

THE GOVERNOR'S SURPRISE

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Although a growing number of secular scientists are abandoning the theory of evolution as an inadequate accounting for our origins, many still cling to this false theory with religious devotion. Liberal theologians and churches have bought into evolution and have “reinterpreted” the Bible to fit the evolutionary scheme. (If you have a big enough hammer, you can knock a square peg into a round hole, but it won’t be a pretty sight.) Confessional, conservative churches like the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (and others) refuse to get on the evolutionary bandwagon, and steadfastly maintain that while theories come and go, God’s Word will stand forever. Therefore, we confessional Lutherans believe in a literal six-day creation of the universe in the relatively recent past according to the account preserved for us by God in the first chapter of Genesis.

Nevertheless, many among us are intimidated by evolution; they want to believe the Bible, but they feel that to do so would be to ignore the obvious. They are unaware of the vast literature of creationism and of the multitudes of respected scientists who believe the Bible and reject evolution. They are unaware that creationism and evolutionism are simply two ways of looking at a finished product, one true and the other false.

In this brief essay I cannot hope to answer the many questions that a person may have regarding creation and evolution. What I hope to do is whet the inquirer’s appetite by pointing to a key event in the life of Jesus which involved two ways of looking at a finished product and apply this to the creation of the universe.

The event in Christ’s life to which I refer is the Miracle at the Wedding in Cana: Jesus turned water into wine (John 2.1-11). Let’s remember that in chapter 1 of John’s gospel, Jesus is confessed to be the Word who was with God in the beginning, and who is God (1.1). It is further confessed that “all things were made by Him” (1.3). So, this Jesus, who was present at the Wedding in Cana, is, according to the Bible and the Christian faith, God the Son, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, created the universe. Amazing! Now, what was the nature of the miracle Jesus performed? It was an act of creation! When the hosts of the wedding ran out of wine, Jesus turned six large stone pots full of ordinary water into the finest wine, instantly, by the mere exercise of His divine will. This act parallels the creation of the universe in Genesis 1.

In Genesis we read of all things coming into existence, not by natural processes observed in the world today, but by a supernatural process; a miracle. God, by His will and Word simply commanded things to exist and voila! At the end of six 24 hr. days, a grown up, fully functioning universe was up and running. Then we are told that this supernatural six day process came to an end: “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made” (Gen 2.1,2). Thus, the processes of nature which we now observe are different from the supernatural process by which the world was made. In this instance, the present is not the key to the past!

Back to Cana. Jesus had made fine wine out of mere water, instantly, by His will. Now, the governor of the feast did not know where this new supply of wine had come from, but the servants who drew the water knew (v. 9). The servants knew that the wine was the product of a miraculous act of God. The governor of the feast, who did not witness the miracle, and had not been told of it, came to a perfectly natural, but wrong, conclusion. When he tasted it, he called the bridegroom and delightedly expressed his surprise that the bridegroom had broken with customary practice and had saved the good wine for now. In other words, he tasted fine wine with all the marks of quality: fine grapes well tended; proper fermentation and aging; etc. Those who know wine know that a good wine doesn’t just happen overnight. It takes time and skill. What other conclusion could the governor arrive at, then. The bridegroom must have kept a “stash” of the best wine for later in the feast. A reasonable conclusion, but utterly false. The servants knew the truth. Only moments before, this fine, fully matured wine had been ordinary water transformed instantaneously by power of the Son of God.

Today many people are of a naturalistic mindset. Everything must happen according to the laws of

nature. There is no room for God's intervention in the world. When such people look at the world, they see it as the result of natural processes plus time plus chance. They look at what they see nature doing now, extrapolate backwards for billions of years, and theorize about the natural origins of the universe. But however plausible their theories may seem, just like the governor of the feast in Cana, they are dead wrong. And in their error they shut God out of the universe. This is one reason why the faith of so many Christians is so anemic. They try to fit Christianity and evolution together and end up with a God who doesn't do much and a Bible that can't be believed for much. Is it any wonder they cannot resist the spirit of the age? To such "gruel and barley water Christianity" I say, "No Thank you!"

In the Bible God has given us a glimpse into the wonders of His creative activity. Just as the servants at the wedding in Cana were privy to the miracle of Jesus and knew the truth about the water made wine, so we, instructed by the ever enduring Word of God, are privy to the fact that the universe was created by miracle and not by nature, and that the God who created the universe, can and does intervene for our good. We are not blinded to God by a naturalistic mindset. We know the truth about God and His creation. We know also, by the mercy of God, that His supreme intervention into the world was when He became man in order to save sinners from eternal hell by his sacrificial life and death. Christians are believers in a real God who sent His true Son to give everlasting life to "whosoever believeth in Him." Jesus, who died for us, rose again, and now sits at the right hand of the Father, has promised to come again in glory on the last day, to judge the living and the dead. Until that day of ultimate victory, we have this further promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28.20). Such a God you can count on, not only with regard to the beginning and end of all things, but for all the time in between. He, the Creator and Redeemer of all, cares for you.