we have a worldview based on truth.

We thank you that we have revelation from your Word. We thank you that we can have confidence even in those things which we cannot see because you have revealed them to those who ask and seek and knock. We pray that we can be numbered among those who do so seek and who find the fulfillment of your promise that when we ask, it shall be given;

when we seek, we will find; and when we knock, the door will be opened. We ask your blessing on us as we consider these things together. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

Our Tuesday night study in these recent weeks has been something of a departure in that we generally go verse by verse, chapter by chapter through books of the Bible, examining the text of God's Word and finding in it the truths that enable us to grow in grace and grow in knowledge of our Savior. It is important, though, to also look at ourselves in the larger context of the world.

It is easy to become insular. It is easy to become iconoclastic. You can look both of those words up if they sound a little unfamiliar. But what it means is to be in a small group where everyone in that small group agrees and you never really test your views and test the ideas in the larger context of the surrounding culture and the surrounding world. If our Christianity is valid, if our faith in God's Word, the Scriptures, the Holy Bible, is valid, it ought to stand up in the face of scientific inquiry, in the face of challenge and even opposition from people with differing points of view. We shouldn't have to blind ourselves and stick our heads under a blanket or into a bucket to be Christians.

This is a major point, and I hope if you remember anything from this evening, you remember this point. You do not and should not sacrifice your intellect and sacrifice your reasoning, inquiring mind on the altar of faith and say, "Well, to be a Christian, I must blind myself to scientific discoveries. I must blind myself to the facts. The only way I can maintain my Christianity is just, I'm not going to listen to scientific discoveries. I don't want to hear about hominid fossils. I don't want to hear about the reaches of outer space as is explored by the Hubble telescope. These facts threaten my faith, so I don't want to hear about them."

This is nonsense. There's no point in having a faith if it can't cope with genuine factual information. It's just nuts. Why be deluded? You might as well believe in the Wicked Witch of the West and the Land of Oz and some other fairy-tale type of thing. If Christianity, if God's existence, if God's plan and purpose in creating this world and populating it with people, if that's not valid, if it doesn't stand up to critical reasoning, investigation, and inquiry, you shouldn't believe it. Who gave you your reasoning, common-sense mind? Can you think of any Scripture that says, "Thou shalt not think, thou shalt not reason, thou shalt not exercise logic?" The real question is not, "Can you examine the facts?" The real question is, "Can you be objective?" Can you discern and separate fact from philosophy? Can you, when you read a scientific report, discern where there is an actual fact? "Here we found this rock, and when we tested it and did radiometric dating, here is the conclusion that we drew." "We found these bones. They're shaped this way. This is how many of them there are. This is the type of rock strata in which or under which or above which they were found." This is the nature of the seabed. This is the nature of the basalts that are at the floor of the sea. Here's the nature of the granites that form the majority of the continents. Here are the fossils that are at the top of Mount Everest. Were they deposited by a worldwide flood, or were they deposited at an earlier time before the continental plates crashed together and thrust that former seabed upward to this highest height on the planet?

What is the nature of the facts? How can it be understood? In particular, beginning last week, I want to continue what we started back last Tuesday in looking specifically at the "theory of evolution"; more technically

speaking, more specifically, the neo-Darwinian evolutionary model that is embraced by a great majority of science and scientists.

Scientific journals and so on all assume this to be a fact. In other words, the assumptions of materialism, that everything you see around you, your life, the people sitting next to you in this room, all life as we know it, plants and animals, large and small, are the result of a series of happy accidents that began with the materials that shot forth from a single point in the Big Bang, spread out through the universe, coalesced into particles which gravity brought together, and as they banged and mashed together, they eventually created stars and the stuff that was ejected from stars, more dense materials that was welded together in those great star furnaces, the higher elements.

You know, initially it was all pretty much hydrogen, and then more dense nuclei were formed, atomic nuclei, the heavier elements in the periodic table were formed, and these floated around. Gravity and other forces that have been studied in physics brought them together, and these lumps were trapped in the gravity of stars, and hence you have the solar system and you have Earth. And in the primordial Earth, formed of this ball of molten rock and so on, as it slowly lost heat into space, and as it cooled, and as it churned, the denser materials such as molten nickel and so on headed toward the center, and the lighter, less dense materials went to the outside.

It began to skin over, kind of like a pudding—a real pudding, not instant pudding. If you ever try to get a skin on instant pudding, it just won't do it. But if you get the real cooked pudding, the good stuff, it skins over. I'm not telling anybody how to cook their pudding. I like all kinds of pudding. But the old kind of pudding before we had instant made a skin because that part cools and it kind of changes a little bit. And that's what would happen in the early Earth, and this skin becomes the crust, and it's formed mainly of these two types of rock. And yet there's all of this hydrogen and oxygen and these other elements churning around inside, and this gets spewed forth into the area above the surface of the molten Earth in the form of steam. And there's these vast clouds of steam that envelop the Earth, and as it continues to cool, this steam condenses into liquid water, falls in the form of rain or dew or condensation of some sort, and begins to fill the hollows in this skin that is formed on the planet. The denser rocks, mainly your basalts, your dark rocks, tend to sink in further because they're heavier, so to speak, they're denser. And these are going to sink to what is now the bottom of our ocean basins, or what back then were the bottom of the ocean basins.

Our ocean basins now, basins, are seemingly different because of the continental drift, tectonic plate stuff. This is all pretty obvious from looking at the planet, looking at the ridges under the oceans, and looking at where volcanic activity—none of this we have any problem with. These are observable. It seems reasonable that this is how the Earth came into being, seems to be the way, from our perspective, that God did it. From the evolutionary perspective, it's a happy accident.

This is not really a point of contention except for those Christians who go to Genesis chapter 1 and look at the six days of creation: “the evening and the morning were the first day,” when the Spirit hovered over the water and God said, “Let there be light.” But we have gone through the book of Genesis, and if you weren't there for it, at some point I would encourage you to at least listen to the tapes from the first chapter where we go through creation week, because there is nothing in that account that definitively, beyond question, says that those were six 24-hour solar days 6,000 years before the present. There isn't anything that says it wasn't either, and I'm not arguing pro or con. I'm simply saying that you cannot, based on the Bible, confidently claim that God created the planet Earth 6,000 years before now in six 24-hour days. The text is not conclusive enough to make that claim. It's not conclusive enough to deny it either.

God did not give us a scientific text. He didn't have as his aim giving us a chronology in Genesis. It is etiology. It is a giving of beginnings, etiology. It is explaining where things came from, not when or necessarily how they came, other than their ultimate cause, which is the Lord God and His sovereign commanding word. That's the message of the first chapter of Genesis, and it is presumptuous to argue, as many do—they call themselves YECs, the young earth creationists—that the earth as a planet is only 6,000 years old.

I would urge again, as I did when we studied Genesis 1, look at the situation in Genesis 1:2. Genesis 1 says what? You can say it with me: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” That's in the beginning. It doesn't say that was on day one. The earth was created sometime before day one, is it not? Because in Genesis 1:2 it says, “The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters.”

When the Genesis account picks up, there is an earth in the heavens that is dark because light is not penetrating to the surface where the Spirit is hovering. The face of the waters is not up in outer space. It's right down at sea level, isn't it? And down at sea level it's dark. That's where the Spirit is hovering, on the face of the waters. The earth is without form and void. Tohu vabohu. There is no civilization, there is no order, there are no living things, and we have no argument with science, other than possibly the timing, that this is how Earth came into being. God created the heaven and the earth, or the Big Bang created the heaven and the earth. They are equally unknowable, unprovable. Someone who believes in the Big Bang has just as much faith as someone who believes in God, because you can't prove the Big Bang. There are things that seem to point to it, but there are things that seem to point to God.

So, we come to the place where the earth is in place, it is cool, it is capable of sustaining life. There are oceans on the crust of the earth. What does Genesis go on to say? Light is the first ingredient. God says, "Let there be light," and there was light. The perspective, the viewpoint in Genesis chapter 1 is at sea level. Doesn't mean there was no light elsewhere in the universe, that the stars had not been burning for some unknown period of time.

We know from Einstein and the laws of physics related to time and space that time is relative to your perspective. When God says the evening and the morning are the first day, where is that clock sitting? Is it sitting on the surface of the earth, or is it sitting on God's desk in heaven? Hanging on God's throne room wall. Which kind of clock is it? The Bible does not say.

It might have been a 24-hour day on the earth's surface. It might have been somewhere else. Physics tells us that if you had a clock that was outside the expanding universe generated by the hypothetical Big Bang, one day, one period of 24 hours, would cover several billion years inside this rapidly expanding universe. It is hard for us to comprehend, but that is exactly how it works.

Well, we'll leave out time calculations for the moment, but listen, don't get fried over fossils and other sorts of evidence in the earth and in the universe that says it's very, very old. Genesis and Psalms and the other creation passages in our Bible have no argument with an old universe.

Remember when God is speaking in the book of Job and He says, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth and the stars sang together?" If the stars were already there when God laid the foundations of the earth, that means they pre-existed day one in Genesis chapter one, right? Now, this is a poetic allusion to the angels. Stars don't sing per se, but angels don't float in empty space, do they? They're somewhere in the universe. They're made out of something, right? So, don't be entrapped by faulty Bible interpretation that says that the Bible teaches it must necessarily have been a single week of 24-hour days 6,000 years ago and it can be nothing else.

Again, God's purpose in Genesis and the other passages that deal with creation is not to give us a calendar or a chronology. It is to give us the ultimate source. There is no doubt from Scripture that God created the heavens and the earth. There is no doubt from John chapter one that the Lord Jesus Christ was intimately involved as the Word. "Without him was not anything made that was made." From Genesis one we know that the Holy Spirit was involved. "The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters." And when God gave a command, we understand that it is the Spirit who implemented it. And this is consistent throughout the Bible.

God the Father is the planner and the architect. God the Son is the one who executes and manifests and puts into effect that plan. And God the Holy Spirit is the one who energizes and accomplishes and makes things happen. And the three members of the Trinity have organized themselves into that hierarchy. The Father outranks the Son and Spirit. The Son outranks the Spirit. The Spirit is presented in Scripture as doing the bidding of both the Father and the Son. They are co-equal and co-eternal.

And if you cannot see that even amongst the triune God's members, the Father, Son, and Spirit, who are exactly equal, willingly subordinate themselves one to another without sacrificing quality or equality, there should be no problem for us to willingly subordinate ourselves in accordance with God's commands. "Submit one to another." "Wives, submit to your husbands." "Children, submit to your parents and obey them," and so on. It speaks not at all of your quality or of your worth or of your value, because God himself has done this and it didn't diminish God's quality.

So, this is where evolution kicks in. This is where we have a parting of the ways. Leave out the time element for the moment. We'll come back to the time element perhaps in a future night.

But let's take a look at the origin of life. The first major element of disagreement between the secular humanist materialist philosophy and Christianity, and Judaism for that matter, is that God is responsible for life on this planet and the conditions that sustain it, or accidental random happenings are responsible. I recommended to you, and I recommend once again that you get yourself a copy, or check out of the library to peruse, this book called *Darwin on Trial* by Philip E. Johnson. There are many good books. If you can find another one that's similar to it, that's fine. This is a good one. It's something of a classic. It's well known. And the arguments in it have largely stood unrefuted by the secular opposition. They've made a lot of spurious attacks on it because it blows big holes below their waterline. But I want to once again point out and summarize for those of you who won't have an opportunity to read it or peruse it anytime soon, some of its major arguments because they're very good. I can't make them any better than this.

First of all, what are the elements that drive evolution? If you don't have an intelligent God putting conditions in place, orchestrating an environment and then building life, where does it come from? Well, the evolutionary model, both before life appears and after, is changes at the chemical or molecular level. This is what we call mutations when it happens in your genes, your DNA. And when those changes take place, when something changes, then that thing becomes more survivable than its predecessors. It is now going to take over.

So, for example, you have a little scrawny chicken and it's slow and it's weak. And you have another chicken born from the same hen, the same rooster, but his genetic mix was a little better and he's a nice, healthy, wing-flapping, leg-running chicken. And so when the coyotes come to raid the barnyard, the little scrawny one gets eaten and the big one lives to reproduce. This is a pretty simple concept. So evolution rests on these two legs.

Mutation, this is where your changes come from, and natural selection. Once a change is made, the factors in the environment are going to make that new version of a thing more survivable.

Now, there is a logical problem with natural selection. And I'm not going to spend a whole lot of time on it, but this is something that Johnson points out. Because the analogy that's given here is that people have bred dogs or bred chickens or bred horses, and by mixing and matching, you can get—you know, there used to be one dog that looked sort of like a wolf or a coyote, and by artificially breeding and selecting, we've gotten everything from poodles to Dobermans to Great Danes, and what are the ones with the cask under their chin? Yeah, St. Bernards, and poodles and Chihuahuas and Mexican Hairlesses, and all these different kinds of dogs, all bred from these *Canis canis* ancestors. So they say, see how you can, by selection, in this case artificial selection guided by humans, you get these wide ranges of body types and body characteristics, short noses, long noses, short tails, long tails, short legs, long legs, short hair, long hair, etc.

But man has been selectively breeding dogs for thousands of years, and guess what? We've never bred two dogs together and gotten anything but a dog. Never developed a new species. Now, the Darwinist, the evolutionist says, well, over millions of years and gradually changing things along, you'll come up with a new species, and we don't see new species when we breed dogs because there's not enough time.

Well, the logical argument here is, we have overcome the incredibly long time involved in accidental random mixing and matching and natural selection, and how many thousands of generations that would take, over hundreds of thousands of years, by, from generation to generation, selectively breeding. People bred Shetland ponies over the course of just a very few generations, and Clydesdales, and so on. Same thing with dogs, and cats, and fish, and your ornamental fish. I've got a little egg-shaped fish in there that would never have occurred in nature. He's the product of selective breeding by Oriental people who like to play games with fish.

But still, we find in every case where we do artificial selection that we reach a limit. You can't keep breeding dogs and get a dog as big as an elephant. There is an upper limit to what the dog gene will do, no matter how creatively you mix and match. You can't get a dog as big as a house. You can't get a dog as small as a mouse. We have found, through the rapid, intelligent manipulation of the dog gene, what its limits are. You can only get the hair to be so long. You can only get the nose to be so long. You can only get the tail to be so short or so long. These are the parameter limits within the gene, and we can't exceed them, even by intelligent manipulation.

Even by conscious mutation, there are things that the dog gene just won't do, and it won't become anything other than a dog. If you took the poodles and the Pomeranians and the Pekingese and the Dobermans and the St. Bernards and all of these other dogs and put a hundred of them on an island and sailed away and left them for 50 years and came back, you know what you would find populating the island? *Canis canis*, average mutt dog,

medium size, medium legs, medium tail, medium nose, medium everything. The gene would move back to the middle of all of its ranges, because that's how it works by design.

So, saying that natural selection is survival of the fittest is really what we call in logic a tautology.

Because what is survival of the fittest, really? If you ask a scientist, what exactly, what is specifically survival of the fittest in evolution? I know this sounds like a science class, but believe me, this impinges on our faith. Is our faith viable? Is evolution a better, more viable alternative? Which one is most fit to survive? Well, think about natural selection.

If you ask a scientist, if you read up on this, you know what you'll discover? The definition of natural selection and survival of the fittest is that type of plant or animal, that type of organism which is most capable of reproduction, most successful at reproduction. Whichever organism most successfully reproduces, that is the fittest. That is natural selection.

Now, evolution will try to tell you, well, if it's a better flyer, or if it's got a better beak for cracking nuts, or if it's got better claws for hanging onto the tree branch, if it's got a better elbow or a better eye, that's not it. It doesn't matter if you have a better elbow, or a better eye, or better feathers, or any other characteristic. If you are not more successful at reproducing than the competing life forms, you are doomed to extinction. The only thing that survives is that thing which most successfully and effectively reproduces.

Now, think about this. A lot of you are school age, and you're going to be getting evolution in your school materials, if not in your current schooling, when you go on to college and so on. But think about this: the only criteria for natural selection, ultimately, is successful reproduction.

So, the fact that you have a slightly better light-sensitive spot, or you have a slightly better flapping forearm, or a slightly better anything, if it does not contribute to more successful, more effective reproduction, there's no reason for it to be selected for. You have to somehow be surviving the predators better. You have to somehow be more successful at mating. Not only that, but there has to be a significant enough advantage that in a pool of... Let's use a very small example.

Let's say you've got a thousand little rodent organisms, and one in a thousand produces a new mutation that gives it better claws for fending off its attackers. You say, okay, great. That mutation, that genetic change, has to survive when that mouse-like thing interbreeds with 999 other competitors who don't have that gene.

What are the chances of success? It can't just be a very slight advantage, because that little advantage could get overwhelmed just by the sheer numbers of other little animals. What if you have two sons with the claw gene, but both of them get hit by a falling rock? This has to be a significant enough advantage that it is going to survive dilution in the much larger pool of competitors. There is a conundrum in evolution that says, my very slight, very gradual changes are going to accrue into a new species, ultimately. Yet, if the changes are that gradual, they're not going to confer a reproductive advantage and survive this great gene pool. It's illogical, it's scientifically not possible, and it's scientifically never been demonstrated.

Well, this is one flaw in natural selection. We'll pause here and take our break. We'll come back and continue by looking at some of the other elements of evolutionary theory.