

XLIII. Timeless Truth for Timely Topics in Biblical Perspective

What Does the Bible Say?

“The Origin of Life: How? When?—Four Explanations”

Selected Texts

Dr. Harry L. Reeder III

August 7, 2016 – Evening sermon

We will be looking at four texts in this study. The first two texts will be background texts and the others will be supporting ones on the possibilities of life, that is the origin of life. This is the 48th sermon on Christian world and life views with the title of the series being Timeless Truth for Timely Topics. In this study we’ll look at the matter of the origin of life. I am addressing this issue for many reasons. First of all it is a Biblical issue. Secondly there are questions that surround this issue and thirdly I’m going to mention some sub points on this matter. I was handed an excellent article on this matter about three or four months ago that germinated my thoughts on the fact that this would be an appropriate topic in this series this year. I wanted to do this topic before I go to the next one on capital punishment because I think you need to understand the matters of the origin of life before you can understand the issues of capital punishment. So in this study we’ll look at the sanctity of life in terms of the origin of life.

Look at the permeation of the gothic culture of despair and death, particularly as it infiltrates the media and the younger population. This piercing culture is the evidence of despair. We see the movement of ‘gender dysphoria’ and the virtuous morality statement of the educational systems of our day that says ‘the virtuous thing is that people in their own autonomy can self identify in terms of who they are and what they are regardless of biological evidence.’ We are seeing such bizarre things these days.

For instance, a young lady on the west coast who was engaged in matters of racial injustice in terms of an organization that is commendable, presents herself as an African American and she works cosmetically to make that as presentable as possible yet it becomes clear when her mother, father and siblings step forward that she is not African American. She basically lied and said that she so identified with them that she wanted to be one of them and if I want to be one then I can be one of that ethnic minority. Interestingly, in a survey that was done after this incident with this young lady seventy plus percent of the Americans who were surveyed said that if she wanted to identify as an African American it doesn’t matter that she is Caucasian, it’s ok. This is absolutely irrational. Yet it is determined as not only as okay but virtuous to live in such a professed, deceptive statement in this world just because that is what I want to be. Then how can I tell them that is not what you are?

Here is another bizarre case. A man decided he was a one-legged man and insisted to the point that he affirmed his right with a doctor’s agreement to remove a leg, because he wanted to appear as he identified himself. That is a true case and how bizarre is that. What is more bizarre is that the people surveyed, again, almost three fourths said that was okay if that is what he wants to be.

The case of gender dysphoria is happen all over. In my own hometown of Charlotte, North Carolina, now in direct opposition to the law of the state which has said that public restrooms are going to be defined by one’s biological status for matters of sanity and security, have undergone amazingly hypocritical corporate pressure, but the school system I graduated from in Charlotte has gone downhill ever since I graduated. The first movement downhill was that I graduated but they have started a new program called the gender unicorn agenda.

Here are the following policies that have now been enacted. 'We will have a place of security and safety for gender confused students by engaging in the following policies; parents involved in the life of their children in matters of gender engagement in the Charlotte Mecklenburg school system can only be engaged if the student permits the parents to be engaged which will be enforced by the school officials.' I will tell you right now if I was a Christian involved with the Charlotte Mecklenburg school system, in which I consider them missionaries, that is point where I would say 'I will not be an instrument to destroy the family relationship. I will not be a part of that or participate in it.' That will be one of the school's policies and again that is against state law in North Carolina.

Another policy is secondly, 'all students are free to choose bathrooms and any changing and shower facilities that they desire to in terms of their professed gender identity at that moment. The Charlotte Mecklenburg school system will now begin to remove gender based activities. Students may choose their gender based activities such as intermural sports, dress code, classes, ceremonies, bathrooms, photographs, extracurricular activities and contests based upon the gender they choose to participate in, including overnight fieldtrips and sleeping arrangements. Students will no longer be referred to as boys and girls or him and her but from now on, scholars or students. There will be no classroom management techniques using gender specific language.'

Why is this insanity here? Why would the city of New York now put in place a law in which people can bring a lawsuit up to \$250,000 if someone does not submit to referring to them by their chosen gender base, no matter what they are? If what they choose to be at that moment is not referred to by whomever is addressing them, then they can sue you and your corporation up to \$250,000. By the way, how many possibilities have been enumerated in that code? There are 31 possibilities. People now are given 31 choices of their self-identity in gender.

I believe the piercing culture, the death culture, the gothic culture and the death spiral in which we now have a platform of a political party that embraces the destruction of human life in the womb at any time up to birth for any reason and if possible anyone choosing to do that will be tax payer supported. The removal of a foreign policy that limits foreign policy aid that it can never be used for abortion purposes for our nation is called the Helms amendment is now being removed. Where did we become so intent on the culture of death, so irrational and insane as 31 possible genders and self-identification to the point of self-mutilation?

I believe the Bible says that such confusion, chaos, insanity and irrationality is inevitable unless the grace of God in redeeming grace or common grace restrains the heart of men? In a sense this should not surprise us. What surprises us, is how impotent it reveals the contemporary church in America to be that this is taking place under our watch. The salt is not salty. The light is not shining. It should not amaze us that men in their depraved state eventually get to such insanity. Romans 1 describes it and what ought to break our heart is it happens when His church in this country is not engaged in such a manner with truth and love that we no longer restrain evil and see sinners transformed by grace.

One of the places we would start is that we would think Christianly, consistently and speak from a Christian world and life view. One of the places to begin is where life came from. Why do people believe that you can self-identify or that you can take a life of someone else if it is convenient? That is the direct result of Darwinian atheistic evolution. If life is nothing more than cosmic accident then if you can cut down a tree then you can cut down a life. If a tree is inconvenient then I will cut it down. If a mutated accident called a life is inconvenient then I can cut it down or redefine it into anything I want to do.

In other words, there is a reason why Paul when he went into a pagan community began with the doctrine of creation. There is a reason why he declared that all humanity came from one man created by God. This issue of the origin of life is crucial. It is crucial for our ministry of Gospel evangelism and discipleship and it is crucial for our ministry of public theology in the public square for public policy to have some sense of sensibility. The unscientific conclusions of atheistic Darwinian evolution are bad science and in most cases its conclusion are non-science that are purely philosophical and theological. They are faith based world and life views of materialism, secularism and humanism that man is the origin and measure of all things. This also includes relativism where there is no objective truth and there is only 'my' truth that I declare at that moment and that alone is truth. So when we engage in this matter and begin to deal with it, what are we confronted with?

Creation is a matter of faith. Atheistic evolution is a matter of science. Wrong! I hope to at least in an elementary way lay down some framework for you in this study as you deal with it. Ken Ham has recently opened up the creation museum and now there is the ark encounter. He also recently had his second debate with Bill Nye and what didn't amaze me were the reviews of the New York Times and the Washington Post. I expected those because they work from a world and life view. What amazed me was a professing evangelical who said 'Men like Ken Ham have embarrassed us because they come at it with a fundamentalist non-scientific intractable view of creation.' This was from an evangelical publication that Mr. Ham was unmoved by scientific evidence to give up on his doctrine of creation. I would say that Mr. Ham won the debate and he doesn't embarrass me. I would be more than glad to enter into such debates.

I am about to go to my 50th high school reunion in October. I have been asked to pray at that reunion. No one 50 years ago would have said 'Harry Reeder will be doing the invocation at our 50th reunion.' I can hear my science teacher in disbelief saying 'you're debating what?' It's not that hard. I want to start this study by reading a few passages and making a couple of points with you. Let's start by looking at John 1.

John 1:1-5 says [1] *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2] He was in the beginning with God. [3] All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. [4] In him was life, and the life was the light of men. [5] The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.* Here we are told that God created all things through His Son and for His Son and nothing was made that exists that did not come from Him. We call it ex nihilo creation.

The scientific term is biogenesis. That there was God, the intelligent, holy, living Being and when He spoke from what He spoke that brought into existence everything that is living. Genesis, the origin of life, came from the ever living God and its intelligence is a reflection of His intelligence. His order is a reflection of His order. He brought those things into existence through His Son and He spoke them into existence. Now let's look at Colossians 1.

Colossians 1:15-18a says [15] *He is the image of the invisible God, the **firstborn** of all creation.* (The term firstborn used in verse 15 doesn't mean that Jesus didn't exist and He was birthed but it means that is His position. The firstborn is the inheritor so He is not only the position of everything coming into existence by Him but everything came into existence for Him.) [16] *For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. [17] And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. [18a] And he is the head of the body, the church.* Now let's look at Genesis 1.

The book of Genesis is the book of origins. It gives us the origin of the family, marriage, sex, procreation, sin and it gives us the origin of space, time and matter. Genesis 1:1–2 says [1] *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.* [2] *The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.* When it starts ‘in the beginning’ that means there was a time when there was no time. There was just eternity whereby and wherein God dwelled. Then God began beginnings. In the beginning (time), God created the heavens (space), and the earth (matter). So you take the passage in John 1, Colossians 1 and Genesis 1 and you see the doctrine of the Trinity in creation that God the Father authored it. God the Son accomplished it and God the Holy Spirit ordered it. Now let’s look further down in Genesis 1.

Genesis 1:26–27 says [26] *Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”* [27] *So God created man (singular) in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

So man that is humanity, created by an original Adam and Eve – male and female created in God’s image. You can’t image God with just the male or with just the female but both are required to bring a reflection of who God is. So God made them in His image. They are likened unto Him. This is unlike anything else in creation. They don’t crawl up out a gas heap of pollution and somehow come into existence. God creates everything and orders it. Then the last thing He does is makes man in His image as His vice-regent, to be fruitful and multiply, rule over the earth and subdue it. He makes man in His image, bringing them into existence, in order to accomplish that. That is what the Bible says.

In our children’s catechism classes the very first question they learn about is who made them. God made me. Today in Scotland there is a proposed law that anyone who teaches that is guilty of child abuse. Scotland is the place of John Knox. Now anyone who would teach children that they are created by God can be guilty of child abuse. Then if anyone holds to that at any of our universities they are automatically ruled out of promotion or tenure. If anyone was to say that in our educational systems they would be considered an academic Neanderthal. But this is what God says. There was nothing and God made everything. God made everything in the space of six days and on the sixth day God made man in His image. The reason life is sacred is because God made life and human beings bear the image of God. That is what the Word of God says.

So what does the scientific and academic community have to say? There are five possibilities here. One possibility is the result of spontaneous generation where life just happened. This is what we call a-biogenesis. ‘A’ means there was nothing – no (a) living (bio) genesis (origin). That is life originated from no life, things that existed. Another phrase is spontaneous regeneration.

The second possibility is that life has just always existed. It’s always been here so we don’t have to explain its origin. Life is eternal and has always existed.

The third possibility is that life on earth was cultivated or as Richard Dawkins said in that famous interview with Ben Stein, ‘it may have been little green men from somewhere that put it here.’ Meaning life was cultivated by alien life from unknown locations in the universe. This is the third possibility in the academic circles. So, we were put here as experiments by alien life from some unknown place in the universe.

The fourth possibility says there isn't any life and that this is all just an illusion. You think you are living but you're not. You are thinking a dream and this is just an illusion that doesn't exist and it is meaningless so do what you want. There is no life so whatever it is that you are calling life that really isn't a life you can make it what you want to make it. People actually get paid for teaching that in our universities.

The fifth possibility is that life in general but human life in particular is the result of a supernatural act that requires an eternal existence of an intelligent being. In other words, there is a creation because there is a Creator. There is human life because the Creator has made human beings in His image, male and female. So let's take these starting with the 'scientific' ones.

In particular I'm going to start with the fourth possibility where life is an illusion because that is not a scientific statement. It is a philosophical statement. In fact that is non science. Why would I say that? It is because science is built upon observation with five senses. When we talk about science, something I've grown to love that comes from the impact of the Reformation called the scientific method which is experimentation, observation and conclusions that then must be repeated. So to do science it requires an experiment, the observation of the experiment with the five senses, a conclusion of the experiment and then to be affirmed it must be repeatable. So it has to be observable and repeatable.

We know possibility number four is nonscientific because one, we have senses and there is life. There is life that does exist which is sensible and observed, therefore possibility number four is non-scientific. It is a philosophical statement really designed to dodge the issue and elevate man as sovereign over his existence by declaring the existences of illusion. Science would declare that life is not an illusion. So do with it what you want to.

Now let's look at possibility number one which is that life is spontaneous generation. This is called scientifically a-biogenesis. That is origin of life from nothing that is living. There has never been a scientific experiment to support that or that will support that. Two, take a 2 by 4 that came from a pine tree, stick in the ground and tell me when it becomes a pine tree. Just take a dead limb and stick in the ground and tell me when it comes to life. There is no case of inert, inanimate things becoming life. Spontaneous generation doesn't happen. It has never happened. There is no affirmation that living things come from nonliving things. Therefore to make such a claim is unscientific.

Let's look at possibility number two where life has always existed and is eternal. We know this is not the case because life dies. We have this thing called the second law of thermodynamics. So we know this is not a scientific statement because life has not always existed. There is a place of origin. In fact, that is why they have come up with big bang theories because clearly there is a finiteness to everything. There is an origin of everything. Life in and of itself in general but human life in particular is not eternal. We know in terms of historical analysis, archeology, geography, scientific observation and the second law of thermodynamics that there is no such thing as eternal life where life has existed without being created, that is human life.

To get around that, today there is another philosophical statement that this universe with its second law of thermodynamics does not have eternal life but there isn't just a universe there are multi-verses. In fact, the reason this universe is here is because there was a previous universe that gave birth to this one and then a previous one that gave birth to this one etc. So we are the evolution of a universe of a number of universes before us but regardless of the fact that there is no scientific support of that, all that does is just kick the can down the road because somewhere there is a universe that kicks this thing off, even if you don't want to say there is only

one universe, the one we exist in that clearly declares that life has an origin. Human life is immortal but it is not eternal. Eternality is no beginning and no end. God made us for forever, immortal but we have a beginning. Science acknowledges that. The notion that human life is eternal is non-scientific.

The third possibility was that life on earth was seeded from alien beings from some unknown location and this is the go-to today. There is funding of numerous 'ceti' projects out today which is a scientific acronym for the 'church for extra-terrestrial intelligence.' This is why a lot of your tax money is ending up on Mars and doing probes throughout the universe. This is why many are sitting on mountains right now listening for communication from the intelligent beings that are observing us, having seeded us as an experiment on this earth. That is why Richard Dawkins made a certain comment from the Ben Stein movement yet it was kind of taken out of context but it's an actual fact that there are constant missions to other planets. It is known that we have found 2000 planets but none of them come close to the uniqueness of this little speck in the universe called the earth. All these missions go out to find the intelligent beings in another location in the universe that seeded, cultivated and planted us here and all of them have returned empty handed and will continue to return that way. It is a fool's errand.

I'm fine for them to do it because there are a lot of other blessings that come from these missions. There is velcro so that when you get old and don't want to tie your shoes. There are a lot of good things that come from these missions but in terms of the finding of the extra-terrestrial beings, they will return empty handed. Do I believe in extra-terrestrial beings? Yes for they are called angels. Sure I believe in them but they did not seed us. God made us in His image. In the image of God He created us, male and female. Again, this kicks the can down the road because you have to ask yourself, where did those intelligent beings come from and who made them? So what we have to confirm concerning the third possibility that it is unscientific as well.

So what do we end up with? We end up with the fifth possibility. Once there was nothing and then there came something and something ordered and reproduced itself and now we're here. Here is a more rational explanation. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and God made man in His image – male and female He made them in His image. Isn't interesting that all four of these possibilities, apart from the Biblical declaration of the doctrine of creation, draw from Biblical truth? Why does man say that life is an illusion? It is because of our fallen nature and we don't want to be accountable to the God who made us. The Bible tells us that. Why is it, that man would say life is eternal? It is because the One who made us in eternal. He has no beginning and no end.

When did God begin? The Bible says that God began beginnings. You can't put God in the box that He made. He made the box of time so He has no beginning and no end. He is the Alpha and Omega – the beginning and the end. The reason we run to the matter of life eternal is because biogenesis is true. The eternal living God originated us and gave us life that is immortal in creation and life that is eternal in Christ who is eternal in redemption. Why would they say that life was seeded here? It is because it was. God made the heavens and the earth and then He put us in it (seeded us) and then told us to be fruitful and multiply. It wasn't alien extraterrestrial intelligence for it was the God of glory from His dwelling place who made the heavens and the earth. Then He placed us here to give the Triune God of glory praise, honor and glory in that we might enjoy Him forever.

So why do we keep running into these other things and shout things like 'academic Neanderthal' and 'fundamentalist intractable idiots' to those who would hold to a position of

creation instead of a free debate in the public square? It is because of another taught in the Bible that is called the fall. Because of man's heart rebellion suppresses the truth in unrighteousness. Let's look at Ephesians 4 and Romans 1 for some concluding passages. You are living in Romans 1 days right now. First let's look at Ephesians 4.

Ephesians 4:17–24 says [17] *Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you (those who know Christ) must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds (the irrationality of the unbelieving mind). [18] They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance (not the lack of truth) that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. [19] They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. [20] But that is not the way you learned Christ!—[21] assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, [22] to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, [23] and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, [24] and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Unfortunately that is not being done today, where pulpits, lecterns and discipleship are no longer committed to renewing the mind of believers so that they think Christ-like and we're trying to define the Gospel in terms of the futility of the old way of thinking. Now let's look at Romans 1. Why do we have this gender dysphoria? I'm not talking about the normal adolescent process that men and women work through or the inappropriate stereo typical enforcement of roles upon men and women that have no Biblical foundation and are just culturally nuanced. I'm talking about the movement where people are saying 'I will be what I want to be' and given oneself up to mutilation of the body and chemical mutilation and everything else. Why is there a culture of death and despair? The Bible tells us it will be there when something happens and Romans 1 tells us. The wrath of God will be revealed at the end of time but in measured temporal judgments it is already being revealed so keep this in mind as we look at Romans 1.

Romans 1:18–24 says [18] *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. (Why do we suppress the truth? It is because it is a heart problem not a mind problem.) [19] For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. [20] For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. [21] For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. [22] Claiming to be wise, they became fools, [23] and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.*

[24] *Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, [25] because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.* When you read further in Romans 1 you'll see that God first gave them over to sexual promiscuity, secondly to sexual perversion and then thirdly He gave them over to social approval of the anarchy of the day that begins with suppressing the truth in unrighteousness.

One might think I'm being judgmental and I certainly am. I am always judgmental of anything that stands against the glory of God as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer but I'm also committed to bringing men and women to the truth of the Gospel. So with a new heart we no longer suppress the truth from a darkened heart. I want you to know the God who made you wants you even though He doesn't need you. The God who made you loves you even though

you don't love Him so that you will give Him glory – your Creator, your Redeemer and your Sustainer. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word. Thank You for the privilege to be equipped by grace with the Truth of Your Word. Help us to clearly, courageously, publically, compassionately and consistently proclaim the Truth in a public square. Men will not come together to be right with Him until they know they exist because of Him. They will continue to buy the lie that in sin they can be like God, instead of the truth that God has already made them like Him and Jesus will redeem them and restore them. In the place of confusion, can be contentment and in the place of despair is Hope. Fear gives way to love. Shame gives way to redemption. Death gives way to life in Jesus, Amen.

Power Point

Origins - Five Possibilities

Five Apostolic Strategic Commitments

1. Spontaneous generation
2. Eternal and self-existent
3. Cultivated
4. Illusion
5. A supernatural act of an eternal intelligent being