

“A Little Evolution Goes a Long Way” – Rob Martin

I have had many conversations over the years concerning the theory of evolution. I am sure that you can imagine how many of them went. Me: “*I don’t believe in evolution.*” Opponent: “*You’re an idiot.*” Me: “*silence*”. What could I come back with? The discussion over evolution has been dominated by intellectual types who throw around phrases that the average person doesn’t understand; phrases such as: *speciation, phyletic gradualism, cladogenesis*, etc. You get the point. It resembles a practice used in law. Legal speech is unintelligible to the layperson, therefore requiring the assistance of an attorney.

The same thing has happened to the evolution debate. It is impossible to debate a point if you don’t understand the language and phraseology of the subject. To illustrate this, let me start by saying that my former response of “I don’t believe in evolution” was, in fact, an idiotic statement, deserving of the scorn of my opponent.

Take a breath. Don’t start praying for my soul just yet. Allow me to play Virgil to your Dante and we can travel this darkened wood together.

Perhaps you have fallen into the same trap that I did. Most Christians make the same mistake that I made for years; that mistake being that they dogmatically disavow the theory of evolution as being anathema to their religious convictions. They do this, as I did, without even understanding what exactly the theory of evolution is. Any time you are discussing the theory of evolution, it is of the utmost importance to understand that ***there are basically two types of evolution.***

Evolutionary theory is broken down into ***macro-evolution*** and ***micro-evolution***. The prefix ‘*macro*’ means, literally: big; and, the prefix ‘*micro*’ means, literally: small (macro and micro are derivatives of Greek words).

Micro-evolution is a scientific fact that is observable in nature. It can be explained as a *within-species evolution* of genes, or the alteration of a specific trait due to natural response. When Charles Darwin first formed his theory of evolution, he was actually observing micro-evolution. The finches that he observed on the Galapagos Islands had longer beaks than the finches that did not reside on the islands. He then formulated that evolution was changing the species. (It is interesting to note that when Darwin published his seminal work on the theory of evolution, the **complete** title of his book was *On The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life.* [emphasis added] He was attempting to use this new theory of his to scientifically prove that certain races were more highly evolved species of human.)

The first major gaping hole (there are many) in Darwin’s theory concerning the finches of the Galapagos Islands was that this observed change was not a permanent one. A professor from Princeton University conducted an 18 year study of the same finches and found that during drought years, finches with shorter beaks died off because, with a limited amount of seeds, only those that could reach the grubs living under the tree bark could survive. However, the finches with shorter beaks thrived during seasons of plenty. The natural selection that occurred was on a micro-evolutionary level.

There are three plainly observable principles to micro-evolution. 1. A trait will alter because of a stimulus. 2. The trait will return to the norm if left to nature or returned to its original conditions. 3. No new information is added to the DNA.

Okay, that's a lot of science talk. Let's look at this in a more simplified context. I'm sure many of you readers are pet owners. The best example of micro-evolution can be observed in competitive dog-breeding. The desired traits for each class of dog are manipulated by an outside stimulus (the breeder) in an effort to achieve the desired effect. The dogs that possess the trait are only bred with other dogs that also possess that trait. For the sake of simple explanation, let's assume that the desired result is a dog that is tall.

Tall male dogs will continually be mated with tall female dogs. The tallest of the offspring will be mated together, etc. This occurs over the course of several dog generations until the desired height is achieved. However, as with Darwin's finches, the change is not permanent, and, most importantly, the dogs are still dogs. When left on their own (outside the control of the breeder), the dogs will mate at random (as in nature) and the height of the dogs will begin to return to normal.

Macro-evolution is the belief that these small changes evolve over eons of time into new traits or a transition to a new species. Macro-evolution is a theory that has never been observed in nature. This is the theory most commonly associated with Darwinism, and is the theory that is thought of when most Christians think of "evolution".

There are several problems with macro-evolutionary theory. For one, when micro-evolutionary changes occur, there is no new information added to the DNA. Without information in the DNA there can be no change to the species. Also, no transitional stage of evolution has ever been observed in the fossil record. Not a single one. This speciation is pure speculation to account for the origins of life.

The reason that this speculation occurs is because science has limited itself to finding naturalistic explanations for the existence of life on this planet, and has ruled out, from the outset, any possibility for supernatural causation. This is where science clashes with faith.

Science makes the mistake of stating that since there is no empirical proof for God's existence (you can't touch, see, or taste Him), that there must be a natural cause for what is observed in nature. However, in order to produce this natural cause, science is willing to make theoretical claims concerning the origins of life that are not testable, even according to its own statements of requiring empirical evidence. The important thing, as a Christian, to remember is that science is searching for a way to explain the universe outside of the context of a Creator God. As believers, we understand that there can be no life, no universe, no anything outside the context of God.