

Series: DOUBT YOUR DOUBTS. Just in Case You Missed Something

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 4, 2018
HASN'T SCIENCE MADE GOD IRRELEVANT?
Genesis 1-2, Psalm 8
SPEAKER: KEN DAVIS

1. At the beginning of his book, **The Problem of God**, Mark Clark says this:

"How often have we turned on the television and heard the host say, Tonight we will be talking about faith versus science. Our first guest is a former University of Oxford professor, evolutionary biologist and bestselling author. He believes that science, not faith, holds the answers to all the questions. On the other side of the aisle we have Joe Smith, who will speak for the legitimacy of faith and Christianity. Joe homeschools his kids, thinks Oprah is the Antichrist and lives in a swamp."

...Joe and the Oxford professor represent the widely embraced caricatures of the opposing sides of the faith-science debate. Christianity--and faith in general--is seen as naïve, simplistic and incompatible with human reason. ...Science is based on truth and evidence, while faith is based on hopeful thinking and legend. Science is a search for objective evidence that leads humanity forward, while faith looks back to ancient teachings, outmoded holy books, and irrational conclusions in the face of overwhelming evidence otherwise." (The Problem of God, Clark, pp.23-24)

a. Mark Clark was born in the GTA and raised by staunch atheists. He says that he grew up thinking that people who believed in God were the unintelligent people of the world who refused to use their brains and believe what was so obvious to everyone else.

-When you read books by some of the new atheists like Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, you get the same impression; that science has answered all the questions people have had for 1000s of years--and to believe that God has anything to do with **anything** both defies science and reason.

b. What I want to do today is to simply encourage you to **go where the trail of evidence leads you!** And let me just say at the front end. First, believe in God in general--and Christianity in particular--is **not** opposed to science and never has been.

-Secondly--and this is where I'll spend some time today; the theory of evolution--as you've seen in it portrayed in your high school and university textbooks--doesn't prove God's non-existence. Not at all. Evolution is simply a **theory** about how everything we see came to be.

-My challenge to you is--do some digging, some research, some thinking! Don't check your brain at **any** door--of a church, a university, CNN--or **Google**. **Think!** Don't just doubt your beliefs--**Doubt Your Doubts!**

2. Let me start with the existence of God. There are a **lot** of things I could get into--but let's stick to two. Immanuel Kant, a philosopher who lived in the 18th century narrowed it to two broad categories: **The moral code within and the starry hosts above.**

-We talked about the **moral code within** last week. To put it simply, ***If we just evolved gradually in a random, unguided process of natural selection--survival of the fittest--can that explain the moral code every person on the planet has inside?***

We see this in it's **simplest** form when it comes to what we think is **fair** and **unfair**. When kids are playing, and one of them cheats--they say, "But **that's not fair!**" Inside us is this objective set of rules that tells us that to cut in line in front of someone is wrong. **Unfair**.

-There's something in us that **knows** that if a parent abuses a child--it's **wrong**. That if someone works and the employer doesn't **pay** them--it's **wrong**. That if someone tortures their pet--it's **wrong**. That when rich people oppress, bully and steal from the poor--it's **wrong**. It isn't just a matter of, "I don't like it--but there's nothing really wrong with it"--there's a sense of anger and indignation in us that **would not be there based on the survival of the fittest**.

- a. C.S. Lewis was once a staunch atheist. His main issue was the **rock of atheism** that we talked about last week; **evil and suffering**. What change his mind was the thought, ***If God isn't--then where did I get this idea of a distinction between good and evil?***

-Now sceptics will say that these morals--this sense of justice has justice and morality has evolved **with** us. That all morality is just a matter of preference. That actually doesn't make sense. How would the concept of the **survival of the fittest** ever evolve into the belief that **risking your life to save someone else** is a noble thing to do?

-**Survival of the fittest**--in the wild--means that you kill and eat your own children--if it comes to that. Survival of the gene pool means that it's okay to rape and impregnate your neighbour's girls if you feel like it--and it's not **wrong**. It's just that your neighbour **doesn't like it!** It means that if a parent has a deformed or sickly child--the choice to either let them live or kill them off is simply a matter of **preference**.

-**Does it seem logical to you that there really IS no right or wrong, good or evil in circumstances like this?** See, if there is no real moral code, then Hitler wasn't wrong--he just lost the war. Paul, in talking to the Romans says that our **conscience**--and everyone has one--comes from God:

Even Gentiles, who do not have God's written law, show that they know his law when they instinctively obey it, even without having heard it. ...For their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. (Romans 2:14-15 NLT)

- b. **Richard Dawkins**, in **The God Delusion**, cites a study of human nature done by Harvard biologist, **Marc Hauser**, where he proposes, among other things, that 5 people in a hospital be saved by harvesting the organs of a guy in the waiting room.

-97% of the people surveyed said it would be wrong to do that--with **no** difference between what atheists and people in God believe. What Dawkins gets wrong is that Christians all agree that a person doesn't need God to be good--or to **want** to be good. We all have a conscience.

-Some say, "Okay--then **why is believed to be right and wrong different from culture to culture?**" Some people welcome others of different races; some kill and eat them! It's like math; sometimes we get the wrong answer to a math problem. But that doesn't prove that there are no laws of mathematics!

3. That brings us to this whole issue that seems to come up of **science vs. faith**. In an informal university campus debate I recently heard a girl parrot off the standard line that is often used by the New Atheists; "A person can't believe in God **and** science!" And then people typically go into this rant that scientists have been persecuted by the church down through history. If you look at the record, **That simply is not true.**

-There's only a **small minority** of Christians who have a problem with science. Christianity and science have been friends **from the beginning**. One person has described the Christian worldview as the Garden in which science grew.

-I'll tell you why. Animistic beliefs **deify** both nature and the solar system. Buddhism says that the universe is an illusion. Polytheism explains natural events as the actions of the gods. It was Christianity that said that God was a god of order and reason--the creator of all the laws of nature--meaning that everything out there could be explored and studied. Let me just give you some facts:

- a. The first scientists are all Christians--Galileo, Copernicus and Bacon. The first universities in North America--Harvard, Yale, Princeton--were started by Christians.
- b. The second fact is that the Bible tells us **why** things exist--and the **Who** behind it--but it doesn't address the **how**. There is no teaching of the Bible--or about God--that conflicts with scientific discovery. What the book of Genesis teaches is that what we see is **not God! God made it**. That means we can **study** it!

-The silent question is, "Why would you worship the things you see instead of the One behind it?"

- c. The third fact, originally resisted by the scientific community, is the Big Bang Theory. Before Edwin Hubble discovered this through his telescope in California, the scientific community believed that the universe--**matter**--was eternal.

-When Hubble clearly showed that the universe had a beginning about 15 or so billion years ago messed with them all. Even Albert Einstein resisted it! Want to know why? It was because **it seemed too follow too closely with biblical record**--that there was a start to everything. Now the scientific community had to explain what was behind it.

-Let me be **really** specific about precisely **where** the difference between faith and the scientific community comes out. We **both** agree with this fact: **The universe as we know exploded into being from a single point about 14 billion years ago. That's a fact.** At that time--time, gravity, stars, planets--**everything** came into being. The difference is in the answer to, **What caused the Big Bang?**

-The biblical record says, **The only One powerful enough to cause something like that is the One who Himself is uncaused. God.**

-The atheistic community would say, **What caused the Big Bang? NOTHING!** Now think about that for just a minute. Is it scientifically *rational* to respond like that? If you were at home and you heard a **big bang** downstairs, would you conclude that **nothing** caused it? Only if you were too tired or lazy to check, right?

-The answer that atheists like Dawkins, Harris and Hitchens would give is, **It came from an atom of infinite destiny.** If you ask, "So where did that atom come from?" And the answer would be, **Nowhere!** My question is, **Is that where the evidence leads?** To say it was caused by **nothing** isn't science; it's faith.

- d. Let me mention one more thing; it's the fact that **secularism** is currently the predominant philosophy in Europe and North America. Early scientists like Francis Bacon believed and taught that truth is found in the **both/and** of science and faith--they work hand in hand. Secularism teaches that faith and science are mutually exclusive.

-Richard Dawkins says:

Faith is like a mental illness--a great cop-out, the excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate Evidence. (The Problem of God, pp. 24-25)

Sam Harris gets even more insulting:

We have names for people who have many beliefs for which there is no rational justification. When their beliefs are extremely common, we call them religious. Otherwise, they are likely to be called mad, delusional, or psychotic. (The End of Faith, p. 72)

-Secularism has dominated philosophy for well over 100 years. But things are changing. **Drastically!** Alvin Plantinga, a Christian, is now considered by many to be **the** greatest living philosopher--and he is having a huge impact on the philosophy departments in universities all over North America--to the point where it is now academically respectable to argue **for** theism.

-Now, why do I bring that into the picture? It's because the issue of whether or not God is relevant to life our lives is **not** a scientific issue. Science is, by definition the study of the **physical** world. The existence of God is a **metaphysical** issue. Meta means **above or outside of**--and it's simply referring to a realm which, by definition, cannot be put in a Petri dish, tested, probed, and magnified under an electron microscope.

-The arena of faith that **does** cross paths with science is who humans are, how we came to be, and who deserves the credit? We can believe, philosophically, that we are just a little further up the foodchain from the chicken we eat at Swiss Chalet--and that when we die, we rot and that's it--but **no one lives like that!**

The Bible's account of human life--and the **deep** sense of worth we sense--and the sacredness of human life says something way-**way** different. I simply want to ask you to listen--and think--and ask, **where does the evidence lead?**

4. Now, here's what I know. **Evolution is a fact.** How many of you have a dog? How many of you love dogs **more** than cats? **YES!** Here's what I know; most of you have dogs that look **way** different than Lily, our Sheltie. Bulldogs. Shiatsus, Golden Retrievers, Poodles. The gene pool has mutated and changed over the years. That's called **micro-evolution**; that is,

small mutations **within** the species have created the diversity we see in pets, livestock, birds, fruit and veggies.

-That's what Charles Darwin observed in the Galapagos Islands. And it allowed some species to survive while others died off. The creation account says:

**Let the land produce living creatures *according to their kinds*: Livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind.
(Genesis 1:24 NIV)**

There's no argument there.

- a. Where Darwin changed the narrative is in his leap in **theory** from **micro-evolution** and to **macro-evolution**. In other words, these mutations weren't limited to **species**--these mutations **jumped** species. If you've taken high school or university biology--you've seen where this goes--from amoebas to frogs to birds to mammals.
- b. **Darwin's** ultimate conclusion was that God was in no way involved. By itself, the word **evolution** means **orderly change**. Since Darwin, it has been redefined as a **random, unguided, gradual process by which non-living matter evolved into life as directed by natural laws**.

-And in this new definition, God was sidelined as totally unnecessary and irrelevant to the development of life and therefore to us.

Dawkins says that evolution allowed him to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.

5. Where the teaching of the Bible and Christianity part ways is the part that eliminates God from the equation. Listen:

What are mere mortals that you should think about them, human beings that you should care for them? (Psalm 8:4 NLT)

Even though we are mere specks of live in the universe--**God deeply cares about each one of us!** In other words, we as human souls didn't come into being through a **random unguided process**. God's love for us and interest in us isn't a lie we tell ourselves to feel better about life; it's true. Psalm 8:5 says:

You made them a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned them with glory and honour. (Psalm 8:5 NIV)

The overall record of the Bible is that humans have dignity; that life is sacred--and that how we **use** the gift of life is a **big deal!**

- a. Now, to help you make a **good** decision about whether science has made God irrelevant, you need some facts.

I'm going to give them as succinctly and accurately as I can. About 20 years ago, **Time** magazine published an article called **"What Does Science Tell Us About God."** The author says, "One intriguing observation that has bubbled up from physics is that the universe seems calibrated for life's existence."

- **That** was just the tip of the iceberg. Physicists now tell us that the timing and conditions of the Big Bang were so exact--down to the millisecond--that if any of them were off even slightly, the whole thing would've collapsed in on itself. Even Steven Hawking who died just recently, a brilliant man and an atheist said, "Clearly there are religious implications!"

- b. Something else. The prejudice in the scientific community against **any** intelligent design is formidable. A good friend, Dr. David Ianuzzo, taught biochemistry at York and ran a heart research institute in the States. He experienced that prejudice. What's **fascinating**, though, is that Darwinism is under attack --not from Christians--but from within the scientific community. Why? Well, people are **simply** following the trail of evidence.

-For example, that everything we see came from nothing through a random, unguided process.

What made the **Big Bang** theory so difficult for atheistic evolution is that it put evolution on an **impossible** time frame--with no explanation for where the laws of physics even came from.

- b. Darwin's most flawed claim was what he called a **simple living cell**. Think about it like this; when Darwin first published, **Origin of the Species** in the 1850s, they had primitive microscopes that could only magnify up to 200 times. A cell's nucleus looked like a black blob. Know what the magnification is for an electron microscope? 10 **million** times!

-Scientists now know that there is **no such thing** as a "simple, living cell." Cells are unbelievably complex--like little factories with DNA in them that could fill 1000 large books with information. The thought that a few sparks in primordial soup made this happen? Darwin was not just a **little** wrong--he was off the charts wrong. Sheer chance is a **very** inefficient way to get things done!

-To give you an example--know how long it would take to draw out of this box, in order, the letters to the word **evolution**? **9.6 million years!** The odds of the amino acids lining up just right to form a molecule of protein are 1 in 10 with 450 zeros after it. And it takes 239 molecules of the right type coming together in the right order to form a living cell.

- c. This is why people from the scientific community like Richard Dawkins had to come up with **other** theories. Like the **multi-verse**--you know, that there are an **infinite** number of universes. Or that **aliens** planted life here--for which there is absolutely no evidence.

-Dr. George Wald, Nobel Prize winning micro-biologist and professor emeritus at Harvard University concluded that it's not only unlikely or improbable that life could emerge **by chance**. He said that it's outright **impossible**. Darwin was sincere, but that's it.

6. There's another test that Darwin has to pass: the fossil test. See, Darwin theorized that paleontologists would eventually discover billions of tiny mutations in the fossil records that led

from single cells to humans. Darwin died in 1882--giving geologists and paleontologists 135 years to find these links. What have they found? Listen to what some of the experts say:

Dr. Stephen J. Gould, a leading evolutionist and professor of biology and geology at Harvard University said: "*120 years of fossil research after Darwin, it has become abundantly clear that the fossil record will not confirm this part of Darwin's predictions. A species does not arise gradually by the gradual transformation of its ancestors.*"

-Niles Eldridge of the American Museum of Natural History puts it like this:

"We paleontologists (fossil experts) have said that the history of life supports the story of gradual adaptive change, all the while knowing that it does not."

- a. Know what the fossil records **do** show? All of the species suddenly show up, fully formed, in the Cambrian fossils--about 570 million years ago--with **no** transitions. And then they remain unchanged to the present. **That's** what the evidence shows. Now, I'm not trying to be clever or smug, but Which way do **you** think the evidence points? Does the trail of evidence lead to a natural, random, unguided process that has produced the kind of sophistication we see--or to a **Designer**?
- b. And there are **more** challenges. Darwin taught that animals gradually developed different systems out of need. For example, when lizards needed to fly to get more food to survive, they developed wings. This happened gradually--over millions of years. Darwin said that for these mutations to survive, they would need to serve some **immediate** advantage.

-This presents challenges in and of itself. When you look at the difference between a lizard's front legs and a chicken's wings--**what's the advantage of being half and half?** Michael Behe, a professor of biochemistry at Penn State University, wrote a book called **Darwin's Black Box** in which he introduces the principle of **irreducible complexity**.

-Behe's primary example of this is the eye. Michael Behe has demonstrated that there are several systems in the body so complex that they couldn't **possibly** have evolved one step at a time.

- c. Now, listen to what **Darwin** said about this:
"If it could be demonstrated that any complex organism existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous successive slight modifications, then my theory would absolutely break down."

-To put it bluntly: The theory **does** break down. No scientist has been able to explain how eyesight, blood-clotting and other complicated systems could evolve.

7. There's one more thing that science has no evolutionary explanation for: DNA. Darwin knew nothing about it. It's found in every single living cell in the universe. What's interesting is that DNA is actually a chemical **language** with the instructions for putting your body together, piece by piece--from your 600 different muscles to your 2 million optic nerve fibers to your 100 billion nerve cells.

-The information in a single strand of human DNA would fill a library of 4000 books--and a **teaspoon** of DNA could contain the instructions for every single living thing that has ever existed. And there would **still** be enough room in this DNA to store the information from every book in the world.

- a. In his book, Francis Collins, the scientist who mapped the human, explains that DNA is a **super** organized language. The title of his book is, **The Language of God**. It was the understanding of how complicated DNA is that caused Anthony Flew, an 80 year old spokesperson for atheism, to believe in God. He said, "I always promised I would go **where the evidence led me!**"

-To say that this **just happened** is to defy everything we know about entropy and the law of thermodynamics. Let me explain this law; how many of you expect that while you're here, your house will become **better organized**--all on it's own? We **all** know that over time things don't **integrate**--they **dis-integrate**. Want proof? Look at your **body!** Look at **my** body!

- b. That's why a careful scientist like Michael Denton, a medical doctor, molecular biologist and genetics researcher would write a 368 page systematic dismantling of

Darwinism and conclude:

"Ultimately, the Darwinism theory of evolution is no more nor less than the great cosmogonic myth of the 20th century."

8. **Why am I talking about this?** It's because science increasingly seems to confirm--not deny--the existence of God. Here's the question; are you committed to following where the evidence leads you? For Richard Dawkins to make science the enemy of Christianity and intelligent, rational thought is absurd.

-Does it make **sense** to you that all we see **just happened**--the precise timing of the Big Bang, a single living cell developing against impossible odds, and the intelligent language in **every single cell?** Does it even make sense to explain it all with...**Nothing! Nobody! Random chance?** That **is** not science. That's **magic!** In **science**--nothing ever **just happens**.

-Now, hear me out on this; what you believe about how everything came to be has **huge** implications for the way you live--for how you see yourself. Know this; there are followers of Jesus who take a **very** literal interpretation of Genesis 1-2. Could God do things like that? **Of course!**

*Some followers of Jesus would say, "I think the days here refer to **ages** in time--10s or 100s of thousands of years for each period of development.

*Some followers of Jesus say, "I think it was the process of evolution--**with God behind it** that produced what we see today. Francis Collins takes that approach in his book, **The Language of God**. There is room here for everyone to place themselves.

- a. Here's what I know. The evidence is clearly stacked against a Darwinian explanation of the universe. The **odds** are impossible that the precision and sophistication of what we see just **happened in a blind, unguided, random process**. It simply **couldn't** have

happened that way--given that timing of what we see. That's why scientists like Dawkins and Gould have come up with theories about multiple universes and alien invasions--for which there is **absolutely not a shred of evidence!**

-Science is the study of the **physical realm**--that is, what you can see, touch, hear, smell and evaluate. That's why Harvard professor, Stephen J. Gould, the most celebrated atheist, evolutionary biologist and paleontologist of the 20th century wrote:

"To say it for the umpteenth, millionth time, science simply cannot, by its legitimate methods, adjudicate the issue of God's possible superintendence of nature. ... We simply cannot comment on it as scientists." (Stephen J. Gould, Rock of Ages, p. 195)

- b. Richard Dawkins uses his scientific credentials to say that science proves that God doesn't exist. Actually? People **CHOOSE**, for **personal** reasons, to not believe what they don't want to believe.

-Remember the Nobel Prize-winning scientist I quoted by the name of Dr. George Wald, who said that he was absolutely convinced that it is impossible for life to have spontaneously arisen from non-life? I didn't read the full quotation. Listen to the rest of it:

"That leads us only to one other conclusion, that of supernatural creation. But we cannot accept that on philosophical grounds. Therefore, we choose to believe the impossible, that life arose spontaneously by chance."

- c. There is in the scientific community a **huge** devotion to Darwin and his theory of **The Origin of the Species**. I may be wrong, but what **I'm** seeing is a faith-like devotion to Darwin--**no matter where the evidence leads**.

-Colin Patterson, senior paleontologist at the British Natural History Museum and author of the museum's text on evolution made this amazing statement in a speech to an audience of experts:

"Can you tell me anything you know about evolution, any one thing...that is true? I tried that question on the geology staff at the Field Museum of Natural History and the only answer I got was silence. I tried it on the members of the Evolutionary Morphology seminar in the University of Chicago, a very prestigious body of evolutionists, and all I got was silence for a long time and eventually one person said "I do know one thing--it ought not to be taught in high school."

-Patterson later denied he'd said this. Know why? Peer pressure. To speak against Darwinism is the worst form of scientific heresy! Most people in the science profession will tell you that if you even **infer** that God had anything to do with all we see, grant money disappears and qualified people are refused promotions.

- e. Here's what I know. Know **who** the scientists really are who have Ph.D.s and write textbooks? They're fragile people with prejudices, hang-ups, problems, and limited time and energy--like you and me. Most of them have read lots of books and earned their multiple degrees in tiny focused areas of research. The honest ones will admit that. And God loves them **passionately!**

-Here's the danger we **all** face. It's to **choose** to believe what you want to believe, what works for you--when the evidence clearly leads somewhere else. Paul said:

**...The basic reality of God is plain enough. Open your eyes and there it is!
...So nobody has a good excuse. (Romans 1:19, 21 MSG)**

9. And now? Well, **you** have to look at the evidence and choose what you're going to believe about the reality we live in--and about yourself. **Why is there something rather than nothing? Who put 4000 volumes of DNA in every cell? What caused the Big Bang?** If you can shrug your shoulders and say, "**Nothing!**" then please tell me how to have that kind of faith!

-See, **everyone** believes; **everyone** chooses which trail of evidence to follow. Science hasn't made God irrelevant; it has simply made the trail of evidence clearer. There is a God powerful enough to design all we see--and **loving** enough to include you and me in that love!