

# “Evolution and Biblical Creation”

## Session 4 in the Christianity and Science Series

Series Webpage: [www.richknopp.com/lcc-science/](http://www.richknopp.com/lcc-science/)

Lincoln Christian Church  
October 15, 2025  
[www.RoomForDoubt.com](http://www.RoomForDoubt.com)

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### Introduction



- A. Mentimeter audience interaction. Use QR code  
OR ... go to [menti.com](https://www.menti.com) and use code 7114 1053.
- B. Evolution and the origin of life.
  - 1. See session 3, “Science and God’s Revelation in Nature.”
  - 2. Evolution is IRRELEVANT until life *already* exists.
  - 3. The importance of addressing abiogenesis.
- C. The history of Darwinism. (See Richard Knopp, “Darwinism: Its Development, Dominance, and Debates,” Parts 1 and 2, included in the FREE Science and Christianity Video Collection at <https://roomfordoubt.com/science-christianity/>.)
- D. **Charles Darwin** (1809-1882).
  - 1. Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (1859).
  - 2. Darwin proposes a MECHANISM for evolution:  
NATURAL SELECTION.

“Being well prepared to appreciate the **struggle for existence** which everywhere goes on, from long-continued observation of the habits of animals and plants, it at once struck me that under these circumstances favorable **variations** would tend to be preserved and unfavorable ones to be destroyed. The result of this would be **the formation of new species**. Here, then, I had at last got a theory by which to work” (*Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*; emphasis added).

- E. **Neo-Darwinism** (1910s-1930s).
  - 1. Darwinism is synthesized with genetic theory stemming from **Gregor Mendel** (1822-1884).
  - 2. All living species arose by *unguided natural* processes primarily through mutations and natural selection.
- F. Evolution is TRUE!
  - 1. The real question is, HOW MUCH?
  - 2. MICRO vs. MACRO evolution.
- G. Considerations on **biblical creation**. (See session 2: “Science and Biblical Creation: Interpreting Scripture.”)
  - 1. Several plausible interpretations of biblical creation by devoted Christians.
  - 2. God created life, “each **according to its kind**” (Gen. 1:11-12, 21, 24-25; cf. 1 Cor. 15:35-41).
  - 3. “And God said, ‘**Let the ...**’” (Genesis 1):
    - a. Waters be gathered and dry land appear (1:9).
    - b. Earth sprout vegetation (1:11).
    - c. Waters teem with living creatures (1:20).
    - d. Earth bring forth living creatures (1:24).
  - 4. Implications:
    - a. There is LATITUDE on what God does and what God “lets” nature do.
    - b. There are LIMITS on what nature can do.
- H. Session objectives.

## I. Divergent Positions Regarding Evolution

### A. **Naturalistic Evolution** (e.g., Charles Darwin, Richard Dawkins).

1. Richard Dawkins: "Although atheism might have been logically tenable before Darwin, Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist" (*The Blind Watchmaker*, 6).
2. Accepts macro-evolution by *purely naturalistic* processes, without any guiding intelligence or God.

### B. **Evolutionary Creationism** (e.g., Francis Collins; Biologos.org; endorsed by Tim Keller).

1. Takes a "compartmentalized" approach to science and faith. (See session I.)

"Faith shows us how we should live. Science teaches how life happens. Science can tell us how the world works, but only in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus do we see what it all means."

(Website video: "God's Word, God's World")

"We fully affirm that the Bible is the inspired and authoritative word of God. We also accept the science of evolution as the best description for how God brought about the diversity of life on earth."

2. ACCEPTS macro-evolution, but it is God-directed.

3. Design is theologically affirmed but not scientifically detectable.

### C. **Young Earth Creationism** (e.g., Ken Ham at [www.answersingenesis.org](http://www.answersingenesis.org)), Jason Lisle, Eric Hovind).

1. The Genesis creation days are literal 24-hour days and occurred less than 10,000 years ago.
2. God distinctly created separate kinds of life as asserted in Genesis 1.
3. OPPOSES macro-evolution.

### D. **Progressive Creationism** (e.g., Hugh Ross at [www.reasonstobelieve.org](http://www.reasonstobelieve.org)).

1. Accepts Big Bang cosmology and the universe age of 13.8 billion years.
2. God created different kinds of life during distinct, but indefinite, periods of time.
3. The first appearance of modern humans occurred around 100,000 years ago.
4. OPPOSES macro-evolution.

### E. **Intelligent Design** (e.g., Stephen Meyer, Michael Behe, William Demski, The Discovery Institute—[www.discovery.org/id](http://www.discovery.org/id)).

1. Seeks to offer a "scientific" case for the necessity of intelligence to account for the existence and design of the universe, life, and the diversity of life forms.
2. Intentionally avoids the use of the Bible to establish their "scientific" case.
3. Unlike evolutionary creationism, ID holds that design in nature and life can be scientifically DETECTED.
4. Probably most oppose macro-evolution, but some accept it (as long as it incorporates the necessity of intelligence-input (perhaps God)).
5. All oppose NATURALISTIC evolution.

## II. Notable Problems with Naturalistic Evolution

### A. The **EVIDENCE** problem.

1. Evidence of MICRO-evolution is not evidence of MACRO-evolution.
  - a. E.g., Peppered moths
  - b. E.g., Darwin's finches

"None of the 'proofs' provides any persuasive reason for believing that natural selection can produce new species, new organs, or other major changes, or even minor changes that are permanent.... The point in dispute is not whether microevolution happens, but whether it tells us anything important about the processes responsible for creating birds, insects, and trees in the first place" (Phillip Johnson, *Darwin on Trial*, 27,68).

2. Darwin acknowledged a FOSSIL problem (e.g., in the Cambrian Period, about 540mya).

"Why then is not every geological formation and every stratum full of such intermediate links? **Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely graduated organic chain; and this, perhaps, is the most obvious and gravest objection which can be urged against my theory.** The explanation

lies, as I believe, in the extreme imperfection of the geological record.” (Darwin, *Origin of Species*, chap. 6, “On the Imperfection of the Geological Record”; emphasis added).

3. 160+ years after Darwin, the Cambrian fossil problem has become WORSE for Darwinists. (See Stephen Meyer, *Darwin’s Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design*, 2013. See <http://www.stephencmeyer.org>.)
  - a. The fossil record does not support the *gradual* appearances of new life forms; most major phyla appear relatively *suddenly* (within 15-25 million years).
  - b. The Cambrian fossil record reveals the *opposite* of Darwinian expectations.
    - (1) Darwinism predicts a **“bottom-up”** model (from simple to complex life forms).
    - (2) The Cambrian fossil record actually exhibits a **“top-down”** picture: more complex phyla structures appear abruptly, fully developed, *and earlier than* diverse speciation within those structures.
- B. The **TIME** problem and the Cambrian Explosion.
  1. 19<sup>th</sup> century: Earth about 100myo—not nearly enough time for Darwinian evolution.
  2. Big Bang in cosmology gives much more time: Universe is 13.8byo; earth is 4.5byo.
  3. But the “Big Bang” in geology, the “Cambrian Explosion,” occurred within about 20my.
  4. If 100my was not nearly enough time for Darwinian evolution, the Cambrian era allows only 1/5 of that time.
- C. The **PARADIGM** problem among naturalistic evolutionists.
  1. Richard Dawkins: Evolution must be GRADUAL (see *Climbing Mount Improbable*).
  2. Stephen Gould: Evolution CANNOT be gradual, and the fossil record shows this. (>> “punctuated equilibrium”)
- D. The **MECHANISM** problem.
  1. Darwin’s natural selection required **gradualism**: Evolution occurs gradually.
  2. **“Irreducible Complexity”** (Michael Behe): Even the “simplest” organisms are incredibly complex units with many *interdependent* parts. (See *Darwin’s Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*, 1996; *The Edge of Evolution*, 2007.)

**Darwin:** “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by *numerous, successive, slight modifications*, my theory would absolutely break down” (*Origin of Species*; emphasis added).

**Behe:** “An irreducibly complex biological system, if there is such a thing would be a powerful challenge to Darwinian evolution. Since natural selection can only choose systems that are already working, then **if a biological system cannot be produced gradually, it would have to arise as an integrated unit**, in one fell swoop, for natural selection to have anything to act on” (*Darwin’s Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*, p. 39; emphasis added).

  - a. E.g., A mousetrap.
  - b. E.g., The bacterial flagellum.
- E. The **INFORMATION** problem. (See William Dembski, *The Design Inference*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2023; Stephen Meyer, *Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design*, 2009.)
  1. Darwin’s naturalism: Evolution occurred by natural, unguided processes only.
  2. Types of structures:
    - a. **Complex but Not Specified** (random).
    - b. **Specified but Not Complex** (repeated).
    - c. **Complex and Specified** (“specified complexity”).
  3. Naturalism via chance cannot produce specified complexity, which requires some kind of INTELLIGENCE.

- F. The **MORALITY** problem.
1. The historical connection to EUGENICS (Francis Dalton, Darwin's cousin).
    - a. The full title of Darwin's 1859 book: *The Origin of Species: or the Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life*.
    - b. "Positive" eugenics: *promoting* "desirable" hereditary traits.
    - c. "Negative" eugenics: *preventing* "undesirable" hereditary traits (e.g., 1927 Supreme Court ruling).
  2. The logical implications of "**Social Darwinism**."
    - a. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903): coined "survival of the fittest."
    - b. The Scopes "Monkey" Trial in 1925 in Dayton, TN.
      - (1) John Scopes: Accused of teaching evolution.
      - (2) Prosecutor: William Jennings Bryan. Primarily concerned about the eventual social and moral consequences of social Darwinism in America.
      - (3) Defense: Clarence Darrow, famous lawyer and skeptic.
      - (4) Popular, but grossly inaccurate movie: "Inherit the Wind" (1960).
    - c. Germany's use of Darwin (see Richard Weikart, *From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics, and Racism in Germany* [NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004]).
  3. Will Provine (atheist): "If you believe in evolution ..."

### III. Reflections

- A. Not every type of evolution was created EQUAL.
  1. Micro- vs. macro-evolution.
  2. Naturalistic vs. non-naturalistic evolution (i.e., evolutionary creationism, young earth creationism, progressive creationism, intelligent design).
- B. The primary challenge is from NATURALISTIC evolution.
- C. Even if we reject evolutionary creationism (theistic evolution), it offers encouragement that evolution—even macro-evolution—does not necessarily PRECLUDE having strong faith in core Christian beliefs (God's creation; miracles; Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection).
- D. Old-earth creationists, young-earth creationists, and intelligent design theorists all contribute to a cogent case AGAINST *naturalistic* evolution.
- E. The amazing variety, beauty, and adaptability of living forms should engender ADORATION and WORSHIP of their ultimate CREATOR (Gen. 1-2; Ps. 104; Neh. 9:6; Rev. 4:11).

### Recommended Resources

- Richard A. Knopp. "Science and Christianity Video Collection" of 13 videos, including two presentations on Darwinism. Available FOR FREE! (<https://roomfordoubt.com/science-christianity>).
- Room For Doubt Animation: "Why Do You Still Believe?" (<https://vimeo.com/327406232>)
- Richard A. Knopp. *Truth About God: What Can We Know and How Can We Know It?* Six short videos are available. Especially see "Truth About God in Nature." (<https://roomfordoubt.com/truth-about-god>).
- [www.RoomForDoubt.com/recommended-resources/science-and-the-christian-faith](http://www.RoomForDoubt.com/recommended-resources/science-and-the-christian-faith).

**NOTE:** These presentations are part of the ministry of **Room For Doubt**, which was a grant-funded program at Lincoln Christian University. It now continues its work only through **donations** from those who share its mission to **encourage questions, address doubts, and strengthen faith**. If you value this important work, **please consider supporting this effort**. For more information, see [www.RoomForDoubt.com/support](http://www.RoomForDoubt.com/support).