

# The Summit Chronicle

Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord — Isaiah 2:3



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## Table of Contents

### A STUDY OF ROMANS 14

pg 1 by Wayne Jackson

### WHAT DO YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT EVOLUTION?

pg 4 by Wayne Jackson

### THE PLEDGE

pg 6 by Trevor Major

### INTELLIGENT DESIGN & THE ORIGIN OF LIFE (P2)

pg 7 by Rex Banks

### SABBATH OR THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK?

pg 9 by Dave Bell

### DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOUL AND SPIRIT

pg 13 by Kevin L. Moore

### MODERNITY

pg 14 by Edwin Jones

### UNRELIABLE SCIENCE

pg 15 by Brad Harrub

## Contributing Writers for this Month's Articles

Rex Banks • Wayne Jackson  
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Edwin Jones • Brad Harrub  
Trevor Major

## Scripture of the Month

"He who neglects discipline" despises himself. But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding. The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom. And before honor comes humility"

—Proverbs 15:32-33

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## A STUDY OF ROMANS 14

by Wayne Jackson

Article description: The 14th chapter of the book of Romans is an intriguing piece of literature. for the spiritually minded student.

Often misunderstood, frequently abused—it offers much instruction Romans chapter 14 is a complex segment of scripture that frequently has been both misunderstood and abused. It confronts a variety of issues.

The text arises out of a transitional era in religious history when many converts to Christ were passing from one great divine system (the Mosaic regime), to another (the Christian age).

Because of the diverse backgrounds, religious and cultural, on the part of both Jews and Gentiles, many problems arose that threatened the unity of the body of Christ. A number of principles, therefore, are set forth in this chapter that, if pursued conscientiously, would help ameliorate this potentially explosive situation.

Let us consider some of the circumstances reviewed in this chapter and note the applications that are relevant for any age. Perhaps you might wish to read the chapter before proceeding with this article.

### Weak vs. Strong

In the larger context of this address, the apostle contrasts those who are "weak" (14:1), with those who are "strong" (15:1). A careful consideration of the relevant data leads to the conclusion that the stronger are those who have a greater

degree of Christian "faith" (14:1-2, 22-23). The stronger faith was that characterized by a more precise understanding of Christian doctrine (cf. 10:17).

The stronger (more knowledgeable) faith, for example, perceives that certain meats, formally "unclean" under the Mosaic economy (Leviticus 11), are no longer forbidden to those in Christ. These saints understand that certain "days," formerly esteemed as "holy," henceforth are not to be viewed as such under the law of Christ.

### Compassion for the Weak

The "strong" Christian must exercise patience so as to understand that the "weak" have not reached the level of knowledge that is possessed by the more mature (vv. 2-3). Therefore the strong must extend compassion and longsuffering, allowing the weak time to grow, thus reaching a level of comprehension wherein he can move forward in Christ without violating his conscience (vv. 5-6, 13, 15-16).

### Unity among Christians

Paul strongly admonishes the brethren to be united in matters that do not affect the integrity of the Christian faith, e.g., the eating of certain foods, or the honoring of particular days.

Those who conscientiously refrain from eating "unclean" meats were not to be condemned. Even though their knowledge was incomplete, they meant well, and their efforts, though misguided, were designed

towards bringing glory to God. Similarly, the man who refused to labor on the Sabbath—even though that restriction was abolished in Christ (Ephesians 2:13ff; Colossians 2:14-17) was doing so with the purest of motives—to honor his Creator (v. 6).

Thus these brethren with sincerely held differences, with varying levels of knowledge, and with distinct degrees of conscience sensitivity, must strive for oneness in Christ. The cause of Jesus and the worth of a soul must be paramount, and in many cases brothers in Christ must be willing to yield to one another rather than cause heartache and division.

Does this mean that fundamental doctrinal truths may be pushed to the side for the sake of accommodating heretics, or placating every “crank” in the church? It does not. Such a base view of this exalted text would force the scriptures into self-contradiction in many particulars. It would nullify all passages requiring discipline and, when necessary, the severances of fellowship with those who pursue dissolute lives, and/or who advocate destructive, anti-Christian teachings.

Christians must follow after things that make for peace; we must strive to build up one another, not the reverse (v. 19). All of this, of course, is to be accomplished in an atmosphere of loyalty to the truth.

**The Value of a Soul**

The inspired apostle cautions each child of God not to be a stumbling block, nor to put one, in his brother’s way (v. 13). We do not live the isolated life (v. 7). What one does affects others.

If the Christian has a calloused disregard for the weaknesses of his brother, knowingly wounding his conscience, caring not for the

person’s soul, and such results in the “destruction” of the weaker brother (v. 15), has not the very work of Christ on behalf of that precious soul been for naught? And who will share the blame for that apostasy?

**Keeping the Conscience Sensitive**

Paul admonishes that when a Christian proceeds with a certain action, he must “be fully assured in his own mind” (v. 5) that what he is doing does not violate his own conscience. The conscience is a sensitive instrument, and is a person’s most valuable endowment in “nudging” him in the proper direction as he grows in knowledge.

The conscience is not the final arbiter of right and wrong (Proverbs 14:12). It must be educated. Yet, in its proper place, it is a prized gift from God, and the Christian must guard against it becoming hardened (cf. Ephesians 4:19; 1 Timothy 4:2).

This is why, at the conclusion of the chapter, Paul cautions that doing something in violation of one’s conscience (even though the issue be religiously or ethically neutral), is sin. One must be able (in the case of eating “meat,” for example) to eat or drink “of faith,” i.e., with a clear conscience (v. 23). A clear conscience does not make a wrong act right, but a violated conscience can make a right act (in terms of its basic nature) wrong for that individual.

**Ultimate Judgment Belongs to God**

No Christian has the ability to look into the heart of another child of God, and judge the motives behind his actions (1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Corinthians 2:11). Hence, in many matters we must leave judgment to God, who will always do what is right (Genesis 18:25). In the ultimate reckoning, we are responsible

to the Lord, not to our brethren (vv. 4, 8-12, 22).

Such being the case, we are not required to conform our entire lives to the personal convictions of our less-informed kinsmen in Christ. Were that the case, we would have no church buildings, or baptisteries, or Bible classes on the Lord’s day, or Bible literature, or individual communion cups, or fully supported preachers, or corporate orphan homes, or church benevolence to non-Christian, etc. Over the years, well-meaning but misguided brethren have opposed these expediencies.

Yet, as noted earlier, we do have the responsibility not to deliberately wound their spirits and engage in public, frivolous acts that could jeopardize another’s salvation. There is a delicate balance here and much wisdom is required in pursuing it.

**Paul’s Example**

Paul was a Jew in the supreme sense of that term. His loyalty to the Mosaic system was beyond reproach. As he instructed his Jewish brethren in the more advanced elements of the gospel, he acknowledged the temporary design in the Law. His letters are filled with affirmations of the Law’s abolition. The Mosaic code provided no means of ultimate justification. One has only to read the argumentation in several of his epistles, e.g., Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, 2 Corinthians, and Colossians, to see the clear picture regarding this matter.

And yet the great apostle was ever sensitive to the spiritual needs of his Jewish brothers, exerting himself to accommodate their misunderstandings until they were able to access a richer comprehension of truth.

Though Paul knew there was no salvation associated with circumcision

(Galatians 5:2, 6), he nonetheless had Timothy, a preaching companion whose father was a Gentile, circumcised so as to not be offensive to potential Hebrew converts (Acts 16:3).

He knew there was no redemptive virtue in temple ceremonialism, yet he yielded to a purification ceremony in order to defuse a volatile situation in Jerusalem (Acts 21:26). That selfless act cost him four years in prison (Acts 24:27; cf. 28:30). The apostle openly affirmed his willingness to subordinate himself to those of lesser knowledge for the sake of their souls (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). What a man!

### Practical Applications

In the foregoing sections of this article, I have attempted to set forth the principles enunciated by God's great apostle in chapter 14 of the Romans letter. Sometimes, however, it is a far more difficult task to apply the divinely-prescribed principles to real-life situations in the modern world, but a spiritually-seasoned, studious effort must be exerted in the interest of truth.

In this connection, I must say this. In far too many cases, Christian people do not want to exercise the personal study, and individual analytical prowess, so as to seek wise applications for the resolution of tense Christian relationships they encounter.

Much too often, it is the case that they want to present the elders or a preacher with the "facts" of their situation, and have them hand down a decision—all neatly packaged. And when one urges them to take the biblical principles, and ferret out the applications in the best interest of all parties involved, they sometimes resist, occasionally lashing out at the one who seeks to help them grow in their study habits.

In addition, there are not a few in the church who simply cannot tolerate any

degree of flexibility among brethren with whom they do not share perfect agreement (and who ever does?). Rather, they are ever poised to "write up," "mark," and/or "disfellowship" any who does not measure up to their standard. The professional "bounty hunter" cannot long survive if he is not on the trail of a victim. It is a sad state of affairs when a man is the happiest when he is flaying a brother in Christ.

But let us pose a very real example that on occasion has confronted devout Christian brothers.

A lovely family is converted to Christ from a seventh-day sect, with which they were affiliated for a number of years, and in which they were more than superficially involved. They are honest, dedicated students of the Holy Scriptures, and they soon learn that the Law of Moses, with its Sabbath obligations, is not in force today. They are convinced of such and are able to argue that case admirably.

They have a couple of problems, however. They simply cannot feel comfortable about doing yard work on Saturday; out of long habit, they prefer to reserve the day for Bible study or other primarily spiritual activities. Should they be ridiculed if they so choose? If they prefer not to attend a ballgame or some other recreational pursuit on the seventh day of the week, should not they be loved and respected?

And what if it is the case that they cannot in good conscience, at a church potluck, partake of some sister's baked ham, or of a sportsman's platter of fried catfish? Cannot their long-time dietary habits be regarded with honor, rather than someone suggesting how "silly" such abstinence is?

The protection of the "consciences," of the weak is of far greater value than placating the insensitive criticisms of

their Pharisaical brethren who attempt to strain out gnats while camels are lodged in their own "orthodox" throats.

### Conclusion

May God help each of us to inhale the fragrant vapors of Romans 14, to digest the principles of this magnificent narrative, and thus be willing to divest ourselves of our petty inclinations of self-interest for the ultimate goal of a larger population in heaven. The motto of the Christian should be "compassion without compromise."

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# WHAT DO YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT EVOLUTION?

by Wayne Jackson

What do you **really** know about evolution? Not much, I assure you!

Dr. Colin Patterson, who was senior paleontologist of the British Museum of Natural History, delivered a speech at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City on November 5, 1981. He began by saying:

I'm speaking on two subjects, evolutionism and creationism, and I believe it's true to say that I know nothing whatever about either.

For over twenty years I had thought that I was working on evolution in some way. One morning I woke up, and something had happened in the night, and it struck me that I had been working on this stuff for twenty years, and there was not one thing I knew about it.

I tried that question on the geology staff in the Field Museum of Natural History [Chicago], and the only answer I got was silence. I tried it on the members of the Evolutionary Morphology Seminar in the University of Chicago, a very prestigious body of evolutionists, and all I got there was silence for a long time, and then eventually one person said: "Yes, I do know one thing. It ought not to be taught in high school."

This is a remarkably strange statement in view of the fact that almost every evolutionist on the globe—from the professors at Harvard to your children's elementary school teacher in many cases—is absolutely certain that he knows virtually all of the "facts" that support the evolutionary hypothesis. But it would be highly interesting to hear them attempt answering some very fundamental and specific questions.

## Something from Nothing

Here is a most interesting problem. How does something come from nothing? Some years ago I debated an atheist, Professor Paul O. Ricci, in southern California on the question of the existence of God. One of the arguments I pursued was this.

Something cannot come from nothing. But something is. Thus, something always has been. That "Something" that always has been is not matter (as demonstrated by the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which implies that matter is not eternal). Thus, there is a non-material "Something" that always has been, that produced the "something" that now is. The argument was further expanded, but this is sufficient for the purpose of this article.

Mr. Ricci protested; he alleged that something can come from nothing. I asked him to explain how that is possible. All he could say was, "Read the literature." I pressed that I wanted him to explain the process to our audience. (I was not debating "Professor Literature," but Mr. Ricci!) Again he repeated: "Read the literature." Regrettably, I was forced to point out that the nearest thing I had ever observed of "something coming from nothing," was his attempt to respond to my question as to how "something can come from nothing"! The audience got the point and my opponent did too! If there is nothing, there will always be nothing. Something cannot come from nothing.

Some attempt to avoid this question by suggesting that it is not germane to the evolutionary issue, for evolution deals with "development," not origin. There has to be "origin" before there can be "development." The question is entirely germane, and Darwinists simply cannot deal with it!

## The Living from the Non-living

A second non-knowable proposition from the evolutionary vantage point is this: how can something non-living produce a living creature? Centuries ago scientists demonstrated that the theory of spontaneous generation, i.e., life bursting into existence on its own, is without supporting evidence. Francesco Redi (1626-97) and Louis Pasteur (1822-95), through careful experimentation debunked the notion that life can generate itself.

Even renowned Harvard evolutionist, Dr. George G. Simpson (1902-84), familiarly known as "Mr. Evolution," conceded that though "most biologists think it probable that life did originally arise from nonliving matter by natural processes . . . spontaneous generation does not occur in any known case" (1957, 261).

Sir Fred Hoyle, one of Britain's prominent scientists, likened the accidental creation of life to a vast conglomerate of blind men (10 to the 50th power, i.e., one followed by fifty zeros) simultaneously solving scrambled Rubik's cubes (1981, 521ff). This is an illustration signifying never!

Scientists (e.g., Miller and Fox) have been trying to create life for the past half-century, and have failed miserably. If human intelligence cannot create life, does it seem reasonable that raw, non-intelligent "nature" could have done so?

## The Organized from the Disorganized

Here is another “don’t know” problem for evolutionists. How did a highly organized, fully integrated body with cooperating parts (and all cells are highly organized; see Jackson 2000, 6-14) develop from a mass of mere matter?

Rudolf Virchow (1821-1902), a German pathologist, popularized the “cell theory,” namely that “every cell originates from another cell like it.” Virchow wrote that “where a cell exists there must have been a pre-existing cell” (Simpson, Pittendrigh, and Tiffany 1957, 39). Simpson characterized this as one of the “great foundations of modern biology.” Yet none of them knows how a non-cell produced a cell.

One evolutionist described the cell as a “microuniverse” that abounds with discrete pieces of life, each performing with exquisite precision” (Gore 1976, 358). In his book on the cell, John Pfeiffer wrote that “all cells are built according to a fundamental design which provides them with certain common features apparently necessary to life” (1964, 10). Built? Designed? Can there be something built without a builder, or designed without a designer?

Paul Ricci, an evolutionist (see above), in his book, *Fundamentals of Critical Thinking*, concedes that “everything designed has a designer” (1986, 190). His rationalization is that nothing in nature bears the evidence of design; things just have “order.”

Who was the Orderer of the order?

### From “Kind” to “Kind”

The Bible teaches that God made living organisms each after its “kind.” Recall Virchow’s statement that every cell originates from another cell like it. The “creation-according-to-kind” principle is stressed no fewer than ten times in Genesis 1. The Hebrew word for “kind” (*min*) is a comprehensive term, broader than the more prolific “species.” A “species” generally is defined as a group of similar creatures that can cross breed and produce a fertile offspring. The falcon is designated as a “kind” in Leviticus 11:14, yet there are more than forty species of falcons.

The term “kind” represents segments of biological organisms that are separated by unbridgeable gaps that no evolutionist can supply. Charles Darwin acknowledged that this is “the most serious objection which can be urged against the theory” of evolution (1859, 313).

It is commonly claimed that the evidence was sketchy in Darwin’s day, but now it is different. Wrong. There are fossils representing some two hundred fifty million species in the various museums of the world, and the “missing links” are still missing. The evidence is even more pronounced than in Darwin’s day.

Professor Simpson confessed that there is a “regular absence of transitional forms” in the fossil record (1944, 107). The late Stephen J. Gould of Harvard acknowledged that there exists “precious little in the way of intermediate forms,” and the “transitions between major groups are characteristically abrupt” (1977, 24).

Mark Ridley, a professor of zoology at Oxford University, wryly noted that “no real evolutionist, whether gradualist or punctuationist, uses the fossil record as evidence in favor of the theory of evolution as opposed to special creation” (1981, 831).

Evolution is a story of “gaps,” not “links”—of “questions,” not “answers.”

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# THE PLEDGE

by Trevor Major

Every one used to assume that “virgin” and “young person of marriageable age” meant the same thing. A white wedding gown touted the bride’s purity, and nothing less was expected of the groom. Today, a young person dare not proclaim his or her virginity for fear of becoming the object of endless teasing and put downs. The intellectual elite think that “saving oneself for marriage” is quaint and unrealistic. Outspoken critics of abstinence programs promote sexual freedom and scoff at the sanctity of marriage.

These attacks on chastity are not doing anybody any good. They aren’t making us healthier, happier, or wealthier. More importantly, they fail the test of God’s Word (Psa. 12:6). The Bible portrays sex as a special gift to be treasured and safeguarded, opened on our wedding night, and only ever shared with our husband or wife (1 Cor. 6:9; Heb. 13:4; Jude 7).

We could blame chastity’s hard times on the usual suspects: lack of good parenting, a vacuum of sound moral teaching in our schools, and the influence of popular culture. There are other trends in our society as well. For instance, we’re waiting longer before we get married. There’s nothing wrong with that. In fact, people who marry at an early age have the odds stacked against them. But still, it’s a real challenge to stay chaste for so long. No wonder Paul gave this advice about the unmarried: “if they cannot exercise self-control, let them marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion” (1 Cor. 7:9).

How can young people fight this battle? No doubt prayer (Php. 4:6), Bible study (2 Tim. 2:15), wise choice

of friends (1 Cor. 15:33), and involved parents (Eph. 6:4) are all part of the mix. In addition, there are now several tools designed to keep the commitment foremost on a day-to-day, hour-to-hour basis. One is a chastity ring—a little reminder to say “I don’t” before “I do.” Another is the “True Love Waits” chastity pledge card. Millions of young people have signed these cards since they were first developed and published in the early 1990s.

Like virginity itself, these pledge programs have come under attack. A widely-circulated claim is that they just don’t work: a large majority of teens fail to honor their pledges. But there’s a lot more to this picture. One huge study of adolescent health reveals that young women who make virginity pledges are less likely to have a child out of wedlock compared to those who don’t. The same study also reveals that pledge-takers tend to delay sexual activity, have fewer sexual partners, and are less likely to marry as teens.

Another recent report claimed that pledge-breakers were more likely to engage in risky sexual behavior, which increased their odds of catching some nasty disease or other. This claim received widespread attention for “proving” once again that abstinence programs are a failure and do more harm than good. NBC’s *Today Show*, CBS’s *60 Minutes*, and all the usual media outlets repeated this slur. In point of fact, the report was extremely biased: the researchers hand-picked a tiny group of misbehaving pledge-breakers and concluded, not surprisingly, that they were taking huge risk with their health. Meanwhile, they totally ignored the fact that pledgers as a whole are much less likely to engage in any kind of sexual behavior than

their non-pledging friends.

The fact is, teens who commit to abstaining from sex live healthier, happier lives. But it’s not just a matter of good consequences. The Christian teen’s commitment to sexual purity is grounded ultimately on a commitment to a “pure religion” be keeping him- or herself “unspotted from the world” (Jam. 1:27).

Research on chastity pledges has shown that they work best in the absence of peer pressure. In our Good News for Youth program over the next few weeks, we will hear more about sex, dating, and marriage. Our young people will be given an opportunity to sign their own pledge cards. Teens, as you sign these cards, please keep the following points in mind:

- This is a private, personal commitment between you and God.
- Do not sign the pledge merely because your friends and people around you are signing the pledge.
- Determine to keep the promise even if others make fun of virginity and flaunt their sexual “liberty.”
- Abstain from *any* kind of sexual act.





# INTELLIGENT DESIGN & THE ORIGIN OF LIFE (Part 2)

by Rex Banks

## Specified Complexity

Simple illustrations can often clarify important ideas. Hopefully the following illustration involving a keyboard and a cat will help explain the concept of *specified complexity*, a concept which is central to understanding the origin and development of life.

### Case one

Suppose we came home to find the letters “i” and “h” (“ih”) on the computer screen with Fluffy the cat sleeping alongside the keyboard. Consisting of just two letters this sequence is short or *simple*. It is the opposite of what we mean here by “complex” (below). Additionally, these two letters do not conform to any specified recognisable pattern. For example, they do not spell out a word found in the dictionary. Because these two letters do not reproduce an independently given pattern (eg a pattern found in a dictionary), they are said to lack specification. Thus the sequence “ih” lacks both complexity and specification. We could easily conclude that the sequence was produced by Fluffy’s jumping upon the keyboard.

### Case two

Nor would it be difficult to believe that Fluffy’s keyboard capers over a week could produce a *complex* (rather than simple) sequence of hundreds or thousands of random letters conforming to no independently given pattern (eg the sequence jkhgdrkjylhbfkhfjy etc). Unlike the two letter sequence in case one, this string consists of thousands of letters and is thus designated “complex” rather than “simple.” This particular string of letters is but one of an almost infinite number of possible sequences, but cats jumping on keyboards will produce *some* sequence so why not this one?

### Case three

Next, it would not be difficult to believe that Fluffy could produce a sequence of letters which is *simple* as in case one, but also *specified*. In this context a *specified* sequence is simply one which conforms to independently given pattern. For example, consider the sequence “h” and “i” (“hi”). Our colloquial dictionary defines “hi” as a form of popular greeting and therefore this sequence conforms to an independently given pattern (ie a dictionary definition). However, while this sequence contains *specification*, it is much too short to contain *complexity*. Again we would not rule out the possibility that this was a random arrangement

produced by our frisky feline jumping upon the keyboard.

### Case four

There is a final scenario involving specification and complexity to consider. Suppose we returned home to find a sequence of letters and spaces on the screen beginning with the sequence *To my beloved wife on Valentine’s Day* and ending with the sequence *Your loving husband*. In between these opening and closing sequences, sixteen lines of letters and spaces follow the sequence found in Robert Burns’ poem “A Red Red Rose” (“O my Luve’s like a red, red rose That’s newly sprung in June” etc). This sequence of letters and spaces is both *specified and complex*. It conforms to an independently given pattern and it is made up of hundreds of letters and spaces. We have here an example of *complex, specified information* (CSI) and the question before us is this: “Do cats jumping upon keyboards produce such information?” This is part of a larger question, namely “Do random, unguided processes produce CSI?” If we are committed to *following the evidence wherever it leads*, we will readily accept the conclusion of ID proponent **William A. Dembski** that “pure chance, entirely unsupplemented and left to its own devices, is incapable of generating CSI” (**Intelligent Design**). Yes, experience tells us that pure chance “can generate complex unspecified information, and (that) chance can generate noncomplex specified information” but observation, experience and experimentation confirm that “(what) chance cannot generate is information that is both complex and specified” (ibid).

Observation, experience and experimentation confirm that chance working upon matter cannot give rise to CSI. Complicated formulae written in chalk upon a blackboard are not generated by the chalk or the blackboard. In this case, the chalk and blackboard act as *carriers* of the CSI, but experience tells us that the CSI is the product of intelligence. It is possible to reproduce Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason in semaphore or Morse Code, but experience tells us that while flags may *carry* such CSI they cannot *generate* it. An intelligent agent familiar with Kant’s Treatise and skilled in semaphore is required. Chalk and blackboards, ink and paper, electronic “dots” and “dashes” *carry* CSI, but blackboards, paper and electrical activity do not *generate* CSI. In each case, CSI is independent of the material base (eg chalk, ink, paper). Uniform experience teaches us that *intelligence* is required to generate CSI.

## CSI and DNA

Since living organisms are constructed according to an “algorithm” or “instruction manual” (DNA), origin of life research is essentially an investigation into the origin of CSI within the genetic code. This being the case, researchers today must confront issues which never occurred to 19th century apologists for evolution - issues which have become increasingly complex as information theory has taught us more and more about the quantification and storage of data.

Information specialists point out that the information *content* of a particular arrangement is measured by the smallest number of instructions required to spell out this arrangement. The greater the complexity of a particular arrangement, the greater the number of instructions needed to specify this arrangement and it's important to keep this in mind when discussing the informational content of DNA. Molecular biologists and those best equipped to appreciate the key role of information in a multitude of cellular processes search for superlatives to explain the staggering volume and complexity of the information transfer involved in these processes. *Bill Gates* was understating the case when he likened DNA to a “computer program, but far, far more advanced than any software we've ever created.” Evolutionist *Richard Dawkins* says:

“There is enough storage capacity in the DNA of a single lily seed or a single salamander sperm to store the Encyclopedia Britannica 60 times over. Some species of the unjustly called ‘primitive’ amoebas have as much information in their DNA as 1,000 Encyclopedia Britannicas” (**The Blind Watchmaker**).

Creationist **Werner Gitt**, Director of the German Federal Institute of Physics and Technology says:

“DNA molecules contain the highest known packing density of information. This exceedingly brilliant storage method reaches the limit of the physically possible, namely down to the level of single molecules” (**In the Beginning was Information**).

In his **Not By Chance!**, Physicist **Dr Lee Spetner**, a specialist in information and communication theory, has the following:

“The genome can hold a lot of information... The genome of a mammal has from two to four billion. If you were to print those symbols in a book in ordinary type, the book for a bacterium would have about a thousand pages. The symbols for a mammal

would fill two thousand volumes - enough to take up a library shelf the length of a football field! All this information is in the tiny chromosomes of each cell... If all the copies of the DNA in all the cells of your body were straightened and laid end to end they would be about 50 billion kilometres long! That's long enough to reach from the earth to beyond our solar system. Light would take about two days to travel the length of all DNA molecules in your body!”

The genome does indeed “hold a lot of (complex specified) information” and ID proponents point out that since life and CSI are inseparable, the distinction between the source of information and the medium of information is very important for origin-of-life studies. Functioning as “an algorithm or instruction manual, for building a living (organism),” DNA *carries* a vast amount of CSI, but like chalk, blackboards and flags, the materials which make up DNA do not possess intelligence. Moreover, DNA is not alive and it is not information itself. The inescapable fact is that wherever CSI is found and the source of that CSI identifiable, that source is known to be pre-existent intelligence. There are no known exceptions. In view of that fact that there is no known example of CSI in the absence an organizing intelligence, ID proponents argue that intelligent causation best explains the source of CSI in biological systems.

**Gitt** points out that “There is no known natural law through which matter can give rise to information, neither is any physical process or material phenomenon known that can do this.” **Gitt** states this as one of 23 information theorems and concludes:

“After many talks by the author at colleges and universities, both at home and abroad, no researcher could mention one single counter example (to these theorems). In one case someone said that it might be possible that one of these theorems could be negated a few million years in the future, when a counter example may be found. My answer was that it was possible, as in the case of all natural laws. However, even if one or more of the theorems could be nullified by a counter example after a few million years, we still have to accept them and live with them now.”

**Dembski** reminds us that “Many special sciences have already developed...methods for (drawing a distinction between intelligent causes and undirected natural causes) – notably forensic science, artificial intelligence, cryptography, archaeology and the search for extra-terrestrial intelligence.” **Dembski** uses the movie **Contact** by way of example. In this film, the **SETI** (Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) researchers detect a series of 1126 beats and pauses representing the prime numbers up to 101. Understandably,

*continued on page 15*



# SABBATH OR THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK?

by Dave Bell

In this essay I will be arguing that the Sabbath day law has been replaced and therefore the authorised day of worship under the christian dispensation is the first day of the week (Sunday). In order to prove this proposition true I will be looking at three things: [1] implication, [2] the differing covenants, and [3] an apostolic example we are enjoined to follow.

## [1] Explicit statements always imply other statements.

One argument that the Sabbath argument uses is that we are to keep the Sabbath day since there is no explicit statement given in the Bible that mandates a change in the observance of the sabbath day. This is true, no one will find an explicit statement that says: "Thou shalt worship God on the first day of the week." It is on this that the Sabbath keepers rest their case. I contend, however, that this is a very weak basis to rest such a case on. Consider for a moment that if we apply this line of reasoning to the entire Bible then we would find that none of the Bible would apply to any person now living on the earth. Think for a moment, where is there to be found in all scripture an explicit, direct command bound on any living person by name.? You will not find one, therefore by parity of sabbatarian reasoning on this point no one is amenable to any explicit law, command, or example since they are not explicitly bound on anyone by name. This on its own shows us the fallaciousness of such reasoning.

Those then who argue in this way forget the fact that God, in His word, has made explicit statements and these explicit statements imply other statements. Further, we are expected to only draw conclusions which are warranted by the TOTAL evidence, that is both the explicit statement, and what that explicit statement implies, as well as all other verses in scripture on that subject, (the total context.) Therefore we are neither to outrun the evidence nor are we to suppress any evidence by leaving it out of the total context of scripture. This is fallacious at best, but dishonest at worst if indeed it is deliberate.

We know, for instance, that that the explicit "all people" in scripture implies you and me specifically. It is only by implication or inference that we do know that this is the case since my name and yours are not explicitly mentioned. Further God has given us a mind through which we can reason from the explicit to the implicit by drawing true inferences from the explicit statements. From this, I suggest that those who argue that there is no explicit statement in scripture which tells us to meet on the first day of the week are totally ignoring the law of inference or implication. If we concede the point then it follows that there is nothing implicitly taught in scripture which could be held as doctrine binding on people today, Sabbatharians however say that there is at least one doctrine that is binding on all people today, the keeping of the sabbath, thus they have already conceded that implicit teaching exists. Further if one teaches that only explicit teaching is correct then that one disqualifies Jesus from being the son of God

## What is implication or implicit teaching?

When we say that every proposition is taught implicitly by explicit statements in the Bible we are saying that it is impossible for the given statements to be true yet the proposition which is implied is false. (Assuming that we have reasoned correctly.) If we say x implies y then we are saying at the same time that it is impossible for proposition x to be true but proposition y to be false. The second must be true if the first is true. The first proposition is a premise and the second proposition is a conclusion.

## An example.

Let us take two explicit statements: [1] The coin is in my hand. [2] My hand is in my pocket. What is it that these two statements imply? We now have a third proposition: [3] The coin is in my pocket. Now this third proposition is not explicit yet if the first two are true the conclusion (the third proposition) cannot be false. Surely we can see that it would be a grave error to say that the coin is not in my

pocket simply because there is no explicit statement saying that it is. We can infer the third proposition from the first two. The argument here is valid by Modus Ponens which in short form is this:

If p then q  
p  
therefore q.

We can see from this that it is indeed an error of reasoning to say that because there is no explicit statement there is therefore no teaching involved that can be bound on any person. Yet it is just this argument that is used to say that one should not worship on the first day of the week, or that the sabbath has not been explicitly abolished.

## Another example:

In Acts 2:37-38 after Peter had preached the first gospel sermon the Jews cried out: "what shall we do?" Peters reply was: "Repent and be baptised." This is the explicit statement, yet when we read the total evidence of the plan of salvation we can see that hearing, believing, and confessing are implied in Peters statement since all are essential to salvation.

We are then to note here that what is taught implicitly is bound on all people living today not because we infer it, but because God has implied it Himself in the explicit statements He has uttered through His Spirit. It is of paramount importance that we understand this point since if we do not then we will fall into the error the sabbatarian argument has on this point of implicit teaching.

It seems appropriate here to mention **ambiguity**. This occurs when one term is used in more than one way thus changing the meaning of a proposition. In the sabbatarian argument the term "**law**" is referred to in two ways. [1] the "moral law" which includes the sabbath day since it was part of the ten commandments, and [2] "**ceremonial**", which refers to animal sacrifices, feast days and suchlike.

## [2] On covenants.

The Bible itself does not make this distinction thus to use the terms in this ambiguous way is illegitimate. The term "law" refers to the Jewish covenant in total, and this covenant including its whole law was to be repealed. Consider what Moses says in (Deuteronomy 4:8), "What great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this **whole law** which I am setting before you today?" Here Moses is implicitly saying that this law belonged specifically to the Jewish nation and no other. This can be seen in the rhetorical question he asked. It is also in an interrogative form which means that the matter is put forth in the strongest form Moses could use. It is equivalent to saying: "We all know that no other nation has a god so near to them as our God is to us, and no other nation has this law, nor anything that approximates it." Then in (Exodus 34:27-28), God said to Moses: "Write down the words for in accordance with these words, **I have made a covenant with you and with Israel**. So he was there with the Lord for forty days and forty nights, he did not eat bread or drink water. And he **wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten commandments**."

Now it is true that Moses was given other precepts and instructions that were added to the ten commandments, and these as well as the law constituted the entire Jewish covenant God made with Israel, He made it with no one else either individual or nation. From this, the proposition that the law was nailed to the cross implies the **whole law**, the ten commandments included, was repealed. Further the sabbath day law was explicitly included in the words of that covenant thus it is implied beyond doubt that the sabbath day law was rescinded along with the rest of the Jewish covenant. Therefore there is nothing that remains of that covenants specific components which applied only to the Jews. The principles, however, did come across into the new covenant.

### More about the covenants.

There are three types of covenant that God made with man. [1] individual, as with Abraham, Adam, Noah and other patriarchs. [2] National, as with the Jewish nation and [3] Universal with all mankind now living. From this we can see the progression of God's plan of salvation for

all peoples. Further it is implied in these several covenants that each covenant superceded or replaced the the other that preceded it. Thus the national covenant replaced the individual covenant, then the universal covenant of Christ replaced the national Jewish covenant. The argument is this: If the national covenant replaced the individual covenants of the patriarchs, then the universal covenant replaced the national covenant of the Jews. The national covenant did replace the individual covenants of the patriarchs, therefore the universal covenant did replace the national covenant of the Jews. Again this is a valid argument by Modus Ponens;

If p then q.  
p.  
therefore q.

Further this argument is sound if the premises are true, and I contend that they are indeed true when you look at the total context regarding the several covenants. Part of that evidence is found comes from Moses himself where he states in (Deuteronomy 18:15) "The Lord your God will raise up a prophet like me from among your countrymen, you shall listen to him." This is echoed by Peter in (Acts 3:22). Moses was a lawgiver and mediator for the Jewish nation, Christ is the lawgiver and mediator of the universal covenant. Thus the national covenant was replaced by the universal covenant and we are to "Hear Christ, not Moses."

Therefore, in order to understand what is happening we must discriminate between the covenants God made. If we do not then we will not be able to understand either what our duty is or what law we are amenable to.

Now it is admitted that there are things each covenant has in common, for example, obedience, faith, law keeping etc. However, each covenant is both distinct and complete in itself. It is also well to note here that the language of one covenant can explain the language of another covenant. But it is the covenant **we are under** which dictates the law we are amenable to at all times. Thus all the covenants God made either individually, nationally, or universally were made only for the individual(s), nation(s) that it was given to and to no one else, unless He extended it to them.

One fallacy of the sabbatarian argument is simply that it does not distinguish between the national and the universal covenants. Bound up with this fallacy is the fallacy that mistakes similarity for identity. Each covenant does have things in common, but the sabbath argument concludes, therefore they must be identical. This just is not the case. Why? Because they do not require the same acts of obedience, nor do they promise the same things. Paul states in (Romans 9:4-5): "Who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption of sons, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the temple service, and the promises whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever, Amen." Here we have law, covenants and promises that were peculiar to Israel, therefore the duties required in these contracts were not obligatory (bound) on any other persons or nations.

Language in one covenant may explain duties under another, but they are restricted to only those features which are common to the two covenants. The laws of each covenant are complete in themselves yet they are similar in those features in which each covenant is alike similar **but not identical**.

### An example.

We all know that in all matters of law we are amenable to the law under which we are living in the country we are living in. Suppose the speed limit in one country is 50 k.p.h. and in another country it is 70 k.p.h. We get caught doing 70 k.p.h. which is the limit in our country but not in the one we are on holiday in. We try to defend ourselves by protesting that it is "legal" to do 70 k.p.h. in our country (under our covenant or contract.) Will it do any good? We know it won't since we are now amenable to another law under another covenant or contract. The question is, how do we understand this principle in all things except the Biblical? The principle is the same, (those breaking the speed limit will be prosecuted) the laws are similar one is 50 k.p.h. the other is 70 k.p.h. but they are **not identical. This is how it is with the several covenants of the Bible also**.

It must also be noted that in New

Testament times there were many Gentile congregations that had no knowledge of the law of Moses. These were entirely dependent on the teachings of the inspired Apostles and others who taught them the Gospel of Christ. We too learn from Christ and the inspired apostolic writings what the terms of Christ's covenant are, that is every precept we are expected to observe. "This is My beloved son, listen to Him," is how God from heaven ordained His Son and His Son's covenant with all men living today. (Mark 9:7).

Notice also Paul's statement in (I Corinthians 9:20-21) "And to the Jews I became a Jew, that I might win the Jews, to those under the law, as under the law **though not myself under the law**, that I might win those under the law, to those without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God, **but under the law of Christ**, that I might win those without law. Paul here is saying that he could be indifferent to everything else, **except the law of Christ**. The form of the law, he may or may not observe, it was to Paul a matter of indifference, a question of expediency, but as to morals and the principles of truth, they were to be found in the law of Christ. This also explains why he and other apostles went into the synagogues on the sabbath day, it was not to observe the sabbath day, rather it was because that is where the Jews were gathered and thus the opportunity to teach them the truth of the new covenant. Paul became a "Jew" on the sabbath in order to win the Jews.

The covenant made with Israel on Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:1-24) cannot be denied yet some will say that this was not a covenant. they do, however, in saying this show that they are ignorant of what a covenant is. A covenant is a contract or treaty made between two parties. It has in it the contract laws, and other things the two parties agree to. When God made the covenant with the Jewish nation, it was anticipated in the covenant God made with Abraham (Exodus 6:3-8) God then made a covenant with the Jews on Mount Sinai in His own name "Jehovah." No former covenant had been completed in that name (Exodus 34:27-28). By referring to the giving of the law on Sinai we can see clearly that it is in the form of a covenant. It was given to the Jews as a guide and a test of obedience, and it was sealed with blood and bound on them. Further it was

not entirely religious, for the purpose of God in preparing the nation to be ready to receive Christ when He should come into the world necessitated that a government should exist and that by means of a national religion He would be able to give His universal revelation to the world concerning His will for all people. Thus the law combines the the purpose of those covenants of land and flesh in order that the world may be prepared for Christ. (See Galatians 3:8, 16-25). This covenant was temporary in nature.

Now in (Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 8:6-13, 9:15, Matthew 28:25), the new covenant made by Christ was sealed with His own blood, and it was this covenant that was in view during the former dispensations. Every former offering, law, and service foretold of the coming redemption, and every prophet, priest, and king typified the coming of Christ. As such, there are fundamental differences in the covenant God made with Israel and the covenant Christ made with all people.

- [1] There is a change in the priesthood (Hebrews 7:11-12).
- [2] Because of this there was a change in the law (Hebrews 7:12)
- [3] There was a change in the limitation of the covenant (Deuteronomy 4:7-8) Which we discussed earlier.
- [4] There are different promises in the new covenant (Hebrews 8:6)
- [5] The law was written on tablets of stone, but the new covenant is put into the hearts and minds of all who belong to it.
- [6] The old covenant was formal and outward, the new is inward and spiritual.
- [7] All who have a place in the new covenant shall first "know the Lord," Jeremiah makes this statement. Under the old covenant a Jew was born into it. the Hebrew writer quotes this again in (Hebrews 8). In the service of God under the law of Moses this could never have been said to be true.
- [8] Finally on this point, they differ in respect to form and place of worship.

In (Colossians 2:13-17) Paul settles the question of the law's continuance as a rule

by which Christians should live. It was nailed to the cross. this implies that the Mosaic law was finished. This necessarily includes the sabbath day law since it was a part of the covenant law. The explicit statement is "The law of commandments was done away with being nailed to the cross of Christ." (Jeremiah 31) predicts this by saying that the covenant to come would not be like the Jewish covenant. Thus we can say with certainty that the old covenant was repealed in its entirety including the sabbath day law.

Now we come to the question itself, was the sabbath day law changed to the first day of the week.? My contention is that it was and that it is implicitly affirmed in scripture.

**An Apostolic example.**

When dealing with scripture we are to realise that the teaching of the New Testament is revealed by explicit statement, which as we have said implies other statements. We derive these from necessary inference. We are also taught by Apostolic example it is to this that we will turn to now.

In (Acts 20:7) We read: "And upon the first day of the week, when we gathered to break bread, Paul spoke with them intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight." Now this is a specific statement of an apostolic example. This then raises two important questions. [1] Are Christians obligated to follow this example? and [2] Are Christians obligated (bound by this example) to eat the Lord's Supper every first day of the week? In other words can a Christian partake of the Lord's Supper on some other day of the week (e.g., the sabbath day).

- [A] Jesus Himself instituted the Lord's Supper (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-23.)
- [B] He also observed that supper with the apostles before His death.
- [C] The instituting of that supper was not on the first day of the week, it was on the sabbath day.
- [D] However, there is **no record** of the Lord's Supper ever being observed by the church on the sabbath day in all the New Testament.



[E] The sabbath is not the day on which the Lord died, nor is it the day He was raised from the dead.

[F] On the day that he instituted, Jesus explicitly stated that He would not drink the fruit of the vine **until that day when He would drink it new with them in His Father's kingdom (church)** (Matthew 26:29).

[G] The New Testament ties the Lord's supper to the "Lord's Day." Also When christians partake of the Supper it involves the proclamation of Christ's death, resurrection, and second coming. (I Corinthians 11:26).

[H] In (Acts 2:24), Peter explicitly states that christ could not be held by death, plus the fact that He arose from the grave **proved** that He was indeed the Son of God (Romans 1:4).

[I] From this we can see that the partaking of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week is appropriate, since it was on the first day of the week that Christ rose from the grave.

[J] From these things therefore there are implications that arise concerning the partaking of the Lord's supper on the first day of the week. These are as follows:

[1] The death of Christ was according to the eternal purpose of God.

[2] Christ arose from the dead on the first day of the week.

[3] Christ appeared to many people after His resurrection.

[4] Christ then ascended back into heaven.

[5] He is there now reigning as king with absolute authority.

[6] He is coming again and at that time He will judge all people (I Corinthians 15:1-8, cf 11:26).

[K] It is also clearly implied that the partaking of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week is an integral purpose of all christians assembling together every Sunday.

[L] In the passage before us the disciples came together to "break bread," that is to

partake of the Lord's Supper.

[M] This purpose is attested to and implied by Paul in (I Corinthians 11).

[N] The two passages (Acts 20:7, and I Corinthians 11:20), are then witnessed by (I Corinthians 16:2), where it is stated: "On the first day of the week, lay by in store as you have been prospered, so that no collections be made when I come."

[O] the expression, "the first day of the week, in the Greek, is kata mian sabbatou, which means on the first day of the sabbath week, (sunday). Further the word kata means every, so christians are under obligation to meet every first day of the week. The implication then of the two scriptures is that all christians are to assemble on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper and to lay by in store of their means.

[P] Therefore when one honestly considers all of this evidence in (Acts 20:7, I Corinthians 11:20, and I Corinthians 16:2), then the only logical conclusion that follows from the evidence is: that on the first day of every week christians are to assemble together in order to at the very least, partake of the Lord's Supper and to give as they have been prospered.

[Q] Note that this is in parity with with the commandment given to the Jews to "remember the sabbath day to keep it holy." However, we have seen that the commandments have been nailed to the cross (Colossians 2:14). This in turn clearly implies that no christian is under the specific obligation to observe the sabbath day. As we have seen similarity does not mean identity, and the law under one covenant does not apply exactly in the specific laws of another covenant.

[R] When one looks at the total context on this issue one can only infer that the meeting on the first day of the week for all christians is in the form of a general command implicit in the teaching. Notice what Paul says in (I Corinthians 16:1-2) "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia so do you also. On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." Therefore the members of the Lord's church were **commanded** to put their contributions into the treasury every first day of the

week. This implies that there was to be a meeting every first day of the week and that that assembly had a basic purpose for meeting, that being to partake of the Lord's Supper and put their contribution into the church treasury (Acts 20:7, I Corinthians 11:20, 16:1-2). The only logical conclusion one can draw from this is that christians are to meet every first day of the week to partake of the Lord's supper.

[S] Further this is the **only day** on which that supper is to be taken. There is absolutely no authority in scripture for the Lord's Supper to be taken on any other day (Including the sabbath). And whatever is done without Biblical authority is sinful (II John 9-11, I Corinthians 4:6, II Chronicles 15:1-15.)

### To summarise these things,

[1] We can see that if the early christians were commanded to contribute of their means every first day of the week.

[2] If that contribution was made while the church was assembled.

[3] If another basic purpose of that assembly was to partake of the Lord's Supper. Then.

[A] the early christians were commanded to partake of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week. further there is no Biblical authority for the Lord's Supper to be eaten on any other day including the sabbath. Therefore the only authority given to the Lord's church when to meet is on the first day of every week. That is the only implication one can infer from the total context. This further implies that **the sabbath day meeting was abolished, as Paul says, by it being nailed to the cross.**

[B] Notice also that in (Acts 20:7) Paul and the rest of the congregation waited seven days **then** came together and remained together for quite some time thus it was not a momentary short assembly. The perfect participle indicates that they came and remained together and while they were there Paul preached to them. The expression in Greek is klasai arton (to break bread). Klasai is the first aorist infinitive of klao ("I break.") The infinitive in Greek is used just as it is in English and that is to denote the purpose of the action of the principal verb. The original dative force of the infinitive expressing that for which anything is done.

# DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SOUL & THE SPIRIT by Kevin Moore

[C] Therefore it can be seen in (Acts 20:7) there was a purpose stated by the infinitive “on the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread.” When we add (I Corinthians 11:20) it is very clearly implied that the Christians were to come together for this basic purpose.

[D] Thus it is significant that Christ rose from the grave on the first day of the week and it is because of this that the churches in Galatia and Corinth were commanded to assemble on the first day of the week to lay by in store and partake of the Lord's Supper, A third apostolic example in this is preaching.

[E] Therefore it is clearly implied that (1) The disciples were under obligation (bound) to meet every first day of the week. (2) A basic purpose of that assembly was to have the Lord's Supper thus they were in turn bound to take the Lord's supper and also to give of their means.

Therefore by clear implication three things can now be predicated;

[1] All Christians are to meet every first day of the week.

[2] The first day of the week is the **only day** authorised in which the church can meet with the approval of God.

[3] This clearly shows that the example implied in this apostolic example is not only bound on all men living today under the universal covenant, but that it is permanent, that it is in force until Christ comes again.

One can reach this inescapable conclusion only by reasoning correctly and drawing only the conclusion drawn from the evidence that is warranted, and by using implication correctly.

The word “spirit” is translated from the Greek *pneuma* and the Hebrew *ruah*, and is used in different ways in the Bible, including: wind (John 3:8), breath (2 Thess. 2:8), both righteous and wicked spiritual beings (Matt. 8:16; Heb. 1:14), the Holy Spirit (Matt. 4:1), and the inner man (Acts 7:59; 17:16). With reference to human beings, it is the part of us that is not subject to physical death, that is made in the image of God, and will live forever. Since man is created in God's image (Gen. 1:27), and God is spirit (John 4:24), and spirit does not have flesh and bones (Luke 24:39), there must be more to man than just his physical nature. Man has a spirit (1 Cor. 2:11; Acts 7:59; 17:16), which comes from and returns to God (Heb. 12:9, 23; James 2:26; John 19:30; Eccl. 12:7).

The word “soul” is translated from the Greek *psuchê* and the Hebrew *nephesh*, and is a generic term with various meanings depending on the context in which it is used. For example, how would you define the English word “bark”? It depends on whether you are speaking about the ‘bark’ of a dog or the ‘bark’ of a tree. Similarly, the definitions of the words *psuchê* and *nephesh* depend on the context in which they are used. Biblical usage includes: a synonym for “person” (Acts 2:41; 1 Pet. 3:20) or

other living creatures (Gen. 1:20-25; Rev. 16:3); the physical life-force of both animals and humans (Psa. 78:50; Lev. 24:17-18); and a synonym for the inner man or immortal spirit (Matt. 10:28; 16:26; Acts 2:27; Rev. 6:9; Jas. 1:21; 1 Pet. 1:22). Note the parallelism in Psalm 77:2-3: “My *soul* refused to be comforted . . . my *spirit* was overwhelmed” (cf. Psa. 143:4-7; Luke 1:46-47).

What appears to be a distinction between the soul and spirit in the Bible may simply be a literary device used to emphasize a particular point. For example, Hebrews 4:12 is probably not trying to make a distinction between the “soul and spirit” any more than there is a discernible difference between the “thoughts” and “intentions” of the heart. The point is that the word of God is capable of cutting through to the most inner and secret places of a person's being. Instead of making a theological argument on the nature of man in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, it seems that Paul is simply offering a fervent prayer that the whole person be preserved blameless. Compare Matthew 22:37. At the same time, since the words “soul” and “spirit” are used in a variety of ways, there is no difficulty in considering a distinction between the two as long as the reality of neither is denied.

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# MODERNITY

by Edwin Jones

Modernity is a rather curious word. When I preached a series of lessons about it recently, many thought I made it up. The word, however, is quite real. Not only is it real, it describes a condition that may offer the strongest challenge ever given to Christianity. We would thus be well served to investigate this thing called Modernity?

In his book, *Dining With The Devil*, **Os Guinness** does an excellent job of presenting the disturbing implications of Modernity as a challenge to Christian thought. As Guinness explains the concept, it is distinct from both Modernism and Postmodernism. The promise of Modernism, with its hope that man could create a utopia, gave way to the pessimism of Postmodernism and its grudging acceptance of human limitations. Modernity, however, has seemingly found away around the pessimism of our human limitations to create a self-confident, consumer driven, party like atmosphere.

We have arrived at a place in modern culture where consumerism, industrialization, secularism, individualism, and telecommunications have combined to dramatically change our world. In fact, change is now the name of the game. The modern church growth movement and the mega church phenomenon are vivid illustrations of how Modernity has adversely affected religion. Progress, so called, and the excitement of modern advances have captivated many. No longer is the Bible the chief resource of choice among many religious people. Gadgets, choreography, trendy methods, human wisdom, worldly credentials, marketing expertise, etc. map the road to success. Change is a must. Showtime rules!

How can plain, ordinary, biblical Christianity compete with all the hoopla of the age? When people are so seduced by the convenience, enjoyment, and razzmatazz of this present era, how

can the values of Christ get their due attention? These questions are far from being merely academic in nature; they address the all too real circumstances of everyday life. The saddest aspect of these realities is that many religious people have abandoned Christ for the glitz and glamour of Modernity.

Even among us, we find growing numbers of brethren getting on the bandwagon of Modernity so they might compete with the denominations for the affections of the crowd. As the trend continues, increased shallowness, decreased commitment, and a growing reliance on human productions will certainly follow.

The answer to the challenge is a difficult one for our modern culture to embrace. We must first accept that attracting seekers is of value only if we are attracting those who are seeking the Christ of Scripture. Remember, while Jesus was great at raising crowds, He was equally adept at dispersing them (cf. Jn. 6). He wanted everyone to have an opportunity to know what He offered, but He only wanted to continue with those who wanted to do things His way (Matt. 19: 16-22).

The largest numbers will never be attracted by the truth. The type of evangelistic motivation that naively suggests we can convert the world in one generation if only each member would convert one person per year, does not take notice of the reality of the narrow road (Matt. 7:13-14). Growth is not about mathematical wizardry, the latest greatest programs, polished personalities, clever mantras, or salesmanship driven schemes; growth is about preaching the true Gospel to facilitate real, heartfelt, sacrificial conversions (Lk. 9:23; Gal. 1:8-9).

In our flesh, we often prefer the look of a thing to the unseen things of

faith (cf. Gen. 3:6; I Jn. 2:15-17; II Cor. 4:16-18; 5:7). When, however, such things as reading the Bible and daily, sacrificial service lose their appeal, let it be understood that whatever replaces them is no longer Christianity. If we had to do without all our devices, programs, human credentials, conveniences, and climate-controlled comfort, how would we fare? How much have we too become dependant on the perks of Modernity?

A word of caution is, however, in order as we close. I do not at all intend to suggest that all modern things are evil. Quite the contrary, many recent advances can facilitate the Gospel in amazing ways. Avoiding these improvements for fear of where they might take us is a tactic of weakness, not worthy of the true spirit and power of Christ (II Tim. 4:7; Eph. 3:20). What I intend to suggest is that the will of Jesus must be given its due place in all we do.

Our modern sophistication is no substitute for truth. Experts in psychology and group dynamics are no substitute for a foundation of Scripture. Amazing gadgets and mind boggling advances are hollow if they are not employed by those who are first Christ-like. If we allow Modernity to shape us rather than Jesus, we are none of His (Rom. 8:9). "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it" (Ps.127:1a).



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...continued from page 8

this complex specified sequence is enough to convince the researchers that intelligence is at work, and Dembski's point is, that like many other scientific endeavours, the SETI programme makes sense only if CSI is identified as the product of intelligent causation. To conclude that CSI in DNA is the product of intelligent causation is simply to follow the available evidence where it leads. Conversely, the General Theory of Evolution runs counter to both human experience and reason. The late **Dr A. E Wilder-Smith**, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry explains:

"Evolution is... basically an attempt to explain the origin of life from matter and energy without the aid of know-how, concept, teleonomy, or exogenous (extra-material) information. It represents an attempt to explain the formation of the genetic code from the chemical components of DNA without the aid of a genetic concept (information) originating outside the molecules of the chromosomes" (**The Natural Sciences Know Nothing of Evolution**).

ID proponents point out that while molecules, sugars, amino acids, proteins and such like function as *carriers* of genetic information, all the available evidence indicates that these materials are no more capable of giving rise to CSI than chalk, blackboards and paper. They argue that *uniform experience* or *inference to the best explanation* points to *intelligence* as the source of CSI wherever it is found, including CSI within the genetic code. Finally, ID proponents make the important point that information in DNA is not just *similar to*, but rather *identical to* that found in computer codes or linguistic texts. In other words, the property of specified complexity or information content of the coding regions of DNA is the very same as that found in computer codes and linguistic texts.

*In part 3 we will discuss pre-biotic evolution and self-organization.*

## UNRELIABLE SCIENCE

by Brad Harrub

"Most published scientific research papers are wrong" (Kleiner, 2005). This shocking admission comes from work carried out by John Ioannidis, an epidemiologist who boldly asserts that there is a **less than 50% chance that the results of any randomly chosen scientific paper are true**. He indicates that "small sample sizes, poor study design, researcher bias, and selective reporting and other problems combine to make most research findings false" (see Kleiner, 2005). Ioannidis correctly maintains that replication of reported results is a critical component to distilling out error in science.

Sadly, society has been led to believe that we are not to question science. The popular media is quick to report new discoveries as "factual" even though the results have never been replicated or verified by another laboratory. Individuals would do well to be wary of findings until they have been independently replicated. As Kurt Kleiner, staff writer for *New Scientist*, observed:

Traditionally a study is said to be "statistically significant" if the odds are only 1 in 20 that the result could be pure chance. But in a complicated field where there are many potential hypotheses to sift through—such as whether a particular gene influences a particular disease—it is easy to reach false conclusions using this standard. If you test 20 false hypotheses, one of them is likely to show up as true, on average" (2005).

He went on to explain:

Odds get even worse for studies that are too small, studies that find small effects (for example, a drug that works for only 10% of patients), or studies where the protocol and endpoints are poorly defined, allowing **researchers to massage their conclusions after the fact**. Surprisingly, Ioannidis says another predictor of false findings is if a field is "hot," with many teams feeling pressure to beat the others to statistically significant findings (emp. added).

Given the humanistic climate in which we now find ourselves, and knowing that most researchers are anxious to silence God and disprove His existence, parents would be wise to inform their children of Ioannidis' findings. Scientific discoveries can be, and

often are, "massaged" to fit the current evolutionary dogma. Nevertheless, the inspired Word of God remains the ultimate standard of Truth.

### REFERENCE

Kleiner, Kurt (2005), "Most Scientific Papers are Probably Wrong," *New Scientist*, [Online], URL, <http://www.newscientist.com/channel/opinion/dn7915>.

## Psalms 131

**"O Lord, my heart is not proud  
Nor my eyes haughty**

**Nor do I involve myself in great matters  
Or in things too difficult for me**

**Surely I have composed and  
quieted my soul**

**Like a weaned child rests against  
his mother**

**My soul is like a weaned child within me**

**O Israel, hope in the Lord  
From this day on and forever"**

The heart of David which constantly yearned for God, to praise Him, glorify Him and honor Him, reveals itself in this beautiful Psalms. While short, it delivers a clear message of how David's heart trusts in God as that of a child for his/her parents.

As a parent, I have witnessed the miracle of birth with our first daughter. And then the Lord blessed us with another beautiful daughter later. Through the wonderful experience of watching our children grow, one of the most precious things I've observed is their total dependence and trust on us as parents.

A child trusts and depends on his/her parents alone. It's their entire security. Notice how David talks of his '*quieted and composed soul like a weaned child rests against his mother*'. A child's heart is innocent and rely heavily on parents for comfort, love and care.

The day that you let go FULLY and allow the all-powerful arms of the Lord to take care of you—will be the beginning of a blessed life. Why do you think David yearned for the Father so much? If you don't **hunger for righteousness**, if you don't **thirst for godly living**—you will **never** understand the *heart* of David.

—Ed