

time continuum. According to Dr. Francis Collins, a geneticist who is the head of the Human Genome Project, forty percent of scientists believe in God and believe that He created life.

Collins stated that after serious reflection, “I began to realize that the evidence for the existence of God, while not proof, was actually pretty compelling. It made me realize that atheism would no longer be an acceptable choice for me, as it was the least rational of the options.” (quoted in *A Place for Truth*, Dallas Willard, ed., IVP, pp. 78-79)

Yes, there is an anti-supernatural bias among many scientists and others. But to those of us who have opted for a belief in God, it seems that it takes a far greater leap of faith to believe that life just happened and that it happened to evolve into the amazing complexity and diversity that we see all around us!

True, some very smart and thoughtful people don't believe in God, but some very smart and thoughtful people do believe in God. Admittedly, a decision about whether God exists and created life, including us, has profound ramifications. If it all just happened, and happens to be here, life has no ultimate meaning and purpose. If God created it, and us, our lives have meaning and a purpose, and this reality should make a difference in how we should live. The existence of life can't force someone to believe in God as creator, but the miracle of life gives many of us reason enough to believe that He is just that!

by David J. Claassen

daveclaassen.com

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FAITH FILES

Reasons Enough for Belief

#002

The Source of Life



David J. Claassen

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The Source of Life

The earth is full of life of incredible diversity. Scientists continue to discover new species at the rate of 1500 a year. The best estimate is that there may be over 8 million species on earth.

One of the most fundamental questions is where all of this life came from. There are two basic answers. Some believe it came about naturally, through a non-directed evolutionary process. Others believe that it was created by God.

The Belief in Naturalistic Evolution

Natural evolutionists believe that in a primordial environment there was the right mix of gases such as hydrogen, methane, ammonia, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, etc. that interacted with some type of energy such as the sun or lightning that converted these basic elements into a variety of amino acids. Those evolved into proteins; the proteins eventually evolved into simple cells, complete with DNA to replicate themselves.

Dr. Stephen Meyer, a geophysicist who earned a doctorate at Cambridge, wrote, "Consider what you'd need for a protein molecule to form by chance. First, you need the right bonds between the amino acids. Second, amino acids come in right-handed and left-handed versions, and you've got to get only left-handed ones. Third, the amino acids must link up in a specified sequence, like letters in a sentence. Run the odds of these things falling into place on their own and you find that the probabilities of forming a rather short functional protein at random would be one chance in a hundred thousand trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion trillion. That's a ten with 125 zeroes after it! And that would only be one protein molecule — a minimally complex cell would need between three hundred and five hundred protein molecules." (Dr. Stephen Meyers, quoted from *The Questions Christians Hope No One Will Ask*, Mark Mittelberg, Tyndale, pp. 39-40)

Even the simplest of cells is amazingly complex and has hundreds of thousands of bits of information stored in its DNA. DNA is an astonishingly complex storage mechanism. During cell division this DNA is replicated into the new cell, so both have the same information. In fact, scientists have recently discovered that DNA has a built-in error-proof mechanism so that mis-

takes in replication rarely happen.

So effective is DNA at storage that scientists are experimenting with using DNA as a storage device for computer data. As of this writing they've succeeded at storing 700 terabytes of information in a single gram of DNA. It would take 14,000 Blue-ray discs to hold that much information!

If we saw several dozen stones on a beach we'd think they've been placed there by the forces of time, including the waves. But if those stones clearly spell "I love Lucy" we'd know someone had consciously moved them into the appropriate places so that they make sense. Information requires someone to have organized it. The storage and sharing of information in a meaningful way, so that it makes sense, requires intentional effort. DNA seems to shout that it has been designed.

Scientists, after great effort and using complex laboratory equipment, have failed to create a protein, let alone a strand of DNA or a simple cell. Even if they succeed at creating a protein, or something slightly more complex, it will only add to the argument that it takes intentional and intelligent effort to do so!

How, Then, Did God Create Life?

Among those who believe God created life there's disagreement as to how exactly He did so. There are three major views. There are those who hold to a young-earth view, that the world and everything in it was created in a literal six days of twenty-four hours each. Others hold to an old-earth view, that the "days" of Genesis refer to vast periods of time: millions or even billions of years. A third view is the theistic evolution view, that God used and guided the evolutionary process.

Though Christians differ on how God created the universe and life, they all hold to the belief that God created all that is. Christians can have a friendly debate with each other as to how God created it all, but we stand united in the firm conviction that God did it.

"Then God said, 'Let the land produce vegetation'... And God said, 'Let the water teem with living creatures'... And God said, 'Let the land produce living creatures'... Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...'" (Genesis 1:11, 20, 24, 26)

A Creator Makes Sense

We can't use science to disprove God. Science can only deal with what's observable. Many people believe that what is observable was made by a creator who is not observable, at least not by scientific methods. The belief is that God, who is outside space and time, and is neither energy or matter, created what exists — energy, matter, and life — within a space and