

In the Beginning, God Created . . .

Martin Luther's father was a miner. In the course of mining work in Germany, numerous fossils were unearthed. It is said that the miners were frightened by these images of plants and animals in the rock, thinking perhaps the devil had placed them deep in the earth to confuse them.

Luther's response was rather simple and biblical. In the course of his lectures on Genesis, Luther said, "just as there are mountains after the Flood where previously there were fields and lovely plain, so undoubtedly there are now springs where there were none before and vice versa. For the entire surface of the earth was changed. Have no doubt that there are remains of the Flood, because where there are now mines, there are commonly found pieces of petrified wood. In the stones themselves there appear various forms of fish and other animals" (*Luther's Works, American Edition*, Volume 1:98).

Some of those fossils are on display at the house/museum where Luther was born. The words of Luther, quoted above, are written on the plaque beside their glass case. Yet the guide quickly assures the tour group that these fossils are really millions of years old, products of our evolution through time, which 'we all know' is really the truth of the matter.

I've heard such speeches before. Once, at the Cave of the Mounds, I confronted our guide as she ceaselessly spouted on about the 'millions and millions of years' it took to form those caverns. At the very opening of the movie *Armageddon*, a written "prologue" to the movie appears on the screen recalling the meteor that supposedly struck the planet 'millions of years ago.' No, it's not the first time I've run into such anti-biblical babble, and I'm sure it won't be the last.

But there, in the home where Luther was born, such talk seemed sacrilegious. I can only imagine the violent response those words would have elicited from old Martin. Yet, sadly, the truth is that a lot of Christians don't concern themselves much with the issues of the "truth" of evolution. Many, including the Roman Catholic Church, have simply dismissed the Bible and openly accepted evolution as the correct teaching of our origins.

But if we dismiss the Bible's clear words on this issue, what else can we dismiss from the pages of Scripture? Do we dismiss the Commandments that we might not like (because the sin tastes better)? Do we dismiss the forgiveness won for us by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ? Do we dismiss the comfort of God's presence with us as we struggle in this world, or the hope we hold on to of the everlasting life promised to us by God?

There are only two ways to look at and understand this world: from a worldly viewpoint, and from a Biblical viewpoint. A worldly viewpoint may allow us to think and feel and live however we might want, but worldly viewpoints have at least two major problems: they never completely account for everything we face in life (that is, they are always mistaken somewhere), and they offer us no hope or promise for what comes after this life.

The Biblical viewpoint doesn't usually agree with what we, as sinners, want to do in this life, so it's not as popular as the worldly way of looking at things. But even though we may struggle with it, the Biblical view of this world does ultimately account for everything, because it sees everything resting under the care and in the hands of God. If we don't "get it," that's okay, because God's got it covered. And, of course, the Biblical viewpoint not only proclaims our origins from God's creative Word, it also proclaims and delivers the forgiveness of our sin that has separated us from God, and it promises a glorious everlasting life with God that is yet to come.

So it's time for all of us Christians to sit up and take notice of the viewpoints that are being thrust upon us, and to return to the Biblical view that God has given us in His Word.