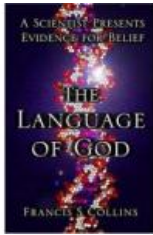


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## Putting God Out of Business? A Debate Over Darwinism

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BeliefNet.com offers an interesting debate on the question of evolution this week. Francis Collins, director of the Human Genome Research Project and author of the best-selling book, *The Language of God*, argues that an affirmation of evolutionary theory is compatible with the belief that God designed the cosmos. Indeed, Dr. Collins goes so far as to suggest that an affirmation of evolution still allows for an understanding that God designed the human species.

In his words:

*I believe God used the mechanism of evolution to achieve that goal. And while that may seem to us who are limited by this axis of time as a very long, drawn-out process, it wasn't long and drawn-out to God. And it wasn't random to God.*

*[He] had the plan all along of how that would turn out. There was no ambiguity about that.*

And:

*If God is real, and I believe he is, then he is outside of nature. He is, therefore, not limited by the laws of nature in the way that we are. He's not limited by time. In the very moment of that flash in which the universe was created, an unimaginable burst of energy, God also had the plan of how that would coalesce into stars and galaxies, planets, and how life would arrive on a small planet near the outer rim of a spiral galaxy. And ultimately, over hundreds of millions of years, give rise to creatures with intelligence and in whom he could infuse this search for him and this knowledge of good and evil. And all of that happened in his mind in the blink of an eye. While it may seem to that this whole process has the risk of randomness and, therefore, an unpredictable outcome, that was not the case for God.*

The problem with Dr. Collins' proposal is that it just doesn't represent the dominant theory of evolution. The dominant view of evolution requires true randomness in the cosmos and in the development of all species, including humans. But randomness contradicts divine design.

David Klinghoffer rejects Collins' claim that evolution and belief in the divine creation of the cosmos can be held together.

From his article:

*The key point is whether, across hundreds of millions of years, the development of life was guided or not. On one side of this chasm between worldviews are Darwinists, whose belief system asserts that life, through a material mechanism, in effect designed itself. On the other side are theories like intelligent design (ID) which argue that no such purely material mechanism could write the software in the cell, called DNA.*

On Collins:

*For his part, Collins thinks because God is outside of time, He may have initiated an unguided process which He could know would produce life. But an unguided process is still unguided. In this scenario, God is not the creator.*

In sum: “To put it starkly, Darwinism would put God out of business.”

And: *[A]ttempts to mesh God with Darwinism—two contradictory ideas—are not necessitated by “science” or the “scientific method” but instead are merely science-flavored rationalizations.*

*“Science-flavored rationalizations” — sounds just about right as a description of these arguments for “theistic” evolution.*

There is at least one other troubling dimension to the interview with Francis Collins. When asked about the fact that some individuals and couples are now choosing to abort babies diagnosed with conditions such as Down syndrome (through prenatal genetic testing), Dr. Collins said:

*I’m troubled that the applications of genetics that are currently possible are oftentimes in the prenatal arena. That is not the reason I went into this field.*

*The reason I went into this field was to figure out how to treat illnesses, rather than try to stop such individuals from even being born. But, of course, in our current society, people are in a circumstance of being able to take advantage of those technologies. And we have decided as a society that that choice needs to be defended.*

*We decided “that that choice needs to be defended?” There is no defense for that choice.*

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