

Catechetical Resources – The First Article¹

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

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THE FIRST ARTICLE

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

I believe that God made me together with all creatures, and that He gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind, and all my abilities.

And I believe that God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, cattle, and all I own, and all that I need to keep my body and life; and by defending me against all danger and guarding and protecting me from all evil.

All this God does only because He is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it.

For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him.

This is most certainly true!

I. WE INTRODUCE THE SUBJECT.

How did our world begin? How and when did life first appear upon this earth? Who was the first human being, and when did he live? Questions like these have fascinated philosophers and scientists for at least 2500 years. During the course of the centuries widely different answers have been formed and given, but millions of people still confess that they don't have the absolute truth regarding these matters. An untold number of men and women have devoted countless hours in a mammoth search for answers to our origin, but it has all been in vain; they still do not agree on any one truly dependable explanation of the world's and of life's beginnings.

Do you want to know the truth about the world's origin? Do you want an absolutely unchangeable, infallible, completely trustworthy answer to this question: How did life begin? Then please read on, and you will hear the answers from the lips of the only One who was present, when all things were created; you will learn from Him who is the Truth all that anyone ever can or ever needs to know about the origin of the world and everything in it. That is the subject of the First Article of our Creed and the theme of this treatise.

After we have studied what our God says about this matter, we shall be able to say with the inspired Psalmist: I have more understanding than all my teachers" (Psalm 119:99), provided that they do not believe Scripture, because we shall have been taught the facts by our all-knowing God. That is much different than reading about the speculations of mankind regarding the origin of the world and of life.

However, before we hear what our God says about the great questions concerning origins, we shall have something to say about the first seven words in the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty." In

¹ PLEASE NOTE: Scripture references are frequently quoted from the King James Version. If other translations are cited, they are identified with NIV (New International Version) or BECK (An American Translation by William F. Beck). Quotations from the Confessional Writings are from *The Book of Concord*, translated and edited by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, cited as Tappert). If the quotation is from the *Concordia Triglotta* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), it is so indicated.

his masterful Small Catechism explanation of the First Article, Dr. Luther says very little about the meaning of those seven words. Indeed, he could not and would not treat every part of the Apostles' Creed in his matchless Small Catechism explanations. That would require a large book and he was, after all, writing his Small Catechism for children. Therefore, in his explanation of the First Article, he simply showed that God created everything on earth (particularly mankind) in a wonderful way, that He furthermore continually preserves and protects His creation, and that we are to respond to His overwhelmingly great blessings by serving and praising Him.

Yet, there are a number of other concepts in the First Article that are also important for our faith, especially in these latter years of the twentieth century. In fact, there are so many and such profound Bible truths in these first dozen words of the Apostles' Creed that we could study them for years and yet not truly understand them all. This is the kind of study that Dr. Luther himself advocated, after we have learned the major truths; and that is what we plan on doing in the rest of this paper. (In his Large Catechism Dr. Luther wrote: "For the somewhat more advanced and educated, however, all three articles can be treated more fully and divided into as many parts as there are words. But for young pupils it is enough to indicate the most necessary points," Tappert, p. 412,12.) The first of these doctrines that we shall discuss is "Faith," the "I believe" of the Creed.

II. WHAT DOES "BELIEVE" (HAVE FAITH) IN GOD MEAN?

A. Faith in God is personal.

"I"– that is the way the Creed begins. The singular number is important, since no one can believe for someone else. True, a Christian family, a Christian school, a Christian church, Christian friends and companions are boundless blessings for us. They can actually influence us for good in all eternity. Yet, they cannot believe for us nor save us with their faith. Faith is always a personal matter. That is why it is totally impossible to begin the Apostles' Creed with "We believe." It must always be "I believe." (The Lord's Prayer is much different in this respect. With it we pray for others and they pray for us; therefore we use the pronouns "we, us, and our" in this greatest of all prayers. It is also true that we sing "We All Believe in One True God," Lutheran Hymnal numbers 251 and 252, for there we confess our mutual faith. Yet, each one must believe for himself.)

B. Faith in God may be said to have three aspects.

To have faith or to believe in someone means to trust in him, as a little child trusts his parents. Johnny, aged three, does not awaken in the morning to ask whether mother or father will give him food, drink, clothing, protection, and the like during the day. He knows, he believes, he trusts without questioning that his parents will do all of this for him. In the same manner we trust our God completely to supply our every need for body and soul, for time and for eternity. This complete confidence is faith in our God.

Scripture, however, also speaks of faith from three different viewpoints: knowledge, assent, and confidence. Each of the three terms may at times be used as synonyms for faith. For example, in John 17:3 our Lord says, "This is life eternal, that they might *know* Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent."

Yet, faith may also be divided into these same three parts. For example, if we are ever to believe in God, we must first know something about Him, as St. Paul wrote: "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" Romans 10:14)

But one's knowledge of God alone is not sufficient, for millions of people know about Him without really believing in Him. In addition to knowledge there must also be assent, a saying, "Yes, yes, I accept what Scripture says about God."

But even these two points (knowledge and assent) are not the complete story of faith, since the Devil certainly has knowledge of God, and he must also agree that everything the Bible says about Him is true. St.

James wrote about this point (2:19): “The devils also believe (that there is one God), and tremble.” However, Satan certainly doesn’t have true faith in God. For real faith a third thing is necessary: confidence or trust. Many Bible passages speak of trust in God, this necessary ingredient of faith. The Bible tells us, for example, “Whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25); “None of them that trust in Him shall be desolate” (Psalm 34:22).

III. WHO IS THE TRUE GOD?

(Note: We shall treat the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and the attributes of God in connection with the First Article. We shall also have something to say about Christ’s Person, although we plan on presenting a few additional thoughts in the paper on the Second Article.)

Our God is so infinitely superior to us in every way that we shall never be able to understand Him completely, so long as we live here on this earth. Not even the wisest man who ever lived can understand more than a tiny fraction of God’s greatness and goodness, because here we “see through a glass, darkly” (I Corinthians 13:12).

St. Paul wrote about this inconceivable greatness of God in Romans 11:33, 34: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God: how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” The Psalmist, too, was lost in awe and wonder, when he thought of God’s greatness, writing, “O Lord, how great are Thy works; and Thy thoughts are very deep” (Psalm 92:5).

Other sacred writers echoed the same thoughts. For example: “Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord” (Psalm 86:8); “His greatness is unsearchable” (Psalm 145:3); “There is none like unto Thee, O Lord” (Jeremiah 10:6); He is “God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To Him be honor and might forever” (I Timothy 6: 15, 16). Indeed, our God cannot be compared with anything or anyone else. One day, however, we shall by the grace of the Lord Jesus see our glorious God “face to face” (I Corinthians 13:12); “We shall see Him as He is” (I John 3:2), That will be one of heaven’s greatest miracles, an experience more blessed in every way than any we have ever had on this world, or indeed could ever imagine here in this time!

Yet, while we live here in this world, we can catch a few tiny rays of God’s glory, as we shall learn in the next sections.

A. We can learn something about our incomprehensible God from two sources.

1. The miracle of creation tells us something about our God.

St. Paul treated this point several times. For example, he spoke about “the living God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein . . . (who) left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts 14:15, 17). We know the truth of these statements. All that we need to do is to look at the sky with its numberless, gigantic heavenly bodies or at one teaspoonful of water with its million, billion, trillion atoms, each a world in itself. An all-powerful, all-knowing Being must have created it all; it just couldn’t come into existence by itself. The rain, the seasons, and the food we eat also bear witness to God who is good and merciful to all of His creatures.

Again St. Paul writes: “For the invisible things of Him (that is, God’s qualities or characteristics) from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made (that is, by us human beings), even His eternal power and Godhead” (Romans 1:20).

Yes, indeed, when we view the towering mountains and the rolling prairies, the vast forests and the pounding seas, the life-saving sun and the life-preserving rains, the billion bushel harvests and all the

other blessings that God has shed upon us abundantly, what else can we do, except to exult with David of old: “Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty and Thou art exalted above all” (I Chronicles 29:11)? We can truly learn something about our great God from creation.

St. Paul wasn’t, of course, the only sacred writer to treat of God’s glory in creation. Long before his time, the inspired Psalmist wrote 19:1: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork.” Anyone who has spent even a minimum amount of time in studying the stars must agree with the Psalmist. We, too, are overwhelmed by the power and the majesty of Someone who could create those infinitely large heavenly bodies. Yes, creation tells us, among other truths, that God is all-powerful, all-wise, all-merciful.

In addition to all of this, each one of us has been created with a natural knowledge of God. St. Paul wrote about this also: “When Gentiles, who do not have the law do by nature things required by the law they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them” (Romans 2:14, 15, NIV). The Apostle is here telling us that all people by nature know that God exists; that He requires a certain conduct; that He forbids murder, adultery, theft, and the like; and that we shall have to answer to Him one day for the way in which we have lived on this earth.

This natural knowledge of God with which each one of us was created is good, for it should move all people “That they should seek the Lord . . . and find Him” (Acts 17:27). If they, against their better knowledge, do not seek the Lord, then “They are without excuse.” Why? “Because that, when they knew God (from creation and from in their natural knowledge of Him with which they were created),-they glorified Him not as God” (Romans 1:20, 21).

Yet, we must also admit this: One’s knowledge of God derived from the creation of the world and from our own creation is imperfect. At best it tells us only a very little about who God is and what He is like; nor can it answer the greatest question of all: How can we be saved? If our knowledge of God is to be at all adequate; we need another source to tell us what He is like. And, praise be to Him, He has given it to us; it is our Bible.

2. The Bible tells us all that we need to know about our God.

In the Bible the Holy Ghost reveals to us many things about God, about His being and His works, that we couldn’t possibly learn from creation. King David referred to this matter in his well-known 19th Psalm. There he first wrote: “The heavens declare the glory of God... there is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.” In other words, the heavens speak about God in a way that every user of one of earth’s 3,000 languages can understand.

Yet a few verses later this same inspired writer told us that the Word of the Lord speaks much more clearly and powerfully about our God than any of His works could possibly do it. He wrote: “The Law of the Lord (His Word) is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord (His Word, again) is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7).

Well, then, what does Scripture tell us about our God? To examine every passage that treats of our overwhelmingly great God would require a study of almost every passage of the Bible (His name alone in its various forms is mentioned some 10,000 times in Scripture). We shall, therefore, in the rest of this Part II restrict ourselves to some major points.

B. The Bible tells us that our God is triune.

1. The Bible repeatedly testifies to this fact.

In Bible passages like Deuteronomy 6:4 Scripture clearly teaches that our God is one. That passage reads as follows: “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord.” As if to emphasize this truth, Jesus quoted those words verbatim in Mark 12:29. St Paul emphasized the same truth with his familiar, “There is none other God but one” (I Corinthians 8: 4). Therefore we say and teach that God is one Being or one Essence.

Scripture just as clearly teaches that our God is three separate Persons. That is Bible doctrine from the first pages of Genesis through Revelation, the last Book of the Bible. True, this teaching may not be quite as clear in the Old Testament as it is in the New Testament, but consider these Old Testament passages: Genesis 1:1: “God (the Father) created the heaven and the earth”; Genesis 1:2: “The Spirit of God (the third Person in the Holy Trinity) moved upon the face of the waters”; Genesis 1:3: “And God said” (He spoke the Word, and the Word is Christ as John 1:1-14 tells us). Thus the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see the three distinct persons in the Godhead on the very first page of the first book of the Bible, when read with John 1.

Genesis 1:26 is another passage from the first chapter in the Bible that expresses the same truth: “Let **us** (the three Persons communed with each other) make man in **our** image.” In the very next verse, however, the singular subject (God) is used with the singular verb (made), denoting just one God. The Aaronic blessing (Numbers 6:22-26), the blessing with which the high priest dismissed the congregation, also reminded the Old Testament children of God that there are three persons in the Godhead. They believed, as we do, that the Father blesses and keeps us; the Son is gracious unto us, and the Holy Spirit gives us peace.

Still another Old Testament Bible passage that clearly speaks of the three Persons is Isaiah 63:8-10, There the Father was speaking, the Son is the Savior who redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit was the One who was vexed by the people.

Finally, there are a number of Old Testament passages that speak of either one or more of the three Persons in the Godhead. The reader may wish to consult Psalm 110; Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 53; Ezekiel 36:27; Joel 2:28.

The New Testament speaks of the Holy Trinity in a still clearer way. Matthew 28:19 and II Corinthians 13:14 are two of the best known passages that teach this doctrine. In the former the Lord Jesus asks us to baptize “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” In the latter passage, the final verse of Second Corinthians, St. Paul wrote what has come to be known as the Apostolic Blessing: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.”

The best known New Testament Bible story that teaches the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is the Baptism of Jesus. Jesus, whom the Father expressly called His beloved Son, was present for baptism; the Father spoke from heaven; and the Holy Ghost came down from heaven in a form like that of a dove (Matthew 3:13-17).

Furthermore; Jesus is expressly called God in Bible passages such as John 20:28, 31: Jesus is “My Lord and my God”; “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.” Titus 2:13 tells us: “We wait for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ” (NIV). I John 5:20 calls Jesus Christ “the true God and eternal-life” (NIV). Colossians 2:9 reads: “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form” (NIV). One of the best known Old Testament Bible passages that expressly call Jesus God is Isaiah 9:6: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given. . . and His name shall be called Almighty God, the Prince of Peace.”

As if to emphasize this truth that Jesus is indeed true God, Scripture bids us to honor Him just as we honor the Father (John 5:23), for if we don’t honor Jesus, we aren’t honoring the Father either.

Jesus also has all of the characteristics of God. He is, for example, all-knowing (“Lord, Thou knowest all things,” John 21:17); He is omnipresent (“I am with you always,” Matthew 28:21); He is

omnipotent (“All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth,” Matthew 28:18); and He is able to give us eternal life (“I give unto them eternal life,” John 10:28).

The Holy Ghost, too, is God, no less than the Father and the Son. That is evident from the two Bible passages previously quoted (Matthew 28:19 and II Corinthians 13:14), in which each of the three persons in the Godhead is, shown to be equal in every way. The Apostles, who were taught by our Lord, also called the third Person in the Trinity “God”: For example, in Acts 5:3, 4 St. Peter told Ananias that he had lied to the Holy Ghost, who is God.

The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and from the Son, as Jesus testified: “The Father shall give you another Comforter” (John 14:16). Again, Jesus said of the Holy Ghost that He is “the Comforter” (John 14:16); and He is “the Comforter. . . whom I will send unto you from the Father” (John 15:26). Jesus promised His disciples that after He had ascended into heaven the Holy Ghost will “teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I (Jesus) have said unto you” (John 14:26). Through the Word the Holy Spirit will teach us exactly what Jesus taught, while He lived here on earth.

Another fact that shows conclusively that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are three Persons in the Godhead is this: Each of the three Persons took part in the same works. For example, Genesis 1 tells us that the Father created everything that exists, but John 1:3 says: “All things were made by Him” (Jesus, the Son); and Psalms 43:6 and 104:30 tell us that the Holy Spirit created everything. These passages by no means contradict each other; they simply tell us that each one of the three Persons took part in the work of creation, although ordinarily we say that the Father created everything.

What has been said of creation can also be said about redemption. We know that Jesus, God’s Son, redeemed the world from sin, as St. Paul wrote in that well-known passage, Galatians 3:13; “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law.” (Many other Bible passages tell us the same thing.) Yet, the Father took part in our redemption also, for “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself” (II Corinthians 5:19). And “It is the Spirit that beareth witness” (I John 5:6) that Jesus did indeed redeem us. You can see from these Bible passages that all three Persons took part in redeeming us, although it is, of course, true that we generally speak of the Father creating us, the Son redeeming us, and the Holy Ghost sanctifying us.

Finally, all three Persons must each be God, since all have the same attributes or characteristics. We showed above that the Father and the Son have identical attributes, and the Scripture says that same thing about the Holy Ghost. He is, for example, omnipresent (“Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit?” Psalm 139:7); He is all-knowing (“He will guide you into all truth,” John 16:13); He gives us life, even as Christ was “made alive by the Spirit,” I Peter 3:18).

2. Our Creeds express the Bible doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

Human reason will never be able to understand how God can be three different Persons, yet truly and only one God. That idea defies all our principles of mathematics. Yet, this doctrine is not a contradiction. It is, in fact, the great mystery of our faith; it is the foundation of our religion; belief in it is a necessity for salvation. Therefore the Augsburg Confession, Article I, one of the chief doctrinal statements of our Church, states, “There is one divine essence which is called and which is truly God, and that there are three persons in this one divine essence, equal in power and alike eternal: God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit” (Tappert p, 27, 2),

An excellent statement on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is also written in the Athanasian Creed. This is one of the oldest creeds of the entire Christian Church. It deserves to be much better known and much more frequently used than is usually the case. Every well-informed Christian ought either to know it from memory or at least use it in his devotions from time to time. It is recorded in Tappert, pp. 19-21, and in The Lutheran Hymnal, p. 53.

The Apostles’ Creed, the Nicene Creed, and numerous statements in Lutheranism’s other creeds also express the Biblical doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

3. Many deny the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

The reader may wonder why so many paragraphs have been devoted to the teaching that God is triune. There are two reasons for this procedure: Without belief in this doctrine, it is impossible to be saved, for this is the only God who exists; all others are idols. The Athanasian Creed, after thoroughly presenting the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, rightfully concludes with: “This is the true Christian faith, unless a man believe this firmly and faithfully, he cannot be saved.”

Secondly, this doctrine has been doubted, denied, and disputed for centuries, yes, almost from the dawn of human history. We know, for example how people began to worship gods and goddesses long ago, instead of bowing down before the true God. Every such form of polytheism (the worship of many gods) is a denial of the Trinity; it is wicked idolatry.

In New Testament times also, from the very day that Christ began His public ministry, people everywhere doubted that He was truly God. Then, as now, most of the Jewish people together with all other non-Christians rejected Christ. They thus turned away from the true God to an idol.

Even among those people who claimed that they were Christians there was a dispute regarding Christ’s divinity. That dispute reached its climax when Arius (died 336 AD) and his followers claimed that Christ was not truly God, but only like God. That teaching led to the so-called Arian Controversy in the early 300’s. The controversy ranged around two similar Greek terms. One side maintained, wrongly, that Christ was *homoiousius* (like God), while the other defended the Bible teaching that Christ was *homoousius* (identical with God). You will note that there is only one letter added to the first Greek word, but the difference in meaning is the difference between worshipping the true God or worshipping an idol.

Thank God, this controversy was settled for a large part of the Church at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD. That was the first great meeting of the Christian Church after the Roman persecutions had ended. At this time the Church condemned the false doctrine of the Arians and stated in the clearest possible way that Jesus was indeed God. At that council meeting the Church wrote and adopted the Nicene Creed with its well-known statement about Jesus: “God of God, very God of very God.” The true doctrine of the Holy Trinity was reaffirmed.

For millions of people presently living in the world, the Nicene Creed did not, however, settle the matter of Jesus being true God. The controversy persists today with Unitarians, Mormons, Jews, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and others refusing to recognize Jesus Christ as true God. Many who claim membership in the Christian Church subscribe to the same heresy.

Therefore it was necessary for us to state precisely and in detail in the preceding paragraphs what Scripture says about our one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three distinct Persons, yet one great God. (To emphasize this point many parts of the liturgy for our Church services and various symbols used in our homes and churches, like the triangle, the three entwined circles, and the trefoil repeatedly refer to the Holy Trinity.)

C. The Bible tells us that our God has manifold incomprehensible attributes.

Our God is so great that even the greatest intellects cannot understand more than a tiny fraction of what He is really like. Indeed, He would not be much of a God, if we with our frail, error-prone, intellect could fully comprehend Him.

Yet, our God has revealed some of His characteristics (attributes, we call them) to us in the Holy Bible. By examining His attributes we can learn a great deal more about Him than “we possibly could by just studying His works. The paragraphs that follow describe some of those characteristics.

1. Our God is a Spirit.

That truth is clearly expressed in Bible passages like John 4:24: “God is a Spirit,” and II Corinthians 3:17: “The Lord is that Spirit.” A spirit, as Jesus Himself said, is a being that “hath not flesh and bones” (Luke 24:39), no parts at all that one can see with his human eyes.

Consequently, our childhood picture of God as an elderly, bearded human figure, presiding over the earth, is entirely false, That is simply an artist’s portrayal of One who is an invisible Being. In heaven, of course, “We shall see Him as He is” (I John 3:2), but that will be after our bodies have been glorified at the resurrection.

It is true that Scripture at times speaks of God’s hands (“Thy hands have made me,” Psalm 119:73), His eyes (“Thine eyes did see my substance,” Psalm 130:16), and His feet (I will make the place of My feet glorious,” Isaiah 60:13). Yet, each time that Scripture speaks of God having a body or various members, that is only a human way of expressing certain truths. God really has no body and no parts of a body.

2. Our God is almighty (omnipotent).

This is the only attribute of God that is specifically mentioned in the Apostles’ Creed: “I believe in God the Father **Almighty**. . . Nor do we need to look far in Scripture to learn that this great truth is stressed repeatedly from the opening chapters of Genesis to the last chapters of Revelation. For example, who except someone who is truly almighty could have created the numberless heavenly bodies? Who among us will deny the truthfulness of the angel Gabriel’s words to Mary at the time of the Annunciation, “With God nothing shall be impossible”? In addition our Lord Himself testified: “With God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26) and “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18).

The Psalmists in various places also speak of the unlimited power of our God. Psalm 135:6, for example, reads like this: “Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did He ‘in heaven, and in the earth, in the seas, and all deep places.”

Let all willful sinners, let all those who defy the living God, beware of that almighty power. With it God destroyed the ancient world by such a tremendous flood that it covered the entire world and wiped out every living being on earth (except those in the Ark), because of man’s dreadful wickedness (Genesis 6-8). With it He so totally obliterated those vile cities of Sodom and Gomorrah that no one knows to this day where they once stood (Genesis 19). In His omnipotence God will on Judgment Day say to billions of unbelievers, “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire” (Matthew 25:41); and immediately they will be “cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:15).

On the other hand, let every child of God rejoice and thank our heavenly Father evermore for His almighty power, since He has promised again and again to use it for our spiritual and physical welfare: “The name of the Lord is a strong tower,” wrote King Solomon, “the righteous runneth into it, and is safe” (Proverbs 18:10). Psalm 104:10-28 tells us how our God uses that same almighty power to provide for the daily needs of every creature on earth, including us. He can, if necessary, even do that by means of a miracle, as He provided manna in the Wilderness for His children during their forty years of wandering (Exodus 16:14-16).

Is it any wonder then that children of God in every age have joined the Psalmist of old in proclaiming triumphantly, “The Lord is the Strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1).

Besides being almighty, the only one of God’s attributes specifically mentioned in the First Article, the Bible also tells us about a number of other characteristics of our God. We shall briefly discuss them in the following paragraphs.

3. Our God is unchangeable.

In Psalm 102:26, 27 we read that the earth and the heavens grow old and eventually perish, but “Thou (God) art the same; and Thy years shall have no end.” That thought is repeated in Hebrews 1:12. Scripture also states that Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, and today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

Since He is unchangeable, God never changes His standards of morality, a fact that millions of people, persuaded by the Devil; overlook. If at one time God condemned adultery, fornication, drunkenness, homosexuality, and the like, as He surely did in Bible passages like I Corinthians 6:9, 10 and Galatians 6:19-21, then He will unquestionably condemn them today. For emphasis God even adds that such unrepented sins will shut one out of heaven forever.

Nor does it matter in the least that Satan has completely convinced countless numbers of people that actions of this type are perfectly acceptable in these last years of the twentieth century. Our unchanging God hates these sins with every part of His being. He will surely cast such unrepentant sinners into hell, “Where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched” (Matthew 9:48). Let every sinner be sternly and clearly warned!

On the other hand, God’s unchangeableness is a blessed comfort for every believer, for we know that God said to His people long ago, “My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of My peace be removed” (Isaiah 54:10). God’s love, His mercy, His care for His children, His promise of eternal life to every believer in Christ, all of these promises and many, many more have never changed, nor will they ever be abolished. No matter how difficult life may become, no matter how severely Satan may tempt us, “The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our Refuge” (Psalm 46:7), and will be forever, since He never changes.

4. Our God is omnipresent.

King Solomon referred to this attribute when he prayed in part of that lengthy prayer dedicating the Temple: “Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee” (I Kings 8:27). King David confessed the same truth in that fine Psalm 139:7-10: “Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there, If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.”

Through the Prophet Jeremiah (23:23,24) our God asked these questions: “Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.” In each case the answer is obvious.

This is a truth that staggers the imagination. God is present where you are at this very moment; He is present everywhere on earth and on the sun, the moon, and the stars. He is present throughout our galaxy that stretches many hundred million miles. He is present throughout every one of the known and unknown galaxies, all of them so far away from the earth that we cannot possibly imagine the vast distances involved. Yes, God is present at the very edge of the universe; He encompasses it all, as St. Paul wrote, He “filleth all in all.” (Ephesians 1:23).

Dr. Luther put it this way: “We confess that God is a supernatural, unfathomable Being, who at one and the same time is entirely in every little kernel of grain and also in and above and outside all creatures. . . Nothing is so small, God is still smaller; nothing is so large, God is still larger; nothing so short, God is still shorter; nothing so long, God is still longer; nothing so wide, God is still wider; nothing so narrow, God is still narrower; in short, God’s being is so far above and beyond words and thought that it is simply indescribable” (quoted in F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p, 444).

The thought that God is present everywhere and that He knows everything, as we shall hear in just a moment, must strike terror into the heart of every willful sinner. Such an evildoer must know that every thought of his wicked heart, every sinful word with which he plans his crimes, and every evil act that he ever performs – all are well-known to our omnipresent God. Then let every unrepentant sinner listen

carefully to the dire warnings of Scripture, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked” (Galatians 6:7); and, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31). Let him repent of all his wickedness now, while he is still living, before the frightful judgment of the living God curses him eternally.

Yet, what a comfort for us Christians to know that our omnipresent God has promised us, “When thou shalt pass through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire, then thou shalt not be burnt” (Isaiah 43: 2). Even in the worst of calamities our God is with us “always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20) to help, to rescue, and to bless us. Then, at the very end of our lives, we can confidently pray, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me” (Psalm 23:4). Indeed, God’s omnipresence is an invaluable blessing to us, His undeserving children!

5. Our God is omniscient.

King David wrote eloquently of this divine attribute in his magnificent 139th Psalm, especially verses 1-4: “O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether.”

An idea like this, that God knows everything about us, whether we are seated or arise, whether we lie down or are walking about, simply overwhelms us. Then, when the Psalmist adds that our God knows our every thought, even before it is formed, that is truly beyond any human comprehension. Yet, God does know everything. David’s son, Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, reemphasized that attribute of our God in his prayer dedicating the Temple: “Thou, even Thou only, knowest the hearts of all the children of men” (I Kings 8:39). There is nothing, absolutely nothing in the past, present, or future that God does not know, whether this be something in the lives of individuals, of the Church, of the nations, or of anything else that could be mentioned. This He knows, not as the result of acquired wisdom, like us, but by His very nature He knows “all things” (John 21:17).

What lessons does this awesome attribute of our God, His omniscience, hold for us? For the willful sinner it must surely be a mighty warning, for he must realize that God knows his every evil thought, word, and deed, and that God hates every one of them. Such a sinner must tremble in his shoes, when he thinks of God’s omniscience. One day such an unrepentant sinner will call unto the mountains to fall on him and to destroy him so that he doesn’t fall into the hands of the living God, but it will all be in vain (Luke 23:30; Revelation 6:15-17). He will be cursed forevermore.

For the Christians, on the other hand, God’s omniscience provides peace, contentment, courage, hope, and a strengthened faith that one can find nowhere else in the world. Since our Heavenly Father knows that we have need of food, clothing, shelter, and the like, as He said in Matthew 6:32, then we do not need to worry about receiving such things that we really need for our bodies, “All these things shall be added unto you” who seek first the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33).

Furthermore, since “His understanding is infinite” (Psalm 147:5), why should we ever feel that He has forgotten or forsaken us? “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee,” says our God in Isaiah 49:15.

In His omniscience God also sees to it “that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28). We, His children, can surely trust Him to keep that promise.

Above all, He knows that we need forgiveness for our many sins. Therefore He provided for this all-important blessing through Jesus, His only-begotten Son.

Another fact must be mentioned: Since God is the only wise One (Romans 16:27), and since He always works out all things for our good, we must never question His works, never doubt His goodness, and never criticize His dealings with us. We cannot be like the mother who, when her son was apparently dying, prayed, “God, You cannot let him die; You cannot let him die.” The son did not die; but his brain was so severely damaged that he never recognized his mother again. The lesson for us is obvious: Trust God’s omniscience and His goodness, no matter what happens.

Like that mother, every one of us has undoubtedly had experiences that may have moved us to question God’s works, because at the time they may have seemed evil or even calamitous to us. The Bible story of Joseph is just one of numberless examples. Joseph might readily have turned to God with this bitter criticism, “Why did You let me be thrown into jail, when I was only trying to keep Your commandment?” He, however, did nothing of the kind. Later he probably understood how God used this humiliating experience to keep him humble, when God led him to the prime ministership of Egypt and to the saving of his people from starvation. Someone has said that we can see only the wrong side of the tapestry in such cases. It may then appear to be just a jumble of threads with no pattern whatsoever. God, on the other hand, sees the right side of the tapestry, and that picture is always a perfect one. Therefore we should never question His dealings with us, His precious, forgiven children. In His omniscience, He always knows and does what is right and good for us. Another point must be mentioned: If God knows everything that will happen, do we consequently have any freedom of choice? Are we then responsible for our actions? Answer: God knows everything that will happen, but that doesn’t mean that He causes everything to happen or even wishes it to happen. If Mr. Smith commits suicide on a certain day, God knows and has known from all eternity exactly what would happen on that particular date, but He surely does not want anyone to commit suicide. He allows it, yes, since He has given the human heart the fearful ability to say no to His will, but it is against His will, no doubt about that.

One of our Confessions, the Formula of Concord, puts it this way: The foreknowledge of God foresees and foreknows also that which is evil; however, nothing in such a manner as though it were God’s gracious will that it should happen” (*Concordia Triglotta*, p. 1065).

Thus there is no doubt that God most exactly and certainly foresaw (*praeviderit*) before the time of the world, and still knows, which of those that are called will believe or will not believe; also which of the converted will persevere (in faith) and which will not persevere; which will return after a fall (into grievous sins), and which will fall into obduracy (will perish in their sins). So, too, the number, how many there are of these on either side, is beyond all doubt perfectly known to God. However, since God has reserved this mystery for His wisdom, and has revealed nothing concerning it to us in His Word, much less commanded us to investigate it with our thought, but has earnestly discouraged us therefrom, Romans 11:33 ff., we should not reason in our thoughts, draw conclusions, nor inquire curiously into these matters, but should adhere to His revealed Word, to which He points us (*Concordia Triglotta*, p. 1081, 54, 55).

Finally, we must also note that no one may claim for himself the wisdom that God alone possesses. We are thinking of matters like knowing the future or the state of the dead, and the like, which God has expressly chosen not to reveal to us. Fortune tellers, spiritualists, and others claim to have such wisdom. They are such an abomination to God that He ordered them put to death in Old Testament times, so that the pollution would be removed from the land (Deuteronomy 18: 9-14; Leviticus 20:27). We must not consult with them, nor have anything to do with them. On the contrary, we confidently place ourselves into God’s loving, caring hands, knowing that one day we shall understand all secrets and all mysteries (I Corinthians 13:12).

6. Our God is eternal.

Moses, the great man of God, testified: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God” (Psalm 90:2). Another Psalmist wrote of God, “Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end” (Psalm 102:27), while the Prophet Isaiah spoke about the “Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 40:28).

This attribute of our God is also incomprehensible. Some of us can imagine what 75 years are like; to some extent we can even picture for ourselves a period like that from the discovery of America to the present, or from the birth of Christ to the end of the twentieth century; but who among us can possibly conceive of eternity, of time without end?

There is an ancient legend of India which says something like this: Imagine that a bird with a tiny piece of cloth in its beak brushes across the towering Himalayan Mountains once every thousand years. When the mountains are worn away by that action, that will be but the beginning of eternity.

We simply cannot conceive of God being without a beginning or without an end, since everything on earth happens in time. Eternity is the absence of time, no day or night, no year or century, no thousand or million years, only forever and ever: This is one of the attributes that describe our God!

Try to imagine what an overwhelmingly powerful warning this attribute of our God is for all the wicked, for the unbelievers, and for us when we fail to repent of our sin: All of these classes of people “Shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord” (II Thessalonians 1:9).

Again, try to conceive of the joy, comfort, peace, strength, and blessedness in such truths as this: “And so shall we ever be with the Lord” (I Thessalonians 4:17). The hymn writer expressed some of these blessings that are ours through this attribute of our God with that joyous Easter hymn: “I know that my Redeemer lives. He lives, my **ever** Living Head... He lives to bless me with His love... He lives to grant me rich supply... He lives to calm my troubled heart... He lives my mansion to prepare; He lives to bring me safely there” (*The Lutheran Hymnal*; 200).

7. Our God is holy.

The seraphim, whom Isaiah saw in the vision, proclaimed; “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory” (Isaiah 6:3). St. Peter referred to the same attribute when he quoted Leviticus 11:45: “Be ye holy; for I (God) am holy” (I Peter 1:16). Our God is so completely holy that even to suspect Him of committing a sin would be blasphemy on our part.

Again this is a warning for every sinner. Before God’s aweful holiness and purity, anyone with the slightest sin clinging to him will surely be burnt to a crisp, like hay in a fiery furnace. Oh, that we might understand what this perfection means, as compared with our sinfulness! Isaiah knew what it meant. After seeing the “Holy One of Israel,” he cried in terror: “Woe is me. For I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips... for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts” (Isaiah 6:5). He and we could not possibly stand before the all-holy One, unless every single sin is removed from us. The Psalmist tells us clearly enough, “For Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with Thee. The foolish shall not stand in Thy sight: Thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing (lies): the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man” (Psalm 5: 4-6).

Yet, that same holiness of our God can become the greatest comfort that we can ever experience in this wicked world, for we know that Christ’s complete holiness and righteousness has been transferred to our account. This is “the righteousness of God (which we receive) by faith of Jesus Christ” (Romans 3:22). Christ took our sin upon Himself and paid its punishment; in return He gave us His righteousness. With His righteousness we can stand before God on Judgment Day, so perfect in every way that even our all-holy God cannot find a single flaw in us.

The writer expressed that thought excellently in his hymn:

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
 My beauty are, my glorious dress;
 Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed
 With joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in that great Day,
 For who aught to my charge shall lay?
 Fully thro' these absolved I am
 From sin and fear, from guilt and shame. (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, 371)

8. Our God is loving, gracious, and merciful in Christ.

Scripture refers to this attribute of our God hundreds of times from Genesis 3 through the Book of Revelation. Nowhere else, however, is it written more clearly and more beautifully than in that well-known, widely-loved Bible passage, John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” That is the complete Gospel in 25 words. Believe it, and you will be saved forevermore.

“God is love,” wrote the Apostle of love (I John 4:8). “The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,” wrote Moses, the man of God (Exodus 34:6). If God did not have this attribute, then all of His other qualities would help us none – we would then be without forgiveness, without help or hope for the future (and for the present also). Then, since we are sinners, we should certainly be condemned eternally.

Yet, thanks and praise be to our God forever and ever, He is compassionate. He did find a way, through His Son Jesus, for us to escape hell fire. He has called all people to repentance, to receive forgiveness through faith in Christ and thus to live with Him in all of the glories of heaven forever.

Someone has said, “Your God is too small,” meaning that our conception of God is far too small. After studying His attributes, we probably also will confess, “Yes, our idea of God has been far too small.” To overcome this lack, we should learn to know well at least the eight attributes of God discussed in the previous paragraphs. We should remember them clearly and depend upon them completely. Then we shall surely be blessed now and forever by Him who possesses them.

D. The Bible tells us that God is the Almighty Creator of everything that exists.

1. Scripture repeatedly testifies to this fact.

For centuries the wise men of the world have tried to determine with their own minds how this world and everything in it came into existence. Since they left God out of their thinking, they have never arrived at the correct answer. They remind us of St. Paul’s words to Timothy (II Timothy 3:7): “Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

On the other hand, even the humble Christian knows the true answer to this question: How did the world and everything in it begin? With Dr. Luther he can tell the whole world: “If you want to know where you and I and all people came from, then listen and I shall tell you: It is God the Father, the almighty Creator of heaven and earth... who created everything and preserves it. Now you know it.” (Quoted by R. Pieper in *Der kleine Katechismus Luthers*, Vol. 1, part 2, p. 18 – all translations from this source are by the author of these notes.) God alone has revealed this mighty truth to us in His sacred Word; we could not know it in any other way.

Listen to what God says in the very first verse of His Bible: “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Through His servant Nehemiah God echoed that same thought: “Thou (God)... hast made the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein”

(Nehemiah 9:6). Through His great prophet Isaiah God bids us, “Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who has created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth. Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of His understanding” (Isaiah 40:26, 28). Through that same prophet our God again tells us: “I have made the earth and created man upon it: I, even My hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded” (45:12).

In New Testament times God testified to this same truth about creation through His faithful Apostle Peter who spoke of “the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the seas, and all things that are therein” (Acts 14:15). St. Peter also preached about “God that made the world and all things therein” (Acts 17:24). In Colossians 1:16 St Paul wrote: “For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him.”

Scripture also tells us that both the Son and the Holy Ghost, the second and third Persons in the Godhead, took part with the Father in creating everything that exists. For example, in the very beginning of time “The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2). Job, the sufferer, said, “The Spirit of God made me” (Job 33:4). John 1:3, a verse that refers to Jesus, reads as follows: “All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.” Colossians 1:16, the passage quoted in the preceding paragraph, also tells us that Jesus worked with the Father in creation. Thus, even though Scripture particularly ascribes the work of creation to the Father, yet both the Son and the Holy Ghost also took part in this stupendous act.

There you have the truth of God, again admirably summarized by Dr. Luther: “Here (in the Word), first of all, a great light shines in your heart, if you will accept it, and teaches you in just a few words what can never be completely described with all tongues, with many books... namely, who you are, whence you came, and whence came heaven and earth. For you are God’s creation, workmanship, creature, and work, that is, by yourself and in yourself you are nothing, can understand nothing, know nothing, and can do nothing” (quoted by R. Pieper in *Der kleine Katechismus Luthers*; Vol. 1, part 2, p. 24).

This is what God Himself revealed about creation; this is what God has led me to believe; this is the only true account of creation, and pray “God, I shall never believe any other attempted explanation of the origin of the universe.

2. Our God created everything that exists in the beginning of time.

The very first words in the Bible are “In the beginning,” That, of course, means in the beginning of time. Before this there was no time, no earth, no universe, nothing except God. It is totally impossible for us to imagine God existing eternally before He created heaven and earth. Someone might even ask: “What did God do before creating everything that exists?” Dr. Luther once answered, somewhat facetiously, that He was making a switch to be used on people who ask such foolish questions. Dr. Luther meant to say that some things are so far above our human understanding that we shall need to wait for the answers until we reach heaven, where there will be no more unanswered questions.

How long ago was “the beginning”? Ask the average evolutionist and he will tell you five billion (more or less) years ago. Look into various King James Version Bibles and you will find the date 4004 BC. The dates thus given by these two different sources vary so tremendously that there is no possibility whatsoever of their ever being reconciled.

Obviously, there is no way of knowing the exact year in which our world was created, simply because God chose not to reveal this information to us. But of the two figures given in the preceding paragraph, which one comes closest to being the correct one? Bishop Ussher of Armagh in Great Britain, who gave us the 4004 BC figure, published his *Annals of the Old and New Testaments* about

1650 AD. Bible authorities recognize his work as scholarly and carefully done. He closely examined the various genealogies together with other information in Scripture, and on that basis he compiled the dates that have been included in various editions of the King James Version since 1701.

This process would be completely reliable, if all of the necessary information were given in Scripture. Unfortunately, several factors make these dates somewhat uncertain. For example, when the Bible says that so and so begat so and so (see, for example, Genesis 5;10;11), we do not always know if the second person named is a son or possibly a grandson (or even a later descendant) of the first person named. Also we know that Bishop Ussher's dates of the various kings of Israel and Judah are not completely reliable, since a king's son may have ruled with his father for some time as a co-regent.

The entire matter of dates in the Bible is quite technical. Suffice it to say; first, that any dates on the margins of our Bibles are not inspired; they are not a part of God's revelation. Secondly, while we admit that the 4004 BC date may err by hundreds of years, yet everything we know from both the Bible and also from secular history points to a comparatively young earth. Even secular history provides no single reliable figure that goes much beyond Bishop Ussher's 4004 BC. Certainly the "in the beginning" of Genesis 1 does not remotely approach the millions or even billions of years commonly listed by evolutionists as the time for the world's beginning.

3. Our God miraculously created everything that exists with His Word.

"And God said" – that expression occurs eight different times in Genesis 1. Each time it is followed by sentences like these: "Let there be light... let there be a firmament... let there be lights in the firmament of heaven let the earth bring forth grass." In every instance what God called for appeared instantly and miraculously in all of its beauty and glory. (Man's creation was somewhat different, as we shall hear presently.)

This creation of God at the beginning of time is different from every work of mankind, for God had nothing with which to begin. An artist must have his brushes, paint, and canvas to "create" a picture; an architect "creates" his buildings out of stone and steel, wood and glass; a factory worker "creates" all of his products out of some kind of raw materials. But God had no raw materials, no plans or patterns, nothing at all with which to begin. He simply spoke the word and what He wanted was done. "He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:9). That is the method He used for creating our universe and everything in it, excepting only man and woman, as the writer to the Hebrews clearly states: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Hebrews 11:3).

Imagine the power that was necessary to bring an entire universe into being; try to understand the wisdom that was necessary to create the almost countless varieties of animal life found everywhere on earth; consider the mercy of our God who provided food for His creation with all of the earth's grasses, trees, and herbs: Creation does indeed present to us the picture of an incomparably great, majestic, powerful, wise, and merciful Creator, as we shall show in greater detail on the following pages.

Let us compare God's creation with just one work of man. We consider the digging of the Panama Canal, finished in 1914, one of the engineering wonders of the modern world, and it was indeed a tremendous undertaking. In all it took 44 years to build at a cost of \$352 million, the most expensive peace-time undertaking in U.S. history up to that time. Yet, what did we really do in constructing this marvel of the ages? Essentially no more or less than moving some dirt in the narrowest part of Central America from one place to another. And, pray tell, what is that in comparison with the creative work of our God, who made the soil, placed it into Central America, and connected it with the infinitely greater land areas to the north and to the south, all of which He had made out of nothing? The mightiest miracles of mankind cannot be compared with God's work of creation, as little as one can compare a teaspoon of water with all the oceans of the world.

4. Our God created everything that exists in six normal days.

Everyone who reads Genesis 1 impartially cannot help but conclude that God used exactly six 24-hour days to create everything in our universe. That is what the expression “and the evening and the morning were the first (second, third, etc.) day” clearly tells us. A literal translation of the Hebrew is this: “Then came evening, then came morning – the first {second, third, etc.) day.” That expression also agrees perfectly with the Jewish method of reckoning the day as the time from sundown to sundown.

If I write my mother to tell her, “We visited the British Museum – that was the first day; then we saw Westminster Abbey and Buckingham Palace – that was the second day; on the third day of our vacation we drove to the Shakespearean country, where we spent the fourth and fifth days; thereafter we spent the sixth and seventh days in Scotland” – if I write in that way, what else can Mother possibly conclude except that I have spent seven ordinary 24-hour days of my vacation in several parts of Great Britain? Genesis 1 is surely no different.

True, millions of church people, in an effort to reconcile Genesis 1 with the vast ages demanded by evolution, claim that the word “day” in Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, and 31 really means an era, a long period of time, possibly hundreds of thousands of years. In trying to justify this opinion they point to passages like Psalm 90:4 (“A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday”) and II Peter 3:8 (“One day is with the Lord as a thousand years”). They then maintain that “day” may mean a long period of time. Yet, if one does not read any preconceived notions into these two these Bible passages, what else do they truly tell us except that God is eternal?

No one denies that the word “day” (Hebrew *yom*) in the Bible may in a few cases denote a longer period of time. John 8:56 is a passage like that: “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My (Jesus’) day,” while Matthew 24:37 speaks of “the days of Noah...;” In these instances the word clearly means some years, but nowhere in Scripture does “day” mean a thousand years, much less five hundred thousand or fifty million.

There are other compelling reasons for regarding the word “day” in Genesis 1 as a normal period of 24 hours. Nowhere else in Scripture does it mean anything more than that when expressions like “first day, second day, or the day after” are used. Seven times God expressly said, “Then came evening, then came morning, a first (second, etc.) day.” That is the Hebrew equivalent of our “from midnight to midnight, one complete day.” And that is just about as clear a definition for a 24-hour day as one can find anywhere.

Furthermore, regarding “day” as anything more than 24 hours results in absurdities or in direct contradiction of Bible truths. For example, if the word “day” means a long period of time, then what does the word “years” mean in Genesis 1:14: “Let them (the heavenly bodies) be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years”? Or, if “day” in Genesis 1 means 500,000 or more years, how could vegetation, created on the third day, possibly survive that long a period of time without the sun that was not made into a light bearer until the fourth day? How can the word “day” mean 500,000 years in Genesis 1:13 and in the very next verse mean 24 hours without any further explanation? And what shall we say about Exodus 20:11 and Exodus 31:17: “In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is. In six days the Lord made heaven and earth”?

If we don’t read the Bible in its normal sense (unless it specifically requires a different understanding), then we shall have all kinds of problems and arrive at all manner of ridiculous thoughts. Can you imagine, for example, that it took God a half million years to create light? Either light exists or it doesn’t. It certainly cannot be developed over a period of a half million years. No, what St. Paul wrote of his letters, applies to all of Scripture: “Our letters to you have no double meaning – they mean just what you understand them to mean when you read them” (II Corinthians 2:3, Phillips). Indeed, the idea of sometimes making the word “day” in Genesis 1 into a long period of time is preposterous.

One more aberration must be mentioned in this connection: Various well-meaning people believe in what is called the “Gap Theory.” Its adherents maintain that there is a gap of possibly millions of years

between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. They conclude that God first created an entire world of plant and animal life that flourished for untold ages and then disappeared. They translate Genesis 1:2: “And the earth became without form and void” (the only correct translation is “the earth was without form and void.”)

Then, so they believe, God continued with an entire new creation, as written in the rest of Genesis 1. Since this theory rests on the wrong translation of the Hebrew, since there is no confirmation of it anywhere in Scripture, and since everything in Genesis 1 indicates that this is a description of the original creation, we reject the “Gap Theory” completely. It is simply a false doctrine devised to make Genesis 1 agree with evolution that requires millions of years for earth’s development.

5. Our God’s creation of everything that exists is far beyond our understanding.

In Genesis chapter 1 our God tells us, in summary form, exactly what He created on each one of the first six days of the world’s history. (Genesis 2 tells in greater detail some creation facts, especially those of the sixth day.) It is really a tremendous story, certainly one of the most important chapters in the most important Book ever written, well worth our detailed study.

Scientists have studied God’s creation for centuries. Most of them probably admit that they are just beginning to learn something about what God (if they believe in Him) made on each one of those six original days. They will probably admit also that there is much more to learn about creation than we have thus far discovered. (Wasn’t it Thomas Edison who said that we don’t know one percent about anything?)

For example, God’s creation consists of atoms. That truth has been more or less well-known, since the Greek philosopher Leucippus proposed it about 430 BC. The theory was further developed by another Greek philosopher, Democritus, who lived about 400 BC. These people believed that all matter was composed of tiny atoms, indivisible (that is what the Greek word means) particles. Today, some 2500 years later no one has ever seen an atom, even with the most powerful electron microscope. Nor would any physicist be so bold as to claim that he knows everything there is to be known about atoms. We do know that they are infinitely tiny particles (a molecule, consisting of one or more atoms, is thought to have an average diameter of 1/250 millionths of an inch) and that they have various components (no one knows how many or what all their functions are). We know also that atoms are really miniature solar systems that consist mostly of empty space. Indeed, one physicist wrote that one of the greatest mysteries on earth is this: If one picks up one end of the pencil why does the other end follow, since its atoms are primarily empty space? Other physicists tell us that if all the empty spaces in our body were eliminated, then there would be nothing left except a speck of dust, invisible to the human eye, and weighing 120-200 pounds. Yes, indeed, when we look into matter, we are dumbfounded by the supreme intelligence needed for its creation.

Consider also the innumerable books that have been written over the centuries in an effort to explain what God made on each of the six creation days. Many of these writers, of course, have rejected God as the Creator. Yet, some have written from the creation standpoint, giving all glory to God for what He made. For example, in the 1830’s the Earl of Bridgewater bequeathed 8,000 pounds to anyone who would produce 1,000 copies of a book on the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested in His creation of the world. Peter Mark Roget, who compiled the well-known Thesaurus, wrote one of the volumes in this series.

In the 1870’s Dr. Herbert W. Morris issued his *Work-Days of God*, an excellent book that beautifully tells what God did on each of the creation days. Some of the thoughts in the following sections on the six creation days have been taken from this work. When he is quoted directly, it is by the simple title “Dr. Morris.” Dr. Morris is, unfortunately, a believer in the Gap Theory and consequently the first pages of his book must be discarded. The Gap Theory was discussed under II, D, 4; see also VI, G, 1.

At the same time we gladly admit that much of God's creation is and will remain a mystery to the human mind. That is entirely in keeping with those great unanswered questions that the Lord presented to Job in chapter 38, questions like these: "Whereupon are the foundations thereof (of the world) fastened? Or who laid the cornerstone thereof?" (v. 6) "Hast thou commanded the mornings since thy days?" (v.; 12) "Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth (we don't know exactly what this term means) in his season? Or canst thou guide Arcturus (the brightest star in the constellation Boötes) with his sons?" (v. 32) "Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?" (v. 34).

Consequently, the treatment of the *Work-Days of God* in the following sections is by no means exhaustive – untold numbers of books would be required to state what we do know about creation. In the following sections we shall, instead, try to show a little of God's power, mercy, wisdom, and love in His creative works.

IV. WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ANGELS AND THEIR CREATOR?

A. How important is this doctrine?

How often do you suppose that the angels are mentioned in the Bible? 50 times? 100? More than 200 times? The truth is that they are spoken of in at least 275 Bible passages, which certainly says something to us about their importance.

Have you ever sung a hymn that deals especially with angels? Do any of the hymns in *The Lutheran Hymnal* treat angels specifically? See hymn numbers 254-257.

Is any day in the Church Year dedicated to the angels and their work? If you will consult *The Lutheran Hymnal*, page 3, you will see the notation, "St. Michael and All Angels – September 29." In his 1947 edition of the *Lutheran Liturgy* Luther D. Reed stated, "September 29 was the date of the dedication in the fifth century, of a small basilica on the *Via Salaria*, six miles from Rome, the first church in Italy dedicated in honor of Michael. The feast which commemorates this event, and which eventually regarded Michael as representative of all angels, gradually spread through out the West. The Council of Mainz introduced it AD 813 and the popularity of the 'warrior saint' in Teutonic lands is shown by the large number of churches which bear his name... The term 'All Angels' is an Anglican addition at the time of the Reformation." All of this shows us that the doctrine of the angels is indeed an important one.

B. God created multitudes of perfect angels.

Some time during the six creation days (we don't know exactly when), God created the angels. St. Paul wrote about that in Colossians 1:16: "For by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible."

God created a huge number of angels, for Scripture speaks of "10,000 times 10,000" (that is 100,000,000) of them (Daniel 7:10); "a multitude of the heavenly host" (Luke 2:13); "an innumerable company of angels" (Hebrews 12:22); and "10,000 times 10,000 and thousands of thousands" (Revelation 5:11). Yet, their number is constant. They do not increase by marrying and having children, as our Lord clearly stated in Matthew 22:30 and Mark 12:25. In reality they are sexless, although the Bible always refers to them as masculine.

Angels are spirits ("Are they not all ministering spirits?" Hebrews 1:14 . They have no bodies, for "A spirit hath not flesh and bones" (Luke 24:39). True, the good angels at times assumed a human body, as they did when they appeared unto Abraham to announce the future birth of a son (Genesis 18), when they came to Lot to warn him about the destruction of Sodom (Genesis 19), when the angel Gabriel announced the birth of Jesus to Mary (Luke 1:26-38), or when an angel announced the resurrection of our Lord to the astonished women on Easter morning (Mark 16:5-7).

At times the angels are even reported to have eaten and drunk, as in Genesis 18:8 and Genesis 19:3. Yet, this assuming of a human body was only for the moment; nor was the eating and drinking to receive nourishment, for in heaven everyone “shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more” (Revelation 7:16), God created His angels, because He had an immensely important role for them to play both in heaven and on earth. Their very name “angel” (which means “messenger”) already points to some of their work. We shall treat their work in greater detail in part F.

God created all of the angels perfect, as we know from the judgment that He pronounced upon all of His finished creation: “Behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). Even Satan and all of the present evil spirits were at one time holy, blessed, glorious beings.

God also gave each one of His angels freedom of choice, even as He gave our first parents the choice of serving Him in greatest blessedness or of disobeying Him and thus falling into deepest misery (Genesis 2:16, 17). There was, consequently, a remote possibility that some of the angels might fall away from God, although one would hardly expect anyone to choose a curse rather than to remain blessed.

C. Some angels, led by Satan, rebelled against God and were cast out of heaven forever.

The greatest of all tragedies actually occurred: Satan rebelled against God! When that happened or just how it happened is something that is not told us in Scripture. The time must have been quite early in the history of the world, but the reason for the rebellion can only be guessed. Was it Satan’s pride that proved to be his downfall? (He does seek the honor that belongs to God alone, as we know from Matthew 4:9, where he tried in vain to make Christ worship him.) Was Satan like the king of Babylon, who said, “I will exalt my throne above the stars of God... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High” (Isaiah 14:13, 14)? Pride like that can account for Satan’s fall, for “Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Proverbs 16:18).

At any rate, Satan “abode not in the truth” (John 8:44), and thereby he also left the incomparable glories of heaven. What is still more incomprehensible is that he persuaded a number of other angels to join him in his rebellion. Jude 6 speaks of “the angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation.” From that day onward into all eternity there are two classes of angels: the good ones and the evil ones.

What happened to the angels that rebelled? Answer: “God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment” (II Peter 2:4). God “reserved (them) in everlasting chains” (Jude 6). Having been cast out of heaven, they will never again have an opportunity for repentance or salvation. Nothing more frightful or horrible can ever happen to anyone.

You might ask at this point: Why did God give mankind a second chance for salvation, after we rebelled against Him, while denying that privilege to Satan and his evil angels? The answer to that question must wait until we by the grace of the Lord Jesus stand before our God in heaven. Then we shall know all things and understand the answer to every question.

Meanwhile, be sure to thank our God wholeheartedly that He has offered you an opportunity for salvation and made you His child and heir through Jesus Christ, His Son.

D. The evil angels’ great aim is to destroy mankind.

One may ridicule the idea of a devil and his evil angels; one may refuse to believe that they exist; or one may forget about them, as millions do. The plain truth is that they do exist, and their major aim is to destroy us, body and soul, forever. God’s Word speaks about the evil angels and their frightful aim in dozens of Bible passages. For our souls’ welfare we need to listen to what God’s Word says about them.

1. Therefore learn the names by which they are called.

Their names already tell us much about them and their evil purpose. The leader of this wicked band is called Satan (meaning “enemy”), as in Matthew 4:10; II Corinthians 12:7; etc. At other times he is referred to as the Devil (meaning “slanderer”), as in Matthew 4:1,5,8,11; etc. The Pharisees called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils (Matthew 12: 24; etc.). In the Old Testament he is sometimes called Belial (I Samuel 2:12), meaning “worthlessness as an evil force.” In Revelation 12:9 he is called the great dragon, that old serpent, the Devil, and Satan. Christ called him “the wicked one” (Matthew 13:19) and “the prince of this world” (John 14:30). Can anyone with such names have any other purpose in mind than wickedness, destruction and disaster?

Satan’s evil angels are also called by several different names in the New Testament. For example, St. Matthew uses the term “devils” (Matthew 8:31; 9:34); St. Luke calls them “evil spirits” (Luke 7:21; 8:2) and also “unclean spirits” (Luke 6:18; 8:29).

From these various names of Satan and his wicked helpers, we can easily and quickly learn how they continually try to use every part of their evil being to destroy us forever.

2. Note well their deadly intentions.

A study of just a few Bible passages will immediately show us what Satan’s intentions are (the other evil angels’ aims are identical). Christ Himself described Satan as “a murderer from the beginning, a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44). The apostles continued the description by calling him the deceiving “god of this world” (II Corinthians 4:4); our deadly enemy (Matthew 13:39), who walks “about seeking whom he may devour” (Peter 5:8); the one who “sinneth from the beginning” (I John 3:8); the “great dragon... that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan which deceiveth the whole world” (Revelation 12:9). Satan and his evil hordes are the wily, powerful “rulers of the darkness of this world” (Ephesians 6:11,1.2), vicious and cunning deceivers, cruel killers.

In view of these clear Bible passages, how can anyone fail to understand Satan’s vicious intentions? If we let our guard down for even a moment, that can be dangerous or even fatal. “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation,” warns our Lord in Matthew 26:41 and in other places.

3. Consider their brutal and fiendish methods.

The Bible gives us numerous examples of the frightful way in which the Devil does his evil work. He may grievously vex us, as he did the daughter of the Canaanite woman (“My daughter is grievously vexed by a devil,” Matthew 15:22); he always tries to tear the Word of God out of our hearts, as Jesus stated in the Parable of the Sower and the Seed (“Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts,” Mark 4:15); he persistently tempts us to sin, makes the most extraordinary (but hollow) promises, if we will only sin against God’s commandments, as he tempted Christ (Matthew 4:1-11), Peter (Luke 22:31), and every other person who has ever lived; he seeks to deceive us, “as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty” (II Corinthians 11:3), trying to snare us in his trap (I Timothy 3:7); and he persecutes the Church (“Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison that ye may be tried,” Revelation 2:10). Finally, he is never satisfied until he has completely ruined our bodies and souls in the eternally-burning, horribly-tormenting fires of hell, as he captured the soul of the Rich Man (Luke 16:19-31).

To achieve these diabolical aims, Satan will make any promise, hurl any threat, and use any means that might produce results for him. Frequently he is remarkably successful in his temptations, for he has had thousands of years to test his methods and to perfect his attacks. At one time he may attack us through our lusts, as he successfully attacked King David with the most frightful results through the sight of Bathsheba bathing herself (II Samuel 11). Today the Devil can only clap his hands in unholy glee for having persuaded untold millions of people that fornication and adultery are allowable and even desirable. At other times Satan may tempt us through our greed, as he successfully tempted Judas to sell

our Lord for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14-16). (Today he surely must rejoice at having persuaded countless numbers of people to forget that the “love of money is the root of all evil,” I Timothy 6:10, and that they should get more money by any means.)

Sometimes Satan leads us to the forbidden wicked pleasures of this world, as he led the Prodigal Son, who fortunately, was brought to repentance in his desperate condition (Luke 15:11-24). (In the 1970’s Satan is persuading some 600,000 children and young people to run away from home annually, some never to return, some to return in shame. That is more than one every minute of every hour every day.) At other times the Wicked One will use fear to make us deny our Lord, a spectacularly successful approach he used with the Apostle Peter, who three times denied vehemently that he knew our Lord, just a short time after he had vowed undying allegiance to him (Mark 14:66-72). (We Christians are often tempted by the same method where Satan makes us afraid to rebuke sin and to confess the Lord Jesus.)

Often Satan may dangle hollow, worthless, deadly promises before our eyes, as he did with Eve, the mother of us all (Genesis 3:4, 5). (Just ask many a murderer, embezzler, thief, fornicator, and deceiver, if Solomon isn’t correct, when he wrote, “Food gotten dishonestly tastes good, but afterwards your mouth will be filled with grit,” Proverbs 20:17, Beck.) At other times the Devil may torment us with the loss of our possessions, sickness, loneliness, or worse, as he did with the great Prophet Job, who finally became so dejected that he cursed the day of his birth (Job 3). (Today Satan doesn’t use persecution nearly as often as he did in years gone by – he doesn’t need to, since he has become phenomenally successful in persuading an unlimited number of church members to deny some, many, or most of the articles of the Christian faith.)

Satan’s methods, described in the previous paragraphs, are all directed towards the Christians. As far as the unbelievers are concerned, “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (II Corinthians 4: 4), The Old Evil Foe cannot, of course, entirely neglect the unbelievers for fear that they might listen to the blessed Gospel of Christ and be saved. Therefore he must, at least occasionally, see to it that they remain in their spiritual blindness. (What has been said of Satan is equally true of his diabolical followers, all of them fiendishly bent upon our destruction.)

4. Recall what the Bible says about demoniacal possession.

We must also say a word about another method that Satan used extensively in Christ’s time and possibly may still be using occasionally: Physical and spiritual or demoniacal possession, whereby one or more evil angels actually enter into a person to control his actions, words, and possibly even his thoughts.

At one time it was fashionable in some circles to deny demoniacal possession; many said that the Bible passages which refer to it really meant some unusual suffering of mind or body. Yet, Scripture carefully distinguishes between demoniacs and people afflicted with other bodily illnesses, as, for example, in Mark 1:32: “They brought unto Him (Jesus) all that were diseased, and they that were possessed with devils,” (See also Mark 16:17, 18; Luke 6:17, 18. Matthew 17:14-18 tells of a boy who had epilepsy and was possessed by a devil.)

Indeed, the symptoms of demoniacal possession are much different from insanity or any other physical disease. Sometimes the devil that possessed someone would make him “so savage nobody could go along that road” (Matthew 8:28, Beck); occasionally the devil made a person dumb (“As soon as the devil was put out, the dumb man spoke,” Matthew 9:32, Beck), or blind (Matthew 12:22). At times the devil would make someone exceedingly miserable (“A devil is making my daughter miserable,” Matthew 15:22, Beck), or give one such strength that nothing or “nobody was strong enough to control him” (Mark 5:4, Beck) and make him shriek “in the burial places and in the hills” (Mark 5:5, Beck). Time after time the devil within a person would acknowledge that Jesus was the Son of God (Luke 4:41: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of God”; see also Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 1:24; 5:7).

Scripture also several times mentions a spiritual possession, as was the case with Judas (“Then entered Satan into Judas,” Luke 22:3) and Ananias (“Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?” Acts 5:3).

In addition to the Bible passages cited in the previous paragraphs, various other ones tell us that Christ cast out devils and that He gave His disciples similar powers. See, for example, Matthew 9:33; 10:1; Mark 1:12-28; 6:13; Luke 8:1,2. Luke 10:17 tells us that the 70 disciples cast out devils. Matthew 17:14-21 shows that the disciples could not cure one case of demoniacal possession, because of their lack of faith in Jesus’ promise, “Cast out devils” (Matthew 10:8).

Exorcism, the casting out of devils, continued in the early history of the Christian Church; even into the third century AD it was combined with baptism. Later it disappeared to a great extent, especially during the 18th and 19th centuries, only to be revived again in the last quarter of the 20th century, undoubtedly due in part to such movies as “The Exorcist.”

Does demoniacal possession exist today? Possibly, although in his more than 40 years in the Christian ministry the writer of this paper can recall only one case that may have been something of this type. In that instance, the violent man was quieted only by fervent prayer in the name of Jesus. Should an authentic case of demoniacal possession actually occur, one can drive the demon out only by fervent prayer in the name of Him who “spoiled principalities and powers. . . triumphing over them” (Colossians 2:15).

E. We can defeat the powerful attacks of the evil angels with God’s Word and help.

After hearing about the great power, the cunning attacks, and the frequent successes of Satan and his evil cohorts, one might conclude that the prospects of winning the battle against them is dim at best or possibly even non-existent. However, that is by no means the case. In fact, the battle against the Devil has already been won; he had been defeated by Christ our Lord through His Passion and resurrection: (“Now shall the prince of this world be cast out,” John 12:31; “For this purpose was the Son of God manifest, that He might destroy the works of the devil,” I John 3:8.)

Satan had tried to destroy Jesus practically from the day of His birth, when King Herod sent the Wise Men to find the Christchild so that he might kill Him (Matthew 2:1-15). Again, when Jesus began His ministry, Satan tempted Him fiercely, but unsuccessfully, for 40 days (Matthew 4:1-11). Then, in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross, the final battle between Christ and Satan took place with our Lord completely defeating our archenemy.

Dr. C.F.W. Walther expressed those thoughts perfectly in that outstanding Easter hymn, number 198 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*:

The Foe was triumphant when on Calvary
The Lord of creation was nailed to the tree.
In Satan’s domain did the hosts shout and jeer,
For Jesus was slain, whom the evil ones fear.

But short was their triumph, the Savior arose,
And Death, hell, and Satan He vanquished; His foes;
The conquering Lord lifts His banner on high.
He lives, yea, He lives, and will nevermore die.

Although Satan has been defeated, we must remember that he is still alive, and he still carries on his warfare against the Christian. Yet, he is neither omnipotent nor omniscient; his powers, though great, are limited; and, praise God, we can overcome every one of his temptations with the power that God gives us in His

holy Word. We can certainly say with St. Paul, “He who loved us helps us win an overwhelming victory” (Romans 8: 37; Beck); and we can sing with Dr. Luther,

Tho’ devils all the world should fill, All eager to devour us;
 We tremble not, we fear no ill, They shall not overpow’r us.
 This world’s prince may still Scowl fierce as he will,
 He can harm us none, He’s judged; the deed is done;
 One little word can fell him.

Let’s see how this works out practically: If we are in danger of an attack by an enemy, we must keep careful watch. Sentries are posted, and other means are used to warn us of an impending attack. That is exactly what our Lord admonished us to do in our battle with Satan: “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41). The Apostle Peter, writing from personal experience, reemphasized that warning to be vigilant, for Satan, that cunning, hungry, roaring lion is determined to devour us (I Peter 5:8). Are you, therefore, on the lookout, wherever you may be, for Satan’s onslaughts? Do you pray earnestly, “Dear Lord, keep me ever watchful for Satan’s temptations and when they come, give me the power to withstand them”? That is keeping careful watch.

Furthermore, we must choose the right weapons, both offensive and defensive, for the battle against the Old Evil Foe. Some weapons, like our own power or our own resolutions, are completely worthless in this great battle against the Devil, as St. Peter learned to his great sorrow (Matthew 26:30-35; 69-75). One simply cannot damage a high flying bomber with a BB gun; much less can one who relies on his own powers defeat Satan.

God Himself, fortunately for us, provides the only effective defensive and offensive weapons, ones that will surely gain us the victory in this great and fearful battle. He states what those weapons are in Ephesians 6:11-18: “Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. . . above all, taking the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

Yes, our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed such a good shield that not a single one of Satan’s fiery arrows can ever pierce it. And the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, is exactly the right kind of an offensive weapon that will surely overcome even the most vicious of Satan’s attacks. The Word of God is our guarantee of victory; it is the one offensive weapon before which Satan cannot stand.

Our Lord gave us an excellent example of the way in which we are to use His Word, the sword of the Spirit. When He was tempted by Satan in the Wilderness at the beginning of His ministry, our Lord repeatedly replied with a Word of God. When Satan told Christ that the angels would protect Him, if He jumped from the pinnacle of the Temple, our Savior answered, “It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God”; when the Devil offered Him the entire world if He would only bow before him, Christ replied, “It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve” (Matthew 4:6-10). Unable to accomplish his wicked purpose in the face of such a formidable weapon, “Then the devil leaveth Him” (Matthew 4:11). We can just as easily conquer Satan with the mighty Word of God. Of course, that will mean that we know the Word. We ought therefore gradually to develop our own treasury of Bible passages which we can use when Satan tempts us. A few suggestions follow:

When Satan tempts us to uncleanness or fornication, use Genesis 39:9c
 When he tempts us to lie—Ephesians 4:25
 When he tempts us to worry—Matthew 6:25-34
 When he tempts us to laziness—John 9:4
 When he tempts us to covetousness—Colossians 3:2
 When he tempts us to steal—Ephesians 4:28
 When he tempts us to feel depressed—Philippians 4:4

When he tempts us with dangers—Psalm 91
 When he tempts us to believe that our sins are too great to be forgiven—Matthew 9:2c
 When he tempts us to despair of God’s help—Psalm 121
 When he tempts us with fear—Psalm 23 and 46
 When he tempts us to doubt God’s goodness—Romans 8:28
 When he tempts us to drunkenness—Galatians 6:21
 When he tempts us to love money—I Timothy 6:10
 When he tempts us not to hear the Word—John 8:47
 When he tempts us to uncleanness—I Corinthians 6:18-20.

Thus we can gradually prepare an arsenal of weapons upon which to draw instantly, whenever Satan attacks. Those weapons are the various Words of God (“It is written”) – using them is a part of fighting “the good fight of faith” (I Timothy 6:12). After God has made us Christians, we must cooperate with the Holy Ghost in fighting against our adversary with God’s Word. “Fight the good fight with all thy might,” admonishes the hymn writer, for your very soul is at stake. Do not give in to the Devil, no not for even one second. When we thus use the Word of God in true faith, the Devil must flee from us, as he departed from our Lord (Matthew 4:11). That is exactly what our God has promised, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).

True, because of the weakness of our flesh, we sometimes forget to use the Word properly, and then we shall surely fall. When that happens, there is just one thing to do: Repent, like the Apostle Peter, who “went out and wept bitterly” (Matthew 26:75). Then pray earnestly that God will guard you always and give you His Word to overcome succeeding temptations.

F. Multitudes of good angels remain in heaven.

In the decade of the 1970’s one hears much about Satan, Satanism, and the cult of the occult. Of course, we Christians must always be on our guard against these evil ones, as we pointed out in the previous section. Yet, it is certainly also exceedingly important that we concern ourselves with the good angels and their mighty works for God and for us. That is what we propose to do in the following paragraphs.

Countless thousands of good angels remained faithful to God, when Satan and his wicked followers rebelled. They form such an important part of God’s plan for us and for Him that Scripture speaks of them dozens of times. We shall examine some of the pertinent Bible passages.

1. Good angels are spirits with many astonishing attributes.

Scripture often mentions the many attributes that God gave to His angels. For example, they are so powerful that one of them could “cut off all the mighty men of valor, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria (II Chronicles 32:21), a total of 185,000 soldiers, in one night (II Kings 19:35). King David also referred to that great power of the angels in Psalm 103:20: “Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength.” II Thessalonians 1:7 speaks of “mighty angels,” while II Peter-2:11 refers to “angels, which are greater in power and might.” (They are, of course, not omnipotent, for God rules over them, Daniel 7:10.)

Since angels are spirits (see IV, B), they are not bound by space. While they are by no means omnipresent (like our God), because of their nature, they fill no space. They can easily and probably almost instantaneously appear at Nazareth to announce the birth of Christ (Luke 1:26-38), in Egypt to tell Joseph to return to the Holy Land (Matthew 2:19, 20), to Daniel in Babylon to tell him something about the future (Daniel 9:26 38), and to us, wherever we may be, to protect us from harm and danger (Psalm 91:10-12).

Angels are also eternal, as Luke 20:36 tells us. They never grow old or weak, nor is their number ever increased, because they neither marry, nor are given in marriage” (Matthew 22:30). They are eternally blessed in heaven (“Angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven,” Matthew 18:10). They are so blessed, because they remained in that state of complete holiness in which they were created. On Judgment Day they will gather the elect from all over the earth before Christ (Matthew 24:31), who will have returned “in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him” (Matthew 25:31).

2. Good angels serve God.

Since the good angels are forever blessed in heaven, since everyone who sees our God face to face in heaven will surely love and serve Him with all his heart, it is not surprising to hear that the angels worship and praise our God in a manner greater and better than anything we can ever imagine, here on this earth. The seraphim call to one another before Him in overwhelming antiphonal choruses, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory” (Isaiah 6:3).

The multitudes of the heavenly host chanted God’s praises at the birth of His Son: “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14), Psalm 103:21 and Psalm 148:2 tell us that the angels bless the Lord and praise Him. St. John saw a vision of the heavenly angels and told us something about this glory: “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing” (Revelation 5:11, 12).

Since the word “angel” means “messenger,” it is not at all surprising to hear that angels have often acted as God’s messengers. Cherubim with a flaming sword guarded the tree of life in the Garden of Eden so that our first parents would not eat of it after the fall into sin (Genesis 3:24); they blinded the homosexual Sodomites and warned Lot to flee from that wicked city (Genesis 19); they assured Jacob of God’s blessing (Genesis 28:10-22), The angel Gabriel announced the future birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:11-20) and of Jesus (Luke 1:26-38). An angel told Joseph about Jesus’ virgin birth (Matthew 1:18-25), then warned Joseph and Mary to flee to Egypt with the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:13). After Herod died, an angel told Joseph to return to the Holy Land (Matthew 2:19-21). Only an angel was great enough to announce the actual birth of our Lord to the shepherds (Luke 2:10-12), to bring to the women the glorious news of Christ’s resurrection (Matthew 28:6), and to tell the disciples at Jesus’ ascension that He would return in glory on the Last Day (Acts 1:11).

Angels accompanied our God or served Him at many of His great acts; for example, at the giving of the Ten Commandments (Galatians 3:19; Acts 7:53). At the end of Jesus’ dreadful 40-day temptation by Satan, angels came to serve Him (Matthew 4:11); at His frightful agony in the Garden of Gethsemane they strengthened Him (Luke 22: 43,44); and at His resurrection they rolled away that huge stone with which His grave had been sealed (Matthew 28:1-8). On the last great Day of Judgment our Lord “shall come in the glory of His Father” (Matthew 16:27) “and all the holy angels with Him” (Matthew 25:31). Then the angels will gather all the wicked together to “cast them into a furnace of fire” (Matthew 13:41, 42), “taking vengeance on them that knew not God, and that obeyed not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Thessalonians 1:8).

3. Good angels serve us Christians.

One of the most precious of all God’s promises to His children is this one: “He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone” (Psalm 91:11-12). Captain Eddie Rickenbacker experienced that during World War II, when he and his companions were lost at sea for weeks with nothing but starvation and death

looming before them. Then one day a seagull lit upon his head. He caught it and divided it among his companions, thus saving their lives until they were rescued. Later he had no other explanation, except that God had sent one of His angels to rescue them in this way.

Perhaps the angels have not protected and preserved us in such a dramatic, visible manner, but they have, nonetheless, been constantly watching over us. Every Christian will surely echo Daniel's sentiments, when he was rescued from the Lion's Den: "My God has sent His angel, and shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me" (Daniel 6:22).

Every Christian parent will also readily testify that the guardian angels protect our children day after day, as Matthew 18:10 indicates: "Their (the children's) angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven." Without that protection, our children would undoubtedly often be in great danger and suffer many accidents.

Finally, angels carry our souls to heaven at our death, even as they carried the soul of Lazarus into Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22). Just try to imagine what a day of triumph that will be: To be carried to heaven – that will be a homecoming such as no one on this evil old world could ever possibly imagine. Therefore, let no one ever say, "Isn't it too bad that so and so died." Rather, let us sing a *Te Deum*, since the angels have carried his soul into eternal glory. (At the funeral of a pastor the congregation and the mourners joined in singing "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation" as the opening hymn, a fine way of expressing our joy at the work that Jesus did for our redemption.)

Oh, we are fortunate indeed that our God created His angels to serve us, for "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them" (Psalm 34:7). And what a blessed day that will be when we join the multitude of angels around the shining throne to sing the praises of Him who overwhelms us with all manner of earthly and heavenly gifts!

4. Good angels are divided into various ranks.

In order to carry out their assigned tasks, God divided the good angels into various ranks. We know little about these ranks, except that they are mentioned in Scripture – we shall have to wait until we join them by the grace of the Lord Jesus, before we have all the answers.

One of these ranks is composed of the cherubim. In Genesis 3:24 they stood guard before the tree of life so that Adam and Eve would not eat of it and thus preserve their lives indefinitely upon this wicked world. In Psalm 99:1 we hear that the "Lord sitteth between the cherubim"; Isaiah 37:16 says, "O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubim"; and Ezekiel 10:5 speaks of "the sound of the cherubim's wings" being heard "even to the outer court."

Isaiah 6 mentions a different class of angels, the seraphim. In the vision that Isaiah saw, they were standing above the throne of God, chanting in their antiphonal chorus, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3).

Michael is called the archangel (the term means the chief angel). He is mentioned in Daniel 10:21 as "Your prince," in Daniel 12:1 as "the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people," in Jude as "contending with the devil. . . about the body of Moses," and in Revelation 12:7-12 as fighting against and casting out Satan. On the Last Day he will accompany our Lord with a great, triumphant shout (I Thessalonians 4:16) (As far as we know, there is only one archangel, not a number of them; as our Communion Liturgy, bottom of p. 25 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, suggests.)

Then there is Gabriel, who also seems to enjoy some important office. He appeared to Daniel to announce to him "what will happen in the latter part of the time when God is angry because the set time has an end" (Daniel 8:19). He came to Daniel again "this time. . . to give you insight and understanding" (Daniel 9:22). Gabriel's New Testament appearance to Zachariah and to the Virgin Mary are well-known (Luke 1:11-20; 26-38).

From these examples we know that there are ranks among the angels, but we don't know much more than that. However, we do know enough about the good angels to thank and praise our God daily for the

blessings He brings to us through them. A good way of thus thanking and praising God is to learn and regularly to use that fine hymn, “Jesus, Brightness of the Father,” number 257 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*.

Jesus, Brightness of the Father, Life and Strength of all who live,
For creating guardian angels Glory to Thy name we give
And Thy wondrous praise rehearse, Singing in harmonious verse.

Blessed Lord, by their protection Shelter us from harm this day,
Keep us pure in flesh and spirit, Save us from the Foe, we pray,
And vouchsafe us by Thy grace In Thy Paradise a place.

Glory to th’almighty Father Sing we with the heav’nly host;
Glory to the great Redeemer, Glory to the Holy, Ghost;
Three in One and One in Three, Thro’out all eternity!

V. WHAT, SPECIFICALLY, DID GOD CREATE ON EACH OF THE SIX CREATION DAYS?

A. Our God created light on the first day.

And God said, let there be light; and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: And God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day (Genesis 1:3-5).

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). In this case the words “heaven” and earth” undoubtedly refer to the raw material out of which God later made the heavenly bodies to be light bearers and fashioned our earth. The heavenly bodies did not function as light bearers until the fourth day of creation. The earth, too, was originally one great, dark mass of land, water, and elements” without form and void,” as Scripture says. We also read that “God’s Spirit hovered over the waters” (Genesis 1:2, Beck), that is, over the original mass of the earth, surely in anticipation of and in preparation for the rest of the tremendous creative acts.

After creating the original mass of heavenly bodies and the earth, all the other mighty acts of God in creation were directed toward making that great, black, formless mass called the earth into a suitable dwelling place for us, plus forming the heavenly bodies into light bearers. Every additional divine activity of these first six days followed a carefully organized plan to provide a perfect home for God’s own children, as we shall see.

1. Our God’s creation of light is mysterious and very good.

After first creating the mass of the earth’s material, God then called, “Let there be light.” Immediately light, that mysterious miracle of God, appeared, as Genesis 1:3; Isaiah 45:7, and other Bible passages clearly tell us.

This was elemental light, not yet connected to the sun or with any other heavenly body. It is difficult for us to imagine a light that is separate from the sun, although there are, of course, many forms of artificial and phosphorescent light. Did that elemental light cover one-half of the world for 12 hours and the other one-half during the other 12 hours of the first day? We do not know the answer to this question.

Ever since that first day of tremendous miracle, scientists have been trying to learn more about light, and still they do not understand it fully. Many centuries came and went before mankind realized that light travels some 186,000 miles per second. It was the invention of the prism which showed us that light is made up of many colors. (This writer learned to remember the various colors of light with that

coined, mnemonic word “vibgyor,” composed of the first letter of the various colors: violet, indigo which is a reddish blue, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red.) Light can pass through solids like glass with its powers unimpaired (what a tragedy, if it did not have this God-given ability). Although these and other facts are well-known, physicists admit that light remains one of the world’s great mysteries.

However, this truth every Christian knows full well: “God saw the light, that it was good.” It is indeed an excellent creation of God, absolutely necessary for preserving life on earth, the first necessity that God had to provide on those six creation days.

2. Scripture often draws spiritual conclusions from light.

Scripture often refers to light, frequently drawing spiritual conclusions from it. For example, the Lord Jesus is called the Light, as in John 1:5: “The Light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not.” Jesus came to shed the light of God’s truth to a sin-darkened world, but, unfortunately, much of the world closes its eyes to this marvelous Gospel light. In John 8:12 our Lord specifically said: “I am the Light of the world,” meaning that He shows all people the way to heaven through faith in Him; He also shows us how to live in this wicked world.

We who are Christians, in turn, are to shine with reflected light. As the moon reflects the light of the sun, so we in our lives are to reflect the goodness, mercy, and holiness of our God. “God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Corinthians 4:6). Therefore, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Isaiah 60:1,2 has a similar thought: “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: But the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.” Furthermore, we should pray regularly, “O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me” (Psalm 43:3); and a fine motto for our lives is Psalm 36:9: “In Thy light shall we see light.”

“And the evening and the morning were the first day.” Thus we come to the close of the first great day in the creation story. It was a day like ours of 24 hours, undoubtedly with an interchange between light and darkness like today. It saw light for the first time in history, light that brings us indispensable blessings. The more we learn about light and its benefits, the more we ought to join Solomon in confessing, “Truly the light is sweet” (Ecclesiastes 11:7).

B. Our God created the firmament on the second day.

And God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: And it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day (Genesis 1:6-8).

1. What is the firmament?

God’s work on the second day of creation is also marvelous, miraculous, and beneficial: On this day He made the firmament. What is the firmament? The Hebrew word means “spread out” or “expanse”; it is the limitless sky above us. Job 37:18 speaks of God who “spread out the sky,” while the Psalmist (104:2) says that God “stretches out the heavens like a curtain.”

The firmament includes our atmosphere, since Genesis 1:20 tells us that the birds fly “in the open firmament of heaven.” Science has learned a great deal about the atmosphere which God created. We know, for example, that it may extend from 3,000 to 4,000 miles above sea level (most of our atmosphere is in the troposphere that extends approximately 5 to 10 miles above sea level), that it has

various rather ill-defined layers, and that the temperature varies tremendously as one ascends. We know too that our atmosphere is really a great ocean of air, weighing approximately 15 pounds per square inch at sea level and composed primarily of nitrogen (78%) and oxygen (21%). No matter where we might be, at sea level or at 15,000 feet above sea level, that ratio always remains constant.

2. What is the purpose of the firmament?

God said that its purpose is to divide “the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament.” That simple statement describes a profound miracle, the miracle of water in the atmosphere. We can see the waters under the firmament all around us in the oceans, lakes, and rivers of the world; we cannot see the waters above us, unless we happen to be caught in a rainstorm. Consequently, we seldom think about the moisture in the atmosphere. Yet, there is actually so much water above us that scientists estimate some 15 million tons falls upon the earth in the form of rain, snow, hail, and sleet every second of the entire year. An estimated 45,000 thunderstorms occur throughout the world daily. On December 26, 1948, an estimated 99 million tons of snow fell on New York City in one day: An inch of rain on an acre of land amounts to 113 tons of water, while an inch of rainfall on a state like Iowa (56,000 square miles), not an unusual event, amounts to an incredible 4 billion tons of water. Multiply that figure by the 33 inches of average annual rainfall in Iowa, and you will have a little idea of the unbelievably huge amount of water that God places into the firmament.

Job asks (38:25-27) who it is that causes it “to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness wherein there is no man. . . to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth?” The great prophet Isaiah answered this question (41:17,18): “When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water; and the dry land springs of water.” Deuteronomy 28:12 tells us that rain is one of the blessings of an obedient nation, while Deuteronomy 28:24 tells us that drought is one of the curses of God upon an immoral and disobedient nation. We ought to learn that lesson very well in America.

3. How does God use the firmament to provide rain for the earth?

There is, of course, a huge amount of water in the oceans of the world, but before it will help us, God, must purify trillions of barrels of it; He must transport this incredibly large amount to every spot on earth; and He must let it fall gently to water the land; If we were given this problem, we should have to throw up our hands in despair. No matter how much time, effort, and money we should expend upon this project, that work is simply far beyond mankind’s ability. The United States alone receives an average of some 7 trillion tons of moisture annually. All of the world’s trains, trucks, and freighters, working around the clock, could not transport even a fraction of that amount from the ocean to us. And if that is true of the United States, which averages some 30 inches of rainfall annually, what shall we say about parts of Hawaii and Southeast Asia which average more than 400 inches of rainfall annually? The amount of rain that falls on our world staggers the imagination.

Yes, our God “calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them upon the face of the earth” (Amos 9:6), either in the Flood, as at Noah’s time, or in the form of gentle rain, as in our day. In His omniscience He created the firmament and through it a perfect method of providing rain for our fields and gardens, for the mountains and for the valleys, for the lakes and for the oceans (they also need rainfall to replenish their oxygen supply).

This is what God did to achieve that purpose: He created the sun and gave it the power to expand water some 900 times (we call that process evaporation). Since water is approximately 800 times heavier than air, the expanded moisture easily ascends into the atmosphere, while all of its impurities are left

behind. (Our God has given the sun the remarkable ability to raise as much as 5,000 tons of water from one square mile of ocean surface every hour.)

God then gathers these waters into multitudes of clouds, blows them all over the world with His winds, lets these clouds cool gradually, and then allows the life-preserving rain to fall where it is needed. Eliphaz the Temanite had the right idea, when he said that God “giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields” (Job 5:10).

4. What are the other blessings of the firmament?

There are, of course, various other blessings of the firmament, all of them more or less directly related to rainfall and to the weather. For example, approximately 100 lightning flashes occur somewhere in the world every second. They fuse the nitrogen of the air into nitrogen oxide that is soluble in water, exactly what plant life needs for survival and growth. Lightning produces some 100 million tons of nitrogen annually, more than all of the world’s fertilizer plants. (Lightning may, of course, also be highly dangerous, even fatal. However, if one avoids being near anything that points into the sky during a thunderstorm, or if one remains in his car, he can generally watch this awesome display of divine majesty in comparative safety.)

Then there is in our atmosphere the jet stream, some 30 or 40 miles above us, sometimes traveling as fast as 250 miles per hour. It has a great effect upon our weather, as well as upon the speed of airplane travel. In addition to the jet stream, the firmament has many other highly complex air currents that also affect our weather.

Long ago God asked His servant Job, “Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail?” (Job 38:22) True, snow and hail can cause great difficulties for both man and beast. More than once God has decided a battle or a war with snow or hail, as He did when He won the victory for Israel over the five kings with great hailstones (Joshua 10:1-11). Yet, we should recall the amazing beauty of the trillions of snowflakes, all of them hexagonal, none of them alike. We remember also the importance of heavy snowfalls for millions of acres of land in the western part of our country. If it were not for the runoff of this snow, many farmers and ranchers would be in dire straits. Yes, there are treasures in the snow.

5. How well does the firmament correlate with the rest of God’s creation?

What a blessing that the firmament fits wonderfully well with the rest of God’s marvelous creation: For example, our bodies are designed to withstand exactly the approximately 15 pounds per square inch of air pressure at sea level. (This means that the average person’s body must withstand a total pressure of some 14 or more tons. If we would rise high enough into the atmosphere without protection, our bodies would eventually explode, because the weight of air is so much less at the higher altitudes.) Everything else on earth is also designed to withstand that same amount of air pressure.

Our lungs too are specifically designed to breathe our type of air. If, for example, our air would be composed of two parts of nitrogen and one of oxygen, we should be breathing nitrous oxide, an anesthetic. If the proportions were quite different from our 78 percent nitrogen and 21 percent oxygen, we undoubtedly could not continue living.

As we breathe, we use mostly oxygen, while the nitrogen is exhaled. What would happen if the nitrogen were heavier than the oxygen (it is not)? Then we should soon be breathing pure nitrogen, and no person could do that and live.

Again, the atmosphere with its layer of ozone effectively protects us from the sun’s deadly ultraviolet rays. What if there were no atmosphere to shield us from those rays, as is the case with the moon and with the other heavenly bodies? Then we should soon all be dead. What if there were no atmosphere to alleviate temperature extremes? Then our earth would have daily temperature variations

like that of the moon, from some 200°F below zero to some 230°F above. Who or what living thing can endure immense temperature variations like that?

Long ago King David extolled our God with that familiar 19th Psalm, whose opening verse is this: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handywork.” The very last of all the wonderful Psalms begins in this way: “Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in His sanctuary; praise Him in the firmament of His power” (Psalm 150:1). What else can we do but praise and thank our God for His tremendous work in creating the firmament that gives us our many varieties of weather, the beautiful clouds, the magnificent sunrises and sunsets, the life-preserving rain, the awe-inspiring northern lights, the proper air for breathing, the comparatively moderate temperature, the protection from the sun’s ultraviolet rays, the cooling winds, and the constant, life-saving interchange between the water above the firmament and that below it? Indeed, what God said at the close of the first day about light could very well be repeated on the second day, “Behold, the firmament is good.”

C. Our God gathered the waters into one place, let the dry land appear, and created plant life on the third day.

And God said, let the waters under the Heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas: and God saw that it was good. And God said, let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day (Genesis 1:9-13).

By the morning of the third creation day, our God had taken some gigantic steps toward preparing this world as the perfect home for mankind. Light had been made, and that was of the utmost necessity for both plant-, animal-, and human-life. Then there was the firmament with its blue sky, its life-preserving air, its waters, and all its other blessings for mankind.

Yet, a totally inconceivable amount of work still remained before this earth would be exactly the kind of home that a loving God had planned for His children. The world was still one great disorganized mass, composed of a mixture of water, soil, rocks, and minerals. There was not a trace of life anywhere. That was the condition to which our God now turned all of His attention, and this is the way He proceeded:

1. Our God commanded, “Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place” (Genesis 1:9).

Immediately that is exactly what happened! What a gigantic feat! Nothing quite like this colossal convulsion ever happened again in all of the world’s history, with only Noah’s Flood approaching it in magnitude. To accomplish this amazingly great miracle, God had to depress the ocean floor as much as 35,000 feet in some places (three-fourths of the oceans are two or more miles deep); He had to separate approximately 320 million cubic miles of water from everything else on earth; and He needed to transport all of that water to one place in one day’s time. If you have ever seen the mighty Mississippi in flood stage, you probably saw less than one/millionth as much water as God moved on that great third creation day. And God did it all with one almighty word – that is the only correct answer to the question that the Lord Himself posed to Job of old: “Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further! and here shall thy proud waves be stilled?” (Job 38:8-11)

Let’s try to compare that incredibly huge movement of water with something from our own experience: A two-year-old saw inspiring Niagara Falls for the first time. All she could say was “Oh, oh, oh.” When the time came to leave, she cried, “No; no, no.” She was so fascinated by the sight and the

sound of all those hundreds of tons of water roaring down the Falls that she could not bear to leave so soon. What would she or others have said, if they could have seen the waters of the world thundering to their appointed places on the third creation day? No wonder that the Psalmist blessed God in that outstanding 104th Psalm with these words: “The waters stood above the mountains. At Thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of Thy thunder they hasted away. They go down by the mountain; they go down by the valleys unto the place which Thou hast founded for them” (Psalm 104:6-8). Probably only a Christian sailor can begin to appreciate what God did in gathering the waters together, as Psalm 107:23, 24 tells us: “They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep.”

The Bible tells us that God “gathered (the seas) together unto one place” (Genesis 1:9). If you will look at a globe, you will immediately realize that the oceans of the world are indeed connected with one another. And yet God called “the gathering together of the waters. . . Seas” (Genesis 1:10). In other words, even though the waters of the world are connected, yet there are a number of oceans that differ from each other in their chemical composition. Sometimes a fish that is perfectly at home in one ocean cannot exist in another, because of the differences in the water. We still recognize those differences of which Moses wrote by speaking of “The Seven Seas” (the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, North Pacific, South Pacific, Arctic, Antarctic, and Indian Oceans).

To the oceans must, of course, be added the lakes, rivers, and streams of this earth. We know from Genesis 2:10-14 that there were at least four great rivers flowing through or near the Garden of Eden after God finished with His marvelous creation. Since that time there have been huge changes in the location, size, and flow of the earth’s lakes and rivers, as we know from geology, but God’s good arrangement will continue to the end of time: “All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again” (Ecclesiastes 1:7).

2. Our God saw that His gathering together of the waters in the seas “was good” (Genesis 1:10).

After all these many centuries since the world was made, we are just beginning to learn how extraordinarily good this part of God’s creation really is. We can, for example, see God’s goodness and wisdom in the qualities that He gave to water. It is the only substance on earth (except bismuth) that, like every other thing, contracts as it cools, but then at 39°F suddenly reverses the process. From that temperature on, until it freezes, water expands rapidly. How fortunate: If God had not given it that power, then the tropics would be unbelievably hot, while much of the rest of the world would be ice-covered. Then ice would sink to the bottom of our oceans, rivers, and lakes and much of it would never thaw. So much ice would eventually accumulate that insufficient water would remain to moderate climate. What then would happen to all the sea creatures is not difficult to imagine. Fortunately, ice rests on the surface, since it is lighter than water.

We can also see God’s goodness in the ratio of water to land. He created about three parts of water to one of land. Some 139 million square miles or about 70 percent of the earth’s surface is covered by the oceans, exactly the right ratio that we need for our way of life. If there were more water, then many of the world’s largest cities would never have been built; since the land on which they stand and much other land would be flooded. If there were less water, the world would have much larger deserts than we now have.

God’s mercy is again evident in the vertical and horizontal movements of the waters caused by the many currents and tides. The Gulf Stream, for example, is as much as 50 miles wide in places, 1500 feet deep, and 4,000 miles long, the largest river on all the earth, 1,000 times larger than the Mississippi. It is caused by the east to west trade winds near the equator that pile up water in the Gulf of Mexico. It then flows up the east coast of the United States, meets the cold Labrador Current coming south from Newfoundland, stirs up the fertilizers in the water, and produces ideal conditions for some of the world’s greatest fishing. Scientists estimate that the Gulf Stream carries 75 million tons of water northward and

eastward every second, although the Stream is difficult to chart because of its many branches. It has a wonderfully moderating effect upon the weather of Europe's western countries, since water is a great source of heat. If it weren't for the Gulf Stream, most of those countries would be snow-covered like Labrador, since they are in approximately the same latitude. Its warmth is equal to burning millions of tons of coal every hour.

If it weren't for currents like these and the tides, our oceans would soon become one enormous, stinking, stagnant pool. (It is interesting to note that Matthew Maury, the first oceanographer to prepare excellent and still-used charts of the ocean currents, began his work after reading about "the paths of the seas" in Psalm 8:8. He said that if God claims there are paths in the seas, then Matthew Maury will find them, and he did. His charts became an indispensable aid to navigation.)

In the oceans our God has given us a 91 billion acre farm that produces millions of tons of food annually. A director of the famous Woods Hole, Massachusetts, Oceanographic Institute said that the seas can produce "twice the protein requirements of a population of 10 billion." Someone else estimated that the oceans can produce 20 times more food than they are doing in the 1970's, while others have said that as much as 90 percent of all the earth's plant and animal life is to be found in its waters. (Some 65 million metric tons of fish are harvested annually from the world's oceans in the 1970's.) Of course, the oceans' crops must be harvested with due consideration for conservation methods. Otherwise those waters will soon become relatively empty of marine life.

The seas of the world are also incredibly rich in minerals. Some 50 elements and an almost immeasurably great amount of oil are found in or under the oceans. Someone estimated that there are approximately 175 million tons of valuable minerals in each cubic mile of ocean water, including 128 million tons of salt, 7.8 million tons of light and strong magnesium sulfate, 360,000 tons of bromide, 8,000 tons of aluminum, 550 tons of copper, 192 tons of iodine, 5 tons of uranium, and smaller amounts of gold, silver, and various other substances. To obtain the total amount of those minerals in the oceans one would have to multiply those 175 million tons by the 320 million cubic miles of ocean waters.

To these incredible ocean riches must be added the wealth of the lakes and rivers of the world. For example, it has been estimated that the Dead Sea contains as much as one billion tons of valuable potash plus almost the same amount of bromide. Salt Lake in Utah contains so much salt that it could supply United States' needs indefinitely.

Thus far chemical companies have extracted millions of tons of salt, bromide, magnesium, sulphur, and manganese from the oceans plus large amounts of iodine and gelatin from the vast kelp beds. Yet, by the middle 70's little more than a start has been made in mining the treasures of the sea. For example, very few of the estimated 1.5 trillion tons of manganese nodules on the Pacific Ocean floor have been mined, although the techniques for such mining are fairly well known.

What all this means is that the riches of the oceans add up to trillions of dollars worth of fish, various other marine creatures, plant life, oil, and minerals. Small wonder that there have been disputes between countries that have no or little ocean border and those countries that have much ocean shoreline (the United States has the world's longest coastline). The "have-not" countries claim that the ocean wealth is the common heritage of mankind, while other countries claim they own the rights to everything within 200 miles of their shoreline (those rights were extended in the 1970's for many countries from the former, three-mile limit that was originally based on the range of the 18th century land cannon).

In addition to the wealth of the world's oceans and other bodies of water, we must not forget the unbelievably great value of water itself for manufacturing, farming, drinking, waste disposal, navigation, transportation, and recreation use. How fortunate we are that God has made water the most plentiful and cheapest substance on earth. Although in some places it is scarce and expensive, yet our God has given our own country an abundance of water and good soil, the two greatest natural resources of any nation.

Consider for a moment our uses of this abundant resource. The average American uses about 200 gallons of water daily for personal needs, but if all water uses are considered the total is closer to 1800 gallons. For example, it takes 800,000 gallons of water to bring one acre of cotton to maturity, 10

gallons to produce one gallon of gasoline, 50,000 gallons to manufacture a ton of paper, 65,000 gallons to finish a ton of steel. Where irrigation is practiced, some 2-4 feet of water are needed every year, and one foot of water on an acre of land equals some three and a quarter million gallons. From these few examples you can readily understand why the estimated United States' daily needs for water are some 200 billion gallons, and if you will add to this all of the water used for hydroelectric plants, the total would increase immensely.

One can go on and on to show how we use water for transportation (hundreds of millions of tons of various items are cheaply transported annually on the oceans and on the waterways of many countries), for recreation (various areas of our country are almost entirely dependent on water for recreation), for solvents (water is one of the greatest solvents), waste disposal (we have always believed that almost anything can be disposed of by flushing it down the drain), for energy (some of the greatest electric plants in the world produce electricity by water power), for making seeds to germinate and plants to grow (nothing could grow or live without water), for ice (a luxury that has become a year-round necessity), and for peace of mind (what is more beautiful and relaxing than a colorful sunset over the quiet waters of a favorite lake?).

Long ago the inspired Psalmist exclaimed: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: The earth is full of Thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships: There is that leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein" (Psalm 104:24-27). Let's remember too that "the sea is His (God's), and He made it" Psalm-95:5).

Finally, water should recall for us those precious promises of Jesus, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Revelation 21:6), and "He that believeth on Me (Christ) shall never thirst" (John 6:35).

3. Our God commanded, "Let the dry land appear: and it was so" (Genesis 1:9).

What a tremendous convulsion must have taken place on that third creation day! Not only did the seas roar into their prepared places, but land everywhere arose. When just a little land is displaced by an earthquake, that can cause a tremendously destructive tidal wave 20-30 feet high. It may travel hundreds of miles. What kind of a convulsion must then have taken place when all of the earth's dry land and waters were separated! We simply cannot imagine what sweeping changes took place when the Creator of all things formed the two billion United States acres, the world's chains of mountains with some of them 30,000 or more feet high (mountains may have been much lower in the beginning of time), the widespread fertile valleys, the plains and plateaus, the lowlands and the highlands, the irregular coastlines, the many peninsulas, and good harbors, all according to one grand master plan.

We must not, of course, think that the land then looked exactly as it does today. Mountains have been formed since creation day; rivers and lakes have changed immensely; some land has been raised, some has sunk down; indeed, continents may even have drifted apart. (Without doubt the world-wide Flood of Noah's day was a huge factor in drastically changing the topography of the world from what it was at the end of the third creation day.)

4. Our God said of the dry land that it "was good" (Genesis 1:10).

As God looked upon the world's great land mass, upon its mountains and valleys, its fertile soil and its variety of mineral wealth; as He saw its infinitely great potential blessings for mankind, He said that it was good. Indeed, even today, after all of these many centuries of greed and sin, distrust and wastefulness on our part, we can still see the grace, mercy, omnipotence, and omniscience of our God in every part of His separating the waters from the land. What if there were no fertile soil ranging in depth from a few inches to many feet, all over the world? Then we and every creature on earth would quickly

starve to death. What if God had not placed some 2,000 metals and minerals into His earth? Then our present way of life would surely be at an end, What if He had created all the land one level surface?

Then there would be no drainage, no rivers, but stagnant pools and a monotonously flat surface everywhere. What if God had not placed some three trillion tons of coal underground in the United States (one-half of the world's supply), from which some 200,000 products are made? (It seems that much coal, that tremendously valuable source of energy was formed by the Flood of Noah's time from the unbelievably rich plant life existing at that time. The Flood possibly compressed this plant life and sealed it with sediment. Thus, while the Flood was a dreadful curse upon sin, it also became a rich blessing for us.) What if He had not made 8 percent of the earth's crust aluminum or 5 percent of the earth's crust iron? Where would we go to find materials to use for the almost innumerable products made from iron and aluminum? Oh, yes, Isaiah well wrote long ago: "The whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3).

Dr. Morris in his *Work-Days of God* revealed for us just a few of the treasures that God placed into the land for our welfare. Dr. Morris wrote as follows:

Its strata, like so many shelves, to unknown depths, are crowded with stores of all manner of useful things for his (man's) service. Here is a magazine of minerals and metals proffering him the means of multiplying his conveniences, extending his civilization, and advancing his own knowledge, refinement, and happiness. Here are beds of granite to supply him with building materials that will defy the force of time and tide; marble of every grain and shade of color for his temples, palaces, or statuary; limestone to improve his soil and cement his walls; slate to cover his roofs or lay his floors; gypsum, white as snow, to finish and adorn his apartment; the hardened grit to grind his corn; sand to make him glass; and clay to fabricate his wares; chalk, basalt, porphyry, sandstone, and a multitude of other minerals, all convertible by ingenuity and industry into various useful and important ends. In the great cellars below we also find laid up ready to his hand an abundant stock of coal, wherewith he may warm himself, and multiply the strength of his arms a millionfold. In close connection with this are fountains of oil to supply his lamps (this was written before the day of the almost omnipresent automobile): And here too are inexhaustible stores of salt, an article of prime importance to him and to the living creatures around him.

Among the strata of the rocks, in their joints and fissures, and interlacing their solid masses, are also provided and laid up for man, metals of different qualities, and adapted to all the various purposes of life. Here are to be found the precious and beautiful metals of gold and silver to serve him for coins, metals, and ornaments; mercury, antimony, arsenic, potassium, phosphorus, aluminum, sulphur, sodium, magnesium, to supply him with chemicals for his arts, and medicines for his health; tin, copper, nickel, zinc, plumbago (graphite), platinum, cobalt, lead, et cetera, to construct him instruments, utensils, and other conveniences without number. Above all, here are inexhaustible stores of iron, the most useful, and, therefore the most valuable of all the metals. The uses of iron to man are not to be numbered or estimated. It ministers to his necessities and comfort, to his ease and safety, from the beginning of his life to its close; it is equally serviceable to the arts, to agriculture, to navigation, and to war; out of it are made the sword and the plow share, the scissors and the needle, the cable and the anchor, and 10,000 other instrumentalities in daily use of sea and land.

To all of this we surely should respond thankfully with Robert Grant in his hymn number 17 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*:

Oh worship the King all glorious above;
 Oh gratefully sing His power and His love,
 Our Shield and Defender the Ancient of Days,
 Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise!

This earth, with its store of wonders untold,
 Almighty, Thy power hath founded of old,
 Hath 'stablished it fast by a changeless decree,
 And round it hath cast, like a mantle, the sea.

5. Our God created vegetation, as His last stupendous act on the third day (Genesis 1:11, 12).

Vast strides had been made thus far in creating the world a perfect place for mankind's home. However, all the earth was still barren and lifeless. Everywhere the land was just waiting for something with which it could be covered. Then suddenly an awe-inspiring miracle took place. Plant life was created and for the first time in the world's history there was life on earth. God made every form of plant life to spring forth in all of its glory; it was all a finished product, certainly not the result of eons of evolutionary development.

This is the way in which God proceeded: He commanded, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind" (Genesis 1:11). Thus three different forms of plant life were created, a division that is just as valuable today as it was when God made the world.

a. Our God created the various kinds of grasses.

God created the many families of the world's grasses, a form of plant life whose importance cannot be overemphasized. These families include about 5,000 varieties. Some of them are as short as the blades on the golf green, while some are 120 feet tall. (Bamboo is the world's tallest grass and it has so many uses that millions of people in the Orient can hardly live without it; it may grow three or four feet in a day; and it reaches its full height and diameter in one season's growth.) Grass grows in various shades of restful green, not in some glaring colors; it is found almost everywhere on earth; in the water and on the tops of mountains, on otherwise barren deserts and in the fertile fields, on rocky soil and on the sand, in wet marshes and along the roadsides. It provides food for numberless creatures and, through them, wholesome meat for our tables and nourishing milk to quench our thirst; it beautifies our yards and provides an excellent surface for many kinds of recreation; and it helps to prevent erosion (there is from 10 to 50 times more water runoff on poorly farmed soil than there is on grasslands or in forests). Every blade of grass on which so much of the world's life depends bears witness to the goodness, the wisdom, and the power of our God. No one else can make even a single plant to grow.

b. Our God created all of the world's plants.

"And God said, let the earth bring forth the herb yielding seed" (Genesis 1:11). That is the way in which all vegetation that has seeds was brought into existence. (Grasses have seeds too, but the seed pods are not so apparent as they are in the rest of vegetation.) These few simple words tell a story that is the subject of thousands of books, for, like grass, vegetation is found everywhere on earth in perhaps as many as 250,000 varieties. Like grass, the plants also are absolutely indispensable for the life of man and beast. Just try to imagine the blessings that we have received from the plant life of our gardens and our fields.

It is somewhat difficult for us to separate all plant life into grasses and herbs, but the world's grains, of which corn, wheat, oats, rice, sugar cane, and barley are the most important, may be called "grasses," while all vegetables are "herbs."

Vegetation (not meat) was given to mankind and to animals for food in the beginning of time as Genesis 1:29, 30 tells us: "And God said: Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat."

After the Flood, when life seemingly became much more difficult, God added meat for food also, as Genesis 9:2, 3 tell us: "And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things."

c. Our God created all of the world's trees and shrubs.

"And God said, let the earth bring forth. . . the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind" (Genesis 1:11). This simple statement opens up for us the entire world of forestry, for obviously the words refer also to nut-bearing and to other kinds of trees. (Various shrubs and flowers, while not specifically mentioned in these verses, were also created by our God on the third day of the world's history.)

We could spend a lifetime or many lifetimes in studying what God created with His trees and still not know everything there is to know about them. This much we do know, however, that God has given the United States alone approximately 1,000 different kinds of trees in addition to the various other kinds found elsewhere. This we also know: Only God could make the various kinds of trees. This does not mean, however, that all of the tree varieties in the world today were created in the beginning, just as all of the berries in the world were not necessarily created on the third day either. For example, the boysenberry, developed by Rudolph Boysen in 1931, is a cross between raspberries and blackberries. (This is interesting to anyone who is acquainted with the famous Knott's Berry Farm in California, begun when Mr. Knott bought land and planted it all in boysenberries for Mrs. Boysen to sell in desserts and jams.) Some trees are also the result of a cross between two or more varieties. (We shall have more to say about this later in this paper. See VI, E, 1.)

d. Our God created all plant life unspeakably wonderful.

Every blade of grass, every single plant, and every tree are laboratories, manufacturing establishments, and storehouses so intricate, so perfectly designed, so marvelous in their functions that only God Himself could have made them. Yes, every part of every plant is a miracle of God.

The roots, for example, with their myriads of tiny root hairs anchor the plant or the tree; they absorb moisture with its dissolved minerals; they send this moisture up vertically, sometimes as much as 300 feet, to every branch and twig. Even the number of root hairs is amazing. (One scientist estimated that a single winter rye plant produced 14 billion root hairs with a combined length of 6600 miles.)

Plant leaves are also one of the world's most intricate chemical plants. Their chlorophyll molecule reacts with sunlight to produce hydrocarbons that in turn produce sugars and starches in that complicated process called photosynthesis, a process on which all life ultimately depends. It is a process which is highly difficult to duplicate, even in a well-equipped laboratory, but plant life does it easily all the time. (An expert estimated that a 50 foot sugar maple with a trunk 15 inches in

diameter has 162,500 leaves with an area of almost 15,000 square feet available for photosynthesis.) Who else but God could ever have thought of a process like that?

e. Our God twice said of vegetation and trees that they/ have seeds within themselves (Genesis 1:11, 12).

God not only created all plant life, but He made its continuation possible by giving it seeds. While some forms of plant life spread in other ways, most of it is reproduced by means of seeds. The study of seeds is fascinating. They range in size from the proverbial, tiny mustard seed to the huge coconut. They are mysterious, to say the least, since the world's great botanists can rarely tell if a seed is alive or dead. All seeds have genes that regulate their plant growth and tell exactly what kind of plant is to be produced. They are amazingly tough, for some of them have been buried, boiled, dried, kept for 1;000 years, and still germinate and grow. They are spread far and wide by wind and wave, by birds and animals, and by man. Some plants produce an almost inconceivably great number of seeds. It has been estimated, for example, that a single quack grass plant can produce 90,000 seeds, while the progeny of a single grain of corn can conceivably produce so prodigiously that within five years all of the United States plus Canada and Mexico could be planted in corn. If only God can make a tree, then surely only God can also make the amazing seeds.

We must remember too that almost every plant has the miracle of pollen, the male part that fertilizes the pistil, the female part. Without these two parts most plants would quickly die out. Pollen is spread particularly in two ways: by the wind and by insects, especially by bees. One can readily understand that insect life must have been created almost immediately after plant life, for one cannot live without the other. There is no room for evolution's millions of years, which its proponents claim elapsed, between the time that plants began to appear and the arrival of insect life.

f. Our God said three times that He created all plant life "after his kind" (Genesis 1:11, 12).

Byron Nelson, author of *After Its Kind* (Bethany Fellowship, Minneapolis; rev. ed.; 1967) wrote, pp, and 4:

After its kind is the statement of a biological principle that no human observer has ever known to fail. . . The most desperate and subtle effort of man in modern times have (sic) been unable to alter this divine decree. The Bible teaches that from the beginning there has been a large number of types of living things, man included, which were so created as to remain true to their particular type throughout all generations. . . The Bible does not mean to say that every distinct form of plant or animal. . . came from the hand of the Creator in just the form in which it is beheld. The 'kinds' of Genesis refer. . . to those natural species of which the world is full, which have power to vary within themselves in such a way that the members of this species are not all exactly alike, but which nevertheless cannot go out of the bounds that the Creator set.

That excellently states the meaning of "after its kind." Apple seeds produce apple trees; and although there is a large variety of this species, yet those trees cannot be successfully crossed with wheat or even with nut-bearing trees for that matter. There are God-given limits to the development of a kind, boundaries beyond which it cannot go. Even Luther Burbank, certainly one of the most competent plant breeders of all time and an evolutionist, wrote: "I can develop a plum half an inch long, or one two and a half inches long, with every possible length in between, but I am willing to admit that it is hopeless to try to get a plum the size of a small pea, or one as big as a grapefruit"

Norman MacBeth, *Darwin Retried*, p. 36. Much less can man develop a plum-orange. “After its kind” prevents this, fortunately, as we shall learn later.

g. Our God saw that His creation of plant life “was good” (Genesis 1:12).

Even to list the blessings of God’s work on this memorable third creation day would require many pages. These blessings are visible on every side, whether we look at the seas with their boundless food and mineral treasures; or to the earth with its fertile soils, sands, stones, and other minerals; or at plant life with its blessings for man and beast. Who, for example, can measure the value of the earth’s 5,000 grass species that enrich and protect the soil, provide food for animals and man, carpet the earth with a beautiful green blanket, and are useful in a thousand other ways? The World Book Encyclopedia states, “The grasses are the first among all the forms of the plant kingdom in their usefulness to man.”

Who among us having seen one of California’s Big Trees has not stood lost in awe at what God can do? Some of them rise straight into the air for 100 feet before having a single branch and then it may be 10 feet in diameter with sufficient wood in the one tree to build 45 five-room houses. One could write many a book, as he tries to explain how trees are “good” for lumber, fruit, nuts, beverages (tea, coffee,) medicines (quinine), spices, sap, clothing, coconuts (the palm tree with its hundreds of uses is said to be the world’s most valuable tree), lumber, paper, furniture, resins, waxes, mulch, compost heaps, gums, rubber, alcohol, sugar, shade, shelter, heating (thus producing energy), cooling, ornament, and many others. (National Wildlife, April and May of 1973, quotes a statement of the United States Forest Service that a moderate-sized tree cools the summer air of a city as much as 20 average room air conditioners running 20 hours a day.)

What is true of trees is equally true of other forms of plant life. They, too, are blessings beyond compare for us. They are needed and useful for food and drink, clothing and drugs, ornament and shade, conservation and building materials, dyes and medicines, plastics and fuels. Without them neither man nor animal could survive.

Try to imagine also how much beauty and pleasure all of the world’s flowers provide. How much poorer and more barren life would be without them!

The world’s naturalists have often written movingly of the beauties and value of the oceans, the glory and benefits of the land, and the manifold blessings of plant life. Permit me to quote just part of one article written by Donald Culross Peattie in his inimitable style (*American Forests* 12/47):

Wood is man’s best friend. Most versatile of all living substances, it held him in his cradle; was the frame of the bed he came to rejoicing, the log upon his hearth; and will make him his last long home. It was the murmuring tree above his childhood play, and the roof over the first house he called his own. It is even the page he is reading at this moment.

Living, a tree sweetens the air where it breathes. It lays the dust and tempers the wind. When it is felled, sawn and seasoned, it lays bare the hidden beauty of its heart, in figures and grains more lovely than the most premeditated design.

Touch any object made of wood – the tabletop of bright maple, the chopping bowl of plainly birch, a paneled wall of knotty pine, the lean strength of an ash rake handle, a basket of woven willow splits, or a tobacco pipe of briar. Pass your fingers sensitively over this wood, then press your full palm upon its firmness. Compared with metal or clay or stone, it seems warm still, still living out its useful days.

With its 1,000-odd native species of trees, the United States started out with the greatest forest heritage that ever fell to the lot of a lucky people. So wood has gone into the very fiber of our nation. Our first exports back to England from the Jamestown Colony came

from the forest – mighty pines for masts, pitch, turpentine, black walnut. By the time George Washington had inherited Mount Vernon (a wooden house, like millions of American homes) and planted around it now-mighty elms and tulip poplars, our wood-wise pioneer ways were already 150 years old.

When British shot fell back from the live-oak sides of the frigate *Constitution*, she got her name *Old Ironsides*. When the backwoods boys fought beside Robert E. Lee in their homespun dyed with butternut, they were known as “Butternuts,” and that tree became a synonym for tattered valor. The cabin where Lincoln was born was made of the logs of that grand old tree, the American white oak. The rails that he split were black walnut.

Wood fired the racing steamboats on the Mississippi, and fed the first railroads. We spanned the treeless plains on ties cut from eastern forests. On rims of hickory and spokes of oak, pioneers rolled west to the Pacific. There new woods came to hand – redwoods and Douglas fir 300 feet high, tremendous sugar and ponderosa pines, gigantic western cedars, timber such as man had never seen before.

And every kind of tree has its own virtues. Some are perfect in their capacity to absorb sudden shock, like the ash so carefully selected for baseball bats. . . most cabinet woods are chosen. . . because they shrink little in seasoning. On the other hand, our ancestors taught us to fit seasoned hickory dowels into chair seats of green sugar maple: when the maple shrinks it clasps the hickory leg in a grip that nothing can loosen.

The same species of wood may have uses ranging from the trivial to the sublime. The little box that holds berries in the market is made of deal. But when you camp beneath its fragrant boughs, you call it spruce. Once a year it becomes your Christmas tree. The newspaper publisher calls it pulp and on its macerated fiber he flings at your door each morning the news of the world. When the violinist’s bow drops on the strings, the note comes down through. . . the bridge to the violin’s rich, soft belly – made of spruce.

All that we need to do is to read Mr. Peattie’s article in the light of this third creation day to see what good things God then made for mankind.

Every part of God’s work on this memorable third day, especially His creation of vegetation, is often mentioned in Scripture, each time teaching us valuable lessons. For example, we are compared with grass in Psalm 90:5-7: “In the morning they (all people) are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourish and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth. For we are consumed by Thine anger. And by Thy wrath are we troubled.” And “We all do fade as a leaf” (Isaiah 64:6). Yet, a Christian, cleansed by Jesus’ blood is “like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (Psalm 1:3). And, “To him that overcometh will I (Christ) give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Revelation 2:7).

D. Our God created the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth day.

And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day (Genesis 1:14-19) .

What an amazingly orderly method of creation our God followed! Everything that mankind would ever need upon this earth, excepting only animal and human life, had already been created. Water and land had been

separated, and the barren land, had been covered with what must have been an incredibly luxurious blanket of vegetation. Now the time had come for God to turn His attention to the skies above us, to make heavenly bodies (whose primary material had been created on the first day) light-bearers. Thus He made provision for preserving the plant life that He had made. This, in turn, would prepare the way for animal and human life. All of that was done on the fourth day of creation, when our God made the sun, moon, and stars the light-bearers (that is what the-Hebrew word translated “lights” in our Bibles means) of the original light that had been made on the very first day of creation. Until time ends, the heavenly bodies will now continue to be our major source of light.

Two other things should be noted before we begin a more detailed study of the fourth day of creation. 1) Genesis 1:9-14 was written from the standpoint of a Christian on earth viewing the majesty of God in the heavens that He had made. It is not a statement made purely from a scientific standpoint –otherwise God would hardly have said that He made “two great lights.” Both of them are actually quite small in comparison with other heavenly bodies. The sun and the moon appear to us to be “two great lights” because they are relatively close to the earth. 2) Though astronauts and astronomers have learned much about the heavenly bodies, every one of them will undoubtedly confess that there is infinitely more to be learned about them than we already know. What God really did on this fourth creation day in making the heavenly bodies light-bearers is to a great extent still a mystery, even after all of these many centuries of study.

1. “God made. . . the greater light to rule the day” (Genesis 1:16).

In an instant God made the sun our great light-bearer. He made it a star that is more than a million times larger than the earth (if our entire solar system, the sun with its nine planets and all of their satellites, were one body, more than 99 percent of the sun. Put another way; our sun has 1,000 times the mass of all the other bodies in our solar system combined.) Heavenly Father gave the sun a surface temperature of 10,000 degrees; He positioned it exactly the right distance from the earth to perform its functions for us; He made it our light-bearer and heat-giver by having it convert 560 million tons of hydrogen into 556 million tons of helium every second, with the remaining 4 million tons of hydrogen transformed into energy that radiates outward as heat and light the sun so that our earth receives about three ten-billionths of its energy (if it were more, our earth would boil; if it were less, we would freeze). He made the sun the ultimate cause of all our energy, excepting only atomic power; He gave it prominences or streamers, some of them millions of miles long; He made it the ultimate cause of all the earth’s vegetation, rain, wind, seasons, and climatic changes. That much we do know about the sun, yet there are still many secrets and mysteries about this great center of our solar system waiting to be discovered. Of our sun Dr. Morris wrote in his *Work-Days of God*, p. 377: “Among all the visible objects of creation, there is none whose nature and functions are so wonderful – none whose glories are so wide-spread as the sun; none where the eternal power and Godhead are more clearly seen; none that more impressively call us to render unto the Lord the glory due unto His name. In the sun we have the most worthy emblem that the visible universe presents of Him, who, with the word of His power, kindled up its glories, and with the strength of His right hand established it in the heavens.”

Psalms 19:4 tells us that God “set a tabernacle for the sun” in the heavens. He not only created it, not only placed it where it now is, but He has sustained it to this day. At the end of time He will cause every heavenly body to “pass away with a great noise” (II Peter 3:10), for in the new heaven there is “no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof” (Revelation 21:23).

2. “God made. . . the lesser light to rule the night” (Genesis 1:16).

God made the moon barren with an incredibly rugged surface. He gave it no air, no wind, no fertile soil, no water, no clouds, no plants, no animal life. Since God gave it no atmosphere, it has no twilight, nor can any sound be naturally heard there (that would require an atmosphere). Its temperature range is

enormous, from some 215°F in the sunlight to some 250°F below zero in the shade. It is dusty beyond description (our astronauts' space suits could not be cleaned, when they were brought back from the moon). It has one sixth the gravity of the earth. Nor is it necessary to spend billions of dollars in sending astronauts the 239,000 miles to the moon in order to learn that it is a completely dead world. All thoughts of eventually colonizing it, as some have proposed, would seem at this point to be utter nonsense. Yet, the moon landing of Apollo 11 with its astronauts on July 20th, 1969, the first time in history that man had ever set foot on another heavenly body, was truly a tremendous scientific feat.

Our moon is the second most important object in the sky. To us it seems to be almost as large as the sun, since it is 400 times closer and 400 times smaller than the sun.

The moon, of course, shines only with light reflected from the sun. Since the sun shines on only one half of the moon at one time and since part of this one half is at times turned away from the earth, we say that the moon has phases. They range from its first quarter to the full moon, then the last quarter and finally the new moon. These phases never occur on the same date in successive months, since the moon travels around the earth every 27.32 days. Then, since the earth is moving around the sun, the moon must go a little more than once around the earth to get to the beginning of the cycle again. The average time for returning to the starting point is 29.53 days. Also, we should note that the moon travels once around its axis as it completes its cycle around the earth. Therefore no one on earth ever saw the other side of the moon, until the astronauts circled it in the last third of the twentieth century.

Since our moon has no life nor any possibility of life, since it is a barren wilderness, one might wonder why God placed it into the sky. At first glance it may appear to be a completely useless object. Yet, that is not the case at all, for when God looked at the moon, He saw that it too "was good" (Genesis 1:18), absolutely imperative for our well-being. Without it we could hardly live, as we shall hear, when we treat the purpose of the heavenly bodies.

3. "God made . . . the stars also" (Genesis 1:16).

a. Our God made the planets of our solar system.

Even the ancients noticed that some stars always remained in the same relative position, while others changed their positions in the skies. They called these heavenly bodies that changed positions "planets" (the word means "wanderers").

The first four planets in order from the sun, all somewhat similar in size, are Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Mercury, 36 million miles from the sun, supposedly has temperatures up to 774°F in the daytime, and more than 100 degrees below zero at night. Its high temperature is sufficient to melt most metals. It revolves around the sun once every 88 days.

Beautiful Venus, 67 million miles from the sun, is the brightest object in our sky, next to the sun and the moon. It is our nearest planetary neighbor (about 26 million miles from the earth), but no one has ever seen its surface, because it is constantly surrounded by clouds. It probably has no oxygen or water, but it does have much carbon dioxide. Sometimes it is the evening star in the west or the morning star in the east.

Mars, 141,600,000 miles from the sun, is a planet that has always fascinated people. Because it has a reddish color, it was named after the Roman god for war. Its temperature ranges from about minus 200°F to about 500 above zero F. After spending \$1 billion on the eight-year project and after searching among the rocks for days before finding a suitable, fairly smooth spot for landing, our *Viking I* Lander settled on Mars on July 20th, 1976. That indeed was a tremendous scientific achievement, but one of the major purposes, to find evidences of life on Mars, was not laudable. In fact, there is little evidence of any water on Mars and nothing even remotely resembling life in any form. (We shall treat the matter of life on other planets in part 5 of this section D.)

The other five known planets in our solar system are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. All of them, except Pluto, are much larger than the four described in the preceding paragraphs. Jupiter, 484 million miles from the sun, in keeping with its name (Jupiter was the chief Roman god) is the largest of all the planets, probably weighing more than all the rest combined. Though it is five times farther away from the sun than the earth, yet because of its huge size (1300 times larger than our earth), it is the brightest planet in the sky, excepting only Venus and Mars.

Because of its great distance from the sun, its temperature is about 220° below zero F, and its year is the equivalent of our 12 years. Saturn, 885 million miles from the sun and famous for its rings, is with Jupiter the most beautiful of all the planets, when viewed through a telescope. One cannot see its rings without a telescope. Its day lasts about 10 hours; its year lasts for 29 and a half years.

Uranus, 1,779,000,000 miles from the sun, also named after an Olympian god, is so far away from the sun that its year is 84 of our years. Yet, it rotates so rapidly that its day lasts only 11 hours. Neptune, 2,809,000,000 miles from the sun, was discovered, as predicted, because Uranus's orbit was affected by another heavenly body. Its year lasts for about 165 of our years, but it also revolves so rapidly that its day is about 15 hours.

Pluto, 3,685,000,000 miles from the sun, is, as far as we know, the outermost planet in our solar system, so far away that its year is 249 of our years. Its day is probably equal to six of our days. It was named after the Roman god of the dark regions. Thus the names of all the planets, excepting our earth, were derived from Roman gods.

To give us some idea of the placement of our sun's planets, we shall quote some remarks by Sir John Herschel, famous English astronomer, who died in 1871 (quoted in *Life* 6/9/44). He wrote:

Choose any well-leveled field. On it place a globe two feet in diameter. This will represent the sun. Mercury will be represented by a grain of mustard seed on the circumference of a circle 164 feet in diameter drawn around the globe; Venus, by a pea, on a circle 284 feet in diameter for its orbit; Earth, also a pea, on a circle 430 feet; Mars, a rather large pin's head, on a circle of 654 feet; the asteroids, grains of sand on orbits having diameters of 1,000 to 1,200 feet; Jupiter, a moderate-sized orange on a circle nearly a half-mile across; Saturn, a small orange, on a circle nearly four-fifths of a mile; Uranus, a full-sized cherry or small plum, on a circle about a mile in diameter; and finally Neptune, a good-sized plum, on a circle of about 24 miles in diameter.

Sir Herschel had nothing to say about Pluto, since it was not discovered until 1930, but the person who sent the letter to *Life* from which the preceding quotation was taken, wrote: "In the same scale, Pluto could be represented by a small pea on a circle having a diameter of 3.2 miles."

We have purposely listed the planets' distances from our sun in order to show some of God's almighty power: Try to imagine the power required to create such immense heavenly bodies and to place them up to a totally incredible 3 billion miles from the sun: The Psalmist was putting it mildly when he wrote, "Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite" (Psalm 147:5).

Are the distances listed in the previous paragraphs fairly accurate? Yes, they are, since they can be computed mathematically. (Geometry, you may remember, easily tells us the distance to a given point, if we know two angles and the length of the base. These angles and the base length are readily obtainable from the earth's orbit around the sun.) Yet, those distances, as great as they are, are tiny when compared with the immense stretches to the fixed stars (more will be said about this point in section C.)

b. Our God created an incredibly great number of fixed stars.

God said of the stars, “The host of heaven cannot be numbered” (Jeremiah 33:22). Before the invention of the telescope, many a person may have thought that this statement was an exaggeration, since one can surely count 2,000 or 3,000 stars, the number that can be seen by the naked eye. But then Galileo gave us the telescope and soon the heavens were opened to us in all of their glory and in all of their manifold millions. No longer did astronomers regard our Milky Way as stardust, but they could actually see many of the 100 billion or so stars in it. No one can conceive of a number that large. Suffice it to say that if you started counting one, two, three, etc., as soon as you could talk, you would never live long enough to count to a billion. (At the rate of one a second, it would take you 33 years to count to a billion.) Does that give you some idea of the work that our almighty God did on that memorable fourth day when He created our galaxy?

However, that is not all that God made on the fourth day. Astronomers have learned that there is not just one milky way or galaxy, but incredibly large numbers of them. They tell us that they can see 1 million galaxies within the bowl of the Big Dipper, while the *National Geographic*, May, 1974, estimated that there may be as many as 100 billion galaxies in our universe. Even if there were only 1 billion galaxies (that many are visible through the most powerful telescopes) and each one of them had as many stars as our own galaxy, that would give us a figure of 1 followed by 20 zeros for the total number of stars. Only when we by the grace of our Lord Jesus reach heaven and understand all things, will we be able to comprehend a figure like that.

Indeed, Jeremiah wrote truthfully that the stars of heaven cannot be numbered. Yet, God “tellethe the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names” (Psalm 147:4). Isaiah the prophet wrote in a similar manner: “He (God) calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth” (40:26): When we consider these truths, what else can we do except to stand in awe and wonder at a power that could make a universe like ours, know each star by name, and continually care for each one?

c. Our God placed His fixed stars at infinitely great distances from each other.

Dr. Morris in his *Work-Days of God* wrote:

That the stars are at an incomparably greater distance than the planets is obvious from two simple considerations. The earth at one point of its orbit is nearly 200 million miles further from some of them than at the opposite point; and yet this enormous base makes no sensible difference in their apparent size. Again, the planets, when viewed through a powerful telescope, exhibit a circular phase or disk, capable of being magnified and distinguished into parts and features; Venus and Jupiter can be made to appear as large as, and even larger than, the full moon; but no telescope can thus magnify the stars; through the most powerful glasses ever invented, they are still mere specs or points of light. These considerations alone, then, prove them to be at an inconceivable distance.

For a long time the distance of the fixed stars was regarded as utterly beyond the calculation of man. The method used for computing the distance of the moon and the sun from us would not apply to them. The diameter of the earth afforded no adequate base line for the calculation; and even the diameter of the earth’s orbit, 190 million miles, was found to be but little better – in passing from one extremity of this immense line to the other extremity, not the least change was observed in the apparent positions of the stars; the keenest scrutiny could not detect the slightest displacement among them. At length, however, instruments of sufficient delicacy and

perfection were invented to mark a difference, though extremely small, and the human mind triumphed over what had so long appeared insuperable. In the year 1839, Henderson, a British astronomer, succeeded in calculating the distance of the star known as A Centauri, and found it to be no less than 20 trillion miles.

God placed the stars so far away that astronomers have had to invent an entirely new yardstick to measure the distance. It is the light year, the distance that light travels in one year, approximately 6 trillion miles. Today's astronomers confirm Henderson's calculation that Alpha Centauri, the nearest fixed star, is somewhat less than 4 light years from the earth; others, they claim, range all the way up to a billion or more light years from our earth. Obviously, any figure above a few light years is uncertain at best, since those measurements have to be computed indirectly.

Three examples will surely increase our awe over these fabulous figures: If one were to travel to the nearest fixed star at the rate of 1,000 miles per hour, it would take him more than 2 million years to reach it. Again, an astronomer said: "Set three wasps flying over Europe, and its skies would be more crowded with wasps than space is with stars." And someone else wrote that the universe is the only thing that can never be reproduced on a miniature model scale. If, for example, the earth were represented by a one-inch ball, the nearest fixed star would be 40,000 miles away.

If we accept astronomers' estimates that some fixed stars may be millions of light years distant from our earth, does that mean that our universe is billions of years old, or at least as old as it took light traveling at 186,000 miles per second, to reach the earth? Not at all, for He who made the heavenly bodies light-bearers could easily make the light shine from them to our earth on the fourth day of creation without any intervening time. (All of creation appeared mature, when first viewed by Adam and Eve.)

Since the stars shine brightly, even though they are placed at gigantic distances from the earth, they must be immensely large. Dr. Morris has this to say about those sizes:

From the immense distance of the stars we are at once brought to the conclusion that they must be bodies of stupendous dimensions, otherwise they would be altogether invisible from our world. It is demonstrable that our sun, at the distance of the nearest of the fixed stars, must appear only as one of the smallest of those visible to the naked eye. And this fact alone serves to show that they must be globes at least equal in size and splendor to the sun, while many of them doubtless are vastly larger.

Another thing that goes to prove that the stars are immensely large globes is the degree of light which many of them shed. Experiments plainly indicate, that were the stars Sirius and our sun placed at equal distances from us, that star would impart an amount of light 14 times greater than that of the sun. The diameter of the star Vega has been calculated to be 38 times that of the sun; consequently its bulk must be 55,000 times that of the sun. What a stupendous orb must such a star be!

In view of what we know about the heavenly bodies, we certainly should join the Psalmist of old in his hymn of praise: "Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite" (Psalm 147:5). Truly we ought to agree wholeheartedly with Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of that famous Temple: "Lord God of Israel, there is no god like Thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath who keepest covenant and mercy with Thy servants. . . behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee" (I Kings 8:23, 27).

4. God told us His purposes in creating the heavenly bodies (Genesis 1:14-18).

After studying a little of what God did on that amazing fourth day of creation, after learning something about the number of the stars and their sizes, we naturally will ask: “Why did God create the immense universe with its totally incomprehensible number of stars?” In general, there is just one true answer to this question: All heavenly bodies were created for this world, particularly for mankind, and to glorify God. (They were not created for the purpose of supporting any kind of life, as we shall hear in point 5.)

If we want to understand the purpose of the heavenly bodies in greater detail, we can do no better than to begin the list with what God Himself said about them in Genesis 1. They were created “for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years, and for lights. . . to give light upon the earth. . . and to divide the light from the darkness” (Genesis 1:14, 15, 18). (We shall discuss the second part, that the stars “glorify God” in part 6 of this section.)

The heavenly bodies were created for “signs,” signs that tell the farmer when to plant his seed, signs that tell the navigator his exact position, signs of changes in the weather (Christ referred to this in Matthew 16:2,3), signs that guide our rockets among the planets, and signs of God’s judgment. St. Luke wrote of the last days as follows: “There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars,” Luke 21:25; and St. Matthew explained those signs in this way: “The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven,” Matthew 24:29).

Secondly, the heavenly bodies were created for “seasons.” The sun, for example, regulates our seasons by the angle at which its rays strike the earth (not by its distance from the earth). One can easily understand this, if he takes a globe, tilts it at an angle of about 23 degrees from the perpendicular (that is the way the earth is tilted), and then keeping that tilt, takes the rotating globe around an imaginary sun. That experiment will quickly show that at one place in earth’s orbit the sun’s rays strike the northern hemisphere directly (that is summer); at the other side of the orbit, the sun’s rays strike the northern hemisphere at an angle (that is winter).

This arrangement of the four seasons in much of our world was planned by God for us and for our land, too, since land generally requires seasons to produce a harvest and to rest. Nor should we forget that the heavenly bodies form our church year also. Some of these religious seasons, like New Year’s Day, for example, are regulated by the earth’s orbit around the sun. Others, like Lent and Easter, are regulated by the sun and by the moon. (To compute the date for Easter, one must wait for the vernal equinox, on or about March 21st, then for a full moon, and the following Sunday is Easter.)

Thirdly, the sun gives us our days, the 24 hours that it takes the earth to make one complete revolution around its axis – that is the shortest measurement of time which is regulated by the sun. The sun thus tells us the exact time of the day. What a masterful arrangement by an all-wise God who has given us day and night of approximately 12 hours each, exactly what our bodies need for work and for rest.

Fourthly, the sun gives us our years – that is the longest time-span regulated by the sun. In this year of about 365 days we again can see the wise provisions of God, giving us exactly what we and all the rest of the world need for our life and for our harvest. Can you imagine, for example, living on Saturn with its “year” equal to approximately 30 of our years? Sometimes our three- or four-month winter seems long enough as it is, to say nothing of having it last for almost eight years.

The heavenly bodies are earth’s timekeepers, for it takes the earth 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 46 seconds to complete one revolution around the sun, or about 11 minutes less than the Julian Calendar figured (it was devised by Julius Caesar in 45 BC). The result was that by 1582 the vernal equinox, the date for spring to begin, actually arrived about 11 days sooner than it did in 325 AD, when the time for Easter was decided. Consequently, Pope Gregory XIII decreed that October 4th, 1582 should be followed by October 15th and that henceforth every year divisible by four and every century divisible by 400 would be a leap year. Sooner or later all countries began to follow this more accurate

Gregorian Calendar, although there were riots in some places by people who demanded to have their lost 11 days restored. Our arrangement of BC and AD (from the Latin *anno Domini*, meaning “in the year of our Lord”) was devised by Dionysius Exiguus in 450 AD. His computing of the date for Christ’s birth was not entirely accurate, since most scholars believe that our Lord was born in 4 BC, or even a year or two earlier than that.

Finally, the heavenly bodies were created to “give light upon the earth. . . and to divide the light from the darkness.” Although the sun or the material that was to become our sun had been created on the first day, it did not become our light bearer until the fourth day, when God made it the source of most of our natural light. We have previously pointed out the blessings and benefits of light and the wise arrangement that God made when He divided our 24-hour day into two fairly equal parts. Could you, for example, conceive of living on an earth where, like on our moon, both day and night would be two weeks long? Imagine what that would do to our mental health!

5. God did not create the heavenly bodies for supporting life of any kind.

For ages people have speculated about whether or not some form of life exists on the moon, on Mars, or on some other planet. (For example, Sir John Frederick William Herschel, a great astronomer, discoverer of the planet Uranus in 1781, was convinced that there was life on the moon. This idea is, of course, ridiculous). That speculation reached somewhat of a climax in the 1960’s and the 1970’s when man finally devised the necessary mechanisms to reach the moon and some of the other planets in our solar system. “Experts” make many statements like these: “I think there is no question that we live in an inhabited universe that has life all over it”; “The question has become not so much one of if (there is life elsewhere besides on the earth) as of where”; “It is reasonable to assume that of the billions of planets that probably encircle the stars, many have the proper conditions for the development of life.”

Indeed, one of the major reasons for NASA’s spending billions of dollars in the 1960’s and 1970’s to send men or mechanisms to the moon, to Mars, and to other planets was to see if life existed there. Scientists say that if life is found on Mars, that would force us to conclude that there is intelligent life elsewhere in the universe.

Furthermore, both American and Russian and other scientists have joined in vast projects, possibly lasting through the twentieth century, in using radio astronomy and various other devices, all in one gigantic effort to find life elsewhere in the universe.

What does God say about this matter of life on other heavenly bodies? There is no question but that He in His almighty power could easily have created another earth with its civilization or, for that matter, a million other earths, all as densely populated as ours. But did He? The Bible never answers this question with a positive statement like this: “There is (is not) life on other planets.”

Yet, from everything we know there is no life of any kind anywhere in the universe, except on our earth. That statement is based on four main facts: One, when God told us the purpose of the heavenly bodies, as He did in Genesis 1:14-19; Psalm 19:1-6, and in other places, He said that they were made to serve mankind and to glorify God. They were created for “signs. . . seasons. . . days. . . years. . . to give light upon the earth,” as we just heard. They declare God’s glory, as we shall see shortly. No other purpose of the planets is mentioned anywhere in the Bible, certainly nothing is said about their being created by God to support life. (Life on the stars would be totally impossible because of their enormously high temperatures.) Since all of the universe was created specifically to glorify God and to serve this earth, how can there possibly be any life anywhere else except here?

Secondly, when life on this earth ends, when Christ returns for judgment, then all heavenly bodies will pass away too. The purpose of their existence, to serve this earth and to glorify God, will be at an end. There will be no more earth, as we know it. Various Bible passages speak of the heavenly bodies passing away when our earth comes to an end. For example, Matthew 24:29: “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall

fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken.” II Peter 3:10, 12 read as follows: “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.” If the heavenly bodies pass away when this earth ends, then they could have no other purpose except to serve this world.

A third important reason for concluding that no life of any kind exists anywhere else in the universe is that Christ came to redeem people on this earth. Again and again we are told in Scripture that God wants all people to be saved, that He provided a means of salvation through Christ our Lord, and that we shall by His grace one day share heaven with Him and with all the good angels. In all of these many, many Bible passages there is not even a hint that Christ saved anyone outside of this earth or that any people outside of our world will be in heaven. There just aren’t any other such people. “Christ (is) the Savior of the world,” John 4:42, our world, not other worlds.

A final compelling reason for being certain that life exists nowhere else is that conditions elsewhere in the universe, so far as we know them, are simply impossible for human life. Could you live on Venus, our nearest neighbor planet, with its lack of water, its abundance of carbon dioxide, its constantly cloud-covered sky and its probable 900°F. temperature? Could you imagine living on Mars, also comparatively nearby, with its daily temperature ranging from minus 200°F. to plus 50°F. with its complete lack of vegetation, and with not even a microbe in its soil? Or how about Saturn, where winter lasts some 20 years? There is no other planet besides our earth in our solar system that could possibly support human life. Therefore be sure to regard all those stories about space colonies for what they are—fanciful fiction.

As for the contention that the trillions of other suns in our universe have innumerable planets circling around them, and that some of these planets undoubtedly have some form of life – well, in the first place, no one knows whether other stars have planets like our sun. No one has ever seen a planet outside of our nine, not even with the most powerful telescopes or radio antennas. Indeed, it is doubtful if a single one exists, since they would not fit in with God’s plan of having the heavenly bodies serve our earth.

As for our Viking Lander searching for life on Mars, that is just another example of evolution’s false thinking. Why in the world would God have created microbes or any other form of plant life on any planet without placing people there? Plant and animal life are meant by God to serve mankind. If there are no people anywhere else, obviously there is no need for any other form of life elsewhere. “They fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” as Scripture tells us repeatedly (Job 28:28; Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7). If a scientist does not begin his work by listening to what God says, he can and often does fail miserably. That is exactly what happened to Viking One and Two in their great objective of seeking life on Mars: They failed completely in their aim; after a year of study, scientists concluded that the two Viking experiments showed no life whatsoever on Mars.

If, on the other hand, our scientists had begun their planetary explorations with the idea of learning more of God’s creation and of glorifying Him for making the universe, that would have been a different matter. As it is, our space exploration with its misplaced emphasis on finding life elsewhere, as tremendous an achievement as it truly is, is nevertheless the modern Tower of Babel. One could not call it anything else until and unless its objectives are changed. A study of God’s Word would have proved that there is no life on other planets, even before the exploration was begun.

6. God saw that His creation of the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth day of creation “was good” (Genesis 1:18).

a. God’s creation of the heavenly bodies is “good” for proclaiming His glory.

One of the finest Bible passages that speaks of the heavenly bodies glorifying God is written in Psalm 19:1-6. It begins in this way: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament

showeth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge.” The creation of the heavenly bodies does indeed proclaim the omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence of God like nothing else in our physical universe. Just consider for a moment what Scripture says about this matter. It tells us that the stars of heaven cannot be numbered (Jeremiah 33:22), and we have learned that there must be at least many quadrillions of them, a number far, far above our understanding. But Scripture also calls upon us in Isaiah 40:26 to “Behold who has created these things?” That’s one message the stars proclaim so loudly, so clearly that it seems impossible for anyone who looks at them to doubt that God is truly their omnipotent Creator.

More than that, the same passage tells us: “He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for He is strong in power.” Psalm 147:4 has a similar thought. God has actually decided exactly how many stars are necessary to fulfill His purpose, and even though we cannot possibly count them all, yet He has given every one of them names in keeping with their purpose as we stated previously (see 3.b, of this section D.) Is it any wonder that Isaiah refers to the greatness of God’s might and that Psalm 147: 5 tells us, “Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite”?

Furthermore, as Isaiah wrote (40:26): “Not one faileth.” As far as we are concerned a hundred million of these heavenly bodies could fail and we should never miss them, yet our God keeps them all rotating, revolving, moving in perfect order and stability. Dr. Morris wrote that God keeps them “all in ceaseless motion, and all careening through the trackless void with velocities appalling to contemplate, without any visible power or agency to produce their motions, or to guide them in their unmarked and mighty circuits; yet every one completing its daily rotation; and accomplishing its annual round of hundreds of millions of miles, without deviating the fraction of a minute from age to age, and from century to century. Here is mechanism the most sublime, mechanism worthy of the Divine Architect!”

The same author points out that if the earth in its orbit around the sun were just five seconds late every million miles, and assuming that the world is 6,000 years old, today we should be over six months behind in our seasons. Yet, the seasons have always come at exactly the same time, ever since that memorable day after the Flood, when our God said to Noah and to us: “While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22). How can we explain all of this movement by the heavenly bodies, never losing even one second in a million miles, and all done without “cogs, rods, belts, water, wind, steam, et cetera”? The only explanation is that our almighty God uses His power to move the heavenly bodies in absolutely perfect time in keeping with His master plan.

View magazine, 7/4/71, stated that a man standing near the equator is traveling in five directions at once: 1,000 miles per hour as the earth travels around its axis; 67,000 miles per hour as it travels around the sun; 600,000 miles per hour in the whirl of the Milky Way; 45,000 miles per hour with the movement of our sun; and 290,000 miles per hour with our Milky Way revolving around a local group of galaxies: If the heavenly bodies were not revolving in this way, if God had not put this plan into effect, then the universe would probably collapse because of the gravitational pull of the planets and the stars. Long ago God asked Job: “Whereupon are the foundations thereof (of the earth) fastened?” (Job 38:6. The obvious answer: Earth is fastened on to no foundation – God keeps it in its course.

How can anyone who knows anything at all about the heavens fail to see the glory of God revealed everywhere above us? A little girl was looking at the nighttime skies in all of their beauty and glory. She exclaimed, “If the sky this side of heaven is so beautiful, what must heaven itself be like!”

We don’t want to forget either what Psalm 19 tells us about the Word of our God. After showing that the heavens truly declare the glory of God, the Psalmist says, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” As great and magnificent as the heavens are, as much as they tell us about our

God, they nevertheless cannot compare in any way with God's perfect Word. The Word reveals our God to us as nothing in creation could ever possibly do it.

With the hymn writer we praise our God in singing,

“We sing the wisdom that ordained The sun to rule the day;
The moon shines, too, at His command, And all the stars obey” (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, 43, 2).

b. God's creation of the heavenly bodies is “good” for mankind.

God made the sun exactly the right size and placed it exactly the right distance from the earth for it to heat the earth and to give light in which most living things rejoice. God made it to produce day and night, exactly what our bodies need; to create wind, wave, and rainfall that the earth desperately needs; to make all plant life grow and thus to give food to man and beast. Without God's constant blessing through His sun nothing on earth could live. Without its rays sometimes striking our earth directly and at other times striking it at an angle, we should have no change in seasons or in length of days. What a monotonous life that would be!

God made our moon exactly the right size, too, and He placed it exactly the right distance from the earth to accomplish its purpose of ruling the night.

Another purpose of the moon, not mentioned in Genesis 1, is to produce the tides, which sometimes reach a height of 50 feet, as at the Bay of Fundy. The tides are wonderfully beneficial to ocean life and to every one who lives near the ocean. If there were no great water movements, like those produced by the tides, the oceans would soon become one huge, stagnant, lifeless pool.

It is interesting to note also that no other planet in our solar system has a moon that is as large in proportion to its planet, as our moon is in comparison with our earth. That is just another indication to us that our God made the moon exclusively to serve our world. And if we call the landing of men on the moon a fantastic accomplishment, which it truly was, that shall we say of the creation of the moon and all of the other heavenly bodies and of the Creator who did it all with one omnipotent word?

Likewise, the other heavenly bodies are good for us. The July 1943 issue of the *National Geographic* carried an article with the title “The Heavens Above.” Its subtitle was: “On Land, Sea, and in the Air the Stars Serve Modern Man as Map, Compass, and Clock,” Paragraphs 1-4 of this article read as follows:

Since Stone Age times the stars have excited man's interest and wonder. During the present war (this was written during World War II), however, with airplanes and ships navigating over vast areas of land and sea, a knowledge of the heavens is more important than ever before.

Every person in the Army and Navy, or who is likely to be, should know at least a few of the stars used for reference in navigation – the art of locating one's position on the earth's surface.

He never can tell when such knowledge may save his own life or that of a comrade. If he knows the stars along with even the simplest principles of navigation, he can chart a course for thousands of miles if need be, and safely steer a boat or maneuver a life raft to friendly shores.

The man who knows the stars is never entirely lost on land, sea, or in the air, as long as the sky is partly clear.

That *National Geographic* article also has excellent diagrams of the better-known constellations together with star maps for every month of the year. It makes for an interesting study.

How, then, can we fail to join the Psalmist of old in exclaiming, “When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man that Thou art mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:3,4) “Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty” (Revelation 15:3).

Let’s join the hymn writer in singing God’s praises with

All praise to God, who reigns above,
The God of all creation,
The God of wonders, power, and love,
The God of our salvation!
With healing balm my soul He stills,
The God who every sorrow stills,
To God all praise and glory.’

(The Lutheran Hymnal 19, 1)

Hymn number 41, 2 in *The Lutheran Hymnal* has similar thoughts:

Heavens, spread the story
Of our Maker’s glory,
All the pomp of earth obscuring.
Sun, thy rays be sending,
Thy bright beams expending,
Light to all the earth assuring.
Moon and star, Praise afar
Him who glorious made you;
The vast heavens aid you.

We shall close our discussion of the fourth day of creation with this quotation from Dr. Morris. He wrote of the analogy between our natural sun and the Son of Righteousness, the name given to our Lord in Malachi 4:2:

In the opening scene of the fourth day we have a fine image of the advent of the Redeemer of men. On that morning the sun burst forth in its unveiled glory; irradiating the new-made earth, and revealing upon its face scenes of loveliness and grandeur which neither were seen nor known before. So arose the Son of Righteousness upon the world of mankind, an object as wonderful and as new in his person, and character, and office, as the great orb of day when it first came forth to run the circuit of the heavens – pouring a flood of light from above upon benighted humanity, and opening up to them views of truth, happiness and immortality, such as the world had never known or heard before; and, like the solar light, while revealing all else, remaining Himself a Glorious Mystery.

As the natural Sun is the center of the system of Creation, so the Son of Righteousness is the vital center of revealed truth and religion. He is the heavenly orb that illumines and animates every page throughout the whole circle of Revelation; and to Him point from every quarter, like the rosy fingers of the morning, all the types and prophecies, all the doctrines and sacraments, as to their radiating focus. He is the light, the life, and the bond of union that constitute them into one gracious and harmonious whole.

As the sun shines by its own light, so the Son of God poured the light of truth upon men from the fountain of His own mind. The instructions He imparted were neither derived from tradition

nor borrowed from philosophy. He was a self-luminous and Divine Orb, risen upon the darkness of the world, shedding new light, and revealing new truths to bewilder humanity.

As in the pure sunbeam we have combined all the colors of the rainbow in their due proportions, so in Christ we find all virtues and graces harmoniously blended in one perfect character. In Him we behold every principle, every affection, every impulse, in perfect equipoise.

As the sunlight, on whatever foulness or corruption it may fall, remains uncontaminated, so the Son of Man, amid all the temptations, guilt and depravity of earth, continued pure and unspotted. From every company and from every scene He emerged sinless and immaculate; and He re-entered the portals of Heaven pure as when He left the bosom of the Father.

As the light of the sun is unlimited and inexhaustible, so also are the healing and saving beams of the Son of Righteousness. As a thousand eyes turned toward the natural sun, at the same instant, are as fully and perfectly enlightened as if but a solitary eye beheld it; so if a thousand, or a thousand millions of perishing sinners look to the Almighty Savior, in one moment, He is infinitely sufficient to hear and save them all.

E. Our God created all sea creatures and all winged creatures on the fifth day.

And God said, let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day (Genesis 1:20-23).

1. Our God had previously made the seas and the earth perfect places for marine and for air life.

Dr. Morris explained this point as follows:

We have now advanced through four days of the creative process, and as the fifth opens upon us, the earth, that ere while was dark, without form, and void, is found a beautiful world – the heavy darkness has passed away, the waters are collected, the continents and islands are elevated and stocked with vegetation in all its variety, the pleasing alternation of day and night is established, the clouds float their soft and golden fleeces over the landscapes, the waters of sea and lakes sparkle in the sunlight, and the rivers flow with soft murmurs or rapid currents along their new-made channels, while gentle breezes, enriched with the sweet odors of the fresh vegetation, are fanning the face of nature. But as yet there are no living tenants to behold or enjoy the new creation; it is a scene without breath of life. But today inhabitants shall be given to the ocean and to the firmament; fishes shall cleave to the waters, and the air shall be made vocal with the music of the feathered race.

God had from the beginning planned that the earth, the seas, and the air were to be populated with a tremendous variety of creatures. He wanted no spot on earth to be completely barren. The fifth day, then, saw a huge advance in reaching this aim. At the end of this mighty creation day there were living, moving creatures populating the air up to a height of thousands of feet and also populating the oceans to their very bottoms. (Marine life has been found at a depth of 35,000 feet, where the water pressure is 8 tons per square inch. Tiny spiders and other creatures have been found thousands of feet in the air.)

One can also readily understand God's wisdom in creating on this one day creatures that live primarily in the water or those that fly in the air. These two, numerous forms of life differ greatly from land animals. They differ from land animals in three important ways: To a great extent they move

without feet; they, for the most part, lay eggs; and, generally, they also are clothed differently from land animals.

2. Our God said, at the beginning of the fifth creation day, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature” (Genesis 1:20).

a. Our God created a tremendous variety of marine life.

A literal translation of what God said on this day of creation is this: “Let the waters swarm with swarms, with living beings.” That translation gives us a better idea of the gigantic number and the huge variety of sea creatures than does the King James Version, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature.”

Of this remarkable miracle on the first part of the fifth creation day, Dr. Morris wrote:

No part of the surface of our planet is more fully peopled, or inhabited by greater numbers and diversities of beautiful, or strange, or monstrous forms, than the waters, whether those be of the sea, the fresh lakes, the sparkling streams, or the stagnant pools. In every climate from the Northern to the Southern Pole water abounds with its living tenants; and from the floor of the ocean, where its depths exceed the heights of our loftiest mountains, up to its ruffled surface, every successive stratum of its waters is crowded with its own orders of life. There is not a bay or a sound, not a rod or a foot of water upon the face of our globe, in which the power of the Great Creator is not displayed, and His will executed, by some species of animated beings. The creative fiat of this day passed through all the depths of the sea, extended through all its breadths, and pervaded and animated its every drop.

How many species of marine life did our almighty God create on that first part of this fifth creation days? After all these many centuries of study and observation; no one really knows the exact answer to that question. Yet, we do know that He created many thousands of orders, families, and varieties of marine life. We shall list a number of the major classes in the paragraphs to follow.

There are, for example, many thousand varieties of microscopic *animalcules*; all so tiny that hundreds of them may be found in a drop of water. Take a drop of water from a pond, examine it under a good microscope, and you will find not only many tiny animals, but undoubtedly various forms of plant life on which they feed, Yet, the presence of those minute creatures does not necessarily mean that the water is contaminated – man contaminates the waters of the world by dumping his waste products into them.

Of these microscopic creatures Dr. Morris wrote:

When we are compelled to believe that these (microscopic creatures) are as diverse in their forms and characters as are the larger species of creation; that every one is an organized and living being, with a complex system of members, each of which is most skillfully fitted for its peculiar functions; that the processes of digestion; nutrition and reproduction are carried on in these invisible particles with equal perfection as in our own bodies; that they have instincts and habits, the powers of choice and aversion, and capacity for pain and enjoyment – all this appears so amazing that we find it as difficult to stretch our imagination downwards to the infinitely little among the creations of the earth, as it is to rise to the comprehension of the infinitely vast among the orbs and the systems of the heavens. Where, then, are the bounds of Jehovah’s empire: Where are the limits of the operations of His hands! . . . He (man) looks through the telescope, and

discovers the creations of the Almighty reaching above him to the infinitude of space; he peers through the microscope, and sees them in like manner descending below him to the infinitude of minuteness.

A second major family of sea creatures, created by our God, are the *mollusks*. The word means “soft bodies,” with most of them having one or two or more shells to protect these soft bodies. They include those delectable clams, oysters, scallops, snails, and various other species. They range in size from the almost microscopic to some varieties that have shells weighing 500 pounds. Since they live on the bottom of the waters, where there is much calcium, they can readily manufacture their protective shells. The calcium is more easily absorbed in the tropics; that is why some of the shells found there are so huge. Isn't it amazing how easily these creatures can separate the calcium from the water, while laboratories have such a difficult time in performing the same operation?

How can anyone who has ever collected a few shells made by these amazing creatures fail to be impressed with their infinite variety and their transcendent beauty? (You may remember how fascinated Oliver Wendell Holmes was with his “Chambered Nautilus.”) Our God has created so much beauty, even for the bottoms of the waters, that we are amazed by it. Yet, every one of these creatures follows the general rule “after their kind” (Genesis 1:21); they don't just develop their masterful colors and their many varieties in a haphazard manner; they all reproduce according to the pattern that our Heavenly Father has determined for them.

A third family of sea creatures, with some 10,000 species, is the *crustaceans*. They include crabs, lobsters, and shrimp. They and many others are a part of what Psalm 104:25 calls “creeping things innumerable” within “this great and wide sea.” In God's master plan they help to clean the oceans and our beaches by eating dead and decaying matter; yet, strangely, they themselves provide some of the tastiest food every harvested. Is it any wonder that the Psalmist wrote: “The earth is full of Thy riches. So is this great and wide sea”? (Psalm 104:24, 25).

A fourth group of sea creatures includes the various mammals that live entirely in the water or spend much of their time there. Among them are “great whales” (Genesis 1:21), really great “sea monsters,” “long-stretched-out creatures.” These great sea creatures include the dolphins, various members of the saurian and amphibian families, and the like.

Whales, those colossal creatures, the largest that ever lived on earth, range in weight all the way to 100 tons, as much as 50 elephants (the blue whale is the largest). A whale of that size has a tongue that can provide sleeping space for six large men. At birth such a whale may weigh 8 tons, be 24 feet long, and gain 200 pounds a day. The story of whales is indeed a fascinating one.

A fifth class of sea creatures, the one with which we are probably most familiar, is fish. No one really knows how many kinds of fish that God made. Some 30,000 species have been discovered, but in the 1960's some 100 new species were being discovered every year. That is a striking confirmation of the Scriptural truth that the waters were to swarm with swarms of living creatures.

A good book on fish will show the huge number of varieties, ranging from beautiful to ugly, from flat to round, from wide to narrow, from long to short, and weighing from 1/100 of an ounce (the Philippine Goby is the smallest fish) to 20 tons (the whale shark is the largest fish).

God also made fish in swarms of colors ranging from black to white, from gold to silver, from one end of the spectrum to the other, from solid to vari-colored, from single to multi-colored, from single-striped to many stripes, and from speckled to plain.

There are also swarms of every kind of fish, Just how many fish there are in the waters of the world no one really knows, although we do have a record of an estimated 15 billion pounds of tilefish dying in one part of the Atlantic Ocean in 1882. Some fishermen may never have encountered the swarms of fish of which the Bible speaks, but they are there nonetheless.

b. Our God created marine life perfectly suited to its environment.

If we had been asked to design a creature that could live and move and feed and breathe in the water, we would have an impossible job. Not until the twentieth century did submarines reach a fairly advanced stage of development. Not until the last half of the twentieth century did atomic submarines come into widespread use. (It may be interesting to note that an atomic submarine in the late 1970's costs approximately \$1 billion, enough money to build 200 to 300 private high schools.) Even though these colossally expensive atomic machines may remain under water for long periods of time, they do not begin to approach the sea creatures that God designed in efficiency and ability to remain in the water for a lifetime.

God created sea creatures perfectly with exactly the kind of shape that is best suited to their environment; He covered many of them with scales that protect them from the water, even as tiles protect the roofs of the homes (these scales form one of the world's most efficient raincoats, keeping the fish from getting wet and protecting them to some extent from the cold). God provided fish with fins for balance and an air bladder for buoyancy; He gave them concave eyes, exactly the right type for seeing in any direction within the water; He provided them with a powerful tail to propel them easily and .swiftly through the water. (Except for birds flying through the air, can you imagine anything more graceful than the slow, sudden, or rapid movement of fish through the waters?) God gave fish gills for obtaining the necessary oxygen from the water (they can separate oxygen from the H₂O infinitely more rapidly and more easily than we can do it in an expensive laboratory). Since marine creatures cannot easily hide, God gave each one its own defense against its enemies: They may have great strength or sharp teeth or poison stings or rapid movement or excellent camouflage or even electrical charges.

c. Our God created . . . every living (sea) creature . . . after their kind" (Genesis 1:21).

This, too, is an amazing part of God's creation. He made every one of those thousands of kinds of sea creatures with the ability to reproduce their kind. Never, never does one kind of sea creature eventually produce another kind, as evolutionists would have us believe. Crabs never produce oysters; both the Bible and the geological record are clear enough on that point. There may, of course, be many varieties within a particular kind, Consider, for example, the many varieties of whales, sharks, bass, and the like. But when God created all sea creatures, He set bounds beyond which their offspring cannot go: one kind produces offspring of that kind only, a fact that completely wipes out evolution's claim to the contrary.

Harry Rimmer, who wrote extensively on the creation days, jokingly remarked that if evolution were true with its claim that one species eventually develops into another, "How profitable it would be to a farmer who could cross a mackerel with a Plymouth Rock." A mackerel may lay 500,000 eggs at one spawning. If one could get a cross between it and a Plymouth Rock chicken to do even half that well, the farmer would have quite a problem in gathering all the eggs.

d. Our God commanded marine life to “be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas” (Genesis 1:22).

God indeed gave sea creatures an amazing fecundity. They are the only animals in all the world of which God said that there were to be “swarms.” In order that this command might hold true for all time, God gave His sea creatures the remarkable ability to “multiply, and fill the waters in the seas” (Genesis 1:21). For example, if every offspring of a single pair of mackerel lived for 10 years, all the oceans of the world would be completely filled with them. Perch may have 25,000 eggs at one spawning; codfish 2-9 million; and the giant ocean sunfish, 300 million. A lobster may lay 12,000 eggs; an oyster many more. Tiny animalcules have been observed to produce 60 offspring every 12 hours. If all of these offsprings of one set of parents live for a total of 60 hours, and many do, the number of offspring would be about 884 million!

But, of course, all the offspring of sea creatures do not live. Only a small fraction attain maturity. The rest are eaten before the eggs hatch, or when they are still tiny, or they perish in other ways. Yet, the marvelous fact is that the Lord knew all of this full well and consequently gave these creatures remarkable fecundity to compensate for their losses.

e. Our God preserves His marine creatures.

God did not simply create the numberless sea creatures and then let them exist by themselves – nothing can exist, except God sustains it. Psalm 104:27-29 tells us about this marvelous providence of our God. After writing about the sea and its innumerable creatures, the Psalmist said, “These wait all upon Thee; that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That Thou givest them they gather: Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.”

How does God provide food for His hungry marine life? Ultimately all sea life depends on plankton, those microscopic forms of plant and animal life that generally feed on still smaller sea creatures. Plankton form the “great pastures in the seas.” They are eaten by the tiny creatures of the oceans; these tiny creatures, in turn, are eaten by the larger ones, which in turn are eaten by still larger ones. Generally this is the way in which God provides food for His hungry sea creatures. Some, of course, scour the ocean bottoms for dead animal bodies, while some larger creatures like certain whales, for example, eat some rather small forms of marine life.

f. Our God saw that His creation of marine life “was good” (Genesis 1:21).

This is the thought that every one of us ought to repeat with profound devotion every time we think of God’s work on the first part of creation’s fifth day. Sea creatures serve us in so many ways that it would take pages to list them all. For example, they are good for food, providing valuable protein when eaten fresh or canned or frozen or smoked. (People actually love certain types of seafood and caviar so much that they are willing to pay many dollars for a meal that features them.) They are good for pharmaceuticals. (Codfish and shark livers are a valuable source of vitamin A; vitamin D is obtained from tuna; much marine life is rich in iodine that prevents goiters – Japanese people seldom suffer from goiters, because they eat many fish.) They provide oil and meal. (Menhaden are one of the world’s most valuable fish, because they are excellent animal food.) Other marine creatures provide ingredients for paints, varnishes, soap, and cosmetics; possibly much of the oil that God placed underground was formed by marine life; watch-oil comes from dolphins and porpoises. Some marine life is used to make certain forms of jewelry and leather goods. Pearls come from clams and oysters; clam shells are used for making buttons; handbags and billfolds are made from some of the tougher skins, like those of the sharks. Marine life is good for fertilizer. (The

Indians taught the Pilgrims how to place a fish in a corn hill to make it produce abundantly; guano, from birds off the Peruvian Coast that eat the fish in those waters, is one of the world's most valuable fertilizers. Various kinds of marine creatures are good for producing furs (the sea otter, for example); chalk (the chalk cliffs of Dover are composed of the calcium deposits of trillions of sea creatures), and sponges.

Finally, fishing provides relaxation and recreation, so we are told, like few other pleasures. Since fish have no nerves in their mouths, we can catch them with a pole and hook, knowing that they suffer little pain. They constitute a form of food that our God graciously gave us after the Flood (Genesis 9:2,3).

After contemplating the goodness of our God, who made all of this for our sakes, Dr. Morris wrote as follows:

In the survey now taken of the watery world – traveling down, as we have, from the enormous whale of 100 feet in length, by its numerous congener (allied) monsters of the deep, and through all the unnumbered and innumerable shoals of the migratory tribes, and among the scattered multitudes of encrusted and crawling creatures along the ocean floor, and over the boundless pavements of shell-fish of every varied form and size; together with a thousand other species, til we reach the myriad tribes of animalcula, 500,000 times less than the least visible point – what a distance we have traveled, what a lengthy and diversified series of living beings have we traced! And yet all of these are fashioned after their kind in a manner worthy their Divine Maker; each species; from the greatest to the least, embraces a system of exquisite contrivances and adaptations, a combination of faculties and functions, surpassing all human study and comprehension. What, then, shall we think of that All-Comprehending Intelligence that planned and formed all the thousands and tens of thousands of the ocean's differing tribes – differing in size and form and color; differing in the structure of their bones, and in the tissue of their flesh; differing in their organs and faculties and dispositions; differing in their systems of respiration, circulation and digestion; differing in their instincts and habits, food and habitation; differing in their, instruments of assault and means of defense, in their modes of reproduction and sources of enjoyment, in the duration of their existence, and the end of their being, as well as in a multitude of other particulars: What an endless diversity do we here behold! What countless organs and functions to be contrived! What innumerable properties and adaptations to be secured! Yet in the Divine Mind the whole vast and varied population of the watery world existed in plan, perfect and complete, “when as yet there was none of them.” In that plan, nothing was forgotten, nothing overlooked in its execution, no unforeseen difficulty arose, no living thing, great or small came short of its designed perfection. How marvelous the arrangements, how perfect the works of the Great Creator!

Thus, then, dies the ocean with its innumerable tenants, all in their measure endowed both with a capacity and a means of happiness, proclaim aloud the vast profusion of the Divine Beneficence: “Oh Lord, how manifold are Thy works; in wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches; so also is the great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. . .”

Fish and fishers are mentioned a number of times in the Bible. We remember that Jonah became a type of Christ through being swallowed by a great fish: “As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:40, NIV). At the beginning of His ministry Jesus saw some men fishing and called to them: “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19); Preaching the Gospel for the salvation of many souls – that is our major work on earth also.

Finally, we remember that the early Christians, as do many Christians today, adopted the fish as a symbol of their faith. The reason is this: the Greek word for fish is *ichthus*, and each one of the letters in that word is the first letter of the Greek words for “Jesus Christ, of God the Son, Savior.” That is an excellent summary of our faith.

3. Our God also created every kind of winged creatures on the fifth creation day (Genesis 1:21).

a. Our God created winged creatures perfect for their environment.

Genesis 1:20, 21 speaks only about birds, but other winged creatures were undoubtedly also created on this day. In the paragraphs that follow we shall speak primarily of birds, although we shall occasionally treat other winged creatures too.

We could begin to appreciate the greatness of God’s miraculous work on the second part of the fifth creation day, if we were to face the problem of populating the skies. How would we go about designing a heavier-than-air-creature that could easily and quickly with its own power rise into the air and descend to the ground without crashing; one that could, if necessary, fly for hundreds of non-stop miles; one that could easily transport itself high into the skies, or fly a few feet above the ground, or walk on the ground? Given such a problem, we should have to throw up our hands in despair, saying that it could not be done. We know full well that man did not invent a heavier-than-air-machine that could fly before the twentieth century, even though he had long dreamed of such a machine. Yet, to think of such a mechanism flying on its own power is ridiculous – it must and does consume huge amounts of expensive energy to keep it in the air, and even then it cannot always keep itself from crashing to the ground.

Yet, our God easily designed intricate creatures to fill His skies. He gave them a perfectly stream-lined design with a comparatively tiny beak and mouth, with no teeth, for that would interfere with the stream-lined design. He made them extremely light, with most of them weighing from a few ounces to a few pounds at best. (The largest American bird seldom weighs more than 40 pounds.) He created them with such strong wings and with tails for rudders that some of them (the Arctic tern, for example) can actually make a 20,000 mile round trip every year. He gave them five air-filled sacs that can be filled at will, since they are connected with the lungs; He provided for them a high temperature (106-112°) to help keep them in the air; and He gave them various hollow bones that can be filled with air for additional buoyancy.

Our God designed the birds’ bills in huge varieties to fit perfectly the needs of each species, depending on whether the bird is a swimmer, a wader, a scratcher, or a flesh-eater. The hawk’s bill is hooked to “separate the flesh from the bones upon which it feeds as cleanly as the dissector’s knife”; the duck has a spoon bill for feeding in the water; the woodpecker has a sharp beak for boring after insects; the pelican has a pouch for holding the fish; the heron has a long beak for fishing; the parrot has a curved beak for help in climbing; the sparrow has a tiny beak for cracking seeds. Thus we can list almost every species of bird and see how God created exactly the right kind of bill for every one. Those bills are used to obtain food (imagine a robin with a duck’s bill), to build nests, to feed the young, and to clean their feathers.

God gave each bird species perfect feet to fit their habits. To some (ducks and geese, for example) – He gave webbed feet for swimming; to some (robins and sparrows, for example), divided feet for walking on the land; to some (eagles and hawks), sharp and crooked claws to seize and hold their prey; to some (cormorants and fishers) barbed feet to hold the slippery fish; to the waders (herons and others), long feet with knees hinged the opposite way from most other creatures so that they can better see their food; and to many of them toes that lock when they’re sleeping on the perch so that they don’t fall.

To all the birds God gave feathers, the strongest such structure for its weight known to us. Each feather is a perfect zipper with up to 650 barbs on each one and with many microscopic barbules on each barb (rub a feather the wrong way and it is probably impossible to return it to its original position). After the bird nests, God lets the old feathers fall out in perfect order, and then gives it new ones.

Our God also gave His birds a perfect body with powerful breast muscles for flying (a humming bird beats its wings 75 times a second in flight). To many birds God gave a gizzard for helping to digest their food (birds of prey have no gizzard; their strong stomach juices help to digest their food). He gave some birds such a keen eyesight that an eagle, for example, can detect a fish three miles away and capture it in one long, swift glide. He gave birds good hearing so that they can protect themselves from the enemy. (Bats are flying mammals; they have a built-in radar that sends out signals at a frequency of 80,000 cycles per second, far above our hearing, then decrease to 40,000 cycles per second as they approach an obstacle. Bats use their “radar” for catching insects and for preventing collisions.) Birds’ taste, fortunately, is rather poor; otherwise they would hardly eat some of the highly distasteful bugs.

What a marvel of design are the birds of the world! Not until the twentieth century were we able, to duplicate the flight of birds to some extent; even today we cannot possibly duplicate all the feats of the birds that they, perform a billion times a day, nor will it ever be possible.

Did all of this come about by chance, as the evolutionists would have us believe? Indeed not; in all of this we can plainly see the wisdom of God, who designed such lovely creatures to glorify Him and to serve us, as we shall see shortly.

b. Our God created many birds of many varieties (“Every winged fowl,” Genesis 1:21).

God created so many bird species that approximately 9,000 of them are known, and there are many varieties within the various species. Humming birds, for example, have at least 600 varieties; pigeons, some 300; sparrows, dozens. All of these varieties were not created in the beginning, but all of the “kinds” were made on the second part of the fifth day of creation.

God made the birds in many different sizes, ranging from the bumblebee-size humming bird to the huge and stately trumpeter swan with its ten-foot wingspan, the largest of any American bird. (The extinct *aepyornis* – the word, means “high bird” – of Madagascar grew to 14 feet in height.)

God also created birds in many different colors, ranging from black to white with almost every conceivable shade in between. Sometimes their colors and markings are so beautiful and so fascinating that one knows instinctively that only God could make them so attractive. Yet, strangely, God did all of this by using only four different pigments: black, brown, red, and yellow. What human being could use just four colors to create the many lovely birds; for example, the exotic, long-tailed Bird of Paradise? And who among us could give them their distinctive voices, ranging from the fascinating serenade of the mocking bird to the croak of the lordly peacock?

Not only did our God make many kinds of birds, but He also created vast numbers of them. It has been estimated that there are some 5 billion birds in the United States in the 1970’s, but we kill so many with guns, pesticides, and other methods that this tremendously great number is small in comparison with what used to be. For example, about 1840 John James Audobon, surely one of the greatest ornithologists ever to observe birds, saw a flock of passenger pigeons that was a mile wide, took three hours to pass a given point, and contained 1,115,136,000 birds, according to his estimate. Those handsome, graceful birds were probably the most numerous of any bird species in history, but the last one died in 1914. The rest were mostly slaughtered by man. God created so many birds and preserved them so wonderfully, despite man’s sometimes feverish, oftentimes stupid attempts to destroy them, that they are still found everywhere on earth, except in the interior of Antarctica. One

even meets them far out on the oceans of the world. (We shall have more to say about their destruction and conservation later in this paper.)

c. Our God also created other winged creatures on the fifth day of creation.

This is not specifically stated in Genesis 1:20-23; the words used in these verses are “birds” or “winged bird.” Yet, Dr. H.C. Leupold in his Exposition of Genesis, page 80, rightly and aptly remarked: “Here. . . where the broadest of class distinctions are being made, without a doubt, the expression is meant to include every type of being that has wings – the small and the large, and not only what we call birds. . . An entirely new type of being has come into existence, creatures that breathe and are animated and have power of their own volition to go from place to place. . . a monumental, epoch-making achievement that deserves to be described by the verb ‘and He created.’”

Undoubtedly, then, God’s creation on the second part of that memorable fifth day included insects, many of which have wings. Our Heavenly Father created so many insects, that after all of these many centuries, no one even knows how many species exist, to say nothing about understanding them all. Some 800,000 different species have been identified, but there may be again as many not yet known. God made these insects in almost every conceivable size and shape, ranging in length from 1/100 of an inch to 1 foot. He gave them a tremendous fecundity (a queen bee can lay 50,000 eggs in one season and may live seven years). There are actually so many insects that the United States Department of Agriculture estimates that there are 25 million of them over every square mile of the earth’s surface, while British authorities estimate that there are 2,240,000,000 of them under every square-mile of land. One can quickly see that the number of insects in the world is literally incalculable. (Additional information on this topic is listed in F, 1, c.)

In this fine section on insects, Dr. Morris wrote:

When we contemplate the insect world – the vast number and variety of its species; the wonderful powers and faculties with which they are endowed; the delicacy and complication of their parts; their strength of limbs and swiftness of flight; their exquisite organs of sight and touch and smell and hearing; their quickness to discern their enemies, and their ability to communicate alarm; their manifestation of love and hatred, anger and joy; their ingenious homes and instinctive skill; their reproductive energies and marvelous transformation; their cunning, artifice, and stratagems; their tact, industry, and perseverance, together with a multitude of other traits and operations – when we contemplate all these, I say, we find ourselves surrounded with a profusion of evidences, baffling every attempt to comprehend them all, that every living thing is the work of the Divine Hand, and that no animated being is too minute for His notice, or too humble for the visitation of His care. Nor should we, assuredly, regard them beneath our notice. Study and reflection upon these, the handiworks of the Creator were intended to feed the flame of religion in the soul, and to maintain within it an abiding sense of the Divine Presence. Every insect is a lesson full of divinity, and its examination should be to us a devotional exercise.

d. Our God blessed all winged creatures, paying that they were to “multiply in the earth” (Genesis 1:22).

Let’s spend a moment in trying to learn some of what lies in this stupendous six-word command: “Let fowl multiply in the earth” (Genesis 1:22). Three actions, at least, are necessary for most fowl to multiply: Migration, reproduction, and preservation. We shall briefly discuss each point.

1) Our God gave many of His birds extraordinary migration habits, primarily to reproduce themselves.

Most of us have undoubtedly heard stories about birds that migrate hundreds of miles to the same area, sometimes even to the same tree, for several consecutive years, there to hatch a new set of offspring. You may have heard about the famous shallows of Capistrano that return to San Juan Capistrano Mission every year on St. Joseph's Day and after raising their young, depart on October 23, St. John's Day (their return and their departure may vary by a few days).

In Nature Magazine, April, 1947, Raymond Piffit Fuller wrote of that fascinating creature, the hummingbird: "What a memory and what resolution, what stamina, what superhuman sense of direction and homing guided this ounce of bird life, first down south across a dozen states, the Gulf and Yucatan, to Central America, then northward in spring over the route to this very place of mine, to this very maple tree! Consider one leg of that journey (made both coming and going), the flight straight across the open water of the Gulf of Mexico. This tiniest of birds can accomplish that without rest, without the chance to eat. . . to hit a tree at 5,000 miles!"

That feat is all the more remarkable when one realizes how much food hummingbirds require – they must eat almost constantly to sustain themselves. At night they would quickly die, if they did not go into some sort of hibernation. Who but an omniscient God could create a creature with such remarkable powers?

How in the world can a golden plover annually find its way across 2,000 miles of open ocean from Alaska to Hawaii? How can the Kirtland warbler annually navigate from the Bahamas to just three counties in Michigan? How can the arctic tern annually fly practically from pole to pole (some 22,000 miles round trip)? What moves 300,000 geese (in the middle 1970's) to find the Horicon, Wisconsin, marsh on their yearly pilgrimage? Despite many attempted explanations by ornithologists, there is just one answer to these questions: God determined that birds were to multiply, and migration is just one part of that changeless decree. They migrate to breed and thus to replenish their species.

2) Our God gave all birds the remarkable instinct to mate, to build nests for their offspring, and to incubate their eggs.

God gave His birds the instinct to seek a mate, sometimes with exotic and fascinating mating habits. Each pair then seeks its own territory for building its own nest and for defending it, no matter who the enemy might be. The study of birds' nests is fascinating. There are hundreds of types of nests built in or on trees, on the ground, in birdhouses, near the water, in and around houses or barns, in sand or clay, on rocks, or in grasses. Each species has its own particular type of nest, made of its own specific type of material, and it is always exactly the right kind to meet the needs of that particular species. Who gave birds this remarkable instinct? Who else, excepting Him, who said that birds were to multiply on the earth?

When the time comes for the female to lay her eggs, she must sit on them for days, carefully turning them, keeping them warm, leaving the nest only to snatch a few mouthfuls of food. Her mate must help her with the incubating, until she returns to continue the work of hatching, waiting, and keeping the eggs warm, until they are finally hatched. Who told the birds that it is necessary to incubate the eggs, if the young are to be hatched? Who gave the normally active birds the power to sit almost motionless day after day through cloud and sunshine, through rain and wind? Who else but He who commanded them to multiply?

Every one of those billions of birds who each year incubate their eggs is a miracle of God, some of them greater miracles than others. Have you heard, for example, about the emperor penguin of Antarctica? The female, which looks exactly like the male to our eyes, lays an egg on the ice. Then the male picks it up and holds it against his breast with one foot for about 60 days, never receiving

any nourishment during all this time. Meanwhile the female goes to sea, fills itself with fish, and then returns to begin the task of rearing the chick. Thereafter the exhausted male goes to sea to feed and to refresh itself. Would you believe that all of this is done while snowstorms strike and winds howl and the temperature falls to 500 below zero F? It's true!

3) Our God, through their parents, preserves the birds' offspring and guides them to maturity.

Of course, many baby birds never reach maturity. Eggs may be eaten by a variety of creatures, nests may be destroyed, and the young may die for a number of other reasons. A wild duck, for example, may hatch a dozen little ones, of which only one or two actually reach maturity.

Yet, God does preserve millions of baby birds, as He said, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them" (Matthew 6:26); and "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father" (Matthew 10:29).

This is the way in which God preserves His birds: He moves both parents to care for their offspring. Some other creatures depend entirely on their mothers to help them mature; some learn to fend for themselves very early in life; some, like turtles, never know their parents at all. Birds, however, require the combined efforts of both parents; otherwise their offspring would never have enough to eat. One naturalist said that a growing bird eats its own weight in food every day. A family of two adults and three young will eat an estimated 50 pounds of weed seeds or insects in five months. Someone else estimated that if a growing boy would eat as much proportionately as a young robin, he would consume two sheep or a small calf each day. Mothers, be careful about saying that your child eats like a bird.

Dr. Morris wrote about the birds' care for their offspring in this lovely way:

When at length the young burst their prison cells, and come forth, what tenderness of affection is manifested by the parent birds! How they rejoice over them; how they lull and quiet them by their gentle notes of love; put food into their little open bills; cover them with their feathers and keep them warm; lead them forth and teach them to pick and gather food for themselves; and in a word, "perform the part of so many nurses, deputed by the Sovereign Lord and Preserver of the world to help such young and helpless creatures."

Of all the birds through which God carefully provides for the young, the bald (bald in this case means "white") eagle is one of the most extraordinary examples. For one thing, the bald eagle is monogamous; as long as his mate lives, he will not consider getting a divorce; he loves his home, returning to it again and again, generally not planning on moving elsewhere. He builds his new, marvelously ingenious nest on top of the old one; he may actually use the same nest for a lifetime, always adding to it until it becomes many feet tall. He is tremendously devoted to his family, taking turns with the female to incubate the eggs. Then, after the chicks are hatched, both parents train them carefully. They teach them how to exercise daily, how to tear up a fish, how to get ready for flying, eventually to take their first flight, and then toward the end of the first year to leave the nest permanently. What a blessing, if all American households would show the same care and devotion for all their members, as does our national bird for its own family! We should remember those remarkable habits every time we see our nation's bird on a dollar bill or elsewhere in the grand seal of the United States. (The bald eagle, since it is a part of our nation's seal, is the most photographed bird in the world.)

God wants us also to be concerned about bird conservation. That is indicated by His Old Testament Civil Law that stated: "If you happen to see along the road a bird's nest in any tree or on

the ground with young birds or eggs and the mother sitting on the young or the eggs, do not take the mother with the young birds. Be sure to let the mother go when you take the young birds, so that you will prosper and live long” (Deuteronomy 22:6,7, Beck). If our forefathers had observed that simple rule, we might still enjoy the sights of the stately passenger pigeons that once darkened American skies. Today the best that we can do in this matter is to see a dead one in some city museum.

4) Our God saw that His creation of winged creatures was “good” (Genesis 1:21).

a) Birds are good for proclaiming God’s glory.

At the close of the fifth day God looked at what He had made and “saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:21). Yes, indeed, feathered creatures are good far beyond our telling. Every sparrow of the field proclaims God’s protection, as our Lord indicated: “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?” (Luke 12:6) And if God so takes care of His birds, then why should we ever worry? “For even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: Ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Luke 12:7).

Every bird in the sky also points to God’s preservation of His creatures. We stated in a previous paragraph that God preserves His birds through their parents. Actually, of course, it is He who daily gives His birds their food and drink, as Psalm 145:15, 16 tells us: “The eyes of all wait upon Thee; and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest shine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.”

Dr. Morris in his reflections on the fifth day of creation beautifully illustrates how birds show forth the glory of God: He wrote as follows:

How incomprehensible the wisdom and power of Him, who contrived and executed the innumerable forms and features, and who conceived and bestowed the faculties and endlessly diversified instincts of the whole feathered race, as now scattered over the entire seas and lands of the globe! Ere the creative word had gone forth, and ere the morning of the fifth day had dawned, all potentially and prospectively existed in His all-comprehending mind as clear and complete as they now exist in living reality – the peculiarities and characteristics that were to divide them into their several orders, classes, and species; their outward forms and inward constitutions; the locations they were to occupy, and the habits they should follow; the materials they should employ, and the skill they were to exercise in building their nest habitation; the seasons at which they should severally pair, the number of eggs they should lay, and the length of time required for their incubation; the texture, the arrangement, and the coloring of their plumage; the instincts that should guide them in finding and selecting their food; the artifices they should practice in eluding their enemies, and in catching their prey; the notes they should utter, and the songs they should warble; their individual character, and social disposition; their passions and affections, pleasures and pastimes; their language or mode of communication with each other; the force and fleetness with which they should fly or swim, dart through the air, or dive into the water; the periods of their longevity, and the degrees of their fecundity; the times at which they should depart and return in their stated migration; the relations they should sustain and the ends they should subserve in the great system of nature; all these, and a thousand other things connected with them, stood forth clear, perfect, and complete before the omniscient eye of the Creator as He opened His lips to utter the words, **let . . . fowl . . . fly above the earth, in the open firmament of heaven.** (A literal translation is “let birds above the earth in the face, or, in the front, of the firmament”) . . . In view of such a display of the Divine Capacities, how fitting,

Reader, for you and me, the adoring exclamation, “Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!”

In all their doings and movements, the guiding finger of their Creator is clearly seen. Prior to all experience and independent of all instruction, we see the little feathered tribes undertake and accomplish all the ingenious duties of their being; and accomplish them, too, with a certainty and perfection which no instruction could teach, and no experience improve. The sparrow performs and goes through the whole wonderful process of building, laying, hatching and rearing, as successfully the first time as the last. And whence is all this to the little bird of the air, if not from the omnipresent and infinite Spirit? Who or what leads the young female bird to prepare a nest, untaught and undirected, long before she has need of it? Who instructs each particular species in its own peculiar style of architecture? And when the first egg is brought forth who teaches her what she must do with it? Or that it is a thing to be taken care of, that it must be laid and preserved in the nest? How come she to know that her young are contained in the eggs? For certain it is, that there is nothing in the external aspect, or in the internal composition of them, which could lead even the most enlightened and scientific mind, previous to experience, to conjecture that out of them presently would come forth living, perfect birds like herself. And the germ of future life being wrapped in the egg, who teaches its little owner that heat will develop and mature that germ? Who acquaints her with the fact that her own body possesses that precise kind and degree of warmth required? And what is it that holds her so constantly and so long upon the nest, amid light and darkness, storm and sunshine, without the least knowledge or idea as to what the result or fruit of all this toil and self denial is to be? Here, then, are operations carried on, and effects produced, which must constrain every candid mind to recognize in them the invisible hand of God (end of Dr. Morris’ quotation).

b) Birds are good for serving mankind.

God did not just create thousands of bird species helter-skelter; He had a definite purpose in mind for every one of them; all were made to serve mankind in some way. If you were to read a book like Nettje Blanchan’s *Birds*, you would learn the blessed purpose that God had in mind with the various kinds of birds He created. He, for example, gave us swallows to fly over the waters and the marshes, swifts to fly around the roofs of the houses, and whip-poorwills to fly in the country to help keep down the mosquito population. He created kingbirds and flycatchers to help control larger insects like horseflies, grasshoppers, and beetles. He made the warblers and others to clean foliage of ants, leaf hoppers, and smaller caterpillars, and worms. To the woodpeckers, chickadees, and nuthatches He gave charge of the bark of the trees, where many insects lay their eggs. Meadowlarks, blackbirds, and crows have been entrusted with the ground floor to help rid it of grasshoppers and chinch bugs. The birds of prey, the hawks, buzzards, and condors have the task of consuming dead and decaying flesh of animals. Even the lowly sparrow has its place in God’s economy – it eats many of the billions of dandelion seeds that would otherwise go far toward destroying the usefulness of our lands.

The story of the way in which the seagulls saved the early Mormons in Utah is well known. When those hardy, pioneers (but misguided spiritually) were about ready to harvest their first crop, grasshoppers appeared in uncontrollable numbers. The harvest would have been entirely lost and probably many Mormons would have starved to death, had not great flocks of gulls appeared to begin eating the grasshoppers. When they had eaten their fill, they flew to Great Salt Lake to drink; then they disgorged their food, and returned to eat more grasshoppers, and repeated the cycle until they had rid the land of that menacing plague of

grasshoppers. Small wonder that the Mormons raised a memorial statue to sea gulls in Temple Square and that these birds are protected by state statute.

No less a miracle annually happens almost everywhere else in America. Birds devour weed seeds and worms by the ton. Try to imagine what life would be like, if both weeds and worms multiplied unchecked. In ten years insects would probably have eaten almost everything in sight and weeds would undoubtedly have overrun our land. Yes, birds are indeed good for us, as God said centuries ago.

Yet, we have only scratched the surface in stating how good birds are for mankind. For example, owls, hawks and eagles destroy myriads of rodents that could otherwise cause huge amounts of damage. Fortunately, we are gradually learning to drop labels like “harmful” and “beneficial” species to understand that all of God’s winged creatures are good for us. True, hawks do occasionally destroy poultry, while eagles may at times also be destructive. That will always happen, because birdlife too has been affected by man’s fall into sin. Yet, birds are true friends of mankind. May we never forget it.

In some areas of the world, like the Peruvian coastline, birds, with their droppings, provide so much rich fertilizer in the form of guano that much of the area’s economy is built upon gathering and selling it all over the world. (Even the ancient Incas protected those guanayes by inflicting the death penalty upon anyone who killed them. In the 1970’s some 40 million guanayes live off the Peruvian coast, where they eat the multitudinous anchovies. They may then provide up to 100 pounds of droppings in their ten-year life on or near the coast where they live. Sometimes, when the cold ocean currents do not flow upward, when the ocean waters become warm and there are few anchovies, then disaster strikes. (Many birds die of starvation.)

In what other ways are birds good for us? Oh, they provide us with food (you may remember those wonderful goose or duck dinners); they furnish us with feathers (in years gone by no bride’s trousseau was ever complete without several pillows filled with goose feathers); they carry messages (homing pigeons are such dependable creatures that in years gone by they were often entrusted with bringing “home” important messages, like, for example, the news of Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo); they clean up the garbage and fish markets (some birds of prey are so valuable for doing this that they are protected species); they furnish some of the world’s sweetest melodies (the beautiful strains of the lovely mockingbird form some of the most enjoyable music on earth); and finally, with their activities they provide cheer and enjoyment for countless birdwatchers.

The Bible mentions birds over 100 times, repeatedly using them to teach spiritual lessons, as for example, Psalm 91:4, which uses the picture of a mother bird to tell us that God cares for us: “He (God) shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust.” Psalm 8:4-9 tells of the Psalmist’s astonishment that God has placed His lovely creation, including bird life, into mankind’s control: “What is man, that Thou are mindful of him? And the Son of Man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hand; Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O Lord our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!”

c) Insects are good for serving mankind.

True, certain insects damage crops, eat our clothing, spread disease, mess up our automobiles, eat away at our buildings, harm our shrubbery, cause irritation with their stings or bites, and generally make life miserable for us. Yet, only some 300 out of the 800,000 known insect species actually do a great deal of damage, and that is to be expected because of mankind’s sin; yet, even

they may do a great deal of good. As for the other hundreds of thousands, they are so beneficial that we probably could not live without them. A few examples follow.

Bees have rightly been called miracle workers. (“Busy bee” is a good description, for one bee working diligently can produce one teaspoon of honey in six weeks, and then it dies.) God has given bees a tremendously efficient society; He enables them to communicate with each other by means of a dance, thereby telling others in the hive where the nectar is and how far away it is; and He moves them to pollinate approximately 100 agricultural crops (bees are, in fact, the world’s greatest pollinators); God equipped their bodies with exactly those parts that they need for doing their work for us. Without their beneficial work, most of the world’s fruits, melons, berries, clover and various other crops would soon die out.

And what shall we say of the little ladybugs that devour harmful aphids, the preying mantises that eat mosquitoes, the monarch butterflies that in their caterpillar stage eat milkweed leaves (otherwise we would have a difficult time in eradicating this weed from our fields), the friendly spiders with their strong, 1/1000 of an inch thick silk that is frequently used for gun and camera sights? (Spiders, someone said, are real mathematicians in measuring angles and capable engineers in figuring stress and strain.) And what about the insects that feed on dead or decaying plants and animals? What would the world be like without them? Other insects help in pollinating plants, in producing silk and dyes. Thousands of tons of lac, the excretions of certain insects, are annually used for shellac.

We shall close the discussion of God’s fabulous work on that great fifth creation day with another quotation from Dr. Morris.

In the history of insects, we meet with the most beautiful illustration that all nature affords of the great and distinguishing doctrine of Christianity – the resurrection of the dead. And to see this; let us follow one of these little animals through the marvelous changes of its existence. Our starting point is a diminutive and almost invisible egg; from this comes a worm, scarce an inch long at maturity, doomed to draw out its little length to obtain locomotion from day to day. Prone on the earth, it is passed and repassed unnoticed. Its appointed days in this condition drawing to a close, it languishes; refuses to eat; ceases to move; becomes wrapped in a silken shroud; this soon changes into a dusky crust; and in this, as in its coffin, it remains apparently dead. The time of its sepulture, usually six or seven months, having passed away, it begins to acquire new life and vigor; presently it bursts open its confining cell, and comes forth; no longer, however, an offensive crawling worm, but changed and fashioned into a beautiful butterfly, furnished with limbs and wings; and decked in down of purple and gold. It now takes rank with a new and superior race of being; it mounts the air, ranges from flower to flower, rises in exhilarating flights towards the glorious orb of day, rejoicing in its new and splendid existence. Who but must see in all this a striking parallel, and an instructive type of the blessed change that awaits the righteous? Like the caterpillar worm, they now are doomed for a brief period to tread the soil of the earth, and then to be laid to sleep within the tomb. But they remain there only for an appointed time; a day cometh, when, like the worm, they shall come forth from the wreck and ruin of the grave, in forms lovely as that of the Son of God, and shall mount up with wings, shall join the angelic holy throng, and dwell forever with the Lord. Let the works of God, then confirm to us His Word; let the wonderful display of His power and wisdom, as thus seen in the transformation of insects, serve to strengthen our faith, and to animate our hope of a blessed immortality.

That is why a butterfly has long been one of the most revered symbols in Christianity – it speaks to us of the resurrection.

F. Our God created all land animals on the first part of the sixth creation day.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:24,25).

By the end of the fifth creation day God had made almost everything that was necessary to provide a perfect home for mankind. Just one major work remained: The creation of the many kinds of land animals that were to serve us. God therefore determined that the earth was to be populated with animals, and they do, in fact, exist almost everywhere. God gave them remarkable powers to exist in even the most unlikely places. (The desert rat, for example, can live for weeks without water. It somehow manufactures water from hydrogen in the food and from oxygen.) When all land animals had been created, then everything would be ready for the final and supreme act of God during those first six days of the world's history: The creation of man and woman.

1. Our God created three major groups of land animals on the first part of the sixth creation day (Genesis 1:24,25).

a. Our God classified all land animals into three major groups (Genesis 1:24).

The classification of animals is an exceedingly complex, highly difficult, and somewhat inexact science. People who do this work are called taxonomists (from two Greek words, meaning "law of arrangement").

One of the first and surely one of the greatest of all taxonomists was Carl Linnaeus, the famous Swedish biologist, who died in 1778. He was a strict creationist. He wrote in the Foreword of his great *Systema*:

"From behind I saw the Eternal, All-knowing, and Almighty God as He went forward, and I swooned! I tracked His footsteps over nature's field and marked in each one, even in those I could hardly discern, an ineffable wisdom and might, an impenetrable completeness. There I saw how all **animals** were supported by plants, **plants** by earth, **earth** by the globe; how the globe spins night and day round the sun, which gave it life. How the sun rolled as if on its axle with planets and fixed stars to an inconceivable number, each and all of them upheld out of the empty void of the incomprehensible primary movement. The Creator of all beings, the impulse and helmsman of all things, Lord and Master of this world. . . A Being without whom is nothing which is created; A Being who has founded and built all this, which shines everywhere before our eyes. (Bible Science Association 2/78)

Later Georges Cuvier conceived the idea of four great and broad groups: The vertebrates (animals having a backbone or a spinal column), the mollusca (animals having no backbone, like snails, shells, oysters), the articulata (all animals with external skeletons, like insects and crustaceans), and the radiata (animals with radial structures, like sea urchin, sea anemones, and polyps).

Today's taxonomists classify all animals into phyla, classes, orders, families, genera, and species. The phyla (meaning "tribe") are the largest or broadest classification; species are the smallest.

These groupings can perhaps be best understood by means of an example. The domestic dog is called *Canis Familiaris* (a Latin term, meaning the familiar dog family) with the *Familiaris* denoting the species into which the genus *Canis* is divided. (In this case the species may be further subdivided into the approximately 400 Varieties of domestic dogs.) Dogs (*Canis Familiaris*) have been placed into a larger group called genus *Canis* (dog family), which also includes coyotes, foxes, hyenas, jackals, and wolves. All of these creatures have in turn been placed into a still broader group call Family *Canidae* (larger family of doglike creatures), which also includes bears, raccoons, and weasels. The *Canidae* family in turn belongs to the order *Carnivora*, (flesh-eating animals). This entire group then composes the class *Mammalia*, those animals that nourish their young with milk (the word *Mammalia* comes from a Latin word meaning “breast”). Mammals also give birth to their young, and their bodies are covered with hair. Finally, mammals belong to the broadest class called phylum *chordata*, (*chordata* is from the word “chord”) which include all vertebrates (those having a backbone). (Thoughts in this paragraph were adapted from the Encyclopedia Britannica.)

All of this sounds rather complicated to the average layman. It frequently is complicated for professional biologists also, since they often disagree in their classifications. One biologist might say that there are x number of species in a certain genus, another may say that there are far less species but more varieties in the same grouping. Definitions for each group may differ somewhat, there may be overlapping, and in some cases one professional biologist may assign a certain animal to an entirely different group than does another scientist.

What has just been said is not meant to condemn the taxonomists’ work. Their efforts, especially when they believe in creation, is highly valuable for the study of animals. Yet, from a layman’s standpoint the Genesis classification of all land animals into three general groups, cattle, creeping things, and beasts of the earth, is surely much simpler and highly logical. True, in a few cases it is also difficult to determine into exactly which of the three classes some creatures belong. God’s tremendously varied creation does not always fall into neat categories. Yet, the average Christian will almost immediately be able to place any land animal into one of the three larger groupings of Genesis 1:24, as we shall demonstrate in the paragraphs to follow.

b. Our God created all “cattle” on the sixth creation day (Genesis 1:24).

This group of land animals includes all of the domestic quadrupeds, like cows and camels, horses and donkeys, sheep and goats. God created them all perfectly, gave each one of them exactly those features that it needs to perform its work for mankind. To cattle He gave that complex digestive system which essentially turns grass into delectable dairy products. (For centuries, Israel was a cattle-raising people. Abraham, Jacob, Jacob’s sons, and many others had huge flocks and herds of these domestic creatures, as we know from Bible passages like Genesis 13:5-13; 30:43; 47:1-6.)

To camels God gave perfect feet for traveling in the desert and the ability to go for days with little to eat or to drink, exactly what nomads like the early Israelites and various other far eastern people needed for transportation across the deserts. (Abraham was blessed with many camels, Genesis 12:61, as were his descendants. Israel, of course, could not eat camel meat, since these creatures had no split hoof – see Leviticus 11.)

To horses our God gave great strength, especially useful for easing mankind’s burdens. (When our oil is gone, will horses again become as valuable as they were in the past?)

To sheep and goats our God gave a remarkable covering, so valuable for making clothing that Bethlehem’s shepherds even remained with their flocks overnight to protect them from harm or loss.

One major respect in which these domestic creatures are different from every creature made on the previous creation day is that “cattle” are mammals. They feed their young with milk that continues to flow just as long as their offspring need it. Then, miraculously, in most cases the flow of milk stops.

c. Our God created all “creeping things” on the sixth creation day (Genesis 1:24).

Commentators agree that the Hebrew word translated “creeping things” in the King James Version means all animals that move on or close to the earth with no legs or with short ones. This class of creatures includes various kinds of animals like the approximately 6500 different species of reptiles, snakes, amphibians, lizards, turtles, and crocodiles. Snakes are found today in some 300 varieties ranging from the tiny garter snake to the 30-or-more-foot boa constrictor.

Then there are the amphibians (the word means “living a double life”), like toads, frogs, and salamanders, who generally begin their lives in the water as tadpoles with gills and then develop lungs for living on the land. Lizards occur in some 2500 species; turtles range in size from the tiny to the three-quarter ton leatherbacks and Galapagos. Crocodiles, alligators, and the famous dinosaurs (the largest creature ever to live on land, ranging in length up to 100 feet) also belong to this class of creatures, as do the many different kinds of worms.

“Creepers” differ immensely from every animal that God had thus far created, for they are cold-blooded; they have bodies that are covered with scales or horny plates, never with fur, hair, or wool; and they, for the most part, creep along the ground, as Genesis 1 says.

The story of dinosaurs is a fascinating one. There is no question but that dinosaurs once roamed the earth in large numbers and varieties. (Some people think that the behemoth of Job 40:15-24 was a dinosaur.) All of them have vanished from the earth, as have many other animal species; many of them were exterminated by man. Yet, let no one imagine that there once was an “age of dinosaurs,” eons before man appeared. That idea is nothing but a pipe dream, strictly condemned by Genesis 1. Also we must remember that man’s footprints have been found imbedded in rocks next to dinosaur footprints (in the Paluxy riverbed in Texas). Why did the dinosaurs vanish from the earth? Possibly because after the Flood the earth no longer supported the tremendously lush vegetation that was found everywhere before that time. Possibly, too, the climate, which before the Flood appears to have been comparatively mild everywhere, became much different after the Flood. Cold-blooded animals can generally not stand freezing cold for any length of time.

Do “creeping things” also include all of the uncounted trillions of microscopic creatures found in the soil and elsewhere? Undoubtedly many of them can be placed into this category. They include bacteria and protozoa that creep about. Fungi and algae are plants, created on the third day. All four occur in countless numbers. Someone, for example, said that a gram, 1/28th of an ounce, of fertile soil may contain an incredible 100 million bacteria, 100,000 fungi, 10,000 algae, and from 10 to 100,000 protozoa. And the Sheboygan (WI) Press, 4/12/78, stated, in writing about fertile soil:

Scientists estimated that the soil beneath a square meter of ground – slightly bigger than a square yard is home for 50,000 springtails, 100,000 earthworms and related worms, 200,000 mites, 10 million nematodes (simpler worm-like creatures), 500 million protozoans (single-celled animals) and a staggering 300 trillion bacteria.

d. Our God created all “beasts of the earth” on the sixth creation day (Genesis 1:24).

This class of animals includes all of the wild (so-called because of their vital energy and activity) four-footed mammals, once found in tremendous abundance almost everywhere on earth. One might divide them, as do the taxonomists, into various families or genera. Pachyderms are the largest land

animals; they include elephants, rhinoceroses, and hippopotamuses. Marsupials have an external pouch in which the incompletely developed offspring live for a time after their birth. Best known representatives of this group are the kangaroo, the opossum, and the wombat. Carnivorous or flesh-eating mammals include lions, tigers, bears, wolves, and the like. Ruminants, those wild, cud-chewing mammals, include buffaloes, antelopes, elk, deer, and giraffes. Rodents are gnawing or nibbling mammals that include mice, rats, squirrels, and beavers.

These “beasts of the earth” are found everywhere on earth from the tropics to the polar regions; they appear in almost endless forms and sizes; and they are all specially designed by our Creator for their particular environment and for the particular purpose of serving mankind, as we shall see in a moment.

2. Our God created all land animals so that they would form a perfect balance in nature.

We have previously referred to our Heavenly Father’s master creation plan. Every part fitted together wonderfully, like so many cogs in a perfectly made, exceptionally intricate machine. An example is the various kinds of birds, each one designed to care for some particular phase of work on behalf of mankind.

Many other examples of this perfect balance of nature can be cited. The common housefly, for example, is so prolific that if all the offspring of a single pair would live an entire season, they would number 14 followed by 18 zeros; that number could cover the earth to a depth of 50 feet; but, of course, they do not all live, because the housefly is food for many other creatures.

Again, if grass in a certain area is unusually abundant, field mice may multiply tremendously. Yet, they, in turn, furnish more food for foxes and other predators, so that they multiply also. Thus the total population of most creatures tends to remain in balance under God’s hand. We must remember, however, that sin has affected every part of creation. Thus nature, which God created in perfect balance, sometimes becomes unbalanced, as for example, in a grasshopper plague.

Usually, however, unbalance and the resulting disaster tend to happen when mankind does some foolish things. In India, for example, the dhamin snake eats rats, but that snake’s skin is valuable. So many of them were consequently killed that rats multiplied rapidly and almost uncontrollably. In the middle 1970’s they may have numbered five billion; they annually consume millions of tons of sorely needed grain. As a result, the Indian government is trying to undo man’s destruction by banning the export of this type of snake skin.

In our western states man declared war on coyotes, in the mistaken notion that they either were good for nothing or positively harmful to livestock. Then rabbits and various other rodents tended to multiply so rapidly that great problems arose in that direction. Hawks, owls, wolves, mountain lions, and various other creatures have also been slaughtered senselessly by people who were ignorant of their important roles in the balance of nature. (“The Animals Nobody Loved” is the title of a *National Geographic* article).

Other examples of man’s foolishness in tinkering with the balance of nature are the introduction of rabbits into Australia (they became such pests that hundreds of miles of fencing were built to keep them from spreading, but before the fence was completed they were multiplying on both sides of it). Starlings, English sparrows, carp, and many other creatures were introduced into the United States by people who mistakenly felt that they would be beneficial. Often they multiplied so rapidly that they became pests.

If man could only learn to stop tinkering with God’s lovely creation of animal life, we should all probably be better off, for all wild creatures have a definite part to play in God’s master plan. Only when these creatures become too many or too few do we have great problems, although troubles in this area will always occur because of sin.

3. Our God created all land animals “after their kind” (Genesis 1:24,25).

We have treated this topic, “after its kind,” previously. See V,E, 5,f. We shall add a few points to that discussion. God gave each one of His land animals exactly those kinds of bodies which they need to exist. Sometimes we may not know the reason for the various body members of God’s land animals, but He always had some good purpose in mind for creating His creatures exactly as He did. (In 1946 Edwin Way Teale, the famous naturalist, wrote that the tails of many creatures are useful for various purposes, but he also concluded that the tail of a pig was useless. Soon thereafter he was deluged with letters from farmers who pointed out to him that pigs’ tails are indeed useful in various ways. For example, tightly-curved tails mean that their owners are in good physical and mental condition; pigs’ tails are considered great delicacies in some quarters; someone even wrote to say that they are a useful handle for catching pigs in the barnyard.)

Fortunately, all animals pass their body members on to their offspring. That is what the expression “after its kind,” mentioned five times in Genesis 1:24,25, means. It means that horses produce horses. There may be many varieties, that is true, for the expression “after its kind” allows for varieties, but it strictly prohibits horses from producing any other kind of animal, cows, for example, or wolves. Horses’ genes are totally unable to produce any offspring except horses. That, of course, rules out evolution’s main doctrine, that one kind of animal can eventually produce another. This is simply impossible, because of the limits that God built into each creature’s genes.

What a blessing that each animal’s offspring is so regulated. Imagine what would result, if the general rule, “after its kind,” would not be in effect. Harry Rimmer, an avowed opponent of evolution, tells us what the results might be: “If the eagle could mate with the leopard, producing a predatory, feline hybrid with wings, how unhappy would be the lot of the dwellers in the land where this particular monstrosity were common. If the rattlesnake would cross with the bird, producing a venomous hybrid that would smite from the air, cast iron umbrellas would quickly come into vogue. Imagine the hybrid that resulted when the crocodile mated with the elephant or the tiger with a shark. Weird indeed would be the dilemma of humanity if creation forgot the commandments of the careful Creator when He said, each ‘after its own kind.’”

God also gave each one of His creatures, whether they be cattle, creeping things, or wild beasts, exactly those characteristics which they need to exist and to serve mankind. Fortunately, these creatures pass those characteristics on to their offspring also. If this law were not in effect at all times, nothing but chaos would result in God’s creature world. What would happen, for example, if sheep passed wolf-like or lion-like characteristics on to their lambs, or vice versa? How could wolves and lions long exist, if they passed only sheep-like characteristics on to their offspring? What if the desert night creatures would pass daytime activities on to their young? The young would quickly die in the hot sunshine of the day. Is it any wonder that God emphasized and re-emphasized the words “after its kind” in these two verses of Genesis?

4. Our God saw that His creation of the three kinds of land animals “was good” (Genesis 1:25).

a. Our God’s creation of the domestic animals is good for us.

Cattle, with their intricate, built-in, chemical factory, easily produce a tremendous variety of dairy products, highly valuable from Bible times to the present. They serve us with food (a good steak is an excellent dinner, and where would McDonald’s be without cows?), leather used in many different products, serums (those valuable medicines produced by several different animals including cows), and finally, fertilizers, glue, jello, soap, and animal food.

The horse has been an almost invaluable creature for man in conquering and exploring the world. (Two simple, but almost earth-shaking inventions or adaptations were the placement of the horses’

collar at their shoulders instead of around their necks, where they at one time quite effectively choked horses, and the stirrup that allowed much greater movement to fighting men.) Horses still do much work for mankind, besides providing us with a great deal of pleasure. (For much of the twentieth century the United States horse population declined steadily. In the 1970's, however, that trend is beginning-to reverse itself.)

Harry Rimmer, who wrote extensively on the days of creation, had a special love for sheep, and he devoted many paragraphs to them. He wrote that man is like a sheep in many ways: Sheep quickly lose their way without a shepherd—so do we, and how grateful we should be that we have a Good Shepherd to guide us through this world. Sheep are always dirty and cannot cleanse themselves—mankind is thoroughly polluted by sin which no earthly power can wash away; only the blood of Christ can cleanse us. Sheep depend on their shepherd for food and drink, even as our Good Shepherd gives us our daily bread. Sheep cannot find their way to good pasture; they must be led there by the shepherd. We can never find the way to heaven with our own mind; God must show us the way in His Word. Sheep are often in physical danger or distress, and so are we. How fortunate that our Good Shepherd is with us constantly; His rod and staff comfort us (Psalm 23).

Someone called the camel God's gift to the desert dweller. Its entire body is specifically designed for desert existence; its foot is made for traction in the sand, where our man-made vehicles can easily become stranded; and its second stomach is a reservoir used when it cannot readily find water elsewhere. It can subsist on the fat in its humps, when it cannot easily find other food. It provides a method of travel for many; it furnishes milk for the Bedouin, hair for his cloth, hair and skin for his tents, and dung for his fuel, as it has done since Abraham's time and before.

b. Our God's creation of creepers is good for us.

Most creepers perform invaluable services for mankind. For example, they eat insects. (In Florida, where the author of these notes lives, the climate is ideal for the multiplication of insects, yet for most of the year in various places very few of them disturb us; the many toads and various other creepers keep down the insect population.) They also devour destructive rodents. (That is one of the snakes' major purpose in the balance of nature. Many people are ready to kill almost every snake that they see, and that attitude is a part of the curse that God placed on the creature that the devil used to tempt Eve. Yet, a snake is also a type of Christ, as we know from the story of the Brazen Serpent, Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14,15.) Earthworms are one of the world's most valuable creatures for enriching and aerating the soil. (If one finds many earthworms in a certain plot of ground, one can make up his mind that it is good for growing crops.) Alligators are good for helping to preserve wildlife in states like Florida. (In dry seasons they dig water holes to provide drink for various creatures.)

Even the lowly microbes are indispensable for our life. When we think of microbes, many of us probably wish that they were all dead, for they cause smallpox, pneumonia, and various other diseases. But let no one of us despise these microscopic creatures. For one thing, they eat dead wood. True, termites eat buildings too, but can you imagine what our forests would be like, if there were no insects and microbes to devour the debris of dead trees? These microbes and other insects also convert nitrogen from the air so that clover, alfalfa, and peas can use it to enrich the soil; they ripen cheese and sauerkraut; they turn fruit juices into wine and wine into vinegar; and they help to dispose of dead bodies and decaying vegetable matter (can you imagine what our earth would look like, if dead bodies and decaying vegetable matter were not disposed of by these tiny creatures?).

c. Our God's creation of "beasts of the earth" is good for us.

Entire economies are sometimes built on wild animals. An example is the Laplanders with their reliance upon the reindeer for many uses or the Eskimos with their dependence upon the caribou and other arctic creatures. Elephants have long been used for work and for travel in some parts of the world. Various kinds of wild animals furnish furs that are indispensable for people living in the far north and valuable for many others. Coyotes, wolves, and other predators are good for preserving the balance of nature; they weed out the weak, the sickly, and the dying, who might otherwise contaminate entire groups of animals. All of these wild creatures are good in one way or another, although mankind may not always recognize or understand all or the good that they do (See F,2).

It is true, of course, that wild creatures sometimes cause damage. They may destroy our livestock or even occasionally kill people. That, as we have noted several times, is the result of mankind's sin, for sin has affected the creature world also. Yet, in general, every part of God's lovely creation is good for us and good for proclaiming His glory.

5. With the creation of land animals our God finished creating the world a perfect place for mankind's home.

Every plan that God had thus far formulated, every word that He had thus far spoken, every act that He had completed, all of it together had just one purpose: To provide a perfect home for man and woman, God's crowning achievement. God made the universe geocentric, that is, everything in the universe was created especially to serve this world, as we learned when we discussed the fourth day of creation. And God made everything within this world to serve mankind. Therefore, He told us to "subdue" the earth "and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28).

Can you imagine what the world must have been like immediately after God created it, before sin came and placed a black mark over all of God's lovely creation? Can you imagine how Adam and Eve must have felt when they saw all of the things that God had made for them in the Garden? If one can still grow strawberries that are two inches in diameter and grapefruit that are eight inches in diameter, if trees still grow to a height of 300 feet and to a circumference of 100 feet, if farmers can still raise 200 bushels of corn to the acre, if melons and fruits and nuts remain among the tastiest morsels in all the world, then what do you suppose all of these crops were like in the Garden of Eden? What do you suppose our first parents thought and said when they surveyed all of that marvelous plantlife and when they noted that the entire creature world was eager to serve them? They undoubtedly spoke their own, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (Psalm 103:1,2). Can we fail to join them?

G. Our God created man and woman on the last part of the sixth creation day.

And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish (fill) the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a help meet for him. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7,18,21-23)

These verses describe the climax of God's creation, the supreme act of our Lord during those first six days of the world's history, the work for which every other act had been but the prelude. Dr. Morris wrote:

All that we have thus far surveyed, however, has been but...the fitting up of a mansion for an expected occupant...and now at length that the mansion was finished...the long-looked-for occupant and worshipper only remained to be created.

Everything was ready for man, the crown of creation.

Genesis 1:26-28 states that the Triune God (that is the significance of the "let *us* make man," as we heard in III, B, 1) created man and woman. The passages from Genesis 2 then describe this ultimate act of our God in greater detail. Yes, it is true that some critical commentators claim that Genesis 2 is a different account of creation from that written in chapter 1 and that it originally was written by a different person. These destructive critics love the idea that the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), Isaiah, and some other books of the Bible were really written by various authors, with some editor then gathering the material and forming one book out of it. In other words, they sit in judgment on what the Bible itself says, instead of letting the Bible sit in judgment on them. The Bible tells us often enough that Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible and that Isaiah wrote the book that bears his name.

Likewise, Genesis 2 supplements Genesis 1 by providing additional details, and it prepared the way for the frightful calamity and God's promise of a Savior, written in Genesis 3. For additional, excellent material on this point, the reader is referred to Dr. H.C. Leupold's *Exposition of Genesis*; the Wartburg Press; Columbus, Ohio, 1942.

1. Our God made man and woman in a manner entirely different from every other part of His wonderful creation.

Every part of man's creation shows that it was completely different from that of everything else that had been made on those six memorable creation days. In every other case our Heavenly Father simply spoke the word, and it was done. But that was not at all the way in which He created mankind. With a special form of creation God shows us that we are not just another animal, as the evolutionists would have us believe. We are something special, different, higher, more precious than every other part of creation, as will become apparent in the following paragraphs.

a. Our God formed man from the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7), giving him a body and a soul.

Just before creating man, the three persons of the Holy Trinity consulted with each other. They said, "Let us make man in our image" (Genesis 1:26). Then our Heavenly Father proceeded in this manner: He took a lump of fine earth, molded the form of a man, much as a potter forms his clay, and then breathed into his nostrils "His own vital breath," the breath of life. Dr. Leupold, in his *Exposition of Genesis*, wrote:

The idea to be emphasized is that with the particular care and personal attention that a potter gives to his task God gave tokens of His interest in man, his creation, by molding him as He did...a personal, vitalizing act of the Creator imparts life to man—an honor bestowed upon none of the lesser creatures.

That is exactly what Isaiah wrote many years later: "But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou our Potter: and we are all the work of Thy hand" (Isaiah 64:8).

Nothing is said in Genesis about God giving man both a body and a soul, the only one of God's creatures to have an immortal soul. (The expression in Genesis 2:7: "Man became a living soul" simply means that man became a living being.) Yet, every person does have a soul, as our Lord clearly taught in Matthew 10:28 and 16:26: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell...for what is a man profiteth if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Also, when God breathed His spirit into man's nostrils (Genesis 2:7) He made man an eternal creature. At death the soul of the believer is at once present with Christ in heaven, as our Lord expressly said, when He promised the repentant malefactor: "Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). Jesus certainly did not mean that the malefactor's body would be in heaven on that very day; it would be thrown into some unmarked grave; but the eternal soul would begin immediately to enjoy all of heaven's blessings that God has prepared for those who believe in His Son. On the Last Day soul and body will then be reunited.

By the same token the souls of the wicked, the unbelievers, are cast into eternal hellfire immediately upon their death (that is what happened to the Rich Man, Luke 16:19-31). You may also remember that Christ, after His resurrection, preached to the unbelieving spirits in hell (I Peter 3:19, 20).

We have spent some time on this point that God gave "me my body and soul," as we read in Dr. Luther's explanation to the First Article. The reason is that various people within the church deny that man has a soul. How they can maintain such a falsehood in view of the Bible passages just cited is simply unexplainable. If we want still more proof that all of us indeed have both body and soul, then we might look at Acts 7:59 where we are told that Stephen, filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:55), called upon God, "Receive my spirit." His body was buried (Acts 8:2), but his soul was carried by the angels into heaven, even as Luke 16:22 tells us that the soul of poor Lazarus was carried into "Abraham's bosom" (another term for heaven). If we look for an Old Testament Bible passage that speaks of body and soul, we have one in Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust (that is, our bodies, that become dust after death, Genesis 3:19) return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." These passages show us that we must again take our choice between what Scripture clearly says and what false prophets teach.

What we have been saying is that God took a lump of rich dirt, formed man's body of it, and gave it life. What an amazing miracle that God could take some ground and make out of it a man with body and soul!

This thought that we are after all only soil of the earth surely must make us very humble. A hundred years from now that is generally all that will be left of our bodies, no matter how strong, how beautiful, how healthy we are today.

On the other hand, when we consider that God actually made us in His own image, as we shall hear in a moment, we are highly exalted.

b. Our God made woman from a rib in man's side (Genesis 2:18, 21-24).

For the first time in all those miraculous, overwhelmingly great creation works God saw something that He had made and said, "It is not good" (Genesis 2:18). Those words certainly do not mean that man's creation was not good—it was tremendously good. What God was saying in this verse is that man's creation was incomplete. Man needed a helper, someone to live with him, to walk at his side, to complement him, to bear his children, and to help care for them.

Who could possibly fill such an important role for Adam and for all subsequent men? Not the animals, not even the greatest of them, as we learn from Genesis 2:19, 20. If man were only an animal, as evolutionists would have us believe, then he should be able to find help and companionship among the higher forms of animals, but who among us would claim that this is

possible? The very thought is ridiculous. Therefore, God immediately created someone who would fill this lack.

This is what God did: “He caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam” (Genesis 2:21); then, while Adam was sleeping, God took one of his ribs with the flesh thereof, closed the place with flesh, and formed the first woman with it (Genesis 2:22). Dr. H.C. Leupold, in his *Exposition of Genesis*, wrote of this act:

Though no definite reason for this type of procedure in creating woman is assigned, we are able to see the most eminent fitness in this much ridiculed act. For one thing, the absolute unity of the human race in its descent from one ancestor is established—a vital doctrine of the Scriptures (cf. Romans 5:18ff). Besides, at the same time the dignity of womankind is guaranteed: woman is not of inferior substance. The truest of kinship with man is also established: she is of his bone and flesh. Even the very part of the body from which she is taken is of deepest moment: woman is neither of the foot nor of the head, for she is neither superior nor inferior to man; she is exactly on the same level with him as far as being a creature of God is concerned. If then, lastly, a part of the substance of man is to be used, none could be found that could be more conveniently dispensed with than a rib. Deeper thought on the subject throughout suggests a most excellent propriety in God’s procedure in the whole matter of the creation of woman.

Just as God created the first man and woman, so today He alone can and does give us life, as many Bible passages tell us. See, for example, Genesis 25:21-23; 29:31; 30:2, 22; Ruth 4:13, I Samuel 1:5, 11, 27; and many others. When God had finished creating Eve, God “brought her unto the man” (Genesis 2:22), thereby instituting and performing the first marriage. Immediately thereafter the Bible account follows with the first recorded words of the first man: “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Genesis 2:23). In the original Hebrew in which the Old Testament was written, there is a fine play on words here, to indicate that the woman really came from the man. The Hebrew word for man sounds like *Eesch* and for woman *Eescha*.

The creation of woman also shows that she is in an entirely different class of beings from animals. God created her in a manner entirely different from the method He used for making every other creature. Evolution lies, when it claims that woman, like man, is simply a higher form of animal. She is infinitely more than that; she is a human being, together with man the crown of creation.

c. Our God assigned different roles to man and to woman.

In Genesis 2:18 God said that He would make a helper for man, and that is exactly what the woman is to be. She is indispensable for propagating the race and for helping to train the children in the way that they should go; she is invaluable for walking by the side of her husband and her family to feed and to clothe them, to counsel and to guide them; she is irreplaceable in her ability to cheer, to comfort, and to help all those people who are nearest and dearest to her.

The godly housewife is honored everywhere in Scripture. In Genesis 1:28 both her husband and she are told to rule over all living creatures. In Proverbs 31:10-31 we are told that “her price is far above rubies.” In Galatians 3:28 we hear that in Christ “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” The woman who has been redeemed by Christ is just as much a child of God as the man who has been similarly saved. The godly housewife is in no way inferior to man in God’s sight.

We must remember, however, that in God's master plan the woman occupies a position subordinate to the man, as Genesis 2:18 states. Time after time Scripture indicates that the husband is the head of the home and that the woman works with him in this task, "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man" (I Corinthians 11:9), and "The head of the woman is the man" (I Corinthians 11:3). Therefore St. Paul wrote, "I suffer not a woman to...usurp authority over the man...for Adam was first formed, then Eve" (I Timothy 2:12, 13).

Dr. Luther, in his usual inimitable way, correctly wrote, "Each one functions best as he has been created, a woman with her little finger does better by a child than a man with both his fists. Let every one stick to that work to which God has called and appointed him" (Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 525).

d. Our God gave man and woman extraordinarily wonderful bodies.

About 3,000 years ago, centuries before the miracles of modern medicine, King David wrote: "I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14). Some 450 years ago Dr. Luther also drew attention to our wonderful bodies by writing in his explanation to the First Article that God gave each of us "my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind and all my abilities." If these men with their limited knowledge of physiology could thus praise God for His astounding creation of our bodies, then we, who know much more about that tremendous miracle of the human body, ought to praise Him all the more. Indeed, one might choose any member of our bodies, the small or the great, and one would soon learn that many volumes have been written about it. Those books seek to give us an understanding of our various members and attempt to prescribe treatments when something is wrong with them. (Even though our bodies are miraculously fashioned, they nevertheless will almost always have some defect or illness, because sin has thoroughly contaminated them.)

In the paragraphs to follow we shall discuss a few points about our bodies that *Time* in an article entitled, "The Incredible Machine," called an assembly of enormously intricate parts, many of them so small that they cannot be seen with the naked eye."

God creates a new human being when He joins a male sperm, about 1/25th the size of a comma in this sentence (1/500 of an inch), to a female egg, 1/4th the size of a period at the end of this sentence (1/175 of an inch). When just one of perhaps hundreds of millions of male sperm has entered through the coating of the female egg, God allows no more to enter. Thereafter He joins one-half of the 46 chromosomes in the male sperm with one-half of the 46 chromosomes in the female egg, and a new human being with characteristics of both father and mother has started its development. Each of these chromosomes may, so we are told, contain as many as 2,000 genes. These genes are the master controllers that regulate the development of every organ and member of the body so that they increase to the proper form, shape, and size. To do that correctly these genes may have as many as four billion pieces of information stored in them. Then, shortly after fertilization, God begins to divide the original cell into many others, increasing the original cell's size 10,000 times in one month and 30 million times in a year. That is the miracle of reproduction, a highly complex procedure that can have been devised only by an infinitely wise and gracious God.

Christianity Today, 6/2/78, in an article entitled "Genetic Engineering: Blessing or Curse?," pointed out the dangers of scientists meddling with genes. Blessings may result, but great harm may result also. The warning is this:

Nothing is more fundamental to life than genes and heredity. We know that differences between various life forms, such as birds, insects, and plants are due to genetic differences. And we all know how many of our own characteristics are fixed by what we inherited from our parents. Thus, when scientists toy with genetic

material, it's the same as manipulating life itself. It's perhaps the greatest act in the game of man attempting to "play God." And the implications of genetic engineering for Christians and non-Christians alike are profound.

As our bodies develop within the body of our mothers, God gives them a framework made of 206 bones. They range in size from the tiny stirrup of the inner ear to the large femur of the upper leg. Each one of them is twice as strong as oak; their joints are permanently lubricated with a fluid that nothing else on earth can match; and all of them are perfectly engineered by the Master Designer for their specific purpose. Someone wrote that bones are the most marvelously engineered objects ever created. They are rigid, but not brittle, so that they don't break at every little strain; they are exceedingly tough, yet they must be resilient enough to stand a great deal of stress; they are alive, and they have many blood vessels in them for nourishment; their cells are constantly dying and constantly being renewed; if they are broken, the cells reconnect the separate parts and then the bone is healed. Bones make our hands the most versatile instruments on earth (under God our hands have created our civilization and our culture). Elsie McCormick wrote long ago in *Colliers* magazine of the human foot: "Engineers who have studied it go into ecstasies about its ability to absorb shocks, to endure strain and to bear weights out of all proportion to its size."

Biologists have estimated that the human body contains from 23 to 60 trillion cells (opinions vary). Each of them is exceedingly complex; each one must have food and each excretes wastes; each one may have billions of molecules. It has been estimated that some 60 million cells in the human body die every minute, while the same number of new ones are born in that same minute. Thus God renews our bodies day by day.

To feed all of these cells, to provide oxygen for them, and to collect wastes, God has given us blood and a heart to circulate it. If much of our blood is lost, we shall die, since "the life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11). To circulate the blood our heart beats approximately 103,000 times every day from birth to death without any interruption. In so doing the heart moves our blood an incredible 168 million miles a day through some 60,000 miles of blood vessels, daily pumping 10,000 quarts of blood or about 55 million gallons in a lifetime. The heart does all of this normally without lubrication, without repair, and without interruption.

Our kidneys filter all of our blood every hour and pass the waste on to the bladder, from which it is then expelled. These organs too are so extraordinarily wonderful that modern medicine cannot begin to duplicate them. True, doctors have developed dialysis machines that clean the blood, but they are so dreadfully expensive and the treatment so irritating that some people have chosen to die rather than to continue with dialysis treatments. Our kidneys perform the same function without our willing it or even without our thinking about it.

Thus we can mention any member of the body from the very humblest to the brain, the most complex of human organs, all of them multimillion dollar organs and most of them functioning without our giving much thought to it. Every part of our bodies is wonderful, perfectly made. Can anyone still doubt that only an all-wise, all-powerful God could take \$6 worth of chemicals (by 1977 standards), especially carbon and calcium, add water (our bodies are two-thirds water) and make out of them an enormously complicated human being? Out of these chemicals and water He formed people who have a body infinitely more beautiful than the prettiest animal, who can sing like Jenny Lind, who can paint like Rembrandt, who can write like Shakespeare, who can build machines like Henry Ford, and who can do all of the other notable works of mankind throughout the ages. Only God, who "set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him" (I Corinthians 12:18), could work such a miracle. Do we join the psalmists of old in praising Him who made us so fearfully and wonderfully (Psalm 139:14)?

We shall close this section with a few quotations from Dr. Morris who beautifully described the wonders of the human body:

Another fact that heightens unspeakably our admiration of the human body is the *method in which it is kept in repair*. While all the above complicated machinery is in full operation, its every member, every organ, every vessel, every fiber, is removed and replaced by another and a new one, without occasioning one moment's interruption of its movements. This is effected through the processes of nutrition and assimilation. Old and worn out particles of the system are being continually carried away by perspiration, respiration, et cetera; and these are constantly replaced by new particles derived from the food we eat and the air we inhale.

In the silent recesses of the brow, it (the brain) holds its court, and maintains in ceaseless activity all the noble and marvelous powers of its being;—here it employs its ever-active Reflection; here Reason conducts its labored processes; here Memory lays up its treasures of observation and experience; here Imagination spreads her airy wings, and Genius creates her teeming wonders. From beneath the dome of this sacred temple the immortal spirit looks up, adoring, to the Great and Glorious God, from whom it has proceeded, and to whom it shall return.

e. Our God created mankind in His own image (Genesis 1:26, 27).

When the Bible tells us that God planned and made man “in the image of God” (Genesis 1:26, 27), this means that in some respects we are like God. It does not mean that we look like God, since He is a spirit (John 4:24), and a spirit does not have flesh and bones as we do (Luke 24:39).

What, then, does the expression “in the image of God” mean? Two New Testament Bible passages provide the answer. They are Colossians 3:10 and Ephesians 4:24. They read as follows: “And have put on a new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him... And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

Being created in God's image means, then, that our first parents knew God's will perfectly and did it exactly; they were righteous. Someone said it consisted in the spiritual qualities of the soul that possessed the blissful knowledge of God. It means that our first parents loved God and His Word and delighted in doing His will. They were morally perfect, completely pure and holy in all their thoughts, words, and deeds. They were consequently immortal, since the only cause of death is sin, and our first parents were without sin as God created them.

The reader will understand at once that such a creation placed man and woman into an entirely different category from that of animals. Evolution claims that man is just a higher form of animal. God says that He created man in “His own image, in the image of God created He him” thus making man and woman entirely different from all the rest of creation.

Dr. Morris wrote of this image of God that it

lay in the soul, and consisted in its capacities to resemble God in His moral attributes—in a mind capable of true knowledge, a conscience to distinguish between right and wrong, affections to delight in holiness; and a heart to love God with all his powers.

2. Our God gave mankind dominion over everything that He had made (Genesis 1:26,28).

One way in which our creation in God's image showed itself is in our ruling over the earth. God said of man and woman: “Let them have dominion...” (1:26).

You will note that God said mankind was to have control over everything that had been created on the fifth day of creation (all marine and all air creatures) and everything that had thus far been created on the sixth day of creation (cattle, every creeping thing, and every living thing that moveth upon the earth). When God added that we were to have dominion “over all the earth,” this meant that man was to have mastery over “the powers of nature, physical, electrical, chemical, physiological and the like” (Dr. Leupold, *Exposition of Genesis*).

In the beginning man’s control over nature was easy; every part of nature, yes every creature on earth gladly, willingly served mankind, simply because God had planned it that way. Since the fall into sin, however, it is often highly difficult for us to rule over everything on earth. Because of sin the ground is cursed, weeds grow, labor is hard, and death is certain. We have to wage a relentless battle against destructive insects; few animals serve us willingly; storms damage property; weather may kill; and the earning of daily bread often becomes a struggle.

Yet, we must also note Dr. Leupold’s concluding paragraph in his comments on this verse, Genesis 1:26:

Taking the verse as a whole, we cannot but notice that it sets forth the picture of a being that stands on the very high level, a creature of singular nobility and endowed with phenomenal powers and attributes, not a type of being that by its brute imperfections is seen to be on the same level with the animal world, but a being that towers high above all other creatures, their king and their crown.

We shall close this section with another quotation from Dr. Morris:

What a concourse of wonders have we now seen in connection with this the last and crowning work of the Creator’s hand—his erect and noble form—his expressive countenance, and hand of instinct powers—his soft and delicate skin without, and his marvelous mechanism and vital chemistry within—his admirable senses, and keen perception—his brain, the sacred temple of the soul, with its telegraphic nerves in instant and uninterrupted communication with every part—his powers of memory, reflection, reasoning and imagination—his unlimited capacity for knowledge, and the astonishing achievements of his intellect—his varied and powerful emotions, and kindling vital interest and impelling to ceaseless activity—his unslumbering conscience, God’s faithful witness in the soul always and instantly declaring in favor of truth and righteousness—and the sweet harmony of all his parts and powers and faculties with the will Divine. How illustrious a being was man as he came from the hands of his Maker! With what dignified attributes was he endued. For what high pursuits was he qualified. To what sublime enjoyments was he destined. In him was found, in an important sense, the end of this earthly system. Without man, the world, its furniture, and its habitants, would have existed in vain. Whatever of skill, power and goodness were displayed by the Creative Hand, there was, before the formation of man, none to understand, admire, love, enjoy, or praise the Creator. The earth was clothed with beauty; the landscape unfolded its delightful scenes; the sky spread its magnificent curtains; the sun traveled in the greatness of his strength; the moon and the stars solemnly displayed the glorious wisdom of their Author, without an eye to gaze, or a heart to contemplate. A magnificent habitation was, indeed, built and furnished; but no tenant was found. Brutes were the only beings which could enjoy it all, and their enjoyment was limited to animal gratification. But man was separated from all earthly creatures, by being formed an intelligent being. His mind could trace the skill and glory of the Creator and the works of his hands; and from the nature of the work, could understand, admire and adore the Workman. His

thoughts could rise to God, and wander through eternity. The universe to him was mirror, by which he saw reflected every moment, in every place, and in every form, the beauty, greatness, and excellence of Jehovah. To Him his affections and his praises rose, more sweet than the incense of the morning, and made no unhappy harmony with the loftier music of heaven. He was the priest of this great world, and offered the morning and evening sacrifice of thanksgiving for the whole earthly creation. Of this creation he was also the *lord*, the rightful, just and benevolent sovereign. The subjection of the inferior creatures to him was voluntary, and productive of nothing but order, peace and happiness. With these endowments and privileges, he was placed in Paradise, no unworthy resemblance of heaven itself; and surrounded by “everything which was good for food, or pleasant to the eye.” In an atmosphere impregnated with life; amid streams in which life flowed; amid fruits in which life bloomed and ripened; encircled by ever living beauty and magnificence; peaceful within; safe without; and conscious of immortality; he was destined to labor only that he might be useful and happy, and to contemplate the wonders of the universe, and worship its glorious Author, as his prime and professional employment. He was an image of the invisible God, created to be like Him in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, His illustrious attributes; and like Him to receive dominion over the works of His hands.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come! Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honor, and power; for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. Amen.

H. All of our God’s original creation was perfect (Genesis 1:31) and praiseworthy (Psalm 104).

1. Our God’s creation was perfect.

At the close of the sixth and last creation day, when our Almighty God surveyed the universe and everything in it, He could not find a single flaw anywhere. He, the only all-holy, all-wise One “saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Genesis 1:31). Nothing in the world or in the universe was imperfect, nothing was useless, nothing marred His creation, nothing could possibly be made better. On the contrary, every bit of plant life and every creature had been made according to one grand, all-inclusive master plan; everything in the universe was in complete harmony with everything else; and everything served mankind, the crown of creation, willingly and perfectly.

As for man and woman, our Creator had taken a lump of earth and made of it a faithful, helpful wife and a loving, devoted husband. Our God had created beings whose intellect was boundless, whose knowledge of science was complete, and whose rule over the world was perfect. Even after the Fall into sin when everything became imperfect, their descendants were capable of becoming cherished sons and blessed daughters, artists that could decorate the Sistine Chapel or write Macbeth, builders of the Taj Mahal or composers of the Messiah, carvers of a Pieta or discoverers of penicillin, teachers of the children and preachers of the Gospel.

2. Our God’s creation is praiseworthy.

When the Psalmist viewed all of the creation marvels, he could only exclaim: “Oh Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom Thou hast made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches” (Psalm 104:24). The Psalmist, who knew much less about God’s creation miracles than we do, nevertheless was filled with awe and thanksgiving as he contemplated God’s marvelous works.

Can we do any less? We have, on the previous pages, treated the creation days somewhat in detail in order to obtain a little idea of the glory of God in creation. We have seen His omniscience, His

omnipotence, also His mercy and His goodness to us in His creative works. We hope and pray that you will now look upon the universe and especially upon this earth and everything in it with eyes enlightened to see the glory of the Lord in every part. When we begin to see the greatness and the glory of God in creation, then we can join Johann Mentzer in wholeheartedly singing his stirring hymn, “Oh, that I had a thousand voices,” number 30 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. Stanzas 1 and 4 of that hymn read as follows:

Oh, that I had a thousand voices
 To praise my God with thousand tongues!
 My heart, which in the Lord rejoices,
 Would then proclaim in grateful songs
 To all, wherever I might be,
 What great things God hath done for me.

All creatures that have breath and motion,
 That throng the earth, the sea, and sky,
 Now join me in my heart’s devotion,
 Help me to raise His praises high.
 My utmost powers can ne’er aright
 Declare the wonders of His might.

Yet, one other, still more important fact must also be mentioned: Even though creation tells us Christians much about God, that revelation is far from perfect. If we want a perfect, completely dependable revelation of God, especially of His love in Christ for poor sinners, we must go to the Bible. King David wrote that truth some 3,000 years ago in Psalm 19. After telling how the heavens declare the glory of God, he wrote, “The law (the Word) of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7). Creation tells us something of God’s majesty, power, and wisdom, but the Bible is far more clear, dependable, and necessary.

I. Man’s sin caused God’s curse to crash down upon His lovely creation (Genesis 3).

With perfect bodies, with no sin and its frightful effects, with all creation serving mankind, oh, our first parents must have had an indescribably happy existence in Paradise. Can you imagine what they saw and how they felt when they first viewed all of the splendors of the Garden and knew that a gracious God had prepared it all for them? (In V, F, 5 we mentioned some of the physical blessings which they must have seen on that great sixth creation day.)

Not until we by the grace of the Lord Jesus reach the new heaven and the new earth will we ever again see or experience the full blessing of our first parents in Paradise. The very thought of all those blessings moved St. Paul, and with him all Christians, to exclaim, I have “a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Philippians 1:23). That will be Paradise Regained, for Jesus promised, “to him that overcomes will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Revelation 2:7).

We know, however, that this altogether blessed state did not continue, for man sinned, rebelled against his Maker, separated himself from his Creator, and placed a black mark across all of God’s lovely creation. This is how it happened: The Devil, who had previously defied God and had consequently been cast out of heaven forever, hated God with all of his being. Yet, since he could not attack God directly, he spent all of his time in plotting the fall of mankind, God’s dearest creatures. One day he entered into a snake (the devil is therefore called “that old serpent” in Revelation 12:9 and 20:2), came to Eve and tried to make her doubt

God's goodness. He asked her, "Did God really say, 'don't eat from any tree in the Garden'?" (Genesis 3:2, Beck).

Eve knew the answer to that question full well: "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the Garden...but God did say, 'Don't eat of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the Garden, and don't touch it, or you will die'" (Genesis 3:2, 3, Beck).

"You're not going to die," the snake told the woman. "No, God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you'll be like God and know what is good and bad" (Genesis 3:4, 5).

You can see how cleverly Satan was doing his deadly work. Instead of pointing to the hundreds of trees whose fruits God had graciously and lovingly given to our first parents, he tried to make Eve believe that God was imposing an unreasonable command by forbidding them to eat the fruit of one tree. He even dangled this empty, worthless, deadly promise before them, "You'll exist like gods, if you eat of it; you will be a higher being than God made you."

Eve fell for the bait. She looked and "saw that the fruit of the tree was good to eat" (Genesis 3:6, Beck), and in that moment the world's greatest tragedy occurred: She sinned. God had placed that particular tree in the Garden to test our first parents' obedience. In return for all His unbelievably great blessings, He asked them to obey His will. He promised death to them, if they ate of the tree. But Eve forgot God's abundant blessings, blotted God's threat out of her mind, turned against God, listened to Satan, ate the forbidden fruit, and gave some to her husband who, incredibly, also ate of it, apparently without even a word of protest. And the world will never be the same again.

Before this time our parents walked with God and talked with Him; now they hid themselves from Him, afraid to show themselves to Him (Genesis 3:8). Before the Fall our first parents lived in perfect innocence; afterwards there was burning shame (Genesis 3:10). Before this time Adam and Eve lived in perfect harmony with each other with Eve wanting nothing except to complement her husband and Adam giving himself totally for his wife; after the Fall Adam dishonorably blamed his wife for the sin and Eve foolishly blamed the serpent (Genesis 3:11-18). Before this sin the first man and woman and all their descendants could look forward to a perfect life without sorrow, pain, or death; afterwards God said to the woman: "I will give you much trouble when you're pregnant, and in pain you will give birth to children. You will long for your husband, and he will rule over you" (Genesis 3:16, Beck).

To the man God said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate some fruit of the tree when I ordered you, 'don't eat of it,' cursed is the ground on account of you. Weary from work you will eat your food as long as you live. The ground will grow thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat bread till you go back to the ground, because you were taken from it. You are dust and will turn back to dust" (Genesis 3:17-19, Beck).

Our first parents exchanged life for death; they turned work from a pleasure into a drudgery; they made it necessary for all their descendants to study, labor, and to have many sad experiences before they could begin to rule over the earth, something that came naturally in the beginning of time. Sickness strikes, pain comes, heartache appears, mourning is frequent, wild beasts harm or kill mankind, water drowns him, accidents threaten him, criminals steal from him, attackers hurt or kill him—thus was Paradise lost because of the willful sin of our first parents.

J. Our God resolved to rescue mankind from the frightful consequences of sin through His Son (Genesis 3:15).

Since the first people on earth had deliberately chosen Satan in place of God, since they had wickedly rebelled against their Creator who had overwhelmingly blessed them, one might expect that God would have wiped them off the face of the earth and immediately cast them into hell there to burn eternally with Satan. Yet, that is not what God did at all. In a totally unexpected, indescribably merciful gesture, He promised them rescue from the fateful consequences of their sin. Even before announcing the appalling results of their disastrous disobedience, He promised them a Savior. That Savior would be one particular

Seed of the woman who would crush Satan's head; the Savior would in turn be bruised and wounded by Satan (Genesis 3:15)—that is the eternally blessed meaning of this first Gospel promise. Therewith God brought hope to the hopeless, lifted up the fallen, made disaster bearable, turned death into a blessing, and opened Paradise for every believer.

From that day onward God's energies were directed toward providing salvation for mankind through Jesus. As the rest of the Old Testament clearly tells us, God chose a special nation to present the Savior to the world; He carefully nourished that nation in its formative stages; He gave it a land of its own where it might develop; and finally, "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4, 5).

God's act of saving rebellious mankind through the perfect life and cruel death of His only begotten Son is so stupendous in every way that we can only bow down before Him in awesome gratitude. If we joined the Psalmist in singing our God's praises for His mighty creation, then surely we shall much more readily join the more than 100 million angels surrounding the throne in heaven in chanting the praises of Him who died and rose again for our sakes, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever" (Revelation 5:1,13).

VI. EVOLUTION IS A REBELLION AGAINST THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION.

A. Rebellion against God's Word is normal for natural man.

1. Rebellion against God's Word is evident in various areas of life.

Almost invariably when God says something in His Holy Book, numberless people immediately deny that truth. Satan began those lies, when he contradicted God's Word in Paradise. Our Heavenly Father had said, "You will die, if you eat of this tree," and Satan said, "You will not die." Since Satan is a liar and the father of it (John 8:44), all of his followers will also continue contradicting God until time ends. Natural man simply does not receive "the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2:14).

Since mankind's nature is totally corrupt, since we by nature oppose God's Word, it should not particularly surprise us that millions of people loudly defend homosexuality, even though the Bible condemns it again and again. Leviticus 20:13 states that this vile sin is to be punished with death; Romans 1:26, 27 says that it was characteristic of the rotten heathen immorality of St. Paul's day; while I Corinthians 6:9,10 warns that unrepentant homosexuals will not inherit heaven (the word translated "effeminate" in the King James Version really means "homosexuals"). Other sexual relationships outside of marriage are also strictly forbidden by our God in passages like Exodus 20:14; Matthew 19:18, I Corinthians 6:13-20; and Galatians 5:19-21, yet millions of people practice these dreadful sins. God says they are evil, that unrepentant adulterers will not inherit heaven, yet uncounted thousands claim that extra-marital sex is harmless, desirable, even necessary under some circumstances.

2. Rebellion against God's Word is particularly evident in explaining the origin and development of life.

Therefore, it need not particularly surprise us also that people by the hundred million defy God and refuse to believe Him when He says in Genesis 1 and in other Bible passages: "This is the way in which the world came to be." Even though God was the only one present, even though He graciously revealed

exactly how He went about creating the universe and everything in it, multitudes of fallible men and women immediately reason: The world must have come about in a way different from what God said. Their reasonings have culminated in the theory of evolution, the only widespread alternative ever offered to the doctrine of creation.

Honest evolutionists admit that their theory is unscriptural and anti-Christian. For example, Charles Darwin, the patron saint of evolutionists, clearly revealed that he did not accept Genesis 1, even going so far as to state in his autobiography, "I for one must be content to remain an agnostic." (An agnostic is one who believes that we cannot know whether there is a God who created and who governs the universe; an agnostic accepts only what can be learned through his senses.) Sir Julian Huxley (born 1887), one of evolution's great promoters, wrote, "In every pattern of thought there is no longer need nor room for the supernatural, the earth was not created; it evolved. So did all the animals and the plants that inhabit it, including our human selves, mind and soul, as well as brain and body. So did religion." Similarly, Harlow Shapley, well-known Harvard astronomer (born 1885) wrote: "There is no need for explaining the origin of life in terms of the miraculous or the supernatural. Life occurs automatically wherever the conditions are right" (*Science Newsletter*, 7/3/65). Sir Arthur Keith, in his *Introduction to the Origin of Species* in the 1940's, wrote: "Evolution is unproved and unprovable. We believe it because it is the only alternative to special creation which is unthinkable."

These evolutionists and millions of others are honest: They flatly reject what God has said about the creation of the world. They forget, of course, that many "scientific facts" accepted by one generation, have been totally discarded by another. Only God's Word is perfect and eternally true, as our Lord Himself testified in John 17:17: "Thy Word is truth," Any theory, statement, experiment, speculation, or assertion that contradicts any Bible truth is automatically a lie, simply because it contradicts God who cannot lie. What the Psalmist wrote in Psalm 116:11 is surely true of the evolutionists, "All men are liars."

B. How does evolution attempt to explain the origin of the world and everything in it?

In this paper the term "evolution" will be restricted to its usual sense: The theory which claims that every living creature traces its ancestry back to a single cell that somehow became alive from lifeless materials and then through a series of minute changes stretching over millions of years finally acquired all of the various characteristics of contemporary animal life. (Evolution at one time stated that everything began with a "simple" cell, until science began to discover that the individual cell is a tremendously complicated organism with about 100 mitochondria, each one of which may have almost 50,000 units to it. Each human, fertilized cell has 46 chromosomes, and each chromosome has about 2,000 genes. So each cell has possibly 100,000 genes. *The National Geographic*, 9/76, has an interesting article on the amazing cell. Someone wrote that an individual cell is about as complicated as New York City!)

Evolutionists disagree greatly on many details regarding their theory, as is to be expected with something unprovable and untrue. However, they do generally agree that such a one-celled creature is the common ancestor of every form of created life (hence the expression "amoeba to man"). Over the course of several hundred million years (changes in heredity take place slowly), so they claim, these one-celled creatures eventually developed into worms, which ultimately became fish, then amphibians, later reptiles, then birds, finally mammals, and last of all man. At one time evolutionists prepared charts showing how one class of creatures gradually developed into another class, but most evolutionists no longer favor the reproduction of such charts, since they are admittedly not true to fact.

Evolution, as we have just described it, is the so-called "macro-evolution" to denote large changes into various different classes of animals, in contrast to "micro-evolution," the minor changes that develop within various kinds. Everyone, Christian as well as unbeliever, creationists and evolutionists, agrees that micro-evolution has often happened and continues to happen today. Creationists know, however, that no

changes from one kind of creature to another kind have ever taken place, nor is this possible, as we shall show in a later chapter (See VI,E,1).

C. How did the theory of evolution arise?

Evolution as an explanation of the world's origin, is by no means something new. Its beginnings can be traced all the way back to Anaximander (died 547 B.C.), the Greek philosopher and astronomer, and to Aristotle (died 332 B.C.), one of the best-known Greek philosophers. In succeeding centuries various men proposed variations of this theory, yet none of them was widely or seriously accepted before the late 1700's and the 1800's.

On the contrary, during the first approximately 1800 years after the birth of our Lord, most of the Christian world (this included most scholars) accepted, literally, the creation account of Genesis 1. True, at times the church and its scholars fostered ideas that are not really a part of the Bible record. For example, many believed at one time that the earth was flat, basing their thinking on passages like Psalm 67:7: "The ends of the earth." (This phrase occurs frequently in Scripture, see, for example, Psalms 22:27; 59:13; 72:8; 98:3; etc., but it certainly does not mean that the earth is flat and that consequently, if one sails far enough he will drop off into space.) Some churchmen thought that the earth was stationary, since "the sun rises." The story of Galileo and his seventeenth century heresy trial is well-known. He claimed that the earth moved around the sun and that the sun was the center of our solar system. Under pressure from the Church, he recanted, but supposedly grumbled as he left the room, "Yet it (the earth) does move." We must not, however fault the Church too much for this, since Galileo insisted that his word was the last one on the subject. Had he called it a theory, the trial might have been avoided. We must also be careful that we do not read some scientific claim into the Bible, which is not really stated in God's Word. Yet, when these admissions are made, we must remember that the Church and its scholars for some 18 centuries correctly taught the creation account of Genesis 1.

A drastic change in this line of thinking began in the late 1700's and especially during the 1800's. This was the age of rationalism, when reason supposedly ruled the earth and when everything supernatural was cast aside by many scientists and philosophers. Various voices began to be raised against creation by men like Erasmus Darwin (Charles' grandfather, who died in 1802) and Chevalier deLamarck. (This French naturalist, who died in 1829, hated Christianity; he believed that acquired traits could be passed on to succeeding generations, a theory hardly anyone accepts today.) Then there was Charles Lyell, a British geologist who died in 1875; he was completely opposed to creation and to the Flood account, stating that all things were progressing today as they had always done. (That is exactly what Peter wrote of unbelievers to the last times, II Peter 3:3, 4). There were others who defended and promoted Charles Darwin's falsehoods, men like England's Thomas Huxley (died 1895) and Germany's Ernest Haeckel who died in 1919 (he hated Christianity; instead he promoted the now discredited Theory of Recapitulation, which states, wrongly, that the development of any creature from conception to birth repeats its evolutionary history).

Above all there was Charles Darwin, an evil example of the wrong man (he had become an agnostic by 1859), at the wrong time (this was the age of rationalism that wanted nothing to do with God), with a wrong theory (evolution attempted to explain the world without God's creative power), and the tremendous ability to popularize his anti-Christian thoughts (in the *Origin of Species* that appeared in 1859). In his book, the bible of the evolutionists, Darwin made some fantastic assumptions. He assumed, for example, that spontaneous generation actually happened (this is the theory that living beings can arise from non-living materials, a theory that Pasteur would soon demolish).

As a young man at Cambridge University, Charles Darwin studied and earned a degree in theology, the only degree that he ever earned. There he had been taught that God created every species exactly as it is found everywhere on earth (that is too narrow a view of creation.) Then on the famous *Beagle* voyage, begun in 1831, on which he was the unpaid naturalist, he observed a tremendous number of varieties among the various fauna, birds, turtles, and the like. They often differed somewhat from each other from island to

island and from island to continent, especially off the coast of South America. Then, as Frank Marsh explained in *Evolution, Creation, and Science*, pages 307 and elsewhere, “It began to appear very irrational to him that one ‘species’ should have been created for each small island. But how, then *had* the different ‘species’ arisen, and why did they belong to the South American genera? That problem, once in his mind, gave him no rest. His conclusion is known to everyone in his theory of evolution.”

Had Darwin been content to point out these minor variations within a “kind,” he would undoubtedly be honored by Christians today, for this is Scriptural. The Bible nowhere makes the statement that minor changes in “kinds” would happen, yet several facts almost directly point to that conclusion, as we shall see in VI, E, 1, b.

Again, Charles Darwin assumed that the geological record was incomplete, because the missing links between the various classes of animals had not yet been found, something, he believed would surely happen (it has not happened to this day). He believed that ‘every form of life could develop new organs, something totally impossible, and that these new characteristics could be passed on to succeeding generations, something that has never happened.

Darwin’s thinking culminated in his world-famous or infamous *Origin of Species*, first published in 1859, sold out on the date of publication, and later republished in many editions. This was the great, red-letter day in the history of evolution, and science has never been the same again. So great has been the influence of this book on the religion of evolution (it is a religion requiring infinitely more faith than Christianity) that it has literally become the evolutionists’ bible, even though many disagree with some or even with most of its conclusions. For example, Dr. Ernest Mayr, a leading Harvard University professor and evolutionist, wrote in his *Animal Species and Evolution*, page 13, that Charles Darwin was “bewildered,” page 484 “hopelessly confused”; and page 12, “Darwin failed to solve the problem indicated by the title of his work.” Dr. George Gaylord Simpson, Mayr’s colleague at Harvard, in his *This View of Life*, page 81, says that Darwin’s “book called the *Origin of Species* is not really on the subject.” (These quotations are from the book *Darwin Retried* by Norman Macbeth, page 25).

Despite these contrary opinions, Darwin has become the patron saint of the evolutionists. His canonization took place at the 100th anniversary celebration of his *Origin of Species* in 1959. So much praise was heaped upon him at that time that, George Simpson could state in his *Meaning of Evolution*: “Darwin was one of history’s towering geniuses and ranks with the greatest heroes of man’s intellectual progress. He deserves that place first of all because he finally and definitely established evolution as a fact,” a completely untrue statement, since evolution, far from being a fact, is a totally false assumption.

D. How widespread is the theory of evolution?

The result of Darwin’s and many of his followers’ work is that the theory of evolution is accepted as gospel truth by the vast majority of the world’s scientists, educators, publishers of newspapers and books, editors of magazines, historians, doctors, economists, philosophers, governmental agencies (including the Smithsonian Institution), and possibly by the vast majority of church men and women. Dr. Henry Morris, in his *Troubled Waters of Evolution*, wrote that evolution has permeated every facet of biology, the physical sciences, psychology, sociology, history, humanities, philosophy, religion, and even outward Christianity. In the very midst of some of God’s greatest wonders, preserved in our national parks, government rangers lecture as if evolution were a fact of life, while the B.S.C.S. Curriculum (*Biological Sciences’ Curriculum Study*), developed at governmental expense, is also blatantly evolutionistic. Indeed, even the United States Supreme Court ruled in 1968 that states may not prohibit the teaching of evolution in state-supported schools.

What is still more amazing is that large areas of the Church that for 18 centuries believed in creation have now accepted and are promoting evolution. For example, in his 1950 encyclical *Humani generis* Pope Pius XII wrote that “The teaching authority of the Church does not forbid that... research and discussion... take place with regard to the doctrine of evolution.” The 1967 *New Catholic Encyclopedia* states that this

marked the starting point of a new development and that evolution was expressly recognized as a valid hypothesis. Since that time huge numbers of Roman Catholics have accepted evolution as a fact.

In the Protestant field Emil Brunner, a widely known theologian, stated in his *Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption* that evolution can no longer be conceived as a mere hypothesis, but must be regarded as a proved science truth. Tens of thousands of pastors within the Christian Church agree with this statement or at least believe that evolution must be regarded as a valid explanation of the world's origin.

Nor does the future appear to be any better, since most American church colleges have also long since abandoned creation to favor some type of evolution. Biological departments at such schools as Valparaiso University in Indiana or Concordia College at Moorhead, Minnesota, both Lutheran institutions, have for some years been teaching evolution as a fact of life. Many seminary professors all across the land have followed this example. At the larger secular universities it is difficult to obtain a degree in some fields and to teach in them (for example, geology, anthropology), without being an evolutionist. Even the American Scientific Affiliation, originally organized to defend the Bible, now accepts evolution.

So sure of their belief are the followers of evolution that they make statements like this: "Evolution is accepted by all of the world's scientists" (*Rand McNally Map of Evolution*, Rev. Ed., 1960); "No serious scientist denies the fact of evolution"; "No informed mind today denies that man has descended by slow process from the world of the fish and the frog" (*Life*, 8/26/66); "We are not taught by the Bible, however, that the universe came about all in six days" (Knights of Columbus, *Lessons of Genesis*—they say that the first chapters of Genesis are not historical in the modern sense of the word); "The creation account is obsolete, completely refuted, and accepted by only the ignorant or the prejudiced."

The result of all this propaganda is that millions of people have never heard of the doctrine of creation (various state legislatures have tried, generally unsuccessfully, to introduce the teaching of creation in public schools as an alternative to evolution). Some of our country's greatest university libraries have no or few books or periodicals that defend or promote creation. No anti-evolution law remains on the statutes of any state (Mississippi was the last state to abolish its anti-evolution law in 1970).

All of this prompted Robert T. Benedict to write in his *Journey Away from God*, page 38: "So then, from all quarters of authority: from scholars in science, philosophy, and philology, and even from the established Christian Church, twentieth century man is told that the scriptural account of creation is wrong (albeit the best man could do with the limited facts on hand)—misleading—calculated to dull men's mind—plagiarized from the Babylonians—utter foolishness—devoid of all scientific basis; or—simply misinterpreted."

Yes, voices have been raised against evolution and in favor of creation. The Creation Research Society, for example, composed of hundreds of professional scientists with masters or doctors degrees, stoutly and ably defends creation; the Institute for Creation Research of California is a school whose major reason for existence is to teach all subjects on the basis of the Genesis 1 creation story; the Bible-Science Association of Caldwell, Idaho, conducts creation seminars, publishes creation material, and sells many excellent books on creation—if our readers wish additional material on creation vs. evolution, he should write for their catalog; the Moody Institute for Science of Chicago has a fine series of creation films; entire church bodies are completely opposed to evolution, accepting Genesis 1 exactly as it is written (these include probably close to 100 percent of the members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, many members of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, a large percentage of the Southern Baptists, etc.) Above all, many a humble, sincere Christian believes implicitly that God meant it, when He said in Genesis 1 that He created the universe and everything in it in six days.

Even many evolutionists agree that, as a Foreword to a 1956 edition of *Darwin's Origin of Species* stated, "The evidence (for evolution) is unsatisfactory and does not permit any certain conclusions." The Foreword to a 1960 edition of the same work is really a criticism of evolution. So some evolutionists; at least, realize the truth of Dr. Walter Lang's statement: "We maintain more faith is required of those who accept evolution than of those who accept the Biblical record of origins. Because evolution is also untestable, it too is a religion" (*Essays on Creation*, 1974). Dr. Lang, director of the Bible-Science Association, and other creationists have written in this vein: Evolution is a religion; it has its god (chance,

time, and nature); its bible is the geological timetable; its prophets are the misguided scientists who promote evolution; and its worshippers are all who unquestionably accept evolution's falsities without seeing its absurdities.

Yet, when this is said, one still faces the fact that most of the world believes in evolution. Since this is a theory that can easily and quickly destroy the Christian faith, it behooves us to examine it in the light of God's Word and also in the light of true science. We shall do that in the following paragraphs. If we do it objectively, we shall surely come to the conclusion that evolution is violently anti-Christian, it is clearly opposed to God's Word, it is not a respectful theory, it violates many scientific principles, it makes claims that cannot be tested, and it is at best a dreadful scientific blunder.

E. God's Word thoroughly condemns the theory of evolution.

1. God's "after-its-kind" principle of creation destroys evolution's basis.

a. What is a-Biblical "kind

In Genesis 1:11-25 our God used the expression "after his (their) kind" ten different times (Genesis 1:11; twice in v. 12; twice in v. 21; twice in v. 24; and three times in v. 25). Since God inspired Moses to write this expression so many times in just one short section of the Bible, it must be important indeed. We must pay careful attention to it. Since we have treated this topic previously (see V, C, 5, f; V, E, 2, c; and V, F, 3), we shall just repeat the definition previously stated: A Biblical "kind" is in general any group of creatures that has many similarities, that can interbreed with each other, and usually has fertile offspring.

b. God allows variations within a "kind."

While not stating this directly, various Scripture teachings show that such variations within a kind do indeed happen. For example, when the Bible tells us that Adam named all of the world's animals in part of the sixth day (Genesis 2:19,20), it means that he named the "kinds" of animals in the world at that time. It does not mean that he named the million or so species of animals that still live on earth today—here would not have been sufficient time for that.

Again, the Lord told Noah to take into the Ark "of every clean beast by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean...by two, the male and his female. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth" (Genesis 7:2, 3). That surely does not mean that Noah took a pair of each one of the 40,000 or so species of spiders or representatives of each one of the hundreds of species of squirrels, or seven of the 32 deer species, or two each of the three dozen dog species.

What Noah did was to take only the common ancestor of each one of these kinds; otherwise there would hardly have been room for all of them in the Ark, though it was a tremendously large ship, some 500 feet long by 80 feet wide by 50 feet high (Genesis 6:15—a cubit is 18 to 20 inches). Dr. Henry Morris in his *Genesis Flood* estimates that the Ark held as much cargo as 522 railroad boxcars. Arthur J. Jones, in *The Creation Research Quarterly* of October, 1975, stated that Noah took 700 kinds of animals into the Ark, 66 clean and 734 unclean kinds. That would make a total of 2400 animals that lived in the Ark for more than a year. There was actually room for many more than that, although we must remember that there had to be space also for living quarters and for food.

Dr. Rehwinkel in his *The Flood*, has figures that are somewhat different. He states that there are an estimated 290 kinds of mammals larger than a sheep, 757 from the size of a sheep to a rat, and 1359 smaller than a rat. Whichever figures one uses, one can understand that the Ark could easily

accommodate the many “kinds” of creatures, although it would not have had room for representatives of each species of animal in the world today.

From the foregoing examples it is evident that Scripture indirectly tells us that God made each “kind” of animal so that it could develop changes within its kind. Admittedly, no one knows all of the answers or reasons for the development of changes within the various kinds. Why are there many races of mankind, ranging all the way from the short, black African pygmy to the tall, blonde, white Nordic? Why are there 9 species of red fox and hundreds of varieties of pigeons; why the many varieties of finches and turtles that disturbed Darwin; and why are there dozens of species in one family of creatures and hundreds in another? Why, for that matter, are certain creatures found only in certain areas, like the Galapagos turtle, the Amazon anaconda, the Australian kangaroo, the New Guinea bird of paradise, and the Chinese pandas? Complete answers to these questions may never be known, but this we do know full well: God created the original ancestor of every kind of creature, including man, so that it was capable of developing in greater or lesser variety.

(Walter Lang, in his *Five Minutes with the Bible & Science*, 12/77, stated: “Creationists...believe that potential for a people, including all races, was placed into the genes of Adam and Eve at creation. Since then, God selects from that pool to endow individuals with their characteristics, sometimes in order to meet the demands of their environment,” The Creator did the same for the ancestors of each kind.)

Furthermore those animals that survived the Flood eventually migrated to various regions of the earth, where their offspring were born and where the “kinds” developed into various species. (Land masses may have been connected at one time—that could explain the location of various species.)

c. God prevents one “kind” of creature from changing into another “kind.”

God created every major kind of creature during the first week of the world’s history—He did not make one creature from which all others descended over the course of millions of years. Also God set bounds beyond which no creature can ever develop. For example, no fish can ever develop into an Amphibian—God’s law of the “kind” prevents that. Nor is there any example in all the world of one kind of creature ever developing into another kind. At no time in all the world’s history did a sperm of a human being ever fertilize the egg of another creature, like an ape. There is no example of the sperm of a horse ever being able to fertilize the egg of a cow to produce a horse-cow. The chemical composition of the various cells prevents this from happening. This is one of the great laws of science, laid down in Genesis 1, for the well-being of mankind. And honest scientists everywhere recognize that truth. It is called the “fixity of species.”

What then happens to evolution’s basic principle that one kind of creature eventually developed into another, for example, that in time fish became amphibians? It must be discarded; it is untrue; and thus the very premise upon which evolution is built must be abandoned. When the foundation is gone, can anything still remain of the building? Everyone knows the answer to that question.

2. Various other parts of God’s Word also condemn evolution.

As if the “after-its-kind” principle were not enough, God’s Word repeatedly adds to evolution’s death warrant. For example, evolution claims that eons ago lifeless materials plus time and chance eventually developed the first spark of life on earth. That position is thoroughly condemned by, among various other Bible passages, Nehemiah 9:6: “Thou, even Thou, art Lord alone; Thou hast made...the earth, and all things therein, the seas, and all that is therein.” In New Testament times the great apostle Paul expressed the same thought, when he spoke of “the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the seas, and all things that are therein” (Acts 14:15). (In his *The Genesis Record* Dr. Henry Morris states that Genesis 1-3 is cited 63 times in the New Testament; it is always accepted as being factual.)

This world and everything in it did not come about by chance, but all life is the result of a divine plan by the master Creator. (See also the Bible passages cited in V, G, 1, b).

Evolution says that everything gradually developed from the lower to the higher, from the simpler to the more complex creatures, and from disorder to better order. God's Word says the opposite: In the beginning everything was perfect (Genesis 1:31); then came sin (Genesis 3); and from that moment everything began to deteriorate. Genesis 3:16-19, for example, speaks of God's curse upon His creation; Psalm 102:25, 26 tells us that the universe including the earth "shall wax old like a garment," and eventually it "shall perish." Isaiah 51:6 has a similar thought. In keeping with this increasing tendency to disorder, mankind's average age at death has shown an astonishing decline from approximately 900 years before the Flood to the present 70 or 80 (see Genesis 5; Genesis 25:7; Genesis 50:22; Psalm 90:10). Finally, when our earth and our universe have reached a certain stage in their deterioration, they will disappear altogether (II Peter 3:7-10).

Evolution maintains that our earth is approximately five billion years old, while Scripture shows conclusively that it is not even 1/100,000th that old, as we demonstrated in III, D, 2.

Evolution believes that man developed his own moral code, after he learned to talk and to write. It also believes that there is no absolute truth, no absolute right and wrong, but that every generation must decide for itself what is right and wrong. Yet, God gave us a code in the Moral Law that applies to all people of all times. Anyone who violates it without repentance will surely lose his soul (see, for example, Matthew 5:17-19; I Corinthians 6:9, 10; Galatians 6:19-21).

Evolution regards man as a higher form of animal, different in degree, but not in kind from other animals. Scripture, on the other hand, says that man is created in God's image entirely different in kind from every other creature. Man is the crown of creation, destined to rule over every other part of God's creation. Unlike every other creature, he alone has a soul that lives forever.

Since evolution claims man is just a higher form of animal, it naturally claims that all creatures, man included, are essentially related to one another. Yet St. Paul writes in I Corinthians 15:39: "All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds."

Evolution maintains that science, especially geology (the study of earth's history by means of rocks) and paleontology (the study of plant and animal fossils) provides the only dependable answer to earth's early history. What an utterly inconceivable amount of pride is needed thus to place man's fallible reason above the Word of our God, which alone and forever is the truth (John 17:17)!

Other contrasts between evolution and God's Word exist. The foregoing examples should be sufficient to show every unbiased person that evolution and Scripture are two opposites, like cold and heat, black and white.

F. True science also thoroughly condemns the theory of evolution.

1. Two majors universally-recognized scientific flaws condemn evolution.

For us Christians the very fact that Scripture condemns evolution is sufficient to keep us from believing it. When God says something, we believe it, no matter if a billion people deny it. When anyone believes something contrary to the Word, he is unquestionably wrong. Consequently, when evolutionists promote their theory, they are lying, no question about that.

It therefore should not surprise us particularly to learn that evolution is also in conflict with some of science's major laws. It especially violates two major scientific principles, called the First and the Second Law of Thermodynamics, basic scientific principles that were developed by the great Sir Isaac Newton (a strict creationist, who died in 1727) and accepted by scientists everywhere. The first of these laws states that matter and energy (essentially the same thing) are neither created nor destroyed. The second is that without outside influence everything tends to disorder (the law of entropy, which is really

a measure of disorder). In other words, any work that requires energy results in the loss of a larger or smaller part of that energy for further work. One might call these principles the law of preservation and the law of deterioration.

Both laws are completely in accord with Scripture. Genesis 2:2 lays the foundation for the first Law of Thermodynamics, for it tells us that God finished all of His work of creation. He made no more matter or energy after the first six days of the world's history. And Hebrews 1:3 tells us that Christ upholds "all things by the word of His power." The total quantity of matter and energy therefore remain constant, upheld by Christ. On the other hand passages like Psalm 102:26 and Isaiah 51:6, previously quoted (in VI, E, 2) tell us that everything is waxing older and therefore becomes more disordered, as we already demonstrated (also in point E, 2 of this section VI).

Evolution depends on principles that require the exact opposite of these universally accepted Laws of Thermodynamics. It is based on the idea that matter was being created all during those eons of time that man was developing from an amoeba. Yet, energy remains constant; it is neither created nor destroyed.

Evolution's violation of the second law of science is even more flagrant and brazen. One does not, for example, need to be a scientist to observe that everything left to itself tends to deteriorate, to decay, to disintegrate, and finally to die. (Often it does that even with the greatest care.) Left alone, a strawberry bed soon deteriorates, iron rusts, the finest horses become somewhat useless mustangs, wood decays, vegetation ages, while man and beast become older until finally they die. Nothing gets better as the ages roll by. One might call this scientific fact the law of degeneration, exactly what one would expect from the curse that God placed upon sin and exactly what Scripture says. In keeping with that thought St. Paul wrote, "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time" (Romans 8:23, NIV); and one day "The creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay" (Romans 8:21, NIV). In heaven there will, of course, be no more entropy, for sin that causes deterioration will never be found in heaven.

Yet, despite this evidence that even a child can easily understand, evolution claims that for several hundred million years the exact opposite happened, all by itself without help from anyone. Something, evolution claims, was present in every creature and in every plant that made it improve and develop into something better, higher, finer. Thus a tiny worm eventually became an amphibian, a reptile, and eventually a bird. Thus some ape-like creature finally became a man, and man himself became a talker, after being a grunter for many millennia.

Dr. Henry Morris wrote of this strange belief: "The evolutionary delusion becomes absolute nonsense in the context of the all-comprehensive Second Law" (*Troubled Waters of Evolution*). All honest scientists will therefore have to admit this truth:

Every field of science and every contemporary observation accept the great Second Law of Thermodynamics, that everything left to itself tends to disorder. Yet, without the slightest shred of evidence, I believe that the opposite law was in effect for at least one-half billion years. During that period of time everything tended to become more orderly, better organized, and more highly developed, all by itself.

That, you will admit, requires a monumental faith, since all the evidence points to the contrary.

2. The world's design and order condemn evolution.

Another factor that thoroughly condemns evolution's claims that everything came about as the result of chance is the world's design and order. Everywhere we look in the universe, from the infinitely tiny atom to the indescribably huge stars, we see evidences of design and order, of a master plan particularly for our earth. This master plan of creation is so clear that even the heathen know that only an

all-powerful, all-knowing God could have made it all (Romans 1:20). If, for example, one sees a lovely, well-kept formal garden of the type that surrounds some European castles, one knows that it required many hands working many hours under the expert supervision of a skilled gardener to make it all possible. It will never grow that way by itself, no not in a billion years. If one views a huge, highly functional building, one knows immediately that for its erection this too required many hands with much machinery working many hours, under the direction of a skillful architect and an able contractor.

Then what shall we say of this world (omitting for the moment our universe) which everywhere shows evidences of infinitely more precise planning and immensely greater work? If we look into the skies, we see the sun and the moon placed exactly at the right distance from the earth to carry out their functions for us; if we look above us, we discover the ozone layer that protects us from the sun's deadly ultraviolet rays; if we observe our earth, we notice exactly the right ratio of water to land to provide billion-bushel harvests for mankind. No other planet has water, as far as we know, since they do not need it.

If we examine plant life, we discover the tremendous miracle of photosynthesis (the word means putting together by means of light) whereby the chlorophyll in plants uses the energy from sunlight to produce sugar from water and carbon dioxide and thus to develop food for the earth's hungry creatures and its billions of people. If we search the ground, we find there countless bacteria and fungi that feed on the dead bodies, which would otherwise remain to pollute our land; if we investigate the human cell, we discover huge numbers of genes that regulate the development of such multi-million dollar members and organs as the nose, the eyes, the arms, the kidneys, and the lungs, neither normally letting them grow too large or too small. If we inspect the bones of the various creatures, we find them perfectly suited to their owners, light and hollow for birds, heavy and strong for large animals, and various kinds, depending on their function, for mankind. If we observe marine or air creatures, we soon learn how perfectly they are created for their particular environment; if we count the elements and study their uses, we find that they are exactly what we need for life on earth, no more, no less.

Furthermore, all life is closely interrelated and interdependent. For example, we are just beginning to understand the masterful interrelationship among soil, minerals, wildlife, water, plant life, forests, and man. Without water, chlorophyll, sunlight, spiders, bees, earthworms, birds, algae, bacteria, and many another part of God's creation, life would be either impossible or tremendously difficult.

The more we learn about creation, the more we ought to recognize that a Master Designer planned it all for our welfare. When one views the complexity, the beauty, and the usefulness of our world, can he really believe that all of this came about by chance, as evolution would have us believe? Indeed not, creation required a Master Builder—God. “The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth” (Proverbs 3:19). With the Psalmist we exclaim, “Oh Lord, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches” (Psalm 104:24).

The evolutionist, in his preposterous delusions, maintains that time and chance have created all that exists. Someone even suggested that a million monkeys, striking the keys of a million typewriters for a million years may by chance type a copy of a Shakespearean play. Bolton Davidheiser answered that contention in his *Evolution and the Christian Faith* by stating that a mathematician had determined that it would take those same million monkeys an average of 284 billion years to type the first line of Hamlet (“Ber.: Who's there?") by chance. That's even too long a time for the evolutionists, who believe that the earth is only some 5 billion years old.

3. Evolution is condemned by its inability to answer major questions or objections.

a. Evolution cannot explain the earth's origin.

One question about which evolutionists have long speculated is the origin of the earth. Almost everyone admits that it did not always exist. Now, then, did it come to be? Scientists have counted

some 20 theories that have been proposed to answer the question. Among them are the following: The earth was torn from the sun, but how can that be when the sun is 99 percent hydrogen and helium and the earth has mainly much heavier elements? The Nebular Hypothesis, frequently accepted in the 19th century, states that our entire solar system began as a huge, hot, gaseous, rotating mass, the outer part of which eventually separated to become our planets, while the inner part became our sun. Yet, this theory has so many flaws in it that it was replaced in the 1940's and the 1950's by the Dust-Cloud Theory, which states that our solar system was formed from a slowly-rotating cloud of dust and gas. As the cloud cooled, its outer edges separated and became our planets, while our sun remained at the center. The theory is similar to the Nebular Hypothesis and it is subject to the same criticisms. (The average layman will surely wonder how one tiny particle of dust to each five cubic yards of space—that's about what space consists of—could ever become our earth.) The Steady State Theory claims that matter is being created continually and therefore our universe is always the Same. Today many scientists subscribe to the Big Bang Theory, as *Time* 12/30/74 stated:

Most contemporary cosmologists agree that the universe was created billions of years ago when a super dense clump of primordial matter exploded with incredible force. The hot gasses created by the “big bang” were flung violently outward gradually cooling and condensing into great islands of stars, or galaxies, that are still moving away from each other.”

You can see that scientists have changed their opinions regarding the world's origin repeatedly, simply because it is comparatively easy to find flaws in every one of their theories, as the reader can quickly learn by consulting the proper authorities.

To all of this George Mulfinger answered tellingly in his essay, “Current Theories of the Universe” (*A Challenge to Education*), page 132:

1. No scheme of evolutionary cosmogony does, in fact, account for the present state of the universe.
2. No scheme of evolutionary cosmology accounts for the existence of the necessary materials at the beginning or the laws that govern their interactions.
3. All such schemes, in proceeding from an unorganized state to the present highly organized universe are in direct conflict with the Second Law of Thermodynamics. This law implied that a universe left to itself for a period of time will increase in disorder, and the longer it is left, the greater the disorder! Devising plausible sounding guesses as to the origin of our physical world is a challenging pastime that has captured the minds of people from all walks of life... No system of evolutionary cosmogony, once it has been given an adequate length of time to demonstrate its worth, has been able to survive. Sometimes a hypothesis will die a natural death as a result of its own shortcomings. Some have been put to rest when they fail to answer to the rigid demands of mathematics. Others of a more recent vintage are still with us. These present systems of thought represent the labors of many brilliant men who disagree violently with one another on many of the basic issues. Interestingly, it seems at times that the only matter upon which they all agree is that the Bible is wrong!

Why can't all people accept the only true explanation for the earth's origin, given to us by the only Person present at the time, the One who truly created all things by His almighty power and wisdom? There is just one reason why people reject the account of creation, as St. Paul wrote: “The

man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Corinthians 2:14, NIV). See also Ephesians 4:17, 18. Another word of St. Paul’s also comes to mind: II Timothy 3:7, which tells us that some people are “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” That describes the proponents of evolution exactly.

b. Evolution cannot explain the origin of life.

Evolution claims that non-living substances somewhere, at some long-past time, somehow combined to form the first spark of life. Statements like this are made: “We naturally have no direct evidence, but there is reason to suppose that at some time in some way some form of microscopic life developed out of inorganic matter.”

The *Gainesville (FL) Sun*, 6/16/78 in reporting on a meeting of the American Chemical Society, stated:

In very general terms, the most widely accepted theory for the beginning of life involved this scenario:

Some 4 billion years ago, the infant earth was a hostile and empty world. Great dead oceans churned over the planet. Volcanoes were building mountains and spreading continents. The atmosphere was hydrogen, water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane gas and ammonia.

Energy coursed through that primordial atmosphere. Lightning produced sudden bursts of electricity. A constant flow of energy came from the sun, from cosmic rays and from the natural radiation of the earth.

The energy rearranged some of the atoms and molecules of the atmospheric gases.

As the changes continued over millions of years, the amino acids and nucleotides were formed in the atmosphere. They fell as a life-giving rain into the oceans.

This very thin broth carried the faintest promise of life into tidepools where the seawater evaporated, leaving the building blocks behind to be drenched by the incoming tide, then died out again.

As the ages passed, nucleotides somehow linked together into chains of DNA, the substance that carries the genetic code throughout each organism and from generation to generation. The amino acids formed chains of their own and became proteins.

Among many vital functions, proteins oversee the chemical processes of life.

In living things, DNA sends a blueprint to the amino acids, telling them how to arrange themselves into specific proteins.

Somewhere in that theoretical process, something was able to transfer the genetic code and reproduce itself. That something was very close to life.

The gap in the theory was an inability to explain how the building blocks spread ever so thinly through the oceans, could be concentrated enough to permit stacking into more complex substances.

That, of course, is the ancient theory of spontaneous generation, which claims that inorganic matter can produce living creatures. Pasteur, that great 19th century scientist, thoroughly disproved this theory with his various experiments, showing that there is an unbridgeable gap between living and non-living things. Life can only come from life—that is one of the great laws of science, called biogenesis; it is universally accepted.

The honest evolutionist must then confess: “No one today seriously believes in spontaneous generation; no one has ever observed it to happen; no one has even come close to creating life from

lifeless materials in the laboratory, despite intensive experimentation and research; yet, I believe that life did arise from lifeless materials at some long-past time.” That truly requires a colossal faith and a prejudiced refusal to face reality. It seems that even the evolutionists recognize that impossibility, since they often use phrases like, “might have been,” “it is presumed,” “scientists speculate that...”

A much easier way for evolution to explain the origin of life on earth is to claim, as some have done, that life was brought to earth from another heavenly body. If that were true, it would surely eliminate some of the evolutionists’ embarrassment. The only problem with this guess is that one would have an impossibly difficult task in trying to explain how life could survive the immensely long journey through space with its lack of oxygen, water, gravity, and warmth.

An example of this line of thinking is mentioned by Walter Sullivan of the *New York Times News Service*. He wrote in early 1978:

Somewhere, somehow, long ago the spark of life was ignited, ultimately populating the Earth with creatures from bacteria to whales. While recent discoveries have defined many of the mileposts along this path, uncertainty remains concerning the central question: How probable or improbable was the lighting of the spark?

Does it occur on most, if not all, of the millions or billions of planets that resemble the Earth in their early history? Or did it result from a sequence of events so improbable that life has only arisen once? So troublesome is the question that a few scientists envision the critical step as having occurred elsewhere.

Sir Fred Hoyle, the cosmologist, proposes that genes and even seeds of life evolve on comets. His associate, Dr. N. Chandra Wiskramasinghe, even suggested recently that when cometary debris falls to earth in meteoritic showers this could explain otherwise mysterious epidemics. (*Gainesville Sun*, Thursday, June 15, 1978)

c. Evolution cannot explain the development of various organs.

If all the earth’s creatures gradually developed their various organs, how did they know which ones to develop? For example, evolution claims that reptiles gradually developed into birds. Then they must also over the course of the years have developed wings, gizzards, beaks, bones with air sacs, etc. Yet, what earthly good is a part of a wing for a bird, or part of a beak for a woodpecker, or partial radar for a bat? If egg-laying, cold-blooded creatures gradually changed into warm-blooded creatures that bear their young, what made them gradually become warm-blooded? Was there a time when they were part cold-blooded and part warm-blooded? And how can an egg-laying creature eventually become a creature that bears its young and provides them with milk from the mother? The entire internal structure of such a creature would have to be changed, and one wonders how that could possibly have happened gradually, as evolution claims. Nothing remotely like milk-producing organs are present in creatures that, according to evolution, preceded mammals, and it is simply preposterous to imagine that one kind could develop into another without outside influence, purely as the result of chance and time. (Even Darwin had problems in trying to explain the development of the eye, but as with other difficulties in his theory, he had a way of sweeping them under the rug and forgetting about them.)

d. Evolution cannot explain the development of man and woman.

Evolutionists have tried for years to find the missing link between some remote ape-like creature and man. Every few years newspaper headlines like the following appear: “Most complete early man skeleton found in Africa”; “1,700,000-year Old Human Skull Discovered”; “One of the Oldest Types of Man Discovered.”

Yet, somehow none of these discoveries ever quite lives up to its promises. For example, Heidelberg-Man, discovered in Germany in 1907, was once thought to be such a missing link. Yet, he or it was completely reconstructed from one lower jawbone (honestly!), and some scientists actually regarded it as a bone from a female chimpanzee. (One must not forget that a Christian can take a jawbone and reconstruct a skull from it to look like modern man, while an evolutionist with his bias can reconstruct it to look like a brute.)

Pittdown Man was discovered in a British gravel pit in 1908. Various paleontologists claimed that it was a missing link some 200,000 to 1 million years old. One edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* said that it was the second most important find next to Java Man. Ernest Hooton, in his *Up from the Ape*, devoted an entire section to this find. Yet, in 1953 Pittdown Man was revealed as a deliberately-planned forgery made from an ape's jaw that had been sanded, stained, and joined to an old skull.

The so-called Peking Man was found in China in 1927, that is, part of a Peking Man was found. Only a skull and other fragments were discovered and from them an evolutionist reconstructed a creature to look like a link between ape and man. Yet, other scientists have shown that these skulls are almost identical to those of a modern Eskimo.

Java Man was discovered in 1890, that is, a skull, jawbone, and several teeth were found. From these few fragments someone reconstructed what supposedly was an early ancestor of man who lived some 500,000 years ago. But the lava in which these fragments were found was only 500 years old, and paleontologists disagree on whether the bones belong to a man or to a gibbon.

Nebraska Man was discovered in 1922, that is, a single tooth was discovered. Clarence Darrow used this discovery with telling effect against William J. Bryan in the famous Scopes Trial that was held in Tennessee in 1925. In 1927 someone suddenly realized that the tooth did not belong to a man at all, but to an extinct species of pig (read about it in *Science*, Vol. 66).

L.S.D. Leakey's find, called Zinjanthropus and the world's oldest man, was featured in the *National Geographic*, 1960 and 1961. Leakey claimed at first that the skull he found in Africa's Olduvai Gorge was 1,700,000 years old. (The soil and rocks in which the skull was found were "dated" by the potassium-argon method, yet mammal bones found nearby were dated by the C-14 method as being approximately 10,000 years old.) Leakey also said that the textbooks would now have to be rewritten, since this find was at least 1 million years older than previous "oldest man." Later Mr. Leakey said that the skull he found was not an ancestor of man, but that of an ape or ape form!

Surely, everyone makes mistakes, and scientists have made more than their share of them, as every history of science clearly shows. But the examples, cited in the previous paragraphs, all of them highly regarded as immensely important at the time, show why J.E. Wechsler could write in the December 1957 *Scientific American*:

The fossils (of man) leave us mystified about his beginnings. Long study of the skulls has failed to give any conclusive picture of man's early evolution; in fact, many of the theories have not stood the test of the new fossil finds. (Quoted by Fred John Meldau in *Why We Believe in Creation, Not Evolution*)

Nor will any new discovery of fossils ever reveal any intermediate forms or missing links between animals and man, simply because they do not exist. The "after-its-kind" law written into science at the beginning by our Creator God prevents one kind of creature from ever developing into another.

e. Evolution cannot date fossils with even a semblance of accuracy.

In the 19th century Sir Charles Lyell, a British geologist who died in 1875, devised the so-called Geologic Time Chart (he made use of the writings of other scientists). That chart is essentially the one used by most of the world's geologists today. It divides all time from approximately four and a half billion years ago to the present into 14 longer or shorter periods, each one of which has an intriguing name like Ordovician (began 500 million years ago), Silurian (began 400 million years ago), Triassic (began 230 million years ago), or Jurassic (began 180 million years ago). Any encyclopedia and many dictionaries will give the reader information about each period, always indicating that this is gospel truth, no doubt about it. In reality, the entire Geologic Time Chart is a fraud, a myth, a nursery tale, invented by those who have without question swallowed evolution's untruths. Others then perpetuated the story of the Geological Time Table.

How do geologists arrive at the dates for those various periods? Well, that is interesting. The geologists claim that a certain rock is x-number of million years old, because the paleontologists have told them that the index fossils (not every fossil, just certain ones) found in that particular rock are x-number of million years old. Geologists never date a rock by its color, composition, looks, or position, but only by the fossils found in it. Accordingly, six entirely different kinds of rock might all be 180 million years old, according to most geologists.

Next question: How do the paleontologists know that a certain fossil is x-millions of years old? Well, that is a silly question, according to many paleontologists. Since everyone knows that the rock in which it is found is x-millions of years old, the fossil must be the same age.

The reader can see at once how the geologists and the paleontologists are really running around in circles. The one group says that a certain rock is 200 million years old, because the other group told it that the index fossils found in it are 200 million years old, and vice versa. Both of the groups accept evolution with its almost endless ages as a fact and then proceed from there.

This type of reasoning is worthless, sheer propaganda to make one believe in the lie called evolution. It is the Devil's way of showing his hatred for the doctrine of creation; and, as may be supposed, it frequently gets the evolutionist into trouble. How, for example, does it happen that supposedly ancient rocks are found on top of much newer rocks, as is the case in the Lewis Thrust Fault at Glacier National Park? There supposedly ancient trilobites are found on top of rocks with dinosaur fossils, which supposedly lived much later. (Evolutionists try to explain this by stating that some unknown force placed the older rock on top of the younger.) And how does it happen that human footprints are found in rocks at the Paluxy River in Texas alongside of dinosaur tracks?

Dr. Robert L. Whitelaw, Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, wrote an article for the February 15th, 1971, *Bible-Science Newsletter*, entitled "Geological Age-Names: Do They Mean Anything?" In this article he presented 12 facts that effectively demolish the so-called Geologic Time Chart. Among other things he pointed out these facts:

Fact 1: Not one of the age-names, Pleistocene, Jurassic, Cambrian, etc., identifies a single kind of strata anywhere on earth, other than it being sedimentary!

Fact 4: The order of the geological ages from Cambrian to the present is thus nothing more than the supposed order of a set of index fossils, an order which results from a fiction built upon a fiction built upon another fiction.

Fact 5: Nowhere on earth have all the index fossils been found in unbroken order.

Fact 6: Nowhere have they been found *in any order at all* in one place.

Fact 7: By contrast in hundreds of places and over vast areas, they can be found in almost every incomplete and mixed up order imaginable: the *youngest* sometimes in *correct* order, sometimes in reverse, and in almost every case in perfect conformity as if all laid down together in one great watery convulsion.

Fact 8: In many places a given index fossil layer (remembering that many other fossils are often present in the same layer) will repeat itself from bottom to top even

after many intervening layers supposedly representing millions of years in the passage of time.

Fact 9: Fossils of the most recent vertebrates, even footprints of roan, can be found in the same strata as trilobites, etc., supposedly most ancient.

In concluding his article Dr. Whitelaw said this:

In conclusion, then, let *formation-names* of strata remain and be used by all means, wherever description is better served, i.e., Franciscan, Laurentian, etc. But let us cease once and for all, paying tribute to geologic age-names that must surely rank among the madder products of the unenlightened human mind—a madness doubly compounded when we find it asserted against the clear revelation of Almighty God. The geological ages of the evolutionary geology should be assigned to the same category of *science* as the signs of the Zodiac or the Norse god; and the use of them to identify time or reality should be regarded in the same light as the African witch doctor who would determine facts of history by consulting the entrails of a chicken.

Nor do the evolutionists fare any better, when they use radio-active dating methods in an attempt to prove the ages of fossils. It is well-known that certain substances break down into other substances over a period of time. For example, potassium breaks down into argon, C-14 eventually becomes C-12, etc. By measuring the amount of the original substance remaining in any given item, some scientists claim to be able to arrive at an approximate date for the item itself.

But don't you ever believe that these methods are completely reliable. *Science News* of January 1972 stated that the dating of moon rock samples showed various results. Lava from 1800 at Mount Hualalai, Hawaii, was dated from 160 million to 3 billion years old. *Science*, October 18, 1968, stated that the argon method dated volcanic rocks, known to be 200 years old, as from 12 to 21 million years old. No less an author than Robert Brown, Director of Geoscience Research Institute at Andrews University, Berien Springs, Michigan, said that radiocarbon dating may be greatly in error for anything more than 4,000 years old. Such methods cannot be reliable because they must assume that a certain amount of that particular element was present in the original sample and that it decayed at an unchanged rate for thousands of millions of years. This is simply an unprovable assumption.

f. From a scientific standpoint, then, evolution must be regarded as a myth.

In 1865 P.T. Barnum of circus fame published a book called *Humbugs of the World*. He was eminently qualified for writing such a book, since he was a great showman, well acquainted with "humbugs." In the book he listed patent medicines, haunted houses, astrologers, and hoaxes of one type or another. He did not list the theory of evolution, since Darwin's work had not yet gained wide acceptance. Otherwise he might well have included it in his book, since evolution is a theory that has deceived millions of people; it has impeded the growth of true science; it is neither scientific nor logical; it is accepted without a shred of proof by millions, reminding us of St. Paul's words written in another connection, "The God of this world (Satan) has blinded the minds of those who believe not" (II Corinthians 4:4) and, worst of all, it has weakened or destroyed the Christian faith of untold numbers of people. It is pure humbug.

All of this has been admitted by respectable scientists, as we heard in various parts of this paper. We shall conclude this section with three quotations from Robert Benedict's *Journey Away From God*, pages 86-88:

Heribert-Nilsson, Professor of Botany and Director of the Swedish Botanical Institute at the University of Lund, Sweden, in 1954 summarized his work as follows:

The final result of all my investigations and study, namely, that the idea of evolution, tested by experiments in speciation and allied sciences, always leads to incredible contradictions and confusing consequences on account of which the theory of evolution ought to be entirely abandoned, will no doubt enrage many; and even more so my conclusion that the theory of evolution can by no means be regarded as innocuous natural philosophy, but it is a serious obstruction to biological research. It obstructs—as has been repeatedly shown—the attainment of consistent results.

Dr. A.H. Clark, biologist in the United States Natural Museum, indicates that:

So far as concerns the major groups of animals, the creationists seem to have the better of the argument. There is not the slightest evidence that any of the major groups arose from any other. Each is a special animal complex... appearing as a distinct creation.

No less eminent a scientific authority than the Swiss zoologist Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz, as a Harvard professor, castigated Darwin's *Origin of Species*, calling it: "A scientific mistake, untrue in its facts, unscientific in its methods and mischievous in its tendencies."

The reader may also wish to consult *the Fossils Say No*, by Duane T. Gish, San Diego, California: Creation Life Publishers.

G. Therefore, pray that everyone will discard the lie of evolution and accept the truth of creation.

1. Many people have tried to reconcile creation with evolution.

The people who claim to believe in both creation and evolution are called theistic evolutionists (theism means belief in a god who created and rules the world). They try to explain their position in several ways. They may, for example, state that there is a gap of billions of years between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2, thus allowing for all of the vast time required by evolution. We have refuted this thought before (see III, D, 4 & 5). Belief in the so-called "Gap Theory" is ridiculous in the extreme, since there is absolutely no foundation for it in Scripture. And what kind of sense is there to the idea that God first of all created the world through a long and involved process of evolution, then destroyed it, then recreated it, as Genesis 1 tells us? And how are billions of years of decay and death possible without the fall into sin of Genesis 3?

Other theistic evolutionists claim that Genesis 1-11 is a myth, allegory, fiction, poetical fantasy, or, at best, a simple account for the simple people of that day and not at all sufficient or accurate enough for our scientific age.

The theistic evolutionist arrives at his conclusions through all manner of subterfuges. He may say that God gave everything a start by creating the first living, one-celled creature and then used evolution to bring about all of the life forms in the world today. He sometimes claims that Genesis 1 and 2 are simply telling us that God created the world, not how He created it. (Dr. Siegbert Becker answered that contention with: "If God did not intend to tell us how He created the world, why did He?" since the first and second chapters of Genesis tell us exactly how God created everything.)

Sometimes the theistic evolutionist claims that the creation days of Genesis 1 are really long periods of time. We have previously discussed and refuted this aberration in section III, D, 4.

Some theistic evolutionists contend that it really does not matter if one believes Adam and Eve to have been the first people on earth. Yet, our Lord thought it important enough to state that God created

man and woman in the beginning of time (Matthew 19:4, 5); St. Paul wrote that the first Adam brought sin into the world (Romans 5:12-19); and I Timothy 2:13 tells us that “Adam was first formed, then Eve.” All of these Bible passages confirm the truth of Genesis 1 and 2.

In trying to reconcile evolution with creation, the theistic evolutionists succeed only in compromising the Christian faith. They do not want to give up God completely, neither do they want to offend that part of the scientific community which believes in evolution. They are neither hot nor cold, and therefore God will spit them out of His mouth, as He promised He would do to the lukewarm congregation at Laodicea (Revelation 3:16).

2. Creation and evolution are irreconcilable.

How can anyone possibly believe that God created everything that exists on the first six days of the world’s history and at the same time believe that He did that over a period of millions of years? Even a child can understand that one either believes that everything gradually developed from a one-celled creature or he believes that God made every kind of life on the third, fifth, and sixth creation days. There can be no compromise between the clear statements of Exodus 20:11 (“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and all that in them is”) and evolution’s statement that everything developed by itself over a half billion years’ time. How can there be any reconciliation between the Bible’s statement that God made everything and evolution’s statement that time, chance, and possibly something like survival of the fittest produced everything on earth?

Surely, every Christian will agree that science has made some fantastic strides in the 20th century. For its many blessings we must be truly grateful. Unfortunately, far too much time, money, and effort have been spent upon that old myth, called “evolution,” which is neither good science nor true Christianity.

On the contrary, the creation account, as told us by the only One who was there, is eternally true; it is far better science in every way than is evolution; it is totally irreconcilable with evolution; and as long as hot is the opposite of cold and black the opposite of white, so long will evolution and creation remain completely opposed to each other in every respect.

3. Therefore be sure to confess the truth of creation everywhere to the glory of God and for our neighbors’ welfare.

Our Lord said, “Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32,33).

Confessing the truth of creation is a part of the testimony that we give to Christ and to His Father, our Creator. We who know the truth of creation just cannot remain silent while most of the world remains ignorant of the origin of all things. We must not hide our faith under a bushel.

We are to confess the truth about creation for the glory of God, so that all people recognize the greatness, the wisdom, and the mercy of our omnipotent Creator and give Him praise for His stupendous work. How can we praise and honor time and chance for creating all things, as the evolutionists do? That would be following the evil example of the heathen at St. Paul’s time who, “When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (Romans 1:21).

On the contrary, our lives, our conversations, our songs, our aims should be those of Joachim Neander who expressed his thoughts in that well-known hymn, “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation” (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, 39). In that fine hymn the author and we join hearts and voices to praise God for creating and for saving us. Robert Grant, in his “Oh, Worship the King” (Number 17 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*), put it this way,

This earth, with its store Of wonders untold,
 Almighty, Thy pow'r Hath founded of old,
 Hath 'stablished it fast By a changeless decree,
 And round it hath cast, Like a mantle, the sea.

It is equally necessary that we confess the doctrine of creation for the welfare of our fellowmen, for if they do not believe in the first pages of Genesis, it is altogether possible that they will believe few, if any, other doctrines of Scripture. If they believe in evolution, then man is but another animal, subject to no moral laws. Then there was no fall into sin, since evolution believes that man is ascending to an ever higher plane. Then too there is no need for a Savior. You can see how every doctrine of Scripture rests upon creation; destroy that and the foundation is gone.

Therefore out of concern for our fellow men, we are to tell them in one way or another, that evolution is false and creation is true. We simply cannot let them continue in their blindness, for that could lead to losing their souls. We must also pray for them that God would lead them out of their blind adherence to evolution to the truth of God's Word.

Sometimes it may be difficult to thus confess our faith in creation. You may be taking a course at a university in which the professor confesses belief in and adherence to evolution. The professor may fail you in the course, if you do not follow his wishes. You may not even be able to obtain certain degrees at the university, if you reveal your belief in creation. Or you may be roundly ridiculed for your faith. No matter—the world will hardly behead you for your faith, as it beheaded John the Baptist, because he insisted on telling the truth about Herod's incestuous marriage (Matthew 14:3-12). Nor will it make you suffer all those almost unbelievably great hardships once experienced by St. Paul, because he preached the Gospel (II Corinthians 11:23-12:11). Yet, regardless of the consequences, be sure to follow the example of the Apostles who proclaimed to all the world, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

VII. GOD ACTIVELY PRESERVES AND PROTECTS EVERYTHING THAT HE CREATED.

A. God preserves His creation.

1. That is true in general.

Dr. Luther masterfully presented this Scriptural doctrine of preservation with just a few simple words in his explanation of the First Article. After stating that "God made me together with all creatures," he went on to say that "God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, cattle and all I own, and all that I need to keep my body and life." (Many of the thoughts that follow in this section VII, except B, are adapted from R. Pieper's *Der Kleine Katechismus Luthers aus der Heiligen Schrift und Luthers Werken*. All translations of those quotations from Dr. Luther are by the author of these Catechetical Resources. Direct quotations are indicated by "Dr. Luther.")

On another occasion Dr. Luther referred to Hebrews 1:3; where we are told that Christ "upholds all things by, the word of His power" and to Colossians 1:17: "By Him all things consist," or "hold together." On the basis of these Bible passages Dr. Luther stated that God is not like a carpenter who builds a house or like one who builds a ship and then turns it over to the new owners. Unless something is wrong with the house or with the ship, the builder does not really concern himself with them after they are finished. God does not act that way at all. He not only created everything with His Word, but He preserves, rules, and keeps His entire creation, again with His Word. So it is the Word that makes the sun shine from morning till evening; this does not happen because of any power inherent in the sun. And

God's preservation extends to all His creatures, the pious and the godless, for God lets His sun shine upon the "evil and the good" (Matthew 5:45).

Dr. Luther also referred to Psalm 104:27 ff., where the Psalmist expressed the great truth that all creatures depend on God for food and drink. "These wait upon Thee; that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That Thou givest them they gather: Thou openest Thine hand, they, are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust" (Psalm 104:27-29). Psalm 104 is the great preservation Psalm, well worth intensive study.

2. That is especially true of believers.

Psalm 33:18, for example, tells us, "The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy." In other words God specifically preserves the Christians.

Now when Dr. Luther stated in his explanation of the First Article that God "preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink..." he was telling us that God uses these means to preserve us. God surely could preserve us without means, as He did on more than one occasion. For example, Exodus 34:28 tells us that Moses "was with the Lord 40 days and 40 nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water," when he received the Ten Commandments. During all of this time God miraculously preserve His servant without food and drink. Again, during all the 40 years of Wilderness Wanderings Israel's clothing and shoes were miraculously preserved so that they did not grow old or wear out (Deuteronomy 8:4 and 29:5), another wonderful instance of God providing for His people.

Normally, however, our Creator God preserves us, His people, through various means like clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home. In Old Testament times God gave His people that promise in words like the following: "And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and the store" (Deuteronomy 28:2-5).

In New Testament times our Lord renewed this assurance in His famous Sermon on the Mount, where He said that we are not to worry about having enough to eat and to wear. He said, Matthew 6:25, 26: "Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat; and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" Then, after reminding us how beautifully God clothes the flowers of the field, He added: "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithall shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) For your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:30-33).

Dr. Luther beautifully summarized these thoughts in his Large Catechism, where he wrote (p. 412, 13-66):

What is meant by these words, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker," etc?
 Answer: I hold and believe that I am a creature of God; that is, that He has given and constantly sustains my body, soul, and life, my members great and small; all the faculties of my mind, my reason and understanding, and so forth; my food and drink, clothing, means of support, wife and child, servants, house and home, etc. Besides, He makes all creation help provide the comforts and necessities of life—sun, moon, and stars in the heavens, day and night, air, fire, water, the earth and all that it brings forth, birds and fish,

beasts, grain and all kinds of produce. Moreover, He gives all physical and temporal blessings—good government, peace, security. Thus we learn from this article that none of us has his life of himself, or anything else that has been mentioned here or can be mentioned, nor can he by himself preserve any of them, however small and unimportant. All this is comprehended in the word “Creator.”

All of this does not, of course, mean that we may turn on the TV, sit in the rocking chair, fold our hands, and wait for God to put food on our tables and clothing on our backs. God has specifically said that mankind is to work. He said it before the Fall, when He told Adam to take care of the Garden. He said it after the Fall, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” And He repeated it in the New Testament: “If any would not work, neither should he eat” (II Thessalonians 3:10).

Yet, we must not imagine that our diligent work, our intellect, or our skills will in themselves provide us with everything we need for our physical welfare. Everything still depends on God’s blessing. Scripture expresses that thought in various places. For example, Psalm 104, the great Psalm that treats of God’s preservation, tells us that He sends the rain; He causes plant life to grow; He satisfies the physical needs of every living thing. Dr. Luther summarized these thoughts with this sentence: “God does not want any lazy idlers, but we are to work faithfully and diligently, each according to his calling and office; then He will give the blessing and the increase thereto.”

B. Sinful, ignorant man often wastes the physical blessings which God entrusted to us for our preservation.

1. God entrusted to us in the United States a land overflowing with physical blessings.

Never in all of the world’s history has God endowed any land with greater physical blessings than He entrusted to the United States. He supplied us with more than two billion acres of land, some of it among the most fertile on the face of the earth, so fertile, in fact, that annual billion-bushel harvests are common. (Someone has called America’s heartland stretching westward from eastern Ohio some 1500 miles to Montana and Colorado and in some places 1000 miles wide the greatest area of exceptionally fertile land in all the earth.)

God made so many wonderful trees to grow here that great forests once stretched in an almost unbroken line from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River (the early colonists could hardly believe their eyes when they first viewed the majesty of these forests; also at times they became somewhat disgusted when in clearing their land it took such a longtime to burn the three-foot-thick black walnut trees). God placed mountains of iron in various places (during each year of World War II almost 100 million tons of high-grade iron ore moved from the Mesabi Range in Minnesota to the Eastern steel mills); He provided so many beavers, some of the world’s greatest conservationists, that John Jacob Astor became one of the world’s richest men just by organizing the efforts to exterminate them and to sell their furs for beaver hats. In the middle of the 19th century our God let 60 to 90 million buffaloes graze on our Western Plains; He provided so many birds that John J. Audubon, certainly a reliable observer, estimated that he saw one and a half billion of them in just one flock of passenger pigeons. God gave America so much oil that for years several billion barrels were annually pumped from our ground. (Oil at one time was so plentiful that when the famous Spindletop Well gushed 3,000 barrels an hour early in this century, it sold for 10 cents a barrel; in the late 1970’s it sold for some 120 times more than that). In our Great Lakes and in the various other bodies of water our Creator gave us the greatest fresh water supply in all the world, probably at least half of the world’s supply. He gave us so much natural gas that we can consume 23 trillion cubic feet of it each year in the 1970’s; in Florida He placed so much phosphate into the ground that one state can furnish a large percentage of the world’s demand;

underneath our land He gave us over 4,000 billion tons of coal, about one half of the world's supply (we use less than 1 billion tons of coal annually in the late 1970's).

One could continue this catalog of entrusted blessings almost indefinitely. In case after case the amounts are astronomical. From these we ought to understand how abundantly God has provided for us and especially to appreciate His goodness.

2. Yet, man in his sinfulness has often wasted God's blessings.

There is evidence of that on every side also. According to the August-September 1975 *Wild Life*, 799 species of birds, mammals, fish, plants, and mollusks have become extinct in the United States since 1750, many or most of them destroyed by man. In the twentieth century one animal species has died out annually, most of them destroyed by man. The sorrowful story of the annihilation of the world's most abundant bird species, the beautiful passenger pigeon, is well known; the last one died in 1914. It took us just about 30 or 40 years to kill and largely to waste 60 to 90 million buffaloes, so drastically reducing the herds that by 1889 only 500 were left. Had it not been for the consecrated efforts of a few conservationists, there would probably not be a single buffalo left in America. It took us just 50 years, from 1870 to 1920 to cut down approximately 75 percent of our virgin forests. (When the loggers first made Wisconsin the lumber center of the nation, they were certain that no one would ever be able to cut down all of those stately white pines, many two and more feet in diameter and 75 feet from the ground to the first branch. But they were wrong; it took only a few years; today there is hardly any virgin forest left in all of the United States).

We have been using so much oil that, by the later 1970's we for the first time in history were importing about as much oil as we produce. That unfavorable ratio of imported oil cannot help but increase in time. (Reliable estimates are impossible to develop, yet many fear the United States' supply of oil and natural gas will be mostly exhausted by the year 2000, United States' peak production of oil came in 1970 and it has been declining ever since.) We have used and misused so much iron ore that almost all of our remaining supplies are low-grade ore that must be processed into taconite before it can be used. In 1975 the *National Geographic* estimated that at the present rate of consumption we shall have used all of the world's known resources of copper, gold, lead, mercury, molybdenum, platinum, silver, tin, tungsten, and zinc, and possibly others within 50 years. Approximately every 10 seconds a new American is born, and he will use on the average for all purposes, including manufacturing, almost 50 million gallons of water in his lifetime—is it any wonder that there is a water shortage in various parts of our country?

Now it is true, of course, that God entrusted all of these resources to us to use for our welfare. It, consequently, was totally impossible for us to keep indefinitely a solid blanket of virgin forests or to let 70 million buffalo roam the Middle West plains, or even to keep one and a half billion passenger pigeons in one flock. All of God's blessings were entrusted to us for our use, not for storage.

Yet, the sad part of this entire matter is that we in the United States have been wasting our resources and living as if they were inexhaustible. For years we cut the trees and moved to the next forest, generally using only a small part of the tree; we killed untold numbers of buffalo purely for sport, sometimes eating only the tongue or none of the meat at all; we destroyed so many millions of nesting passenger pigeons together with their squabs, something strictly forbidden by Israel's Civil Law (Deuteronomy 22:6, 7), that by the late 1800's, hardly a one remained. In our oil fields we often wasted thousands of barrels from just one well. In the early 1800's very little land had been destroyed by erosion, but by the 1970's 300 million acres had been so destroyed, largely because of wrong land-use policies; in 1835 Wisconsin's wolf population was 40,000, while in the 1970's either 6 or none of these predatory animals, valuable for thinning out the weak and sickly in deer herds, remained—the rest had been killed. We probably use more water per capita than any other nation on earth; and we who have 6 percent of the earth's population use approximately one-third of its energy, far more per capita than even

the most progressive of earth's other nations. We often live as if there were no tomorrow, driving gas guzzlers, leaving unneeded lights burning, letting the water run or drip from the faucets, and discarding enough food into our garbage cans daily to feed millions of people (a city like Tucson with its 500,000 people discards almost 10,000 tons of food annually, enough to feed 4,000 families). We pollute our rivers and lakes with wastes, foul our air with chemicals, and discard so much that finding a place for the garbage often becomes a tremendous problem (it has been estimated that we waste as much energy per capita as the Japanese people consume).

3. God requires that we practice stewardship over His entrusted blessings.

When God said that we are to subdue the earth and have dominion over every living thing (Genesis 1:28), He certainly did not thereby give us the license to waste His gifts. When He promised to preserve His people with food and drink, He surely did not mean that He wants us to misuse those gifts. Time and again Scripture tells us that we are to use God's entrusted gifts wisely, as good stewards or managers of His estate. (The gathering of the pieces that were left after Jesus fed the 5,000 is just one Scriptural example that calls us not to waste God's gifts, John 6:12).

This means among other things that we must begin now to reduce our use of electricity, gasoline, natural gas, and all other natural resources; that we use public transportation, walk, or ride a bicycle, when possible; that we use renewable resources wherever possible; that we repair leaky faucets and install proper insulation; that we teach our children to take only what they can eat and to eat all that is on their plates; that we do everything possible to devise renewable sources of energy, like solar-, geothermal-, wind-, and wood-power; that we help to prevent forest fires, discard litter into proper containers, and buy a small car (if possible); that we stop using those pesticides that have threatened to kill various species of birds (in 1975 over 100 animals and birds were on the endangered species list, meaning that they could well disappear shortly, never to be seen alive again on earth; pesticides cause much of this problem); that we buy soft drinks in returnable containers only (we discard 26 billion bottles annually in the middle 1970's); that we return coat hangers, if we do not need them; that we determine what appliances use the least amount of energy and purchase them; that we conserve paper (is it really necessary for us to use 65 million tons annually as we did in 1976?); that we do what we can to stop pollution of our rivers, lakes, and oceans (beginning in 1953 so much mercury was poured into Minamata Bay in Japan that many nearby residents became hopeless invalids from drinking the water and eating the fish). All of this and undoubtedly much, much more can and should be done, if we are to be good stewards of God's entrusted gifts.

C. God defends ups against all danger.

This is the way in which Dr. Luther continues with his explanation of the First Article: "God still preserves me...by defending me against all danger." That is the second part of God's preservation. First, He provides me with all that I need for my body and life, as we heard in the previous section; and, secondly, He defends me. This, too, is a doctrine clearly and repeatedly expressed in Scripture. One of the best known and most widely loved of all such Bible passages is the first verses of Psalm 91: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee (Psalm 91:1-7).

Psalm 34:7 is equally comforting: “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them.” In New Testament times our Lord promised us that even in the most distressing circumstances, “There shall not a hair of your head perish” (Luke 21:18).

Dr. Luther, in his inimitable way, commented on Psalm 147:13 (“He hath strengthened the bars of thy gates”) as follows:

God secures and guards well the gate of the city, in order that one might live there securely and quietly. Yet, how many citizens or people have ever in their lives considered that their protection and safety in the city is a gift from God? Which village peasant thinks that it is God’s gift that he sits so safely behind his fence with his servants? If he hourly expected that thieves and robbers would overrun his house, or if he momentarily expected that his house and home would be burned in a war and that he would also be beaten and plagued, then he would learn to sing and to speak with this Psalm: Oh, how blessed are they! Oh what a great gift of God it is that one can eat his bit of bread and drink the water in safety and in peace. Yet, one must not understand the word “bars” only in the sense of an iron bar made by a blacksmith...but also everything else is included that helps to keep the peace; for example, good government, good municipal laws, good order, earnest punishment; and pious, faithful and wise masters. For iron bars alone will never safely keep a city...in short, where there is protection and safety, that is God’s gift; it is not the result of man’s wisdom (Witze)...as the 120th Psalm (verse 1) says, “Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” Many supposedly invincible cities have been conquered and destroyed. When He (God) removes the hand that strengthens the bars, they perished. How often has not the great, almost almighty city of Babylon been shamefully defeated! How easily and quickly have not the kings of Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome been destroyed! Nothing endures except what God keeps. (Dr. Luther, part 2, p. 41).

Again, in his explanation of the Ten Commandments, Dr. Luther wrote:

There are many devils all around us who could kill us at any hour; but God is present, and He prevents evil from happening to us; otherwise all the princes and lords of the earth could not protect us from the devil’s power. He (the devil) is a lord and god of this world who has thousands of ways through which he can harm us, through fire, water, air, sword, etc. Yet God is stronger than Satan and restrains him so that he breaks none of my bones, destroys neither of my eyes, nor harms me in the least. (Then, after stating that God uses parents to help protect their children, Dr. Luther continued) God cares for the children, more than the mother herself. No one understands this, no one believes it, and yet it is true that God cares for us” (Dr. Luther, part 2, p. 42).

D. God guards and protects us from all evil.

When Dr. Luther in his explanation of the First Article used the expression, “guarding and protecting me from all evil,” this is similar, yet somewhat different from the “defending me against all danger” that we have just discussed. The “guarding and protecting me from all evil” is a broader term than the “defending me against all danger.” It includes protection against all manner of evils like misfortune, suffering, pain, sickness, and various afflictions. The “defending me against all danger” applies specifically to the threats and oppression of spiritual or physical enemies.

One of the finest of all Bible passages that speak of God’s guarding us from all evil is the 121st Psalm, a favorite of many a Christian, and one that all of us ought to memorize. It reads as follows: “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help, My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven

and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Similarly, in his comments on Psalm 147:13 (the Lord “maketh peace within thy borders”), Dr. Luther remarked:

In this peace one should also include every other blessing that belongs to peace, as, for example, the health of the body in the face of pestilence, water, fire, poison and other plagues and sickness. For when such misfortune is widespread, matters are not well in the land either...If pestilence, sickness, and other plagues of the devil are not raging, that is purely a gift of God; it is not due to our caution or work. And if God does not here create peace, all our druggists, doctors, skill, help, and advice would be totally unable to accomplish it. True one should use those means and arts...yet one does not depend upon them...rather one should always ask the blessing: Lord God, do Thou give grace and peace, we have done what we could; we have planted, do Thou give the increase. (Dr. Luther, part 2, p. 43.)

Dr. Luther also expressed those thoughts in his outstanding hymn, “We All Believe in One True God,” a hymn that all of us could profitably memorize. Its first stanza reads as follows:

We are believe in one true God,
 Who created earth and heaven,
 The Father, who to us in love
 Hath the right of children given.
 He both soul and body feedeth,
 All we need he doth provide us;
 He through snares and perils leadeth.
 Watching that no harm betide us.
 He careth for us day and night.
 All things are governed by His might. (*The Lutheran Hymnal* 251, 1)

VIII. GOD’S GOODNESS MOVED HIM TO CREATE AND TO PRESERVE US.

A. God gave us all our blessings out of His mercy.

This is what Dr. Luther wrote in his fine explanation to the First Article: “All this God does only because He is my good and merciful Father in heaven and not because I have earned or deserved it.” Every one of us will surely agree with that statement, especially when we on the one hand contemplate everything that God made and gave to us, as we have been doing it in this paper, and, on the other hand, look at our sinfulness, our rebellion, even our lack of gratitude toward Him who alone made it all possible.

The New Man within us will want to follow the excellent example of Jacob who, when he compared his former state (he then had only the staff in his hand) with his present possessions (huge herds and flocks of cattle and sheep, a large family and great wealth), exclaimed: “I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto thy servant” (Genesis 32:10). The Psalmist, too, after comparing man with the awesome heavens, declared, “What is man that Thou art mindful of him?... Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and crowned him with glory and honor” (Psalm 8:4, 5).

If we properly consider our unworthiness and God’s goodness, as shown in His creation and preservation, to say nothing about His saving us, then we are simply thunderstruck by His goodness. There

can be only one explanation for it all: None of it came about because of our merit or worthiness. Indeed, if God were to deal with us according to what we have deserved, then He would immediately condemn us to hellfire and eternal damnation.

Therefore, as Dr. Luther forcefully expressed it,

Whatever goods and honor God gives us, is pure mercy. He sees that we are engulfed by death, but out of His mercy He gives us life. He sees that we are children of hell, but He has compassion and gives us heaven. He sees that we are poor, naked, hungry and thirsty; yet out of His mercy, He clothes us, feeds us, gives us to drink, and satisfies us with all manner of goods. Consequently, what we have, spiritual and physical gifts, He gives us out of mercy, pours His blessings over us and into us...Therefore this Article should humble and frighten all of us, if we believe it, since we daily sin with eyes, ears, hands, body and soul, money and goods, and with everything we have...Yet the Christians have this advantage that they realize that they owe Him service and obedience for all His gifts. (Dr. Luther, part 2, pp. 46, 47)

B. Therefore we who are Christians respond gratefully and gladly to God's preservation.

Dr. Luther closes his explanation of the First Article with "For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true!" The thanking and the praising are done to a great extent with our lips; and serving and the obeying are done with our works. All four flow from a heart that gladly and gratefully responds to God's love as manifested in our creation and in our preservation. In the following paragraphs we shall have something to say about each one of these four signs of our gratitude.

1. Christians thank God for all His goodness.

If you were suffering from an incurable disease, if that disease were bringing you almost unbearable pain and separation from your loved ones, if humanly speaking you had nothing to look forward to except that your condition would steadily worsen, and then suddenly someone miraculously cured you, how would you feel? You say, "That is a silly question; of course, I should be thankful, so grateful that I would never forget it as long as I live."

Yet, there once lived 10 men who were in exactly the condition described in the previous paragraph; they cried to Jesus to heal them of their dreadful leprosy, and He did. How many of the 10 showed real thankfulness for the astonishing miracle that Jesus had worked? Just one; just 10 percent of the group returned to thank Jesus. Read about it in Luke 17:11-19. Do you suppose that the number of grateful people is any greater today, after we have been similarly blessed?

Yet, our God has done infinitely more for us than to cure us from leprosy. He created us fearfully and wonderfully, as the Psalmist says (Psalm 139:14); He fashioned a lovely home for us on the only planet perfectly suited for mankind, a home in which all of creation serves us; He placed the sun in the heavens to give us light and water in the skies to give us rain; He gave us thousands of kinds of vegetation, fruits, nuts, grains, meats, and spices to provide us with food; He gave His angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways; He has preserved us up to this very hour; when we sinned against Him, He sent His Son into death to save us; and every bit of this God did without the slightest merit on our part.

How do you feel about all of this? Do you take it all for granted, as if you had it coming? Do you believe that all of this is natural or normal? Or do you perhaps consider that it all came about through your own doing and cleverness?

On the contrary, may we pray with King David of old, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (Psalm

103:1, 2); or with another Psalmist, “Oh give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good; because His mercy endureth forever” (Psalm 118:1). In his commentary on Psalm 118:1, Dr. Luther wrote:

Therefore this verse ought reasonably to be in every person’s heart and mouth daily, yes every moment, as often as he eats, drinks, sees, hears, smells, walks, stands, or however and wherever and whenever he uses his, own members...so that he always remembers: If God would not have given him these blessings and would not have preserved him from the Devil, he would well have to do without. Besides one ought to admonish and accustom one’s self to give thanks for such goodness of God with a joyful heart and with a merry face toward God and to say: Now, then, You are surely a friendly, gracious God, who eternally, that is, forever and ever, unceasingly, shows me such rich kindness and benefit; unworthy and unthankful though I be, You must have my praise and thanks. (Dr. Luther, part 2, pp. 48, 49.)

2. Christians praise God for all His blessings.

Like thanksgiving, praise also arises in the heart. Yet, it is somewhat different from thanksgiving, for to praise someone means to say good and great things about him. In this case, we are so overawed by the greatness of our omnipotent Creator, so overwhelmed by the glory of Him who could create the universe with one word, and so deeply impressed by His undeserved preservation that we cannot help but speak of all His unimaginably wonderful attributes to everyone who will listen.

That is exactly what Scripture repeatedly encourages us to do. For example, Isaiah 43:21 tells us that the great reason for our God forming and making us His children is that we are to praise Him: “This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth My praise.” Various Psalm passages call upon us to do the same thing. For example, Psalm 67:3: “Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee.”

Psalm 145 begins in this way: “I will extol Thee, my God, O King; and I will bless Thy name forever and ever. Every day will I bless Thee; and I will praise Thy name forever and ever. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise Thy works to another, and shall declare Thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honor of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of Thy terrible acts: And I will declare Thy greatness. They shall abundantly utter the memory of Thy great goodness, and shall sing of Thy righteousness.”

Psalm 150 asks everything that has life and breath to join in praising God with all manner of instruments. In the New Testament St. Peter well wrote: “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9).

Of course, we can and should praise God with our works, as well as with our words. Our Lord had that in mind when He encouraged us to “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

In addition to praising God with our words and with our works we can and should also praise Him with our music. Various composers have praised our God with some of the greatest music of all the ages. Consider, for example, outstanding hymns of praise like those in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. Singing these hymns is an excellent way of praising our God. Think of Bach’s and of Beethoven’s Masses, of Handel’s *Dettingen Te Deum* and of the *Te Deum* in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. We might well become acquainted with these various musical compositions and use them regularly to praise God for His goodness to us undeserving sinners.

3. Christians gratefully serve God.

The word “serve” comes from a Latin term that means “slave.” That is exactly what we are, slaves of God, as St. Paul writes of himself in Romans 1:1: “Paul, a servant (slave) of Jesus Christ.”

At one time both St. Paul and we were slaves of the Devil, and that condition could only end in one way: eternal damnation in the burning fires of hell.

Yet, God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9). Therefore He sent His only begotten Son into the world to rescue us from that miserable, fatal slavery in Satan’s service and to make us instead slaves of God.

That term “slaves of God” describes the most blessed condition that we can ever imagine this side of heaven, and there we shall be still more richly blessed slaves of God. It implies that we owe everything we have and are and hope to be to our beloved Master. He cares for us, He provides for us, He keeps us. He is with us to the end of this life, and He is our great God in all eternity. On our part this slavery implies that we are to work for Him, use His entrusted gifts as managers of His estate, and have His interests uppermost in our minds at all times.

Among the many fine Scriptural examples of people who thus served God is John the Baptist. On one memorable occasion, when he saw many people turning away from his ministry to Jesus, he spoke those famous words, the motto of his life: “He (Christ) must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). His entire life was spent in the service of the Master, and we can do nothing less than to follow that inspired example out of gratitude for all that our God has done for us.

4. Christians thankfully obey our God.

Obey means nothing more and nothing less than to do what God says in His Holy Word. Dr. Luther asks:

But what does God command? Above everything else, He commands that we hear Christ and accept the Gospel. That is the one, correct, pleasing service that we can do for God for His command is before us. After that, God commands that children honor father and mother; that parents nourish, train, and teach their children; that a wife love her husband and take care of the household, and in return that the husband nourish and protect her, etc. (Dr. Luther, part 2, p. 50)

God’s Word is plain enough; no mastermind is needed to know His will; and we who are moved to do His will by the immeasurably great blessings we have received from Him can quickly learn that will by consulting His Word, as written, for example, in Exodus 20:1-17; Matthew 5:7; I Corinthians 6:9,10; Galatians 5:19-23. Above all, as Dr. Luther stated, God’s will is that we believe the Gospel.

Like St. Paul, therefore, may all of us pray that people everywhere “might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:9,10).

5. Every Christian knows that what has been said in Scripture regarding creation and preservation “is most certainly true.”

Dr. Luther ends his explanation to the First Article with these words, “This is most certainly true!” That is an admirable conclusion, since in his explanation of the First Article he presents only what Scripture says about creation and preservation. And God’s Word is everlastingly true, even if a billion people deny it.

We have tried to do the same thing, to present God's truth only, in this essay on Dr. Luther's Explanation of the First Article. May all of us, consequently, accept these Bible truths and tell all who will listen, "This is most certainly true." May our study of God's mighty creation and His merciful preservation help us to see the glory of God in every part of His wonderful works. That is what the writer of Psalm 104 did. He spoke of God's wonderful creation and His merciful preservation and then, as he contemplated all these great works of our God, He wrote: "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; In wisdom hast Thou made them all: the earth is full of Thy riches." Yet, our God's greatest work is the giving of His Son to save us from our sins.