

Which is True: Creation, Evolution, or Both?

Steven R. Hemler, President

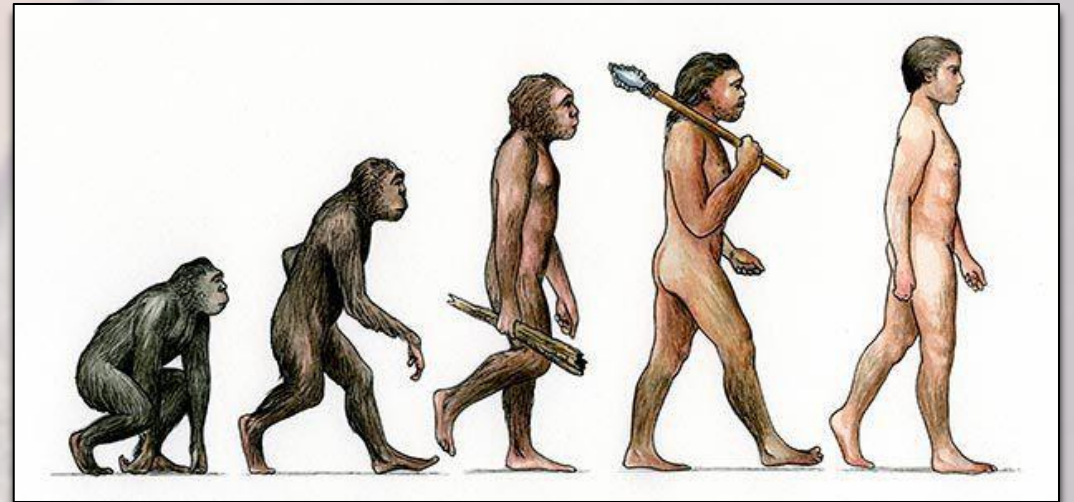


How to Respond?

- “Man is the result of a purposeless and natural process that did not have him in mind. He was **not** planned.”
 - *Paleontologist Dr. George Gaylord Simpson*
- “The more we know of evolution, the more unavoidable is the conclusion that living things, including human beings, are produced by a natural process, with no indication of a controlling creator.”
 - *Evolutionary Biologist Dr. David Barash*
- “Biologists must constantly keep in mind that what they see was **not** designed, but rather evolved.”
 - *Dr. Francis Crick, co-discoverer of DNA*
- “Evolution is the greatest engine of **atheism** ever invented.”
 - *Biologist Dr. Will Provine*

Part 1 Outline

- Genesis Creation Story
 - What it says and how it says it
- Evolutionary Creation
 - Theistic evolution
 - Four types of causes
- Evolutionary Naturalism
 - Atheistic evolution
 - Naturalism and the limits of science



Genesis Creation Story

- What is Genesis teaching and how is it teaching it?
 - Are teachings of Genesis to be taken literally and as scientific truth? If not, how are the teachings of Genesis to be properly understood?
- “Scripture presents the work of the Creator **symbolically** as a succession of six days of divine ‘work,’ concluded by the ‘rest’ of the seventh day.” — *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#337)
- What does “symbolically” mean?
- *Video: Why it’s important to know language being used to properly understand what is being conveyed*

Genesis Creation Story

- In the CCC “symbolically” means:
 - Conveys deep religious truths through narratives of real events using “figurative language.” (CCC #390)
 - Details not meant to be taken literally.
- Genesis creation story is like a parable.
- Primarily concerned with meaning and purpose of God’s creative work.
 - Not scientific details of how it was accomplished.

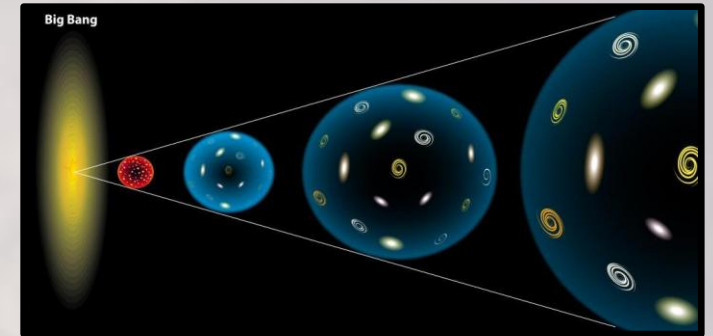
Genesis Creation Story

- “The first page of the Bible is **not** a cosmological treatise about the development of the world in six days. **The Bible does not teach us how the heavens go, but how to go to heaven.**”
 - Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, General Editor, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- “The Bible isn’t meant to be a manual of natural science.”
 - Pope Benedict XVI
- *Video: Fr. Robert Spitzer, S.J., Ph.D., on the Genesis creation story*

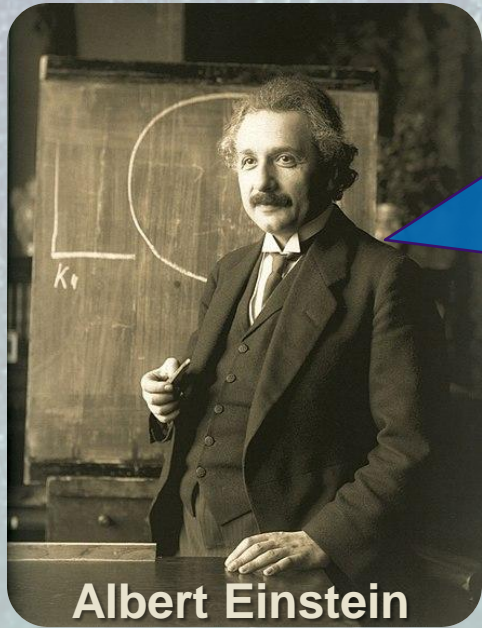


Genesis Creation Story

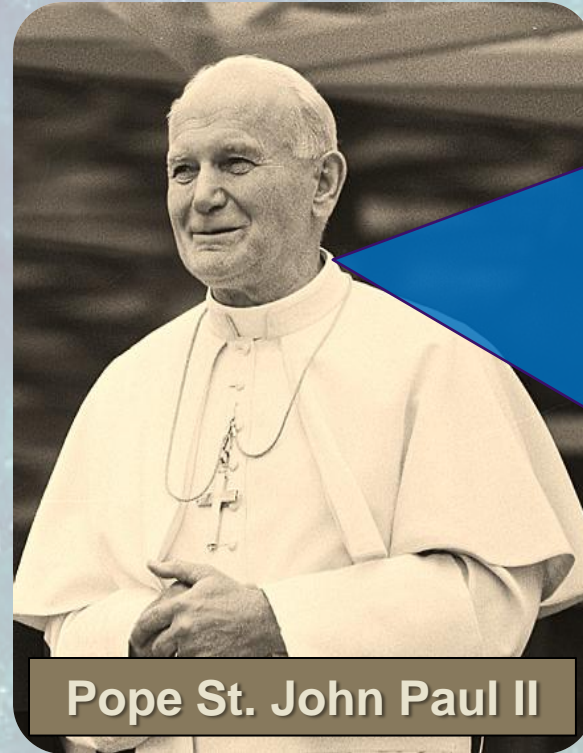
- What are some religious truths taught by Genesis creation story?
 1. God created all things from **nothing**.
 2. Everything God made is **good**.
 3. Human beings are supreme culmination of God's creation.
 - Created in God's own image and likeness.
 4. First man & woman tempted by pride to “be like gods” and disobeyed God.
 - “The Fall” and “Original Sin”



Need Both Science & Religion



“Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.”



“Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish.”

Video: Understanding Genesis

- *Need both religion and science to understand full truth*
 - *The “why” as well as the “how”*

Evolutionary Creation

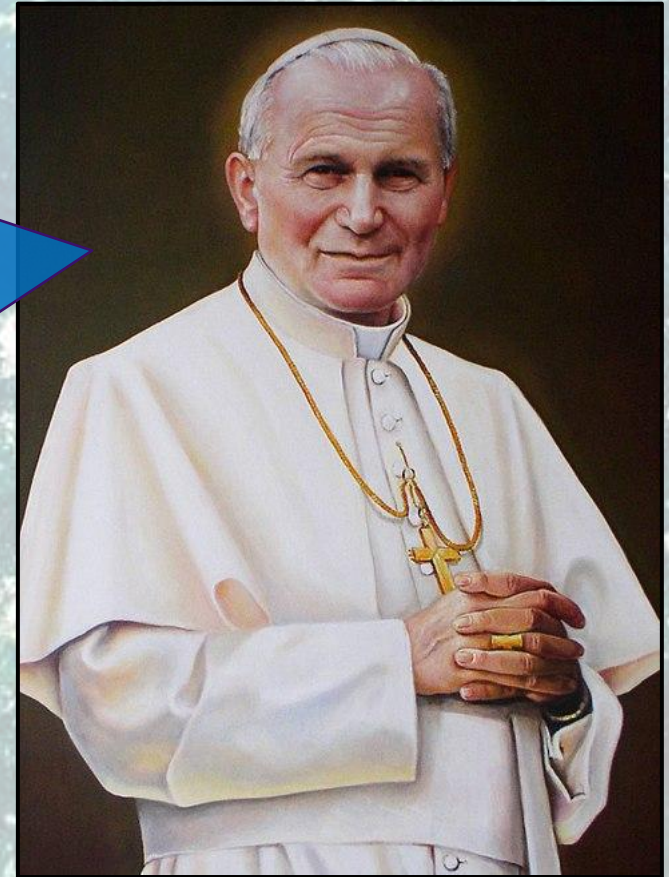
- God **ordained** and **sustained** the gradual evolution of life on earth.
- God established the framework that enabled evolution to occur.
 - Including finely-tuned laws of nature.
 - Nature predestined for evolutionary development of life.
 - May have providentially enabled major transitions and seemingly “random” genetic mutations.
- Also called **Theistic** Evolution.
 - “Let the **earth bring forth** all kinds of living creatures.” (Genesis 1:24)

Evolutionary Creation

- “My predecessors Pope Pius XII and Pope John Paul II noted that there is **no opposition** between faith’s understanding of creation and the evidence of the empirical sciences.”
- *Pope Benedict XVI*
- “The possibility that the Creator also makes use of the instrument of evolution is **admissible** for the Catholic faith.”
- *Cardinal Christoph Schönborn*
- *Video: Fr. Robert Spitzer, S.J., Ph.D.*
 - *Can Catholics accept evolution?*

Evolutionary Creation

“Indeed, the theory of natural evolution, understood in a sense that ***does not exclude divine causality***, is not in principle opposed to the truth about the creation of the visible world, as presented in the Book of Genesis.”



Pope St. John Paul II

Four Types of Causes



- Did Michelangelo or his chisel carve the *Pietà*?
 - Both.
 - Michelangelo was **primary cause & intelligent cause**.
 - His chisel was **secondary cause & natural cause**.
- *Video: Professor Stephen Barr on divine causality*



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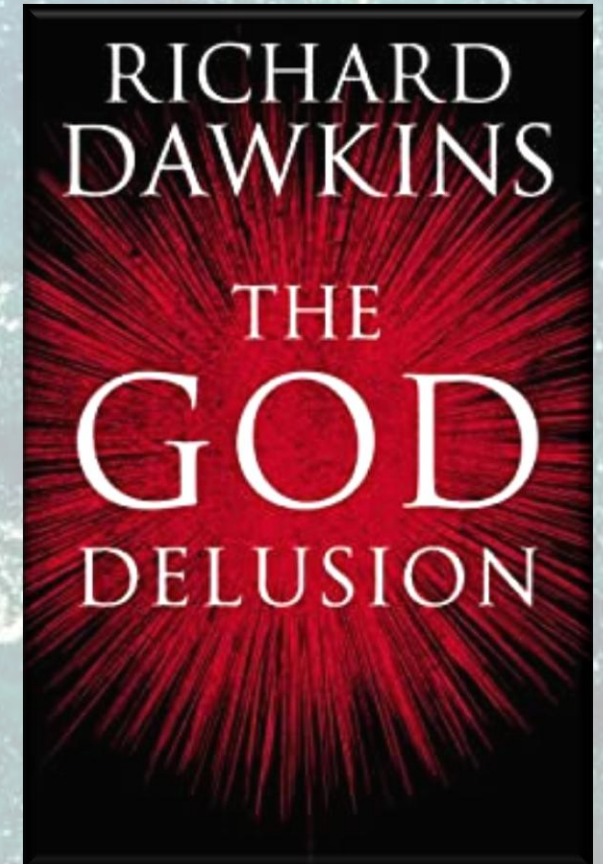
Four Types of Causes

- Which types of causes are God's actions in the evolution of life?
 - God is the **primary intelligent** cause.
 - Who works through **secondary natural** causes.
 - Actions guided by laws of nature God created.
 - Evolution is God's tool ("chisel").
 - "God is the first cause who operates in and through secondary causes." (CCC #308)
- Atheistic Evolution: Natural causes are **primary** cause, not secondary cause.

Common View of Evolution

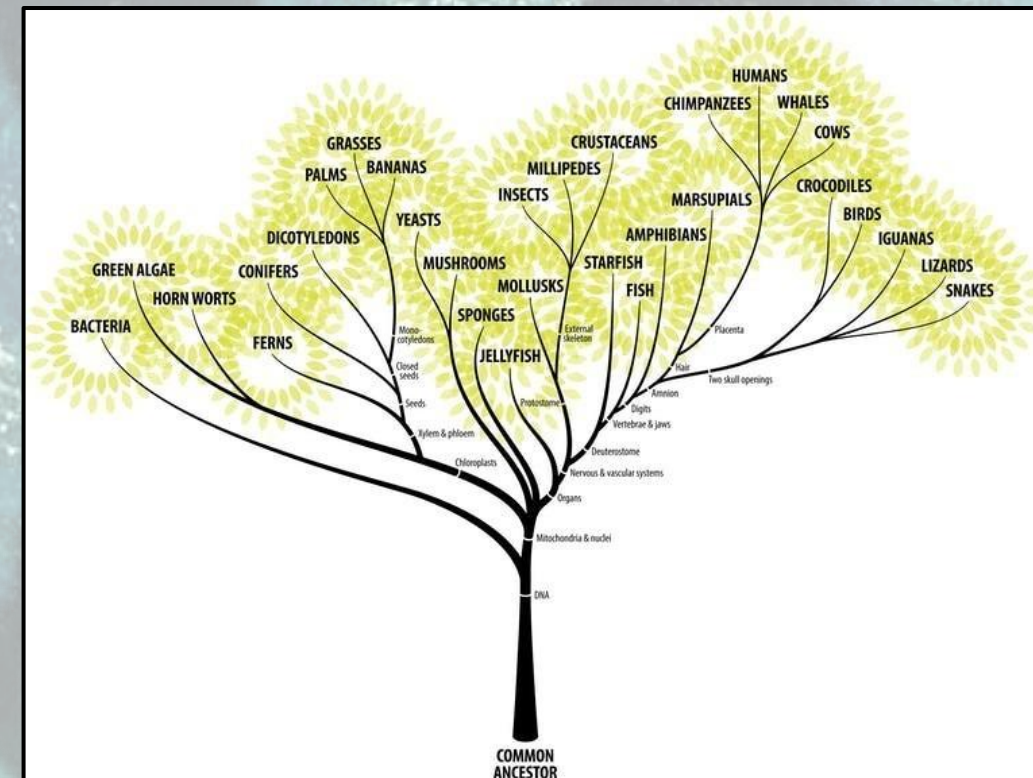
“Where does that [Darwinian evolution] leave God? The kindest thing to say is that it leaves him with nothing to do, and no achievements that might attract our praise, our worship or our fear. **Evolution is God’s redundancy notice, his pink slip.** A complex creative intelligence with nothing to do is not just redundant. **God is not dead. He was never alive in the first place.**”

– Richard Dawkins, Author of *The God Delusion*



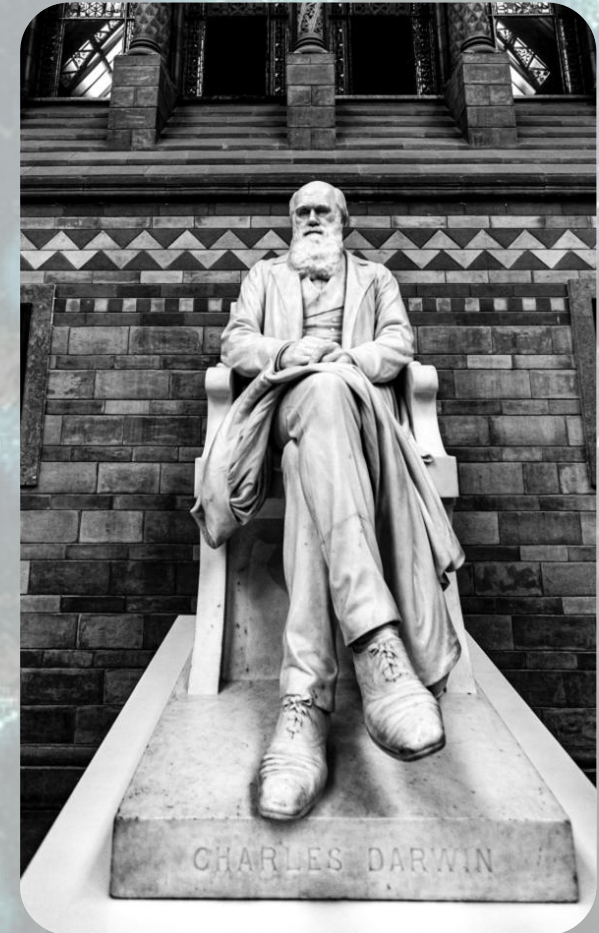
Atheistic Evolution

- Life originated and developed through unplanned and unguided processes.
- Random genetic mutations and blind natural selection alone are fully adequate to explain life's complexity.
- Undirected natural processes are sufficient to produce complex living things that look designed.



Atheistic Evolution

- Seen as challenge to God's existence.
- “Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.” – *Richard Dawkins*
- Without any divine plan or guidance:
 - “Hydrogen is a gas, which given enough time, turns into people.” – *Edward R. Harrison*
- What's going on? Why so strongly promoted?



Naturalism (Materialism)



- Belief that material world of nature is all that exists.
 - Spiritual world (heaven, hell, angels, our soul) does not exist or is unknowable.
 - Only what can be observed and discovered by science exists.

“The cosmos is all that is, or ever was, or ever will be.” - *Astronomer Carl Sagan, Cosmos*

- *Video: Robert Jastrow on Materialism*
 - Author of *God and the Astronomers*



Naturalism (Materialism)

- Since we are confined by “space-time continuum,” it is impossible to rule out any reality outside that continuum.
 - Humans limited by our five senses.
 - How describe a beautiful red sunset to a person who’s been blind since birth?
 - We’re too blinded by our human limitations to know if natural world is whole of reality.
- *Video: Naturalism and the limits of science*



Limits of science

- Origin of human beings, which are an integral unity of **body** and **soul**, is not fully explainable by science.
- Science cannot say anything about origin of our spiritual and eternal soul.
 - “Every spiritual soul is created immediately by God.” (CCC #366)
- At the proper time, God imparted a **soul** into first human and everyone since.
 - Even if our **bodies** did evolve over time.



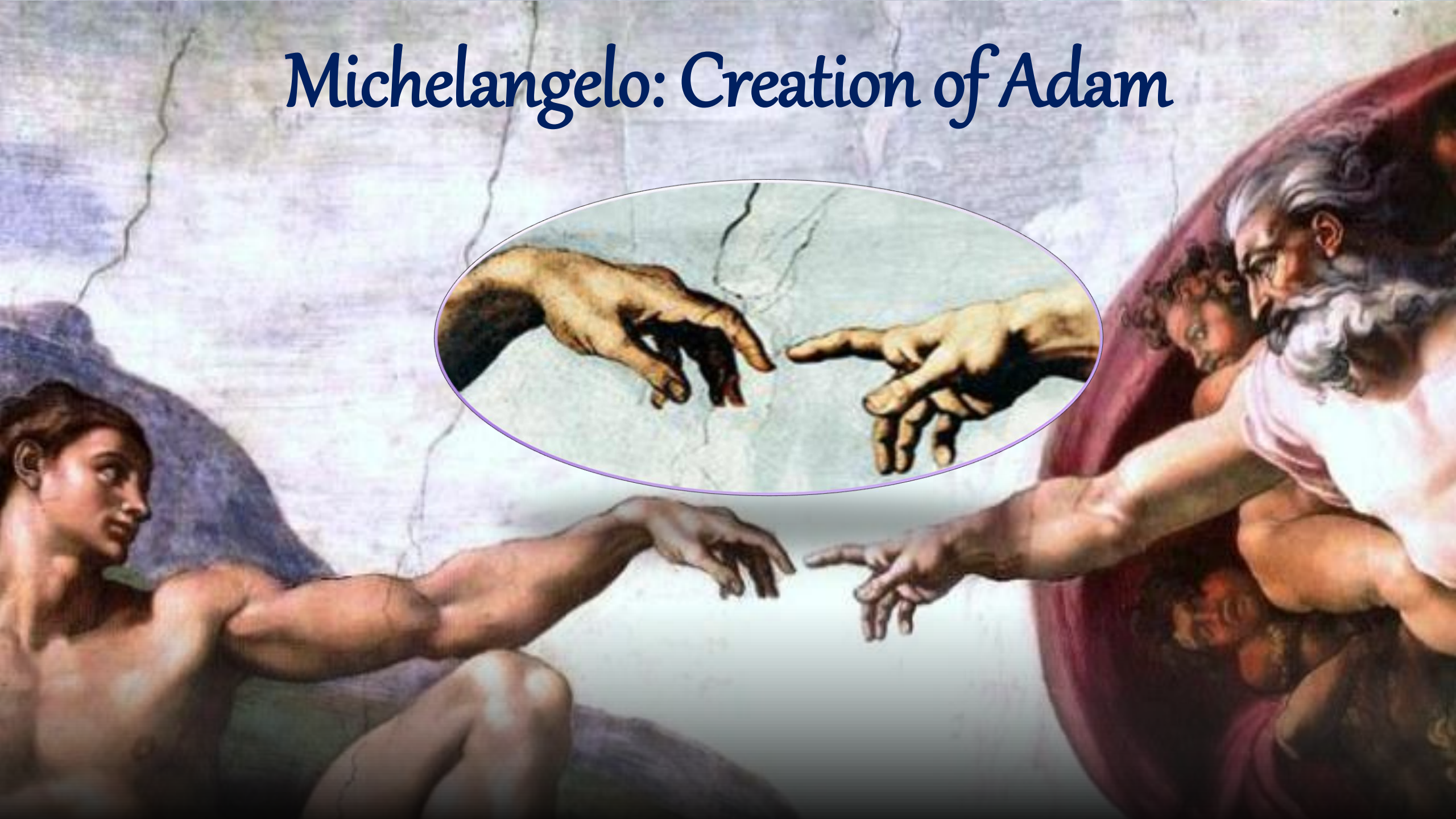
“From the viewpoint of the doctrine of the faith, there are *no difficulties* in explaining the *origin of man* in regard to the *body*, by means of the theory of *evolution*.... It is possible that the human body could have been gradually prepared in the forms of antecedent living beings. However, the human *soul*, on which man’s humanity definitively depends, cannot emerge from matter, since the soul is of a spiritual nature.” - *Pope St. John Paul II*



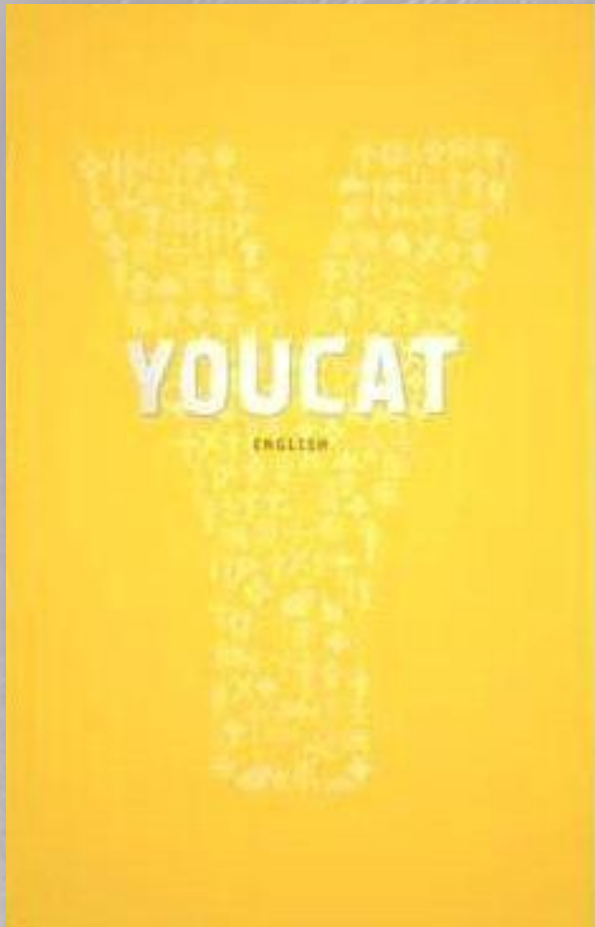
Body and Soul

- Therefore, first true humans (body and soul) could have come into being when God imparted souls into homo sapien bodies.
 - Which developed over time through evolutionary processes.
- This view seems to be supported by Genesis 2:7, which states:
 - “The Lord God **formed man out of the clay** of the ground...”
 - Pre-scientific and symbolic wording describing evolutionary development of homo sapien **bodies** over time?
 - “...and blew into his nostrils the **breath of life**, and so man became a living being.”
 - “breath of life” = rational human **soul**?

Michelangelo: Creation of Adam



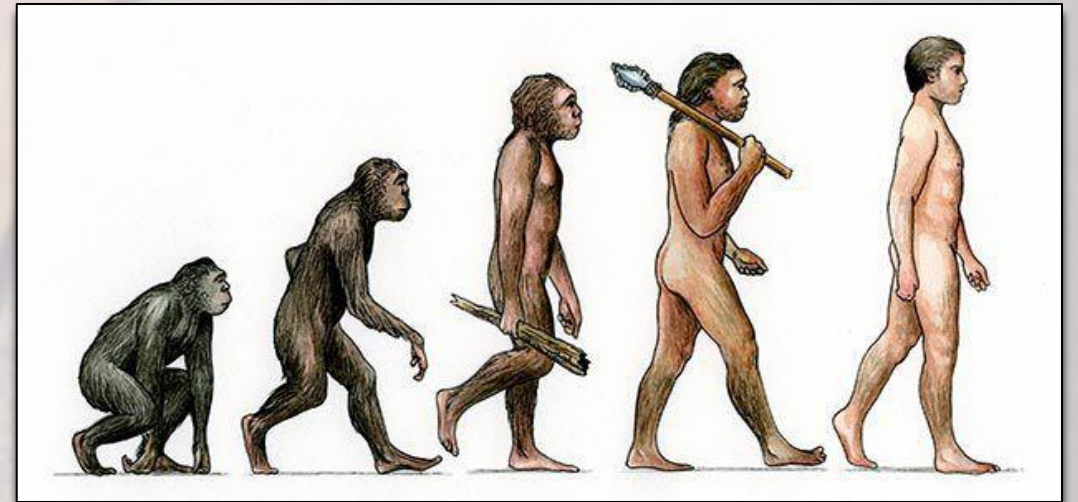
Evolutionary Creation



- From YOUUCAT, *Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Question #42):
 - “Natural science cannot dogmatically rule out the possibility that there are **purposeful designs** in creation.”
 - “A Christian can accept the theory of evolution ... provided he does not fall into the heresy of evolutionism, which views man as the **random** product of biological processes.”

Part 1 Summary

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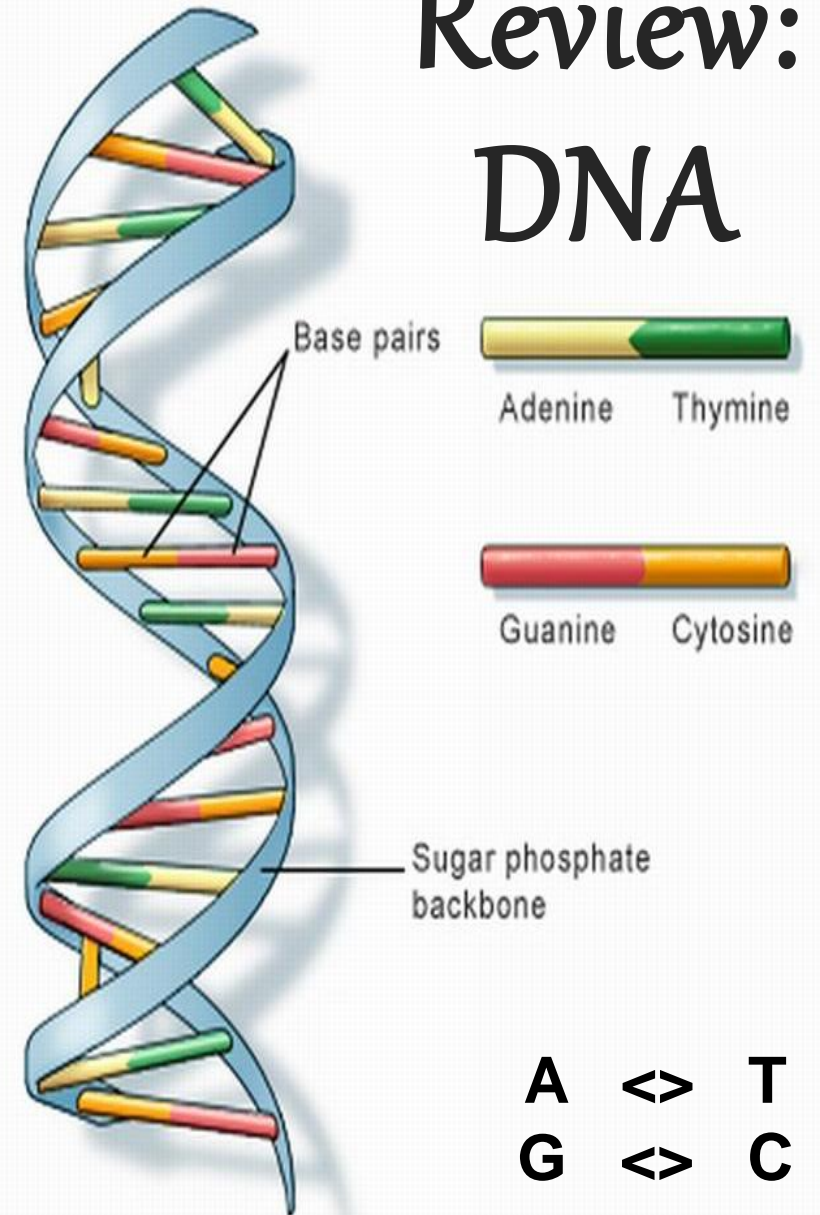
NEXT

- Is there any scientific evidence that **life** has an **intelligent cause**?
- But first, a commercial break...
- *Video: Things **not** due to an intelligent cause*



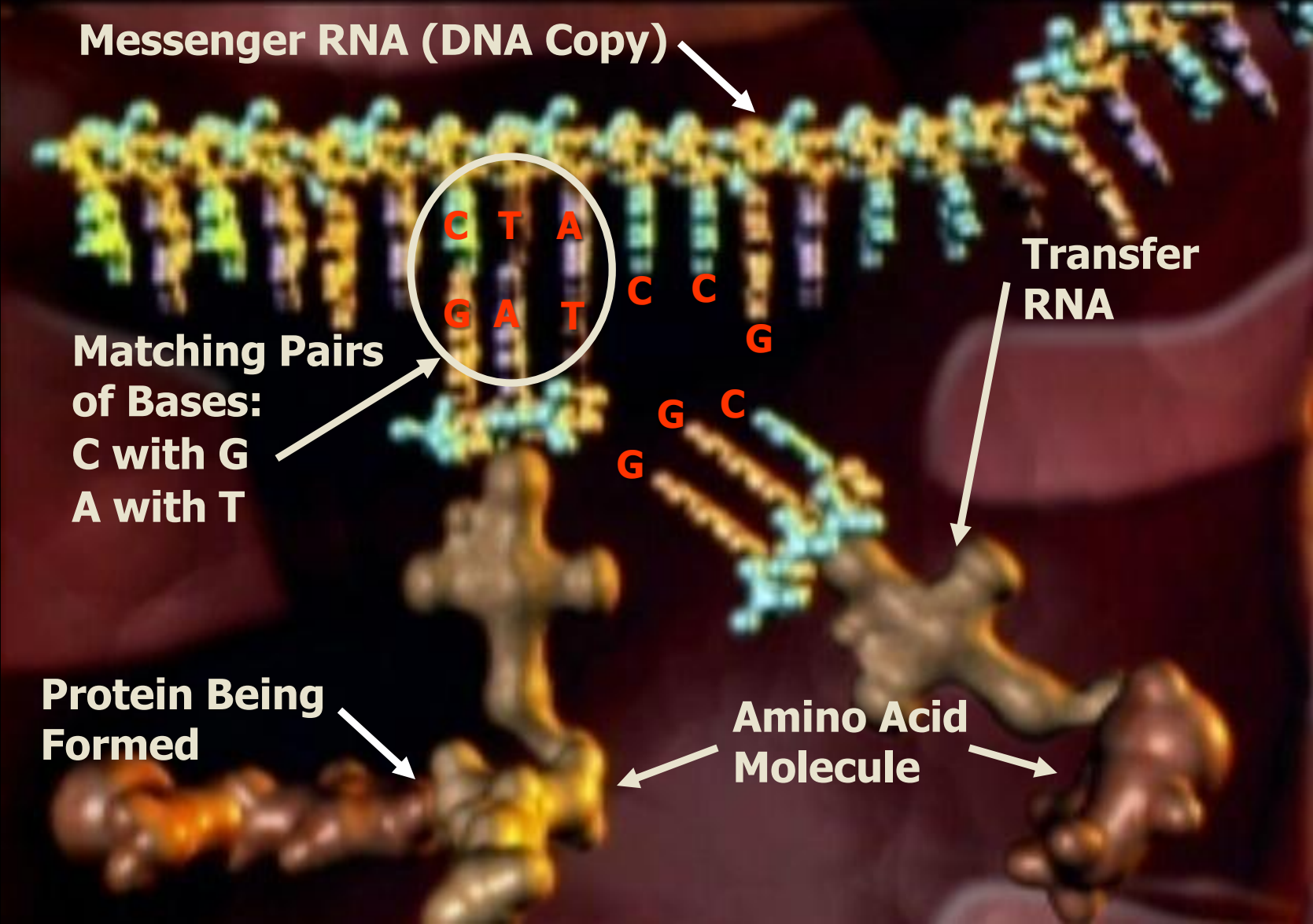


Review: DNA



U.S. National Library of Medicine

How does DNA enable amino acids to be in the correct sequence to make proteins?



Intelligent Cause

- How did the DNA nucleotide bases (the As, Ts, Cs and Gs) get in the correct sequence needed to properly form proteins from amino acids?
- The proper arrangement of nucleotide bases in DNA contains information.
 - Just like letters in a meaningful sentence.
- *Video: An intelligent cause is a valid explanation for genetic information in DNA*

Intelligent Cause

- Biological Information Argument:
 1. Premise One – DNA contains useful information (to place amino acids in the proper order to make functional proteins).
 2. Premise Two – Useful information habitually arises from an intelligent cause.
 3. Conclusion – Therefore, an intelligent cause (God) is a valid explanation for the useful information contained in DNA.

Intelligent Cause

- God is primary intelligent cause.
 - Useful information contained in DNA.
- But God works through secondary natural causes.
 - Point mutations, gene duplication, transposon insertion.
 - These natural mechanisms are God's tools ("chisel") to create genetic information.
- DNA is the sculpture, shaped by the environment, controlled by God.

“It is the affair of the natural sciences to explain how the tree of life in particular continues to grow. This is not a matter for faith. But we must have the *audacity* to say that the great projects of the living creation are not the products of chance and error. The great projects of the living creation point to a creating *Reason* and show us a creating *Intelligence*, and they do so more luminously and radiantly today than ever before. Human beings are not a mistake but something willed; they are the fruit of love.”



Pope Benedict XVI
In the Beginning



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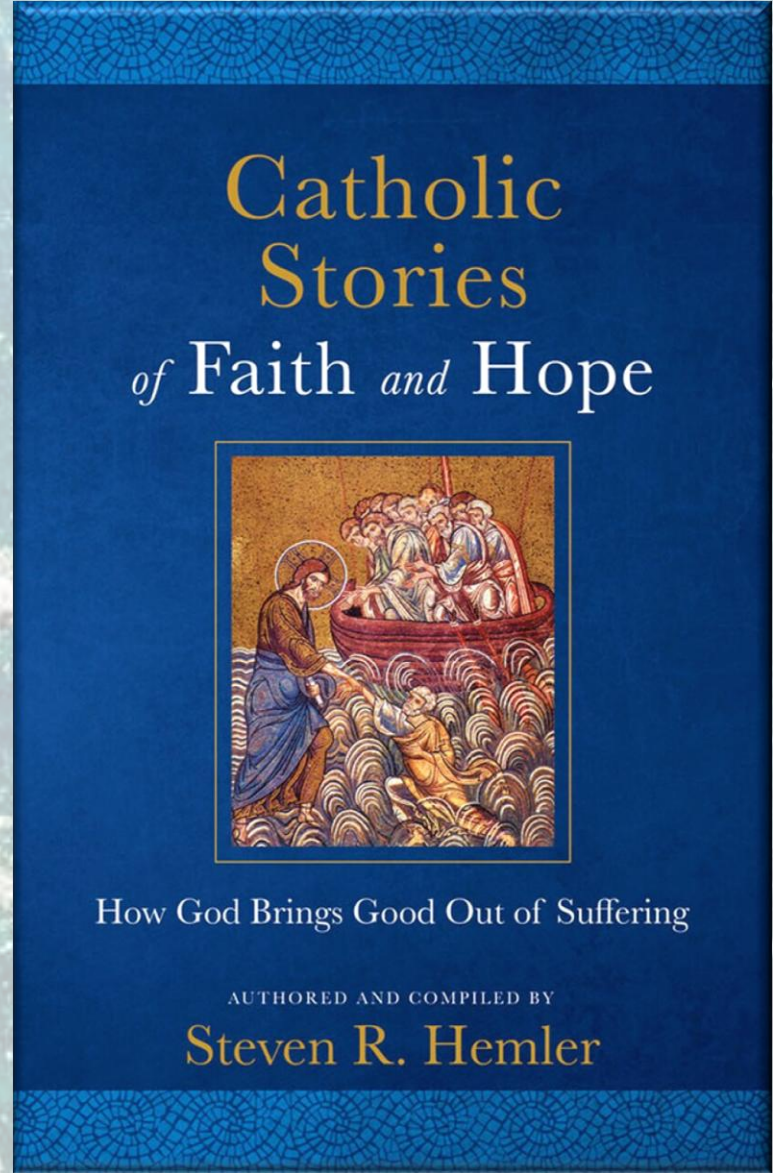
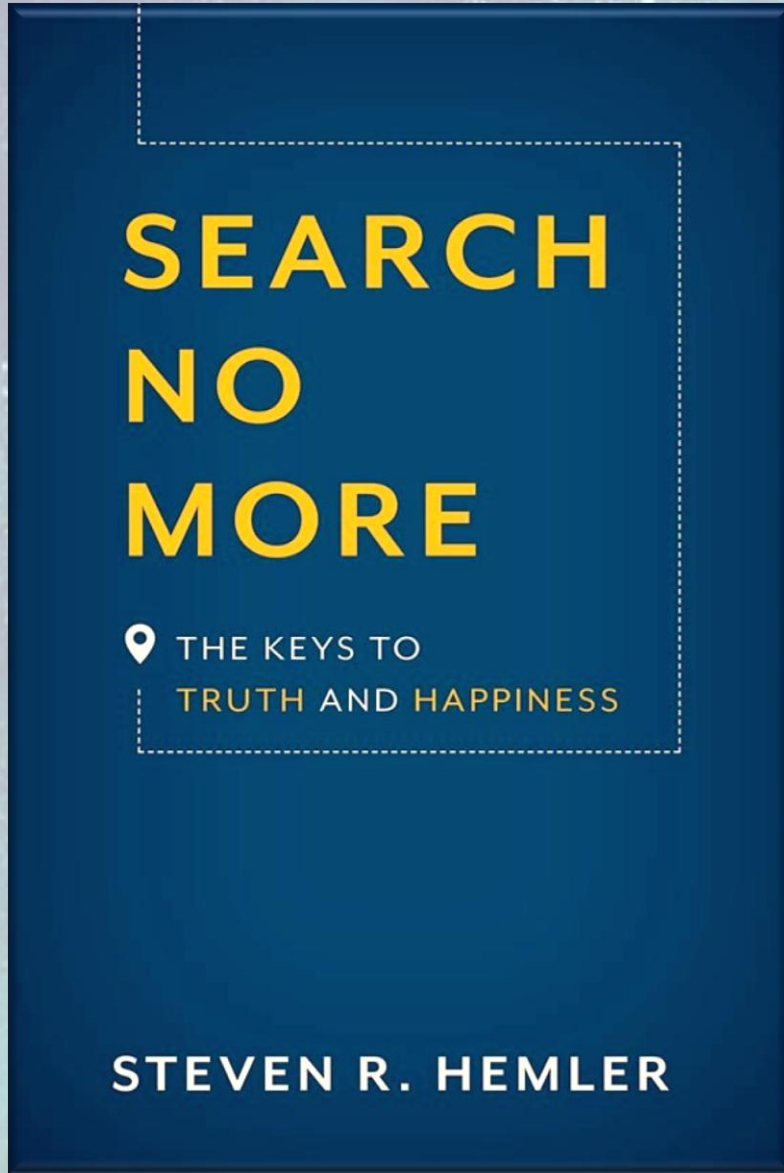
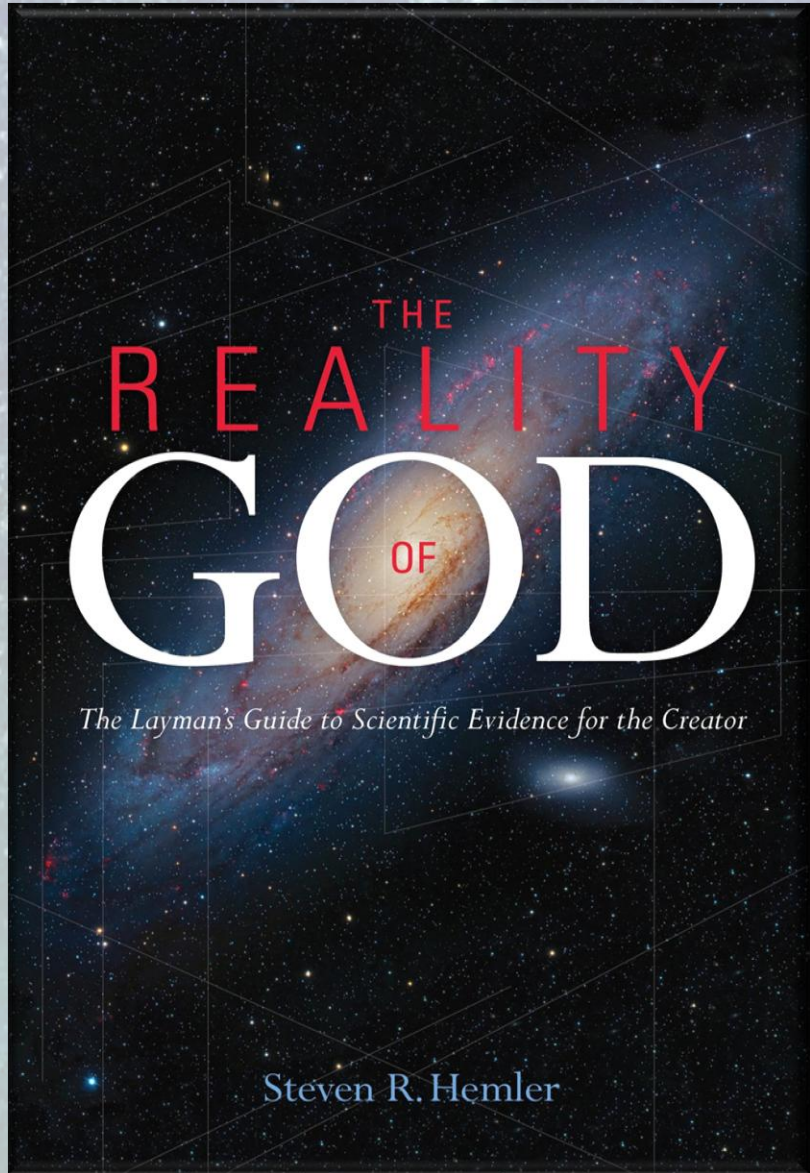
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An aerial photograph of a forest with a large tree trunk in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the image.

Questions?

Comments?

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