

What's Wrong with Theistic Evolution? Did God use Evolution to Create Life on Earth?

In a nutshell, Theistic Evolution is the belief that God used evolution as the process to bring about the variety of life on earth over millions of years. The Bible plainly disagrees with Theistic Evolution. In fact, they are opposites, as will be shown below. More and more student-aged Christians are becoming Theistic Evolutionists—especially those who are raised in public school and don't receive much biblical training at home or in church.

One of the most common testimonies we hear from high schoolers goes something like this: They become Christians at a young age, but they don't get much training in doctrine, especially creation-evolution related topics. After being saturated in public school evolution teaching (and not hearing the Biblical Creation view from parents or church leaders), they start developing *cognitive dissonance*—the tension that develops when holding two contradictory beliefs. They begin questioning: “I know that God exists, but they seem to present so much credible evidence for evolution at school, and it seems like the ‘smart scientists’ tend to believe it.” Many take the shortest route to resolving this mental tension by adopting a worldview that is somewhere between their Christian faith and evolution. Without even knowing it, they have just adopted the view of Theistic Evolution.

In one subtle play, the enemy has replaced their belief in an all-powerful God who spoke Creation into existence over six days and his inerrant Word with a “God” who creates life through a process of death and suffering and a Bible that doesn't really mean what it says! While some might believe there's nothing wrong with this belief, we'll challenge that perspective next by reviewing the six fatal flaws with Theistic Evolution.

The Six Fatal Flaws of Theistic Evolution

We've distilled the major problems of Theistic Evolution into just a short list of the top six. As we'll see, the problems with Theistic Evolution are not just some abstract theological problems—they are issues that can have a serious impact in the daily lives of believers. This is because our beliefs form the roots of our actions and the sum of our actions make up our lives and our choices.

Adam versus Apes: Theistic Evolution Denies the Biblical Creation of Adam and Makes Apes our Ancestors

The Bible is clear that Adam was made spontaneously by God, in God's own image and likeness, out of the dust of the earth (Genesis 1:26 and following). We are not made in the image of some lower ape-like creature, and the “image” of God and His “likeness” is not that of an ape.

Making this idea even worse, evolution would have humans shaped as we are today only because our particular line of ape-like creatures was able to out-last, out-survive, and even out-kill (i.e., through survival of the fittest) other varieties. This is a far cry from humans being specially created out of the dust of the earth in the image of a

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loving and intentional God. Jesus Himself clearly disagreed with the ideas that millions of years of human evolution occurred by stating, “But from the *beginning* of the creation, God ‘made them male and female’” (Mark 10:6) (emphasis added).

Biblical Order of Creation

Even the very basic order of the Creation account in Genesis 1 disagrees with the modern theory of how evolution supposedly unfolded life on earth (see Figure 1).

Bible	Evolution
Earth before the sun	Sun before the earth
Oceans before land	Land before oceans
Land plants first	Oceanlife first
Fish before insects	Insects before fish
Plants before sun	Sun before plants
Birds before reptiles	Reptiles before birds
God created man instantly after all other animals were created	The process of death created man, and evolution is still occurring, though invisible because it takes millions of years

Figure 1. Differences between the Bible and Evolution

Figure 1 clearly lays out how the Biblical order of Creation is opposite to how evolution supposedly happened.

Creator: Theistic Evolution Makes Death, and not God, our Creator

No matter which “version” of evolution one holds to—whether naturalistic evolution without a God, or Theistic Evolution with a process started by God, or Progressive Creation where God helps evolution occasionally along the way—the core problem is that the process of *death is setup as the creator of life*.

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Each of these versions of evolution has a bloody, competitive, “survival of the fittest” process as the creator of new life forms, starting from lower life forms and eventually leading to man. This is much different from the biblical account, where God initially created everything perfect and then our sin bringing the process of death, suffering, and bloodshed. How could God look upon all of His Creation and call it “very good” (Genesis 1:31) if animals (and later humans) were tearing each other apart in order to survive? With the intent of such process to bring about more advanced forms of life? Why would an all-powerful, loving, merciful God need to use a blood-filled, clumsy, random process to populate the earth with animal variety? God’s initial plan was perfect, but we messed it up!

Yes, we see natural selection and survival of the fittest going on in today’s world, but this process is a “mindless” one without creative agency. For example, consider a large field with a healthy population of grasshoppers in two color varieties, green and yellow. When the fields are green in the springtime, the green grasshoppers may thrive more than the yellow ones because they blend in to their surroundings, being less visible from their predators. Then, in the fall when the fields turn yellow, this process is reversed, and the yellow grasshoppers thrive. Is this natural selection producing new species? Certainly not, it’s just the pre-programmed gene variability that God installed into the grasshoppers interacting with their environment. The grasshoppers are all still grasshoppers! This is exactly what we see with “Darwin’s Finches,” which are proudly used to promote evolution in today’s school textbooks.

Death: Theistic Evolution Places Death before Sin

Perhaps the most serious problem with Theistic Evolution is that it has man coming on the scene after billions of years of death-filled evolution has taken place, making murderous “survival of the fittest” God’s idea and not the consequence of sin. To the contrary, according to the Bible, when man appears in Creation, he is perfect and sinless and there’s no such thing as death. Death does not come into the picture *until man sins* (“but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die,” Genesis 2:17). So you can’t have death before the Fall of man (see also Romans 5:12 and 1 Corinthians 15:22). In addition to God clearly warning Adam that “death will come” if he sins, there are two incredibly direct truths in Genesis that address this important “death before sin” topic. First, animals did not eat each other at the beginning of Creation, and thus there was no “survival of the fittest” or “natural selection” process that could supposedly work to drive evolution forward. Humans and animals were originally vegetarian:

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And God said, 'See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food' (Genesis 1:29-30).

God did not endorse humans using animals as a food source until *after* the Flood: "Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. *Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything*" (Genesis 9:3) (emphasis added).

Second, how could God look over the billions of years of blood-filled "survival of the fittest" evolution until it finally reached man and then call Creation "very good" (Genesis 1:31)? This would make Adam's sin and the curse of death meaningless, because death had already existed for millennia! If death was used to create Adam and Eve, what was the real consequence of sin?

Empowered: The Believer Loses the Power That Comes from Fully Believing in God's Word

Put simply, there is power that comes from fully believing in the Word of God. A straight-forward reading of the Bible's account of origins as laid out in Genesis 1 and 5 and Exodus 20:11—without spin or interpreting it through man's lens of "science"—will lead an honest reader to the understanding of the six days of Creation that occurred just thousands of years ago. If God really used evolution to create everything, He could have simply told Moses to write it down that way! But He didn't, and the Creation account reads much differently than how it might read if evolution took place over millions of years. The Bible is clear in several places that God "spoke" creation into existence.

Compromising on God's Word by agreeing with Theistic Evolution robs the Christian of the power that comes from standing fully on the Word of God, and claiming its authority. When Dr. Charles Jackson with Creation Truth Foundation was asked: "Do you meet many Christians at college who are drifting away from the faith?" his response was eye-opening:

They're more than being drifted away from the faith; there's a current that's created under them that pulls them away from the faith. When you put a question mark after any Bible verses that don't have them they already (or the verse itself says, 'this is a mystery'), like 'in six days the Lord God created heaven and earth and all that's in them' (Exodus 20:11), instantly you have a quantum drop in the joy and power of the Christian walk—all of the gifts of God in you—you can feel it. It's like someone pulled the plug and you are running on battery now, and a low battery at that."¹

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There is a close association between the Word of God and the Power of God (Hebrews 4:12, 6:5; Matthew 22:29). Can a Christian live a power-filled life and walk in God's will while denying the Word of God? Christians will live a more power-filled life when there is a strong alignment between what they believe, how they live, and the Word of God.

Denying God's special creation and not believing that He created the world by His Word (Hebrews 11:3, Psalm 33:6) creates a deep crack in the foundation of a Christian, even in ways that are sometimes not known by the person doubting. John MacArthur² adds to this discussing by stating:

Christians will get out there, saying 'Boy, we're against abortion, and we're against homosexuality, and we're against Jack Kevorkian because he's murdering people, and we're against euthanasia, and we're against genocide and, you know, we're against the moral evils of our society, etc.' Why are we against those things? Can you tell me why? Why are we against those things? Give me one reason. Here it is, because they're forbidden in Scripture. Is that not true? The only reason we're against abortion is because God's against it. How do we know that? Because it's in the Word of God. The reason we're against homosexuality, adultery, etc. is because of the Bible. You see, we stand on the Scripture. But the problem is we don't want to stand on the Scripture in Genesis. So we equivocate on whether or not the Bible is an authority at all. What do you think the watching world thinks about our commitment to Scripture? Pretty selective, isn't it?

Fairytales: Theistic Evolution has Christ Dying for the Sins of a Mythical Adam

The Genealogies in Genesis 5 lead directly back to Adam, the first man created by God. But if these genealogies don't lead back to a real Adam who actually sinned, then who do they lead back to? Because the "sinner" Adam and the Savior Jesus are linked together in Romans 5:16–18, any theological view which mythologizes Adam undermines the biblical basis of Jesus' work of redemption.

Endnotes

¹ Overview Eric Hovind and Paul Taylor welcome special guest Dr. G. Charles Jackson in the August 18, 2011 episode of Creation Today.

² Creation: Believe It or Not, Part 2

Genesis 1:1 March 28, 1999 90-209: <https://www.gty.org/resources/sermons/90-209/creation-believe-it-or-not-part-2>