

Ask Jeff

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By Dr. Jeff Meyers

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Crossroads Ministries

301 S. 8th Street

Opelika, Alabama 36801

Website: www.fbcopelika.com

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/jeffmeyers

Good evening, 6:30 Central Standard Time here in Opelika, Alabama. I want to welcome you to the First Baptist Church of Opelika midweek, large group, adult Bible study. And the reason that I designate it as such is because beginning in two weeks, our fall Bible study series and opportunities begin. Now, kind of a little public service announcement to begin tonight. Next Wednesday night, by the way, this works even for those that are time delayed on 97.7 FM, next Wednesday night we will not have our large group, adult Bible study. In fact next Wednesday night we're gonna have the first Baptist Church of Opelika open house. Just like the school year opens up with an open house, we're going to have an open house. Every single one of our ministry areas is going to have a designated spot on this side of the campus, whether it's student ministry, kid's ministry, music ministry, men's ministry, women's ministry, adult education. As we like to say in the South, e'rybody is gonna have an area, right? Now here's the great thing about next Wednesday night particularly for those of you here at this Bible study, next Wednesday night will be an opportunity if you have not already taken advantage of it because it is live online, to sign up for one of our fall adult Bible studies. We have men's Bible studies, women's Bible studies, coed Bible studies, Wednesday night Bible study, Sunday Bible studies. We even have financial peace university. We have all kinds of studies for you to get involved in. Now hear me clearly: I am not trying to get rid of you. I promise. Okay? However, one of the unique things about this Bible study isn't just that it's interactive for those of you who have never been a part of it, you'll find out in a moment, but this Bible study is videoed. It is recorded. It is available 24-7. Those other Bible studies are only in real time. They're not recorded. So again, understand that if you're thinking about, maybe I want to be a part of one of those, I'm not trying to get rid of you. I'm just telling you, you can actually have your cake and eat it too. You can go to that Bible study from 6:30 to 7:30 and then you can watch this one on the way home, all right? You can actually do both. So again, I'm not trying to get rid of you, I just want you to be aware that there are other options. Most of those bible studies are six to eight weeks, some of them are a little bit longer so we'll see it, you know, by Thanksgiving, but nonetheless next Wednesday night come sign up for Bible studies, see other ministry areas, possibly find a new area to be involved in or volunteer in, and here is the Baptist part. Are you ready? The entire evening is going to involve a dessert trail. Every ministry area is going to have their own desserts available and you're going to have the opportunity to go station to station to station, and if you complete the entire trail, we're going to have complimentary insulin for everybody. So it is an opportunity. There are going to be some really good options,

okay? So we just want you know that you do not have to sign up to volunteer in an area, you do not have to sign up for a Bible study. If you want to just come and eat every dessert known to man, go for it, it's good. But it will be an enjoyable evening but we will not have quote this Bible study, next Wednesday night we'll have our quote open house. But beginning the next Wednesday obviously we'll be back and all the other Bible studies that are on Wednesday night will begin. Lots of options. Wanted to invite you in advance.

Tonight, I want to invite you to be a part of this Bible study. If you are new to us or if this is your first time either here in person or online, tonight is a completely interactive Bible study where you have the opportunity, even behind the cloak of anonymity, to initiate, to originate, or to continue a discussion or conversation regarding biblical matters, passages, subjects, etc. Now, let me draw a line of distinction. For those of you that do not know, we actually have a YouTube channel, the Ask Jeff YouTube channel, where we answer a question today, Monday through Friday. Now, obviously we answer two to three minutes, we don't go in great detail like we often do here on Wednesday nights. If you want to be a part of that, then you submit your question to either askjeff.net or fbcopelika.com/askjeff, both of them going through the web base to get to the the daily questions. Tonight, the two ways you can be a part of it. Number one, if you want to remain completely anonymous you have a cell phone, you have a text messaging service, we have a phone number area code 334-231-2313. You can be here in the room, you can be the other side of the camera, you can even be listening on the radio on Sunday morning and submit a question for the following Wednesday night. You can be a part of it by utilizing that text messaging number. You remain anonymous. Your name doesn't come up. Your number doesn't come up. It's just your question.

Now if we're talking about a subject matter, if we're addressing a passage and you want to go a little bit deeper or maybe you want to go a little bit tangent too, you can submit a follow-up question to the subject matter that will show up on the screen in a different colored font and I will know we are staying on topic. You can remain completely anonymous or you don't have to remain anonymous. You can put your hand in the air. When you put your hand in the air, you have the floor, you can take the conversation any direction you want to go. However, let me remind you, you lose your anonymity in the room, but you will not be seen on video and your voice will not be heard on the radio. So you're anonymous to everybody else, not in the room, but as I say every week, that's okay because we're all family, right?

So here we go. Question number one. It says, "Does accepting theistic evolution destroy the gospel? There is death in the evolutionary fossil record. That would put death before man's sin, right? Question mark." All right, there's a lot of layers to this question. Last week we kind of ended on this question of what we know as theistic evolution. Obviously this week we have a question coming in that wants to explore it in a little more detail. So for the sake of everybody kind of getting on the same page, if you'll allow me a few moments to describe and distinguish what theistic evolution is compared to maybe other creation models and then explain or address this question in specific.

When it comes to a creation model, a view of what we know is the world and the universe as coming by and from the hand and the voice of God, there are basically five models. There are basically five concepts that exist. Now, I'm going to use my little handy board tonight to begin this and what I'm going to do, and when I say I'm going left to right here, I'm going from the most open-minded, which is actually theistic evolution, to the most non-open-minded and I'm going to share in brief what these five theories are, basically how they address the question, how everything that we know that is in existence came to existence. Okay? So, beginning on the left here, we have what we call theistic, whoops, there we go. Theistic evolution, okay? Theistic evolution basically states that everything that exists in the observable universe and world comes through what we know is the evolutionary model that can be billions and billions of years of age, but everything started and was initiated by God himself. In other words, it was not an accident or by chance. It was a purposeful methodology of bringing into what you and I know as observable creation through the hand and through the methodology of God but he used this quote process to do it. That's what theistic evolution is in a nutshell.

Now, then we have what we call the day-age theory. The day-age theory states that based on 2 Peter 3, verse 9, that a day with the Lord is of a thousand years, a thousand years is of a day, that when you read Genesis chapter 1 in particular, and it says on day 1, God created light, and then on day 2, etc., day 3, 4, that those respective days are not necessarily 24-hour time periods, but are representative of periods of time. Maybe some believe a thousand years. Some people believe 7,000 years. There are some people in this camp that believe that each one of those respective days involves epochs of time that can give us an enormous amount of chronology that almost matches up somewhat on the theistic evolution side, but yet we see it in compartmentalized creative acts.

Then we get to the middle, which by the way, what I'm about to share with you is what we call creation science. Creation science basically is the mainstream view that if you go buy a book on this subject matter, most of them fall into this camp. Basically what creation science does is they look not only at the creation account in the book of Genesis as being a literal event as described, but they focus a whole lot on what we know as Noah's flood. They focus on the atmosphere prior to Noah versus the atmosphere after Noah. The fact of who ate who and who used who for food before versus the opposite, okay? Before the flood, no rain. After the flood, rain. Before the flood, people are living seven, eight, nine hundred years. After the flood, man, three score and ten and you're doing good, right? And so they claim that what we know as the current observable creative order cannot be seen as these other two theories would state because the world before Noah is completely different than the world after Noah and you cannot transfer the observable data quote on the opposite side. So the creative order is not near as old as it might seem to be observed because what we know as the creative order was cataclysmically changed in Genesis chapter 6 through 9.

Now moving one more to the right, we have what we call the young earth theory. The young earth theory is exactly what it sounds like, it believes that the creative order as described in Genesis 1 is dated, as many like us and others have done, when you go back and you start dating literally the Old Testament, that quote, in the beginning God created

was about 6,000 years ago, and it is no older than that. Now do you see why we call it the young earth theory? And their theory is that when God created everything, he did so in a perfect, sinless environment and everything that we observe today is much the opposite. And so where today, in theory, it might take an item a, quote, million years to decompose to become a different item, in a perfect world with perfect humidity, perfect pressure, perfect everything, that could be done in milliseconds versus millions of years. And so it takes into account a lack of sin and a lack of fallen state as a means by which God brought things into order that now observably appear much older, but obviously are not because it deals with the fallen state versus the pre-fallen state.

And then last but not least, we have what is commonly referred to as the gap theory. The gap theory states that in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," we know the verse well but then there's verse 2, where it says, "and the earth was formless and void, and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the deep." It is those that subscribe to this side of the equation that claim that in verse 2 of Genesis chapter 1, that that is when Satan fell, that is when he rebelled against God, and for a lack of better terms, God turned off the lights. And in verse 3 of Genesis 1, when it said, "and let there be light," God turned the lights back on and that could be an indiscriminate amount of time, but that since verse 3 of chapter 1 to today, we have a literal 6,000 years prior to, it leaves it open for, quote, interpretation.

Now, I went through all those five very quickly because this question is asking about one of the specific theories, okay? And the specific one mentioned is what we know as theistic evolution and the question becomes, does it, quote, destroy the gospel because it talks about or allows for death prior to sin? That's a really good question, right? Because we know that in Genesis chapter 3, that Adam and Eve fell into sin. They did exactly the opposite of what God told them to do. God warned them in chapter 2, verse 16, "in the day that you do this, you will surely die," and we know that's exactly what happened, correct? They died in the relationship to God, and then 900 years later, they died in the relationship to the earth. And so the question becomes, well, if theistic evolution is true, if there were billions of years prior to this event, then there would have been not only a fossil record, but there would have been death, which means that there was death before Adam and Eve, and how can you have this if Adam and Eve are the originators of what we know as sin?

So, that being said, turn to Romans chapter 8. You say, Romans chapter 8? That's right, Romans chapter 8. So I apologize for the long introduction on this question but I wanted all of us to see anytime somebody leads out a question with a very specific approach to, I think it's important to know what are we dealing with, particularly compared to others. Now in the book of Romans chapter 8, I'm going to begin actually in verse 20. It says, "For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Verse 22, this is key, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Now the reason verse 22 of chapter 8 is so important is it did not say earth. What did it say? The whole creation groans. And so this begs a very important question

for you and I to ask that is somewhat related to everything on this board, but in particular, this one question as it was addressed and the question is this, we know the Bible makes it clear that the byproduct of sin is death. We got that, right? However, you do realize Adam and Eve were not the first creative order to sin. Lucifer, Lucifer fell and according to Ezekiel 28, iniquity, that's a fancy word for sin in the Bible, iniquity was found within him and we all know, and by the way, this is another fun discussion, at some point before Genesis 3, Satan fell, right? We know that because in Genesis 3 he is called the serpent, right? He is more subtle than any of the beasts of the field. He beguiled them. He tempted them. Obviously, there's passages in Isaiah and Ezekiel that talk about that event prior to the encounter in the Garden of Eden. The reason I wanted to bring this to your attention is that per this specific question, what you and I know as sin did actually not originate with Adam and Eve. It originated with the fall of Satan.

So let me answer the very specific question. Does the theistic evolutionary model destroy the gospel? Let me qualify how I'm about to answer this. If you subscribe to theistic evolution, that is your right, but I want you to hear, I don't, but I'm about to defend it. Okay? Because even though I don't subscribe to it, even though I do not adhere to this view of the creative order, I don't think if you do, it destroys the gospel message. And here's why, because you have the fall of Satan predating all this mess, if that makes sense, that what we have is a fallen universe long before humanity came into existence and long before the animals came into existence. We could get into all that if you want to, but I do believe, though I don't subscribe to it, I don't think theistic evolution necessarily destroys it because sin and the byproduct of death actually predates Adam and Eve. Even if, even though I don't, even if you believe in an evolutionary model to get to Adam and Eve, which I don't, you still would have a Luciferian fall that would be prior to. So even though I don't subscribe to it, I will defend. I know people that subscribe to this theory, that believe in Jesus as their personal Savior and their Lord, and they're gonna have a mansion next to me in heaven, even though I think they're wrong about this.

And so again, do I think creation theory is important? Oh, absolutely I do. But I do not believe it necessarily, quote, destroys the gospel. I have heard people, hopefully not you, but I have heard people say that if you do not subscribe to my theory of creation, then you must not understand the gospel because how can you not take Genesis 1 literally, but take John 3:16 literally? I understand the approach to that, but if you back it up a little bit, it's almost like we've forgotten Adam and Eve didn't originate sin. If Adam and Eve were the first ones to ever sin in the universe, then we would have a problem. Now, did I mention I don't subscribe to it? But yet, I just defended it. I do believe that you can be a born-again believer in Jesus Christ and subscribe to this theory even though I don't. How's that for honesty tonight? All right? By the way, one day, the Bible says it is appointed unto men once to die and then face the judgment, correct? One day, when you stand before the gates of heaven and God himself says, "Why should I allow you into my heaven?" The response "I was not a theistic evolutionist" is not going to fly. Okay? When you get to that point in your existence, it's all about Jesus. Right?

Now, I will say that there are difficulties getting to the gospel in some of these, but it does not necessarily, necessarily destroy it even though I don't subscribe to it. So, does

that help? Any questions, clarifications, thoughts, concerns, commentary? Anybody? We're good? Oh, oh, yes ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Ah, the question is, which one do I subscribe to? Moving on to the next question. My belief, because tonight I'm the instructor...

[unintelligible]

Is there a creation theory that I subscribe to? Yes. Well, there's five options and you're one of these five. Everybody here at some point finds yourself in one of these five. I will testify that the one I currently hold is not one I've always held. Okay? By the way, we call that sanctification. Okay? It's what we call that. But again, I'm of the opinion that this is between you and the Lord, if that makes sense. Do I think creation theology is important? Oh, absolutely. Do I believe it is equal to the gospel? No. By the way, I just defended something I don't even subscribe to, right? So again, my perspective is not necessarily important tonight. However, you find yourself in one of these five, whether you know it or not. And you do understand it's like Baptist, two Baptist, three opinions. You do realize in every one of these categories, there's a thousand shades of people. Okay, so if I were to label these in contemporary technology, you know how we have like, you know, one, you know, two, like we say something 2.0 or 3.0, you could literally have, you know, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2. You could make your way gradually through because there's all kinds of right and here's the best part, is when people that find themselves in the same category fight each other about the category. That's one of my favorite things because I'm like, I don't understand, right? But again, isn't it amazing how we love our preferences? We do, don't we? We love our opinions.

It says, "We won't get mad at you. Tell us which one you subscribe to. I'm just curious." I'm smarter than I look. I will tell you that I subscribe to one of these. Alright, any other creation ones? Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

Correct. Correct. Right. And by the way, I know soft-spoken, you may not have been able to hear, and I know there was kind of a sound gap by way of radio there. But one of the things you said very accurately is, even from a scientific methodology perspective, today's observed reality does not necessitate necessarily a theory that you hold that gets you to that reality, particularly when you look at, from a biblical perspective, whatever theory you subscribe to originated from God not from man's view, man's perspective, etc. You mentioned the Grand Canyon, okay? Now, one of the beautiful things about this theory right here known as the young earth, is they're really good at doing what we call reverse engineering. You say, well, what do you mean reverse engineering? Well, for example, you know that the sun operates by way of what we know as fusion, okay? The sun loses a massive amount of mass every year. You know the theory, right? The sun's getting smaller, right? It is. And by the way, don't panic. They think it's going to burn out

like in 5 billion years. Okay? But here's the fun part. Let's reverse engineer. If it's losing this amount every year, then let's add it to going back in time. If you were to go back a million years, the sun would have engulfed Mercury. Yet Mercury is here. Again, to your point, there is this conflict of observation, correct? We today see a massive amount of mass loss, so therefore, we make conclusions that you can't make even if you go back a million years. You brought up the Grand Canyon, right? If you subscribe to a true evolutionary observation of the Grand Canyon as described by today's observation, and you go back a million years, then the Grand Canyon would have had to start in New York City because of the erosion pattern and how it falls back. Does that make sense? In other words, to your exact point, one of the difficulties, not just of this position, but in all of our positions, is necessitating that what we observe today is the end of a conclusion of our opinion that necessitates being contrary to what you would observe if you even went back a million years.

So, the important thing here is to make sure that your perspective, your opinion, and your belief does not contradict scripture number one, and does not contradict what C. S. Lewis said, the simple observable facts of life. C. S. Lewis was famous for saying, the one thing that will drive a man mad is to hold a belief contrary to observable fact. So again, to your point, sir, some of these things such as the Grand Canyon, Mercury, other things, observable fact says it cannot be that age if we subscribe to the current model as always being the model which then you have a conflict. We call it the law of non-contradiction. You can't have two opposing things both be true. You can't claim the sun has always lost the mass it is as it is today and that it's the age you claim it to be. Does that somewhat help? Yeah, so you're absolutely right there, which is one of the many reasons I believe this model breaks down. One of the many.

Can we go to Jonah? It's what it says. It says, "Follow up on Jonah. Did Jesus conquer hell during the three days he was there?" Oh, this is a really good question. Now, to talk about Jonah, we're not going to go to Jonah. We're going to go to Matthew chapter 12. Go to Matthew chapter 12. Matthew chapter 12. Now, the reason that Matthew 12 is so important is that because the story of Jonah, the very famous story we talked a little bit about this last time we were together, the story about it in chapter 2 of Jonah where he cried out to God. It doesn't say out of the belly fish. He says "in hell or in Sheol I cried out," in other words, we basically biblically proved the Pinocchio cartoon is wrong last time we were together. But in Matthew chapter 12, Jesus, he is subjected to an interrogation by the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the scribes and all these folks who are contrary to what he believes, and they basically are asking him to produce a sign. Now, a sign is something that is supernatural by the hand of God that man cannot replicate or duplicate. Okay, so for example, in your Bible, the rainbow is called a sign. A virgin giving birth is called a sign. A fleece that is dry with ground that is wet is called a sign. These are supernatural things that humanity cannot create and/or originate on our own. So they basically said, "Hey, you've walked on water, you've multiplied food, you've healed the blind but we want to sign. We want you to do something that cannot be replicated purely from a human perspective."

So verse 38 of Matthew 12, "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas," or Jonah, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." So basically what Jesus said was, "Hey, if you want a sign, all you gotta do is look to Jonah." Three days and three nights, he's gonna be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

And so the question is, quote unquote, did Jesus conquer hell there? Now this is where we're gonna have to delineate some things because what you and I, hopefully you are aware of, the original, what we call Apostle's Creed, okay? The original Apostle's Creed actually stated that Jesus Christ descended into hell, okay? The revised Vatican II Apostle's Creed from the '60s took it out. Interesting, it was good for nineteen hundred years but not for the last fifty but nonetheless for nineteen hundred years the Creed of the Apostles was this statement that victory was won quote over hell.

So are you ready? Go to Revelation chapter 1. [fanfare] How long did it take? 28 minutes that's all it took. Yes, 28 minutes. So we're gonna go to Revelation chapter 1, and yes, it's my fault tonight. I took you there. You didn't go there. And then we're going to go to Ephesians chapter 4, okay? Revelation chapter 1. Remember the Apostle John out on the island of Patmos sees Jesus like he's never seen Jesus before. There's this description of him, of his hair, of the sword coming out of his mouth, his eyes, his feet, etc. Verse 17 of Revelation 1, "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last." Verse 18, the words of Jesus, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Jesus Christ himself said that he had the keys to hell, okay? So in a very simplistic response, yes, there's victory over hell. From a theological perspective, there's a very important word that I talk about all the time in the Bible called propitiation. It's found in Romans 3:25 and it's found in 1 John 2:1 and 2. The word propitiation means to bear the punishment of. Okay, and that what it says is that Jesus Christ is, was, and will always be our propitiation. He paid the price for our sin. Well, what is the wages of sin? Death, right? But if you walk through the scriptures, just because you sin doesn't mean you end up six feet under. What's the ultimate consequence of sin? Well, Jesus said depart into the lake of fire, correct, prepared for the devil and his angels and so we kind of have to reconcile these things.

So go to Ephesians chapter 4, still in the New Testament, Ephesians chapter 4, and we're gonna read a passage of scripture that is not hard to read, but it might be hard to grasp because it's difficult to grasp what it actually says. In Ephesians chapter 4, verse 7, it says, "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Push pause. He ascended in Acts chapter 1, right? And then we know that after the Pentecost experience and the early formation of the church, with the

coming of the Holy Spirit, we receive the gifts of the Spirit, correct? So we're talking about the ascension.

Look in verse 9, "Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." Now what's interesting is there's actually three angles to this verse. Angle number one is, well of course he descended to the earth because he was dead for three days and three nights. The problem with that one is if you've ever been to the holy lands and seen a tomb of which Jesus would have been in, it's not actually in the earth. It's actually above the ground, right? So you can't take that one. The second subscription says, well, when it means he went to the lower parts of the earth, what that really means is he dealt with the dregs of society. He dealt with sinners. He dealt with those of ill repute. Then if that's what it means, why isn't that what it says? It says the, quote, lower parts of the earth. Now, again, I know this goes against most of our 21st century Western cosmology, but the Bible basically advocates that what we know as a place called hell isn't somewhere out there, it may be somewhere, quote, down there. Now, again, I'm not a geologist. I don't claim to be one, but you know that a geologist can't tell you what's in the center of the earth? Isn't that interesting? We do know that it's really what? Hot. Oh, absolutely. All right.

Now, I'm going to share with you a brief story, then we're going to go back to this question. Many moons ago, I was working on my doctorate degree and you know, one of the problems about working on your doctorate is you've got a lot of people who think they know a whole lot about nothing, right? And I was sitting around I was sitting around one of those tables with a bunch of, you know, I can make fun of it because I have one, posthole digger degree, right? Okay, piled high and deep degree. I mean, I got one, right? So, sitting around with a bunch of guys who are of that quote unquote academic caliber, and we're actually discussing this passage and there are people that are around the table that are ridiculing because they're smart, right? They're intelligent. They're academicians. They're making fun of people who subscribe that this is really talking about going into hell. Okay? Well, that week, we had a guest professor and I'm going to go ahead and call his name. That guest professor was a man by the name of Lewis Drummond. Now, I don't expect you to know who Lewis Drummond is, but he is the only person that Billy Graham gave permission to write his biography. So can we just say that in that world he's pretty elevated, so to speak? He was the official historian to the Graham ministry, okay? So he allowed all those guys to talk and pontificate and Dr. Drummond just sat down there at the end of the table. He just had a smirk on his face. And when it all kind of quieted down, now remember, this is Dr. Drummond, this is a man of great high academic esteem, this is a man who actually has graduated with his degree, right? To which he then responded, he said, "Boys," because he could call us that, right? He said, "Boys, I hate to tell y'all but," he said, "one day when you get up to heaven to meet the Apostle Paul, I have a funny feeling he's going to tell y'all Jesus went to hell." And we all got kind of quiet and then Dr. Drummond said, "Boys, how are you going to get to heaven if he didn't go to hell for you?" That didn't come from some redneck theologian. That came from the only man that Billy Graham authorized to write his story, a man who's won more academic awards than a whole lot of other people in our field.

And so I say that to say, that isn't it interesting that we try to act all academic and cerebral trying to talk ourselves out of what the Bible just says, because I know that without Jesus, I will descend into hell. If Jesus conquered sin for me, he had to pay the price for me which means at some level and in some manner, he had to pay that price. And so therefore, I can tell you, I have no problem looking at Ephesians 4 and saying, yeah, he's my propitiation. He went to quote-unquote hell for me, so he didn't go to heaven without me. And so again, y'all can call that unlearned redneck theology, fine, I'm unlearned redneck, I'm good with that, okay? But again, it goes back to Jesus has the keys to hell, Jesus is our propitiation, and the wages of sin is death. And so, 2 plus 2 plus 2 gets 6. Now, you can believe in 5 or 7 that's okay. Okay? But can I quote Dr. Drummond? You may be surprised one day when you meet the Apostle Paul and he tells you. But again, that's just his statement.

Anything else on that one? We're good with Jonah? Yes, sir.

["Can anybody ascend or descend on their own power?"]

Oh, can anybody ascend or descend on their own power? The answer is no. Go to John 3. John chapter 3. John chapter 3, now this is right before the famous verse 16. John chapter 3, Jesus is talking to my buddy Nicodemus. Verse 12 of John 3, he says, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things? And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." So the Bible says, no, you cannot ascend and I would say also you cannot descend because you don't have the capacity, you don't have the power. However, in the story of the rich man and Lazarus, do you remember how they got to their respective destinations? The Bible says an angel took them. That's what the Bible says.

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Yes, he did. That's correct. Oh, absolutely, I apologize. I thought, okay, so the question, let me clarify here. When Lucifer said, "I will ascend into heaven," that's Isaiah chapter 14. God said, "No, you won't. You will descend into hell." God descended him. Let me rephrase, I don't think somebody, I hope you wouldn't, I know you wouldn't. I don't think anybody right now says, you know what, I just want to walk into hell, I can do it. No, it is the result of sin and life that has ceased. At the same time, Genesis chapter 11, we tried to go to heaven, didn't we? It's called the Tower of Babel. How'd that work out for us? By the way, is it just me or does that make anybody else nervous that there's actually a language translation program now called Babel? I just get a little nervous because I read that story in the Bible and it didn't work out real well.

Any other Jonah one? I see a follow-up here. It says going back to question one. Thank you. "So do all of these theories have issues because we're trying to quote put man's time

on God?" Yes and no. Every one of these theories, every one of them has their good points, and every one of them actually has their negative points. So go to 1 Peter 3. 1 Peter 3 and allow me to explain, because by the way, you don't have the ability to go, I don't subscribe to any of those. Well, you do, whether you articulate it or not. 1 Peter 3, verse 15. It says, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." So in other words, I take that passage of scripture to say that even though I understand it's kind of the way we categorize some things, no concept, no theory, no observation is necessarily locked tight and perfect, but the Bible says always be ready to give an answer. Now, I'm gonna go ahead and state the obvious. I cannot completely articulate the Trinity. I just can't. I can do a decent job, I can't do a great job, okay? That doesn't mean I shouldn't have a construct of the Trinity. Okay, because again, we are finite, God is infinite. Okay, we're mortal, he is immortal. We, according to 2 Corinthians, see through a glass darkly now, but we will one day see through one that is clear. Right? And so if we cannot completely, perfectly articulate it in that manner, then it doesn't mean we should not at least try to explain it and articulate it. But again, they all have their positives and they all have their negatives, just to be honest with you. So how's that for honesty?

Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

That's correct. Yeah, in Job 28, it says that even Lucifer before his fallen estate, did not have an understanding of the mind of God, then how are we? Now, go to 1 Corinthians chapter 2, real quick. Now, for those of you that are new, I know this sounds goofy for me to say, this is a Bible study so if we're going to talk about these issues, let's see what the Bible says. So let's go to 1 Corinthians 2, verse 14. It says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." Verse 16, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." So in other words, we don't. And again, Isaiah chapter 55, his ways are not our ways, his thoughts are not our thoughts. But let me give you a pretty good biblical example. Standing before Festus, Felix, and even Caesar, the Apostle Paul gave illustrations of the gospel so as to hopefully explain it to them and those were not perfect illustrations, if that makes sense. So again, we don't have the mind of God, but we trust and believe to explain so that people would believe.

It says, "If you were going to read one book about Christian evolutionary theory, what would it be?" All right, whoever sent that question in, email me. You say, what do you mean email you? I don't remember the name of the book, but I know where it is on my shelf. So email me, does that sound good? Just email me and we'll get to it, all right? So I can't think of it right now, but I know where it is. Okay, anybody else? Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

No, there is no reason to be sorry. Well, you are just really hemmed up on this one. Right. Okay. That's a fair question. For those of you who could not hear the soft-spoken voice of this very young lady in our room tonight, just say thank you, please. Just say thank you. She said that even though I am not gonna share my quote-unquote preference, she would like to know the pros and the cons, okay? So again, I'm gonna make it quick, make it simple. We're not gonna go all night long, okay? So we're gonna begin, I'll just kind of use this line as kind of a pro and a con line, if this makes any sense going all the way across. Now again, if I claim it to be a pro and you don't like it, okay, understand it's a pro from their perspective. Does that make any sense? If you don't like the con that I give you because it's your respective position, don't get upset with me because they all have a negative, okay? We're going to be equal opportunity offenders tonight, okay? We're about to hurt everybody's feelings. Here we go.

So what is, and I know we've already discussed it, what is the pro of evolutionary theology is what we would call modern observation, and when I say modern observation, please understand that when you look through telescopes and if you're of a scientific mindset and you say that according to the Doppler effect and all these different things, it gives you reason to believe in the time periods that are given. Okay? That's the pro to it. You look through the telescopes, you look through the models that we've got, and you can articulate. The negative of what we know as evolutionary theory is what we've already talked about tonight, is there are some very clear contradictions between... Well, I want to say contradiction here. Contradictions. I don't write very well. I apologize. My dad was a pharmacist. There are... Sorry, it's true. There are contradictions between observable things and clear biblical references. Okay, there are contradictions. And I would say the biggest contradiction here is in Mark chapter 13, when Jesus, by the way, he's talking about the Great Tribulation, he says it'll be the worst time since the creation of the world. Jesus used the word creation, which means to bring forth out of nothing. So Jesus did not subscribe to this theory. Just, that's a con, okay?

All right, now, the day-age theory, the pro of this is that much like the previous theory, ma'am, it allows for an elongated time period that may match up with observation, okay? So again, we're dealing with what we call observation. Okay? In other words, much of what we see propagated of modern-day cosmology would line up with periods of time that allow for greater time. What's the negative of the day-age theory? Well, the passage that they subscribe is 2 Peter 3:9, that says a day with the Lord is as if a thousand years, a thousand years as if a day. The problem is that passage has nothing to do with creation. It has everything to do with the second coming. It's not talking about Genesis. It's talking about the book of Revelation. And in light of that, if you're gonna have the word day mean a thousand years or a longer period of time in chapter 1, then why doesn't the same word mean the same thing in chapter 2? All of a sudden we switch to 24 hours, okay?

So again, both of these allow for observations that match what we see through telescopes and modern cosmology, but did you notice that the con has nothing to do with observation? The con of both of those has to do with what the Bible says, okay, not what we claim to observe. What we know as creation science, the positive or the pro of this is

Genesis chapter 6 through 9, and the famous story of what we know of Noah and the flood and the very fact that prior there were lives of great length, after lives of less length, prior to there were animals that then became extinct. There is a clear distinction here, okay? The con of this one, and by the way, some of you may say, well, this is not a con, the con of this one is you're basing your entire theology of cosmology and everything else based on one story called Noah, if that makes sense. In other words, it's all, the con is it is only Noah, and you're claiming that because you have elongated years versus lesser years, you have water coming from the ground versus water coming from above, then therefore, everything, not just those things, are different then than they are now. Okay? Now that may not seem like a con to you, but it is a con, because it does not say in chapter 9, everything is different. Okay?

Now, going to the young earth theory. The pro to the young earth theory is, quote, a world without sin is not subjected to what we see as modern chronology today. For example, we talked about the Grand Canyon and other items, the idea that it takes X number of years to turn coal into a diamond, but under the right pressure, at the right temperature, at the right amount of time, it can be done very quickly. Okay? So therefore, the pro is, you and I have never known a world apart from sin. There's not a scientist on planet earth who's ever done an experiment apart from the fall of humanity and the creation. We don't know what it was actually like, if that makes any sense. So the pro is, it subscribes to a world without sin that, let's just be honest, if you subscribe to an all-powerful God, it didn't have to take him 24 hours, it could have taken 24 seconds, correct? But in a world without sin, obviously, we can see that things could be done much differently. What's the con? The exact same thing, without sin. The scientific experiment says basically you do things over and over and over again. You observe, right? We have never seen this. We have never known this. We can only speculate what it would be like. Okay. It's weird that this theory, the pro and the con are actually the same thing, right? It's the pro that without sin things would not be observed the way they are, but the con is nobody's ever seen that world and nobody's ever... by the way, I hate to bait you with a question. Adam and Eve didn't even see that world. If Lucifer fell before them, they never saw a sinless creation. They saw a sinless garden, but not a sinless creation.

Then what we know as this famous gap theory. The pro to this is between Genesis chapter 1:1 and 1:2, it addresses, it answers, for lack of better terms, it solves all the observable dichotomies and contradictions, okay, because you have a world that was then versus a world that was now, okay? The negative to this one is, if I were to go into grave detail tonight, there are a lot of scriptures, such as Jeremiah 4, verse 23 and following, Psalm 104, etc., that many people have claimed to subscribe to Noah's flood, those that subscribe to this theory claim it's not about Noah's flood, it's actually about what happened in Genesis 1:2. For example, in Jeremiah chapter 4, it talks about God flooding the earth with water and judgment, and all the cities were destroyed. Okay? Well, we understand that in Genesis 6 with Noah, but what about the cities in chapter 1, verse 2? And so again, the con there is, there's these scriptures that are being subscribed to, not about Noah, but about an event that predated that.

Hopefully that helped. There's pros, there's cons on all of them. And by the way, I could spend an hour on all of them. And some of you say I could waste our whole night on them tonight, I know. Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

I'm going to quote this young man. Sixty percent of these are claiming that we know how to date anything. Yeah. True.

["That we're not wrong about that."]

That we're not wrong about that. So again, I want you all to understand. I do not have a degree in geology. I do not have a degree in physics. Okay? I don't. Alright? But again, there are multiple studies that have been done where an item of chronological question has been taken and broken up into different pieces, sent to independent laboratories, and we've gotten different results. Again, by the way, I'm not saying I subscribe to it, but it goes back to this, we don't understand a world without sin. We don't comprehend it. We don't know in a world without sin, I mean, do diamonds come in three seconds? I mean, I don't know. By the way, you know what Hebrews chapter 1 verse 3 says? It said that the Lord upholds the whole creation with his words, with his voice. John 1 says he spoke it into existence. You do realize when he spoke it, there was no sin. In the beginning, God created. So everything we know, he spoke in an environment without sin. Obviously, Lucifer then does sin at some point, and since then, everything, to your point, is tainted. And it's so difficult.

Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

Yes, sir. So in Romans chapter 1 particularly to your point, sir, verse 20, it says that those who look and observe the creative order, that they know by looking at it that there is a creator, there is a God, and that they quote to your point in verse 20 it says, "and they are without excuse," and it's exactly what the Bible says. So again, let me go off the board for just a moment. In fact, just erase it. Oh, that's the wrong button. All right. Just erase it for a moment. Understand every theory that I put up there today, every one of these believes there is a God, believes there is a creator, and believes you came from him. Okay. Can we agree that that's 51% of the good, right? I mean, at least there is a God and we came from him, correct? For those who have no biblical understanding, for those who have no biblical framework, to your point, sir, a lot of times those cosmologies are looking for an excuse to dismiss God rather than explain him. What I've shown you tonight, understand, even if you look at some of these and go, I don't, that just sounds bad, at least they're trying. At least, they say there is a God. At least, they're saying that we came from him and ultimately we're responsible to him. So even though you and I or two of you may have completely different views as far as this chart was concerned, you do have one important thing in common, you believe that there is a God, you came from him, and you're accountable to him. Okay, so can we kind of keep that at the forefront? But to your

point, we are without excuse. Every one of those theories agrees with Romans 1 and 2. Every one of them does. That there is a creation that we can see God from.

Anybody else? We've been in Genesis. Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Ah, great question. If you have someone that was an atheist or an agnostic, do they subscribe to these theories? What's interesting there is, no, they don't, but there are those that are agnostic and there are those that are, well, really agnostic, that might say they believe in intelligent design. Intelligent design is kind of a really specific vague term that means there is something that was of a mindset to orchestrate what we know as the universe in the creative order, but I'm not necessarily willing to say it's God, that we did not come from random chance, we did not come from a cataclysmic series of accidents. And by the way, some of you may have heard the illustration called the watchmaker theory and the watchmaker theory goes something like this. If you take a watch, now I'm not talking about your Apple watch, we're talking about one that actually has mechanical pieces to it, okay? You take, I hate to say this, an old fashioned watch, and you take it apart, you see how many intricate pieces are there. and that the way that is there, there had to be somebody that designed it. And then you look at the creative order and how intricate it is, even more so than that watch, there had to be somebody, or as an agnostic might say, something that designed it. Now, an atheist, the word just means no God. Agnostic basically means there's something bigger and more powerful, but I'm not willing to say it's God. There are those that would subscribe to intelligent design that were not a series of evolutionary accidents, there is something behind all this. There's purpose behind all of it. Does that help a little bit? Yeah.

Now, I will tell you this, I believe the longer you look through a telescope and the longer you look through a microscope, the more you believe there's a God because the more you see how intricate things are and the more you see how incredible things, that the opportunity for accident becomes minimized. For example, and some of you probably heard these illustrations in the past, that you won't see a tornado come through a print factory and produce a perfectly articulated Webster's Dictionary. In other words, order does not come out of chaos, okay? And the true secular evolutionary model subscribes that order came out of chaos. Okay, where I would claim God initiated order and sin brought chaos. The problem per these things is we live in a world where we've seen nothing but through the lens of chaos. We don't know anything but chaos. We don't know anything but destruction. We don't know anything but the mess that's left behind and most of the time we try to put theories together to defend our mess rather than to repent of our mess.

Sir?

[unintelligible]

Yes, sir. Yes, sir, that's one of those out there. Yes, sir. There there are, by the way, there truly are in our world today, there are dozens of resources that are out there. All those resources, listen to me, they're all gonna be one of these five theories. They're all going to subscribe to a God. They're all going to subscribe that we came from God and that we're one day accountable to God. It's how do you draw those conclusions. Now, again, I know we've gone a long time on Genesis today. Hear me out. 1 Peter 3, verse 15 says, always be prepared for an answer. Okay? I know. I know. I know. I know. There's a lot of us here tonight maybe watching online going, oh my goodness, I could have gone to another Bible study and been more fruitful tonight. But I'm going to promise you there's going to come a time where you're gonna run into somebody who's gonna challenge you on this, and you need an answer.

I'm gonna conclude with a true story that happened to a friend of mine, okay? This friend of mine, who happens to be a pastor, had one of these experiences, and we may run a little over, I'll make it quick. You may have experienced this before, and hopefully it won't happen to me tomorrow morning. Have you ever had one of those days where it's trash day, and you forget until you hear the trash can, the trash truck, you know what I'm talking about? Well, it shot him out of bed, he went running in his PJ, he goes flying out there, and he puts the trash, he gets it all in time, right? And he makes something about, he says, "Man, thank you, thank you, thank you." He says, "Wow," this is my friend, "Man, it is really a beautiful day." Now, that's just a casual comment that you might make, right? Okay, the man just got up, he just shot out there in his pajamas. The man collecting trash responded with, "Well, it may be a beautiful day, but you're crazy if you think this came from God." He went... You expect to have these conversations in the academic world. You don't expect to have them while somebody collects your trash. And the reason I bring that up is every human being, no matter what you think about their socioeconomic scale or their skill set, has to answer these questions. Where did I come from? What's the problem? How do I fix it? And where am I going? Every human being is asking where I came from. All I'm asking is be able to articulate what you believe the Bible says because you came from God. I'll let you pick the theory. All right?

Let's pray.

Lord Jesus, tonight, we are grateful that not only do we know that we came from you, but the problem of sin was conquered by you, and that one day we do have the privilege of residing in a place that you call heaven. You said if we believe in God, to believe also in you, that you go to prepare a place for us, if it were not so you would tell us. So thank you, God, tonight that the end of all the theories, at the end of all the ideas, the end of all the speculation, that there is a heaven, there is a hell, and that Jesus Christ is the only one that allows that verdict to be made one way or the other. God, thank you for the privilege of believing. May we go out and study your word so that we can give an answer to those that are questioning. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.