

# CREATION

## A study of where we came from and why it matters in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### LESSON 1: WHAT'S AT STAKE

So what do we do with Genesis 1, 2, and 3? Notice what other churches in America have concluded:

**The Episcopal Church:** Scientific evidence shows that we live in a universe so enormous that it is difficult for the human mind to grasp. This universe has no "up" or "down," no center and no edge. It has been expanding for about 14 billion years from an event called the "Big Bang"

([http://www.episcopalchurch.org/19021\\_58398\\_ENG\\_HTM.htm](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/19021_58398_ENG_HTM.htm))

**The Catholic Church:** Concerning biological evolution, the Church does not have an official position on whether various life forms developed over the course of time. However, it says that, if they did develop, then they did so under the impetus and guidance of God, and their ultimate creation must be ascribed to him.

Concerning human evolution, the Church has a more definite teaching. It allows for the possibility that man's *body* developed from previous biological forms, under God's guidance, but it insists on the *special creation* of his *soul*. Pope Pius XII declared that "the teaching authority of the Church does not forbid that, in conformity with the present state of human sciences and sacred theology, research and discussions . . . take place with regard to the doctrine of evolution, in as far as it inquires into the origin of the human body as coming from pre-existent and living matter—[but] the Catholic faith obliges us to hold that souls are immediately created by God" (Pius XII, *Humani Generis* 36). So whether the human body was specially created or developed, we are required to hold as a matter of Catholic faith that the human soul is specially created; it did not evolve, and it is not inherited from our parents, as our bodies are.

While the Church permits belief in either special creation or developmental creation on certain questions, it in no circumstances permits belief in atheistic evolution.

([http://www.catholic.com/library/Adam\\_Eve\\_and\\_Evolution.asp](http://www.catholic.com/library/Adam_Eve_and_Evolution.asp))

**The Lutheran Church (ELCA):** ELCA members believe that the Bible is the written Word of God... The ELCA has not officially taken a position about evolution. The ELCA teaches that the scriptures witness that all of life is a gift of God. However, the scriptures do not say, for example, how God's creating word, "Let there be...", brings creatures into being. Lutheran tradition has respected the work of the natural sciences in investigating phenomena in the natural world and explaining how they work and how they originated.

(<http://www.elca.org>)

It seems at the very least that the churches that once held prominent places within Christendom have abandoned a plain reading of Genesis 1-3.

In John MacArthur's recent sermon series on the Creation, he had this to say about a work by Henry Morris:

In 1989 scientist Henry Morris wrote an excellent book called, The Long War Against God. And in that book he shows the impact of evolutionary theory on the world. And he reveals the irrefutable fact that the almost

# OPEN HEARTED

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universal belief in evolution that permeates every area of human thinking has effected every area of human life. Not just how we view the physical world, not just how we view the biological sciences, it has effected social sciences, it has effected behavioral sciences, it has effected psychology, it has effected the humanities, it has effected liberal arts, it has effected philosophy and it has even effected religion.

Quoting Henry Morris he says this, "Evolution's lie permeates and dominates modern thought in every field. That being the case, it follows inevitably that evolutionary thought is basically responsible for the lethally ominous political developments and the chaotic moral and social disintegrations that have been accelerating everywhere," end quote.

He goes on in his book to show how everything from genocide to fornication to homosexuality to abortion, to all matters of the destruction of human dignity, not seeing man as made in the image of God, to crime, to drugs and everything else is all a part of the result of a materialistic, humanistic universe without God. So, says Morris, evolution is nothing more than the pervasive modern version of the conflict of the ages, the long war against God.

(<http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/90-210>)

Okay, so the question remains, what do we do with Genesis 1, 2, and 3?

You might think that question has very little to do with the cross of Christ or with Wichita Falls Baptist Church in 2010. If you believe that, you fit in with most of those who call themselves Christians today. Over the weeks to come, we'll find those verses to be foundational and fundamental to all that we believe in the rest of Scripture, what we believe about God, government, family, culture, and the church today, and what we believe about what will happen in the future.

So here we go. Some questions for you to work through before you come to class next Sunday:

1. What is naturalism as it relates to science?
2. From naturalism, evolution was birthed. What is evolution?
3. What questions do you have about the cosmos, our earth, or even what you can't seem to reconcile with Genesis? Please be frank.
4. Why do you think so many denominations have felt it necessary to adapt Scripture to science?
5. Is this a good idea? Why or why not?

Please read and meditate on Genesis 1 through 3 during the week. For the glory of God!