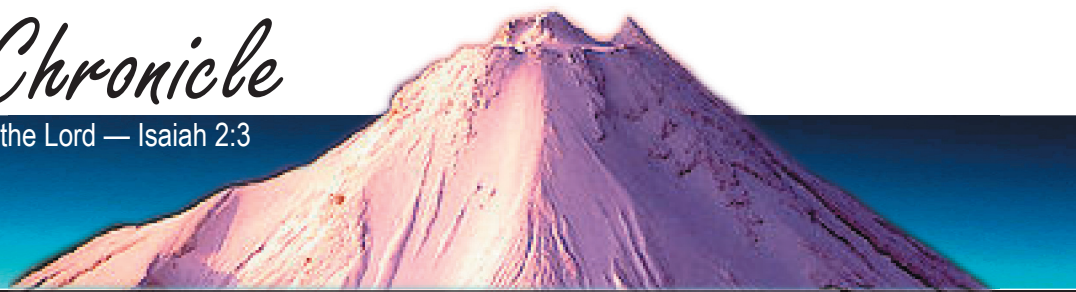


The Summit Chronicle

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



Issue 14 Vol 2

A monthly publication for the church of Christ worldwide

February 2009

Table of Content

- **THE CHRISTIAN WORLD VIEW, THE ATHEIST WORLDVIEW AND LOGIC**
pg 2 by Edwin Jones
- **KNOWING GOD**
pg 3 by Emmy Gillen
- **MATTHEW 24 (Part 1)**
pg 5 by Rex Banks
- **THE EXTRAORDINARY FAITH OF ORDINARY PEOPLE**
pg 8 by Kerry Cain
- **BE CAREFUL HOW YOU READ** pg 10 by Dave Bell
- **THE IMPORTANCE OF A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW**
pg 12 by Allan Turner
- **LIVING FOSSILS: EVOLUTION'S INNATE CIRCULAR REASONING**
pg 14 by Dave Miller

Contributing Writers for this Issue's Articles

Rex Banks • Dave Miller
Dave Bell • Edwin Jones
Kerry Cain • Allan Turner
Emmy Gillen

Scripture of the Month

"Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbour 'Go and come back and tomorrow I will give it', when you have it with you."

— Prov 3 27-28

Contact Us!

If you have any questions that you would like answered by any of our writers, please feel free to contact us via email on:
SummitChronicle@xtra.co.nz

Greetings brethren,

If you're new to *The Summit Chronicle*, we would like to extend a very warm welcome to you and your loved ones as we greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus!

Issue 14 is set to bring you—as is the tradition of *The Summit Chronicle*—powerful, faith-building articles from equally faithful and sound brethren.

Brother Edwin Jones sent us several excellent articles on "The World View" series which we will be running starting with this issue. The articles look at things from both the Christian and non-Christian perspectives and allows you to think on the various, yet crucial, differences between the two views. We also thank Allan Turner for his contributing article in this series.

The Summit Chronicle would also like to welcome onboard brother Dave Miller—someone we hold in high esteem as one of the most sound brothers in the entire church. He brings a whole array of articles bound to fortify your faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. Dave and his lovely wife Deb visited the New Plymouth congregation in what was a very memorable time for all of us. We were extremely built up as a result and look forward to having them back in Middle Earth sometime in the future, Lord willing.

One of our "national contributors" brother Rex Banks, starts a new series on *Matthew 24* which we trust you will enjoy reading over. If you've been reading the past issues of *The Summit Chronicle*, you would appreciate the depth and scholarly work of this man. He is an excellent writer who has contributed to the magazine since it's conception.

Kerry Cain, included for the first time in this issue of the SC, brings an excellent article on how God used ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things. Individuals

who didn't think much of themselves and yet God chose them to carry out His will. Inspirational and certainly makes you think. Especially if you've always thought that you need to be this hugely successful person who possesses great communication skills, command respect from people and just an all-rounder capable individual. Quite the opposite as you'll read. The article really shows us that what we think is miles different from what God thinks. In other words, His thoughts and ways are so much higher than ours and that He always chooses the humble of this world to work with and exalt for His purposes.

Dave Bell, another original contributor to the SC, brings us a wonderful article on the dangers of allowing liberal doctrine and teaching to influence our thinking. This article is much needed for all Christians today—to recognize that we can slowly slip into apostasy when we start to pay attention to liberal ideas that are a plague to the church that Jesus and the Apostles aggressively defended and protected from the wolves in sheep's clothing.

Last but not least, for the first time ever since *The Summit Chronicle* begun, we have a young person contributing and she is also the first sister-in-Christ to contribute! Emmy Gillen's beautiful words of admiration for the Lord will boost you spiritually!

We trust you will definitely be built up spiritually as you digest the spiritual bread that fills the soul. The Word of God is what gives us that nourishment from divine origin. Keep the faith and enjoy your reading!

In the service of the Most High God,

Jaracz Heather & Allan Fowell
Co-founders of The Summit Chronicle

THE CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW, THE ATHEIST WORLDVIEW, AND LOGIC

by Edwin Jones

Can the atheist present a logical reason how his worldview can account for the abstract laws of logic? I think not. But, the Christian world view can. The Christian worldview states that God is the author of truth, logic, physical laws, etc. Atheism maintains that physical laws are properties of matter, and that truth and logic are relative conventions (agreed upon principles). Is this logically defensible?

I present this outline in hopes of clarifying the issue and presenting, what I consider, an insurmountable problem of the atheistic worldview. I hesitate to state that this is a proof that God exists, but I think that it is evidence of the Absolute Nature of God.

This argument is adapted from the Transcendental Argument championed by Greg Bahnsen.

1. How does a Christian account for the laws of logic?

1. The Christian worldview states that God is absolute and the standard of truth.
2. Therefore, the absolute laws of logic exist because they reflect the nature of an absolute God.
 1. God did not create the laws of logic. They were not brought into existence since they reflect God's thinking. Since God is eternal, the laws of logic are too.
3. Man, being made in Gods image, is capable of discovering these laws of logic. He does not invent them.
4. Therefore, the Christian can account for the existence of the Laws of logic by acknowledging they originate from God and that Man is only discovering them.
5. Nevertheless, the atheist might say that in his answer is too simplistic and too convenient. It might be, but at least the Christian worldview can account for the existence of logic itself.

2. Examples of the laws of logic

1. Law of Identity: Something is what it is. Something that exists has a specific nature.
2. Law of Non-Contradiction: Something cannot be its self and not itself at the same time in the same way and in the same sense.
3. Law of Excluded Middle: a statement is either true or false. Thus the statement "A statement is either true or false" is either true or false.

3. How does the atheist account for the laws of logic?

1. If the Atheist states that the laws of logic are conventions (mutually agreed upon conclusions), then the laws of logic are not absolute because

The Tree



"But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

—Jeremiah 17:7-8

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the council of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord and in His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree firmly planted by streams of water which yields it's fruit in it's season and it's leaves does not wither and whatever he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so. They are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgement nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the Lord knows the way of the righteous but the way of the wicked will perish."

—Psalms 1:1-6

they are subject to “vote.”

2. The laws of logic are not dependent upon different peoples minds since people are different. Therefore, they cannot be based on human thinking since human thinking is often contradictory.
3. If the atheist states that the laws of logic are derived through observing natural principles found in nature, then he is confusing the mind with the universe.
 1. We discover laws of physics by observing and analyzing the behavior of things around us. The laws of logic are not the result of observable behavior of object or actions.
 1. For example, we do not see in nature that mething is both itself and not itself at the same time.
 1. Why? Because we can only observe a phenomena that exists, not one that does not exist. If something is not itself, then it doesn't exist. How then can the property of that non-existent thing be observed? It cannot.
 2. Therefore, we are not discovering a law of logic by observation, but by thought.
 2. Or, where do we observe in nature that something cannot bring itself into existence if it does not already exist?
 1. You cannot make an observation about how something does not occur if it does not exist. You would be, in essence, observing nothing at all and how can any laws of logic be applied to or derived from observing nothing at all?
 2. The laws of logic are conceptual realities. They only exist in the mind and they do not describe physical behavior of things since behavior is action and laws of logic are not descriptions of action, but of truth.
 1. In other words, laws of logic are not actions. They are statements about conceptual patterns of thought. Though one could say that a law of physics (i.e., the angle of reflection is equal to the angle of incidence) is a statement which is conceptual, it is a statement that describes actual physical and observable behavior. But, logical absolutes are not observable and do not describe behavior or actions of things since they reside completely in the mind.
 2. We do not observe the laws of logic occurring in matter. You don't watch an object NOT bring itself into existence if it doesn't exist. Therefore, no law of logic can be observed by watching nothing.
 4. If the atheist appeals to the scientific method to explain the laws of logic then he is using circular argumentation because the scientific method is dependent upon logic; that is, reasoned thought applied to observations.

KNOWING GOD

by Emmy Gillen

So this is no poetic verse with direct relevance to my life but a conviction I myself have felt personally and seen in so many around me and just want to share a few thoughts to those who read this in hope that it will draw you closer to God.

It seems for those of us who have grown up within some sort of Christian lifestyle are at this point in our lives where we question why we do what we have been told we are to do, why we live the way we live and why we even believe what we believe... in turn we are being challenged by God to pursue a true and holy and pure relationship with Him and not just a “mask” we put on once a week or even daily to be a “good little girl/boy” or to live up to the expectations of those around us but to honestly and sincerely put reality with the faith we have grown up with.

It seems like we are told to do all of these things, and not do all of these things, but what does it mean if we have no true relationship with God?... obviously nothing... just like when you do homework, or work, or dishes or whatever out of obligation it becomes a repetitious task that has no passion or drive except for the reason it needs to be done....

God does not want a relationship of obligation, He wants us to do all things for Him because we understand that He has given us all things. *“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?”* Romans 8:32

...I'm not good at these argumentative writings at all, but I just challenge each and everyone of us who has ever questioned our actions, beliefs or anything else as a Christian, to truly question it with God and other older believers who stand in solid wisdom of God... search the scriptures, use your resources and get answers to the questions that will soon eat you away...

Learn who our God is, get to know our God, personally, not just know about Him... Get to know Him in a way that daily you can look around you and see that He is at work in YOUR life.

“Let heaven and earth praise Him, The seas and everything that moves in them.” Ps 69:34

“Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!” Psalm 150:6

“The LORD has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil” Prov. 16:4

5. If logic is not absolute, then no logical arguments for or against the existence of God can be raised and the atheist has nothing to work with.
6. If logic is not absolute, then logic cannot be used to prove or disprove anything.

4. Atheists will use logic to try and disprove Gods existence, but in so doing they are assuming absolute laws of logic and borrowing from the Christian worldview.

1. The Christian worldview maintains that the laws of logic are absolute because they come from God who is Himself absolute.
2. But the atheist worldview does not have an absolute God.
 1. So, we ask, "How can absolute, conceptual, abstract laws be derived from a universe of matter, energy and motion?"
 2. In other words, "How can an atheist with a naturalistic presupposition account for the existence of logical absolutes when logical absolutes are conceptual by nature and not physical, energy, or motion?"

Conclusion

1. The Christian theistic worldview can account for the laws of logic by stating that they come from God.
 1. God is transcendent; that is, He is beyond the material universe being its creator.
 2. God has originated the laws of logic because they are a reflection of His nature.
 3. Therefore, the laws of logic are absolute.
 4. The are absolute because there is an absolute God.
2. The atheistic worldview cannot account for the laws of logic/absolutes, and must borrow from the Christian worldview in order to rationally argue.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first heaven and the first earth passed away and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming out of heaven from God made ready as a bride adorned for her husband”

The New Jerusalem

- And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.
- It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.
- It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.
- The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.
- The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.
- The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long. He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using.
- The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.
- The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone.

—Rev 21:10-19



MATTHEW 24 (Part 1)

by Rex Banks

Introduction

It is likely that Paul's letters to the Thessalonians date from about two decades after the Lord's ascension, and while there is much to commend in the local church, it is abundantly clear from these epistles that problems have arisen among the brethren because of misconceptions about the second coming. Evidently just two decades after the ascension, anticipation of Christ's imminent return had produced a restless excitement among certain local members, and this disturbed the apostle greatly. While he is grateful that the Thessalonians had "received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit..." (1:6) and thankful for their "work of faith, labor of love and steadfastness of hope," (1:3) Paul also worries that misunderstandings about the Lord's return have caused needless grief (1 Thess 4:13 ff) and led to irresponsible, reprehensible behaviour (2 Thess 5 - 15). Believing themselves to be living in *the last days*, some are living in an undisciplined manner, "doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies," (2 Thess 3:11) and this is such a serious matter that the brethren are forbidden to associate with those who refuse to heed Paul's corrective instruction (2 Thess 3:6, 14).

Unfortunately like the Thessalonians, many Bible believers throughout history have become convinced that *their own generation* was destined to witness this final act of the Christian era, and invariably the consequences of this belief have been harmful to all involved. For example, not long after Paul issued his stern instructions to the brethren

at Thessalonica, the second century "prophet" Montanus persuaded many believers throughout Asia Minor that heavenly Jerusalem was soon to descend upon the Earth in a plain between the two villages of Pepuza and Tymion in Phrygia. Of course Montanus also revealed that he himself was to have a leading role in the new kingdom. Closer to our own time, William Miller convinced thousands of his followers that the Lord was to return between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844, and many gave away their possessions and donned white robes in preparation for this event. Our Jehovah Witness friends repeatedly set dates for the Lord's return until deciding that His *invisible* "parousia" ("a being present, presence," "a coming," "an arrival") took place in 1914. The list goes on, but while differing in particulars, all such failed predictions have produced similar results: confusion, cynicism, disappointment, and ridicule of all things biblical.

Invariably such failed predictions also involve appeals to Jesus' words in the "fifth discourse" of Matthew 24, and it is fair to say that many fanciful theories about the Lord's return are built upon various erroneous interpretations of this portion of scripture. In the following paragraphs we will attempt to show that the Lord's words in Matthew 24, and in parallel passages in the Synoptics, offer no support to the "date setters" the "latter day prophets" or to anyone else preoccupied with fanciful speculation about the Lord's return.

Context.

a. A great deal of the teaching material in the Gospel of Matthew is contained in *five discourses* (i. 5:1-7:28; ii 10:5 -11:1; iii 13:1 - 53; iv 18:1 - 19:1; v 24:1 - 26:1) and the conclusion of each discourse is signaled by a formula: "The result was that when Jesus had finished these words ..." (7:28 c.f. 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1).

b. The *fifth discourse* occurs in the Climax of Matthew's Gospel (21:1 -28:20).

- This section *begins* with Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem for the final time (21:1) and *ends* with the post-resurrection giving of the Great Commission (28:18-20).
- This section covers *mainly* the final week of Jesus' earthly life, beginning with His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, likely on Sunday. It includes an account of His resurrection on the next Sunday. (The closing verses of Matt 28 record later events).

c. Matt 21:23 records that Jesus entered the Temple, likely on the Monday prior to the crucifixion, and Matt 24:1 tells us that Jesus left the Temple.

- Likely Jesus' words in 21:23 - 23:39 were all spoken at this time.
- In 21:23 - 22:46 Jesus confronts the *Pharisees and Sadducees*.
- In 23:1-39 Jesus speaks to the *people* (23:1). Likely the leaders

are not now present, despite vv 13 ff. Jesus is speaking to *the people* about the leaders.

- Jesus describes the Jewish leaders as evil hypocrites, and He pronounces *seven woes* upon them (23:13-29).

d. To the Jewish leaders and their followers Jesus says: "Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town" (23:34). In the Book of Acts we see this prophecy fulfilled in the ongoing Jewish persecution of the early church (e.g. 13:45, 50; 14:2, 19; 17:5, 13; 18:12; 20:3; 21:27; 23:12; 24: 1-9).

e. Jesus continues: "And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation" (23:34-36).

- Leaving aside the question of Zechariah's parentage we simply note that Abel's murder was recorded in the Book of Genesis, (chpt 4) the *first* book of the Hebrew Bible, and that Zechariah's murder was recorded in Chronicles (chpt 24) the *last* book in the Hebrew Bible. Jesus is speaking of *all* the righteous men whose deaths were recorded in scripture.
- Jesus affirms that the guilt of shedding this righteous blood would come upon those of "this generation." This is not because one generation inherits the guilt of earlier

generations, but rather because *this generation* partook of the murderous spirit of the earlier persecutors. This is what Jesus meant by calling them "sons of those who murdered the prophets" (v 31).

- The meaning of the term "generation" (*genea*) in Matt 24:34 is hotly debated and when we discuss this verse we will consider the suggestion that here the word has reference to the Jewish *race*. However there is little disagreement that here in Matt 23: 36 it means "basically, the sum total of those born at the same time, expanded to include all those living at a given time generation, contemporaries" (Arndt and Gingrich).

f. The Lord concludes: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'" (23:37-39).

- *Jerusalem the city* is addressed because Jerusalem is *the very heart* of all things Jewish, symbolizing the attitude of the nation as a whole. Some think that by "house" (v 38) Jesus means *the city itself*, others think that Jesus here refers to *Israel the nation*, while still others believe He refers to the *Temple*. Likely all three are included, since the destruction of the city and the Temple saw the scattering of

the nation.

- The words "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord" will be spoken at the Lord's return when everyone will acknowledge Him (Phil 2:9-11). Jesus' point is that after His earthly mission is accomplished, these Jewish hearers will not see Him again until *judgment day* when all will bow before Him, willingly or unwillingly.

g. Some 4 decades after Jesus spoke these words, in the year 70 AD, the Romans besieged the city of Jerusalem for 134 days, from 14th day of the Jewish month of Nisan through to 8th of Elul. Vespasian commenced the siege and his son Titus captured the city after his father was recalled to Rome. Of course Jesus' prescience comes as no surprise to those who recognize Him as God in the flesh, (Isa 42: 9; 44:7) but still the details of His prophecy concerning Jerusalem are remarkable. The words "how often I have longed to gather your children together" (Matt 23:37) indicate that this is not the first time that Jesus had sorrowed over the fate of Jerusalem, (e.g. Lk 13:34, 35) and in his account of Jesus' lament over the city on the summit of Olivet, Luke records some details which Matthew does not mention. Luke tells us that Lord wept over the city saying

"If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace--but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls.

They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you" (Lk 19:42-44).

In his **Wars of the Jews**, the first century Jewish historian Josephus confirms the details of this amazing prophecy. Josephus tells us that as predicted, the Romans did indeed "build an embankment against ... (the city) and encircle ... (the inhabitants) and hem ... (them) in on every side." He writes:

"(Caesar) also at the same time gave his soldiers leave to set the suburbs on fire, and ordered that they should bring timber together, and *raise banks against the city*; and when he had parted his army into three parts, in order to set about those works, he placed those that shot darts and the archers in the midst of the banks that were then raising; before whom he placed those engines that threw javelins, and darts, and stones, that he might prevent the enemy from sallying out upon their works, and might hinder those that were upon the wall from being able to obstruct them. So the trees were now cut down immediately, and the suburbs left naked" (5.6.2)

"And now the Romans although they were greatly distressed in getting together their materials, *raised their banks in one and twenty days*, after they had cut down all the trees that were in the country that adjoined to the city, and that *for ninety furlongs round about*, as I have already related. And truly the very view itself of the country was a melancholy thing; for those places which were before adorned with trees

and pleasant gardens were now become a desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down... (6.1.1).

"They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls" said Jesus, and Josephus records the horror of this indiscriminate slaughter:

"While the holy house was on fire, every thing was plundered that came to hand, and ten thousand of those that were caught were slain; nor was there a commiseration of any age, or any reverence of gravity, but children, and old men, and profane persons, and priests were all slain in the same manner; so that this war went round all sorts of men, and brought them to destruction, and as well those that made supplication for their lives, as those that defended themselves by fighting" (6.5.1).

"The soldiers also came to the rest of the cloisters that were in the outer [court of the] temple, whither the women and children, and a great mixed multitude of the people, fled, in number about six thousand. But before Caesar had determined any thing about these people, or given the commanders any orders relating to them, the soldiers were in such a rage, that they set that cloister on fire; by which means it came to pass that some of these were destroyed by throwing themselves down headlong, and some were burnt in the cloisters themselves. Nor did any one of them escape with his life" (6.5.2).

As predicted the Romans did not "leave one stone on another."

" Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury, (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done,) Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency... *but for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited.* This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind" (7.1.1).

Conclusion to Part 1

Jesus' disciples are greatly confused and alarmed by His lament over Jerusalem, and as they leave the city they draw His attention to the temple, (Matt 24:1) remarking upon its massive stones and magnificent buildings (Mk 13:1; Lk 21:5). It is this concern for the city and the temple, representing the very heart of the Jewish system, that is at the forefront of their minds as they question Jesus about future events, (Matt 24:3) and it is very important to keep this fact in mind as we prepare to discuss the Lord's response to these questions. (See **Part 2**).

Rex Banks is a preacher, teacher and researcher residing in Hamilton, NZ.

THE EXTRAORDINARY FAITH OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

by Kerry Cain

In true life as well as fictional stories, those that are the most popular and often the most exciting are stories of underdogs, or just ordinary people—stories like a poor guy from the wrong side of Philadelphia, winning the heavyweight championship of the world (Rocky); or the underdog U.S. Olympic hockey team defeating the powerful Soviet team in “The Miracle on Ice.” We all have a natural tie to the little, weak, insignificant people. The Bible is full of stories of these types of people being used by God to do works of faith that set them apart from the rest of the world.

Several years ago I was teaching a ladies’ class where we were studying Bible women who became famous for eternity. As I was leading the class it dawned on me that several of the women in the class were of equal quality, in my estimation, to those we were studying. We often think of Bible heroes as those that are several steps above the people who live today. But I think this is often not the case. The victories of faith revealed in the Word are not limited to those whose names are well known or who were considered to be extraordinary in their faith while they lived.

Let us consider some of the heroes of the Bible, and see that the reason for their victories, or acceptance and praise by God, was because of their faith, not their might.

TOO OLD, MOSES

Moses lacked so much confidence that he could not speak forcefully or even properly. Moses spent the first forty years of his life in the royal house and family of the greatest nation on the face of the earth, Egypt (Ex. 2:1-10). He fled from the life of riches and potential power after he slew an Egyptian who was mistreating an Israelite slave (Ex. 2:11-15). Moses lived in the wilderness as a shepherd until he was 80 years of

age. At that time an angel of Jehovah called Moses at the burning bush to return to Egypt and lead the children of Israel out of bondage. This was a task for a great man, and Moses thought he was not that man. God began speaking words of encouragement, but Moses continued to express reasons why he could not do the job.

Moses said, “Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?” (Ex. 3:11). [All Scripture references are taken from the King James Version unless otherwise noted.] Many of us can connect with his feelings. “I’m not anyone special; I’m not well known; I have little education; I am just a sheep rancher; I have hardly been around other people for forty years; I cannot do this monumental task.” God said, “Certainly I will be with thee” (Ex. 3:12). We can have the same foundation that Moses had, because this is exactly what God says to us when he sends us on a mission, “...and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28:20).

Moses then said, “Indeed, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said...Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” (Ex. 3:13-14). He is the same one who sends us out to be a light in the world through living pure lives and preaching the gospel. Jesus said, “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58), and “If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins” (8:24). (The KJV reads, “If ye believe not that I am *he*...” The word “he” is italicized, meaning it is not in the original Greek text, but was added by the KJV translators. It is not needed.) “[H]e that cometh to God must believe that **he is**” (Heb. 11:6, emp. added). If we truly believe

that Jesus is “I AM,” we have the foundation upon which we can become great leaders, like Moses.

Moses again spoke, “...they will not...hearken unto my voice” (Ex. 4:1). And sometimes this is true; men do reject preachers of righteousness—Noah, Jeremiah and many more. But God speaks to us through the pen of Paul saying, “Preach the word...for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2-3).

Again Moses found an excuse to disobey God: “I am not eloquent...but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue” (Ex. 4:10). God’s answer was a question, “Who hath made man’s mouth...have not I the Lord?” (Ex. 4:11). The answer is obvious, God made Moses’ mouth—AND ours! We, too, are without excuse when God calls us to do extraordinary things by faith. When Moses finally bowed before God, he then went and stood in the presence of the most powerful man in the world, Pharaoh, and, through Aaron’s mouth, said, “Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go” (Ex. 5:1). An ordinary man, now finally with extraordinary faith, changed the history of Israel and the world.

TOO YOUNG, DAVID

David was a boy whom God had chosen to be king of Israel after the rebellion of King Saul. A youth was chosen because God knew David’s heart, his faith, and therefore his potential for greatness (1 Sam. 16:7, 12).

David, too young to be in the army of Israel, came to the place of confrontation with the great Philistine army, the enemy of God (1 Sam. 17:20). There he saw and heard Goliath mock the God of Israel, and challenge the Israelite army to come out to

battle. God (not Israel) was not being defended, and David could not understand how this could be (1 Sam. 17:23-26). Young David knew that there was “a cause” for which Israel should stand as evidenced by his cry, “Is there not a cause to fight?” (17:29). Think about this question through twenty-first century eyes: is there not a cause demanding every Christian to engage in battle today?

David determined that he would go to battle. King Saul tried to talk him out of this by saying, “[T]hou art but a youth, and [Goliath] a man of war from his youth” (1 Sam. 17:33). Young people **can** be cocky and think of themselves more highly than they ought to think (Rom. 12:3), but young Christians **can** also be men and women of faith, as was “little boy David.” The lad spoke to the giant moments before Goliath’s death, and said, “Thou cometh to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts... This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand...that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel...So David prevailed over the Philistine... and slew him” (1 Sam 17:45-46, 50). What a wonderful example to all Christians, young and old. Is there a cause? There is. Then let us ordinary people get serious about the extraordinary battle before us. We know, by faith, the God of Israel, the God of the church of Jesus Christ. Let us win the battle for Him!

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil...take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore...” (Eph. 6:10-14)!

TOO SMALL, ISRAEL

Israel was once engaged in battle against the great and powerful enemy nations of the Midianites and Amalekites. Israel amassed an army of

32,000 men. That sounds quite large until we compare it to the description of the opposing army. They were “like grasshoppers for multitude, and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude” (Judg. 7:12). After God allowed the “fearful” (those who did not have faith) to return home, 10,000 soldiers were left. When God sent home those who were not serious about being prepared for the battle, there were 300 that remained.

God used “a few good men,” 300 in number, trumpets, empty pitchers and lamps to annihilate the enemies of God (read about the battle in Judges 7). What does God say about the “many” and the “few”? “[W]ide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” (Matt. 7:13-14).

God said to Israel BEFORE the fall of Jericho, “I have given into thine hand Jericho” (Josh. 6:2)—it was already done before they even marched around the city. He tells faithful Christians today: “But thanks be to God, which **giveth** (literally, continually gives) us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:57, emp. added); and, “For whatsoever is born of God **overcometh** (continual action) the world: and this is the victory that **overcometh** the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4, emp. added).

TOO COMMON, APOSTLES

The apostles came from common folks, average laborers, people just getting by from day to day, as many of us. They were hardened fishermen, detested tax collectors, religious zealots, political fanatics, men who bickered among themselves about who should be the greatest among Jesus’ followers, men who spoke when they did not know what they ought to say. This unusual band of men was chosen by the Savior to be witnesses of His resurrection,

and preach to all the world. They did (Col. 1:23)!

The list could go on and on. To paraphrase the Hebrews writer in chapter 11, verse 32, speaking of great men and women of faith: “And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of” plain little Mary, tentmakers Aquila and Priscilla, unreliable Mark, murderous Saul, and many others.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58). May God help us to increase our faith that we, too, might be ordinary people with extraordinary faith!

Kerry Cain preaches for the Colorado City church of Christ in Colorado City, Texas.

This lecture was presented at the 12th Annual South Florida Lectureship, *Increase My Faith*, hosted by the Palm Beach Lakes church of Christ in West Palm Beach, Florida.

**“Who do men
say the Son of
Man is?
Thou art the
Christ, the Son
of the Living
God.
Upon this rock
I will build My
church”
-Matt 16:13-18**

BE CAREFUL HOW YOU READ

by Dave Bell

It is one thing to read the Bible but it is entirely another *how you read it*. Whether we know it or not we will be judged on how we read and therefore interpret the scriptures. This therefore alerts us to the fact that we had better make every effort to read and understand correctly and that takes patient study.

One of the things that has come up again is the issue of singing. Some are saying that even though the command is to “sing” if one were to bring a guitar and sing then he has not broken the actual command to sing. Now on the bare face of it this sounds plausible but plausible is not the same as true.

This argument is often couched in terms of arguing from specificity or silence. However, if we think for just a moment we will see that this is really a false dichotomy. It is made false by assuming that silence actually authorizes something (in this case the guitar). Many liberal brethren seem to embrace this idea and then go on to act upon it.

Some like Al Maxey go further and denigrate the “law of silence” as if it were a bad thing. True some misuse it or misapply it but that doesn’t annul it nor make it redundant. Sometimes I think too that it is perhaps a misnomer yet we need to be aware of how it works.

Now I say the dichotomy is false because there is a third alternative that can be offered in this debate and that is *implication*. Specificity simply means explicit that which is

explicitly or specifically stated. In this case:

(Ephesians 5:19) “Speaking to one another in psalms hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.”

Silence here means that there is no mention of the instrument. Thus some will say that therefore it is not breaking that command if we add an instrument just so long as we sing. Silence here meaning speechless, silent, still or wordless. On that basis alone they say we can add an instrument to our worship.

However, think with me for a moment. There is another word a synonym that fits in here and that word is *tacit*. This word has to do with that which is implied or inferred from statements or actions that are *not voiced* thus from the specific or explicit statement we can infer or *imply* the implicit statement which is not voiced. Implication is concerned with argument which in turn is concerned with validity/invalidity and soundness.

All of these are concerned with the truth. It is bound in such a way that if the explicit (specific) statement is true then the implied statement if correct cannot be false.

If for example I say specifically, “The coin is in my hand and my hand is in my pocket.” You would naturally imply that therefore the coin is in my pocket even though I never specified it. The same can be said of the Bible since it implies that Charles Taz Russell among

many others are false prophets and teachers yet never once mentions them by name—it is *implied by what the Bible explicitly teaches*.

You see logic is a discipline that allows us to see whether a given proposition allows us to infer or imply other propositions, further it limits us by allowing us to only draw the conclusions warranted by the evidence and if we are to be rational we must stay within those boundaries. Implication provides the relevant connection between propositions A and B by saying that if A and B are true then proposition C cannot be false. There must, however, be a *relevant connection* between the evidence and the conclusion.

It is here that many change agents and liberals miss the point. They will tell you that anything that is implicitly taught in scripture cannot be bound on anyone today. Yet implication by its very nature is tacit or unspoken and that is where they run foul of logic.

When we deal with propositions we are saying that something is or is not the case. They may be categorical which assert that something is or is not the case without stating any sort of conditions. They may be hypothetical which states that if one thing is the case, then another thing will be the case. They may be disjunctive which states either or thing is the case or another thing is the case. Or they may be conjunctive which says that both of two or more propositions are true.

When dealing with validity we are saying that for an argument to be valid the conclusion is *implied in the premises*. An argument however is sound when it is valid and ***all the premises are true***. Then at this point we introduce the ***law of excluded middle*** which when applied to propositions says, “Every precisely stated proposition is either true or false. There is no halfway house or middle ground between them. Thus no conclusion we draw can go beyond the evidence of the propositions. Therefore to reject implication (as many do) and say that it is merely a subjective human reasoning process, is to reject rationality itself. To reject it in Biblical interpretation can cost you your soul which is why you must **be careful how you read**.”

In (Luke 24:25-27) Jesus found it necessary when He interpreted scripture, for some people found it necessary not only to read it out loud to them, but also to show them what the explicit statements ***implied***. He showed them how passages that did not specify His name actually did refer to Him. He could only do this by using implication.

In doing this He has also shown us that things taught implicitly (unspoken) are just as binding as that which is explicitly or specifically taught (spoken). Therefore every specific statement God has made contains within it everything He has implied as well. Robert Camp made the statement that everything we infer is not of ourselves; we infer it ***because God has implied it***.

You see inference has two aspects, it is both in the mind and in the facts. The inference in the facts

is called ***implication*** and it is a metaphor from folding. The logical inference is viewed as ***enfolded*** in the facts and ***unfolded*** by the mind.

Now to those who still have trouble with this concept, it is well to remember this. Everything we read and apply from the Bible is in fact done by implication. How do I know this? Well there is not one command in there that is addressed to me Dave Bell explicitly by name. If then the liberals are right then whatever I imply is not bound on me at all. Further if that is true then the Bible and its teachings can never be bound on anyone at all. I do not think that liberals or change agents really subscribe to that maxim since they seem to think that their implication regarding the instrument can be loosed and be ok in worship. This highlights another problem—that of consistency.

TO SUMMARISE

[1] The argument that states only specificity or silence is in fact a false dichotomy since it omits a third option—implication.

[2] We can only imply what the specific proposition addresses, in this case “singing.”

[3] From Ephesians 5:19 the Holy Spirit implies that singing is all He wants. This we term A Capella singing.

[4] We have no scriptural warrant to go beyond the explicit statement and what that statement implies (that is its tacit or unspoken implication).

[5] It is obvious that the apostles and the early church clearly understood this implication since

they sang A Capella in obedience to it.

[6] The addition of a hymnbook does not violate the implication since it does not prevent us from singing A Capella whereas any instrument does.

[7] We claim to understand the implications of other teachings so why in this instance do we throw out reason? The answer, I suggest, is that some want their own way in the matter. God indeed has spoken on the matter, therefore He was not actually silent on it at all. God said “Sing” and having said that—He implied nothing else.

Therefore the only implication we can rationally draw from that explicit command is that we simply sing (A Capella) only in the church which is the subject of that command. To do anything else is to disobey God’s implied command and that will cost you your soul. So be very careful how you read— it is just that important!

Dave Bell is a teacher of the Word and researcher residing in New Plymouth, New Zealand. Dave has written numerous articles not only for The Summit Chronicle but they can also be found on the official website of the New Plymouth congregation at: www.churchofchrist.org.nz



New Plymouth • NZ

THE IMPORTANCE OF A BIBLICAL WORLD VIEW

by Allan Turner

All of us see ourselves and our world through a particular set of beliefs, attitudes, and values. These operate as a filter or grid through which we process all information. For the Christian, this filter or grid is shaped by the truths taught in the Bible. The Bible, of course, has a *beginning* and an *end*. Although this may seem obvious, it isn't.

Many believers, who either ignore, or are ignorant of, the beginning-to-end continuity and theme of the Bible, think they can pick up the Bible, begin reading just anywhere and, as a result, *conjure* God-given answers to every little personal problem they think they have. In other words, they believe there is something mysterious, even magical, about reading the Bible.

They are unaware that the same rules for understanding other kinds of literature are to be applied to the Bible as well. Then, on the other hand, there are many serious critics of the Bible who have never read it, know very little of its stories, and absolutely nothing of its general theme. Consequently, they have no appreciation at all for the superb nature of the book they criticize.

However, the sincere student of the Word, the one who is willing to study to show himself approved of God, is capable of rightly dividing the Bible (2 Timothy 2:15). Not only does he know it has a beginning and an end, he also knows that in between are many different biblical stories, all of which mesh into one grand theme—the scheme of redemption. As he learns these biblical stories and comes to grips with the great scheme of

redemption, the sincere student develops a biblical way of looking at himself, and everything else in the world. It is this biblically based way of looking at things that I am calling a *biblical worldview*. Therefore, a worldview can be likened to a pair of eyeglasses through which one looks at the world—eyeglasses that focus, shape, and color all one's experiences.

Different Worldviews And Their Consequences

Every person, whether he realizes it or not, has a worldview. The modernist, for example, *sees* (we're talking worldview here) humans as purely physical machines. Blinded to the spiritual dimension of God's creation, he believes nothing exists beyond what he can perceive with the five senses.

On the other hand, the Christian *sees* (again, we're talking worldview) humans as the only beings on earth who are made in God's image. Like the modernist, he is aware of man's physical nature; but, unlike the modernist, he is not blinded to man's spiritual dimension.

It is true—"Ideas have consequences." The Bible says, "[As a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). This means that worldviews exercise tremendous influence on behavior. Because the modernist believes this physical world is all there is, he is convinced there is no life beyond the grave. Therefore, eating, drinking, and making merry is the central meaning of his life. If he can't see it, hear it, touch it, taste it, or smell it, then it's just not important to him. Believing "you only go around

once," and convinced that he must do just what the now famous beer commercial commanded, he uses all his energy trying to get "all the gusto" he can out of life.

According to the modernist, that so-called "pie in the sky by and by" that preachers talk about is just a bunch of religious gobbledygook. Reflecting the hedonism inherent in his worldview, the modernist wants, even demands, his dessert right now, and he wants it with chocolate fudge and a cherry on top. Putting others before himself makes absolutely no sense; therefore, he aggressively goes through life looking out for "Number One."

In contrast to this, the Christian, who knows *who* and *what* he is, realizes the *meaning of life* (i.e., "the whole duty of man") is to fear God and keep His commandments (Ecclesiastes 12:13). He knows that life on this physical plane is not all there is to living. By faith, he understands there is life beyond the grave, and this, he realizes, is associated with Christ Jesus (1 John 5:11).

His "living hope" (1 Peter 1:3) is based on his heavenly citizenship (Philippians 3:20). Hence, he views himself as a stranger or pilgrim while here on this earth (Hebrews 11:3; 1 Peter 2:11). Instead of storing up his treasures "where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal" (Matthew 6:19-20), the Christian is laying up treasures for himself in heaven. As he develops the "mind of Christ" (Philippians 2:5), he learns to humbly put others before himself (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6) and gladly

bears their burdens (Galatians 6:2).

Americans Have Changed Their Worldview

As recently as 50 years ago, the majority of Americans never really questioned biblical ethics or morality. Back then, most people looked upon divorce as disgraceful. They thought pregnancy outside marriage was a disaster; that chastity was a good thing; that an honest day's work was the responsibility of any respectable and dependable man; that honesty was the best policy. However, not today. Things have changed.

Americans no longer view themselves and their world through the truths taught in the Bible. As a result, Americans teach their children that evolutionary theory is to be believed unquestionably. They teach them that there remains no *objective standard* for judging what is right or wrong. Spawned by the modernistic worldview, these ideas have produced the current decline of moral standards being evidenced in America. As our countrymen have learned to think in their hearts, so they have become (cf. Proverbs 23:7).

And So Has The Modern Church

This change in worldviews has profoundly affected the modern church. As a result, the modern church has become an intellectual and spiritual disaster area. It no longer knows how to out-think, out-live, and out-die the unbeliever, and its members are certainly not the alien residents the Lord has called upon them to be (cf. 1 Peter 2:8-11; Philippians 3:20). Instead of being different, modern church members blend in nicely with the materialistic world. They yearn for and fret over the same things the modernists do.

In order to "make ends meet," members of the modern church have abandoned their small children to strangers while they (both father and mother) go off to the workplace. They believe that "wanting what's best for their children" equates to the accumulation of as much of this world's goods as possible.

The children of these members are forced to fend for themselves without the help and guidance of a parent in those long hours after school before their parents return from work. This ever-growing number of children has even been given its own special name. Consequently, the "latchkey" children of these modern church members learn to fend for themselves at an early age. It should be no surprise that when these abandoned children—and that's what they are—get older, they can hardly wait to reject true religion, wrongly thinking it to be that hypocritical mumbo-jumbo their parents practice.

In addition, modern church members are always ready to assert their "right" to personal happiness, as if this were a spiritual birthright from the Lord. Bent on building their own personal kingdom, rather than enlarging the Lord's Kingdom, modern church members are primarily interested in newer cars, larger homes, and nicer clothes.

In their minds, the once-honored biblical virtues of *sacrifice* and *conservation* have been replaced with the hedonistic idea that "he who has the most toys when he dies, wins." On such, the warnings of Colossians 2:8 fall unheeded. Instead, such warnings are viewed as the shrill voice of one who has simply gotten "too fanatical" about his religion.

Because the modern church has abandoned its biblical worldview, "preaching as entertainment" is the only kind of preaching acceptable to its members. Like those spoken of in Ezekiel 33:31-32, members of the modern church are enchanted with spectator-worship. "Make me laugh, make me cry, make me happy, and make me want to sing," they say, "but don't you ever try to make me think, and don't you ever ask me to change!" These twist and mold the Bible to fit the "felt needs" of their "itching ears" (2 Timothy 4:3).

To the modern church member, discerning God's will simply means learning about the things God has approved that they have already decided they want to do. Without a biblical worldview, the idea that one should submit his or her will to the Sovereign of the universe falls on deaf ears. Self-abasement and putting others before oneself have given way to pure selfishness.

Without the proper focus, the modern church member looks *inward* rather than *upward*. Instead of being in an intimate relationship with the Lord, he thinks himself to be in a "limited partnership" with Jesus. This enables him to call himself a Christian, while being totally absorbed with the pursuit of "Self." Unless he can be "massaged" with "preaching as entertainment," then he is unhappy, uncomfortable, and will soon be involved in some effort to get the preacher to move. Or else, he *himself* will be moving to a church that will meet his "felt needs." In the modern church, the spiritual pygmies are giants, and they always win.

The Remedy

Despite what may be observed in the modern church, and in the personal lives of many who

claim to be New Testament Christians, the gospel of Jesus Christ is truly a dynamic force that lives in the hearts of all true believers. Its effect is so totally radical, and the transformation it makes is so revolutionary, that the Christian is actually called a “new creature,” who, from a spiritual standpoint, has been “born again” (1 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Peter 1:23). It is this life-changing gospel that provides the only life-giving remedy for that which ails the modern church.

The Bible makes it clear that the one who has been truly converted—i.e., the one who has been renewed and transformed in his mind (Romans 12:1-2)—will have no trouble understanding the absolute seriousness of his spiritual and intellectual quest. Accordingly, this true disciple of Christ will be willing to “gird u p the loins of [his] mind” (1 Peter 1:13). As he diligently pursues his study of the Word (2 Timothy 2:15), he will learn to consistently and effectively apply to his life the Bible’s eternal truths. In doing so, he will be both “salt” and “light” to a lost and dying world (Matthew 5:13-16). Apart from this, nothing else matters. This, the Bible says, “is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Consequently, this alone is the ultimate importance—dare I say, *focus*—of developing a biblical worldview.

**“Cease from
striving and
know that I
am God”
—Psalms 46:10**

“Living Fossils”—Evolution’s Innate Circular Reasoning

by Dave Miller

Another earthshaking find within the evolutionary community only spotlights once again the inherent irrationality of the faltering, fallacious theory. During a Southeast Asian expedition, retired Florida State University science professor, David Redfield, captured the first photos of the Laotian rock rat, once believed to have gone extinct more than 11 million years ago. The fossilized remains, collected previously from sites in Pakistan, India, Thailand, China, and Japan, were thought to verify this last known relative of a long-extinct family of rodents known as Diatomyidae (“Retired Professor Captures...,” 2006). Surprise, surprise—another alleged “ancestor” eliminated from the tattered evolutionary tree.

Observe the two contrasting, conflicting, mutually exclusive approaches to the created realm:

1. **Evolution:** All animals we see today are advanced forms of primitive precursors, and descendants of a single ancestor. As more advanced forms have evolved by means of adaptation, natural selection, survival of the fittest, and genetic mutation, the earlier forms were naturally displaced and disappeared. Fossils, millions of years old, represent life forms that were the evolutionary predecessors of present life forms, but which went extinct long ago.

2. **Creation:** God created a spectrum of animals during the six-day week of Creation. While reproducing only after their own “kind” (an ambiguous Hebrew term that likely parallels the modern taxonomic classification “family”), these animals were created with the genetic potential for producing a variety of other species, giving rise to the diversity of animal life presently on the planet. Along the way, due mostly to environmental factors, many

animals have become extinct. However, other species have escaped detection by humans for centuries, only to be rediscovered in some remote area. Which of these two viewpoints fits the actual physical facts? Obviously, the latter. Evolutionists repeatedly find themselves in the embarrassing position of discovering that the alleged evolutionary ancestors of current life forms, that supposedly went extinct millions of years ago, are in fact still living. They are forced to cover their tracks by inventing a self-contradictory, nonsensical term to identify these anomalies—in this case, “living fossils.” But that’s like a round square. Philosophers and logicians refer to such duplicitous posturing as irrational and “logical contradiction.” Evolutionists call it “science.”

REFERENCE

“Retired Professor Captures a ‘Living Fossil’ on Video” (2006), *Research in Review*, June 13, [On-line], URL: <http://www.rinr.fsu.edu/rockrat/more.html>.

Dr. Miller is a graduate of Lubbock Christian University, where he earned a B.A. degree in speech and Bible. He earned his M.A. degree in speech communication from Texas Tech University, and his M.Th. and M.A.R. from the Harding Graduate School of Religion. He also is a graduate of Southern Illinois University, where he earned his Ph.D. in speech communication

Article published with permission.
Apologetics Press
230 Landmark Drive
Montgomery, Alabama 36117
U.S.A.
Phone (334) 272-8558
<http://www.apologeticspress.org>