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Other booklets by Gary and Lita:

How did we get the Bible? And is it the Word of God?

Gay Marriage: Right or Wrong? And who decides?

Is Human Life Special?

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Many people are concerned at the obvious trend today of devaluing life. Abortion has been legalized for decades, resulting in the death of millions of innocent unborn children every year, and now, arguments for euthanasia and assisted suicide are gaining sympathy in the media. How did this happen, when Western¹ culture would have found these sorts of things horrifying just 100 years ago?

Evolution devalues human life

It might be surprising to hear that this is the logical outcome of the belief that humans have evolved; if we have evolved from animals, how are we worth more than them? Not everyone immediately considers whether they are the product of evolutionary processes over millions of years. But, everyone has asked the fundamental ‘big question’ of ‘How did it all begin?’ at some time. Such ideas are often framed as ‘The three big questions of life’:

1. Where did I come from?
2. What is the meaning of life / my purpose?
3. What happens when we die?

If you think about the ‘three big questions’, you will realize that the answers to questions two and three will be determined by what you believe about question one. If life evolved, there is no purpose to it except that which you make up. And, if this material universe is all that there is, there is nothing to look forward to after death. You are born, you live, you die, and that’s it, but if you are lucky, perhaps you will get recycled as packaged fish food! However, if God created humans, then He defines the purpose of life, and He determines what happens to us when we die.

The historical basis for valuing life

Historically, Western society was founded upon Christian morality, which implied accountability to the Creator God of the Bible. And one foundational idea was that mankind was created in the image of God their Creator. This is obvious because only humans have the capacity to think about the ‘three big questions’ and to have a relationship with our Creator. Endowed with this image, it therefore follows that people have value and rights that animals do not have.

Genesis 1–2 also teaches that God declared mankind, His final creation on Day 6, to be the stewards of His creation. This means that we can use creation for our benefit, but we also have to take care of it, because it belongs to God who put us in charge of it. Put another way, we are ‘top dog’ because it was planned that way, and it is not by cosmic chance.

By contrast, evolutionists view mankind as merely another evolved animal. Under this view, the only reason that humans are at the top of the evolutionary tree is because we evolved to be better adapted and fitter than our competitors. This is a naturalistic and atheistic view of our origins, and although some earlier evolutionary views were around long before Darwin, he certainly popularized this naturalistic view of our world. The elevation of Darwinism has had tragic consequences for human beings.

But isn’t evolution ‘science’?

The debate about origins still rages 150 plus years after Charles Darwin published *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. Until Darwin, most people in Western nations, including the great founding fathers of our modern scientific disciplines like Newton, Faraday, Pasteur, and Kepler, believed that the universe and all life on earth were created by the Creator God of the Bible.

Today, most people have accepted Darwinian evolution as fact, believing it is a modern, scientific approach for interpreting our world.

Is Human Life Special?

But for many it is simply because evolution is all they have ever been taught. Under the banner of ‘modern science’, concepts of creation are excluded from public education because they are mistakenly regarded as unscientific. While it is beyond the scope of this little booklet to discuss the mountains of information pertaining to the creation/evolution debate, it is worth just diverting a little to define what science actually is. Can the scientific method actually tell us what happened at the beginning of it all? This is foundational when considering whether human life is more valuable than animal life.

In the 18th century, many discoveries about our world were being made, and a movement called the ‘Enlightenment’ grew out of Western Europe. Many philosophers and thinkers sought to explain their world without reference to a higher authority or deity. Instead, they appealed to nature itself (philosophical naturalism), materialism, or the idea that matter is all there ever was or will be. They paved the way for a more ‘rational’ approach of disbelief in a Creator God. Darwin’s family was greatly influenced by these thinkers, and it would be fair to say that he was a product of his time. Soon, materialistic dogmatism invaded the scientific realm, and to this day it retains a firm grasp on every aspect of the sciences. World-renowned former Oxford Professor, author, and atheist Richard Dawkins wrote:

“Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.”²

But, is this correct? Did Darwin discover the ‘evolutionary’ truth about life—that the universe and life can be explained without reference to God—using the scientific method?

What is science?

Evolution is not really ‘science’ as most commonly understand the term; to understand why, we have to think about what science actually is. When most people hear the word ‘science’, they often think of some

of the marvelous scientific advances that have been made. We can launch satellites into orbit that allow us to beam television programs into our living rooms from other parts of the world. Or we can develop modern medicines and develop incredible technologies to help heal the sick. These advancements required observation, extrapolation, experimentation, and time. For example, if we were to test the boiling point of water, we would discover it boils at 100°C (212°F) at sea level. When the water boils, we can see steam escaping. We could hypothesize that if we captured the steam, we might be able to use it to turn a turbine wheel and generate power. Technologies are the result of continuing to test and build upon former ideas. We would call this *operational or experimental science*.

This is vastly different than trying to work out what happened in the past, and the longer we are disconnected from the past, the more difficult this becomes. For example, it is said that lifeless chemicals somehow self-organized to form the first primordial cell, and this was the ancestor of all life on earth. This is a hypothesis, but despite the countless man-hours and money spent to try and prove this idea, no experiment has shown this can happen via unguided natural processes (or indeed even with intelligence guiding the process!). In short, if one cannot observe it happening or test it and repeat it, then it falls outside of the commonly understood definition of science. Such ideas about evolution, that fish evolved into reptiles that became mammals that became apes that became humans, cannot be observed, tested, or repeated. As such, they fall under the category of beliefs about the past. This is important, because both evolutionists and creationists use such beliefs when interpreting their world and mankind's place in it, and, indeed, whether human life is special or not. One might call this *origins or historical science*.

OPERATIONAL/ EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCE	EVOLUTION OR CREATION
Happens in the present	Happened in the past
Can be observed	Was not observed
Can be repeated	Happened one time
Can be tested	Cannot be tested

Although many skeptical atheists claim there is no distinction in common practice, this is not true. Famous Harvard evolutionary biologist, Dr E.O. Wilson, wrote:

“If a moving automobile were an organism, functional biology would explain how it is constructed and operates, while evolutionary biology would reconstruct its origin and history—how it came to be made and its journey thus far.”³

But, there are more foundational problems with trying to use science to figure out things that happened in the past. “Where did we come from?” is a *historical* question, so *historical* methods, not scientific ones, are needed, though science will obviously have some things to say about the subject.

Can we use science to determine the truth about where we came from?

Evolution is the dominant origins story in our culture. But Darwin did not have access to the marvelous technological insights we have today due to the advances of operational science. For example, Darwin had little idea about the complexity of the cell when compiling his ideas of evolution. We now know that the study of living cells is more like information technology, but only mind-blowingly more complex. In the nucleus of every living cell is the DNA molecule, which is basically a storage system that contains coded operational instructions for the

almost countless functions in the cell. In a human cell, there are about 3 billion 'letters' of information, all ordered and arranged. It's analogous to a 1,000-volume instruction manual.

The words you are reading are composed of letters. But the letters by themselves do not contain information. They have to be arranged and ordered into words and sentences to produce meaningful information that you are reading and can understand. Random letters on this page would not convey meaningful information to you. As one hallmark that life was created, let's just take the DNA molecule. It is a storage system that contains multiple layers of sophisticated computer codes to help build cells. It will define whether to build a frog or a fish, a hippopotamus or a human being. We also now know that DNA has coded instructions for the building of 'machines' in the cell. Many of these machines actually help to repair the DNA that contains the instructions to build them in the first place! This is an inescapable 'chicken-and-egg' problem. So, in one sense, even though all life is 'just chemistry', it is the unfathomable, complex *arrangement* of chemical molecules that gives life. When one sees such layers of complex information (like the words in this booklet), one also instinctively knows that it came from an



DNA structure

intelligent information-giver. If human anatomy and genetics display the scientific hallmarks of being designed, it ultimately means we were created. And Scripture tells us we were created for a reason. Thus, human life must be special in the eyes of our Creator.

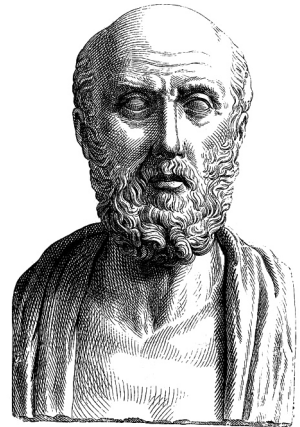
Who decides who should live or die?

If you were to ask someone 'Is murder wrong?', most people would agree that it is, whether they are atheist or Christian. But if challenged, could the atheist provide a logical and consistent reason

for why he or she thinks it is always objectively wrong? Today, in many countries, doctors are allowed to provide seriously ill people (or sometimes just hugely depressed people) medication that allows them to take their own lives. In some cases, the doctors or nurses will actually administer the lethal ‘medication’.

The Hippocratic Oath is one of the most widely known Greek medical documents, and its principles still influence modern medical care. At its core is the principle of the caring for and saving of human life. One of the lines of the oath states, “Nor shall any man’s entreaty prevail upon me to administer poison to anyone; neither will I counsel any man to do so.” This is because there has always been a very clear distinction between medicine, which has the goal of healing and extending life where possible, and the destruction of life by poison and abortion (which the Hippocratic Oath also condemns).

It is clear that there has been a ‘shifting of the goalposts’ to justify the lawful killing of individuals on certain occasions. Many euthanasia advocates claim that a person’s quality of life is the deciding factor as to whether a life should continue or not. Increasingly, if someone wants to die because of illness, aging, or even depression, it is argued that allowing them to commit suicide with medical assistance is simply respecting their autonomy. But this is a very dangerous and artificial area to venture into, because who decides? Societies that offer voluntary euthanasia might quickly end up applying it to people who cannot request or consent to euthanasia, like small children and seniors suffering from Alzheimer’s. And when euthanasia becomes acceptable in a society, very quickly someone’s ‘right to die’ can become ‘their duty to die’, particularly if their care might be deemed an economic



Hippocrates