



*"And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We . . . preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein" (Acts 14:15).*

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## Creation Evangelism

by Henry M. Morris \*

Creation evangelism is the ministry of using scientific Biblical creationism as a help in winning people to Christ. To the best of my knowledge, the term was first used by Walter Lang almost 35 years ago. Lang, who had been a pastor in the Missouri Synod Lutherans, founded the Bible Science Association in 1963 and soon was convinced God could use creationism as a means of leading people to faith in the Bible as God's Word and the Lord Jesus Christ as Creator and Savior.

He was right about this. The Biblical record of creation is not only historically and scientifically accurate, but it is also the foundation of all the saving doctrines of the Bible. In recent decades, many have come to accept Christ because (at least partially) of the scientific and Biblical evidences for creation.

Note especially that the marvelous truths of the person and work of Jesus Christ are based upon His finished work of creation.

*For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth. . . . And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist. . . . And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to*

*reconcile all things unto Himself. . . (Colossians 1:16,17,20).*

This wonderful passage summarizes the past, present, and future work of Christ—creation, conservation, and consummation of all things. And the foundation of His saving and reconciling work is His work of creation.

Similarly, the foundation of the gospel of Christ is also His creation and our worship of Him as Creator. The final (of over 100) Biblical use of the word "gospel" is as follows:

*And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth. . . . Saying with a loud voice . . . worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters (Revelation 14:6,7).*

This is a key component of the gospel of God's saving grace in Christ, for it was, and will be "everlasting." Paul warned against even any angel that would preach some other gospel than he was preaching (Galatians 1:8). In fact, he indicated that Christ's past, present, and future work, as discussed above (Colossians 1:16–20), is incorporated in the truth and hope of the gospel (Colossians 1:5,23).

The fact that creation is the foundation of true and effective evangelism is also indicated by the Apostle John, who affirmed that his wonderful book was “*written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name*” (John 20:31).

That being John’s motive and purpose in writing, it is very significant that he began by stressing the fact of creation by Jesus Christ!

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made. . . . He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . . (John 1:1,3,10,14).*

Thereafter, John’s record of Christ’s person and work is structured around His seven great “I am” assertions of deity (“*I am the light of the world,*” etc.) and His seven great miracles of creation (creating new eyes for a man born blind, etc.).

There should be no doubt that Jesus is the Creator, the eternal Son of God, and that this very fact made it possible for Him also to become our Redeemer and Savior.

Therefore, creation is absolutely basic in true evangelism, not secondary or even irrelevant, as many seem to think. In fact, belief in creation by the Word of God is the very first item in a saving, justifying, living faith (one should read carefully Hebrews 10:38–11:3 in this connection).

This does not necessarily mean that a born-again Christian cannot believe that Christ used evolutionary processes in creating things. But he should be willing to deal honestly with the fact

that any such “evolutionary creation” is completely contrary to the Bible. Jesus Christ Himself believed in the recent creation of all things (note Mark 10:6, for example). He even inscribed the fact of the literal, six-day creation on a table of stone in the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:8,11; 31:18).

Assuming, then, that scientific Biblical creationism is a valid component of true evangelism, we can note the example of the early Christians, Paul in particular, as they went out to preach the gospel in obedience to Christ’s great commission. Paul and his companions normally would go first to the Jewish synagogue in any new city, and there would preach Christ from the Scriptures.

The best example is in Acts 17 when Paul came to Thessalonica, in Greece. *And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you is Christ (Acts 17:2,3).*

Note that he did not have to convince the Jews that the Scriptures were inspired and true and authoritative, for they already believed that. Neither did he have to talk about the creation of the world by God, for they already believed that, too.

But he did use what we might call apologetics, or Christian evidences, stressing fulfilled prophecy in Christ, along with His death and resurrection as prophecies that had been wonderfully fulfilled, confirming that He was indeed the promised Messiah.

He next went to Berea, where he did the same, and the Bereans “*received the word with all readiness of mind, and*

*searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).*

Then Paul went to Athens, the great cultural and intellectual center of the world at that time. There he encountered the Epicurean and Stoic “philosophers” (Acts 17:18). These men were all evolutionists—the Epicureans, atheists, and the stoics pantheists. They did not believe the Scriptures, and they certainly did not believe in the special creation of all things by an omnipotent God.

Paul, therefore, began with creation, using as a point of reference their awareness of an “unknown god” among their many nature gods and goddesses, whose shrines abounded in Athens.

*God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; . . . He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord. . . . For in Him we live, and move, and have our being (Acts 17:24–28).*

Paul recognized that laying the creation foundation was necessary first of all, but the foundation is never the whole structure. Thus he then went on to preach Christ and the resurrection.

*(God) hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead (Acts 17:31).*

Space precludes citing his whole message and, for that matter, the ac-

count given by Luke in Acts 17 no doubt is itself a summary of a more detailed exposition, but the essential point is that, when Paul dealt with those who believed the Bible, he began with the Scriptures, but when dealing with pagan unbelievers, he began with the fact of primeval special creation.

Another example is Paul’s challenge to the pagan idolaters at Lystra.

*We . . . preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14:15–17).*

That Paul often preached against idol worship (which is tantamount to pantheistic evolution) and, therefore, for creation is indicated also by the charges lodged against him at Ephesus, namely that “almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands” (Acts 19:26).

Thus, if we would follow the evangelistic example of the early Christians, we would preach from the Scriptures to those who already believe in the Bible and creation, urging them to accept Christ as revealed therein. To those who do not so believe, however, we need first of all to show them the truth of creation (as opposed to the false nature of all forms of evolutionism), and then proceed to the fact of Christ’s substitutionary death and resurrection, as revealed in the inerrant written Word of God. ❦

# What Happened to Land Plants During the Flood?

by John D. Morris, Ph.D.

The Bible explicitly teaches that the great Flood covered the entire globe. Its primary purpose was to judge the sinful civilization of Noah's day (Genesis 6:7), but this judgment extended to the animals and even the earth (7:22,19). The pre-Flood vegetation is not specifically mentioned, but no doubt the waters devastated all land plants, trees, crops, forests, and swamps. What happened to their remains?

Obviously some plants were buried in Flood sediments and were fossilized. Petrified trees are found in certain layers of Flood-deposited sedimentary rocks worldwide. Often one finds fossilized twigs or leaves or fern impressions, but these are fairly rare. Evidently the majority of plants didn't get fossilized. Where are the rest?

Coal deposits have long been identified as the altered remains of vegetation. The volume of coal and its discovery even in polar regions give us a picture of lush vegetation in a pre-Flood world quite different from our own. There is evidence that the trees typically fossilized in Carboniferous coal seams may have even grown as near-shore floating "islands" with extensive shallow root systems, which became floating mats of vegetation during the Flood. Once buried, they would metamorphose into coal.

Some mats must have been unthinkably large, far larger than any modern peat swamp, for the coals they left behind in some cases cover entire states.

The concept of floating log mats has become a powerful one in Flood

geology. Some geologic strata are identified by the presence of wood fragments, giving the impression that the mat was floating in shallow water with its underside abrading on the surface below.

There are also many rock layers which seem to have required rather calm waters for deposition. A floating mat would have had a damping effect on even turbulent Flood waters, calming them at least locally for periods of time allowing deposition of these sediments. The mats may have been a temporary haven during the cataclysmic storm for various animals, helping them survive for weeks or even months, before finally being overwhelmed. Floating vegetation would also have been the place insects could have survived, particularly in their egg and larva stages, ensuring that they would be distributed worldwide to facilitate regrowth and pollination of plants from seeds, spores, and spores once the Flood was over.

The Bible only mentions one such case of regrowth, that of the olive branch returned to Noah in the Ark by the dove. Olive trees are quite hardy, and the concept of a floating olive tree sprig, grounded by the receding waters, and sprouting in a short period of time is quite reasonable.

And such is the case for all the details of the Flood account. Its global magnitude may astound us, but taken as a whole and at face value, the difficulties always resolve themselves as we study and believe. 🌱



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