

C H R I S T I A N I T Y and A T H E I S M

4. Evolution

Introduction

"Thus disbelief crept over me at a very slow rate, but at last it was complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress, and have never since doubted even for a single second that my conclusion was correct." (*The Autobiography of Charles Darwin*, 86-87)



Robert Green Ingersoll wrote in his book *Orthodoxy*: "His (Darwin's) doctrine of evolution, his doctrine of the survival of the fittest, his doctrine of the origin of species, has removed in every thinking mind the last vestige of orthodox Christianity" (*The Twilight of Atheism*, p. 99).

William Provine of Cornell University candidly conceded that if Darwinism is true, then there are five inescapable implications: there's no evidence for God; there's no life after death; there's no absolute foundation for right and wrong; there's no ultimate meaning for life; and people don't really have free will" (*The Case for Faith*, p. 90).



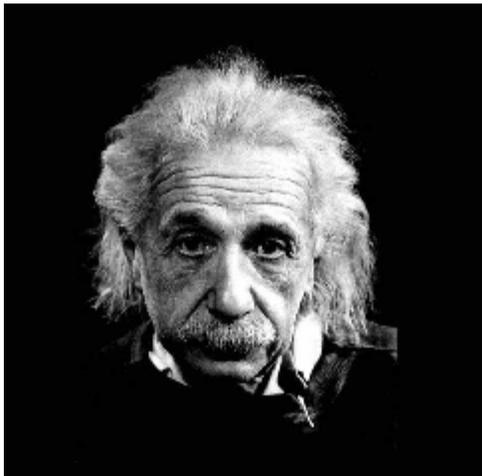
**ROBERT GREEN
INGERSOLL**
"The Great Agnostic"
1833-1899

The Development of This Issue

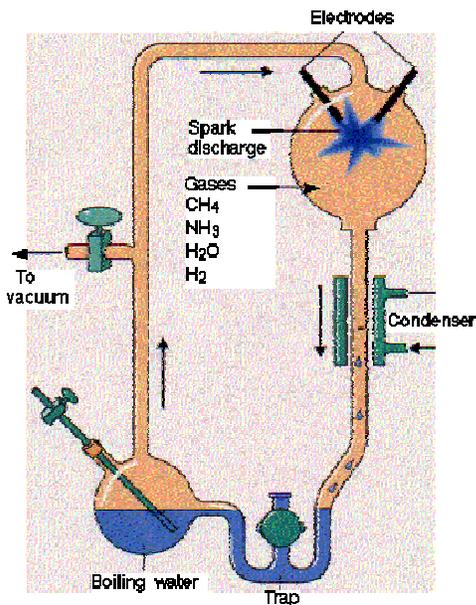
1. A Tool for Skeptics – Some would argue that evolution itself does not necessarily drive away belief in God. There are often other underlying factors. Charles Darwin was turned away from belief by the doctrine of eternal punishment. Thomas Huxley was incensed against the Roman Catholic Church. Evolution is like the oxygen that creates the destructive heat of the acetylene torch. The theory of evolution helped skeptics overturn the authority of Scripture and dramatically shifted the debate between Christianity and atheism.



“British biologist Richard Dawkins was speaking for many when he said that Darwin ‘made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist’” (*The Case for Faith*, p. 90)



2. The Untested Theory – All theories must eventually be tested. In 1905 patent office clerk Albert Einstein published five papers that would eventually revolutionize our view of space, time and the atom. However the world would wait until 1919 for the first verification of his theory when scientists observed that the light of a star was bent by the gravitation of the sun. Numerous experiments have been performed since to verify Einstein’s ideas.

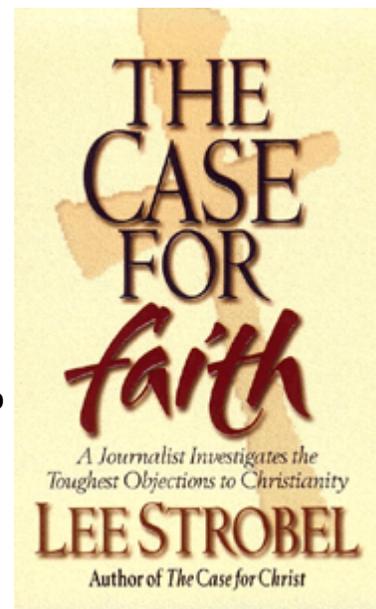


The Theory of Evolution continues to be debated because it cannot be easily tested. One of the best hopes of verification was the origin of life experiments performed by Stanley Miller at the University of Chicago in 1953. Miller used an atmosphere of methane, ammonia, and hydrogen. Passing electricity through this “soup” he was able to create amino acids – the building blocks of protein. However, today most scientists agree that the earth’s atmosphere never had any methane, ammonia, or hydrogen in significant amounts.

The Theory of Evolution remains untested compared to most other theories. The speculation used to explain the various methods of evolution are largely supported by the claim that “given enough time anything can happen.”

Logical Response to the Problem of Evolution

1. Origin of Life? – In his book, *The Case for Faith*, Lee Strobel argues that the inability to account for the origin of life is the achilles heel of the evolution debate. He presents a good summary of the issue.
2. From Chaos to Complexity? – Scientific observation shows that chaos is changed to order only by intelligence. Carl Sagan argued that the receipt of one message from outer space would be proof that there is intelligence “out there.” Yet we have an infinite number of messages coded in the DNA of every living cell which points toward a higher intelligence.
3. Transitional Forms? – The slow, gradual evolution of more complex forms of life predicts the existence of many transitional forms.



Darwin argued that the fossil record was incomplete. Today evolutionists argue that the changes happened so quickly (thousands of years as opposed to millions) that none of the transitional forms were fossilized.

Biblical Response to the Problem of Evolution

1. Everyone "Believes" in Something –

Job 38:4 "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding."

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

2. "Creation" Gives Meaning to Life –

Psalms 139:13-18 ¹³ For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. ¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!

3. Creation is the Foundation for Human Dignity –

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Genesis 9:6 ⁶ "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.

The Declaration of Independence, the founding document of the United States, says:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed . . .

