

Origins and Morality

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"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good" Psalm 53:1.

Does one's view of origins influence his moral behavior? The answer is an absolute yes. Dr. W. A. Criswell once observed: "For years we have taught our children that they are animals; now they act as though they were animals." Beliefs have consequences. The low moral standards of the 21st century may be traced to the indoctrination of at least two, if not three, generations with the theory of evolution taught in public schools and universities.

That beliefs affect behavior is obvious from our text. The fool who says there is no God has a belief system which has an effect on his behavior. Three statements are made about this empty-headed fool [the Hebrew word for fool is nabal which means senseless, suggesting he is an empty-headed fool] in Psalm 53:1.

First, he is corrupt or perverse. The same Hebrew word used here for corrupt is found in Genesis 6:12 which states, "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." By his moral depravity he would destroy himself, resulting in his being destroyed by God, as Genesis 6:13 explains: "And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Interestingly enough, the words corrupt and destroy come from the same Hebrew word.

Second, he has done abominable or abhorrent iniquity or wickedness. As a larger number of the citizens of our country deny the existence of God, belittle His Word, and accept evolution as truth, the more abominable iniquity becomes accepted as normal in our society. Decency is ridiculed and the most outrageous behavior, whether public or private, is officially approved.

Third, neither he nor any other fool does good in the sight of God. What they do may seem good to men, but man's standards are not God's (Isaiah 55:8, 9). As a result, men often call good what God calls evil, and evil what He calls good. Thus, a woe or threatening of judgment is pronounced upon all who dare to pervert God's standard (Isaiah 5:20).

However, behavior also affects belief. The reason the empty-headed fool says there is no God is that he is corrupt and has done abominable iniquity, causing him to experience severe and painful guilt. When guilt becomes too severe to handle, one must either confess his sins or redefine his beliefs. The empty-headed fool will always redefine his beliefs and thus, he declares in his heart that there is no God. Concerning such a person, the Apostle Paul commanded, "*A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted [perverted], and sinneth, being condemned of himself*" (Titus 3:10, 11).

Anyone who does not believe there is a God obviously does not believe in Biblical creation or in giving an account to God for his actions.

Philosophical Implications Regarding Origins and Behavior

What one believes about God clearly affects his behavior, as we

have already noted. He that says in his heart there is no God does only evil, not good in the sight of God, as Psalm 53:1 states. Have you noticed that there are no hospitals or orphanages named after atheists?

What one believes about origins likewise influences his behavior. If he does not believe himself to have been created immediately by and in the image of God, he does not regard himself to be directly accountable to God. In spite of one's denial that he was created by God in His own image, Scripture declares he was. "*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them*" (Genesis 1:26, 27). What if some do not believe this fact? In the words of the Apostle Paul we answer: ". . . *let God be true, but every man a liar. . .*" (Romans. 3:4). That every man will also give an account of himself directly to God is clearly asserted in Scripture as well: "*So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God*" (Romans. 14:12).

One belief leads to another. If a man believes he is not God's direct creation and does not have to give account to Him for his conduct because he has evolved, then he will reason he may do what he pleases, regardless of how wicked his deeds may be. The only limits on his conduct are those imposed upon him by his upbringing—these standards are thought to be psychological hangups—and by the customs, mores, and laws of a civilized society, all of which are ever changing. Consequently, there is no recognition of an absolute standard of right and wrong among those who believe man is not created by God. As a result, relativism becomes the sole determining factor of right and wrong in a godless society.

Historical Examples Relating to Origins and Behavior

There have always been empty-headed fools who say in their hearts

there is no God. Such fools obviously did not believe in the direct creative work of the Creator. Thus, they developed belief systems and philosophies which reflected their beliefs. All of these systems have had a very negative impact on the behavior of all contemporary societies.

While there were earlier versions of belief in evolution, the modern theory of Evolution may be traced to Charles Darwin. Darwin set forth this theory in his Origin of the Species. Darwin's theory centered in the natural selection and survival of the fittest. His theory is by its very nature materialistic and atheistic, for, in denying that God is the Creator of all things, it argues against the existence of God. Henry Morris quotes one atheist professor who says, "The whole history of evolution reveals there is no intelligence back of the process. You cannot understand evolution and believe in God" The process of evolution, especially the evolution of man from lower species, is believed to have required millions of years. One cannot help but wonder if this were the case, who made the years? So much is assumed by evolutionists: the measures of time had to have had a beginning, but time had to have existed before it could be measured. How, then, can evolutionists speak in terms of millions of years when there were no means of measuring time before the earth began to rotate around the sun? If the sun and the earth evolved, then there was no way of measuring time before this process took place.

The theory of evolution has not been confined to natural sciences, such as biology and geology alone. This false belief has been applied to social sciences and political philosophies with destructive consequences to civilization. C. L. Prosser wrote: "The Origin of the Species has had more influence on Western culture than any other book of modern times. It was not only a great biological treatise, closely reasoned and revolutionary, but it carried significant implications for philosophy, religion, sociology, and history. Evolution is the greatest single unifying principle in all biol-

ogy" (The Origin after a Century: Prospects for the Future." American Scientist, Vol. 47, December, 1959, p. 536).

For example, Karl Marx, who wished to dedicate his book, *Das Kapital*, to Darwin adapted Darwin's theory of evolution to social and political thought, resulting in socialism, Marxism, and communism. Who can estimate the havoc, mayhem, and death communism caused to millions in Russia, Eastern Europe and parts of Asia. Communism enslaves people, reduces them to poverty, and eliminates unwanted factions of the population.

Friedrich Nietzsche and Ernst Haeckel were both rabid advocates of Darwinism who adapted this theory to political philosophy in Germany in the 19th century. Their political philosophy became the basis of intense German militarism in the 18th and 19th centuries. Benito Mussolini's thinking was dominated by evolution. He actually used Darwinian catchwords to mock the concept of perpetual peace, lest such peace hinder the evolutionary process. Thus, the theory of evolution and fascism, which was first instituted in Italy in 1922, are ingloriously linked together.

Nazism was bred in the same cesspool of thought. Adolf Hitler's mind was captivated by evolution. In fact, evolutionary ideas formed the basis of the worst of his philosophy in *Mein Kampf* as well as in his public speeches. In his quest to eliminate inferior people and establish a master race through mass murder and gas chambers, Hitler was but applying Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest. Consequently, millions were murdered and World War II was ignited in which millions more were slaughtered.

John Dewey is yet another historical example of one whose philosophy was influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution. Dewey, the father of progressive education, was completely evolutionistic in his approach to education. Who can measure the inestimable moral and spiritual damage his educational system has inflicted on several generations of American youth?

Sigmund Freud was also influenced in his thinking by Darwinism, adapting the theory of evolution to psychology from which he formed his theory of psychoanalysis. This genius and his system of psychology encourages people to blame their ungodly deeds on someone else—primarily on one's parents—instead of taking personal responsibility for their own behavior.

Big business is still another area of society affected by Darwinism. John D. Rockefeller is reported to have said, "The growth of a large business is merely the survival of the fittest . . . This is not an evil tendency in business. It is merely the working out of a law of nature and a law of God." In other words, unscrupulous tactics which undercut and drive competition out of business, are nothing but the survival of the fittest, the foundational tenant of the theory of evolution.

Religious modernism may be largely traced to Darwinism, for the rise of modernism in the 19th and early 20th centuries followed the scientific propaganda of the advocates of evolution. The liberal elements of major Protestant denominations and some Baptists adapted their Biblical exegesis and theology to accommodate the theories proposed by Darwin, and as a result, departed from the Biblical account of creation. Even certain evangelicals adopted a variant concept of evolution called theistic evolution in which they asserted that God did create the heavens

and the earth, but He did it through a process of evolution.

Darwinism, through the unholy philosophies it has spawned, has contributed to the destruction of both marriage and the home, the promotion of illicit sex, the birth of unwanted babies and their abortion, mass murder, revolutionary and guerrilla warfare, unionism, and in short, every evil in our world, and especially the political confusion in Washington, D.C. So-called Liberation Theology and the concept that there is good in all men—which belief denies the fall of man because it assumes man is constantly evolving to a higher plane, a theory which is contradicted by the fall of man—have been influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution.

Biblical Principles Relating to Origins and Behavior

There are three Biblical principles which obviously affect behavior, and each of these three principles pre-suppose a belief in both a Creator and creation. A belief in evolution, as we have before stated, results from either believing there is no God or that God was only indirectly involved in creation. What are these three Biblical principles which influence conduct?

The first Biblical principle which affects one's behavior is the fear or reverence of the LORD. Proverbs 16:6 teaches: "*. . .and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.*" The fear of the LORD is defined in Proverbs 8:13 as follows: "*The fear of the LORD is to hate evil. . .*" To hate evil is absolutely necessary to departing from it. No wonder the fear of the LORD is said to be the beginning of wisdom (Prov. 9:10). Two illustrations from Scripture show how a lack of the fear of the LORD affects behavior in a negative way:

First, Abraham was afraid for his life among the Philistines because he sensed no fear of the LORD among them (Genesis 20:1-

11). Not

exhibiting great fear of the LORD himself, Abraham had told Abimelech that Sarah was his sister. Abimelech, having taken Sarah into his harem, was told in a dream by God that he was a dead man because he had taken another man's wife. The heathen king protested his innocence in the matter and eagerly restored to Abraham his wife. When Abimelech inquired what Abraham had seen that caused him to do what he had done, Abraham answered, "*Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake*" (Genesis 20:11). From this incident we conclude that where there is no fear of the Lord, a man is much more apt to take another man's wife and kill him than he is where He is revered.

Second, Pharaoh refused to obey the LORD because he did not fear Him. "*And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go*" (Exodus 5:1, 2).

Contrast his attitude and actions with those of the Hebrew midwives who refused to kill the male children born to the Hebrews as Pharaoh commanded. "*But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive*" (Exodus 1:17). Because they feared the LORD, He blessed the midwives (Exodus 1:20, 21), but brought ten plagues upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians before destroying them in the Red Sea. Pharaoh's attitudes and conduct were defiant and cruel because He did not fear the LORD.

The second Biblical principle which influences behavior is the view that one has concerning God's Word. "*Blessed are the undefiled in the*

way, who walk in the law of the LORD. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways" (Psalm 119:1-3). Psalm 119:11 adds, *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*

Those who believe the Bible is God's Word and seek to live by its principles will conduct themselves in all areas of life differently from those who do not accept it as such. The very significant decline in moral standards and conduct among professing Christians may be traced in part to the low view of Scripture produced by the so-called scientific method of textual criticism advanced by B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort. These men, as so many in Great Britain during the 19th century, were influenced by Darwinism. Westcott and Hort postulated that the oldest manuscripts of the Bible were the most reliable even though the oldest text types were in the minority. Is this hypothesis not an adaptation of Darwin's theory of the survival of the fittest? Their theory and the resultant textual criticism and multiplied translations have undermined and destroyed the credibility and authority of the sacred Scriptures in the post-modern world. The consequent change in the behavior of society at large cannot go unnoticed.

The third Biblical principle which affects behavior is the faith one has in Jesus Christ. In fact, we may say that nothing so influences one's conduct as does his trust in Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul

wrote by inspiration, *"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity"* (2 Timothy 2:19). Although the Lord Jesus Christ has forgiven him of all his sins (Colossians 2:13), he is not in the least encouraged thereby to persist in his sins. After declaring that where sin did abound, grace did much more abound (Romans 5:20), the Apostle Paul rhetorically asked, *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?"* (Romans 6:1). Then he exclaimed, *"God forbid, How shall we, that are dead to sin,*

live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:2). Jesus Christ is Lord over all (Acts 2:36; Philippians 2:9-11). Yet He is only known as Lord by those trust Him as their Savior, and those who trust and acknowledge Him as Lord and Savior are recognized by the higher standard of conduct by which they conduct themselves as opposed to those who do not acknowledge Him as Lord and Savior.

What One Believes About Origins Will Have a Profound Influence in Both the Philosophy and the Conduct of His Life!

Belief in the theory of evolution is unbelief toward God and His Word. As quoted earlier, one cannot believe in evolution and God. Unbelief toward God and His Word is a great sin. Revelation 21:8 states, "*But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*"

The conduct of a society brainwashed by its belief in the theory of evolution is ungodly. Ungodly behavior in any generation anywhere will bring God's judgment upon it and upon those who have espoused the false doctrines which contributed to it. "*Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core*" (Jude 11). Cf. Revelation 2:20-23.