

Virtual Christian Magazine

Hope And Encouragement
For The Real World

"But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."—Romans 8:25-26

Volume 12 Number 2

February 2010

Do You Want to Join the Club?

By William Miller

Page 3



There are groups or clubs set up for just about everything in life. All have leaders, and many people seek those positions. But which position should we strive for?

Why All the Thorns and Thistles?

By Robert Berendt

Page 6



Why all the challenges in life? Parents naturally try to make life as easy as possible for their children. But is this really the best approach?

Prayer for the Routine Times

By Rick Clowdus

Page 9



Prayer is an important part of Christian life. We've heard it emphasized in church, we hear sermons about it, and we know the scriptures that talk about it, but what happens when it becomes a challenge?

God Is My Helper

By Walter Zamonsky

Page 13



Does God place conditions on receiving His help?

Do We Have to Keep God's Commandments?

By Carol Taylor

Page 15



We all know the laws of our city or state and how they apply, but what about God's laws? Are they relevant for today?

Scientism Infects Darwinian Debates

By Joseph Sheperd

Page 17



Now there is not only one theory of evolution, but twelve! Shouldn't they first get the original theory right?

Letters to the Editor

Page 20

Virtual Christian Magazine Staff

Lorelei Nettles - Managing Editor
Lorelei Nettles - Issue Editor
Mike Bennett - Editor
Angela Cardoz - Editor
Gayle Hoefker - Editor
Jada Howell - Editor
Patrick Kansa - Editor

Jeremy Lallier - Editor
David Meidinger - Editor
Suzanne Morgan - Editor
Amy Stephens - Editor
Debbie Werner - Editor
Eric Evans - Reviewer
Don Henson - Reviewer

Don Hooser - Reviewer
William Miller - Reviewer
Gerald Seelig - Reviewer
Jeremy Lallier - Proofreader
Chris Rowland - Web Design

[Copyright 2010 United Church of God, an International Association](#)

Do You Want to Join the Club?

By William Miller

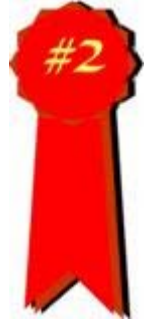
There are groups or clubs set up for just about everything in life. All have leaders, and many people seek those positions. But which position should we strive for?



WERE YOU IN A CLUB WHEN YOU WERE A KID? Not a Boys Club, Girl Scouts or any other organized activity, but a neighborhood club with your friends on the block? I was in at least two, maybe three, before I turned 12 years old.

A neighborhood boy would say, "Hey, we ought to have a club!" And others would chime in with comments like, "That's neat!" (It was a time before the word "cool" was used in our area.) The boy who originally had the idea would say, almost offhandedly, "I'll be first president."

And then most of the other boys would say, "Dibs on second president!" Someone else announced, "I'll be vice president." And then we would argue over rank. You see, we didn't understand that the vice president was the second president. We thought he was the third president or the third person in charge.



In one of these clubs, we had a girl, and she said she would be secretary. Nobody argued about being the secretary. We thought secretaries were always girls. The truth was that the girls were the only ones who could write. We boys were learning writing, but we didn't feel (any of us) that we could compete with her in that area.

Pride and maturity

Every person wants to be able to do something well. It doesn't matter what it is. Sometimes it doesn't even matter if anyone else knows about it, but to have a properly integrated personality, every human being has to feel good within him or herself about doing something well. However, this drive is too easily subverted.

For me, pride was and still is the most natural inclination of human nature.



For me, pride was and still is the most natural inclination of human nature.

But we are Christians. And to be a true Christian, a real Christian, we must be mature. Ephesians 4:14 and 15 indicate that our thinking cannot remain as it was when we were "kids." Yes, we can and should be childlike in humility (Matthew 18:3), but not childish in our assessment of the world, as Paul clearly explained.

This Christian maturity is difficult and nearly impossible in the world that you and I presently inhabit. The world says: You can get away with being stupid as long as you are aggressive; you can remain unfeeling as long as you are fast; and you can roll right over others as long as you always see yourself as first president.

We need God

This has been the way of the universe since Lucifer went bad and stated in Isaiah 14:14, "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High."

We know who "the Most High" is, and we know that Jesus said, "No servant can serve two masters" (Luke 16:13). Christ knew what Lucifer wanted, and the master position could never ever be his.

Hopefully, we are not quite as proud as Lucifer is. But as adults, we are still tempted to think of ourselves too highly. After all, haven't we at least achieved some things on our own? Interestingly, no! James 1:17 states, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights" and Ecclesiastes 3:13 concludes with a similar thought, "It is the gift of God."

Christ knew what Lucifer wanted, and the master position could never ever be his.

And what do we really know that we have not been taught by others? Not much.

There is a perspective that Jesus shared with His disciples toward the end of His life on earth. He knew He was leaving for a while to be with God, and He wanted the disciples to understand His “club.” Consider what He taught in two important passages:

Matthew 23:8-12: “But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

In essence, Christ was saying, “You are all brothers.”

*The world says:
You can get away
with being stupid as
long as you are
aggressive... and
you can roll right
over others as long
as you always see
yourself as first
president.*

Matthew 20:25-28: “But Jesus called them to Himself and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.’”

Here He was basically saying, “Learn to be a servant.”

Along with understanding these two passages, we also know that the office of First President is already taken. Let’s be supremely thankful for the opportunity to become a member of the club and a humble servant!

Read more about this subject in [“Jesus Christ’s Leadership Approach.”](#)

Why All the Thorns and Thistles?

By Robert Berendt

Why all the challenges in life? Parents naturally try to make life as easy as possible for their children. But is this really the best approach?



LIFE IS AMAZING, MARVELOUS AND TOUGH. Any living thing is a creation that boggles the mind, and it seems the closer we look, the more wondrous it is that anything actually lives at all! There are so many obstacles and enemies of life.

Humans are born through pain and difficulty. Parents then embark on a lifetime of care, fear and worry about their children. Scratching out a living involves a lot of work, and things continually seem to go wrong. Often our question is, “What next?”

A hard life on the farm

I recall some of the best vacations of my life on my uncle’s farm. There was always work to do, it seemed—and when it was just about completed, something else came up.

When I was a boy, my uncle used plow horses. On a given day anything from a broken horseshoe to a broken harness to some other mishap was common. It was a rare day when we did not need to stop for repairs or for unforeseen circumstances. When all seemed perfect, a neighbor would call and need some help or a piece of machinery would need repairing.



As I think back to those times, I also remember that I thoroughly enjoyed every minute. We learned great lessons with the events of each day. Patience, determination, commitment to a task, not allowing the unexpected to deter us and the pure joy of working—these were among the many lessons that I benefited from.

When a person puts his or her mind to solving problems, he or she benefits in many ways.

I have often wondered why life needs to be as hard as it is. I have also noticed that the present generation, which has largely grown up in the city environment, does not seem to have the same drive toward work and responsibility. At least, that is the way it seems for so many. There are a lot of wonderful young people—don't get me wrong on that—but somehow there is an overall degree of character that has been diminished.

Opportunities to grow

“Into Each Life Some Rain Must Fall” was a song and a theme that I remember. Without troubles we would grow to be self-indulgent, reliant on others and ill prepared to handle life. Troubles are opportunities to grow!

When a person puts his or her mind to solving problems, he or she benefits in many ways. First there are character traits that form. One is determination. Then there is the exercise of the mind in gathering information. From that point we move toward sorting and judging various approaches so that we can make the best possible decisions in solving our problems. We develop abilities in good judgment and ingenuity in this way.



Finally, there is the satisfaction of solving a problem. This leads to greater self-confidence and self-respect. God knew that hard work and “thorns and thistles” (Genesis 3:17-19) would be necessary for mankind to develop the kind of character that would allow God to trust His children-to-be (Romans 8:16-17) to inherit all of His creation. Only then would God trust us with spiritual bodies that never die or grow old, and with the ability to share in His great power (1 Corinthians 15:43-44, 53).

Working on my uncle's farm and having little jobs to do as a young boy never hurt me. As a matter of fact, that was what made me a responsible adult. It was a job like the daily task of stopping at the home of the Hamilton family in my hometown to empty the ashes from their coal furnace that taught me to be punctual and to fulfill a responsibility. The pay was \$5 per month and, for me, that was big money.

Parents hope their children will grow up to be responsible adults, and moms and dads rejoice when they do. There are times, though, when parents fret and worry because children seem to lack the drive and determination needed to succeed. They simply may not have had enough hills to climb or rivers to cross.

Nobody seeks or wants troubles and problems, but thorns and thistles do grow in our lives. In nature, we can marvel at the difficulty of removing such aggravations from a garden or the farmer's field. No sooner have we done a good job of destroying those bothersome plants than we turn around and there they are again.

A fresh look at thorns and thistles

Perhaps a fresh look at the thorns and thistles of life is warranted. Paul stated that he had learned a positive lesson from all his troubles. He learned to be content no matter his state (Philippians 4:11). Hebrews 5:8 tells us Jesus learned obedience by the things He suffered. Paul also showed concern about the wrong things that careless lives can lead to.

In 1 Timothy 5:13-14 and 2 Thessalonians 3:10-13, Paul encouraged people to work and be responsible. Idleness leads to aimlessness, gossiping and actions that result in a life that is less than full.

Children need challenges in their growing years so that they develop the character needed to fight all the battles they will face during their lifetime. Accepting challenges correctly brings about an excitement and zest for life. Life becomes an exhilarating daily experience. Thorns and thistles become instruments for our education, and the Bible explains that "the sleep of a laboring man is sweet" (Ecclesiastes 5:12).

Children need challenges in their growing years so that they develop the character needed to fight all the battles they will face during their lifetime.

We call God "Father" because He has our best interests at heart. Parents can emulate that kind of love. Some call it tough love. Making sure your children have just the right amount of thorns and thistles is a responsibility that benefits parents as well as children. Let us face our lives with clarity of mind and the expectation of being the better for all that life brings.

Further reading:

For more on the subject of why we face difficulties in this life, please request or download our free booklet [Why Does God Allow Suffering?](#)

Prayer for the Routine Times

By Rick Clowdus

Prayer is an important part of Christian life. We've heard it emphasized in church, we hear sermons about it, and we know the scriptures that talk about it, but what happens when it becomes a challenge?



P RAYER MAY COME EASY FOR US most of the time—the words flow naturally, we enjoy our prayer time and everything seems to be going well in our spiritual life. Then there are times when we go through a severe trial—maybe a very lonely time, where we feel isolated and out-of-touch and it seems like there is no end in sight.

People often speak about having a good prayer life during the good and difficult times, but what about “prayer for the routine times?” What about times when we don’t feel that spiritually minded, but aren’t feeling guilty, either? Or when things seem to be going along fairly well in our spiritual life, but our prayers seem so routine and monotonous that it becomes difficult for us to pray?

During those times, we may struggle for words. We either feel like we’re talking to a wall or like we’ve said the same thing too many times before—and if the words become boring and meaningless to us, surely they will be to God as well. What can we do when that happens and how can we improve our prayer life and relationship with God? What can we do when we find prayer monotonous and realize that we’re just going through the motions? What can we do to help us pray when our prayer life goes stale?

One of the challenges we may have is setting aside time and being diligent to pray.

Here are some things to consider when your prayer life hits the doldrums.

Prayer takes effort

Colossians 4:12 reads, “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, salutes you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God” (American King James Version).

Notice the phrase, “laboring fervently for you in prayers.” That’s interesting, because it implies that sometimes it takes work and it takes some planned effort to pray. Effective prayer can be one of the most difficult things that we do in our Christian lives. We may feel that prayer comes easy for others and that this is only an issue for us, but we must understand that we are not alone in this.

When I was a boy, my brother and I did a lot of construction work with my grandfather. I remember there were times when we didn’t want to be there; we didn’t want to put forth any effort and work. Our grandfather would say, “Boys, it ain’t gonna do itself.” In other words, get busy!

I’ve had mornings when I don’t want to get up, I don’t want to get dressed, I don’t want to shave, I don’t want to pray, I don’t want to study, I don’t want to go to work—“Just leave me alone!” mornings. When I feel like that, I have to remember what my grandfather said and just get busy!



Sometimes we have to face prayer that way. We just have to fight through the distractions and do it. Not only do we have to discipline ourselves to set aside time to pray, it also takes some preparation and planning to know what we are going to cover during our prayer time. During such times it is helpful to ask God for assistance in praying effectively (Romans 8:26).

We may find setting aside time and being diligent to pray a challenge. We must make it a part of our routine, but not ritualize it by repeating our words at the same time in the same way every day—letting it become so repetitious that it becomes meaningless. If we are not careful, our motive can be that of just putting in the time. But prayer is not just a religious duty. It’s much bigger than that!

How should I pray?

There have been times when I’ve wondered how long God wants us to pray each day. When we look at prayer in terms of time limits, we probably don’t grasp its value. But for the sake of discussion, let’s ask the question.

The Bible doesn't specifically say how long to pray, but there are several scriptures to consider—Paul wrote, “pray without ceasing” (I Thessalonians 5:17) and Jesus taught “that men always ought to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1). But we have to balance that with what Jesus said about avoiding “vain repetition” and also about thinking we are going to be heard for our “many words” (Matthew 6:7). It is appropriate to pray often and regularly, but we must avoid vain repetition.

To set aside time for prayer, we need self-discipline, but we also need to think about the preparation and consideration of the content of our prayers.

To set aside time for prayer, we need self-discipline, but we also need to think about the preparation and consideration of the content of our prayers.

A prayer list is a good idea. Sometimes you want to focus on the need for God's kingdom, the work of the Church, individual people or perhaps your own needs. The point is, prayer takes effort and some planning.

Use God's Word and Holy Spirit to help you pray

The Bible often talks about “praying in faith,” “the prayer of faith” or “according to your faith.” Faith is an important component of effective prayer, but how do we get it? Paul writes, “So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). We grow in faith by studying the word of God. If we are not studying our Bible enough, our prayer life may be off track.

Some people might say that to solve problems and find answers we need to look within ourselves for answers and enlightenment. That is a pagan New Age view that is non-biblical and worthless. Rather than looking *within*, we need to look *up* to God since He has all the answers and solutions.

We must also not rely on our own strength and wisdom. We'll be effective with our prayers to the extent that we rely on God to help us pray.

Reminding ourselves of what the Bible tells us to pray about can help us keep our prayer life busy. Praying in faith is not a feeling that we emotionally work up on our own. Faith is a gift from God. The outline Jesus gave us in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4 is a great guideline to prayer. Other areas of the Bible teach us that we can cast our anxiety upon God. That we should pray for laborers in the harvest and also for our enemies. We are told to pray for our church leaders, civil leaders and for each other. The Psalms offer wonderful prayer ideas as well.



Pray honestly

It's important to talk to God about the way we feel and think, but not so flippantly that it is disrespectful or disregarding His will. But to pray honestly means to pray from the heart, which involves true feelings, not what we imagine God wants to hear.

As an example, someone may throw a lot of words and expressions in so they sound religious, thinking they may please God. But God would rather we pray from the heart with sincerity, because He wants us to speak what's really on our mind.

Have you ever noticed how some of your most effective prayers were when you really opened up and respectfully told God what you thought? It's been said that a one-sentence prayer from a burdened heart is more effective than a one-hour prayer that's done only to sound religious. We can go to God when we hurt, we're scared, or when we don't understand something. He will listen with compassion and understanding.

To pray effectively, you just need to talk to your Father from the heart.

Read through some of the prayers of men like Moses, Elijah, or Jeremiah. Those were honest men! And when they prayed, they told God what they really thought. God truly does desire an intimate relationship with us and His affection is beyond our ability to imagine. None of us can fully comprehend the affection, the interest and the fascination that God has for us individually and personally. You are his child, and His love for you goes far beyond any love that a human parent can even imagine.

With that in mind, can physical prayer "tools," or using old English or repeating meaningless memorized prayers really be very interesting to God? He wants our minds, hearts and affections, not cold, empty words or some physical ritual that man in his immature understanding thinks would please God.

To pray effectively, you just need to talk to your Father from the heart. God is just that—our Father. He is not impressed with religious words and rituals in themselves. Yes, prayer takes some effort, and yes, we need God's Word and Spirit to help us pray. We need to pray honestly from the heart and if we rise to the highest degree, we can rise above the spiritual doldrums that we all struggle with at times.

Let's not neglect the tool of prayer to stay connected to the love and affection of our spiritual Father.

Further reading:

For more information please request or download our free booklet [*You Can Have Living Faith.*](#)

God Is My Helper

By Walter Zamonsky

Does God place conditions on receiving His help?



ONE PARTICULARLY HARROWING TALE of deliverance is the story of survival by the crew of a sailing ship exploring Antarctic waters and lands in the early 20th century.

An explorer from Ireland, Captain Sir Ernest Shackleton, later wrote, "When I look back I have no doubt that providence guided us not only across the snowfields, but across the storm-swept sea. I know that during that long and raking march of 36-hours, over unnamed mountains and glaciers of South Georgia, it seemed to me often that we were four, not three. I said nothing to my two companions, but afterwards Worsley said to me, 'Boss, I'd a curious feeling on that march that there was another person with us.'"



In our lives, have we ever had the feeling that we were not alone?

There is more in this incredible harrowing account of endurance of three Antarctic explorers that shows their trust and reliance on God for help. Just before their rescue they had their last encounter with faith while crossing the King Haakon Bay to get to the whaling station at Strommers.

To get there they had to cross a mountain range. Three times Shackleton led them wearily to the tops of 4,000-foot ridges, only to discover the other side was pitted with treacherous crevasses and precipices. On their fourth try, dusk descended and a blanket of freezing fog rolled in obscuring their view. They knew that they would not survive a night stranded 4,000 feet up on a

They knew that they would not survive a night stranded 4,000 feet up on a mountain.

mountain. Worsley gives this account of how they made their descent: "I straddled Sir Ernest, holding his shoulder, Crean did the same to me, and so, locked together we let go."



They shot off down the slope and into darkness. "I was never more scared in my life," Worsley admitted (the understatement of the year). The human toboggan plummeted down the mountainside before crashing into a bank of soft snow. They had descended 3,000 feet in two minutes. Then Shackleton heard the steam whistle that was used to rouse the Strommers whalers from their beds. The three of them were about to be rescued after some 16 months in the frozen Antarctic!

God, in His Word, assures us over and over again that He will help us. We sing hymns like "God Is My Helper" and the Psalms of David are full of God's promises to help. But some may say, "I asked and He did not help me" or "not everyone receives help."

Maybe, just maybe, there are conditions.

God tells us He is willing to help (Psalms 33:18-22; 50:14-15; 55:16-17). God also tells us to *call to Him*, which is accomplished through prayer. The line of communication on our side must always be open. God wants us to talk to Him, obey and love Him. He will listen to us, make a judgment call and help us.

*God, in His Word,
assures us over and
over again that He
will help us.*

These men of Shackleton's Antarctic exploration had no contact with the outside world, no communication other than with God. For months, their lives hung in the balance, along with the lives of their crew who were stranded back on an island. In their final attempt to be rescued, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego before the fiery furnace, so Shackleton, Worsley and Crean in the "icy furnace" cried out: "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us" (Daniel 3:17). And He did!

The stories of these men and their expedition are available in book and movie form, and there is much information on the Internet about Captain Shackleton as well.

To learn more about how to pray effectively in order to receive God's help, see ["The Privilege and Power of Prayer"](#) and ["Additional Conditions for Answered Prayer."](#)

Do We Have to Keep God's Commandments?

By Carol Taylor

We all know the laws of our city or state and how they apply, but what about God's laws? Are they relevant for today?



MY FRIEND IS NOT A BAD PERSON—far from it! He is a responsible citizen and tries to live a good life. The day he was driving his family on a trip through the countryside, he was his usual happy self and had no intention of causing anyone any harm. Even though he was going a little over the speed limit and the signs warned about passing, he didn't think it would be a problem passing the slow truck ahead of him. By the time he realized his mistake, it was too late. An oncoming car careened around the corner and smashed head-on into his vehicle, killing his wife and two children instantly. My friend survived with only cuts and bruises, sick to death that he would have to live with the knowledge of what he had done.



The road laws just didn't care that he'd driven so carefully so many times before and that he *usually* obeyed the speed limits. No one gave him the benefit of the doubt when he misjudged the road ahead that day, even though he'd almost always erred on the side of caution previously. His one mistake cost him very, very dearly and, understandably, my friend never quite recovered.

One thing is for sure: he knows why speed limits and road warnings are so valuable—every day, for every driver, in every situation. He doesn't see them as restrictions on his fun or fuddy-duddy rules for the overly cautious. He knows with sickening certainty that had he obeyed the signs that day, his wife and children would still be here.

Of course, not all man’s laws are so good or helpful, but what about God’s laws? Did God give us laws that are difficult to keep just to be a thorn in our flesh? Christ said “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). When He spoke of “life,” He meant the here and now, as well as the future. That doesn’t exactly match up with the idea many people have of Christianity (that everything that’s fun to do is a sin), does it?

Did God give us laws that are difficult to keep just to be a thorn in our flesh?

But what “fun” are they talking about?

Is it really still fun when a teenager wakes up with a sexually transmitted disease from a one-night stand? Does a young girl really think extramarital sex is still fun when she finds herself pregnant? And how much fun is it to find out your new baby has AIDS from some previous fun you had or because of some fun your mate was having while cheating on you? How much real joy do you have when you’ve let anger get the better of you and you hurt or kill someone else’s child, mate or parent? How much lasting pleasure are perversion, drug addiction, or alcoholism?

No, like the laws of the road, God’s laws are not to keep us from having fun—quite the complete opposite! Keeping God’s laws are the *only* way to long-term (actually, eternal!) joy and happiness for *everyone*. On the other hand, the way of sin is one fleeting moment of pleasure that can turn into long-term pain, sorrow and regrets the next day and the next and possibly for the rest of your life.

You think God was unkind in revealing to us laws that are hard to keep? Is it unkind when a doctor reveals to you that the reason you’re sick all the time is because you’ve been eating poison? Do you think the doctor should just give you something to make you feel better while you keep eating the poison that will inevitably kill you? Just as you can prevent broken bones, concussion or death by respecting the law of gravity, so keeping the laws of God will prevent you from much suffering, because God’s laws reveal the cause of all pain, sorrow and death. Of course we can’t keep any laws perfectly—but there is a time coming when all tears will be wiped away and there will be no more sorrow. It will be a time when God’s laws will be written in everyone’s hearts (Hebrews 10:16, Revelation 21:4)!

God’s laws show man the only way to live abundantly—now in this life! As Paul said, he would not have known what was causing his suffering had he not known the law!



God’s laws show man the *only* way to live abundantly—now, in this life! As Paul said, he would not have known what was causing his suffering had he not known the law (Romans 7:7). And John says, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). Free from what? Free from bringing pain and sorrow and misery on yourself and everyone around you. Free from regrets and guilt and shame. Free from destruction, pollution, greed, lust, war, murder, disease, perversion, addiction, etc, etc, etc.

So to answer the question above: Do you *have* to keep God’s laws? Only if you want to be truly happy now and for all eternity!

Further reading:

For more information, request or download our free booklets [What is Your Destiny](#) and [God's Holy Day Plan - Hope For All Mankind](#).

Scientism Infects Darwinian Debates

By Joseph Sheperd

Now there is not only one theory of evolution, but twelve! Shouldn't they first get the original theory right?



IN A *VANCOUVER SUN* NEWSPAPER, reporter Douglas Todd takes issue with how evolution is taught in our educational facilities. He cites two major obstacles to a “richer” discussion on evolution—these being “religious literalism, which leads to Creationism,” and “Scientism.” Scientism is defined as “the belief that the sciences have no boundaries and will, in the end, be able to explain everything in the universe.” Scientism holds that, “If something can't be ‘proved’ through scientific method, or observable and measurable evidence, then [Scientism’s proponents] say it’s irrelevant.”

The scientific community is now debating more than one theory of evolution—indeed, up to a dozen are being discussed. Noted scientist Gerald L. Schroeder, an MIT-trained scientist in both physics and biology, strongly disagrees with the widely accepted theories of evolution. He has had his work published in *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Scientific American* and major newspapers around the world. In his book, *The Hidden Face Of God*, Schroeder shows that he is neutral on evolution—he is neither anti-evolution nor pro-creation. His position is “pro look-at-the-data-and-see-what-they-teach.” He makes some powerful observations about evolutionary theories.

Scientism is defined as “the belief that the sciences have no boundaries and will, in the end, be able to explain everything in the universe.”

On the big bang:

“The big bang produced, from nothing, a universe composed of photons, energy-packed radiations, unimaginably hot and compressed beyond description, a soup of energy, nearly homogeneous throughout. (What produced the big bang remains a question.)”

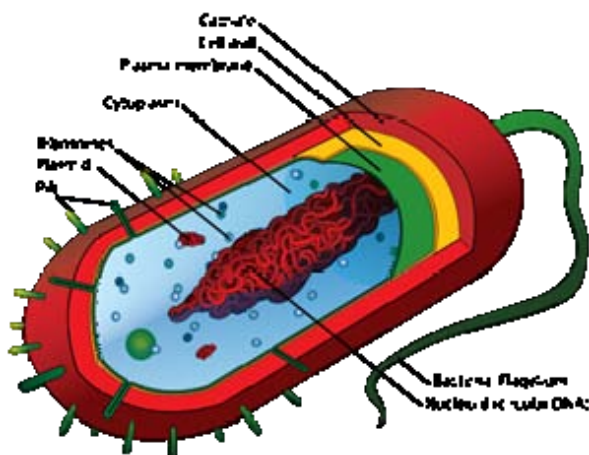
On the human being:

“The human body acts as a finely tuned machine, a magnificent metropolis in which, as its inhabitants, each of the 75 trillion cells, composed of 10²⁷ atoms, moves in symbiotic precision. Seldom are two cells simultaneously performing the same act, yet their individual contributions combine smoothly to form life.

“Ten to the twenty-seventh power—a one followed by 27 zeroes, a thousand million, million, million, million atoms—are organized by a single act when a protozoan-like sperm cell adds its message of genetic material into a receptive egg cell. Combined, these two minuscule cells contain all the information needed to produce the entire body at each stage of its growth, from fetus to adult.”

On the cell:

“The cell is simply jam-packed, a beehive of activity. Components are stuffed tighter than the circuits of a computer board, and everything is in motion. Each cell in your body, at this second and every second, is forming two thousand proteins. Every second, in every cell!



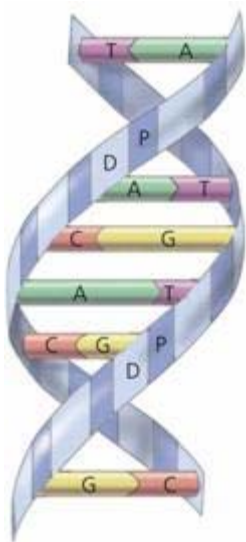
“A protein is a string of several hundred amino acids, and an amino acid is a molecule having twenty or so atoms. Every cell in your body is selecting, right now, approximately 500,000 amino acids. Consisting of some *ten million atoms*, organizing them into pre-selected strings, joining them together, checking to be certain each string is folded into specific shapes, and then shipping each protein off to a site, some inside, some outside the cell, sites, that (somehow) have signaled a need for these specific proteins. *Every second. Every cell.* Your body is a living wonder! The entrance to a living cell is marked by passage through a membrane functioning to keep the bad stuff out, while

letting the good stuff in, and expelling what needs to be expelled, waste products and manufactured goods. But who or what decides what comes in and what goes out?

“Where did these cells get their smarts? Since when do carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen, sulfur, phosphorus—the primary building blocks of biology—have ideas of their own, or any ideas at all?”

On sexual reproduction:

“With sexual reproduction, rather than a single cell acting as the originator of the progeny, a pair of cells unites to produce a daughter cell that is similar, but not identical to either of the parent cells. To accomplish this, the new cell has a mix of the genes taken from each parent. Each parent cell has a full complement of genetic material, called DNA.



“For sex to work, and for the progeny to share contributions from both sides of the bond, each of the parents must be willing to relinquish half of his or her DNA, in technical terms changing from diploid to haploid. In standard mitotic fashion, each parent cell produces spindle fibers that, with their wonder of synchronous motion, reach out from opposing walls of the cell, attach to each of the pairs of duplicated DNA chromosomes, and pull the pairs apart, separating the chromosome sister pairs into two sets of twenty-three pairs. Just what taught the cells to invent and train these fantastically clever fibers remains to be discovered. It’s hard to keep in mind that it’s all just molecules, no brain-power directs these events. The number of possible combinations housed within the human genome, run into the multiples of trillions. With this vast potential for variety, it is not surprising that no two humans are identical.”

Fearfully and wonderfully made

From these four examples given in Gerald Schroeder’s book, true science demands that intelligent human beings acknowledge that myriad *laws* are in motion; that incredible complexity of inter-dependent programming and function are in operation—the many cell components of each are programmed to give signal and direction to other cell components to carry out their part in the life-cycle. Such complexity of design of absolute inter-dependency, of sustained *law* to enable such functions, absolutely demand supreme intelligence and power to bring life about.

Small wonder, then, that King David was inspired to write a Psalm to God about “your heavens; the work of your fingers, the moon and stars which you have ordained” (Psalm 8:3).

Speaking of being human, David wrote in Psalm 139:14-15, “I will praise you; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are your works; and that my soul knows very well. My frame

...true science demands that intelligent human beings acknowledge that myriad laws are in motion; incredible complexity of inter-dependent programming and function are in operation

was not hidden from you, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.”

When we consider the unassailable evidence that true science demands, “Scientism,” in claiming that anything that cannot be demonstrated through observable and measurable evidence is irrelevant, demonstrates itself as nothing more than junk science—a science that chooses not to observe and measure the true and clear scientific evidence shown in Gerald Schroeder’s book, as well what is presented in many other true science publications.

Further reading:

For more interesting information request or download our free booklet [Creation or Evolution: Does It Really Matter What You Believe?](#)

Letters to the Editor

[“Labels—Part 1”](#)



Great article in *VCM!*

I am so thankful for your article on [“Labels.”](#) I personally eschew labels for the same reasons that you bring out in your article. They box you in and compartmentalize you in a way that doesn’t encompass the fullness of each of us as a person.

If I chose one label for myself, it would be “Christian.” That is the only label that fully describes who I am and am aspiring to be.

You brought to the forefront the detrimental effect of labels (indeed, of judging...which most labels applied to others are). They are divisive tools of Satan to separate the Body of Christ, and we are all way too susceptible to embracing them because we think that somehow that distinguishes us from the way of humanity and the way of Satan.

Just wanted to say “Thanks.”

Some feedback messages are edited for space and/or clarity.