



Think & Believe

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Greek or Jew

by Dave and Mary Jo Nutting

It is important in evangelism to tailor your approach to the particular needs of the individuals you are trying to reach. Paul recognized this and used varying approaches accordingly, while all along presenting the central message of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. It is informative to look at his varying approaches with the Greeks and the Jews.

With the Jews, Paul presented Jesus as the Messiah, the Savior for Whom they had been waiting. He used the Scriptures and evidences from Jesus' life to prove that He really was the Christ. The Greeks, however, did not accept the Old Testament and knew nothing of the promised Messiah. Thus, with the Greeks, Paul first began by teaching them about God, the Creator, showing them the futility of worshipping things of nature and calling them to repentance. (See Acts 17:22-31.)

Our western society for many years has been dominated by the Judeo-Christian culture. People for the most part have been familiar with biblical teaching, and most at least have believed in a Creator. The situation is rapidly changing, however. In many ways our society is rapidly becoming more like the ancient Greek culture than the Jewish one. With the complete domination of evolutionary humanism in our schools and media, many students are growing up with virtually no exposure to the Bible. They are being taught that evolution can explain the origin of life without the need of a God. Evolution has become the scientific justification ("excuse!") for rejecting God. The concept of sin has little meaning to individuals raised in the philosophy of moral relativism and situation ethics where there are no absolutes and man is the measure of all. In such a society, the preaching of the cross is seen as foolishness (I Cor. 1:23).

So what can we do? We can begin as Paul did with the teaching of creation. We can show people the bankruptcy of the evolution model and present them with the positive evidence for creation. We can "reason with them" as Paul did, trying to persuade them concerning the truth of the Scriptures. And then, by all means, we can present them with the claims of Christ, and challenge them to repent and willingly submit to His Lordship in their lives.

This may seem like a round-about way to present the gospel, but with some it is extremely necessary. If the seed of God's Word is to germinate and take root in an individual, it must fall on prepared ground. Creation evangelism is one tool which the Holy Spirit is using in these days to prepare the ground in many stony hearts. We praise God that He has equipped us with this tool, and our desire is to help equip others that many may come to the saving knowledge of our great Creator and Savior.



*Some sow, some reap . . .
Some pick up rocks.
(See Notes & Quotes)*

NOTES & QUOTES

■ One day I felt rather discouraged and was thinking, "I'm tired of talking science. I miss the Bible study I used to teach. Just what are we doing in this ministry anyway?" But then, the parable of the sower in Luke 8 came to mind and gave me a renewed vision. I began to think about the whole process of planting, growth, and harvesting as it applies to our work.

Paul says in Corinthians that some plant and some water but God causes the growth. Now, if you've ever had a garden, you know that planting is fun and harvesting is great, but preparing the soil, watering diligently, and pulling the weeds is much less exciting. As I thought about these things, I came to the conclusion that our job in the creation ministry is mostly soil preparation and weed pulling. We present information to help clear the "ground" of rocks, weeds, and debris. After doing this we sometimes are able to plant, and occasionally God gives us the joy of harvesting, but most of our time is spent picking rocks and pulling weeds. Not too glamorous, but extremely necessary. Maybe that's why it's always encouraging to hear from people who have benefitted from the work. Here are a few comments we have received. We thought they might encourage you too:

- Thanks again for your time . . . You have spurred my interest and answered several questions. (Recent Geology Graduate, Colorado) (Ed. Note: *This young man's sister later called us and thanked us for our studies with her brother. She said as a result of our studies he had become a Christian. PTL!*)
- We praise God for your much needed ministry! . . . We have a niece who started to doubt her Christian foundation and heritage after four years away at the university level. It was her science and geology courses that set her mind to questioning. We're sorry to say these courses and influences really undermined her earlier training. We're praying for God's perfect timing to share all our back issues of "Think and Believe" and we pray her mind and heart will be open and receptive. (Colorado)
- As a college student majoring in biology, I face many conflicts which I am sure you can relate to. The information that I get from your articles is very helpful and appreciated. (College Student, Colorado)
- We find the newsletter very interesting and helpful. Because of the credible, verifiable information contained therein, I was able to raise questions in a recent Biology class which made the tenuousness of the evolutionist position clearer. Also because of the questions raised, other Christians in the class made themselves known to me and we were able to build each

other up in our faith and openly discuss our beliefs and evidences for our beliefs in lab periods, as others silently and sometimes quite interested listened. (College Student, Washington)

- We sure do enjoy your newsletter. As a college instructor in Introductory Geology, your information has helped me introduce creationism as a science on equal footing with evolution. (College Instructor, Colorado)
 - Thank you for your faithful ministry through Think and Believe. I read it regularly and enjoy it and use it a lot in my circle of elderly people as well as in younger groups. I pray and believe in your ministry and I want to contribute just a little for its support. (Athens, Greece)
- It's fun to talk with students of all ages. You always hope you're getting through, but you're never quite sure. Here are some comments from some middle school students. We thought maybe you would enjoy them too:
- Thank you for taking your time to talk to our school. I leard [sic] lots of things I never knew before. The day you came in I went home and told my family all about you and the things you taught us.
 - A lot that you talked was really interesting. I didn't fall asleep like I do when other speakers talk. Thanks again for coming.
 - Thank you for comming [sic] to our class and talking. Yor [sic] a great talker. You fit lots of information in my head with so little effort on my part.
 - Thanks so much for coming to talk to our school. I thought it would be really terrible. I though you would be a white coat scientist and just ramble on about all of these scientific terms. But you were really interesting to listen to.
 - Thank you for coming and talking to us about creation and evolution. I really enjoyed the pictures and the facts. Please continue coming to places that need to hear it. I will remember it.
- We would like to express our thanks to all of you who have written to encourage us. Your prayers and kind words mean so much. Thank you!

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The Seed Sprouts

Spring is in the air, and it will soon be time to plant your garden. As you do, take some time to marvel at the amazing events that occur as those tiny seeds sprout, take root, grow and produce fruit. The process occurs millions of times each spring, yet it is so easily taken for granted!

What really takes place in this process of germination? Something triggers the seemingly lifeless seed to become active. In most cases, that something is water. As water is absorbed through the seed coat, it causes the cells of the waiting embryo to swell. It also activates chemical reactions within the embryo which allow the embryo to begin to utilize the food stored in the endosperm (the "fleshy" part of the seed). As the cells of the embryo elongate and begin to divide to form more cells, the seed coat breaks open and the roots begin to extend downward, and the shoot upwards. Very soon it breaks the surface, the first leaves form, and the process of photosynthesis is able to begin.

The process seems straight-forward enough, and so common that we may tend to overlook the complexities. How do seeds "know" the proper time to germinate in nature? The basic conditions necessary for germination appear to be moisture, oxygen, and appropriate temperature. However, plants differ in their specific requirements for each of these. In addition, there appear to be some very ingenious mechanisms involved in maintaining dormancy until the proper time. Some seeds have specialized seed coats which may be impervious to water or oxygen. Germination then would first require some sort of process to break the seed coat and allow water and oxygen to penetrate. For example, some desert plant seeds will not germinate until the seeds have been scoured and scratched by sand and moving water. Other types of plants require a period of freezing and thawing to break the seed coat. Still others require soaking in acid, or even in some cases going through a fire. Another major category of dormancy mechanisms is the presence of chemical inhibitors either within the seed itself or externally. For example, a substance in the fleshy part of the fruit may inhibit germination, as in tomatoes, or a substance produced by another plant may inhibit germination. Other times, a substance within the seed coat may need to be washed away before the seed can germinate. Dormancy mechanisms are extremely varied and numerous.

Seed plant reproduction is another example of fantastic creative design, yet evolutionists continue to give credit to time and chance.

Harnessing Light Energy

Living things need energy. Even though the sun provides an enormous amount of it, this energy would do no good if it weren't for an amazingly engineered system called photosynthesis. What is photosynthesis? Simply stated, it is the process by which energy from light is captured and converted to a form of chemical energy which is usable by living things. In photosynthesis, water and carbon dioxide are converted to glucose (a form of sugar) and free oxygen. Evolutionists claim that this process just happened to evolve by accidents, but is that a logical conclusion?

Sunlight is absorbed by a special plant pigment called chlorophyll. This is the substance that makes plants green. Through a series of chemical reactions, the energy from the sunlight is converted and stored in the sugar the plants produce. This sugar can then be used by plant and animal cells as a source of energy, or it can be converted to other food substances.

Actually, photosynthesis is a complex process involving numerous specialized molecules of various types. It takes place in two phases, the light (or photo) phase and the dark (or synthetic) phase. In the light phase, light energy is absorbed and energizes chlorophyll. The energized chlorophyll then breaks apart a water molecule, releasing oxygen and hydrogen. The hydrogen is captured by a special hydrogen acceptor molecule to be used in the dark phase. The free oxygen is used by the plant tissues if needed, and the excess is released to the atmosphere to be used by other living things. The energized chlorophyll also uses its energy to produce a high-energy molecule called ATP. This ATP is the "energy currency" used in living cells and is vital to many cell functions. One use of ATP is in the dark reaction of photosynthesis. Here ATP is used to convert carbon dioxide and water to glucose. The energy stored in the ATP is thus transferred to glucose, which can then be stored or used by animals as food.

Even though the above description sounds complicated enough, it is actually a simplified explanation of the fascinating process of photosynthesis. What a marvelous mechanism it is! But it doesn't stop there! Every step along the way requires specific proteins to accomplish the task. We saw in the May/June 1985 issue of *Think & Believe* the utter impossibility of even one such protein evolving by chance. How ironic it is to think that many evolutionary scientists believe this engineered "powerhouse" developed by accidents and natural processes.

European Outreach Update

Everywhere we have gone in Europe, evolution has beaten us there. It is presented as "proven fact" as much and probably more than in the United States. Most of the people here have never heard an alternative to evolution even in the churches. At the time of our writing this in West Germany, we have been in Europe for 3½ months and have 1½ months to go. (Actually we will probably be on our way home as you read this.)

During the past two months we have been speaking through interpreters in Italy, Greece and Germany. That has been a new and interesting experience. We certainly hope the translation has been accurate. Even though we do not speak their language, we have really enjoyed the opportunity to get to know people in other cultures. It's quite a challenge just to communicate, but well worth the effort.

We have been much encouraged by the believers we've met, but much saddened by the spiritual need here in Europe. People seem to be caught either in superstitions, ritualistic religion or in atheism, agnosticism and materialism. In Rome we've seen people crawling up the "holy stairs" on their knees, hoping to earn their way to heaven. Others we talked with completely rejected God. Europe is truly a spiritually needy continent. There are so few true believers and such a lack of Bible-preaching churches. Please pray for us and for any others you know who are ministering in Europe.

Healthwise we are doing OK except for a disease we picked up called "Letteritis". The symptoms include a compelling desire to open mail — anyone's mail. It includes empty and hollow-eyed staring at mailboxes. There is also a tendency to write letters and read them five times before mailing. The only known cure for us is a full mailbox upon our return home. So we hope you will all be part of the cure!

Science Fair Report

Participants from the Grand Junction area and from as far away as Montrose and Moab, Utah came to see the interesting and imaginative displays of seventy students participating in the 2nd Annual Alpha Omega Science Fair held February 28 at New Horizons Christian School. We even received some time on local T.V. and a picture in the local newspaper. Everyone participating had a wonderful time showing off what they had learned and seeing what other friends are studying.

—Dorothy Hahn

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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