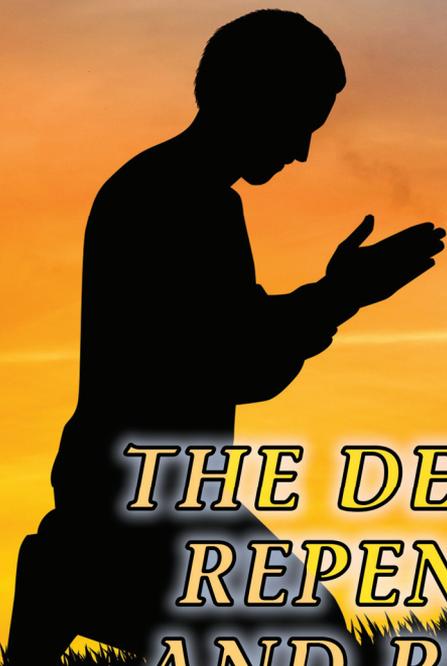


# DOES GOD EXIST?



March/April 2015  
Volume 42 Number 2

*A nonprofit effort  
to convince mankind  
that God is real and  
the Bible is His Word.*



**THE DESIGN OF  
REPENTANCE  
AND RENEWAL**

## Does God Exist? Lectureships

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- Apr. 10–12 Muscatine, IA  
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- May 17–23 York College  
Round Up  
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- June 19–21 ARS International  
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getics Conference  
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- July 25–31 Tahoe Family  
Encampment  
916-989-4885
- Aug. 23–28 Canyonlands Tour  
(see page 18)
- Sep. 27–30 Great Falls, MT  
406-453-3379
- Oct. 10–11 Bloomington, IN  
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Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did (1 John 2:6, NIV).

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Correspondence should be addressed to John Clayton  
1555 Echo Valley Dr., Niles, MI 49120-8738  
e-mail: [jncdge@aol.com](mailto:jncdge@aol.com)

Home phone: 269-687-9426 FAX: 269-687-9431

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**Does God Exist?**, PO Box 2704, South Bend, IN 46680-2704  
Phone: 574-514-1400 or by e-mail: [marcusen@michiana.org](mailto:marcusen@michiana.org)

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# THE DESIGN OF REPENTANCE AND RENEWAL

Who does not love spring? Even those of us who suffer from pollen allergies look forward to this time of year in spite of the fact that we know we will be sneezing and our eyes will be watering and itching. It all goes with the season. I do not think it is just the pretty flowers and the warm weather that makes us love spring. For those of us in Michigan at least, it is the contrast from the darkness and confinement of winter that makes spring uniquely special. When you have been through five months of lake-effect clouds and short days during which you do not see the sun, having longer days and wonderful times of sunshine make spring truly a time of renewal.

In addition to all of this, spring brings freedom from all of the problems that existed in the world around us in the fall. Winter snuffs out the weeds that never got pulled from the garden, and at least for a while all of the weeds we battled in the autumn are gone. The scum on the pond is gone and the pond is full of fresh clean water. Instead of the dead leaves that never got raked up, the forest floor and much of our back yards have fresh new grass, jack-in-the-pulpits, mayapples, and ferns.

In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul uses the analogy of a plant in spring to describe what Christianity is designed to do. “In your own experience you know that a seed does not germinate without itself ‘dying.’” “And when the green shoot comes up out of the seed it is very different from the seed you first planted ...” (verses 36–37, Phillips and TLB). He goes on in verses 42–44 to compare this to life and life after death. He points out that in life we deal with corruption, but in heaven there will be no corruption (verse 42). He finishes by saying we are sown

a natural body and raised a spiritual body. This analogy is carried on in Romans where Paul pushes on to say “don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin” (Romans 6:3–7, NIV).

Second Corinthians 5:17 (KJV) tells us that when we become a Christian we become “a new creature: old things are passed away; ... all things are become new.” Colossians 3:9–10 (KJV) tells us we “put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man; which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.”



We talk in this journal about the design features seen in the creation around us. Our “Dandy Designs” column is now available in five volumes giving hundreds of examples of things observed in the world around us that speak of God’s order, wisdom, and planning. There is perhaps no example of design in the creation that is as important as the design of the Christian system. How important is it to live with a world-view that allows us to make a new start in life? How vital is it to mental health to know that we CAN put our past behind us and make a new beginning?

This new beginning is not a bandage that we can apply outwardly to free ourselves from repeated sin. The most fundamental condition of this freedom is the change of heart that is involved in repentance. The Greek word used for repentance is *metanoia*, meaning “to have a change of mind,” or “to have another mind” (*Young’s Analytical Concordance of the Holy Bible*). Like the planting of the seed, what comes out of repentance looks nothing like what went into it. We think differently, we have different priorities, we put different value on things, and we embrace a different way of living. In the Old Testament under the Law of Moses, people were enslaved to their actions. The “thou shalt” and “thou shalt not” of Judaism (and of all other major world religions today) work on the overt conduct of the individual. However, the weakness of human beings makes these rules unworkable. Paul marveled at how quickly the Galatians left the freedom of Christianity and went back to the enslavement of the

Old Law (see Galatians 1:6; 3:1–4, 11–14; and 6:15). In Colossians 2:8–17 Paul makes additional references to this and tells his readers that Jesus nailed the old ordinances to his cross.

The picture on the cover of this issue conveys the idea that the old man is kneeling before the cross of Jesus so that he can have the Lord’s help in securing the newness that Christianity offers. We are not left hanging out on our own in this renewal process. Peter stated the process in concise form in Acts 2. He was asked what a person needed to do when they realized that they were in the darkness of sin and despair—the winter of living life their own way. His response was, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are afar off, . . .” (Acts 2:38–39, NIV). Notice that Peter tells them to repent—to start thinking differently, to turn away from the past and the attitudes and philosophies and religions that have controlled them, and to turn to a new way of living. That newness is once again the theme of this article. Notice that this newness has linked to it an assistance that was never available before in any religious or philosophical system—and it is still unique today. “The gift of the Holy Spirit” is promised to everyone who will accept Christ and obey him in baptism. That promise applied in Peter’s day and still applies today.

When I became a Christian, I was coming from the darkness of atheism. I had trusted in philosophy and in a lifestyle that revolved around “survival of the fittest.” I had been driven to the brink of suicide by this way of living. I no longer wanted to live a lifestyle that used others and was based upon my own strength—even though at the time, in my own eyes, I WAS “the most fit.” First John 1:5–10 talks vividly about walking in the dark, and I knew what that darkness was about. I knew about obeying God, and I knew I wanted to change. I also knew about my own weakness in how I thought and acted. Romans 7:14–25 is a perfect description of me. My overpowering fear was that I could not change.

The “gift of the Holy Spirit” is not some overwhelming ghost-like creature that solves all of our problems for us and absolves us of any responsibility for making a new beginning. This “gift” is something you have to accept and use. You use this gift by prayer and by allowing the Holy Spirit to guide you in situations where on your own you would fail. For me, even such a simple thing as not filling the



air with expletives was a monstrous challenge. Stopping my criminal acts was simple compared to not thinking with curse words in my thoughts. Looking at a woman without a singular sexual thought was an obstacle that I thought was biological and thus unstoppable. The “newness” that I wanted as a Christian did not come instantaneously. It grew as I matured and learned how to converse with God and how to think differently. Strength that I knew was not of my own origin began to become apparent in my life.

It was a mystery to me how plants knew when to come up in spring and why when they were planted upside down they always emerged right side up. It was a mystery how animals could migrate thousands of miles to a specific point in the middle of a vast ocean. I could not understand how the chemistry of life functioned. As I have learned more about these things, I have seen the wisdom and intelligence involved in the creation. As mysteries are solved by scientists, the intelligence involved in those mysteries becomes more and more apparent. Even more of a mystery to me is the change I have seen happen in my life. I have not “made it” as a Christian and take comfort in the fact that newness does not mean perfection in this world. It is incredibly comforting to me that 1 John 1, which talks about walking in the light, also says, “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. . . . If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives” (1 John 1:8, 10). In between those two verses is the statement “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all unrighteousness.” Romans 7, referred to earlier, ends in the next chapter with a similar statement saying, “There is therefore now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:1, KJV).



in a more important way for us. It talks about how things will be different for us when this life is over. We can truly believe that “He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new’” (Revelation 21:5).

—John N. Clayton



# CAN SATAN REPENT?

I have a question about Satan. I understand that Satan sinned and that he and his angels have been consigned to hell — “a place prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41). But God says that those who repent and ask for forgiveness will be forgiven. If Satan were to be truly sorry and sincerely repent, obey God’s commands, and ask forgiveness would God accept and forgive him?

The above question was asked at a Christian camp session we were privileged to be a part of recently. This is an important question because it gets into what the nature of God is, what angels are, and what it means for humans to be “in the image of God.” Other questions such as: “Who created God?,” “How God can hear everyone’s prayers at once?,” “Why did God create humans?” and “What is it like to die?” are all related to this issue. There are four understandings vital to being able to answer the question of Satan’s repentance, and we would like to discuss those in this article.

## UNDERSTANDING NUMBER ONE.

**There was a creation before time, space, or anything physical existed.** There are numerous biblical passages that refer to events and things that happened before time was created (see John 17:24; Ephesians 1:4; Titus 1:2; 1 Peter 1:20). Angels and the heavenly beings that are not physical were also created before time began. This creation is described in Hebrews 1:7 and 14 “He makes his angels spirits, and his servants as flames of fire. . . . Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve . . . .” These beings were not physical, could not die, and were not limited in space as physical beings are. These angels had the ability to choose between good and evil because without that choice they could not have loved God. Love can only exist if there is a choice. They could choose to love God and to serve him, or they

could choose to reject God. We are told in 2 Peter 2:4 that “God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell.” Jude 6 adds that “the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home ... .” Psalm 8:5 tells us that humans were created lower than angels. In other words angels are not good humans who have passed from this life, and they are not physical beings. Mark 12:25 portrays angels as beings that are not sexual nor do they engage in human relationships such as marriage.

## UNDERSTANDING NUMBER TWO.

**God created space/time after the creation of angels, so angels remain outside space/time.** The very first verse of the Bible uses the Hebrew word *reshith*, which is translated “in the beginning.” It then goes on to tell us that God created space (*shamayim* in Hebrew) and the earth (*erets*).

In Revelation 22:13 Jesus declares “I am Alpha and Omega, ... the beginning and the end.” In 2 Peter 3:10–12 we are told that at the end “the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the elements shall *melt* with fervent heat, the earth also and



the works that are therein shall be burned up. ... all these things will be dissolved ...” (emphasis mine). The Greek word used for melt is *luo*, meaning dissolve, break up, melt.

God’s creation of space/time requires incredible wisdom and planning. First Corinthians 2:7 tells us that the wisdom of God is “hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world ... .” Titus 1:2 tells us God had promised eternal life “before the world began.” In Proverbs 8:22–23 we read wisdom speaking, and she says, “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.” This section of Proverbs goes on to describe the creation process of God from when there was nothing to the finished product.

It is important to understand that any being created prior to the creation of space/time is not limited by space/time. Angels cannot die because they are outside of space and time. Aging does not exist for beings created before space and time existed. Satan is able to be destructive in China and Mexico at the same time because he does not experience time. That is also why he cannot repent. Repentance and being born again to begin a new life (Romans 6:1–10) requires time.

Satan cannot repent because he does not experience the passage of time. It is important for us to understand that when we die we too will have no choice. We need to take advantage of the time-dependent being God has allowed us to be, because the day will come when we will no longer be time-dependent.

Like Satan, all of our choices will be gone. No amount of begging and pleading will do any good.



### UNDERSTANDING NUMBER THREE.

#### **After space/time had been created, God created matter/energy.**

Everything we have described so far is referred to only in general references in the Bible. Proverbs 8 tells us of the complexity of the creation process. It strongly suggests the same kind of cause and effect that we see in quantum mechanics, but very little is spelled out for obvious reasons. That kind of detail is not essential to the Bible's message, and most of the readers over the thousands of years would have been incapable of understanding it anyway.

Genesis 1:1 leads us to the next step in the process—"God created the heaven and the earth" (KJV). The Hebrew word *bara* is used in this verse to indicate a process that only God can do. *Bara* is used 42 times in the Bible, and all of those are creation processes peculiar to God.

Today we know that matter and energy are not different things. They are just different forms of the same thing. Mass can be turned into energy, which is what happens in the atomic bomb. In recent years, we have been able to take energy and turn it into matter. The equation  $E = mc^2$  describes what is going on here. The Bible tells us that "God is light" (1 John 1:5) and light is a form of energy. God simply took some of his own substance and turned it into mass. If you had been watching that process, what would you have seen and what would you have concluded? I suggest you would have seen a singularity burst forth with an infinite amount of light, heat, and nuclear force producing all that we see in the creation around us. You might have referred to it as a "big bang."



## UNDERSTANDING NUMBER FOUR.

**God created humans in a special way, with both the spiritual dimension of the angels and the physical dimension of the physical world.** God himself became physical and dwelt among us (John 1:14) to complete the perfect union of man's spirit with God. Romans 8:16 tells us, "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." In Genesis 1:27 we are told, "So God *created* man in his own image, in the image of God *created* he them" (emphasis mine). The Hebrew word used here is *bara*. Genesis 2:7 tell us that God took the elements of the earth and formed a body and gave it animal life. The Hebrew word used in Genesis 2:7 is the Hebrew *yatshir* (to mold into shape) referring to something a potter might do in shaping clay into a vessel.



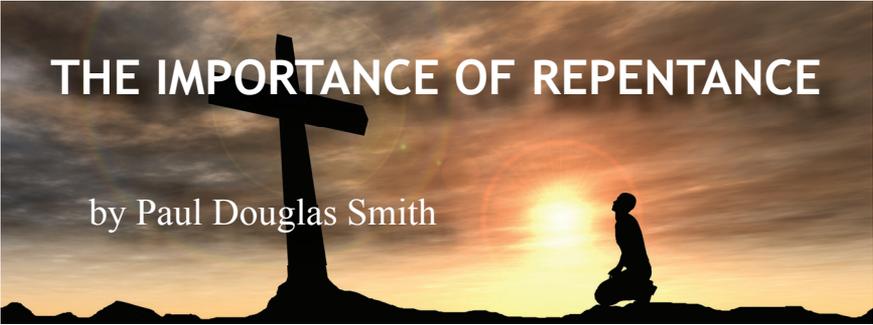
In Psalm 139:13 – 16 the writer tells about God having a relationship with us before we were born. Our real existence as a spiritual being takes place before we enter the physical world, and when we die our spiritual being can be united once again with God. This is a future unique to man because of our having been created in God's image. It

is unique, and it sets us apart. When we sin, unlike the angels, we have the capacity provided by Jesus Christ and his death on the cross to erase our mistake, and be reconciled to God. Being saved is not just a cliché, but rather a description of a wonderful process unique to humans.

It is vital that we not reduce God to the level of a human when we approach these difficult questions. The media and many public speakers, both atheists and believers, tend to make Satan a little man in a red suit with horns and a pitchfork. They also make God an old white man with a beard and an angry expression. God is a spirit and understanding this enables us to be able to get a better understanding of what we are, why we are here, and what we need to do to restore our broken relationship with God. For more information on these subjects, please write us.



—JNC



# THE IMPORTANCE OF REPENTANCE

by Paul Douglas Smith

Before coming to Christ, a person lives totally under the leading of self-will and the lust of the flesh. This explains the biblical connection between the lust of the flesh and the world (1 John 2:16; 1 Peter 1:14). The world consists of the unregenerate masses of mankind who live out their lives dominated by the lust of the flesh. Until one repents of the world he is hopelessly alienated from Jesus Christ.

To grasp true repentance, one must comprehend the nature of sin. A person sins whenever they willfully act upon a flashy impulse to do something that has been forbidden by God. In other words, they reject God's will in favor of their own. Any attempt to find freedom from habitual sin while remaining in self-will is futile.

Repentance (Greek, *metanoia*) means to reconsider, or to experience a change in one's line of thinking. Spiritual repentance is an experience whereby a person's will is altered for the express purpose of bringing it into line with God's will. Repentance describes the transforming of a person who does his own carnal will to one who does the will of the Father.

The act of repentance involves a confession that one's behavior is wrong, a commitment to quit that wrong behavior, and submission to God's will. Godly sorrow that produces a repentance without regret (2 Corinthians 7:10) occurs when the person realizes the error of their ways and agrees to change. This process can be broken down into four basic components:

## 1) **POVERTY OF THE SPIRIT:**

Seeing one's need to change and coming to the realization that you cannot accomplish this change without the power of God.

## 2) **MOURNING OVER SIN:**

Facing the ugliness of one's behavior, and becoming broken over it.

### **3) SUBMISSION TO GOD:**

As the sin in one's heart is exposed, true repentance occurs. Self-will is replaced by submission to God's authority.

### **4) FRUITS OF REPENTANCE:**

As God is permitted to take over one's heart, a change occurs which becomes evident by living life in a Christ-like manner.

An excellent study on the mechanics of repentance comes to us in Matthew chapters 5–7—the Sermon on the Mount. It begins with the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3–12) which describe the attitudes of repentance. After commending these attitudes, Jesus describes the lifestyle that emerges as a result. It is a lifestyle that demonstrates the fruits of repentance and the love that only God can give, leading to a blessed life.

**FAITH LEADS TO REPENTANCE.  
REPENTANCE LEADS TO A CHANGED LIFE.  
A CHANGED LIFE, IS A BLESSED LIFE.**

**WITH A MIGHTY HAND  
AND OUTSTREACHED ARM;  
HIS LOVE ENDURES  
FOREVER.**

**PSALM 136:12**



# WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES FAITH MAKE?

FAITH

by John Cooper

What difference does “faith” make? Does it matter if you have “faith?” How does having “faith” affect our daily lives? These are really important questions and they have a bearing on how we live. Let us consider a few of the ramifications of having faith.

One of the first considerations is what or who do we have faith in. All people have faith in something or someone. Some have faith in money. Some have faith in armaments. Some have faith in government. Some have faith in science. Some have faith in education. Some have faith only in themselves. It is important to place our faith in something that is real, helpful, and lasting.

## FAITH IN GOD IS REAL.

Paul declares in Romans 1:20, “For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made . . . .” There is no other explanation for the origin and order of our universe. Denying the existence of God causes one to live under the delusion that somehow everything we see has no explanation, no purpose, no meaning. How can anyone make good choices when they are living with inaccurate, false information? Atheism leads to bad choices because it is built on a denial of observable proof of the supernatural origin of the universe.



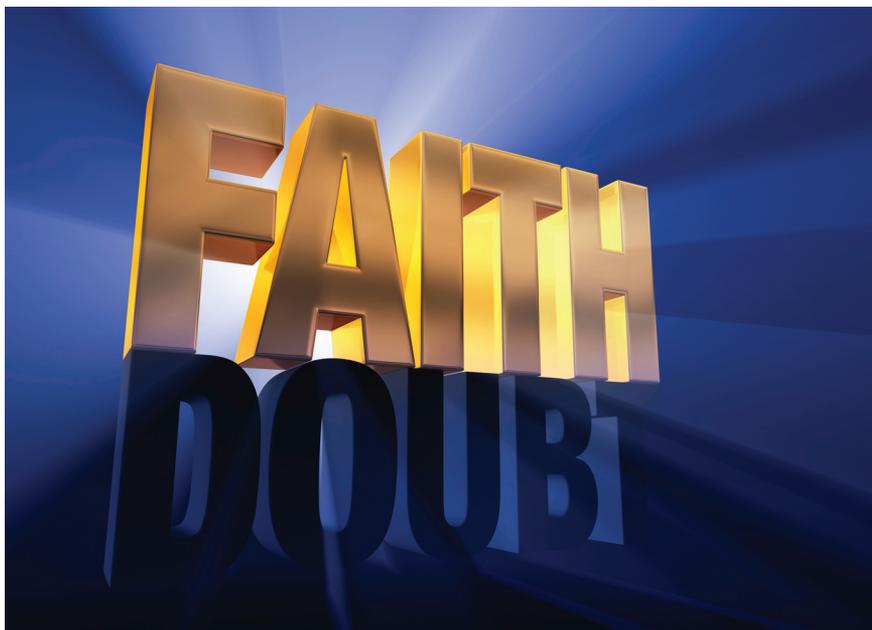
## **FAITH IN GOD IS HELPFUL.**

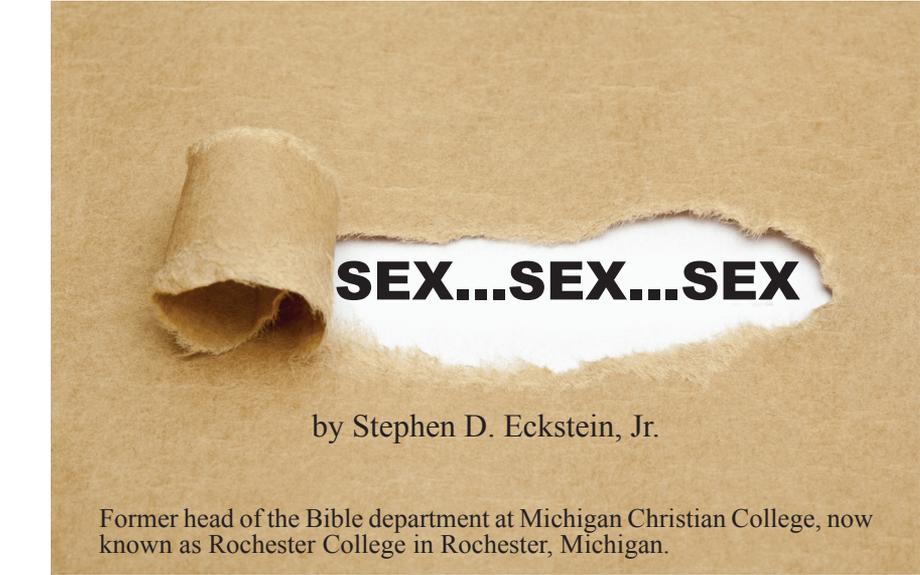
God gives us hope for the future, guidance in the present, and forgiveness for our past. Suicide is a major problem in the county where I live. Several recent articles in the paper indicate no one really knows why people take their own lives. Certainly every case is different, but some over-arching reasons should be considered. People take their own lives when they have no hope, when they are overcome with guilt, when they feel abandoned, overwhelmed, and alone. When people see no positive future in life or when their possessions or relationships disappoint them, they lose hope. Suicide becomes a way out. Faith in the real God of creation will help a person deal with the deadly perils of life.

## **FAITH IN GOD IS LASTING.**

Even death cannot conquer us, since Jesus conquered death. Christians do have hope, help, forgiveness, and loving, caring relationships. Through “faith” we are victorious people. It does make a difference to have faith! Keep the faith—enjoy life!

**And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. Hebrews 11:6**





# SEX...SEX...SEX

by Stephen D. Eckstein, Jr.

Former head of the Bible department at Michigan Christian College, now known as Rochester College in Rochester, Michigan.

## INITIAL REACTIONS

What was your initial reaction to the words in our title? Did the thought that sex is bad, corrupt, and evil come into your mind? Or did you think about the sex literature that is often featured at newsstands throughout the nation? Or did you experience a wave of disgust at another article on sex—perhaps the major topic of movies, magazines, and common talk among the American people? Or did you lament the condition of our so-called Christian America in its sexual abuses in contrast with the beauty and holiness of proper sex relationships as depicted in God’s word?

It is my hope that the last mentioned concept was your first thought. However, if one of the others flashed through your mind, it was because we have been subjected to a constant stream of perversion in nearly all of our media and have received little constructive teaching in our homes and congregations. Some have omitted this teaching entirely because of prudish misconceptions that sex is bad, but a necessary evil connected with marriage.

## THE NEED

Often our youth receive little or no teaching in a straightforward, clear-cut manner prior to college age. In too many cases, even then evasive generalities are used. Therefore, I feel the necessity of teaching sex and its varied aspects to the youth in our church. Church young people today are forming a neglected set of values in regard to sex and sexual conduct. Thus, I would like to list the following principles for teaching sex to our youth:

# BIBLE PRINCIPLES

## 1. THE BIBLE SPEAKS PLAINLY, FRANKLY, AND OFTEN ON SEX FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION.



Many of the sex episodes recorded are evil, but this does not make the Bible an evil book. They are not included for the corrupt in mind who wish a lustful story to whet their evil appetites. They are included with all the sordid details in order to show clearly that the holy and pure can become exceedingly sinful by misuse. (Note the principle of Romans 7:13.) These stand

out as God's solemn warnings to those who might venture on the same ruinous course today. They were written for our admonition and learning. Each should be studied carefully for the intended lessons.

## 2. THE LORD SET FORTH SOME GREAT PRINCIPLES.

This is especially true of the Pentateuch, which shows the various types of sexual sin and their consequences both in the lives of the guilty and the innocent. These principles can be further explained by examples cited in the Bible. Study of these in conjunction with the use of a good concordance can be very rewarding.

## 3. THE LORD SPEAKS PLAINLY ON THE BEAUTY, HO-LINESS, AND SANCTITY OF THE SEX RELATIONSHIP IN MARRIAGE.

God created man and woman with the desire for the opposite sex and has prepared for its proper expression and fulfillment in the marriage relationship. Because of much misinformation and distortion of the truth in movies and other media, young, impressionable minds have been deceived by Satan. The result is that they are engaging in all kinds of sexual irregularities in the single state and outside the marriage relationship.

Any Christian who has counseled with youth can testify that sex problems are often foremost. As a result, it is necessary to counteract such by clear-cut, positive teaching from God's word that marriage is based primarily upon the spiritual union between a man and a woman in Christ. This makes it possible for the physical (which includes the sex relationship), the moral, emotional, and intellectual aspects of



husband and wife to blend increasingly together as the years pass. Without this vital spiritual union in Christ, troubles are sure to arise. This should be made crystal clear. In such a marriage, the sex relationship will take its proper place in the whole of marriage and be a contributing factor to the

benefit of both husband and wife as they grow together in the Lord.

#### **4. A FREE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND DISCUSSION IN CLASS WITHOUT RIDICULE IS IMPERATIVE.**

No questions should be evaded as foolish. Young men and women should express their views frankly in order to reveal their thinking to other members of the class and thus facilitate better understanding.

#### **SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY**

1. List all Bible examples and principles on sex and marriage.
2. Arrange these under the headings PROPER USE and MISUSE. Point out in your study of each the blessings enjoyed in proper use and the curses and misery that follow from misuse.
3. Discuss the purpose of marriage as intended by God and the role of the sex relationship. List and discuss sex ideals that should be striven for by the young man and woman as they plan for marriage and for those already married.
4. Discuss the remarkable nature of the sexual union—the power entrusted by God to man and woman to participate jointly in the beginning of souls that shall live eternally.

May God bless our teachers and their students in their efforts to teach sex and sex conduct as holy, wholesome, and beautiful.



# DOES GOD EXIST? 2015 Canyonlands Tour

**WHEN:** August 23-28, 2015

**WHERE:** Leaving from and returning to Flagstaff, Arizona

**WE WILL BE VISITING:** Sunset Crater, the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, Zion Canyon, Lake Powell, Meteor Crater, The Painted Desert, and the Petrified Forest. Lectures by John Clayton and Alan Doty will be conducted onboard the coach as we travel from one site to the next. Then in-the-field visits will be made to the places discussed. This is a trip for Christians that will feature devotional messages, singing/worship, and Bible study, as well as lessons in science. We will enjoy the beauty of God's creation and learn about God's methods and how the evidence supports the integrity of God's Word.

**PROVIDED & INCLUDED:** All transportation Monday through Friday from Flagstaff and return via air-conditioned motor coach. All lodging at the motels including breakfast beginning Monday at 6:00 a.m. through Friday at 6:00 p.m. All park entry fees and all educational materials. Tour Captain, from our travel partner QueensLander Worldwide Tours, who will provide logistics and on-site support.

**NOT PROVIDED:** Lunches and dinners, Gratuities for Driver and Tour Captain, souvenirs and items of a personal nature.

**COST:** \$879.00 per person based on double occupancy.

**DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION** with QueensLander Tours is **May 1, 2015.**



**Grand Canyon**



**Sunset Crater**



**Petrified Forest**



**Bryce Canyon**



**Zion Canyon**

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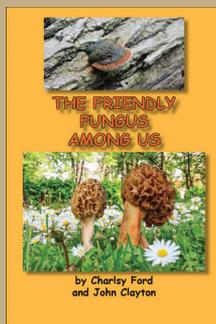


College credit will be available on an arranged basis with this year's trip. This will be handled by York College in York, Nebraska. For information on credits, grading, and tuition please contact York College at 402-363-5621.

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# GREAT SCIENTISTS AND GOD

Editor's Note: There are many writers who claimed that good scientists and intelligent, well-educated people do not believe in God. This simply is not true. Tihomir Dimitrov (<http://nobelists.net>) has been researching the statements of the greatest scientists of all time, and we are reproducing some of their statements in this column.

FRED HOYLE

1915-2001

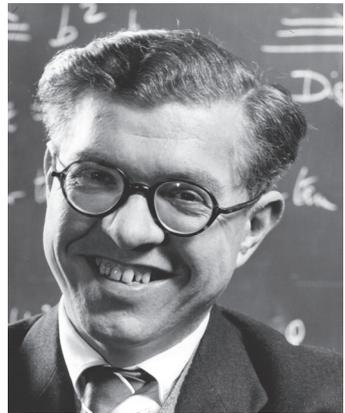
Cambridge Professor of Astronomy  
Plumian Professor of Astronomy  
Director of the Institute of Astronomy

Known in his youth as an atheist, Hoyle became a promoter of panspermia, the idea that aliens have seeded life on earth, and backed away from his atheism. Hoyle likened the chances of the cosmos coming into existence by chance to a solar system of blind men solving Rubik's Cube simultaneously. Hoyle wrote these words:

“Some supercalculating intellect must have designed the properties of the carbon atom, otherwise the chance of my finding such an atom through the blind forces of nature would be utterly minuscule.’ ... A common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology, and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature. The numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion beyond question.”

“The issue of whether the universe is purposive and whether the universe is a product of thought is an ultimate question that is way in the back of everybody's mind ... I have to say that this is also my personal opinion, ... There are very many aspects of the universe where you either have to say there have been monstrous coincidences, which there might have been, or alternatively, there is a purposive scenario to which the universe conforms.”

Sources: *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* of the American Scientific Affiliation, June 2014, page 113, and Wikipedia.



# Cynthia's Corner

## RENEWAL



As I write this at the coldest time of year, looking out my back window at the St. Joseph River which is frozen and covered with snow, I look forward to spring when the cycle of renewal and regeneration begins again. We can count on this—the seasons follow one after another.

Just as the earth is renewed, God gives each human the opportunity to be renewed—to begin again. No, not to change the past, but to be forgiven of it and have it blotted out of God's memory (Isaiah 43:25). God remembers our sins no more (Jeremiah 31:34b). That is an incredible gift and blessing God gives to those who repent and turn to him in humility and obedience!

What is repentance that is acceptable to God? Remember that God knows our minds and hearts (Psalm 139:1–4). We cannot fool God. What exactly is repentance and what does it do? Is worldly sorrow the same as repentance? Second Corinthians 7:8–11 discusses the differences between worldly and Godly sorrow. We also have two classic, biblical examples of worldly and Godly sorrow in Judas and Peter, two of Jesus' twelve chosen disciples. Judas betrayed Jesus for money, was sorry he did it, and attempted to return the money. But, his worldly sorrow led to his death—he hanged himself (Matthew 27:1–5). Peter, on the other hand, denied Jesus three times and “wept bitterly” about it (Luke 22:54–62). But, his Godly sorrow led to repentance and forgiveness. He rejoined his fellow disciples (John 20), and then Jesus himself “reinstated” him (John 21:15–19).

Real repentance is not just talk or a verbal admission of wrongdoing. It is demonstrated in a changed life that conforms to God's word in how we live and how we treat others every day (1 John 2:3–6). Peter's repentance was demonstrated by how he lived the rest of his life. The Christian life, just like the seasons, is a continual journey of repentance and renewal (1 John 1:7–9) as we strive to “walk as Jesus did” (1 John 2:6).

ADDRESS CHANGE? To remain on our mailing list, please give us both your old and new addresses with both zip codes at least six to eight weeks before the move, if at all possible. Thanks!

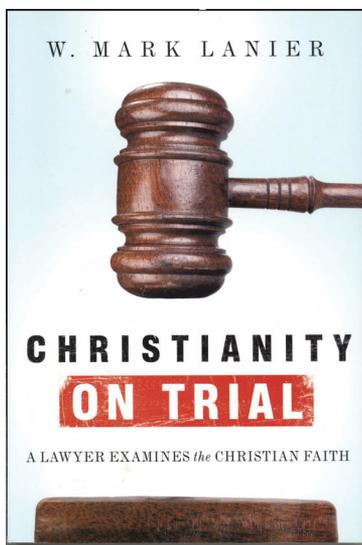




The books that are reviewed in the Book Reviews section are not available through us, but can be obtained from a local bookstore or through many online bookstores.

### **Christianity On Trial: A Lawyer Examines the Christian Faith**

by W. Mark Lanier, IVP Books © 2014,  
230 pages, \$13.16 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-0-8308-3667-3



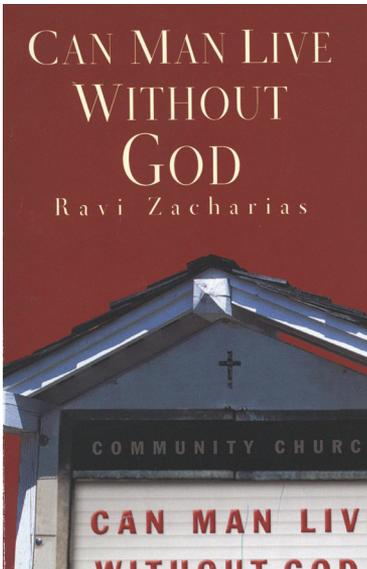
W. Mark Lanier is a trial lawyer with a very high standing in the secular world as one of the top lawyers in America. Ken Starr, the president of Baylor University, calls this book a trial lawyer's version of *Mere Christianity* (the classic by C. S. Lewis). That is a good description. Each of the 12 chapters has a "Witness List" and examines the witnesses in a legal style. The witnesses include historical figures, atheists, and the authors of various books in the Bible. The legal part of the book is explained by Lanier in simple terms as he goes along, so the book is very understandable and easy to follow.

Lanier has an excellent understanding at a theological level of what and who God is. Three chapters are involved with what and who God is NOT and what and who God IS. The logical approach to the moral issues and free-will is handled very well. The question of how God communicates with humankind is handled in an excellent manner.

In typical legal style, Lanier has an opening statement and a closing argument. We recommend this book highly. It will be especially useful in dealing with people who have an interest in the humanities and in matters related to debate techniques and ethics.

## Can Man Live Without God

by Ravi Zacharias, Thomas Nelson Publisher © 2004,  
218 pages, \$13.99 (paperback), ISBN-13: 978-0-8499-4528-1



Dr. Ravi Zacharias is one of the top defenders of Christianity and the Bible in today's world. He holds degrees from several reputable schools including a Doctor of Divinity from Houghton College, a Doctor of Laws degree from Asbury College with a post doctoral in English romantic poets at Cambridge University. He is a brilliant author and an excellent debater. This book is not a book of science, but rather a philosophical approach.

The book is divided into three parts with five or six sections to each part. The first part is titled "Anti-theism is Alive and Deadly." Using massive numbers of quotes and stories of everyone from Nietzsche to Mohammed Ali, Zacharias shows how atheism

fails in practice and in theory to produce quality in life. Quotes of leading scholars of major atheist and agnostic views are used, and the conclusion is that "outside of Christ there is no law, no hope, and no meaning."

The second section is about making sense of life. It is titled "What Gives Life Meaning?" Defining truth and creating a workable philosophy of life are the main subjects with the goal of the section to show that wonder, truth, love, and security are only found in God.

The third section is titled "Who is Jesus and Why Does it Matter?" It works in a theological perspective to the question of whether man can live without God.

There are two very useful appendices in the book. One is from the Veritas lectures at Harvard, presenting a question/answer session that is very interesting and helpful. The other is a review of famous skeptics/atheists quotes, including Descartes, Hume, Kant, Kierkegaard, Russell, and Sartre, showing their education value and their weaknesses.

This is a good book for college students, especially those students taking a philosophy class. The book is well written and useful for college students. For a lay reader not familiar with academic atheist material, it may be of lesser interest.

# DANDY DESIGNS

## STRUCTURAL COLOR

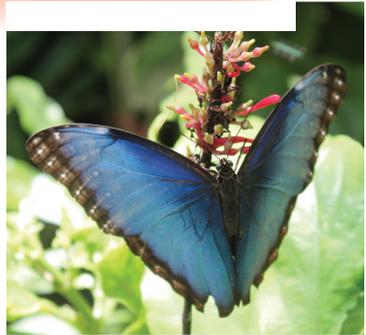
We are all familiar with color produced from dyes. Dyes use the electrons in their atoms to control the colors they reflect. A blue dye reflects blue and absorbs all other colors because the particles reflect the energy from the blue wavelengths and absorb all other wavelengths.

In structural color, the material is actually colorless, but light is scattered in such a way that certain wavelengths get amplified and reflected through constructive interference. Opal is an example of this. Opals are made of silica spheres about 200 nanometers in diameter. Silica is colorless, but when the spheres are arranged in a particular pattern the light is scattered, and wavelengths constructively interfere in different positions giving color. Each wavelength produces a different color at a particular position. Structural color cannot be bleached or changed unless the very structure of the mineral is changed.

This color production is called isotropic structural color because it depends on the angle of viewing. The structure of the material determines the color. Peacock feathers, bluebirds, and morpho butterflies are living examples of structural color. It is also seen in some plants. There is great interest in this method of producing color because it will not change with time and does not require harmful dyes to produce.

We are all stirred by the beauty of the world around us, and God's wisdom and intelligence are displayed in many ways. As we grow in our understanding of what God has done, we continue to be amazed at the complexity of God's world and of the wonder-working hand that has gone before us.

Our thanks to Dr. Matt Meredith, who sent us this information taken from *Chemical and Engineering News*.



# HOW AND WHY DO SONGBIRDS SING

One of the oldest debates among biological scientists is what is sometimes called “the nurture versus nature debate.” The question is whether things that animals do are all learned behaviors or simply a part of the design of their genetics, programed into their DNA at their origin. For many years, experiments have been conducted to answer this question. In previous issues of this bimonthly we have discussed migrations of a variety of animals and how those migrations benefit themselves and/or the other forms of life that share their ecosystem.

There is not much doubt about why birds sing. Contrary to what the word “sing” implies, birds are not just musicians who sing for their own enjoyment. The songs of birds have been shown to warn other birds to stay out of their territory, or perhaps to warn other animals of common dangers and opportunities. Songs are also used to attract mates.

In 1996 an interesting study was done to see what the origin of this method of attraction might be. Meredith West at Indiana University took cowbirds as the ideal subject to



test theories about songs being used to attract mates. This is because cowbirds lay their eggs in the nests of other birds who then hatch and raise the babies. The mother cowbird never has contact with the offspring so she can have no nurturing effect. West housed a group of baby male cowbirds with female cowbirds, and another group with canaries. When both sets of birds were released into a common aviary, the canary-raised birds made a beeline to the canaries and sang only to them and to each other. The cowbird-raised birds flirted with the cowbirds.

What is interesting about this experiment is that when they introduced normal male cowbirds to the aviary, the cowbirds raised with canaries quickly learned the cowbird songs and became expert crooners and courtiers. Also interesting is the fact that other species of birds such as catbirds, seem to be able to develop their singing skills with no contact with other members of their species. Researchers are saying that the songs of birds have a genetic disposition, but their surroundings can affect how the songs are molded and shaped. God’s design for successful mating is seen in this, and the complexity of it is astounding. The implications for humans are significant. Source: *Science News*, May 4, 1996, page 280.

# News and Notes

## SEX CHANGE IS BIOLOGICALLY IMPOSSIBLE

according to Dr. Paul McHugh of Johns Hopkins Hospital. Dr. McHugh is a psychiatry professor who maintains that people opting for transgenderism have a mental disorder. Like homosexuality most people who are asking for a sex change operation have a multiplicity of things that contribute to their feelings. Abuse, drug use



by them or their parents, environmental pollution, and social pressure are all involved in both situations. Some support for McHugh's position comes from the Federal Bureau of Prisons which reports that 47% of black transgender Americans have been incarcerated. In sex-change operations there is a forced biological change that usually requires hormones and other chemical factors to get into

the medical solution. The effects of these drugs on the mind, as well as the chemical problems induced by the surgical procedures, are largely unknown. There will be a lot of complaining from gay-rights activists and political liberals about McHugh's position. Christians need to understand that our role should be to show compassion and sympathy to all people in our society, including people who struggle with their sexual identity, whatever the cause may be. That has to be tempered with a recognition that God is very clear about what his plan is for men and women (Genesis 2:24; Romans 1:18–27). Source: *The Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2014.

**“GAY” MARRIAGE — EASY TO DO AND HARD TO UNDO.** As our culture has embraced same-sex marriage and is now considering polygamy, polyandry, group marriage, and even human/animal marriage, the question remains how do you break up such marriages? In Missouri, divorce is denied by the state. Several other states have long waiting periods for a divorce to be recognized. The question of common law marriages is also surfacing in several states. The bottom line is that God's plan for marriage works. When man tries to change what God has instituted, the result is always

destructive and painful. Source: *South Bend Tribune*, December 16, 2014, page A8.

**ABORTION DEBATE CONTINUES TO SWIRL AROUND THE WRONG QUESTIONS.** Abortion continues to be a divisive subject and people on all sides of the issue continue to harp on the wrong questions. In the *Washington Post*, Janet Harris complains about Planned Parenthood and pro-lifers using the phrase “difficult decision” when referring to abortion. She maintains that 87% of women who have had abortions had a “high confidence” in their decisions. Kevin Drum writing in *Mother Jones* complains about pro-lifers who have abortions when faced with an unwanted pregnancy. From President Obama to pro-life picket carriers, the question of when life begins remains unanswered and often unapproached. When politicians are asked, “When does human life begin?” the almost universal response is as Obama said, “I haven’t investigated that issue.” If you have not answered that question, how can you make a decision on whether abortion is murder or not? From a logical, scientific standpoint, it is clear that human life begins at conception. It is also clear that the fetus is not “an extension of the mother’s body.” The fact that our society has become calloused to the point of not caring whether the aborted baby is a human or not does not answer the most important question about abortion. Source: *The Week*, August 29, 2014, page 17, and *MotherJones.com*.

**ISLAM AND VIOLENCE.** Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me” (John 14:6). We maintain in this journal that he was stating a fact. Obviously, in our day of religious pluralism, many people object to that belief and attach the label of “intolerant” to it. One of the objections to Islam is the violence that groups like ISIS practice against everyone, including other Muslims. Defenders of Islam say “ISIS is not—nor will it ever be—Islamic.” It is true that Muslim groups all over the world have distanced themselves from ISIS. Atheists and Muslims alike compare ISIS to the Ku Klux Klan, which claimed to be a “Christian” organization. They say that the Klan and ISIS are identical in their methods. The fallacy in that argument is that the Ku Klux Klan’s actions were in opposition to everything Jesus taught. Nowhere in the New Testament is there any instruction for Christians to kill their enemies. In fact, just the opposite is taught as Christians are told to love their enemies (Matthew 5:43–45). ISIS can turn to the Koran and quote Mohammed’s instructions, “When you meet the unbelievers in the battlefield strike off their heads” (Sura 47:3–5). The command to make war and slay the enemies of Islam is clear in Suras 8:37–41 and 9:4–7. There is no valid comparison to be made between Islam

and Christianity concerning violence. Source: *The Koran*, Penguin Classics, 1974, and *The Week*, September 16, 2014, page 17.

**ANTI-RELIGION SILLINESS INCREASES.** You wonder where it will end. According to *The Week*, September 5, 2014, page 4, a student in a Tennessee classroom named Kendra Turner said “bless you” to another student who had sneezed. For that Kendra was suspended. The school maintains that “bless you” is on the teacher’s list of “banned language.” Turner says she has a right to free speech. The teacher is quoted as saying, “We’re not going to have godly speaking in my class.” As a former high school teacher, I am sure there is more to this story than *The Week* is reporting. The fact is that our culture is becoming paranoid about anything that is construed to be religious.

**THE CHANGING EARTH.** We have had numerous articles in this journal over the years concerning the need for change. We have tried to point out that Christians are to be new people, constantly growing and changing in a variety of ways. The very existence of earth and its resources for humans depends on change. We get new information nearly every day about how this change occurs. The latest figures show that one of these changes is that our planet gets 40,000 metric tons of cosmic dust added to it every year. This dust comes from the creation of the solar system and the stresses put on comets as they orbit the sun. This dust continually adds minerals to the earth’s ecosystem and is being studied for a variety of practical uses. Compared to earth’s mass of about 6,000 billion, billion metric tons, the dust is not enough to alter our orbit around the sun substantially. However, it does affect all of life on earth in direct and indirect ways. Source: *Astronomy* magazine, September 2014, page 56.

**COURT DECISION MAKES SECULAR HUMANISM A RELIGION.** For some time there has been a battle going on in the Federal District Court in Oregon. The American Humanist Association representing a federal prisoner, Jason Holden, in suing the United States for not considering Humanism to be a religion. They want Humanism to have all rights afforded to religions. Specifically, Holden wanted the prison he is in to allow the formation of a Humanist study group. On October 30, 2014, Judge Ancer Haggerty issued a ruling agreeing with the plaintiffs saying, “The Court finds that Secular Humanism is a religion for Establishment Clause purposes.” Many humanists will not like this ruling which admits that humanism is a faith and not a fact, and the rules and restrictions placed on religion are something atheists have not had to contend with in the past. It also means that secular humanism cannot be entwined with curriculum in the schools

and that it must be separated from the state in church/state questions. It will be interesting to see how this decision impacts the church/state struggles that have been going on throughout the United States.

### **AUSCHWITZ TURNS INTO A PARTY.**

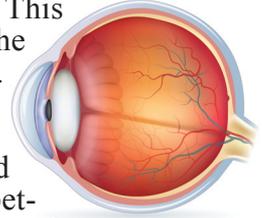
Over a million people were murdered at the Auschwitz concentration camp. It is now a tourist attraction with special observation platforms at the gas chambers, the gallows, the latrines, and the torture chambers. In *The Week* (November 7, 2014, page 16) there is a description of “jolly tourists” who behave as if they were going to an amusement park instead of a Nazi death camp. Instead of learning about the Holocaust and where racism and naturalism can take us, the visitors turn a tragedy into an amusement park atmosphere. It is no wonder that we are insensitive to the pain and suffering in the world, and paralyzed in doing anything to stop it when the tragedies of the past are dismissed in the name of keeping ourselves entertained.



**ASSISTED SUICIDE GROWS.** Most of us have been astounded at the rapid growth of people taking their own lives. November 1, 2014, saw a great deal of media attention given to two women with terminal brain cancer. One was a married woman who was having headaches from her cancer requiring constant medication. Otherwise she was able to do everything she normally did, including conducting interviews on television. She ended her life in Oregon where she had moved to participate in assisted suicide legally. The other was a young lady fulfilling her dream of playing in a college basketball game even though she had some severe motor problems from her cancer. Her last days were made special by her continuing to fulfill her dreams and have an influence on others. Five states in the U.S. allow doctors to prescribe lethal doses of prescription medications to terminally ill patients. In Switzerland, where “going to Switzerland” has become a euphemism for assisted suicide, businesses now operate which give customers access to medically assisted suicide. Studies show that 21 percent of the over 1000 customers of assisted suicide clinics since 1998 did not have a terminal or progressive illness. Some of the customers committed suicide due to ringing in the ears or because of being disfigured by a cosmetic surgery. Our world has decided that human life is no different from any animal life. You can now travel to Switzerland and die at the hands of a doctor in one day. If we are not created in the image of

God and have no purpose in existing, then the termination of one's life is of no consequence.

**NEW DATA REFUTES CRITICS OF EYE DESIGN.** Atheists frequently try to dispute the design of things in the creation. One of the claims is that some things, such as the human eye, are poorly designed. In the case of the eye, there has been criticism of where the optic nerve is attached to the eye. This attachment point produces a “blind spot” in the vision for which the brain has to compensate. New research shows that the position of the optic nerve allows for greater resolving power so that the eye sees more clearly than it would if the nerve were attached anywhere else. The better our data becomes, the more evidence we see for design in every part of the creation. As David said, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful.” (Psalm 139:14). Source: *Atlantis Rising*, November/December 2014, #108, page 10.



**DNA DISCOVERER SELLS NOBEL PRIZE.** James Watson, who along with Francis Crick discovered the double helix structure of DNA, has decided to sell his medal. Watson has gotten a lot of criticism in recent years because of a public statement to the *Times of London* in 2007 in which he maintained that “intelligence in Africa is different than ours.” The fact is that Watson’s statement was based on his faith in evolution as the sole cause of differences in living things. Watson’s belief (and that of people who justified slavery in the past) is that whites were more highly evolved than blacks. Watson’s most damning statement was, “Despite hopes that everyone is equal, people who have to deal with black employees find this is not true.” The Bible maintains the equality of all humans in passages like Galatians 3:28, and all evidence points to the fact that IQ tests were culturally loaded making their results invalid. In fact, we are all equal as humans, and the tragedy of racial prejudice lies to a great degree at the feet of naturalists like Watson, not the teachings of Christ. Source: AOL News, December 4, 2014.

**CHIMP LAWSUIT ADVANCES.** Four captive chimpanzees in New York have become the first non-human primates in history to sue their human captors in an attempt to gain their freedom. Actually this is being done by a group of lawyers who have formed an organization called the Nonhuman Rights Project. The basis of all of this is that the chimps have been shown “to possess highly developed cognitive capabilities.” The chosen criteria for that statement include such things as infant care, indication of social awareness, expressions

of love, demonstrations of emotion, a concept of past and future, the ability to make tools, and genetic similarities to humans. If you believe that humans are just a product of natural processes and thus have no special characteristics, then such a lawsuit makes sense. If you believe that humans were specially created in God's image, then your view is entirely different. Christianity teaches social responsibility including obeying laws, paying taxes, etc. How these chimps will do those things is not clear. It is also interesting that whales, elephants, and even dogs demonstrate some of these characteristics, and anthropomorphism (ascribing human characteristics to animal behavior) seems to be the basis of all of this. Source: *Popular Science*, December 2014, page 84.

**FALSE MEMORY SYNDROME DEBUNKED.** Since the time of Freud there have been psychiatrists who have maintained that abuse and trauma experienced as a child can be forgotten for decades and then reappear as mental illness later in life. There have even been cases where parents have been dragged into court and subjected to humiliation and financial hardship to treat Decades Delayed Disclosure (DDD). In almost all cases where this has happened the families have been torn apart, and some Christian families have suffered from such claims. A group called the False Memory Syndrome Foundation has been formed in Philadelphia to combat this kind of therapy of a supposed abuse which, as it turns out, usually has not happened. In many cases, discipline that was biblical and not abusive is what the child is reacting to. It is a situation of normal resentment from an adolescent struggling with desire and resenting parental guidance. The religious implications of this mental health myth's effect on people are enormous. Source: *Skeptical Inquirer*, January/February 2015, page 16.

**COMET LANDING DATA COMES IN.** On November 12, 2014, a robot called Philae fell from its mother ship Rosetta onto comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko. As data came in from the robot's activity, which includes drilling into the surface, one immediate result was that the water found in the comet is not the kind of water that produced the oceans on earth. The comet's water contains very high amounts of heavy hydrogen, which is hydrogen with a neutron in the nucleus making it heavier than ordinary hydrogen. That means that the water on earth did not come from this kind of comet and must have some other source. This is another step in understanding the uniqueness of planet earth. The special methods that produced our planet speak of wisdom and design. The more we learn about the cosmos and its creation, the closer we get to the Creator. Source: *Science News*, December 13, 2014, page 6.

This journal is a part of a program of service titled **Does God Exist?** The purpose of the program is to provide thinking, seeking people with scientific evidence that God does exist and that the Bible is His Word. It is our conviction that all men can logically and rationally believe in God. In addition to this bimonthly journal, the **Does God Exist?** program offers DVDs and video tapes, CDs and audio tapes, courses, books, and other materials. These materials are offered on a loan basis or at our cost. We also are more than willing to correspond with you and answer any specific question(s) you might have. If you would like further information on borrowing or purchasing these materials, we would be glad to send it to you. Check the boxes below to describe what you would like and mail it to us. We will get it right out to you.

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