Who Is In Control of Your Life?

A nonprofit effort to convince mankind that God is real and the Bible is His Word.

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The cover of our journal for this month shows a young man who seems to have had enough of people telling him what not to do. I am not sure how climbing to the top of a stop light with a “Don’t Walk” sign on it solves anything, but sometimes you do just want to climb above the fray and sit and watch everyone else fight the daily battle of life. Many young people today see Christians and the Bible as an antiquated system of what they cannot do. A significant number of the e-mails that we receive from people who are struggling with their beliefs come from people who do not think the Bible prohibitions make any sense—premarital sex, cohabitation, recreational drugs, homosexuality, non-nuclear families, abortion, euthanasia—the list of things that people feel the Church stands against goes on and on.

Much of the concern here is rooted in the fact that what might have been a problem 2,000 years ago is not considered to be a problem today due to the advances of science, medicine, and social acceptance. Pregnancy, for example, is no longer a major issue in the minds of many people due to birth control and abortion. A common statement to us is that pregnancy is no longer necessary in sex, and sexually transmitted disease can be avoided if sexual expression is done with care. The idea is that Christianity is simply denying people one of the basic joys of life, and is out of date.

The response of the Christian community in the past has been to throw scriptures and numbers at these arguments. The scriptures are cited as coming from God, and thus beyond question. The numbers have been used to show what has happened in the past in terms of disease, suicides, mental breakdowns, and social problems. The lessons of the past cannot be ignored, but people still believe that they will beat the odds and that the march of modern science has invalidated what has happened.
in the past as a means of deciding what should be done in the future.

In this discussion we would like to approach the question from a different perspective. Rather than focus on the negative things that might happen if we engage in the activities that we have been listing, let us look at the positive things that come from not engaging in these activities. The question here becomes a question of control. What drives your decisions? How do you arrive at an understanding of why you do what you do? Is the basis of your decisions logical and functional, or are you just climbing another stoplight with a different set of prohibitions?

**SATIATION AND FULFILLMENT**

Why is it that when you are hungry you do not always go to an all-you-can-eat buffet? Why would you go to a nice restaurant where you probably would not get nearly as much food, but where you will have some ambiance? Why do we shop for different kinds of food rather than just buying something that is cheap, easy to prepare, nutritious, and filling and eat that at every meal? The answer for most of us is that eating involves more than just being satiated. We want more than just to stop the gnawing pain in our stomachs. We are interested in the smell, the taste, the atmosphere, the companionship, and the uniqueness of our experience.

Our food appetite is probably the simplest of our appetites. Our sexual appetites are far more complex. While evolutionists try to explain all sexual conduct in terms of survival and passing on one’s genes, the fact is that there are massive emotional and psychological concerns in our sexual conduct. When sex involves multiple partners there is competition, concern for performance, comparison, security issues, and personal issues. If you assume that man is just an animal, and that all sexual conduct is identical to what happens in dogs, cats, hogs, horses, and cattle, you have an incredibly shallow view of sex. The abundance of chemicals and devices designed to improve one’s sexual performance is an indicator of how our culture has relegated sex to physical mechanics and away from what really matters.
In the biblical framework, man and woman were portrayed as becoming one through their sexual relationship (see Genesis 2:24). The body of man and woman is pictured in the Bible as the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 3:16–17) and the unity of man, woman, and God is couched in the beautiful oneness of sexual relations. Being really fulfilled in a sexual relationship does not come from an orgasm or an ejaculation. Those responses are a satiation of our physical desires, and they are pretty much independent of who or what our partner is. The sexual conduct of humans throughout the ages has been abysmal because immediate satiation in an animal response is as far as many people think.

God has called us to one partner in a life-long commitment, because that is what will bring us real fulfillment. The commands to avoid adultery, incest, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, and all the other forms of aberrant behavior the Bible addresses, is because God wants us to have what is truly the best for us. When we reduce our bodies to animal behavior, and are concerned only with satisfying the immediate need for release, we lose one of the most beautiful things God has designed for us. This is not a matter of control, it is a matter of having a great blessing that God made for us.

I find many times when I discuss this with college kids that they are incapable of comprehending what I am talking about. Real fulfillment is something they cannot visualize. Having absolute security where there is no comparison, no competition, no need to hide anything, and no need to worry about performance is not within their ability to comprehend.

**SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST**

When God is eliminated from the picture, and one’s moral foundation is based on something other than God’s commands, what is available? The basis our culture has given for making choices is naturalism—the science and engineering tools that are available to us. Those who embrace naturalism rely upon scientific discoveries to bring answers to life. Sex is enhanced by scientific tools and chemicals. Recreation is produced by the same things—including recreational drugs. If using LSD, alcohol, or marijuana will bring pleasure to us, and if we think we can do it safely, why not do it? Those opposed to Christianity charge that the use of these things intelligently and in an informed way bring great pleasure, and that the biblical condemnations of these things is a control device that must be eliminated in our modern age.
The Bible tells us that our bodies are the temple of God and are not to be abused or used in a denigrating way. In 1 Corinthians 6:15–17 we are told that engaging in sex with a prostitute is uniting the prostitute with the spirit of God. In something as complex as the human mind and body, believing that we can always know the consequences of our actions is ludicrous, but that is not our focus here. When we engage in the use of a drug, we have given up the control of our life to some measure, and perhaps totally. We are no longer fit, and we are in a synthetic, artificial condition that is not permanent. People who use drugs for recreational purposes virtually always have to move to another drug or to a higher dosage. Why does that happen? The answer again is that fulfillment and satisfaction and a permanent high does not come from that type of activity, and control is relinquished to something far removed from our own abilities.

So who is in control of your life? Are you? Living God’s way is not just meeting the demands of some egomaniac in the sky, but living a system that brings the maximum joy, fulfillment, freedom, and peace. Come down off the stoplight and live life fully and completely—with all of the things that the God who created you wants you to have.

—John N. Clayton

WISDOM FROM C. S. LEWIS

Someone recently sent the following quote from C. S. Lewis as a consolation in the loss of my wife. I thought others might profit from it also. JNC

“Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully around hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket—safe, dark, motionless, airless—it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to become vulnerable.”

C. S. Lewis, The Four Loves
As atheists have become more aggressive in their attacks on the Bible and on Christianity, they make public statements which are designed to denigrate God and the Bible. However, many of those statements show a lack of understanding of the difference between the New Testament and the Old Testament. An increasing number of atheist Web sites have taken to portraying God as a control freak, as violent, as an egomaniac, and as sexist. We have discussed Richard Dawkins’ diatribe against God in the May/June 2007 and July/August 2007 issues of this periodical. Dawkins statements are the source of most of the atheist periodicals and Web sites that portray God this way to the public and especially to young people. When attempts are made to get these authors to have a better understanding of what was written in the Bible and why, the response is usually that God must then be a vacillating, insecure being who keeps changing the rules of the game.

The fact of the matter is that there are good reasons for us to have a New Testament and an Old Testament. Failure to understand these reasons leads to misunderstandings and misapplications of what God wants us to know and do. In this article we will attempt to explain why we have a New Testament and an Old Testament and how that information should be applied.

MAN’S SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EVOLUTION

One fact which atheists and Christians alike sometimes overlook is that man has evolved socially and culturally since his creation. Adam and Eve were not twenty-first century Americans driving fancy cars, shopping in massive food stores, and spending large amounts of money, time, and energy on entertainment. There might be differences of opinion about how man has changed physically over time, but man’s social and cultural evolution is a fact. In Genesis 1 Adam and Eve ate
by gathering. Their responsibilities included taking care of the garden, “to dress and keep it” (Genesis 2:15). When man no longer lived in this state because of sin, he was faced with a hostile world. The statement from God was “… all thy life you shalt win food from it with toil” (3:17, Knox translation). No scientist who has studied the evidence questions this. Atheists may challenge the cause or method, but life was hard early in man’s history. The Bible tells us that various social and cultural advances came about. Genesis 4:21 (NIV) says that one of Adam’s descendants “was the father of all who play the harp and the flute” indicating the development of musical instruments and obviously the culture that goes with that skill. Genesis 4:1 (Jerusalem Bible) says, another descendant “was the ancestor of all metal workers in copper and iron” indicating that metallurgy eventually came into use.

As man progressed, a need for a justice system came about. It was early in man’s history when the first murder occurred, and the punishment for that horrendous act was a restrained but final punishment (see Genesis 4:11–12). As we read through the Old Testament we see mankind moving from family units with leadership coming from a family patriarch to a community made up of several families, and a judicial system evolving from that community. The book of Judges has a variety of stories showing the struggles to establish a workable community framework. Leaders in these communities were religious leaders who were not well informed themselves, but who struggled to do the best they could. Judges 18 shows people competing for these leaders and paying them for their services.

What kind of system of law and order was needed in such a primitive society? As mankind battled to survive in a hostile world, what rules needed to be accepted by all who lived in close proximity to each other? Dietary laws were needed for hygienic reasons. Laws involving burying waste were needed (see Deuteronomy 23:12–14). Marriage laws were needed to protect women because they were especially vulnerable in such primitive and harsh conditions. God’s method was to provide direct commandments which met these needs. Originally there was no human calling the shots and no political hierarchy making arbitrary decisions. When mankind insisted on corrupting this system, God warned them they were making a mistake (see 1 Samuel 8:5–19) but gave in to their demands.
“An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth” is an unattractive philosophy for those of us who have lived in a system that emphasizes tolerance and forgiveness. In primitive conditions and in a society where the daily battle for survival was extreme, it was an absolute necessity. Not eating certain animals, quarantines of certain diseases, and isolation of body fluids is medically sound. Complete isolation from peoples practicing sexual activities that spread sexually transmitted diseases is not an arbitrary edict from an egomaniac who wants to persecute. It is a necessary action to prevent diseases like the AIDS epidemic we see sweeping primitive societies in the world today. We may find some of the methods that were employed distasteful and cruel, but that judgment is coming from our civilization that is not faced with the limitations of people in Old Testament times.

THE RADICAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS

By the time Jesus Christ appeared on the earth, man had changed in a multitude of ways. No longer were people living entirely in agrarian settings, but many of them were living in large cities. This required a new judicial system and a different political structure. Methods of farming and cooking had evolved so that dietary laws could be relaxed. Medical knowledge had advanced and survival was less of a hand-to-mouth situation. The securing of goods through trade and currency had changed mankind forever, and leisure time was available for thought and study. Above all, there was writing by which information could be transmitted from person to person and city to city. Mankind had evolved from a primitive, survival-oriented, legalistic system to a personalized moral system.

As you read the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 5–7, you see Him making the contrast we have just been describing. He says things like “You have heard it said …” and then He quotes something from the Old Testament. Then Jesus, God in the flesh, says, “But I say unto you …” and He gives a contrasting way of living that involves attitudes and values steeped not in legalism, but in love and kindness. He
addresses murder, not just by warning about the punishment, but by
telling mankind to stop hating (Matthew 5:21–24). He attacks sexual
misconduct not by a legalistic physical reprisal for an offense, but by
telling us to stop making sex and our sexual motives the primary way
that we look at others. This is a new command of God, appropriate
for the level of development that man has achieved. It is radical. It
is difficult. It is destined to fail at times because of our selfishness,
but it is the ultimate positive way of life for all of mankind. It has the
potential to work.

ADDRESSING MAN’S REAL NEEDS

The Old Testament addressed man’s most fundamental need, which
was survival. The laws given and the punishment for breaking the
law generally matched the potential destructive nature of the offense.
Murder, sexual misconduct, and interrelationships with those who did
those things had the potential to bring disaster to the entire population,
so the punishment was severe. Involuntary manslaughter and stealing
had lesser destructive potential but still needed to be punished, so places
like the cities of refuge were provided to make the punishment as fair
as possible. God even tolerated things He did not approve of (such
as polygamy) and ill-advised worship practices such as in
Judges 18 because it was not
as destructive.

In God’s new will for man
the personal needs of mankind
were emphasized. No longer
were people commanded to
worship in a specific location
or through a priest or other
religious leader. Man’s need to
look to a higher power was pro-
vided in worship through the
Church, but individual prayer
and obedience was the emphasis. The need to address giving and the
serving of others was the primary emphasis of the first century Church,
replacing the ritual and pageantry of the Old Testament. So striking is
this contrast that Jesus is described as “blotting out the handwriting of
ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it
out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Colossians 2:14, KJV). We are
also told in Matthew 5:17–20 that this was the completion of God’s
plan for man. Instead of tolerating polygamy and its denigration of
women and destruction of a real relationship for a man and a woman,
we are given a plan for marriage that brings maximum fulfillment and
satisfaction. Instead of a giving system that is essentially taxation, giving is presented as a gift that comes from the heart and brings joy (see 2 Corinthians 9:7). Interpersonal conflict is addressed by direct discussion and then assisted discussion (see Matthew 18:15–17 and Colossians 3:13), and by an attitude of forgiving, giving, and going the second mile.

Sometimes our immaturity and selfishness prevents us from seeing the beauty in this new will of God for man, but as we get older and see the failures of human systems the beauty of the New Testament of God becomes more and more clear.

WATCHING FOR THE MISUNDERSTANDINGS

When we hear people talk about the violent nature of God, quoting Old Testament examples and commands to justify the claim, we need to understand the context. That was a primitive culture, survival oriented, and controlled by a set of rigidly enforced rules. When God speaks of His jealousy He is talking about His broken heart from man’s acceptance of every other kind of standard to live by except His laws. When extreme punishment is prescribed for what might be a less significant problem in our day, we need to understand that in the day the punishment was given there was very little room for other options. When nationalistic rules and commands are given, we need to understand that this was a tool to help a primitive people survive, and that today God calls us to a system of all peoples of earth being equal in opportunity and access to God (see Colossians 3:11 and Galatians 3:28). In 2 Timothy 2:15 we are told to “rightly [divide] the word of truth” and at least a part of that means looking at the time in which the teaching is given and getting the right lesson from the teaching. Forcing an Old Testament law onto the love and grace teachings of God’s New Testament is a major error.

—JNC

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THE HUMAN BODY:
EVIDENCE OF GOD’S SUPREMACY

by Susan McGee

EDITOR’S NOTE: The Does God Exist? ministry offers $1,000 scholarships to young people who demonstrate the ability to deal with apologetic issues and who are going on to further their education. This money is not from donations made to the program but funds given in memory of Edith Lawson, Connie Parsons, and Phyllis Clayton—three women who were instrumental in the starting of this work. In 2008 $3000 was given in scholarships, and the following is an essay by one of the winners, Susan McGee of Burlington, North Carolina.

In the beginning, Adam and Eve desired knowledge (Genesis 3:5–6). Today, man continues to seek knowledge. When we gain knowledge, we can either let it separate us from God, as in the case of Adam and Eve, or we can let it strengthen our faith in God. Often, when people gain scientific knowledge, they let it form a barrier between themselves and God.

Many Christians today feel that science and faith are two contradicting schools of thought. This often results in Christians abandoning faith in God and holding fast to what they believe is science or in some people never developing a faith in God. The problem with this view is that science is not a school of thought. The word “science” is defined as “knowledge attained through study or practice,” and knowledge is defined as the “understanding of a subject.” Therefore, science is simply the understanding of a certain subject, which comes from studying the subject. It is a collection of facts describing the world in which we live.

Scientific theories sometimes throw people off because they are cataloged under the name of science. It is important to understand that these theories are not pure science; they are only possible explanations that are based on science. Perhaps the most largely disputed issue between Christians and scientists is the theory of evolution. Clearly, the theory of evolution disagrees with the Bible’s account...
of creation, and that often leads people to doubt their faith. This is unnecessary though, because the theory of evolution is just that—a theory—not hard fast scientific fact. If you consider just the plain facts—the science—that scientists are using to compile the theory of evolution, you will see that they can be better explained by the existence of God.

When new scientific discoveries are made, we need to let the discoveries teach us the facts and let the facts lead us to the truth instead of trying to mold the facts into what we want them to mean. Acts 17:26–27 (NIV) tells us that God created us and put us on this earth “so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.” God wants us to search for Him, and He knows that anything we learn about this earth or about our lives will lead us to Him if we let it. If we seek the truth in science, we will find the truth in God.

Thus, believing in God does not require us to abandon science since science is merely the facts that people have learned about the amazing world that God created. So, while many people believe that science contradicts the Bible, science, in fact, supports the words of the Bible and points to creation by God. Take the field of biology for instance. There are many discoveries that have been made about some of the basic building blocks of human life that clearly indicate that human beings were in fact created by God.

Every human cell contains DNA. This DNA is constantly being replicated inside the body’s cells. DNA replication consists of several chemical reactions that proceed with the aid of enzymes, which are proteins. Different proteins are required for each step of the process. Helicase separates the two DNA strands. RNA primase initiates the replication. DNA polymerase adds DNA nucleotides to the strand. DNA ligase joins “short segments of new DNA.” These are four main proteins that participate in DNA replication, and there are numerous others that are not even mentioned by name, such as the excision repair enzymes that proofread the new DNA strands and correct any mistakes.

This DNA plays the very important role of being a template that codes for the production of proteins. The process of protein synthesis begins when the protein RNA polymerase separates the DNA strands and uses one of the strands as a template to create a strand of RNA. After that, certain other proteins prepare the new RNA strand to be
used as a template for making new proteins. Ribosomes, which are made of several proteins, serve as the host location where the new proteins are made.

Thus, as described above, proteins are needed to make DNA, DNA is needed to make proteins, and even proteins are needed to make proteins. So arises the question of which came first, the DNA or the proteins? The DNA could not exist without the proteins because the DNA is made by proteins. Similarly, the proteins could not exist without the DNA because the proteins are coded by the DNA. The answer: DNA and proteins, specifically the aforementioned proteins that participate in the processes of DNA replication and protein synthesis, came into existence at the exact same time and immediately began working together. How could so many specific items emerge simultaneously and be precisely placed such that they can all work in accordance to sustain a human life? This could only happen if they were created by a supreme being who understood the vital relationship between the DNA and the proteins and who knew exactly where to put each protein and each strand of DNA to allow them to interact properly. Thus, simultaneous emergence points to the existence of an all-knowing God who skillfully created the first human beings.

Another type of molecule found in a human cell is the histone. Histones are specific types of proteins that are found in the nucleus of a cell. Each DNA molecule is coiled around several bundles of histone proteins. This helps protect the DNA from being accidentally replicated by the replication enzymes that are present in the nucleus. Without these histones, the cell’s DNA could be randomly replicated, and this unplanned replication could result in too many of certain types of proteins being made, since proteins are made from DNA. Since proteins regulate almost every process that occurs in the human body, having an improper amount of some proteins could cause the body to malfunction. Clearly, our bodies would be in danger if our DNA were not strategically coiled around these histones. Hence, there must not have been any time when the DNA was without these histones; the histones and the DNA must have come into existence at the same time. Again, simultaneous emergence indicates the presence of a God who purposely designed and created human beings.

The aforementioned situations could not take place if it were not for the presence of the cell membrane. The cell membrane is necessary to keep the cell’s contents bound within the cell and to allow communication between cells. It allows the cell to maintain environmental conditions within the cell that are different from the environment outside the cell, and it regulates what materials enter and exit the
cell. Embedded in the cell membrane are numerous amounts of five different types of proteins. Channel proteins allow large molecules to enter and exit the cell. Transport proteins use energy to move molecules that cannot pass freely through the membrane into and out of the cell. Recognition proteins help cells identify each other and stick together. Receptor proteins accept modules, such as hormones, that elicit internal cellular responses. Electron transfer proteins help transfer electrons to and from molecules during chemical reactions. If all of these proteins were not strategically placed along the cell membrane, then molecules would not be able to get where they need to go, signals would not be relayed between our cells, and, subsequently, our bodies would not function properly. Therefore, all of the components of the cell membrane must have come into being simultaneously. How could this happen? Again, it must have been created by a being who had a plan in mind and who had the intelligence to make everything work together. That being is God.

Now, think back to the proteins that were mentioned previously. Proteins are one of the most important substances in the human body, regulating almost every chemical reaction that occurs. Each of those proteins is an ordered combination of amino acids. There are 20 amino acids in the human body, and proteins range in size from 50 amino acids to over 2,000 amino acids. To create a protein containing 100 amino acids, there are 20 possible arrangements, which is a 1 followed by 130 zeros. Subsequently, the chance of creating that one specific protein, which has to contain the right amino acids in the right order, is 1 out of that huge number, or basically zero. So, considering that the human body contains around 100,000 different proteins, how could our amazing bodies have come into existence, possessing all the different proteins—proteins that are necessary to sustain life? This seemingly miraculous incident could occur only through a creation by a being that followed a very specific design. Once again the explanation is God.

Our bodies are truly amazing, and they are only one of God’s wonderful creations. In the book of Romans, Paul writes, “For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse” (Romans 1:20, NIV). As we learn about the science of our bodies, there is no reason to doubt the existence of God; His supremacy is evident throughout our beings as well as in everything around us.
We live in an age of incredible advances in medicine. We also live in an age of incredible skepticism about the validity of much of what modern medicine does—in part because of the expense of doing it. A result of this skepticism has been the growth of extreme alternative medical methods. There have always been people who claimed to have magic potions and elixirs that would cure anything, but today there are reputable scientists and medical practitioners who are selling no more than snake oil. They have elaborate arguments for the use of herbs, special diets, special kinds of lights, acupuncture, special enemas, vitamins, minerals, special ion machines, filters for everything from water to air to blood, and things to wear to keep us healthy, including magnets, garlic, miracle plants, minerals, and countless charms. Those who promote these “cures” showcase studies where miraculous results are claimed. Many of the promoters are people who claim to have benefitted from whatever cure they are promoting.

A disturbing aspect of all this is that many times the cure is said to have a spiritual basis. Sometimes churches are involved in the production or promotion of alternative cures and even bring it into their worship activities. One of the claims is that the alternative medical treatments are natural instead of man-made, and therefore they should be superior to anything modern medicine can offer. Linking the alternative cure to prayer or the laying on of hands gives the cure credibility in the minds of many people. This sometimes causes people not to seek medical help for a condition or to delay it until the condition is beyond any medical help.

It is important to understand that we are not talking about things that might just make us more comfortable. Comfort has psychological and spiritual roots, and anything that makes us more comfortable without doing any harm to us is a good thing. No one questions the
beneficial aspects of prayer or of support from those we love and who love us. However, to claim a cure for cancer, diabetes, leukemia, or a similar disease, can be very misleading and even destructive.

My wife battled this issue for sixty years. She was a type 1 diabetic, meaning that she had been taking insulin injections since she was 10 years old. I estimate that she took some 80,000 plus insulin shots, not to mention over 200,000 plus finger pricks. In the 49 years that we were married, my wife had to deal with just about every complication that type 1 diabetes brings upon its victims—heart problems, kidney failure, retinopathy, neuropathy, gastroparesis, osteoporosis, gum disease and skin hypersensitivity. As we faced these illnesses together, we always were able to find a medical answer that either solved the problem, or put it into a form that she could live with and did not cause death. Ten years ago my wife was recognized by the Eli Lilly and Company with a 50-year award, because very few diabetics have been able to live with insulin-dependent diabetes that long. Her discipline, and the advancements of medical science made it possible for her to have a very productive and high quality of life for a very long time. Until her heart finally stopped on May 9, 2008, she still had her feet and hands, could still think clearly, and was not on dialysis. We had used modern medical science to fight diabetic ulcers, kidney failure, osteoporosis, and neuropathy.

Because we have engaged in a ministry for over 40 years designed to show people that belief in God and in the Bible is scientifically credible, we have had massive amounts of mail about faith, chronic illness, and medical and alternative cures. We have always considered these treatments, and in many cases have found they would be destructive. My favorite line is that poison ivy is natural. Some of the alternative cures and materials people recommended to us would have caused damage to the kidneys. Others would cause skin problems, and others would have caused stomach damage. These cures were from well-intentioned folks who wanted to help us deal with the diabetes. They felt that natural materials were from God and would be superior to the modern medical methods we were relying on.

We also had numerous letters over the years from atheists and skeptics suggesting that my wife’s diabetic condition was proof that God does not exist. They suggested that a loving God would not allow His children to be inflicted with such an insidious and destructive disease as diabetes. This view assumes a totally mechanistic view of human life. It assumes that our physical survival is the number-one priority in our existence. This view is consistent with atheism, but it is not consistent with what the Bible says about the purpose of our
existence. Survival of the fittest is not a part of the discussions that Job had with his friends and is not consistent with the teachings of Ephesians 6:12–13 where the purpose of our existence is discussed. God did not cause my wife’s diabetes, but how we deal with it, how we allow it to impact our lives, and what we do with our lives is the issue. Romans 8:28 tells us that God can take any afflictions that come our way, and make something positive from them. Some things happen because Satan is alive and well on planet earth and natural things just happen in the physical world in which we live.

Some believers in God make the same kind of argument as the atheists. Their approach is that diabetes and all other ailments of mankind are the direct result of sin. The concept is that man’s sin, his failure to eat the right foods, his use of modern medicine, modern chemistry, and modern agriculture have caused impurities to build up in our bodies leading to all of our chronic ailments. There is no question that various ailments of mankind are due to pollution and the injudicious use of certain materials. Asbestos, mercury, lead, and many organic compounds have been proven to be the direct cause of many serious ailments and disabilities. Cancer has been linked to a variety of man-made chemicals, and new studies raise questions about psychological disorders and physical diseases that may have their roots in the synthetic materials that mankind has carelessly discharged into the atmosphere, water, and soil. The fact remains however, that not all ailments of mankind fall into this category.

Many alternative cure proponents suggest that impurities of all kinds are stored in the human body. My wife was told on one occasion that if she could get rid of the impurities in her body her diabetes would be cured. Many processes like chelation, magnets, skin salves, and a variety of tonics are said to take away the impurities causing the disease and flush them from the body. A good example is an alternative cure that involves an enema. The idea is that the intestines are full of chemicals and industrial wastes that cause a variety of ailments, and if you wash out the intestines with a special natural wash, the diabetes, or whatever ailment a person might have, will be cured.

David made a famous statement in Psalm 139:14, “I will praise thee Lord, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made ….” The human body is designed to withstand incredible abuse and handle a variety of environmental conditions. The intestinal tract is one of those wonderfully-made parts of our body. When a doctor does a colonoscopy
in which he sends a camera up the colon and through the intestines, what does the doctor see? Are there chemical materials and chunks of industrial waste attached to the colon? Most of us who have had a colonoscopy have been given a picture of it, or have actually watched it being done. The intestines are designed to shed any material that might stick to them. All waste material is sent out of the body, so no damaging material remains. The idea that a man-made, artificial means is needed to cleanse the intestinal tract is simply a case of not realizing how wonderfully made our intestinal tract is.

So called “filtering treatments” are an example of failing to understand how well God designed our bodies. Chelation and similar treatments have been held out as a means of cleansing the blood of undesirable ions, chemicals, and substances. Blood and the organs that produce, cleanse, and circulate it are incredibly well designed. The process of putting oxygen into the blood by the lungs and then removing it by cells in the muscles is so complex that chemists struggle to find materials to duplicate it. The body has an elaborate filtering system that removes impurities from the blood. This system is so good that all attempts by modern science to equal it have been unsuccessful. Kidney dialysis has come a long way in the past 50 years, but it still cannot do as good a job as the original equipment. Invasive attempts to filter or oxidize the blood are frequently dangerous and always less effective than what God has designed. The system that controls the rate of breathing and the heart’s ability to speed up with exercise without accumulating wastes while providing enough energy, is an amazing feat of engineering.

The most critical area for all of us to consider is the area of nutrition, but even here there is a need to be careful about extreme claims and exaggerated concerns. In Genesis 1:9 God told Adam and Eve that He had given them all kinds of plants to eat. In Acts 10:13–15 Peter was told to kill and eat, and that what God had cleansed he was not to call unclean. The message is that God designed the human digestive system to be able to handle a wide range of foods, and implied is the notion that man’s dietary needs could be met by those foods. Today we have people telling us that the foods we eat are nutrient-deficient, and that we need to supplement our diets with massive amounts of the nutrients, which cost a lot of money. God’s design is not that inefficient. In fact, adding certain natural chemicals can be dangerous. A natural chemical like vitamin A can be concentrated so much it can do physical damage
to the body. Even soluble vitamins like vitamin C can be detrimental in massive doses—leading to hemorrhoid problems in some people. Recent studies have shown that vitamin E and some natural supplements can be a catalyst to cancer and other physical problems. It is important not to denigrate God’s design and the wisdom in what He has created to nourish us.

The one area where there seems to be valid concern is in cases where pesticides, growth hormones, fungicides, and herbicides have been used in excess. I have a friend who raises apples commercially, but will not eat any himself because he says he knows what the trees are sprayed with. Man-made chemicals can be hazardous, and there is some wisdom in growing your own fruits and vegetables, in peeling things like apples before you eat them, and in keeping abreast of recent studies on various crops to know the hazards. Our bodies are very resilient, but man-made chemicals can be a risk and we need to use common sense to avoid problems.

We urge our readers not to be swept up in extreme claims of natural foods and supplements. God designed us with intelligence and purpose, and we should eat healthy foods that we know have been grown with care. We have farmer’s markets, roadside stands, and our own back yards where we can get healthy foods. Avoid extreme claims about herbs and special tonics, and avoid invasive medical procedures that may be dangerous and, at best, are likely to be ineffective. Trust God’s design of our bodies to provide a good level of health. When there are problems, go to a reputable doctor who is trained in the area of concern, and not to someone who makes bold claims but lacks the training to effectively help us in our infirmities.

Finally, remember that “it is appointed unto man once to die” (Hebrews 9:7). This physical body is not all there is. My wife died after 60 years of type 1 insulin-dependent diabetes, but she had 59 years of good health and enjoyed marriage, births, grandchildren, and an effective ministry blessed by God. I am thankful for modern medicine, and how doctors used the design of the human body to give her a good quality of life in spite of the diabetes. She is now free of all the negatives her physical body endured and is with the Great Physician, free of pain and the encumbrances of this life.

—JNC

Phyllis Clayton
Editor’s Note: One of the things that has come out of the battle between extremists in the evolution/creation controversy has been a flow of literature from atheists claiming that good scientists and intelligent, educated people do not believe in God. This is simply not true. Tihomir Dimitrov has compiled an e-book on http://nobelists.net of quotations of Nobel Prize winning scientists. In each issue of this journal we hope to quote statements from some of these.

Guglielmo Marconi: Nobel Laureate in Physics
Inventor of Wireless (Radio) Telegraphy

“The more I work with the powers of Nature, the more I feel God’s benevolence to man; the closer I am to the great truth that everything is dependent on the Eternal Creator and Sustainer; the more I feel that the so-called science, I am occupied with, is nothing but an expression of the Supreme Will, which aims at bringing people closer to each other in order to help them better understand and improve themselves.”

“I am proud to be a Christian. I believe not only as a Christian, but as a scientist as well. A wireless device can deliver a message through the wilderness. In prayer the human spirit can send invisible waves to eternity, waves that achieve their goal in front of God.”

“Every step, science makes, brings us ever new surprises and achievements. And yet science is like a faint light of a lantern flickering in a deep and thick forest, through which humanity struggles to find its way to God. It is only faith that can lead it to light and serve as a bridge between man and the Absolute.”

“I believe it would be a great tragedy if men were to lose their faith in prayer. Without the help of prayer I might perhaps have failed where I have succeeded. In allowing me to attain what I have done, God has made of me merely an instrument of His own will, for the revelation of His own divine power.”
Amy Orr-Ewing is a British writer and works with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM). In January/February 2007 we reviewed her book, *Is the Bible Intolerant?* Like most of the RZIM works, this is a philosophical/theological treatment of apologetic material, not a science work. It is written as a response to material being circulated by atheists such as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and the like.

What this book does is to take objections to Christianity raised by atheists and answer those objections. She also deals with some of the challenges of the past like Nietzsche. Each chapter of the ten-chapter book is a question which Orr-Ewing then answers.

- What about other religions?
- Why isn’t the experiences Christians have with God delusional?
- Isn’t belief in God just a psychological crutch?
- Why are logical positivism and other alternatives not as good as Christianity?
- Why does God let bad things happen to His followers?
- What about hypocrisy in those who claim to be Christians?
- Why would a loving God create people He knew would end up in hell?
- Religion causes war and conflict—it’s dangerous and bad.
- I’ve grown out of belief in God.
- How can I know?
Amy Orr-Ewing writes well, is logical, and does a good job with the issues of our day. Her approach is different than we would make to these issues, but she documents well and raises many useful points. We recommend this book, especially to those who have been given concerns by the writings of people such as Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and the like.

THE RESURRECTION: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS
by C. Foster Stanback.
Illumination Publishers (www.ipibooks.com), 6010 Pinecreek Ridge Ct,

There are several apologetics ministries that are not associated with the fundamentalist creationist movement in the United States. One of these is the Apologetics Research Society which has an interesting Web site at www.evidenceforchristianity.org. We have had a long association with this ministry and know its leaders quite well. We have reviewed a variety of their books and materials over the years, and this is one of their newest books and deals with the resurrection in a very different way.

Most books that deal with the resurrection come at the question on the basis of what can be quoted from people who wrote secular accounts at the time Jesus lived, or rely totally on scripture itself. This very short book comes at the question from the standpoint of how historical study is done. The first chapter is “The Evolution of the Discipline of Historiography.” As a person not trained in this subject this was all new to me, but presented in a understandable way. Stanback follows that introduction with a discussion of the limitations and possibilities of historical research (chapter 2). He then discusses the evidence that the early Christians believed the body of Jesus was resurrected (not just His spirit), and the beliefs of the Jews and Greeks prior to that time of a resurrection.

The remainder of the book is a scholarly approach to debunking theories to explain the resurrection. The book is well documented, scholarly, and very honest and open without the arrogance and condescending attitude that works like this sometimes have. If you want a different approach to the validity of the resurrection, we recommend this book.
We all know about rattlesnakes, and most of us have heard the sound they make—or at least a recording of that sound. The frequency of the sound we hear can be as high as 90 hertz, which means that the snake is shaking the tip of its tail 90 times per second. By comparison, the wings of a hummingbird are moved only about 40 times per second, and if you have heard hummingbirds around a feeder you know that sound has a very low pitch. The most rapid speed humans can move their muscles is about eight times per second—over ten times slower than the rattlesnake. Not only is the frequency an issue, but the snake can keep up his rattle for a very long period of time, where human muscles fatigue very quickly. Studies of how the rattlesnake does this have led to some interesting possibilities as far as exercise equipment for humans.

A rattlesnake rattle is dead tissue. The snake makes the sound by twitching sets of small muscles on either side of its tail. It had been thought that muscle contractions pulled the tail tip first one way and then the other, but research has shown that the muscles extend or lengthen rather than contract or shorten. The muscle on one side lengths and pushes the rattle one way. The muscle on the other side is contracting and absorbing that energy. When it lengthens it pushes the tail tip the other way and the energy and forces are reversed.

It takes less energy to extend a muscle than to contract it. Going down into the Grand Canyon requires less energy than coming out. The muscles exert more force however because of the inertia requirements of stopping the weight that is being lowered. Even though we are supporting the same weight, the lengthening of a muscle produces about twice as much force as shortening it.

Most human exercise programs are designed to make muscles stronger. Researchers at Northern Arizona State University have
taken the rattlesnake rattle, and designed exercise equipment that uses this principle. Physiologist Stan Lindstedt built an exercise bike with electrically powered pedals that run backwards so the patients muscles must resist the force. When elderly patients tried this device, their muscle mass increased as did their balance. Members of a high school basketball team extended their jumping ability a couple of inches (8 percent) by using the same equipment.

In our day of fancy exercise equipment, it is interesting to know that the most modern exercise machine is designed by copying the engineering of the ancient reptile—the rattlesnake. The original engineer must have been infinitely brilliant.


**ANIMAL MAGNETISM**

Some forty years ago we presented material in this journal concerning the methods that animals use to navigate from one place to another during migration. Recently a leatherback turtle was tracked as it migrated from Indonesia to Oregon to Hawaii—a distance of 12,774 miles in 647 days. The main subject of our discussion in 1968 was the Arctic tern, which travels some 12,000 miles one way as it migrates from the north slope of Alaska to the southern end of South America and back. At that time experiments had suggested a number of built-in navigation devices that allow the terns to make that trip.

Princeton University researchers recently discovered that the use of magnetism is far more sophisticated than anyone would have
guessed in 1968 when we first presented this subject. Dr. Martin Wikelski has shown that birds have light-sensitive cells that sense the magnetic lines of force of the earth in their eyes. In 1998 biologists discovered a protein called cryptochrome in the eyes of many animals. This protein reacts to light in a way that depends on the magnetic field in the place where the animal lives. What is especially interesting is that the cells in most birds’ eyes are most efficient with the shorter wavelengths of light. In the fall of the year those shorter wavelengths become more abundant and the bird can navigate more effectively. This also may be a clue the birds use to tell when to begin their migratory journey.

Researchers have shown that while some animals use these light-based magnetic detectors, other animals have small magnetic deposits in various parts of their bodies that give another way of sensing the earth’s magnetic field. Rainbow trout, for example, have magnetite deposits in their snouts, and pigeons have the same deposits in their beaks. Dr. Bill Cochran has shown that not only do some birds have the visual and magnetic methods of navigation, but they also have ways of setting their magnetic compasses. You can know the direction of the magnetic field of the earth which points north and south, but how do you tell which is which? Cochran has shown that some birds only do their migrating at sunset which tells them that when they face the sunset, south is to their left and north is to their right.

The complexity of this system and the fact that we are only now beginning to understand all of the different ways animals are designed to use magnetism, testifies to the fact that we can know there is a God through the things He has made (Romans 1:20). As we study birds, whales, fish, bees, monarch butterflies, eels, turtles, and even bacteria we continue to see the evidence of a wonder-working hand that has gone before us.

**Banana Correction.** In the November/December 2008 issue of this periodical on page 15 we stated that when you eat a banana you are “murdering massive numbers of seeds.” We have been called to task on that statement because modern bananas are parthenocarpic, which makes them unable to produce viable seeds. We should have used corn, beans, peas, pecans, or some other example. The original banana did have seeds and in fact was difficult to eat because of the seeds, but the plant is designed in such a way that man has been able to alter the way new plants are produced. An underground stem called a corm is transplanted and used to form a new plant. Recently tissue cultures have been used to form new plants to avoid the Panama disease. There is a massive amount of material on this versatile plant on the web.

**Fibonacci Correction.** We try to make sure that everything in our materials is accurate. Sometimes we get some bad information, and when we do, we always try to correct it. In our materials on Fibonacci’s ratio there is a statement about the nautilus (an ocean-going cephalopod) which indicates its shell is curled in the Fibonacci ratio. In reality the shell is a logarithmic curl, not the Fibonacci curl.

**Darwin’s 200th/150th.** Charles Darwin was born on February 12, 1809, and in 1859 his famous book *The Origin of the Species* was released. *National Geographic* and *Smithsonian* magazines devoted their February issues to Darwin, and countless essays and articles on Darwin’s work have appeared in just about every mainstream media publication. What is interesting is that if you read what Darwin actually did and what he actually studied, you will find brilliant science, and wonderful discoveries that support and agree with the Bible on every checkable point. It is the wild speculations and theories of later writers trying to equate Darwin’s work on the finches with naturalism that has created the hostile climate that exists in the relationship of faith and evolution. The fact that species can adapt and change to fit a changing world is a design feature of life, whether it be the beaks of Darwin’s finches or modern farm animals and plants. When you
read all the publicity about Darwin, do it with your brain engaged and be critical of the author’s hidden agenda.

**Great Apes Project.** One of the major issues connected with evolution and naturalism is the value of a human being. If you accept the proposition that all life is the product of chance directed by mechanical forces, then humans have no more worth or value than any other living thing. The biblical contention that man is specially created in the image of God and has intrinsic worth because of that unique creation, is denied by those who promote naturalism. In 1993 a group was established called “Great Ape Project” which demanded a basic set of moral and legal rights for apes. In June of 2008 the Spanish parliament was asked to approve a resolution that would prohibit the use of apes in any experiments, entertainment, or commercial venture. Peter Singer, a well-known atheist and promoter of this philosophy, calls it an historic breakthrough. Similar efforts are underway in the United Kingdom, Austria and New Zealand.

Dr. Frans de Waal of Emory University made the comment that should come to everyone’s mind, “… if we give rights to apes, what would be the compelling reason not to give rights to the monkeys, dogs, rats, and so on?” GAP responded, “All creatures that can feel pain should have a basic moral status.” No one is suggesting animal cruelty, but if all animal testing is stopped then medicines will either have to be tested on humans or medical research will have to stop. How then will we solve the disease problems facing mankind today? Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Japan, and the US all have research ban laws or dignity laws being proposed. The Swiss law could even be applied to plants. The biblical claim that man is special is important. We are created in the image of God and are charged by God to manage the creation with compassion and wisdom (Genesis 2:15). When we abandon that concept, all kinds of proposals have to be considered equally valid. Source: *Seed Magazine*, December 2008, page 1.

**An Atheist Appeals for Christianity.** Marcello Pera is an atheist and Italian senator who stirred things up recently by releasing his latest book titled *Perchè Dobbiamo Dirci Cristiani* (Why We Must Call Ourselves Christians). Pera was president of the senate from 2001 to 2006 and has written a number of books. In this latest book he points out that Europe with its enormous diversity needs to have a force that can bring it all together. Pera notes that “Christianity’s concept of the human person as created in the image of God is not something found in other cultures, and this exists prior to the state’s intervention.” Source: Zenit at www.zenit.org/article-24494?l=english.
Circumcision Availability a Problem. During the last ten years in the United States there has been a movement to stop circumcision, claiming it is a barbaric custom that has religious significance but no health benefit. The recent HIV epidemic in Africa has laid to rest any notion that there is no benefit in circumcision. Data shows there is a high correlation between a lack of circumcision and HIV infection with HIV infection being reduced by 50 percent where circumcision is practiced. There is now a backlog as health officials try to meet the demand for circumcision. We would add that if lifestyles were brought in line with what God teaches in His word HIV could be wiped out. Source: *Science News*, January 3, 2009, page 24.

New Studies Deny Wine Benefit. We have noted in this column in the past about claims that moderate wine drinking lowers the risk of heart problems. A new study reported in the *Medical Journal Watch* reports that the benefits reported in the past were for people with unhealthy behaviors such as smoking, lack of exercise, or poor diet. Among people who got regular exercise, ate fruits and vegetables, and did not smoke, there was no advantage. The study report mentions that with data showing connections to genetic predispositions to alcoholism and the risk for certain kinds of cancers there is no justification for drinking. We continue to maintain that there is good reason for Christians to abstain from using the most destructive recreational drug on the planet.

New Problems For Radiometric Dating. We have tried to emphasize in this journal, that the age of the earth is not a biblical issue. The problem is that both biblical and scientific methods of dating have massive assumptions involved that could make significant errors in the methods. A new discovery has added some more data to that discussion. Radiometric dating assumes that the decay we see in radioactive nuclei always takes place with the same decay scheme and that the half life of the decay does not change. New data on radioactive decay now suggests that neutrinos can induce a change in the decay rate of certain isotopes. The earth’s distance from the sun alters how many neutrinos strike the earth, and changes in decay have been observed as this process takes place. How much influence this has on common methods of dating used in geology and anthropology is still being debated, but dogmatically insisting on a certain age either scientifically or biblically is not wise. Source: *Science News*, November 22, 2008, page 2.

Homosexual Data. One of the problems involved in the ongoing debate about gay marriage is getting data from scientists who have actually done studies without having an ax to grind. On both sides
of the issue we have had people who tended to select data to support what they already believed. That accusation can certainly be leveled against gay activists and anti-gay activists. However, there is one study available on the Web and in print that has a documentation list that makes it worth examining. The ten-page report opposing homosexuality has a reference list of 32 studies and articles which tend to suggest it is more than just the opinion of the author. You can get it on the Web at www.familyresearchinst.org/FRI_EduPamphlet7.html or write for it at Family Research Institute, PO Box 62640, Colorado Springs, CO 80962, phone 303-681-3113.

**Global Warming.** Ice core studies in Greenland have reported that 11,500 years ago the temperature of the planet increased 22 degrees in just 50 years. If that research holds up, it is an incredible change, far greater than what we are experiencing now. Stay tuned. Source: *Science Illustrated*, January/February 2009, page 20.

**More Marijuana Problems.** The Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center released a report on February 9, 2009, revealing that there is a high correlation between marijuana use and testicular cancer. The cancer is nonseminoma, and it has increased rapidly in recent years, especially in Europe where cases have increased by 6 percent. The study was of 369 testicular cancer patients between the ages of 18 and 44 and showed a 70 percent increased risk for the disease. Marijuana has a strong interaction with hormonal production, so the finding is not a major surprise.

**“Human Chimp” Goes Bad.** We have maintained in this journal that what makes us human is the fact that we are created in the image of God. Our soul is what gives us our capacity for creativity, and our capacity to feel guilt, sympathy, and love. Atheists have maintained that these characteristics are a product of our brains, and that animals have these traits, but they are just not developed. One animal that has been used to back this claim is “Travis” a chimpanzee used in Old Navy and Coca Cola commercials and several movies. His owner, Sandra Herold, had the chimp doing human things—eating at the table, channel surfing TV with a remote, bathing, dressing, using a toilet, etc. On February 16, 2009, the 200-pound chimp attacked and mauled a 56-year-old friend of Ms. Herold who is in critical condition at the present time. Authorities say the animal “reverted to instinctive behavior.” Our point is that animals do not have a soul and are not created in the image of God. Trying to turn an animal into a human with human values and spiritual characteristics is doomed to failure. Source: AP, February 18, 2009.
2009 Summer Retreat & Field Trips

WEEK-LONG RETREAT

is on August 10–14, 2009 at Michiana Christian Service Camp, Niles, Michigan. All-day sessions on faith and science with John Clayton—lessons, classes, lab exercises, devotionals. Designed for non-science people and anyone who wants to learn about science and faith. It is open to all ages and there will be recreational facilities for all ages. For more information e-mail jncdge@aol.com, or call 269-687-9426, or write John Clayton, 1555 Echo Valley Dr., Niles, MI 49120.

FIELD TRIPS

For many years Does God Exist? has offered summer programs in the field designed to help Christians train to be more effective in using apologetics to build faith and answer questions. We have two opportunities this summer.

CANYONLANDS

is an all-ages trip to Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, Zion, Petrified Forest national parks, Meteor Crater, Lowell Observatory and more on September 13–18. Cost will be $779 for double occupancy from Flagstaff. Reservations need to be made ASAP. For more information contact us or Mark Story, Mark@QLTours.com or phone 1-877-865-6711.

CANCELLATIONS!

In the last several weeks we have had to cancel two of our trips: the Galapagos tour and the Youth Trek. They were scheduled for June and July of this year.

The Canyonlands trip in September is still planned. See you then!

There is no charge for the programs, only the cost charged by the companies that manage the boats and buses involved. John Clayton is your host and teacher for these trips, assisted by Nathan and Erin Collins, and Alan Doty. Mark Story and QueensLander Tours (www.QLTours.com) is the agency with whom we have a relationship. Prices include transportation from departure point and back, motels, park fees, and some meals.
This journal is a part of a program of service titled Does God Exist? The purpose of the program is to provide thinking, seeking people with scientific evidence that God does exist and that the Bible is His Word. It is our conviction that all men can logically and rationally believe in God. In addition to this bimonthly journal, the Does God Exist? program offers DVDs and video tapes, CDs and audio tapes, courses, books, and other materials. These materials are offered on a loan basis or at our cost. We also are more than willing to correspond with you and answer any specific question(s) you might have. If you would like further information on borrowing or purchasing these materials, we would be glad to send it to you. Check the boxes below to describe what you would like and mail it to us. We will get it right out to you.

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