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Toward Healing Divisions Among Christians in the Origins Debate

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I. Introduction

On October 21, 1805, the English fleet engaged Napoleon's fleet near Cape Trafalgar, Spain, in one of the most important battles in the history of the world. Admiral Nelson intuitively used tactics later shown by mathematicians to be brilliant. Nelson's tactics and the spirit reflected in his famous message, "England expects every man to do his duty," carried the day against admittedly superior forces.

What were Nelson's tactics? Simply put, his tactics consisted of a scheme to divide the enemy. Not by accident was a large part of Napoleon's fleet in the wrong place when the fighting took place. Even though it was nine years before Napoleon was finally defeated at Waterloo, Nelson's 1805 tactics made it possible for England to live on and fight another day.

The key to the Battle of Trafalgar has up to now been the key to the creation-evolution debate. Unbelievers have successfully divided Christians. As a result, many Christians have been merely standing by, in the same way that most of Napoleon's fleet was standing by, as atheistic evolutionists set the agenda and debate with only a part of the Christian community. Doubtless this tactic has made it

possible for atheistic evolutionists to win many battles, perhaps even carry the day up to now.

How have atheistic evolutionists immobilized many Christians while the creation-evolution debate rages? I shall attempt to answer this question as I discuss the various parts of the debate. Note, however, that unlike the Battle of Trafalgar, the creation-evolution battle is not over. We Christians can recognize the tactics the enemy is using. We, not unbelievers, can set the agenda. In short, we can do the cause of Christ much good by learning to work together.

This conference brings together Christians who have different points of view. The purpose of this conference is to determine what having a Christian worldview means for all scientific activity and specifically for the creation-evolution debate. The theme of this conference comes out of the context of questions currently discussed in the Reformed community. Each speaker belongs to that community. The principal goal of this conference should be to find a common ground regarding origins from which all Christians can battle the forces of darkness.

At present, the debate is complicated and may

have more than two sides. Perhaps our efforts here can draw the lines more clearly than they have been drawn and show that ultimately there can be only two answers to the origins question. For fundamental matters such as this one there can be only the answer of the people of the thesis, the people of God, and the answer of the people of the antithesis, his enemies. To the extent that this conference can unite Christians who now disagree about origins, this conference can serve the Christian community in the unending battle against the forces of darkness.

Of course, some good things have come out of the century-old creation-evolution debate. Because of this debate large numbers of people, many of them entirely outside the scientific community, have learned to appreciate the magnificence of God's Creation and his upholding of it. A vast amount of information concerning the size, complexity, and diversity of Creation would not be common knowledge were it not for this debate. The people of the Lord can praise only him because of this new appreciation of his works. The debate has also brought out various ways in which God might have acted, and some of these insights bring praise to the Lord.

The creation-evolution debate also benefits us by showing that the Bible is a very deep book, not to be read superficially. As with other controversies, this controversy has engaged us in long and intensive study of the Bible with respect to one question; and such study always leads us to see that a superficial reading of the *holy* Word of God will not suffice.

Consider a parallel situation in another modern debate between God's people and his enemies, a debate which has also given us a greater appreciation of Creation; this debate, too, has sharpened our insight into the Bible. I refer to the abortion debate. That debate illustrates how a debate encourages God's people to praise him more. The abortion debate helps us see that debates are not necessarily bad. For example, the abortion debate has been the means whereby the intricacies of early human life have become common knowledge. Who has not been amazed by descriptions of the tiny organs of the human body only a few weeks after conception? As a result, we praise the Lord.

In the rest of this article I shall raise questions and suggest their importance or, in some cases, their unimportance. Then I shall propose some possible

answers to those questions and suggest what these answers imply.

For Christians to unite they must agree on fundamental matters. Two fundamental matters for this conference are the nature of Scripture and the nature of scientific activity. I shall take up the nature of Scripture first.

II. Questions Concerning the Nature of Scripture

A man once asked me if I knew any Christians who had cut off a hand. I asked him why he posed such a silly question. He answered, "The Bible says that Jesus tells Christians they should be ready to cut off a hand if it offends. Don't you know any Christians whose hands have been offensive?" The man did not merely reject Scripture. He attempted to put something between me and the Word of God.

Similarly, in the creation-evolution debate unbelievers often attempt to characterize the Bible in a superficial way. As a result, some Christians who claim that, of course, they believe every word of the Bible, can be fooled. They might not notice that it means nothing if we believe every word of the Bible, but do not look at the deeper meaning of the biblical text. If in this conference we are aware of this trap, we can avoid it.

Even though we may be aware of that trap and others similar to it, we must ask questions about the nature of Scripture. The first question arises because the scientific method is important for many areas of life. What, then, about using the scientific method for the investigation of Scripture? The scientific method consists of obtaining and analyzing evidence, along with using logic to construct proofs. May any part of Creation be the subject of scientific investigation? Specifically, may the Bible be the subject of scientific investigation? There are problems with both "no" and "yes" answers to that question.

If we say no, we cannot use the scientific method to investigate the Bible, then we deny that the Bible presents evidence; we deny that we can compare several parts of the Bible with each other in order to obtain the total message of the Bible. That is, we deny that God gave us power to reason and to analyze his written Word. In short, to disallow the scientific method for investigating the Bible denies the validity of the work of serious Bible students.

But if we say yes, we should use the scientific method in investigating the Bible, then other problems arise. After all, scientists usually solve problems by using information from a wide variety of disciplines. For example, an archaeologist will attempt to determine what happened at a particular place hundreds or thousands of years ago by using chemical and physical analyses of artifacts, paleontological analysis of fossils, linguistic analysis of clay tablets, and so forth. But what may we use from outside the Bible to understand the biblical message more completely? Surely we must use a knowledge of the languages of Bible times; otherwise we could not read the Bible. What about using the history of the Roman Empire to explain the context of the transition from the Old to the New Testament? That seems wise. What about using discoveries by historians that confirm some of the biblical narrative, such as the discoveries which showed—contrary to what historians once thought—that Daniel was indeed third, not second, in the kingdom (Daniel 5:29); and that Quirinius did govern Palestine when Jesus was born (Luke 2:2)? Again, such a use of extra-biblical material seems warranted. But may we use our knowledge of the laws of physics to “analyze” the sun standing still during the time of Joshua, or our knowledge of the laws of chemistry to “understand” the making of wine from water in Cana? To put it another way, may we use our knowledge of physics and chemistry to show that those miracles did not occur, leading us to conclude that the Joshua and Cana accounts teach something other than miracle?

For me, the answer to the questions about miracles—even though drawing a line between useful and non-useful extra-biblical evidence is not easy—is this: I know by faith that nothing can contradict the Bible. The Bible, a part of Creation, stands above the rest of Creation. What, then, do the Joshua and Cana accounts of these events say about Creation? Both accounts are embedded in descriptions of events which are incontrovertibly historical; and therefore we should conclude that these accounts are themselves historical and describe miracles which indeed occurred.

Another question concerning the Bible is the following: What should be the role of the Bible in the life of the Christian? Is its role any different for the scientist who is a Christian? Surely the Bible is to have an over-all impact on the life of each

Christian, regardless of occupation. But an extremely important question for this conference is the following: Is there scientific information in the Bible?

If we say the Bible contains no scientific information, we seem to limit the Bible. We seem to say that we have analyzed very carefully everything in the Bible and that we now know that none of it will ever be of use in any scientific investigation. Actually, it may be that even at present some information in the Bible is useful for scientific work. For example, is it not useful for cosmologists to know, as the Bible teaches, that the universe has not existed from eternity? Doesn't this fact rule out some proposed cosmologies?

But if we say that there is scientific information in the Bible, we may be putting the Bible on the same level as scientific journals, thereby denying that the Bible is different from any other book. Hence, I do not want to rule out the possibility that the Bible could contain information useful in a scientific investigation. Let the Bible speak to successive generations of scientists as their research projects change. If, however, we are inclined to think that the Bible does teach scientific facts, do not insist that we now know all that a given passage will ever teach the people of God. If God, as he teaches us about himself, about his saving grace, and his other mighty acts, sees fit to give us information which might be used in a scientific study, let him do so.

We cannot discuss any part of the Bible, such as the first chapters of Genesis, until we agree on our principles of interpretation. Perhaps the following principles will be useful in our present discussion. (a) Interpret Scripture by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Thus, the Old Testament cannot be properly understood unless we realize how it is used by New Testament writers. (b) Do not sit in judgment on Scripture; never decide that any part of it is in error. (c) Do not divorce passages from their context. (d) Recognize that the universe of discourse varies within the Bible; do not limit the kind of discourse to be found. Thus, the Bible contains poetry; historical fact; theological statements; allegory; reliable records of conversations, even if, as in the case of Job's comforters, the words spoken were in error; and other kinds of discourse.

Using these principles, what can we conclude concerning the first chapters of Genesis? Are they factual? Or are they poetical and perhaps

allegorical? Suppose we conclude that these chapters are factual and teach, for example, that Adam and Eve were the first human beings, from whom all other human beings descended. Are there difficulties with this position? In fact, more difficulties arise in maintaining the opposite position, namely, that the first chapters are allegorical, for the many biblical references to these chapters give no hint that the Genesis account of origins is anything other than factual. I shall be more specific on this matter later.

All who debate these matters must proceed with caution. If we maintain that the first chapters of Genesis tell us *that* God created, but do not tell us *how* he created—a claim often made—then we are guilty, as indicated earlier, of limiting the Bible without warrant. But if we claim that these chapters teach not only *that* God created, but also *how* he did so, we might be tempted to put modern scientific meaning into those chapters. One example: There is no reason to equate the “kinds” of living things in Genesis with our “species,” a word which has had its present meaning for only a few centuries.

III. Questions Concerning the Nature of Scientific Activity

Recently the American Scientific Affiliation (ASA), a society of scientists who are evangelical Christians, published a 48-page booklet, *Teaching Science in a Climate of Controversy*, to help public school teachers involved in the evolution debate.¹ The booklet approaches the origins debate from a Christian perspective. It is neither a ringing defense of, nor attack on, any of the origins positions Christians take. Proponents of any one of these positions would not use this booklet to advance their argument. But because the authors assumed that Christians could examine the origins question *as Christians*, even if they are Christians in public schools, a storm of controversy arose.

Consider, for example, the reactions to this publication by William Bennetta and several well-known scientists in essays collected by Bennetta.² According to these writers, it is wrong to think of scientific activity in Christian terms. It is especially bad if such an approach is even suggested in a public school. Bennetta and the others find religious ideas in a public discussion of science very offensive:

Bennetta: “...(T)he so-called American Scientific Affiliation (is) actually...a religious group” (36).

Michael T. Ghiselin, Senior Research Fellow, California Academy of Sciences: The ASA “pamphleteers” suggest two possible alternative origins models, one “bogus” and the other “divine design.” They are guilty of “telling lies to naive and trusting young persons.... for the purpose of proselytizing” (39).

Lynn Margulis, Professor of Biology at Boston University: “That a religious organization has chosen the name American *Scientific* Affiliation must by itself arouse our suspicion of dishonesty” (Italics in the original). “We must resist the ASA’s charming booklet, for we can deduce that the writers are neither driven by intellectual curiosity nor concerned with an accurate description of life on earth. They are committed to biblical religion...” (40).

Robert Jurmain, Professor of Anthropology, San Jose State University: “The writers of the ASA pamphlet conceal their motives and objectives, which are religious.” “They obfuscate, distort, and waffle to the point of pure nonsense” (42).

Alan M. Portis, dean of engineering at the University of California at Berkeley: “I suggest that it is inappropriate for a science teacher to offer what the ASA publication implies—a synthesis of science and religion” (43).

Bennetta and the others say, in effect: “You may not bring religion, the Bible, or Christianity into any public discussion of science. Christians may play the game, but we will make the rules.”

Christians cannot control the activities of unbelievers. But observe what effect unbelievers’ attitudes, exemplified by the quotations just presented, have on the behavior of Christians, including what they say in discussions on the nature of scientific activity. Unbelievers carry the day by insisting that biblical religion is opposed to scientific accuracy, and that, should Christians claim otherwise, they are dishonest. Christians may not bring Christian ideas into the science classroom; for then they are guilty of telling lies to children. According to these unbelievers, a scientific affiliation cannot be Christian; in fact, in no sense of the word may science and religion be brought together.

This anti-Christian approach to the world, including the approach to scientific activity, has had a devastating effect on the way Christians discuss creation and evolution among themselves. Once again, unbelievers have set the agenda. Many Christians have agreed that yes, there is no place for

religion in a discussion of scientific activity. In this way unbelievers have successfully interjected their ideas into discussions among Christians. As a result, many Christians have been willing to agree: yes, science is neutral. It does not have Christian foundations. Once again Napoleon's fleet is divided: Christians who have been convinced that scientific activity is neutral are not part of the debate with unbelievers on the nature of scientific activity. But Christians, refusing to be carried along by the tide of unbelieving opinion, can instead determine for themselves the nature of scientific activity and present a united front to unbelievers.

What, then, is scientific activity? Perhaps the question can be phrased as follows: Which is more correct, to say that in the scientific enterprise we explore the *world*, or that we explore *Creation*? If we maintain that scientific work is neutral, that is, scientific work is the same for Christians and non-Christians, then we will probably claim that all scientists explore the *world*; we will not mention *Creation*. Suppose, however, that we take a non-neutral view, that is, we claim that all scientists explore the *Creation* which was brought forth by the word of the Lord; here the emphasis is on exploring *Creation*, not the world. I assume the latter view to be correct. Both Christians and non-Christians carry out this exploration, even though non-Christians do not have a proper understanding of what they do. All scientists work assuming the world is a coherent whole, but only some see *why* it is a coherent whole.

Notice that the neutral and non-neutral views both maintain that non-Christians do valid scientific work. The neutral view, however, attempts to find common ground for believers and unbelievers; everyone can talk about exploring the world. Apparently the argument for the neutral view is that only some can talk about exploring the *Creation* brought forth by the word of the Lord; why, some Christians seem to say, cannot we describe scientific work so that non-Christians are not offended? I hope to show in this article that a Christian approach to the creation-evolution question cannot rest on a neutral foundation.

In the foregoing analysis, I have assumed that everyone maintains that non-Christians do valid scientific work. But there are Christians who believe that the scientific work of non-Christians is inferior.

Usually efforts to denigrate the scientific work

of non-Christians are based on a supposed difference between *scientific observations* and *scientific conclusions*. The proponents of this position say that scientific observations are reliable while scientific conclusions are not. But observations usually are based on assumptions which are themselves conclusions; and in any case both observations and conclusions can be in error because human beings—both Christian and non-Christian—are sinful and finite.

Another way to drive a wedge between observations and conclusions is to adopt "instrumentalism." According to this view, God gives us phenomena and we observe the phenomena. But, says the instrumentalist, the theories we construct, built on these observations, have no necessary relation to reality. A theory is no more than a working hypothesis. Thus, we observe objects fall, but there is no *law* of gravity. There is then no need to worry about the supposed conflict between Genesis and scientific conclusions, that is, scientific laws. Does this position represent an adequate understanding of scientific activity? Does this position do justice to the ability of a human being, who bears the image of God, to have insight into the nature of *Creation*? I wonder if the answers to these questions do not force us to conclude that we cannot make a meaningful distinction between scientific observations and conclusions and, finally, that we cannot discard the scientific work of non-Christians.

There is a related question. Can scientific activity reveal to us *that* God created and, in fact, upholds *Creation*? The Bible—for example, in Job 38-40, Psalm 119:89-91, Acts 14:17, and Romans 1:20—states that as we look at *Creation* we see confirmed what the Bible teaches in the first chapters of Genesis, namely, that God upholds his *Creation*. The Bible does not argue with us; it assumes we will see these things. But "these things" are the same things we examine in our scientific activity. Is it not true, then, that the Bible teaches that our scientific activity should indeed reveal to us *that* God created?

IV. Questions Concerning the General Theory of Evolution

The confrontation between belief and unbelief concerning the general theory of evolution is of long standing. For a long time unbelievers have said, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly,

“There is no scientific mechanism besides the general theory of evolution to explain origins. Therefore, however improbable, evolution *must* have occurred.”

Unbelievers have easily divided Christians on the origins question by fiercely attacking views which some—but not all—Christians hold. Specifically, unbelievers attack the young-earth concept of some creationists, often implying there is no other Christian position. The reasoning seems to be this: if we can show the earth is several billion years old, then evolution occurred. So, focus on age. Such an argument leaves out creationists who do not believe in evolution but who do accept a great age for Creation. This argument also leaves out creationists who accept both great age and evolution, that is, theistic evolutionists. These two groups have thereby been rendered ineffective in the creation-evolution debate and, like much of Napoleon’s fleet at Trafalgar, watch the battle from a distance. We must consider how to bring these Christians together again.

I shall take up the general theory of evolution now and the matter of age later.

The general theory of evolution states that life evolved from non-living matter and that all living things evolved from simpler forms. Let us agree for the moment not to include the origin of the human race. With that exception, can the general theory be correct? If it *can* be correct, is it *in fact* correct? I separate “can” from “is...in fact” because claiming that God *can* create in an evolutionary manner is not the same as saying that he *did* create in that way.

Could God have created via evolutionary means? The only acts God *can not* perform are those in which he denies or contradicts himself. Unless it can be shown that creating via evolution denies or contradicts who God is, we must allow that God *could* have created in such a way.

But did God create using an evolutionary means? Surely we can take it for granted that small changes occur from generation to generation. Have these small changes, called *microevolution*, accumulated so that the net effect has been large, i.e., *macroevolution*? To answer the question, we must look at biblical and scientific evidence.

Using the principles of interpretation given earlier (including the ideas that the Bible is correct in whatever it chooses to teach, that exegesis must be made by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and

so forth), we conclude that the first chapters of Genesis are historical, not poetry or allegory. If that is so, does Genesis 1 teach or deny macroevolution (always excepting the case of the human race)? The answer to this question must be based on a word-by word exegesis of the text. Many scholars who have accepted those principles have concluded after intense study that there were several separate creations. According to these scholars, the general theory of evolution is not correct.

What can be said of the scientific evidence? The argument for the evolutionary theory is based (a) on the similarity of structure among animals and among plants and (b) on the conclusion that simpler structures are older. Therefore, runs the argument, is it not likely that simpler structures became more complicated over time, with evolution from the simplest to the most complex?

But there is another way to interpret similarity of structure and the greater age of simpler structures. Consider first that Creation is structured by law and that law determines which objects—and living things—can exist. For example, it is not true that the earth is spherical while the moon is cubical. The same laws govern the two bodies and consequently both are spherical. Similar statements can be made concerning living things. Thus, land animals usually need the same kinds of organs— hearts, lungs, and so forth. At the microscopic level, they need the same kind of protein constituents; other proteins will not work in this Creation, given the existing chemical elements and laws. Similarity of structure is therefore no surprise.

Consider also what kind of food sustains living things. Living things tend to depend for food upon simpler forms of life. If that is the way God made the world, is it not logical to suppose that he created simpler forms of life first? With that state of affairs, the more complex living things could not have been created first: the simpler are older.

Therefore, the evidence used to support the general evolutionary theory—similarity of structure and the simpler structures being older—can also be interpreted to support the claim that God created different living things at different times. Apparently the scientific evidence for either model is circumstantial, allowing for two entirely different interpretations.

Those who do accept general evolutionary theory ought to answer these questions: First, is it not true

that as more scientific evidence accumulates, the goal of constructing a non-life-to-life mechanism recedes? Is not this trend the testimony of knowledgeable biochemists? Second, as more fossils are discovered, is it not becoming increasingly unlikely that certain gaps in the fossil record will ever be filled? These questions suggest a third question: For one who accepts general evolutionary theory, is it not necessary to allow for the possibility that this theory may become untenable as more scientific evidence is obtained?

V. Questions Concerning the Origin of the Human Race

Naturally, the way in which unbelievers divide Christians concerning the general theory of evolution includes the origin of the human race. I suggested earlier, however, that for our purposes it would be better to discuss the origin of the human race separately. Unbelievers usually refuse to separate discussion of the origin of the human race from the origin of other living things. Here, too, we need not let the world set our agenda. In the following, I want to limit the discussion to views held by Christians and then ascertain if it is possible for them to agree.

Among Christians the traditional position concerning the origin of the human race is that Adam and Eve were the first persons and that they became the parents of all other persons. Another position taken is that we can never be positively sure that Adam and Eve were two specific people. According to this position, all we know is that "Adam and Eve" is the Bible's way of telling us about our first parents; we do not know precisely what "Adam and Eve" means. If we take that position, what happens to the principle of comparing Scripture with Scripture? After all, in I Chronicles 1:1, Luke 3:38, and Jude 14 Adam's name is given along with the names of real persons, none of whom is claimed by anyone to be symbolic of a group.

Those who are uncertain about "Adam and Eve" claim that the first persons may have descended from animals. If they are correct, the first man, Adam, could not have preceded the first woman, Eve. But how can this idea be reconciled with Paul's statement that Adam was created before Eve (I Tim. 2:13)? Again, if Adam and Eve were not real persons, what is the origin of sin? If there was no original sin associated with our first parents, must

the traditional Reformed view of sin, pollution, and guilt change? Do not Romans 5:14, I Corinthians 15:22, and I Timothy 2:14 affirm that sin, pollution, and guilt arose with one man, Adam?

If the human race descended from animals, is the difference between human beings and animals only quantitative, not qualitative? Usually, insisting on the qualitative difference has been the same as saying that a person is a soul. But what does being a soul mean? Traditionally, being a soul has meant that human beings were created after the image of God, which, according to Colossians 3:10 and Ephesians 4:24, means that human beings possess knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.

I shall focus attention on only the first of these three, that is, knowledge. The knowledge which only human beings possess and which sets human beings apart from other living things is not intelligence. I make that claim for two reasons.

First, the Bible teaches that knowledge is something far deeper than mere intelligence. Both the Old and New Testament concepts of knowledge imply that one who *knows* simultaneously understands and cares. Thus, a man who knows his wife both understands and cares for her. In this way Scripture relates knowledge to the image of God in human beings, that is, to the human soul. Scripture does not relate *intelligence* to the human soul. In no way is the biblical "knowledge" that which an animal can possess. The biblical description of knowledge provides one reason we can conclude that human beings differ qualitatively from other created beings.

There is a second reason why using intelligence as a criterion for human-ness is wrong. In fact, such use has evil consequences. Emphasizing intelligence may be at the heart of certain modern wrong ideas. For example, many people maintain that members of different races are equal—and therefore all are human—because they have equal intelligence. Sometimes, however, such equality is difficult to prove; because of this difficulty, some persons deny the status of "full humanity" to people who are indeed created in the image of God. Senile persons can then be considered candidates for euthanasia because, lacking intelligence, they have lost human "potential." Furthermore, using the criterion of intelligence may lie behind an unwillingness to ascribe personhood to the unborn. Perhaps overemphasizing intelligence instead of the presence of the im-

age of God as a criterion for human-ness is the great anthropological error of our time. This error would not arise if the focus were on the biblical concept of knowledge instead of on intelligence.

These two considerations lead us to insist that one aspect of the uniqueness of human beings lies in the kind of knowledge they possess. Were we to consider holiness and righteousness also, thus completing the image-of-God triad, we would see that each part of that image sets human beings apart from all other created beings. There is no genetic relation between human beings and animals.

For our purposes in this conference, we should consider one particular claim often made concerning the origin of the human race. This is the claim that the origin of the human race marks a mysterious dividing point in time. It is so mysterious, say some, that we can never know about events preceding the creation of the first persons. That claim, if correct, would severely limit any discussion of origins. But what is the proof of the claim that we cannot know about pre-human events? If this claim cannot be proved, is it not therefore unwarranted?

VI. The Age of Creation

I have purposely left the matter of age to the end. I am not sure we should even raise specific questions concerning age. Such questions, in my view, divide Christians. Atheistic evolutionists like to focus on age because they can keep Christians divided. Atheistic evolutionists can act as if age is virtually the only issue; as a result, only those who believe that the earth is young respond to them. Creationists who deny evolution but accept an old earth and creationists who accept both evolution and an old earth, theistic evolutionists, are then left out of the argument.

But a logical fallacy is involved in focusing on age. If the earth is indeed very old, it does not follow

that biological evolution occurred. For that reason, I want both young-earth and old-earth creationists who do not accept evolution to agree to neglect the age matter. These creationists can show theistic evolutionists that all three groups should be contending with atheistic evolutionists. Then the three groups in which Christians are found—young earth creationists, old earth creationists, and theistic evolutionists—should find ground on which they can stand.

But would it not be better if Christians agreed on the matter of age? Perhaps. But neither young earth nor old earth creationists are close to reconsidering the question of age. Both groups contend that both scientific and biblical data are on their side. It is an interesting argument. Why not forget this argument when contending with unbelief?

As I see it, the truly difficult part of finding common ground for Christians on the origins question is not the matter of putting the age question to the side. I may be wrong; but it seems to me that the most difficult task among Christians who discuss origins is convincing theistic evolutionists of the necessity of holding to a distinct creation of the human race. But there is hope. Once the qualitative difference between human beings and all other creatures is established, a difference we can know about only because the Bible teaches it, we are well on the way to the kind of debate of which the Lord would approve.

End Notes

- (1) Committee for Integrity in Science Education, American Scientific Affiliation, *Teaching Science in a Climate of Controversy* (Ipswich, MA: American Scientific Affiliation, 1986).
- (2) William J. Bennetta (ed.), "Scientists Decry a Slick New Packaging of Creationism," *The Science Teacher*, May, 1987, pp. 36-43.