

It Matters What We Think About Evolution!

Litany for Call and Response, by Michael Dowd (January 2008)

It matters what we think about evolution. Trying to understand reality without an evolutionary worldview is like trying to understand infection without microscopes or the structure of the Universe without telescopes. It's not merely difficult; it's impossible.

Thank God for evolution!

Until we recognize billions of years – not just thousands of years – of grace and guidance, we will remain stuck with abstract and trivial concepts of God, morally confusing and divisive notions of scripture, and unnatural and competitive understandings of religion.

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God didn't stop revealing truth vital to human wellbeing back when people believed the world was flat and religious insights were recorded on animal skins. God is still communicating faithfully today, publicly, through the worldwide, self-correcting scientific enterprise. Facts are God's native tongue.

Thank God for evolution!

Interpreting the insights of evolutionary psychology and brain science religiously, we vitalize our appreciation of doctrines such as 'The Fall' and 'Original Sin'. Now we can comprehend in a realistic way why it is that we and our loved ones struggle with unwanted habits, and why our most important relationships can be so challenging.

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Until we see the entire history of the Universe as scripture, and create laws and incentives that align the self-interests of individuals, corporations, and nations with the wellbeing of life as a whole, we will continue to toxify the air, water, and soil, drive other species to extinction, and be hounded by religious, political, social, and economic crises.

Thank God for evolution!

We cannot trust our future to anyone who believes the world is but a few thousand years old and who interprets ancient apocalyptic writings as revealing God's perfect will. With global warming and global warring on the horizon, the time has come for down-to-earth leaders with heavenly aspirations that include everyone, everywhere.

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These are not the 'End Times' for humanity; they are just the beginning. We know this from the fossil record and from careful observation of the cosmos. Studying evolution is like following cosmic breadcrumbs home. Dinosaur bones and prehistoric artifacts, Hubble space photos and DNA are here to teach us faith, not test it.

Thank God for evolution!

Until we grasp that death plays a vital and necessary role in an evolving cosmos, medical technologies will continue to prolong physical and emotional suffering, medical choices will continue to provoke family discord, and the medical industry will continue to underwrite the widening gap between the rich and the poor.

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Until churches in America preach evolution enthusiastically, sacredly, in ways that expand and enrich faith, the battle over teaching evolutionary science in public schools will never end.

Thank God for evolution!

Until we learn to see through sacred deep-time eyes, atheists and fundamentalists will continue to blame each other for the world's ills, liberals and conservatives will keep trashing one another, and, collectively, we will fail to see that enormous global challenges are divine evolutionary drivers guiding us to greatness.

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Thank God for evolution! ... Amen?