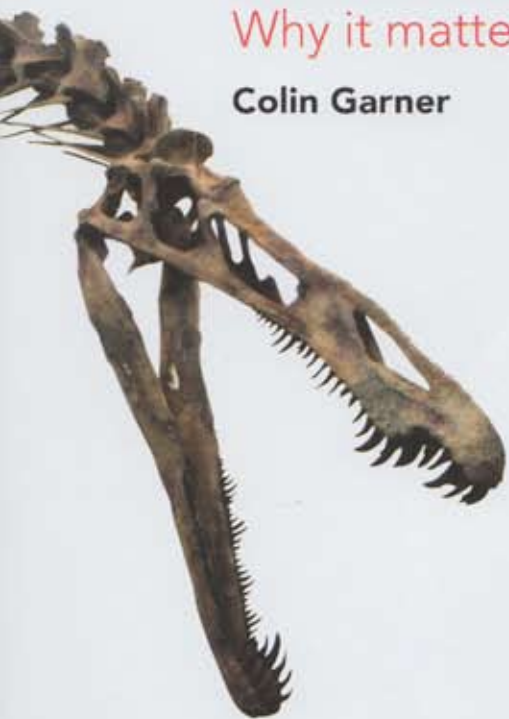


creation **points**

CREATION & EVOLUTION

Why it matters what you believe

Colin Garner



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Part 1

Genesis: the foundation of biblical doctrine

1. The Bible

The evangelical stance on the authority of the Bible is this: 'The Bible, as originally given, is the fully inspired and infallible Word of God. It is the supreme authority in all matters of belief and behaviour.' This is the wording of the University and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF) doctrinal basis, but most evangelical statements are essentially the same. The Bible itself says:

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:14–17).



GENESIS

God inspired the book of Genesis, and its compilation is attributed mainly to Moses. Throughout the Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments, the book of Genesis is referred to or directly quoted from more than any other book in the Bible. It is no accident that God inspired this book to be written so that we could have firm foundations for all our important points of doctrine. Furthermore, it gives us answers about the creation of the universe, where we come from and why we are here.

The New Testament refers to Genesis directly or indirectly 200 times and to Genesis chapters 1–11 107 times (see Morris 1976 for a full list and discussion).

Jesus refers to Genesis twenty-five times for important points of doctrine or teaching. Clearly, Jesus would not deliberately teach us something that was untrue; he is, after all, 'the Truth'. Jesus is God's Son, Emmanuel, God With Us. Most importantly, he was without sin.

Here are just three examples:

1. 'But at the beginning of creation God "made them male and female". "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." So they are no longer two, but one' (Mark 10:6–8, direct quotes from Genesis 1:27 and 2:24).
2. '... from the blood of righteous Abel ...' (Matthew 23:35, reference to a specific real person found in Genesis 4).
3. 'As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving

in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man' (Matthew 24:37–39, reference to a past real event described in Genesis 6–8 that points to a future real event).

Jesus used the book of Genesis as a basis for his teaching. Genesis was

'The Bible, as originally given, is the fully inspired and infallible Word of God.'

foundational to his 'worldview' and 'eternal view'—that is, where things came from, why we are here, why things are as they are, and where things are going.

The following are some of the most important teachings from Genesis 1:

- 'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth' (Genesis 1:1). There was a beginning and God created space and matter. Scientists often refer to the three 'ingredients' of physics: time, length and mass, i.e. 'the beginning' = time, 'the heavens' = space and length, and 'the earth' = matter and mass.
- 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them' (Genesis 1:27). It is vitally important that we understand that we were created in God's image, quite differently from animals.
- 'God saw all that he had made, and

it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day’ (Genesis 1:31). It wasn’t ‘very bad’ or ‘very chaotic’ in the beginning, it was ‘very good’. Since then, due to sin, we and the world have degenerated.

‘...there are no known mutations that give new information to living things, in other words, no new genetic information.’

Other important teachings from Genesis include:

- Man’s role in the created world—Genesis 1:28.
- Marriage—Genesis 2:24.
- Sin—Genesis 2:16–17.
- Right and wrong, knowledge of good and evil—Genesis 3:22.
- Shedding of blood: covering of sin—Genesis 3:21 (see also Hebrews 9:22).

‘Genesis’ means ‘Origins’. It refers to and establishes for the first time the origins and foundations of the following:

- The universe
- Order and complexity
- The solar system
- The atmosphere and hydrosphere
- Life
- Man
- Marriage
- Evil
- Language
- Government
- Culture
- The seven-day week and the day of rest
- Nations

EVOLUTIONARY VIEW TABLE 1

Premise of evolution:

It is assumed that complex beings could not have just appeared, they must have gradually evolved from atoms, given enough time.

Process of evolution:

A collection of random, non-living chemicals organizing themselves into self-reproducing organisms and then a cycle of ‘birth/reproduction; improvement by mutation (errors); survival of the fittest; death’—leading to man.

- Religion
- God’s chosen people

It is easy to take some of the above for granted, but Genesis is the place to which you have to go to find origins of these important things. It is worthwhile reading through Genesis to see where each of the above is first mentioned.

What is the evolutionary view, then, and where did it come from?

THE EVOLUTIONARY VIEW

The evolutionary view of the world emerged during a time of an increasing desire to reject God and hence there was a need to account for how the universe, the world and living things came about without him. In the 19th century there was a philosophical thirst for theories that could mean that there was no God. Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution was embraced because, almost for the first time, man felt he could explain the living world around him without the need for God. Even many Christians and theologians have, incorrectly, accepted evolutionary theory rather than biblical creation, arguing that ‘God used evolution’ to lead to what we have around us rather than the special, separate acts of creation described in Genesis. We will see later that this is a quite unbiblical view that has serious fundamental implications

for a range of important doctrines, not least the Fall, death, the atonement and salvation.

Evolutionary theory proposes that out of chaos came order, information and complexity. In more specific terms, molecules eventually rearranged themselves to become human beings. It was clearly inconceivable that something as complex as a person (or even a frog or daisy, for that matter) could suddenly appear, so the idea of ‘millions of years’ was embraced. The evolutionary process leading to new kinds of plants and animals could not be observed around us, so a basic evolutionary assumption was needed that it must have happened over millions of years.

Table 1 (above) shows the evolutionary view in terms of its basic assumptions and how it is thought to work. Evolution relies on random errors (mutations) in the genetic structure of living things to lead to them having progressively more complex, coded information. However, it is important to note that there are no known mutations that result in new information in living things, in other words, no new genetic information. All mutations result in a loss of information, even though this loss might be locally advantageous to a particular plant or animal in some circumstances. What is required to

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CREATION & EVOLUTION

Why it matters what you believe

Why is the creation/evolution issue so important? And hasn't science disproved the biblical creation account anyway? The world's evolutionary view permeates virtually all society and secular science, and many people, even Christians, hold an evolutionary view almost by default. They reject the biblical creation account in Genesis as fact. In this booklet, Colin Garner discusses how, as well as being inconsistent with biblical truth, evolutionary theory has serious fundamental scientific weaknesses. He highlights the reasons why Genesis, the first book of the Bible, is of such importance to life today, in the hope that it will encourage us all to base our beliefs, our evangelism and our hopes on the whole Bible, including its vital foundational teaching on creation.



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