

St Mary's Fetcham, Surrey
Sun 30th Oct 2011

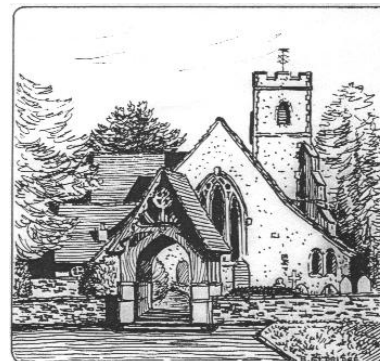
HOT POTATOES # 3

Did I evolve? Was I created?

Scripture

Genesis 1:1-2:25

Colossians 1:15-20



Sermon outline:

CLUEDO HOUSE as a way of exploring different perspectives

- 1) FRONT DOOR - why we are addressing hot potatoes: trust in God and clearing away boulders
- 2) KITCHEN - the Cupcake and different approaches
- 3) LIBRARY - Bible and Creationism: young earth, old earth, and questions about materialism
- 4) LABORATORY - scientists offer evidence for evolution
- 5) HALLWAY - looking into the Bible together with the science - the whole causal structure of the universe depends on a Creator God, and the mechanisms of random mutation and natural selection fit within that; we see signs of God's providence and we have been given minds to explore; Objections: eg. problem with suffering, death and waste; questions about Adam and Eve
- 6) BACK DOOR - 'the created order is like a window... glimpses of its creator' Alister McGrath
- 7) EXIT THE CLUEDO HOUSE - to a Lake in Galilee, to think about Jesus Christ, who affirmed the value of our human life by living it, calling us disciples to live the fullest human life possible; his Resurrection body was different - points to more than the biology we know: the Creation is set within a bigger picture, see Col 1:15-17

The sermon will be accessible from the St Mary's website:

www.stmarysfetcham.org.uk

Resources for further reading and research

Creation or Evolution - do we have to choose?

The Big Questions in Science and Religion

Surprised by Meaning

Evolution - Fact or Fiction

www.bethinking.org

<http://www.st-edmunds.cam.ac.uk/faraday/index.php>

Christian Theology - an Introduction [4th Ed]

Alexander

Ward

McGrath

Blanchard

UCCF website

Faraday Institute

McGrath [Chapter 7]

Did I evolve? Was I created?

Suggestions for Home Groups

You may find it helpful for one of the Home Group to do some research about the scientific evidence before your discussion [eg. read Denis Alexander's book listed above]

KITCHEN: the Cupcake illustrates different levels of understanding which we can apply to this question about human origins:

- (i) Ingredients and recipe: what can we learn about the mechanism of human formation?
- (ii) Look and taste, what do we experience of our humanity and creation?
- (iii) Gift of the cake and how it is received: what can we say about the meaning of human existence on earth? Discuss whether or how this WHY question might affect our understanding of the HOW questions.

LABORATORY: it would be helpful if a member of the group could summarise the main points about evolution and the evidence for evolution

- ❖ Discuss how convincing you find this evidence [see Alexander's book]
- ❖ Discuss any outstanding questions you have with the scientific approach to our topic

BACK DOOR:

Can you think of other perspectives on Evolution or Creation as we reflect on our place in the universe?
Spend time in WORSHIP: you may find Psalms 8, 139, 19 helpful as focus

JESUS OF NAZARETH

Read Colossians 1:15-20

- * What does St Paul say about Jesus and Creation?
- ** How might the Resurrection of Jesus point to more than evolutionary biology?
- *** How might we see Creation as an ongoing activity of God

LIBRARY: thinking about the Bible and Creation:

- (a) Read Genesis 1:1-2:25 together: what are the key messages you receive from this passage?
- (b) Describe the differences between the descriptions of Creation in Genesis 1 and 2. How does this add to your understanding?
- (c) Reflect together on the interpretation of the Bible: what sort of literature is Genesis, who were the readers and what was their understanding of the world? How could this influence the way we read it?
- (d) Some see science and theology in opposition on this topic. How comfortable are you with the ideas of Young Earth or Old Earth Creationism?

HALLWAY: holding Biblical study alongside Scientific evidence:

- (1) How might the theological idea of God's providence help to make sense of our topic?
- (2) 2 objections to an understanding of evolution within God's overall causal structure of the universe were raised in the sermon:
 - the problem of suffering
 - the identity of Adam and EveWhat sorts of answers might you consider as you wrestle with these objections?
- (3) How does SIN fit into this picture?

Discuss how this study might help you to share your faith outside the church

Marion de Quidt Oct 2011