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# No Buzzing Little Fly — Why the Creation-Evolution Debate is So Important

*A buzzing little fly is only a nuisance. The theory of evolution is no mere nuisance — it represents one of the greatest challenges to Christian faith and faithfulness in our times.*

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

The folks at BioLogos ended the year 2010 by declaring “The Dawning of a New Day.” Darrel Falk, president of The BioLogos Foundation, wrote with both passion and anticipation as he reviewed the past year and the impact of BioLogos on the evangelical scene. If making a splash was their ambition, they certainly achieved it. And yet, Dr. Falk clearly seems frustrated that the task undertaken by BioLogos is so daunting.

He reports that BioLogos has “barely begun to deal with the issues in a substantive manner.” Furthermore, he explains that the task of convincing evangelical Christians to accept the theory of evolution represents no small challenge. “Why is the task so difficult?” he wonders.

He suggests three reasons for this difficulty. First, he argues that the church pays far too much attention to a “scientific enterprise” that isn’t, in his view, scientific. He points specifically to the work of the Intelligent Design movement. Dr. Falk, representing the position of BioLogos, insists that the evolutionary “scientific enterprise” is the authoritative world of true science. “For hundreds of years now science has been successfully informing us about the natural world,” he insists. Of course, throughout the centuries, many scientific certainties have been embarrassingly overthrown.

Those who oppose evolution “are taking the Church down a dead end road,” he asserts. Then, after chiding the church for paying too much attention to anti-evolutionary voices, he offers a sentence which, taken seriously, represents a breathtaking intellectual commitment:

*Scientific knowledge is not deeply flawed and we cannot allow ourselves to be led down this pathway any longer.*

That is nothing less than a manifesto for scientism. Science, as a form of knowledge, is here granted a status that can only be described as infallible. The dangers of this proposal are only intensified when we recognize that “scientific knowledge” is not even a stable intellectual construct. Nevertheless, these words do reveal why BioLogos pushes its agenda with such intensity.

Second, Dr. Falk explains that the difficulty of conducting serious disagreements among Christians is itself a limiting factor. “Can we stay Christians even when we disagree so sharply about all sorts of things?” he asks. Well, the good news for Dr. Falk is that the church has long experience with serious theological disagreements. The bad news is that many of these disagreements have turned ugly. In one sense, some degree of risk is involved simply because the stakes are potentially so high. The controversy between the Reformers and the Roman Catholic Church in the sixteenth century was not a calm debate followed by refreshments in the church basement. Both sides recognized that nothing less than the most basic understandings of Gospel, Scripture, and ecclesiology were at stake.



In our current context, I would suggest to Dr. Falk that he and his colleagues should make their arguments with clarity, submit them with charity, and expect the same in response. We will all be judged by both the spirit and the substance of our communications and arguments. At the same time, we do not serve the cause of Christ by denying the importance and implications of our disagreements. Dr. Falk and his colleagues at BioLogos believe, and I take them as sincere in their belief, that those of us who oppose evolutionary science are doing the church a great disservice, leading the church into an intellectual disaster, and robbing Christianity of intellectual credibility among scientists.

Those are significant concerns, and they cannot be asserted as if this is all an intellectual tea party. In return, those of us who oppose the BioLogos agenda of embracing evolution do so because we are concerned that their approach means nothing less than the church's capitulation to scientism and the embrace of a fatal subversion of both biblical authority and the integrity of Christian theology. We, too, are animated by central, and not peripheral, concerns. My own goal is to write and communicate nothing that will, by any intemperate spirit, cause me to be embarrassed before the watching world or to bring shame upon the Gospel.

Thirdly, Dr. Falk suggests that, for some of us, "the theological challenges are enormous." There can be no doubt that he is absolutely correct when he writes that "the theological issues associated with evolutionary creation seem so huge to so many evangelicals."

He then asks:

*Will we ever be able to show the followers of Albert Mohler, John MacArthur and others that Christian theology doesn't stand or fall on how we understand Genesis 1 or the question of whether Adam and Eve were the sole genetic progenitors of the human race? These are extremely critical issues to many and the task of showing in a convincing manner that evangelical theology doesn't depend on the age of the earth, and it doesn't depend upon whether Adam was made directly from dust will likely take decades before it will be convincing to all.*

So, Dr. Falk sees the task as that of convincing us that evangelical theology "doesn't depend" upon affirmations about the age of the earth or the historicity of Adam as "made directly from dust" — but Falk envisions this task as lasting decades "before it will be convincing to all." With all due respect, I think he will need a longer calendar. Most frustratingly, Dr. Falk's statement does not acknowledge the fact that the arguments published by BioLogos go far beyond even these important concerns. Articles at BioLogos go so far as to suggest that the Apostle Paul was simply wrong to believe that Adam was an historical person. A recent BioLogos essay argues that Adam and Eve were likely "a couple of Neolithic farmers in the Near East" to whom God revealed himself "in a special way." There is a consistent denial of any possibility that Adam and Eve are the genetic parents of the entire human race. The BioLogos approach also denies the historical nature of the Fall, with all of its cosmic consequences. BioLogos has published explicit calls to deny the inerrancy of the Bible. The concerns do not stop here.

The Bible reveals Adam to be an historical human being, the first human being, and the father of all humanity. Adam is included in biblical genealogies, including the genealogy of Jesus Christ. If the arguments offered thus far by BioLogos for resolving the "theological challenges" associated with "evolutionary creation" are any indication of what is likely to come in the future, Dr. Falk and his colleagues will wait a very long time indeed for evangelicals to join their club.

The article mentions me at several turns, suggesting that I "attempted to squash [BioLogos], not with a swat, but with a few delicately placed strokes on his keyboard." Dr. Falk responded: "BioLogos is not a little fly, however, and it is not going to go away." Consistent with this assertion, Dr. Falk wrote, "We live in a scientific age and that is not going to change."

As for me — I am said to represent "a view that takes on the entire scientific enterprise." He then writes: "To this day, I have not been able to identify a single person who holds a science faculty position in any Biology, Geology or Physics Department at any secular research university in the world who would agree with Dr. Mohler's view of creation." Well ... *ouch*. At this point, I am supposed to yield to the authority of science and relinquish my theological concerns and be quiet.

I am willing to accept the authority of science on any number of issues. I am fundamentally agnostic about a host of other scientific concerns — but not where the fundamental truth of the Gospel and the clear teachings of the Bible are at stake.

As I have stated repeatedly, I accept without hesitation the fact that the world indeed looks old. Armed with naturalistic assumptions, I would almost assuredly come to the same conclusions as BioLogos and the evolutionary establishment, or I would at least find evolutionary arguments credible. But the most basic issue is, and has always been, that of worldview and basic presuppositions. The entire intellectual enterprise of evolution is based on naturalistic assumptions, and I do not share those presuppositions. Indeed, the entire enterprise of Christianity is based on supernaturalistic, rather than merely naturalistic, assumptions. There is absolutely no reason that a Christian theologian should accept the uniformitarian assumptions of evolution. In fact, given a plain reading of Scripture, there is every reason that Christians should *reject* a uniformitarian presupposition. The Bible itself offers a very different understanding of natural phenomena, with explanations that should be compelling to believers. In sum, there is every reason for Christians to view the appearance of the cosmos as graphic evidence of the ravages of sin and the catastrophic nature of God's judgment upon sin.

Dr. Falk ends his essay with a paragraph that includes this key sentence: "If God really has created through an evolutionary mechanism and if God chooses to use BioLogos and other groups to help the Church come to grips with this issue, then these three huge challenges will begin to melt away as God's Spirit enables us to look to him and not to ourselves." I will simply let that sentence speak for itself.

I do not believe that BioLogos is "a buzzing little fly." To the contrary, I believe that it represents a very significant challenge to the integrity of Christian theology and the church's understanding of everything from the authority and truthfulness of the Bible to the meaning of the Gospel. A buzzing little fly is only a nuisance. The theory of evolution is no mere nuisance — it represents one of the greatest challenges to Christian faith and faithfulness in our times.

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Darrel Falk, "[The Dawning of a New Day](http://biologos.org/blog/the-dawning-of-a-new-day/)," BioLogos, Friday, December 31, 2010. <http://biologos.org/blog/the-dawning-of-a-new-day/>

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