

How Do We Know...?

Does Epistemology Matter? Does Our View of Origins Matter?

Evolution and billions of years is very clear in its significance: There is no such thing as sin, nor any judgment of sin. There never was any creation, nor any Adam, nor any "fall." Therefore, there's no need for salvation from sin nor is there need of a savior. So Christianity is a great big nothing. The supposed incarnation was unnecessary, nor need there have been a cross. Nobody needs to be "redeemed" from anything. People who believe in Christianity, evolution insists, must be superstitious nitwits. Christianity is just another empty religion to satisfy low I.Q., backward people who have a peculiar need to believe in myths.

Evolution also serves a quasi-social role: it's the ticket of admission to our culture's society of intellectuals. Anyone who rejects evolution in favor of creation is deemed a religious nut and ostracized. So evangelical or other fundamentalist Christians and Orthodox Jews are stigmatized in today's increasingly secular culture.

Evolution and billions of years is radically anti-theistic and anti-Christianity. If there were a God, there'd be no need for evolution and billions of years. The whole evolutionary project in science is precisely because God's existence is rejected, but origins have to be explained.

Christian theologians and church leaders insist on holding to the existence of God. They believe the Bible is a special sacred book, and they believe there really are absolute and ultimate truths. They insist that Christianity is true and necessary. Yet they (uncritically) suppose that scientists have discovered real truths in the physical world regarding origins, viz, evolution and billions of years. So they reject the above-mentioned implications of evolution and contrive

various interpretations of the Bible's origins narrative in order to join evolution to the existence of God and a post-mortem judgment for sin from which Christ saves us. Somehow, they believe, the God of the Bible "used evolution to create."

Possibly a motive for this compromise is to appear intellectual, an attempt to avoid the stigma, the contempt, of being a Bible-believing Christian. (It doesn't.)

This "theistic evolution" is bizarrely incoherent; it's an oxymoron. It's supposing that two, not just contradictory or antithetical, but mutually antagonistic, belief systems can, at the same time, both be true. It's mixing organophosphate insecticide with milk and calling it nutritious.

The following essay explores why Christians err in supposing that evolution and billions of years is a truth that science has discovered regarding our natural world.

Just south of Dallas, Texas, a narrow road extends north from Belt Line Road, and a highway sign posted on the shoulder reads, DANGER, WEAK BRIDGE AHEAD. What should the approaching motorist do? Take a risk and proceed? Or make a U-turn and find some other passage?

We are rational beings. We also make decisions based on certain assumptions. If a bridge has been placed over a stream, we assume that someone designed it well and that it was constructed properly. And normally we don't need to decide when approaching a bridge whether to use it or not. We're used to trusting in the adequacy and safety of infrastructure. But what if there's a warning sign? The issue isn't trust. The issue is knowledge. Do we know, know for sure, that the bridge will hold us up?

Likewise, in the realm of metaphysics, how do we know, know for sure, that what we believe to be true is really true when the

consequences of that belief are dire? In the matter of origins, how do we know that the narrative that science advances is true?

Some Christians today are abandoning belief in the Bible's explanation of origins in favor of that which science claims is true, viz, billions of years of time and evolutionary progress from common ancestors to more complex forms of life. The science narrative, of course, is fiercely naturalistic, assiduously denying any role for the supernatural. But other Christians, convinced of the existence of God, attempt in various ways to modify the science narrative so that a hybrid understanding of origins results.

As a result, many in American churches have now adopted one form or another of what for the sake of this analysis will be termed theistic evolution. It's the notion that God exists and that evolution is true. So, let's examine both of these components. Is each true? Can both be true at the same time?

I Epistemology. Throughout history philosophers have pursued the study of knowledge. What is knowledge? What's the basis of knowledge, and what is its scope? Is knowledge possible? Can we know something for certain, without any doubt? For our purposes epistemology can be understood as the attempt to know if what we think is true is really true.¹

If, on a hot and humid summer day the sky turns dark in late afternoon, we say it is going to rain. That is a reasonable belief based on experience. We may even calculate the probability of rain. But unless we actually get wet, there's no actual knowledge of rain. Knowledge is not belief (although philosophers have written extensively on the relationship between the two). No matter how justifiable a belief, it's not knowledge. Knowledge is not a syllogism with reasons for concluding it's about to rain. A meteorologist

¹ To be precise, epistemology is that branch of analytical philosophy that tests truth claims. It detects fallacies in our thinking. It forces us to think logically about things that matter. It also assumes that truth is *discovered*, not constructed.

skilled in interpreting the weather and aware of the science and causes of rain can't supply the knowledge of rain. An inference isn't knowledge. Nor is intuition. Knowledge is something that's true. It corresponds to reality. It necessarily involves sensory experience because that's how we perceive the world we live in, and whatever the limitations of sensation may be, we all know when it's raining.

And if you're in the basement, preoccupied with something or other, and I come to where you are and tell you it's raining, you too can have that knowledge. Of course, you'd have to have confidence in my truthfulness and in my abilities to observe, but my testimony can assuredly convey to you that it's raining. Especially if you see that my clothes are wet.

Suppose I return home and find the grass is wet. Can I know that it rained while I was away? The wet grass is evidence, but evidence is not dispositive. Appearances can be deceptive. The evidence needs to be interpreted, and the interpretation necessarily involves (a) certain assumptions that may or may not be true, (b) considering alternative explanations, and (c) validating the criteria that will lead to a conclusion.

Some truths are called *a priori*, that is, they derive from the meaning of things. For example, consider the proposition that all chemists are people. We all know that that's true. But that type of knowledge is not our concern here. More to the point is, the ability to acquire knowledge has limits that must be acknowledged. We cannot know for certain that the Copernican model of the solar system is true because within a system, all motion is relative and we can't leave our system to observe it. We cannot know for certain which model of atomic structure is true, whether the Bohr model, the quantum model, or some other model, because we can't observe objects in the picometer range. And we can't know whether a rose blossom is beautiful or not. Can we know when life begins? Can we know that there are alternate universes? Can we know the future? No, no, and

no. There are limits to what we can know by reason, by sense experience, by scientific investigation.

Epistemology sits in judgment of all truth claims, of all human inquiry. Yet most moderns are oblivious to its importance, if they're even aware of it.² Sadly, that includes church leaders, those in the pews, and scientists.

Why is this important? Because billions of years is not the digital output of an instrument that geologists put rocks into. Billions of years is an interpretation of certain data, data that are susceptible to alternative interpretation. The evolution of life forms has never been observed, nor *can* it be observed (hyped claims by some notwithstanding). It's at best an inference, or a hypothesis. These are not observable phenomena of nature like gravity, or inertia, or friction, or the laws of thermodynamics. Billions of years and evolution both result from assuming a naturalistic worldview, which is nothing more than a belief – and an unjustifiable belief at that. To be precise, both billions of years and evolution are speculations, not scientific knowledge. Epistemology gives the lie to speculations masquerading as truth claims.

But what about the Bible's Genesis narrative? Revelation is bona fide knowledge, contingent of course on the knowledge, truthfulness and credibility of the revealer. God doesn't ask us to exercise blind faith, as some foolishly suppose. He has acted in history so that we can know that he exists and he has spoken. He has performed stupendous miraculous acts, witnessed by those whose testimony is recorded in the Bible, to validate his written word. Skeptics irrationally discount the record out of unwarranted anti-supernatural bias. Moreover, because God is transcendent, he's not bound by

² The education of scientists rarely if ever includes the study of philosophy, even though they probably have PhD after their name. Most of those in research or in academics have no understanding of epistemology. Their naturalistic presuppositions are almost never explicit or acknowledged, for they reside in the deep recesses of consciousness.

time, so he knows the future, and the prophecies that have come true in the course of history are the Bible's self-attestation.³ The Bible claims to be God's Word, and there's every reason to accept it as that. Therefore, the origins narrative in the Bible must be accepted as authoritative truth. It's revealed knowledge. The same cannot be claimed for science's origins narrative, which Christians therefore should eschew.

The grand Enlightenment project of attempting to replace revelation with reason was (and is) a grand deception. Revelation is knowledge of that which is otherwise absolutely unknowable. No one, however high his or her IQ, can by the exercise of reason know the truths the Bible lovingly reveals.⁴ That includes where this cosmos and all that's in it came from and how it got here. Christians imbued with the claims of theistic evolution should understand that the origins narrative that science advances is epistemologically untenable. Evolutionists of course are free to *believe* whatever they wish about origins, but to promote their stories and teach them as if they were certain knowledge is deceptive.

³ If God commands all people everywhere to repent and believe in him, that must mean we are able to do that, so that unbelief can be judged as rebellion. Therefore God has provided in the Scriptures the very evidence that we seek and need. Fulfilled prophecies are like miracles that demand the conclusion that a transcendent God exists and has spoken. And that the Bible is his Word. The Bible is self-authenticating. Biblical prophecies concern the Nation of Israel, the nations and cities around Israel, and the numerous Messianic prophecies. History supplies the evidence of fulfillment of these prophecies. God has graciously given undeniable evidence of his existence, so all are without excuse.

⁴ Nor can anyone by the exercise of reason *disprove* the Bible's truths. Hume, for example, had he studied epistemology, would have realized that the Bible's reports of miracles can only be presumed to be false by first assuming miracles are impossible and don't occur. He used circular reasoning, assuming what needed to be proved. Furthermore, he wanted experience to be infallible in demonstrating the absolute uniformity of natural laws, yet fallible when a (supposed) miracle occurs. Carl Sagan famously claimed, "the absence of evidence [for God] is evidence of absence." Epistemology identifies errors in thinking such as these.

II False Assumptions: Evolution assumes the truth of naturalism, that nothing supernatural exists in the universe.⁵ There is no God, there's no heaven, and there's no post-mortem existence or judgment of wrong-doing. Only matter and energy exist.⁶

Naturalism obviously is only a belief, and it's a religious belief at that. It's religious because it involves a proposition about God, albeit a negation of God. This proposition cannot possibly be true, because the non-existence of God is utterly unknowable. So the entire scientific superstructure of billions of years and evolution, what some scientists and most science popularizers go so far as to call "the grand, organizing principle of all nature," is built upon a religious belief. It's a religious belief that is both irrational and devoid of revelatory validation.

The assumption of naturalism is not only an unwarranted belief, it can be demonstrated to be false. Consider the following three arguments. First, it cannot be denied that there's design in the natural world. Evolutionists insist that it's only the *appearance* of design, but it is design. There's integrated complexity in the systems of organisms. There's integrated complexity in the informational systems that reside in all life forms. There's integrated complexity even in the non-organic world, such as the water cycle on earth and

⁵ So-called "methodological naturalism," as opposed to philosophical (or metaphysical) naturalism, is supposed to be an acceptable assumption necessary for the work of science. It's to keep science religiously "neutral." It's a distinction without a difference because its purpose, when introduced in the 19th century, was to mollify the Church's antipathy to the atheism then prevalent among scientists. Methodological naturalism is *prescriptive*, that is, it forbids any reference to anything supernatural. This effectively protects philosophical naturalism from any challenge. Science cannot be neutral because those who do science *necessarily* bring with them their underlying religious controlling beliefs.

⁶ Naturalism is an absolutist dogma, demanding the denial of truth, love, justice, beauty, morality, etc. "Truth" is merely an abstraction, an artificial construct. Survival is the only operating principle. Reality can be explained only by physics, chemistry and biology; anything these hard sciences cannot explain either doesn't exist or is false. Teleology is rejected, everything is meaningless and purposeless. There's no free will. And there's nothing special about humanity. These are clearly irrational, destructive, and deliberately anti-theistic controlling beliefs.

the solar system's exquisite stability due to the motions of the planets. There's magnificent, precise correspondence between form and function everywhere. Aristotle recognized it, and it's in even greater display today with current advances in observational science. Design cannot result from random, purposeless events. Where there's design, there's intelligence and there's planning. There's a designer. Design gives the lie to naturalism.

Second, naturalism not only has no explanation for what makes humans human, it *cannot* explain them. Consciousness and morality, for example, defy naturalistic explanations. Attempts to locate consciousness in reverberating neural pathways is foolishness. The mind is vastly more than brain. All that neurophysiologists can offer to account for consciousness is assertion and speculation. That further research one day will explain it is misplaced hope. The ability to reason, to create, to fantasize, these and other such traits have their only explanation in a creation. And creation, obviously, demands a Creator. Naturalism is similarly refuted by our moral nature. We have innate awareness of right and wrong. Morality is not culturally conditioned, after all even animist cannibals know it's wrong to eat one's own family members. The notion that morality "evolved" by natural selection is, like consciousness, bald assertion and speculation. Naturalism and morality are antithetical.

Third, the ultimate origin of matter and energy, and the origin of life demand creation and refute naturalism absolutely. Matter cannot come into existence out of nothing, nor can the natural laws that inhere in matter bring matter into existence.⁷ That's oxymoronic. Supposing that some natural explanation accounts for the existence of matter simply deposits hope in an infinite regress of causes, which is irrational. Regarding the spontaneous origin of life, which naturalism demands for it to be true, if there's one law of nature that

⁷ The law of gravity, for example, describes the interaction of two objects with mass, but it doesn't explain the existence of those two objects. Laws of nature don't—and can't—create the physical world in which they operate.

is universally observed, it's that life begets life. Life does not and cannot come into existence on its own by any physico-chemical process. That life exists refutes naturalism.⁸

All thought begins with certain assumptions. It's how the mind reasons. This means that the conclusions we reach are only as valid as the presuppositions that underlie them. The above three examples compel the conclusion that the foundational assumption for evolution and billions of years, the notion that matter and energy are all that exist in nature, is false.⁹ Therefore all the proclamations that scientists make about evolution and billions of years are false, regardless how technical the language employed or the instruments or methodologies that are used. Christians who seek to harmonize the existence of God or the bible's creation narrative with science's explanation of origins should understand that what science alleges is a false narrative.

III The Noetic Effects of Sin: Scripture teaches that our sin nature prevents us from thinking rationally. About what? Christian philosopher-theologians have pondered this matter.¹⁰ We certainly can think rationally about mathematics. We can be skilled in the use of logic. We use our minds to harness electricity, build bridges, invent machines, discover antibiotics, put satellites in orbit, and etc.

⁸ Anthony Flew, British atheist of renown, abandoned atheism when confronted with the impossibility of life to originate spontaneously. If the beginning is impossible, he reasoned, there's no need for the rest (common descent). Recognizing the need for intelligence to explain life, he became a deist. Confronted with reality, he had to reject naturalism.

⁹ Many further examples could be adduced to establish the falsity of naturalism. The existence of non-material encoded information systems in cells absolutely defeats naturalism. But the most compelling refutation of naturalism is the resurrection of Christ. For evidences for the resurrection, one readily available resource is Wm. Lane Craig's discussion in www.reasonablefaith.org.

¹⁰ One book length treatment is by Stephen K. Moroney, *The Noetic Effects of Sin: A Historical and Contemporary Exploration of How Sin Affects Our Thinking*, Lanham, Md: Lexington books, 2000. An insightful article reviewing Moroney's book is "The Noetic Effects of Sin," by Dewey J. Hoitenga, in *Calvin Theological Journal* 38:68-102, 2003.

And we all can make reasonable decisions about many of life's issues.

But when it comes to spiritual matters, matters that deal with God or the Bible, our rebellious nature blocks careful thought. Sin causes us to be spiritually blind. Sin prevents us from thinking clearly, rationally, about God. Our minds are corrupted, so that we cannot respond to biblical truths. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, for they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). Non-Christians will use their minds to deny God's truths so that they remain in sin. They "suppress the truth in unrighteousness" (Romans 1:18-21). Jesus said, "This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light, for their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). The Gospel is "foolishness to those who are perishing" (1 Corinthians 1:18). It's not only our sin nature that prevents us from thinking clearly about spiritual matters, "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

This corruption of thought due to mankind's rebellion against God is no arcane biblical doctrine. Sin causes us to be deceived (Hebrews 3:13); we are susceptible to self-deception (Galatians 6:7, 1 John 1:8, and 1 Timothy 4:1); unbelievers' minds are darkened (Ephesians 4:17-18); and we are the target of the father of lies (John 8:44). We must respond with faith to the Gospel in order to attain knowledge of truth (2 Timothy 3:7) and thus turn from darkness to light (Acts 26:18). We're to be renewed in the spirit of our *minds* (Ephesians 4:22-24). Jesus repeatedly accused the unbelieving Jews opposing him of having a sin-darkened mind (John 3:19-21; 5:42; 8:44-46; and 12:42). The noetic effect of sin explains why Paul wrote 2 Corinthians 10:5.

Like the above-mentioned sign warning about the weak bridge, the Scriptures provide an abundance of warning: We are not to trust the

speculations and proclamations of unbelievers that contradict God's Word. It's "knowledge falsely so-called" (1 Timothy 6:20).

This means that the notion that scientists are objective and religiously neutral in doing their work is nonsense. Both Christians and non-Christians necessarily bring their religious presuppositions with them to the laboratory. Unbelievers *cannot* look at evidence unbiased and come to a reasoned conclusion regarding origins. The noetic effect of sin means that non-Christian biologists will necessarily interpret any and all evidence to mean evolution. Geologists, paleontologists, cosmologists, anthropologists, etc, necessarily do the same. The noetic effect of sin not only distorts the thinking of individuals regarding God, it is embedded in the communities in which they participate in the form of shared beliefs.¹¹ This means that when scientists "reach a consensus" (for example, on the great age of the earth or common ancestry), they simply are all starting with the same presuppositions. (Even if a scientist were to doubt the anti-theistic claims of his specialty, the noetic effect on his will prevents him from actively resisting them.) When it comes to origins, shared naturalistic presuppositions, anti-theistic religious convictions, always result in anti-God and anti-biblical conclusions. The ability to reason is not a neutral or impartial faculty.

Of course, Christians still have a sin nature, which means that their minds also are vulnerable to the noetic effects of sin. But Christians, because of their relationship with Christ, have the Scriptures and the indwelling, sanctifying Spirit to enlighten their thinking. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge." To fear the Lord is to want to obey Him, that is, to want to submit to His Word because it's acknowledged to be entirely true and

¹¹ Many scientists hold to evolution mainly for sociologic reasons, because modern science forbids any theistic stance. Obtaining a graduate degree, getting publications in peer-reviewed high-impact journals and getting funding all demand conformity to establishment views. Evolution is an enforced belief; the rebellion against God is enstructured in science.

authoritative.¹² Only by humble submission and obedience to the Scriptures and participation in a community that seeks the mind of Christ can a Christian escape the noetic effect of sin.¹³

Christians who accept the Bible as God's Word should commit to its origins' narrative, as it was traditionally interpreted (that is, prior to the Enlightenment and its rejection of revelation), as historical narrative. For a Christian to suppose that the origins tale that science advances should be accepted as true is to miss totally the formidable noetic effect of sin. Non-Christian scientists *cannot* discover true knowledge of the great age of the earth or of the evolutionary history of life, it's simply impossible. Theistic evolution therefore is a false narrative.

IV The Folly of Contradicting God: The nature of the *imago dei*, the image of God, has been variously regarded as relational (ie, attributes that enable relationships, both horizontally and vertically), functional (ie, a grant of dominion; we represent God on earth), or reflective (ie, God sees his own glory reflected in us). Perhaps the ambiguity is deliberate, that is, the term may encompass all three of these concepts. But a dominion mandate is unmistakably there, for Genesis 1:28 says, "Rule over..." Adam naming the animals certainly indicates having such authority. And Jesus, the second Adam, exhibited dominion over nature in the miracles he performed. Man was originally to have dominion over creation.

¹² The concept of authority seems to have lost its meaning in this modern era. Authority means we're obligated to believe and obey the Word as if it were God himself. God has delegated his authority to a book. It's how he exercises sovereignty while preserving freedom. To be sure, interpretation of the text poses problems, but they are surmountable. Differences of interpretation are not the same as denying its authority, which is rebellion.

¹³ Most Christians seem unaware of how deceitful sin is, how it surreptitiously sullies our character as well as clouds our thinking. We won't be delivered from our sin nature until our glorification, but until then, we must recognize its grip on us and deliberately attempt to overcome it. The Christian life is a continual struggle against the rages of sin. The goal is transformation, or Christ-likeness, not peace and happiness.

But of course it was a delegated dominion; we were to be God's vice-regents on earth. As creator, God has ultimate and absolute dominion. To what extent the dominion mandate has been lost due to the entrance of sin and God's judgment of it is controversial, but certainly it hasn't been lost. We make airplanes, we grow our own food, and we create symphonies; animals don't.

But if we believe that we came into existence by evolutionary mechanisms, that is, by purely natural processes, then we're ascribing divine attributes to the physical world. We're saying that nature has the ability to create. We're essentially saying that nature is deity. (This is idolatry.) And by asserting that nature is deity, we're thereby saying that nature, the physical creation, has dominion over us. Not wanting what was above us (God), we put what was below us (nature) above us. Holding to evolution, man abdicates his role of representing and glorifying God. And man abdicates his exalted status in the created world.¹⁴ Evolution reverses the created order. It perverts reality. Thus evolution mocks us. It dehumanizes us. It steals the *imago dei* from us.

Rejecting God's rightful dominion over us, we repudiate our delegated dominion over nature, and as a consequence we necessarily experience God's judgment. And so we came under the dominion of nature (Genesis 3:17-19) – as punishment. Too, in rebellion against God, we unwittingly came under the dominion of evil. And we thereby repudiate the very essence of humanity that God lovingly endowed us with, His image.

It therefore is inconceivable that a Christian would want to take from science its perverted understanding of origins and attempt to connect it in some way to God. Theistic evolution is foolishness in the extreme!

¹⁴ Jonathan Threlfall makes this point in his article, "The Doctrine of the Imago Dei: The Biblical Data For An Abductive Argument For The Christian Faith" in the *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 62:543-61, 2019.

V Does Our View of Origins Matter? Sadly, in America today Christianity is effete. For a host of reasons, most believers have little passion for the things of God, scant desire to serve Him, and a severely attenuated awareness of the goal of attaining spiritual maturity. “It doesn’t matter how I live, or what I’m like personally, I believe in Christ so I have forgiveness of sin and I’m on my way to heaven.” A corollary of this attitude is, “It doesn’t matter what I believe about origins; it’s not a salvation issue.” This is grievous error. We need a better understanding of our calling.

The Christian is called to obey God, to honor God, to worship him, to be like him, to serve him – in short, we’re called into a relationship with God akin to that which obtains within the Trinity (2 Peter 1:4). God is our Father, and thanks to the Person and work of the Son, we’ve been brought into a mutually loving relationship with the Godhead.

Now, God so identifies with His Word that to encounter the Word is to encounter God (Isaiah 66:2b). Every phrase of Scripture expresses not only God’s will, but God himself. To honor and love God is to honor and love his Word. As God is truth, so is his Word.¹⁵ As God is holy, so is his Word.

Just as Christ is the living Word, so the Word of God is our life. It controls our mind, our heart, our will – we live out the Word of God as we go through life. Our penchant for truth, indeed for God, is expressed by our devotion to Scripture. We’re as loyal to it as we are to God himself. Therefore, the Genesis origins’ narrative, as the

¹⁵ A not widely recognized macro-theme of the Scriptures is truth. Truth is challenged at the outset, in Genesis 3, and truth is vindicated at the end of Revelation. Salvation is a sub-theme because it’s based on our acknowledging God’s Word as true, so that we then act on it. Every historical detail and every propositional statement in the Bible must be absolutely true, and every prophecy or promise likewise must be fulfilled, or else Satan could accuse God of being unrighteous and therefore unable to condemn him. An awareness of epistemology, the assumptions involved in the exercise of reason, and the corrupting influence on reason due to sin, as discussed in this essay, are essential to understanding the absolute imperative of holding to the Scriptures as authoritative truth.

people of God have understood it for thousands of years, is *necessarily* our understanding of origins.

Theistic evolution attempts either to link science's anti-theistic and un-provable assertions to God's Word. Or it alleges that the anti-theistic speculations of science are God's doing. In either case, the effort impugns God. The Christian's ultimate happiness is being in God's presence. He doesn't need to adjust his beliefs to modern secular culture's alien religious beliefs nor engage in self-serving compromise.

Conclusion

This essay has argued that science cannot tell us anything about the age of the earth or how we got here. Epistemology shows that such an undertaking is doomed. The naturalistic assumptions that form the basis for and control the entire endeavor are false. All human investigation of the created world, to the extent that it deals with origins, is corrupted by the darkness of unregenerate minds.

Nevertheless, proudly assuming independence from God, non-Christian scientists boldly assert a host of anti-theistic postulates. They suppose that nature can give rise to nature, that something can come into existence from nothing. They devise imaginative scenarios regarding our supposed origin deliberately to contradict God's Word. In rebellion against God, they have their own particular beliefs and sacred myths. It's self-deception to suppose they don't, because everyone has beliefs about God. To believe God doesn't exist is a religious belief. So two religions are competing for the minds and hearts of Western man: anti-theistic "secularism" (for lack of a better label) and biblical Christianity.¹⁶ It's impossible to

¹⁶ It seems incongruous to use the term "secularism" for a religion. But it's appropriate because non-Christians either hide their anti-theistic beliefs behind a façade of irreligion, or they're self-deceived. Certainly, not all who regard themselves as secular are actively anti-theistic; but indifference to God is unbelief, and the refusal to believe in the One who has revealed himself and the concomitant exultation in autonomy constitutes rebellion. Because those who hold to evolution locate the ability to create in

hold to both at the same time because they are mutually contradictory. One must choose.

The one who seeks to honor God with his life and with his mind, who with joy has received the salvation that is in Christ, so freely offered by God's grace, will recognize the deceptive nature of this entire anti-theistic project and will have nothing to do with it. He will instead submit and stay glued to the Word of the God who loves him.

the physical world, the most precise term for their religion is pantheism. They worship that which has been created rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25). This makes theistic evolution a syncretism.