

DOES GOD EXIST?

September/October 2007

Volume 34 • Number 5

The Incredible Timing of the Seasons
(See Dandy Designs, page 24)

**A nonprofit effort
to convince mankind
that God is real and
the Bible is His Word.**

Does God Exist? Lectureships

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Does God Exist? Financial Report

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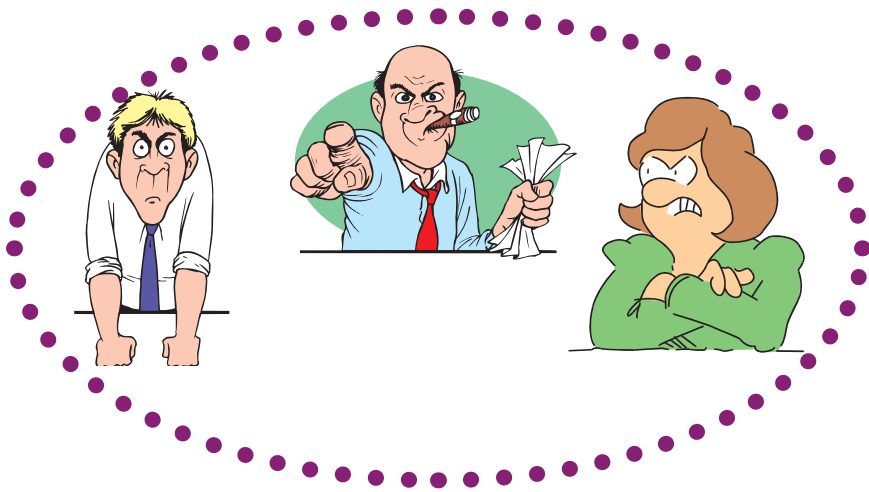
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Learning to Be Content



The above picture portrays the end result of a mother/daughter battle between my daughter Cathy and her two girls Hayley and Harper. There had been a series of evening meals when the girls wanted something different than what their mother had fixed for dinner, and the complaining about wanting something different had gotten to my daughter. My daughter is very creative, so she got a bottle of pigs feet at the store and the next time the girls wanted "something different" she handed them the bottle and told them to fix their own "something different." This picture shows our granddaughter Hayley's reaction to this alternative. My daughter says that the bottle of pigs feet is still in the pantry and is still unopened.

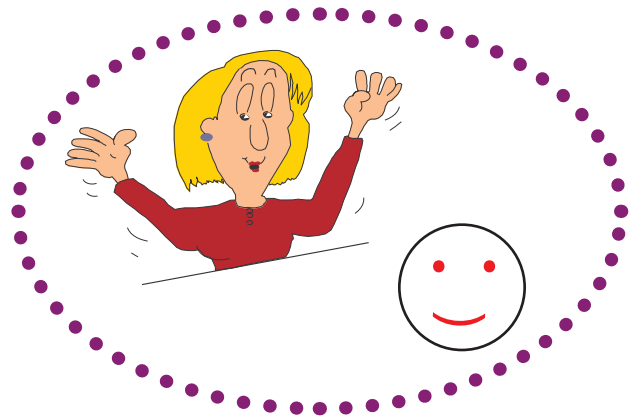
We live in a society that is basically very unhappy. The suicide rates continue to climb in all sectors of our society, and discouragement is widespread. The combination of war, natural disaster, economic



problems, and medical conditions ranging from cancer to chemical depression have all contributed to the unhappiness we see all around us. This situation is something that has connections to what our religious belief systems are all about. If you believe that this life is all there is, then anything that is negative in this life is a major problem. If you hold to the Christian viewpoint about life, then whatever happens in this life is the worst thing you will ever have to experience. There is always room for optimism and positivism because things ultimately will improve.

The followers of Jesus Christ were taught how to be positive and happy with whatever life brought their way. In Luke 3:14 when Roman soldiers asked Jesus how to improve their lives in God's sight they were told to "be content with your wages." The word content in the original language is *arkeo*, meaning to ward off, help suffice (*Young's Analytical Concordance*). We can ward off dissatisfaction, depression, and frustration as Christians by being content. Our society pressures us to

seek a higher income at all cost, and yet life does not always bring wealth no matter what we do. Wealth does not bring satisfaction and peace, if we do find it. Paul emphasized this idea to Timothy in 1 Timothy



6:7-8 when he said, "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can take nothing out of it. So we should be well satisfied without money if we have enough food and clothing." In Hebrews we see a similar admonition to Christians where they are told to "Keep your life free from covetousness and be satisfied with what you have for God himself has said I will never forsake you or abandon you" (Hebrews 13:5).

These teachings to Christians are not just vague suggestions of surrender to failure. They are fundamental teachings of something that can be learned and that is a key to being happy and satisfied with what life brings to you. If you have no belief in God or that there is anything beyond this life, then you are doomed to unhappiness and frustration. There will always be someone who has something you do not have, no matter how successful you are. If the mantra you use to guide your life is "survival of the fittest," then you will always be on the edge wanting to make sure that you are more fit than everyone else. Belief in naturalism and Darwinism dooms its adherents to misery and unhappiness, because being satisfied is anathema to the belief system they adhere to. This is why atheist web sites and periodicals are so full of hate and belligerence. It is also why programs like **Does God Exist?** are constantly bombarded with threats and periodically experience violence.



The problem for most of us is that we have been raised and educated in a system that promotes all of these sectarian naturalistic values. It is hard to learn to be satisfied. Philippians 4:6-13 gives us some interesting comments about these concepts. Paul begins by saying "Do not worry about anything; but tell God every detail of your needs in earnest and thankful prayer. And the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." So how do you not worry about things? The passage clearly tells us that prayer is a primary tool that helps reduce worry. If you have not tried it, do not knock it. The basic concept is that when we look to a higher power and get beyond ourselves and our own selfish desires and wants, anxiety and worry decrease and satisfaction increases. Learning you do not have to be better than everyone else, that things are not the sum total of what is important, and that survival is not confined to those who are the fittest are all by-products of getting beyond ourselves.


Paul goes on in Philippians by saying, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovable, gracious, virtuous, and worthy of praise are what we need to think on. If your mind is focused on outdoing everyone else around you, you are doomed to misery. Every defeat and every loss becomes a monumental problem to worry about. If what is important to you are truth, honesty, beauty, and positivity then you will not be dragged down by setbacks and momentary failures because there is so much beauty and so many wonderful things associated with what God has given us.

Talk is cheap, and such statements as this can be viewed as naive. Paul realizes this as he continues his comments in verse 11. “Do not think that I am saying this under pressure of want, for I have **learned** how to be contented with the condition I am in.” Being content in life, and avoiding depression, worry, and frustration is something we learn. Part of maturing as a Christian means learning not only to look to a higher power, but learning to concentrate on the positive things listed in the previous paragraph. Paul says he learned how to face difficult times (verse 12) as well as facing prosperity. He says he has learned how to be well fed and how to hunger. By the time you go through the various things that happen in life you learn as a Christian how to be content.

Paul’s final comment is, “I am ready for anything through the strength of the one who lives within me” (verse 13). God offers us direct help when we pray and concentrate on the good things that God has and will do for us. Knowing that this life is the worst we will ever have to endure, and that nothing that happens materially is of eternal significance as far as we are concerned is a huge help in dealing with struggles in life. We learn to be content through prayer, through understanding how insignificant anything in this life is, and by experience which shows us how futile it is to make things the focus of our lives. This is a learning process, and as we age we should become increasingly content with where we are in life and with what we have. Our goal is to be able to feel as Paul stated it in 2 Timothy 4:7-8. “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all that welcome his return.”

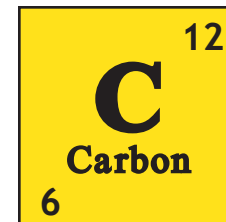
—John N. Clayton

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The Wonder of Carbon

One of the things that skeptics of the existence of God and people immersed in UFO claims seem to share is the belief that there may be intelligent beings elsewhere in the cosmos who are made up of different substances than we are and live differently than we do. It may very well be that there is life elsewhere in the cosmos. The Bible does not say that this is the only place where God has seen fit to create life, and it would be foolish to dogmatically insist that life is peculiar to planet Earth. The fact remains, however, that every observation that mankind has made of other galaxies, other stars, all cosmic material, and now even planets orbiting other stars has shown that they are made of the same materials and function according to the same physical laws that we see operative on Earth. Carl Sagan, a favorite authority used by skeptics and UFOlogists alike, said it well. “The laws of chemistry and physics are the same everywhere in the cosmos.”



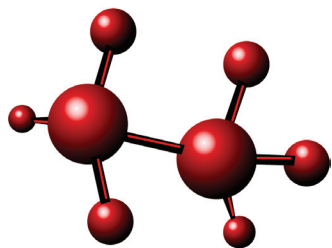
Life on Earth is based on the chemistry of carbon. There are over 90 naturally occurring elements in the cosmos, but carbon has a unique set of properties which enables it to form everything from cells to cyanide. In the chart below is a copy of what is called the periodic chart. This is a logical arrangement of all of the elements in the cosmos based upon their composition and structure. In order

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to form life and life-supporting materials, elements must hold on to their electrons, but not hold on to them too strongly. Elements on the left side of the periodic chart do not hold on to their electrons very well. It is very easy to strip electrons away—a process called ionization.

In a similar way, the elements on the far right hand side of the chart require massive amounts of energy to take away an electron. Very frequently these materials like chlorine (number 17 in the chart) will take an electron away from a material in the left hand column (like sodium, number 11) and produce a material like salt (which is sodium chloride). The long chains of atoms necessary to form cells and the organic compounds that support life cannot be made of atoms that are easily ionized either by losing or gaining an electron.

Another trend in the chart is the size of the atoms. As you move to the right in the chart and as you move down in the chart, atoms become larger. We all know that you cannot build a house out of huge boulders or grains of sand—there is an optimum size to the particles that you use to do construction with. Another property of the chart is how metallic the materials are. Metals have a certain set of properties—they tend to conduct electricity, be shiny, and do a number of chemical things that nonmetals do not do. The left side of the chart and the bottom of the chart tend to be more metallic in nature. On the right hand side of the chart you have materials that do not have metallic properties. These materials, like the halogens in the next to last column, are usually gases and are very harsh chemically active materials. The very last column on the right are called the inert gases, which are totally inactive chemically.



In the middle of all of this, we see a vertical row made up of carbon, silicon, germanium, tin, and lead. Tin and lead are very metallic and could not be used to form life materials. That leaves us with carbon, silicon, and germanium as materials that are perfect chemically to form life and life-support materials. The electron configuration of these materials have what is called an sp³ hybrid structure. What that means is that these atoms have their electrons arranged in such a way that they can form a virtually unlimited number of structures. They can arrange themselves end to end and make long chains of materials sharing electrons between them. They can form a stronger bond by sharing two electrons each and produce a whole new series of compounds. They can arrange themselves into rings, and the rings can even be hooked together. Every combination produces a new family of materials which have a family name—the alkanes, the alcohols,

the aldehydes, the ketones, etc. These three elements can behave as a metal or as a nonmetal depending upon what is around them. They can conduct electricity, but do not do it too well. A small impurity can radically change the way in which they conduct electricity—which has led to semiconductors and the whole electronics industry.

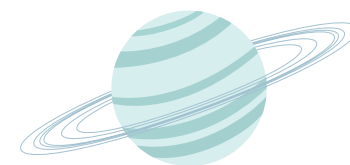
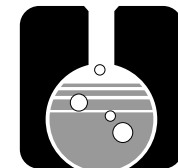
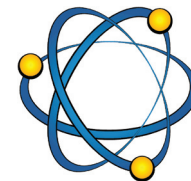
Of the three elements that make up this group of wonderful atoms, carbon is the most versatile. Carbon has six electrons which allows it to be relatively small and to have greater control of its electrons (a property known as electronegativity). The nucleus of carbon is less than half the weight of silicon and six times lighter than germanium. That means that even though the three atoms have similar electron configurations, carbon is much lighter, easier to move, and a more flexible choice for living materials than the other two.



Virtually all of organic chemistry is the chemistry of carbon. Carbon can be arranged in a lattice that makes a diamond. It can be made into granules which we call graphite. Carbon can be made into little balls called buckyballs, which we are just beginning to find ways to use. It can be combined with oxygen to make carbon dioxide, or in limited amounts of oxygen it forms carbon monoxide. Adding more oxygen and hydrogen produces sugar (glucose) and still more produces fructose (another sugar). Combine glucose and fructose and you get sucrose or normal table sugar. Add some nitrogen to these atoms and you can get a protein.

It is interesting that carbon makes up a very small percentage of the earth's crust. Silicon makes up 28 percent of the crust and oxygen makes up 47 percent. The rest is aluminum (18 percent) and other metals (16 percent). These elements make up the rocks that support us, but life itself is made up of carbon which is relatively rare compared to these other elements. The source of carbon is believed to have been nuclear fusion in ancient stars. To have all of life produced by an element is relatively rare on the earth, not a primary product of the sun, and yet vital for all of life is a most interesting situation. As we look at other rocky planets and at our moon, we see extremely small amounts of carbon. Only in the huge gas planets like Jupiter and Saturn do we see significant amounts of carbon.

So would we expect to find aliens elsewhere made of chemistry radically





different than ours? The answer is “no.” Carl Sagan used to call himself a “carbon chauvinist” because, whatever life there is in the cosmos, will have to be made of carbon, not silicon, germanium, or some other element. If people want to talk about rock people or fire people they can do so, but not in a scientific framework. That would be more of a fantasy perspective. Is there life elsewhere made of carbon compounds? Who knows; but if it is found, it will have been

produced by the same chemist and engineer that produced it here on Earth. All of the evidence suggest that the chemist and the engineer was not mindless chance. We truly can know there is a God through the things He has made (Romans 1:19-22), and carbon is a wonderful designed foundation for that life, where ever it may be found.

—JNC

Apologetic Problems with Miracles

There is probably no area of the whole atheist/believer debate where more anger and hostility is generated than the subject of miracles. When we get an e-mail from either an atheist or a believer that has the word miracle in it, I almost always find that there is also a great deal of abuse and name calling in the body of the e-mail. There are a lot of causes for this anger. Atheists feel that claims of miracles have been overblown and are generally false. They also have had the experience of being treated in a condescending way by religious people who hold miracles as a demonstration of superiority. For many denominations the existence of miracles is a doctrinal issue, and if a miracle is denied it is a denial of their creed. For most of us



who just try to live from day to day without engaging in any heavy discussion of an issue like this, the subject of miracles is difficult because we need one. We may be sick or have sickness in our family, we may be in economic stress, death may be or has been present in a loved one, or we may feel threatened by things beyond our control. “Why has God let this happen?” is a phrase I have heard many times from atheists and believers alike. Any discussion of miracles in the past has tended to generate more heat than light, and I hope that in this discussion we can look at some of the problems with miracles and prayer in a constructive way that will reduce the inflammatory nature of this subject.



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Definitions. Webster defines the word miracle as “an event or effect that apparently contradicts known scientific law and is hence thought to be due to supernatural causes, especially to an act of God.” There are two different words in the Greek of the New Testament that are used for miracle. The first is the word *semeion* which literally means a sign. John 2:11 says, “This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed...” This kind of miracle was a validation of a spokesman as approved of God. The Gospel of John is a gospel with apologetic intent, and this is the word John uses throughout his gospel (see John 2:11; 2:23; 3:2; 4:54; 6:2; 6:14; 6:26; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18; 12:37). It is also used in Acts in the same way (see Acts 4:16; 4:22; 6:8; 8:6; 15:12). The point of this use of the word miracle is that a miracle was an indication that this speaker was from God and was not an imposter. There are and always have been humans who claimed to be God or claimed to speak for God. Performing a miracle that was clearly impossible for humans to do was a validation of the speaker and the speaker’s message. In the case of Jesus, this use of miracles was stated to be a sign of who he was and what he was—“The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us” (John 1:14).

The second Greek word used to convey a miracle is *dunamis*, referring to an act of power. This is something used to go beyond what man can do by his own devices and might better fit the definition given in Webster. John never uses this word and Mark uses it once in Mark 9:39. It is more commonly used in Acts (see Acts 2:22; 8:13; 19:11). An act of power might not necessarily be a sign. In Acts 2:22 Peter lists three things that Jesus did that he calls their attention to—miracles (*dunamis*), wonders (*teras* in the Greek, meaning wonder

or prodigy), and signs (*semeion* mentioned above). Peter indicates that these three things were done by Christ to confirm his authority. It is obvious that in our day and time no one should be attempting to do what Peter is talking about. Anyone claiming to be Christ today is at odds with what Jesus taught and we would join the atheist in rejecting their claims. Not only can they not do the things Jesus did, but the purpose Jesus had in his miracles is not relevant to us today. If there is a miracle in today's world, it will come directly from God, not from any mortal. There are some limits as to what God will and will not do that must necessarily be a part of this discussion.

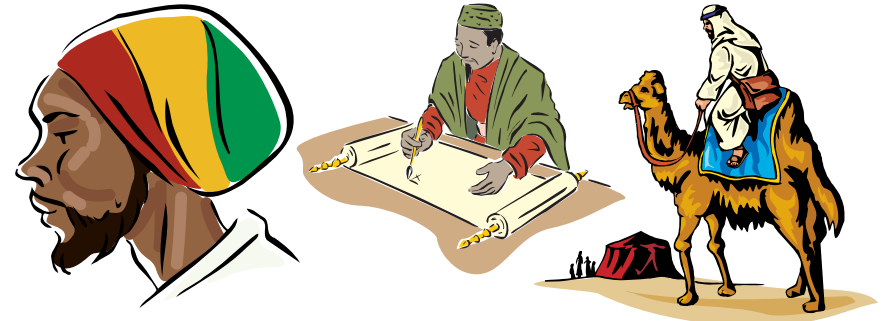
There are Some Things God

Will Not Do. One thing God will not do is to violate the promises He has made. God has told us, "It is appointed unto man once to die, and after that to face judgment." I may live as perfectly as I can, but I have a promise of God that will not be violated and that promise is that I will die and face judgment. Many times people on all sides of the issues want God to step in and violate this promise. That is not consistent with God's nature, and it will not happen. I remember praying for a man in our local hospital shortly after I became a Christian, and having him interrupt my prayer when I asked God to spare his life. He let me know in no uncertain terms that he was ready to die and he knew that promise of God was going to happen; and he was ready for it to happen as soon as possible. He then led me in a prayer that concerned helping his family deal with his death and helping him to go peacefully and without pain. Ecclesiastes 3 tells us that there are things that God will not alter in the physical world—"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven."



God has promised us as humans that we will reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). Sometimes we want to engage in destructive behaviors and then have God step in and stop the natural consequences of those behaviors. Not only does this apply to a situation like a smoker who gets lung cancer after smoking for 30 years, but it also applies to a political system that teaches racial superiority and rejects the principles of morality that God has given us. People who reject God because He did not strike Adolph Hitler dead before Nazi Germany started rounding up Jews and putting them in concentration camps are asking God to violate His promises. If you believe this life is all there is, then these kinds of events are catastrophic in nature. If this

life is only a blink in the total expanse of our existence, their horribleness is less consuming.



Another thing that God will not do is to be a respecter of persons. One of the unique things about the Christian system is its total rejection of racism, elitism, sexism, and nationalism. Matthew 5:45 begins by telling us that God "causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous." In Acts 10:34 God convinces Peter about the fact that all men are equal in God's sight. Peter says "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism, but accepts men from every nation who respect Him and do what is right." Over and over in the New Testament writings the equality of mankind in God's sight is emphasized. "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free" (1 Corinthians 12:13). "For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all" (Romans 10:12-13). "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). "Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all" (Colossians 3:11).



God never intended for Christians to come to their faith to escape problems in life. Nowhere are we promised we will not have problems, sickness, death, or will not suffer violence. What we are promised is that we will have a way of escape provided for us before we reach the breaking point (1 Corinthians 10:13), but that way of escape may be death. To expect God to do something for me that would not be available to others is to make God a respecter of persons. We are all equally precious in the sight of God, and miracles and prayers are not vehicles to make me better than someone else.

The third thing that God will not do is to violate the purpose He had in creating us. We are here for a purpose and we have a mission

to fulfill. Ephesians 6:12 and 3:10 tell us that our struggle extends far beyond the mundane things of this life. “His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:10-11). Job 1 and 2 allow us to see this wisdom being made known to Satan. Job serves as a major player in the cosmic struggle between good and evil. When all the theologians and philosophers of his day have had their say, God steps in and shows Job why he was created and what role he has played. Job responds in Job 42:5 by saying, “Lord, before all these things had happened to me, I had heard of thee by the ear, but now my eye sees you.” He goes on and praises God because he sees his purpose and understands that he has been a part of the whole eternal battle between good and evil.

If God had intervened in the middle of Job’s discourse with his friends, and stopped Job’s struggle and his pain, the book of Job would not be in the Bible. The whole purpose and message of Job would have been lost, and in fact the reason for him being known to all of mankind today would have been destroyed. We are no different than Job. You can take Job’s name out of the book of Job and put your name in place of it. When we leave this world, we will be freed from all of the things that afflict us here. That is when God steps in and puts a stop to our pain and trouble—“And God shall wipe away all tears from [our] eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are all passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

So Why Should We Pray? Prayer has never been for God’s benefit. Jesus clearly demonstrated that principle when He said “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath” (Mark 2:27). Worship and all the acts involved in worship are for man’s benefit. Singing allows us to be united in a special way. Giving shapes our attitudes and gives us the ability to have the best of relationships in life. Prayer allows us to learn to look to a higher power and get beyond the problems and struggles of this life. God does not need for us to tell Him what is going on, or to build His ego or relieve His depression. The Bible tells us over and over that God knows what we have need of before we ask (Matthew 6:8). Prayer is our way to form a relationship with God and to be encouraged and feel support and fellowship that sustains us in the problems of life.

The times in the Bible when we have a promise of a miracle being given in response to our prayers is when the prayer involves ourselves and our work in service to God. James 1:5 says “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.” When we read, “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door

will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7-8), the context is “seek first his kingdom and righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). When we read “If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer” (Matthew 21:22) the context is the tackling of a mountain and having the faith to move that mountain—to try anything no matter how huge the obstacle may appear to be. When you read “You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it” (John 14:14), the context is “Show us the father” in verse 8. Coming to God and learning about God will never be a disappointment. When we read “...ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you” (John 15:7), the context is bearing much fruit (verse 8). This is also true of John 15:16, “The father will give you whatever you ask in my name.” The same statement is made in John 16:23-24 and the context is finding complete joy in the Second Coming. First John 3:22-23 tell us “We have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask” in the context of “love one another.” God can give you the miracle of love so that you can love in a way and in circumstances the world cannot understand.



The times the Bible speaks negatively about prayers and guarantees they will not be answered is when the object of the prayer is selfishness. James 4:3 makes this very clear when James says “When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.” Prayer was never intended for purposes of boosting our ego, giving us physical or social comfort, economic gain or stability, or even good health. Romans 8:26-28 tells us that our prayers are helped by the Spirit when we do not even know what to pray for. That will not happen if our prayers are selfish, but it happens all the time when our prayers are spiritual and “according to the will of God.” First Corinthians 2:11-16 makes it clear that “the man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

There is never any problem in asking God for anything as long as our heart is right and our motives are pure in what we ask. Attempting to force God to satisfy our selfish wants and desires is very wrong.

Most claims of miracles that we hear about in today's world are not miracles at all, and making the claim they are causes great damage. One kind of damage is the Christian who has the same problem and does not get the claimed miracle that someone else got. All of the theological arguments in the world will not remove the hurt of trying to understand why God gave someone else an answer that was not given to me. We should never view a chronic illness or a death as a refusal of God to care about us or answer our prayers.

The other kind of damage is what atheists can do with this when it becomes clear that what happened was not a special miraculous act of God. In the February 2007 issue of *Reader's Digest*, there is a humorous article by Art Buchwald. Mr. Buchwald tells how he became a "poster boy" for Hospice. Buchwald was dying of kidney failure, was on dialysis, and decided to end his life by taking himself off of dialysis. He gets everything ready including planning his funeral and his family is told death is imminent by the Hospice nurses. Buchwald then tells us (page 202), "Against all odds, my kidneys started working again and could function without dialysis. It was a mystery to my doctors. My friends decided it was a miracle."

I had an atheist friend who was dying of colon cancer. He had entered the hospital to "be made comfortable." This 200-pound man was down to about 75 pounds and was being fed intravenously when he awoke one morning feeling better than he had in quite a while. He managed to get the nurses to bring him some food and felt even better. By the end of the day he was eating like a horse and feeling stronger by the minute. A week later he left the hospital and continued being an active atheist for many years after his hospital stay with no sign of the cancer he was dying with. Was this a miracle? My answer to that question is in the negative. Cancer is a mysterious disease, and sometimes things just happen with it that defy human explanation. Many of his religious friends told him God was giving him one last chance to avoid hell, but if that was the case it did not work.

Making wild and untestable claims about miracles is a destructive activity. Coming to God only for the purpose of obtaining a miracle is a misguided act. Being active in your communication with God and asking for something that maybe you should not ask for is fine, but do not get angry if it does not come. Most importantly enter into your search understanding why you exist, what prayer is about, and what God wants your objectives in life to be. We need to learn to pray for spiritual answers to our problems, and become less obsessed with physical solutions that are always temporary. We need to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to us as well. Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew 6:33-34). How true that is. —JNC

The Universal Christ

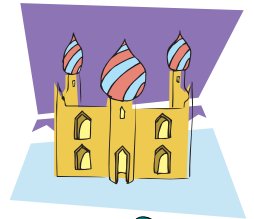
An Introductory Guide to Christianity and World Religions

by Joel Stephen Williams

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Most people in the United States consider themselves Christian, and most Americans consider the United States to be a Christian nation in some form or fashion, even though we are a secular state. In recent decades the extent to which Americans might be called Christian has been changing rapidly. Along with the decline of membership in Christian churches has been the rise of multiculturalism, political correctness, and relativism which suggest that one religion is as good as another. The influx of immigrants from other parts of the world, from the Middle East and from Asia in particular, has brought a significant number of adherents to Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other world religions to America. Temples and mosques are appearing around the United States. The trend is more obvious in the large cities or near major university campuses, because that is where immigrants have usually gathered. People of Anglo-Saxon heritage are converting to non-Christian religions, even though their numbers are quite small. American culture is now very pluralistic.

Many Christian values and assumptions are no longer considered basic values or assumptions. Not only are Judeo-Christian values no longer taken for granted, there is a widespread effort to diminish those same values, even to silence them and remove them from the public square. As Ravi Zacharias, a Brahman Hindu born in India who converted to Christianity, declared:



Philosophically, you can believe anything, so long as you do not claim it to be true. Morally, you can practice anything, so long as you do not claim that it is a “better” way. Religiously, you can hold to anything, so long as you do not bring Jesus Christ into it. If a spiritual idea is eastern, it is granted critical immunity; if western, it is thoroughly criticized. Thus, a journalist can walk into a church and mock its carryings on, but he or she dare not do the same if the ceremony is from the eastern fold. Such is the mood at the end of the twentieth century.¹

The purpose of this brief study is to outline some of the problems a Christian faces in trying to live a life of faith in a pluralistic society and to point in the direction of an appropriate Christian response to non-Christian beliefs. This is only an introductory outline which must be brief due to the constraint of space. The issues at hand and the available options are oversimplified more than once, no doubt.



Responding to Pluralism

How should Christians respond to the growing non-Christian presence among us and the erosion of Christian values in our society? First, we should strive to be a good example and to live an authentic Christian life. Many believers who are attracted to other religions are drawn away from their Christian origins because of inconsistency and hypocrisy on the part of Christians with whom they are acquainted. The immorality, apathy, and indifference of Christians are frequently the reason that some are repelled from the Christian faith. If this negative experience of Christianity is paired with a genuine, sincere practice of a non-Christian religion by an acquaintance, then the attraction toward a new faith might be very strong.

Second, Christians should strive to be informed about world religions. Christian believers should learn at least the basics of the major belief systems in the world. Ignorance can lead us in two equally unacceptable directions. It can mean we are susceptible to adopting a belief system without really understanding it. We may disregard negative portions of a faith system while naively focusing on a few of its attractive qualities. Another unacceptable consequence of ignorance is blind bias and prejudice which is unwilling to see any good or truth in another religion. There is much beauty and truth in all of the major world religions. If these were not present, people would not be attracted to them so easily. For example, in Jainism we see the beauty of the principle of *ahimsa* or non-violence. Or what of this devotional thought from Sikhism from Guru Nanak which reminds me of Psalm 42:

Oh my mind, love God as a fish loves water:
The more the water, the happier is the fish,
The more peaceful his mind and body.
He cannot live without water even for a moment.
God knows the inner pain of that being without water.

When one studies the religions of the world one meets incredible people who show amazing devotion and sincerity to their God or their gods, whichever it may be. God has revealed himself, not only in special ways which are recorded in the Bible, but also he has shown himself in general ways which are available to all (Rom. 1:19-20; 2:14; Ps. 19:1-6; Acts 17:22-31). This means we should expect to find much good in most or all world religions.

Third, Christians need a deep knowledge of their own faith. While there is common ground between most world religions, the differences are vast and significant. Christians who do not understand their own faith will be unable to address these differences. They will be unable to defend their own belief system in an adequate manner.

Fourth, Christians entering into a study of other belief systems or a dialogue with adherents of other faiths ought to examine their own motives. If their motives are simply to try to prove someone else wrong, it would be better if they did not even participate in the discussion. Christians should approach dialogue with an appreciation for that which is good and noble in others. They should approach dialogue in humility in light of our own failings. Dialogue should be done in love, with benevolent concern for the eternal welfare of others.

The Only Way?

What are the possible relationships between the competing faith systems of the major world religions? These can vary from one extreme to another. Let us note two extremes and one possible mediating position.

**All Equally
True**

**One Unique
and Superior**

**All Completely False
But One**

All equally true: Pluralism and multiculturalism are powerful forces in our culture which encourage people to ignore any claim to absolute truth by anyone, except for the pluralist’s contradictory claim that all assertions are equally true. Under the guise of tolerance, many people affirm that all religions are valid. This approach discourages evangelism. While it might encourage peace and harmony, it sacrifices truth. Two contradictory ideas cannot both be equally

true. Furthermore, in this so-called “tolerant” climate, absolute and universal claims are not even allowed. As one group discussion of the World Council of Churches concluded:

Pluralism means that not only are there many religions and beliefs but these religions and beliefs are equally true and valid. Therefore, all truths are relative and all religions are relative. Such an understanding of pluralism cannot be accepted by Christians. In Western countries pluralism has become a dogma of “faith”, in which it is understood that everybody’s opinion is as good as each other.²

If pluralism is true, then the Muslim cannot say: “There is no God but Allah,” and Jesus is not permitted to say: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, except through me” (Jn. 14:6). The contradiction of relativism, though, is that the pluralist cannot deny the absolute affirmation of a Christian or a Muslim and be consistent.

All completely false but one: The other extreme is not logically inconsistent. It would be possible for all religious systems to be thoroughly false except one, but this option does not fit with the facts as we know them. Also, it is morally unattractive. This approach tends to lead to extremism and inflexibility, even to violence. Little or no room is found for respecting the conscience and sincerity of others. Little or no inclination will be present for appreciation of shared truths. Dialogue and discussion will be impossible if one adopts this approach.

One unique and superior: If one believes that one’s own faith is unique in certain ways and even superior to other faiths, one does not have to reject everything found in other faiths as untrue. A little, or even a lot, of another faith system might be accepted as true. If God has revealed himself, not only in special revelation (that which is given initially only to a few), but also in general revelation (that which is available to all through human reason or in nature), then many truths ought to be present in various world religions. For example, most religions have a belief of some sort in a deity and in the efficacy of prayer to that deity. A Christian might find many similarities between a church pot-luck dinner and a Sikh communal meal. The study of comparative religions specializes in the common traits found amongst various religions, and they are many. Commonly held beliefs such as these can provide a starting point for dialogue. They can promote mutual understanding and goodwill between people.

It is not illogical, though, to believe that one’s own faith may contain elements which are unique, that are not held in common with other faiths. Holding a unique trait alone does not make a religion

better than another religion; it only makes it different. However, it is logically possible that those unique traits might make one religion superior to another. In particular if the traits held in common by all religions could be explained on naturalistic grounds and if some of the unique traits of one religion could only be explained by an appeal to a power that is beyond the ability of man or nature, then a convincing case could be made for that religion being not only unique, but also superior to all others.

While the “all religions are equally true” approach would discourage any evangelism at all, the “all religions are completely false but one” approach often encourages tyranny, even holy war. It shows no sympathy for competing belief systems. The “one religion is unique and superior” approach makes room for evangelism, but it is offered in a more humble manner. It is evangelism that springs from a genuine belief that something unique is being offered, but it allows for a large measure of sympathy for other belief systems. It would stake its claims, kindly and gently, but firmly, for the truth of its own way of thought. This, I believe, is how Christians ought to present their faith in dialogue with those of other belief systems.

The Uniqueness of Christ

In this brief introductory guide there is no time to look at the areas of common belief between Christianity and other major world religions. Such an area of common belief can range from huge, major overlaps of belief (as between Christianity and Judaism) to very little of a shared faith (as between Christianity and animism). What, though, is unique about Christianity? What is special? What message do Christians have to offer that no one else has? The chief content of our message is simply Jesus Christ. The following is a very brief outline in confessional form of some unique points of the gospel.³

A unique birth: Jesus Christ is the only person in the history of the world who was not merely a human being. Christians believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, his father being God himself (Mt. 1:20; Lk. 1:35). Thus Jesus was both God and man in one person. He was God incarnate in human flesh (Jn. 1:1, 14).

A unique life: We believe that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life. Not only did he never do anything wrong, he constantly did that which is right (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5).

A unique teaching: Jesus Christ was the Master Teacher who gave the most marvelous religious and ethical teaching to mankind that anyone has ever given (e.g., Mt. 5-8). We would expect no less from God in the flesh.

A unique death: Jesus Christ died “for our sins” as an atonement (1 Cor. 15:1-4). We know, in part because of his resurrection from the dead, that his death was accepted by God as payment for the debt of man’s sins (Rom. 4:25).

A unique resurrection: Jesus Christ was resurrected from the grave on the third day (Acts 2:22-36). The evidence for his resurrection is quite strong, and it comes from a variety of sources (1 Cor. 15:3-8).

A unique coronation: Jesus Christ ascended into heaven after his resurrection and was made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). He was given authority and made king, not over some country or a piece of land somewhere, but over heaven and earth (Mt. 28:18-20).

A unique consummation: Jesus Christ will return and call all mankind to judgment. He is the one who will execute universal judgment on all who have ever lived (Acts 17:30-31).

The Universal Claims of Christ

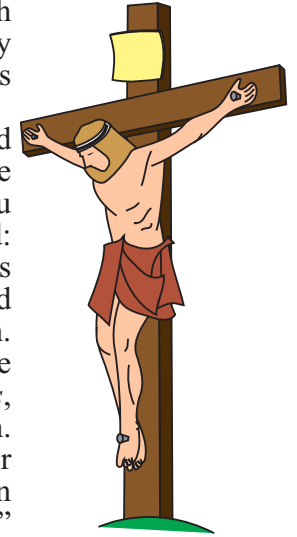


by Carline Hines

If Jesus had only claimed to be a prophet, then Christians could not claim anything unique about their Lord. There have been many prophets. But since he is the greatest of the prophets and more than a prophet, we are justified in making such claims. If Jesus had only been a mere mortal, we could not claim anything more for him than the followers of Buddha, Mohammad, Confucius, or other great religious figures. But since Jesus was and is the Son of God, the Lord,

and the Messiah, we cannot be satisfied with limited and temporal claims for him. Only universal and eternal claims are worthy of his true significance.

On one occasion several people turned away from following Jesus. Jesus turned to the remaining disciples and asked them: “Do you also wish to go away?” Simon Peter answered: “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God” (Jn. 6:66-69). Jesus Christ is the only mediator, the only savior for mankind, and the *monogenēs*, that is, the one-of-a-kind Son of God (1 Tim. 2:5).⁴ “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).



Notes

¹ Ravi Zacharias, *Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Claims of the Christian Message* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 2000), vii.

² “Common witness within a religiously plural context: Group report,” *International Review of Mission* 90 (July 2001): 346.

³ Erwin W. Lutzer, *Christ Among Other gods* (Chicago: Moody Press), 1994.

⁴ The word *monogenēs* is used in reference to Christ in John 3:16 and 1 John 2:2. It is mistranslated “only begotten” in the AV. The NIV reads “one and only.” The RSV and NSRV simply render “only.” The term means one (*mono*)-of-a-kind (*genēs*), sui generis, or the only-one-in-its (his) category. Jesus was the only “Son” in the category of sons of God, because he was God’s beloved Son, and for other reasons related to his deity.

Dr. Williams included an extensive 4-page selected bibliography for this booklet. Due to space problems, we did not include it in this September/October **Does God Exist?** publication. The bibliography will be available on our web site (doesgodexist.org) under the September/October 2007 issue. Also we have made copies of this bibliography and will be happy to send one to anyone interested who would like to have a complete bibliography for further study. If you cannot get it on our website, please feel free to contact us via e-mail, letter, or phone, and we will put it in the mail for you.

DANDY DESIGNS

The Incredible Timing of the Seasons

Fall is a favorite time of year for many of us. We love the cooler weather, the gorgeous colors of the trees, the joys of harvest, and all the good food that is available at this time of year. We also enjoy the passage of migratory birds as they congregate and fly south in all kinds of formations from intricate swarms to the familiar Vs of geese.



What most of us do not realize is how complex the shift of seasons is, and how many things that happen at this time of year take place in a complex interaction with other things. It is interesting that when animals hibernate they do so at a time when plants are producing an abundance of seeds that can be used for food. Grasses and leaves are dry and easy to manipulate into the shapes and arrangements that allow the construction of winter shelter.

In addition to the coordination of hibernation and plant maturation, there is a timing of preparation for the cold. Contrary to popular belief, most plants do not wait until they get frosted to begin to shut down their biological systems for winter. As the sun gets lower in the sky with each passing day, various colors and wavelengths are progressively refracted away from the earth's surface. When the plant loses a chosen wavelength for the latitude where it exists, it begins the process of shutting off the chlorophyll *a* that causes the plant to be green and allowing other chemicals with different colors to appear. The plant also begins shutting down other parts of its systems of conducting water and moving nutrients.

Another coordination of timing and the environment is the migrations of living things. Birds cannot just migrate at any time. Weather conditions, food supplies, care for their young, and the presence of predators are all factors which migration must contend with. In addition to leaving their summer home for their winter home and vice versa at just the right time for them to have enough to eat, for their young to be mature enough to make the journey, and to avoid hurricanes and

other seasonal hazards, migrations have to have the right navigation clues in place. The position of the sun and the moon change, and migrations must happen when the sun and the moon are in the right position. Salmon use odors to locate their home streams, and those odors are strongest in the season when they migrate. The smolt make their journey to the sea at a time when the volume of water in the stream is at a maximum due to melting snow and spring rains. This makes their journey easier and most likely to succeed.

Fall and all it brings to living things is marvelously complex. It speaks loudly to us of the wisdom and planning that goes with the seasons and what the season brings to all of life.



Hummingbird Beaks and Bugs

Most areas of the country have some variety of hummingbirds that come up to feeders and put their long needle-like beak into the feeder and draw sugar water. We have all seen articles on how much a hummingbird has to eat to maintain its high metabolic rate. What most of us do not realize is that you cannot live on sugar alone, and hummingbirds have to eat a fair number of insects to get necessary fats and amino acids to survive. How do you catch a bug with a bill that looks like a drinking straw?

Gregor Yanega and Margaret Rubega at the University of Connecticut in Storrs have discovered the answer to this by running special video cameras at 500 frames a second to catch several species of hummingbirds feeding on fruit flies. When the hummingbird goes after a bug, the lower bill drops down and bends at a point near the middle of the bill. This widens the open part of the bill and allows the bird to sweep up the bugs. You can duplicate this by taking a narrow strip of paper and make a V out of it holding the ends in your hands. Slide your fingers toward the center of the V and bend the strip down twisting the paper as you do so. Notice that the exposed part of the paper will have a greater surface area.

The lower jaw of the bird is made of a special bone material that can bend without breaking as most bones would under such conditions. It allows the bird to suck nectar out of your feeder and then fly with its mouth open to catch a bug, giving it balanced nutrition. This incredible design combines material science with fluid dynamics to allow this incredible bird to survive. It has taken decades of study for researchers to understand how the birds do this, and the applications to objects that will benefit man are still in the planning stage. Reference: *Natural History*, September 2004, pages 22-23.



Editor's Note: The number of books that come out every month is astronomical. Our book reviews are usually ones that your editor has read. One of our co-workers, Phillip Eichman, has his doctorate in biology and has worked with us for many years in our ministry. Here are two reviews he has written on books we have not had a chance to read but which you may find useful. Thank you, Phil, for your help in this.

The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog

by James W. Sire, InterVarsity Press, 2004, 259 pages, \$16.00, ISBN 0-8308-2780-3.

Each person, whether he or she realizes it or not, holds a particular worldview. This worldview serves as a basis for all thought, beliefs, values, and actions. It is also the framework through which we understand and make sense of the world around us. There are a number of competing worldviews that are prevalent today. Much of the problem between science and religion is in fact due to differing worldviews.

Described as a "worldview catalog," this book contains a description and evaluation of several worldviews. Those examined in the book include Christian theism, deism, naturalism, nihilism, existentialism, Eastern pantheistic monism, New Age, and postmodernism.

Although the author accepts the Christian theistic worldview, this is not an apologetic defense of that particular worldview. What Sire does is examine each worldview, pointing out various assumptions and weaknesses of each one, often contrasting it with Christian theism.

The current edition is the fourth, revised and updated edition of a book which first appeared in 1976. The fact that it has been revised several times and is still available in print is an indication of the value of this book. It is somewhat technical in places but still a valuable resource for anyone wanting to understand more about worldviews.

Doubting: Growing Through the Uncertainties of Faith

by Alister McGrath, InterVarsity Press, 2006, 155 pages, \$13.00, ISBN 0-8308-3352-8.

This excellent little book was written by Alister McGrath, who holds degrees in science and theology and has written several books in the area of apologetics. Although McGrath does touch on apologetics

in several places this is not a book written to provide supporting evidence for the Christian faith. The purpose of the book is rather to suggest ways to deal with doubts and uncertainties associated with that faith.

McGrath does a very good job of discussing how doubts arise and how to deal with them without abandoning faith in God and the Bible. The book was written mainly for a young adult audience, but would be appropriate for older adults as well.

I found the book to be very helpful to me in understanding the relationship between doubts and faith. I believe that it would be helpful to others as well, and I would not hesitate to give a copy of the book to anyone who is experiencing questions or doubts about their faith or simply wanting to strengthen their own faith.

Nobel Scientists and God

Werner Heisenberg—Nobel Laureate in Physics

Editor's Note: One of the things that has come out of the battle between extremists in the evolution/creation controversy has been a flow of literature from atheists claiming that good scientists and intelligent, educated people do not believe in God. This is simply not true. Tihomir Dimitrov has compiled an e-book on <http://nobelists.net> of quotations of Nobel Prize winning scientists. In each issue of this journal we hope to quote statements from some of these.

"We can console ourselves that the good Lord God would know the position of the particles, and thus He could let the causality principle continue to have validity" (from a letter to Albert Einstein).

"Where no guiding ideals are left to point the way, the scale of values disappears and with it the meaning of our deeds and sufferings, and at the end can lie only negation and despair. Religion is therefore the foundation of ethics, and ethics the presupposition of life."

"The first gulp from the glass of natural sciences will turn you into

Notice: If you are receiving more than one of these bulletins and you do not need the duplicates, please let us know and we will remove those duplicates. Thank you!

News and Notes

Postage Problems. The recent hike in postage rates included overseas mailing, which had some major changes. This journal used to be mailed outside the United States at a relatively inexpensive rate, but now must be mailed as first class mail—at more expense to us and for some countries almost triple the cost. This not only applies to this journal, but to any materials we may mail to you. On shipments overseas, we are asking that you help us on these high shipping rates. In the US we use the Media Mail rate as our usual way of shipping unless you want to help with the costs for using UPS or Priority Mail. Some of our materials can be seen or obtained on our web sites: doesgodexist.org, whypain.org, and dandydesigns.org. If you have questions about costs, contact us at marcusen@michiana.org.

Stonehenge and Aliens. There are many explanations given to explain the massive stone structures seen in the Great Pyramid, Easter Island, Medicine Wheels in Wyoming, and Stonehenge in Britain. Recent studies on the Salisbury Plain where Stonehenge is located have uncovered a large Neolithic settlement with roads running to the large stone structure. Researchers feel they have found evidence of funerary practices in the area which are believed to be connected to the purpose of Stonehenge. Those who try to attach mystical or alien causes to monuments like Stonehenge are badly misguided. Mankind has always had a concern with the fact that there has to be a better existence than what we have here, and elaborate efforts have been made to connect to that existence. The Great Pyramid in Egypt has 57,000,000 tons of stone made up of 23,000,000 blocks with the largest weighing 15 tons. All of this makes the Christian message with its simplicity and beauty just that more marvelous and incredible. Reference: *Time*, February 12, 2007 page 21.

How Much Salt? The scale of God's wisdom and planning in the creation frequently escapes us, but a recent figure describing the amount of salt in the ocean might stretch our thinking a little. Marilyn vos Savant in *Parade* February 11, 2007, reported that if you took all the salt in the ocean and built a wall around the equator with it, the wall would be 180 miles tall and one mile thick.

Radical Moslem Exposé. There is an interesting article on radical Islam in *Reader's Digest*, February 2007, page 174, by David Gartenstein-Ross. If you would like to see how an American kid from Oregon got into fundamentalist jihadist Islam, do not miss this article.

Ancient Christian Views on Abortion. Many of us seem to assume that the question of unwanted pregnancies is a new issue. In a series of books titled *Quotes from the Ante-Nicene Fathers* published by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company (ISBN 0-80288-0-886) there are numerous quotes of early Christian writers condemning abortion and infanticide. Some examples are from the *Didache*: "You shall not murder a child by abortion or kill one who has been born." Cyprian wrote "The womb of his wife was hit by a blow of his heel. And, in the miscarriage that soon followed, the offspring was brought forth, the fruit of a father's murder." Tertullian wrote "In our case murder is once for all forbidden. Therefore, we may not destroy even the fetus in the womb....To hinder birth is merely a speedier way to kill a human. It does not matter whether you take away a life that has been born or destroy one that is not yet born." While these statements are not from God, they certainly show that the issue of unwanted children was present in the early Church, and killing them before or after birth was not considered an acceptable option.

Prison Condoms and HIV. We have been involved in prison work for most of the 40-year history of this ministry, with large numbers of incarcerated men and women taking our free correspondence courses. One common question is how God views sexual activity in the prison environment. While it is easy to talk about sin and why any sexual activity outside of God's plan in marriage is wrong, the fact is that all studies show that 40 to 60 percent of inmates engage in sexual activity and HIV rates are eight times the general population. Condoms are legal in prisons in Vermont and Los Angeles, and a bill in California was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger that would have allowed them in California state prisons. There is a federal bill in the works at the time of this writing. The implications of all of this are staggering, and a good reflection of how far our society continues to slide towards a complete lack of moral behavior at any level. Reference: *POZ* magazine, January 2007, page 12.

Genetic Causes. One of the most debated subjects in science today, is whether behaviors like homosexuality are caused by one's genes or not. Unfortunately in the homosexual issue, the picture has been clouded by homosexual scientists producing data that was skewed to fit their own sexual orientation and by gay activists using the media to claim they have no choice in their sexual orientation as they feel it

was genetically programmed. In *Scientific American* (April 2007, page 46) is a detailed discussion of alcoholism and genetic influences. The bottom line is that there is a genetic influence on one's vulnerability to alcohol addiction. Making informed choices about what one does in life is linked to understanding this genetic predisposition. We would suggest that this is also true of many other destructive lifestyle choices, and this study strongly suggests that as well.

Psychic research lab closes. The Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research group known as PEAR was established in 1979 to investigate claims of the paranormal. Since that time they have conducted experiments in all kinds of psychic areas and the bottom line is that they have been unable to find any evidence that there is any validity to psychic claims. The notion that mysterious phenomena cause humans to do things that are beyond their control is not only in contradiction to biblical teachings, it is also at odds with any credible studies that have been done in this area. Sources: *New York Times*, February 10, 2007, and *Skeptical Inquirer*, May/June 2007, page 16.

Atheism a religion. A series of court decisions have made it clear that the government recognizes atheism as a religion. The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals stated it well: "...when a person sincerely holds beliefs dealing with issues of ultimate concern that for her occupy a place parallel to that filled by God in traditionally religious persons, these beliefs represent her religion.... Atheism is, among other things, a school of thought that takes a position on religion, the existence and importance of a supreme being, and a code of ethics." This is an important issue for many reasons. One of them is that if a theory of origins is an endorsement of atheism, it is supporting a religion and is in violation of some recent court decisions. This will get interesting. Source: *Newsletter of the American Scientific Affiliation*, May/June 2007, page 6.

More on dinosaur collagen. Researchers who were able to extract soft tissue from the bones of a *T. Rex* have been able to extract collagen, a major component of living bone. The amino acids of this material have given ratios similar to the collagen of chickens and the collagen reacts with antibodies in the same way that chicken collagen reacts. This is perhaps the best evidence so far that the dinosaurs are related to modern birds. We would like to remind our readers that the biblical classification gives the groupings as "birds, fish, beast, and man" (1 Corinthians 15:39; Genesis 1:20-26; Genesis 6) and simply tells us that these creatures were the flesh of birds, not fish. There is no biblical issue here, but an interesting fact about the past. Reference: *Science News*, April 14, 2007, page 228.

Scientific data usually wrong. Scientific studies that are published are wrong to an enormous degree according to those studying the long term credibility of the data. John Ioannidis, writing in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, showed that of the 45 most highly cited clinical research studies in molecular research during the past 15 years, 99 percent had been refuted. There are many reasons for this, but perhaps the most fundamental is the funding of research projects. You have to produce results to get grants or to get grants renewed, and that has led to poor scientific investigation techniques. It is important not to jump to conclusions about new studies until there have been additional studies to show whether they are true or false. We would suggest this is true of moral issues and the data used to support them. Claims today may turn out to be based on false data tomorrow. Source: *Seed* magazine, May/June 2007, page 20.

Religion good for kids. A Mississippi State University researcher has found that of the 16,000 first graders that he studied, those kids with strong religious homes were better behaved and happier than their peers. The study identified youngsters who had both parents attending worship services regularly and who talked to their kids regularly about religion as having strong religious homes. The study is reported on the web at www.livescience.com/human-biology/070424_religion_kids.html.

Ancient man locations expand. One of the interesting questions about the origins of man is where man came from geographically. The Bible places Adam in the Fertile Crescent area in the present day nation of Iraq. The modern theory of many anthropologists is that man originated in Africa. New finds in northern China continue to raise questions about the African origin theory with some dates as old as those given to specimens in Africa. There are many interpretations of the data, but it is obvious that the out of Africa scenario is oversimplified at best. Reference: *Science News*, April 7, 2007, page 211.

Oral sex and cancer. Many modern teens believe that as long as they do not have sexual intercourse, any other sexual activity is OK and puts them at no risk of STDs or other problems. This attitude reveals a major misunderstanding of what God intends for sexual relationships to be, but new scientific data shows that oral sex which is touted as a viable safe substitute for sexual intercourse is not very safe. People who perform oral sex on more than five partners in their lifetime have a 250 percent higher risk of throat tumors due to infection. Source: *The Week*, May 25, 2007, page 24.

This journal is a part of a program of service titled **Does God Exist?** The purpose of the program is to provide thinking, seeking people with scientific evidence that God does exist and that the Bible is His Word. It is our conviction that all men can logically and rationally believe in God. In addition to this bimonthly journal, the Does God Exist? program offers DVDs and video tapes, CDs and audio tapes, courses, books, and other materials. These materials are offered on a loan basis or at our cost. We also are more than willing to correspond with you and answer any specific question(s) you might have. If you would like further information on borrowing or purchasing these materials, we would be glad to send it to you. Check the boxes below to describe what you would like and mail it to us. We will get it right out to you.

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