

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Walking Down the Produce Aisle

“Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them” (Matthew 7:17-20). When Jesus spoke these words, His point could not have been clearer. Every person or philosophy that produces bad fruit is evil, while those people and philosophies that produce acceptable fruit are good. Let’s assume the role of “fruit inspector” and investigate the “fruits” of creation and of evolution.

ABORTION—A PRODUCT OF EVOLUTION

A huge debate has been underway since 1973 when it became legal for a mother to end the life of her child through abortion. Every year in the United States, approximately 1 million babies are killed through this process. Is it right? Absolutely not! The Bible repeatedly stresses that it is a sin to “shed innocent blood” (Proverbs 6:17). God Himself recognized unborn babies as human beings. He told the prophet Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5). God values the lives of unborn babies, while our society—in violation of God’s commandments—has decided that these precious little people do not deserve to live.

What could cause a person to look casually upon the deaths of so many innocent children without lifting a finger to stop this holocaust? The concept of evolution provides one explanation as to why these murders are seen as “justifiable” in our society. One evolutionist put it this way: “Among some animal species, then, infant killing appears to be a natural practice. Could it be natural for humans too—a trait inherited from our primate ancestors...?” When the idea of evolution is taken to its ultimate end, then killing a human baby becomes nothing more than squashing a roach in your kitchen. Millions of innocent lives have been sacrificed on the altar of evolution. And all who have had a part in these

activities will “give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead” (1 Peter 4:5).

WHAT HAS THE IDEA OF CREATION GIVEN SOCIETY?

On the opposite side of the coin, we need to look at the consequences of believing in creation. If a person believes that God created this amazing Universe, and that He created human in His image, then human life becomes very important. If a person believes that humans have been created in the image of God, then that person (if he is true to his belief) not only will value human life, but also will seek to protect it. Those who follow the idea of creation to its logical conclusion do not cling to the idea that “the strong should subjugate the weak” or that “might makes right.” Instead, the principles connected to creation lead people take care of those who are less fortunate and weak because of the value of human life. People who strongly believed in creation established most all of the hospitals, orphanages, and civic organizations in the world.

Also, when a person believes in creation, he or she must feel a certain moral responsibility to the Creator. It is because of this “moral responsibility” that many atheists have rejected God. The famous atheist Aldous Huxley once said: “I had motives for not wanting the world to have meaning.... For myself, as no doubt for most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation.... We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom.” In a world with no Creator, every person can do what he or she feels like doing without feeling obligated by any sense of “right” or “wrong.” However, once a person recognizes the Creator, then that person feels obligated to obey that Creator. This moral obligation leads people to help their fellow humans, be better citizens, and be better husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and friends.

After inspecting only a few of the fruits of creation and of evolution, it seems clear that we need to take the axe to one of the trees—the evil tree of evolution.

- Kyle Butt, M.Div.

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All Clocks Have a Clockmaker

In 1802, William Paley published his famous book *Natural Theology*, in which he presented the watchmaker analogy. He explained that if a person were to stumble across a well-designed watch in the middle of the woods, the complexity of the watch would be

evidence that an intelligent designer made the machine. His analogy is an extension of the more formal teleological argument, which simply states that if there is design in nature, that design demands the existence of a designer. The Hebrews writer used the same line of reasoning when he wrote: "For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God" (3:4).

Cutting-edge biological research has added some fresh insight to this ancient wisdom. Malcolm Ritter recently reported on work done by Akhilesh Reddy of Cambridge University and Joseph Bass of Northwestern University (2011). Their research, published in *Nature* centers on the built-in clocks that are housed in the cells of the human body. Ritter wrote, "even the cells throughout our body have their own 24-hour clocks to coordinate activities at the cellular level. Now new research suggests these internal timepieces may be more complicated than scientists thought" (2011).

How interesting! Our body is filled with trillions of cells that contain complicated clocks. Man-made clocks are complex and effective. If a person found such a device in the middle of the forest, he would be forced to conclude it was intelligently designed. The same is true of the biological clocks found in the body.

REFERENCE

Ritter, Malcom (2011), "Study of Cell 'Clocks' Looks at What Makes Us Tick," http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20110126/ap_on_sc/us_sci_body_clocks/print.

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The Little Girl Who Knew Too Much Bible

A little girl, being asked by a priest to attend religious instruction refused, saying it was against her father's wishes. The priest said she should obey him, not her father. "Oh! Sir! We are taught in the Bible to 'Honor thy father and thy mother'," she replied. But you are to call me father" was his answer. To which she replied, "No, for the scriptures say, Call no man father upon earth for one is your Father, which is in heaven'." (Matt. 23:9.)

The priest was not anxious to lose a religious discussion to one so young and he said, "You have no business reading the Bible." "Then, why did Jesus tell me to 'search the scriptures'?" she asked. He replied by saying, "But that is only for the clergy. You

understand that a little child cannot know the scriptures." "Then why," she asked, "did Paul write to Timothy: 'From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures'?" (2 Tim. 4:15.)

Surely there was some way to get the best of this young upstart. Said the priest: "Timothy was being trained to be a bishop and he was taught by the church authorities." "No sir," said the girl. "He was taught by his mother and grandmother. At least that's what Paul wrote." (2 Tim. 1:5.)

The priest turned away and someone said they heard him mumble something about, "she knew enough Bible to poison a whole parish."

- Unknown, 1962

Lord, Is It I?

While eating the Last Supper Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you who eats with Me will betray Me." As you can imagine, this declaration caused a great disturbance among the apostles, and one by one they came to Jesus asking, "Lord, is it I?"

We live in a time when people rarely see themselves as the cause of their own problems, so it seems remarkable to us that they'd ask, "Lord, Is it I?" Instead of asking, "Is it Judas? Could it be Peter or John?" each man looked to himself as the potential betrayer.

The secret to real self-improvement is this kind of self-inventory, but too often we allow our pride to get in the way of such an honest examination. It's so easy for us to see the faults of others while blindly ignoring our own. This is why Peter tells us to be clothed with humility in 1 Peter 5:5. He goes on to say that God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. We need grace to be forgiven, and for that we need humility.

Instead of being so quick to judge others, we need to spend more time simply asking, "Lord, is it I?"

- Simon Harris

> "You can choose the sin you want to practice, but you can't choose the consequences that result!"

> "Nothing shows a man's character as plainly as what he laughs at!"

- > "Prayer will cut many a knot that my own hands cannot untie!"
 - > "Be sure if God sends you on stony paths, He will provide you with strong shoes!"
 - > "HABIT is a cable. We weave a thread of it every day, and at last we cannot break it!" - Horace Mann
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"In The Beginning, God ...!"* (Text: Gen. 1:1); Sunday evening: Hebrews class: Lesson #26, p. 151.