

***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, totally amoral process, with **no indication of a benevolent, 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-discover of DNA

“Evolution is the **greatest engine of atheism** ever invented.”

– Biologist Dr. Will Provine

# Outline

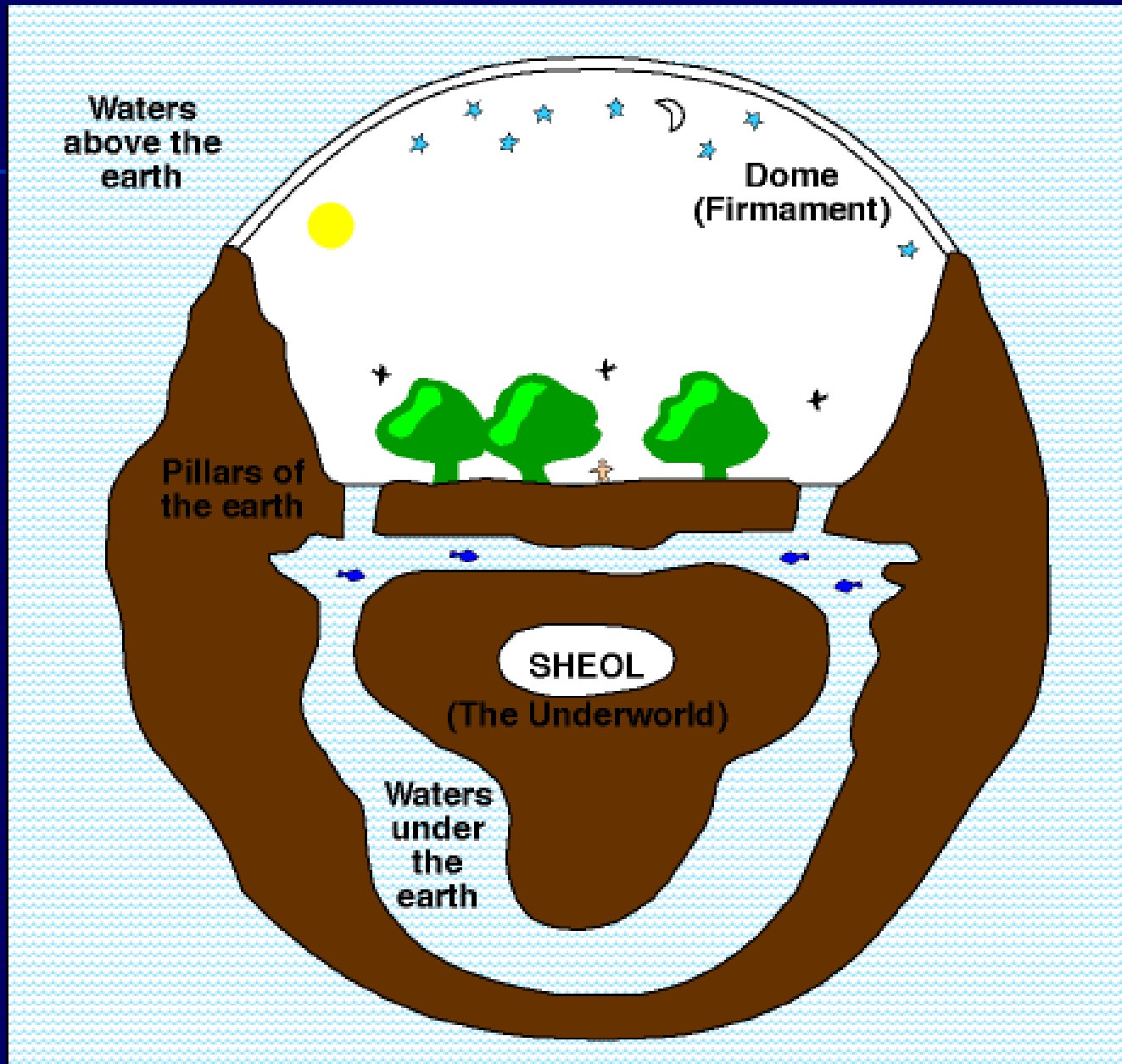
- **Genesis Creation Story**
  - What it says and how it says it
  - Conflicts with science?
- **Common View of Evolution**
  - Atheistic evolution
  - Limits of science
- **Evolutionary Creation**
  - Four types of causes

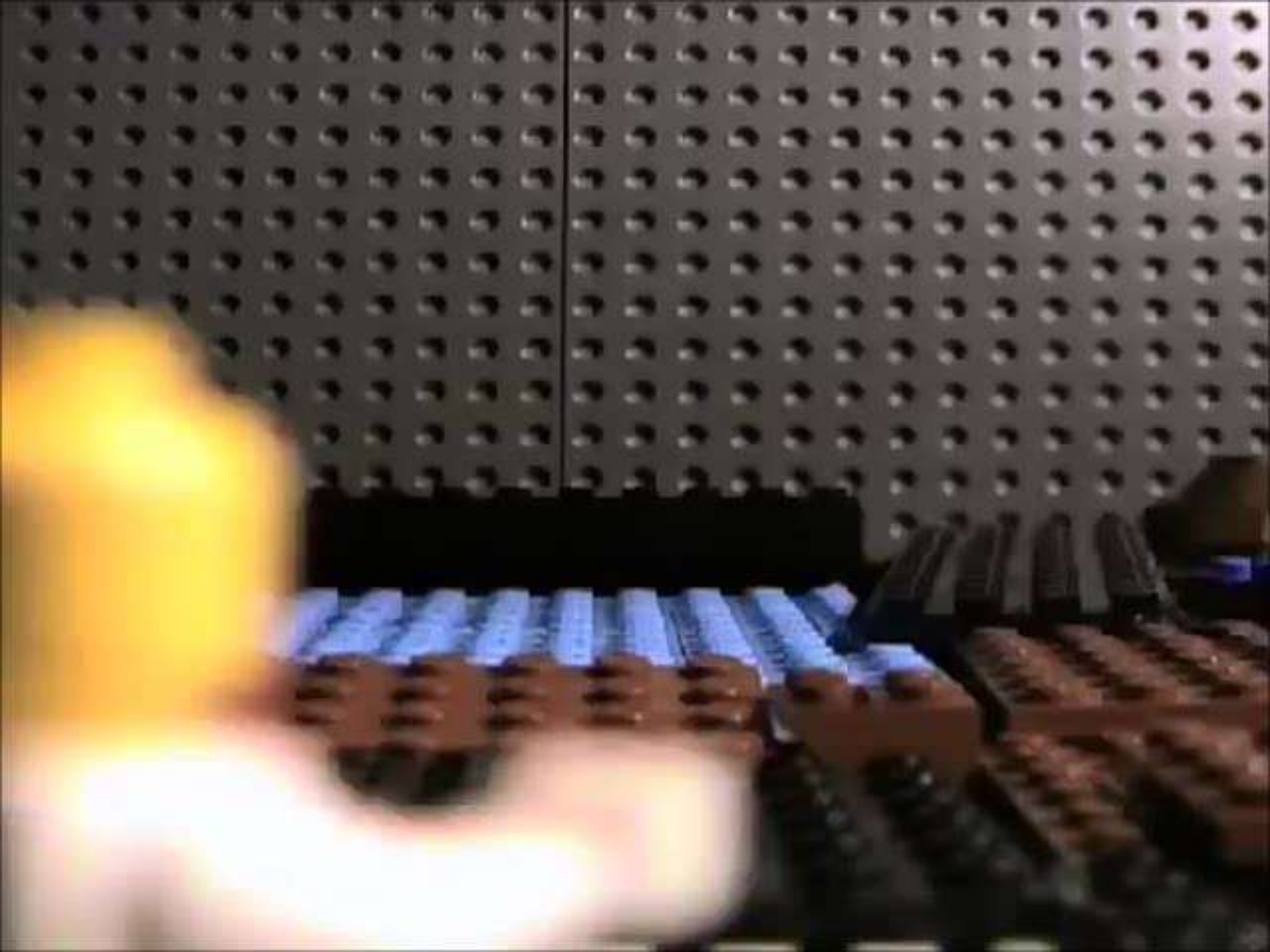
# Genesis Creation Story

- Is Genesis saying world was actually created in seven 24-hour “days”?
- What does science say about age of universe?
- Let’s look at Genesis creation story:
  - What is Genesis trying to teach?
  - How is it trying to teach it?
    - Literally and scientifically?
- *Video: Genesis Creation Story in LEGO*
  - *Made for Catholic Schools Week*



# “Dome in middle of waters”





# Genesis Creation Story

“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 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

- 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



# 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 sufficient to mimic intelligent design

# Atheistic Evolution

- **Seen as challenge to God's existence**
  - “Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.” – R. Dawkins
- **Without any divine plan or guidance:**
  - “Hydrogen is a gas, which given enough time, turns into people.” - Edward R. Harrison
- ***Video: Limits of science***

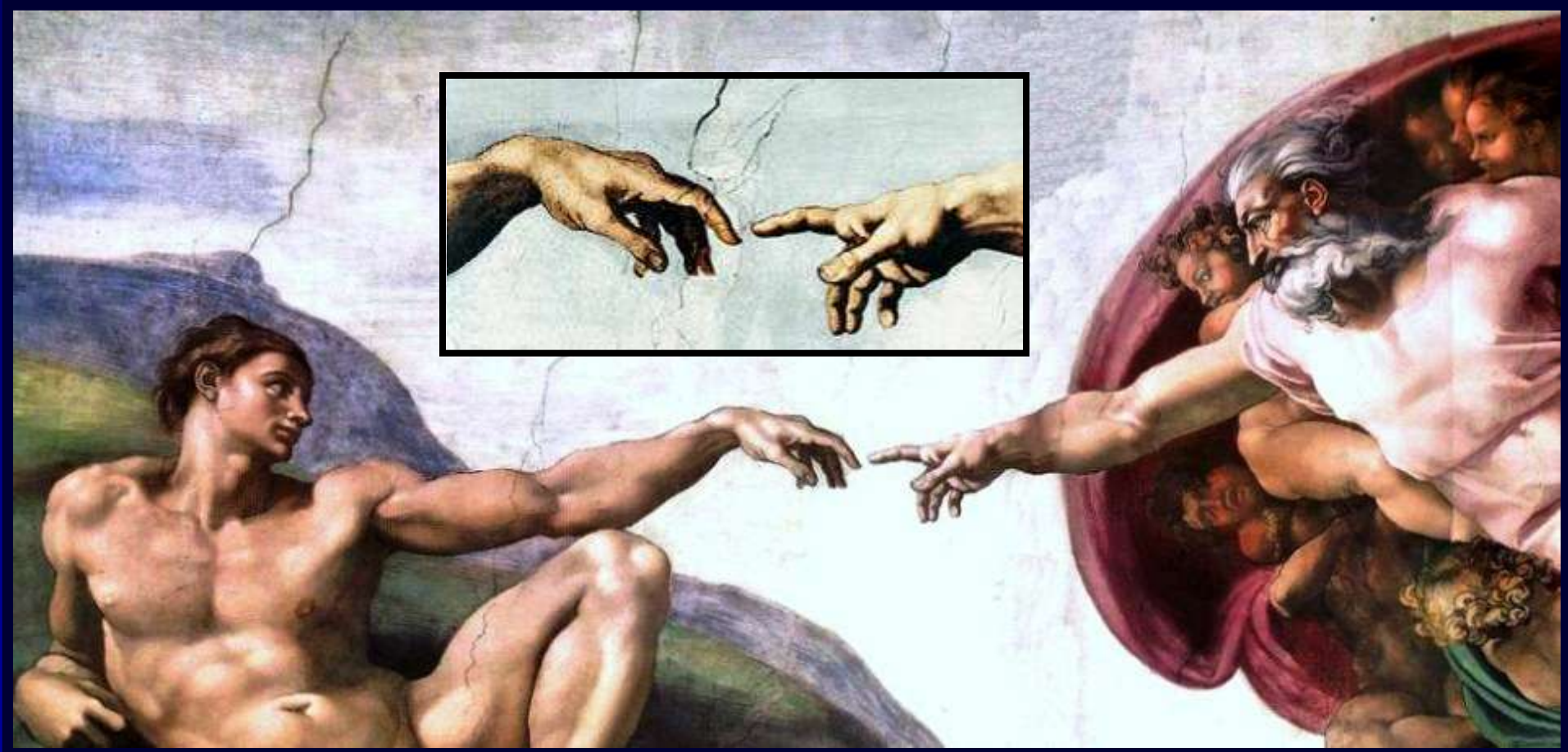


# Limits of Science

- Origin of human beings, which have an integral unity of matter and spirit, 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 soul into first human and everyone since
  - Even if our **bodies** did evolve over time



# Michelangelo: Creation of Adam



# Pope St. John Paul II

“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.”

# Need Both Science & Religion

- Any explanation of human origins that looks only to science is inadequate
  - Need **both** science and religion to get the full truth and complete picture
- “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.”
  - Pope St. John Paul II

# 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 evolution of life
  - Providentially enabled 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**



# Four Types of Causes

- Which types of causes are God's actions in the evolution of life?
  - God is **primary intelligent** cause
  - God works thru **secondary natural** causes
    - Actions guided by laws of nature He created
    - Evolution is God's tool ("chisel")
  - "God is the first cause who operates in and through secondary causes." (CCC#308)
- Evolution is God's method of creation

# Conclusion

- From YOUCAT, *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.”



YOUCAT  
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# Pope Benedict XVI

“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*

# Summary

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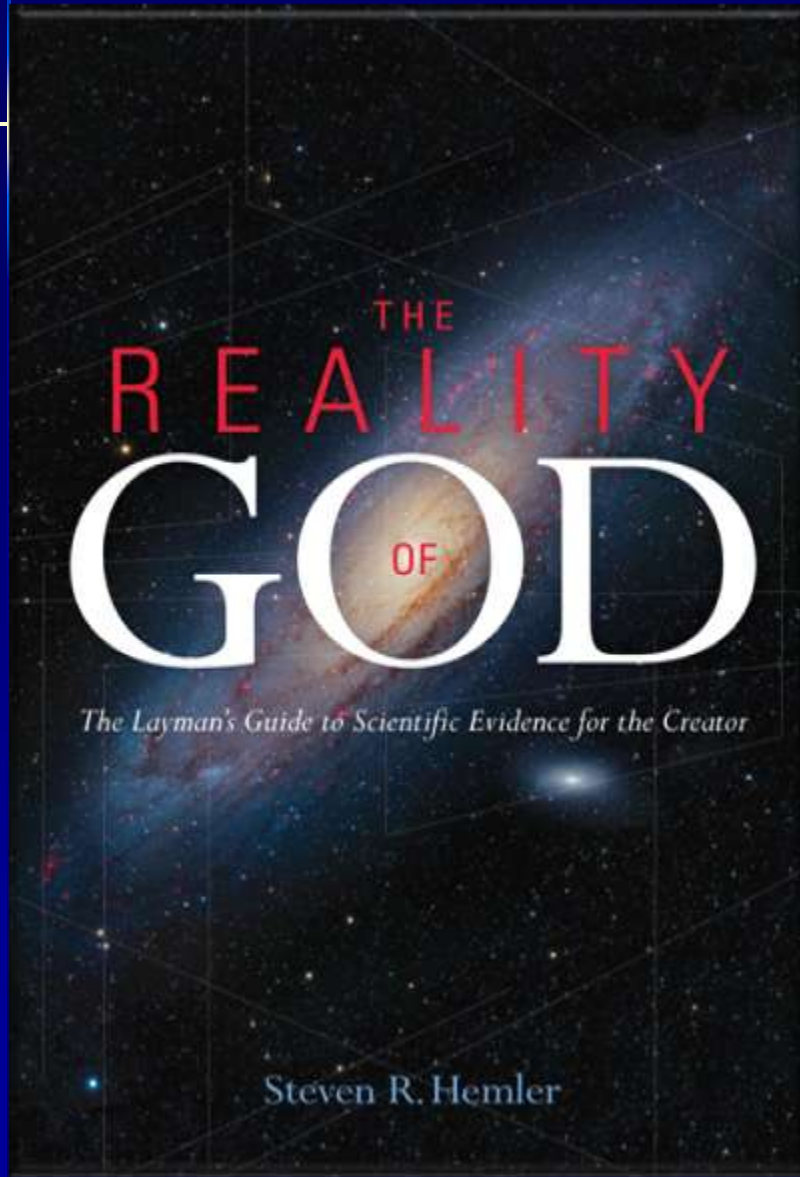
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# *The Reality of God*



Published by TAN Books

“Does God exist?”

“Which is true: creation, evolution, or both?”

\$20 (cash, check or card)

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***Comments?***

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