

# 19. The Epistle of 2Peter—3:3-6

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier  
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## 2 Peter 3:1-4a (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), <sup>2</sup> that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, <sup>3</sup> knowing this first: that scoffers [mockers] will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, <sup>4</sup> and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?..."

Peter began chapter 2 by telling us that just as there were false prophets and teachers in the Old Testament period so they would also be among God's people in the New Testament Church Age as well.

But then he precedes to tell us in chapter 3 they would dramatically increase in number the closer we got to the Lord's return—something that Jesus Himself told us would happen in the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 24).

Those who study cults for a living will tell you that sometime around the middle of the 1800's something began to happen—a wave of Christian cults sprang up in greater numbers than ever before—in fulfillment of Bible end times prophecy.

- *The Mormonism in the 1830s*
- *Millerism which morphed into the 'Seventh-Day Adventism' in the 1830's*
- *Jehovah's Witnesses in the 1870s*
- *Christian Science also started in 1870's*

There have been many other cults that started around that time and since—as the Bible predicted. Then we need to add to this the false teachers of the *secular* world who mock the Bible like atheists, agnostics and others who hold to a view of world history that is completely *natural* as opposed to *supernatural* in origin.

This belief system is known as 'Naturalism'.

Naturalism is the reigning ideology of our day embraced by most of the intellectuals, scientists, educators, politicians and judges in our country and around the world. A naturalist believes that God only exists as a fantasy in the minds of religious non-intellectuals.

In our university's naturalism (the belief that nature is all there is and everything came into existence

through natural processes without any divine fiat)—is the virtually unquestioned assumption upon which all matters of life are based.

Of course, naturalism (worshipping the natural world) is nothing new—Paul talked about it and those who practice it in Romans 1—

**Romans 1:22-25 (NLT2)**

<sup>22</sup> Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. <sup>23</sup> And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles...So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.

Naturalism forms the foundation for the theory of evolution (first proposed by Darwin in 1859).

The devil has worked very hard over the last 160 years, thru the teaching of evolution, to cause people to believe that there is no God Who created us and that we are nothing more than a cosmic accident and therefore life has no real meaning or purpose.

Of course, this is directly opposite to what the Bible says—*“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* (Gen.1:1)

So, in the first verse of the Bible we have the basis for a *theistic* worldview—the belief that everything in the natural realm was created by a supernatural Deity. This stands in direct opposition to *naturalism* which says that in the beginning nothing produced everything all by itself!

This is one of the greatest if not the greatest heresy of the last days—and the Church has not been immune from it—

*“Every year, churches from all over the world celebrate the birth of Charles Darwin (Feb.12, 1809) on the nearest Sunday with what they call ‘Evolution Sunday.’ The day is celebrated with programs and sermons intended to emphasize that his theory of biological evolution is compatible with faith and that Christians have no need to choose between religion and science.*

*Evolution Sunday” has drawn participation from a variety of denominational and non-denominational churches, including Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Unitarian, Congregationalist, United Church of Christ, Baptist and a host of community churches.”*

One well known pastor disagrees that evolution and the Christian faith are compatible and not in conflict with one another—he offered this stinging critique of evolution—

*“To put it simply, evolution was invented in order to eliminate the God of Genesis and thereby to oust the Lawgiver and obliterate the inviolability of His law. Evolution is simply the latest means our fallen race has devised in order to suppress our innate knowledge and the biblical testimony that there is a God and that we are accountable to Him (cf. Romans 1:28).*

*By embracing evolution, modern society aims to do away with morality, responsibility, and guilt. Society has embraced evolution with such enthusiasm because people imagine that it eliminates the Judge and leaves them free to do whatever they want without guilt and without consequences.”*

Of course that's true because evolution is amoral so by rejecting the God of the Bible (Who is a moral God) and replacing Him with the 'god' of naturalism—man is free to live anyway he likes (or so he thinks). So many *have* enthusiastically embraced evolution in their desire to live unrighteously—

**Romans 1:18-20 (NKJV)**

<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, <sup>19</sup> because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown *it* to them. <sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes* are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,

Look, if there is no God, if man is just a cosmic accident, the result of countless genetic mutations—then there is no purpose or ultimate value to life and of course no afterlife.

This leads to a philosophy of life that is nihilistic and hedonistic the motto of which being, *"let's eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die and that's it!"*

Dr. George Marsden, an evolutionist said,

*"Creation scientists are correct in perceiving that in modern culture evolution often involves far more than biology. The basic ideologies of our civilization including its entire moral structure are at risk. Evolution is sometimes the key mythological element in a philosophy that functions as a virtual religion."*

In fact, as one author put it: *"Naturalism has now replaced Christianity as the main religion of the Western world, and evolution has become naturalism's principal dogma."*

So, theism (leading to creationism) and naturalism (leading to evolution) are competing belief systems and lead to two entirely different ways of looking at and living one's life. The Bible says that God made man *"a little lower than the angels and crowned him with glory and honor."* (Psalm 8:5)

But most of the Western world (academia especially) has rejected the Creator and has embraced evolution which teaches that man evolved *"a little higher than the apes"*—a huge difference! You see if you remove God/creation from society and substitute naturalism/evolution as god—you remove the uniqueness of man from the animal kingdom.

The Bible says that man was made in the image of God, but if there is no God then man couldn't have been made in His image and is therefore no different from any other animal that evolved on this planet.

And that is the very thing our public schools teach our children from the time they enter kindergarten—but here's the problem. If we teach our kids they came from animals—it shouldn't surprise us when they act like animals!

- We see kids growing up in our society without God and without morals who place little or no value on human life.

- We see gangs that have taken over the inner city and have turned it into a war zone battling each other over drug turf and killing innocent people who get caught in the crossfire.
- We see kids bringing guns into their schools and wiping out class mates simply because they didn't like the way someone looked at them or talked to them (or about them) on Facebook or on some other social media platform—but what do we expect?

From the time these kids started public school they have been taught a humanistic, naturalistic worldview—a philosophy of life void of God, where they evolved from animals. A worldview where everything came about by chance and genetic accidents and where there is no purpose for life, no life to come and no God to answer to.

So what do we expect when they act as if human life doesn't mean anything?

You see, any philosophy of life that's based on the idea of the survival of the fittest, the strong eliminating the weak as the basic means of evolving from lower forms of life to higher more complex forms—

If that's the ideology that's governing man's thinking and shaping his worldview—guess what, it's going to produce a lot of evil consequences—and it has.

If evolution is true and we are just animals that have evolved higher than the other animals in the animal kingdom—then why should we bother helping the weak, the handicapped, the elderly and the sick?

Let's do away with them—let's embrace infanticide and euthanasia.

Why keep these people around if they're just keeping the rest of us down by draining the resources needed to strengthen the genetically superior. I mean if evolution is true then Hitler was right!!

Hitler was a big fan of Charles Darwin and a big proponent of evolution and sought to hasten the process of evolution on human beings and bring about a master race by exterminating all those whom he considered genetically inferior and less evolved—the strong killing the weak (his version of natural selection)—and who could have argued with him if evolution is true?

But of course, it isn't true—and here's why.

First of all, more and more scientists are being forced to admit, based on advancements in genetics—that evolution is impossible.

It's impossible because the genetic coding of each cell's DNA will never produce anything else—and any mutations in the cell are almost always bad and produce devolution not evolution (speaking of 'macro' not 'micro' evolution—Explain).

But let's come at it from a different angle—where does compassion and mercy come from? The evolutionist would say, *"They evolved as we evolved."*

But listen, evolution doesn't produce compassion and mercy because evolution is based on the survival of the fittest—the strong preying upon the weak. If the strong start showing mercy to the weak it would undermine the very foundation upon which evolution is built—if it were true.

Why is it when a tsunami or an earthquake or a plague of some kind hits some third world country, that the rest of the world (Western world built on Judeo-Christian values) mobilizes and sends workers, food and medicine?

Why do we worry about a little baby born 4 or 5 months premature and spend thousands if not millions of dollars to save that child's life?

Isn't it a tremendous drain on our resources? Why not just let the child die—I mean, they're not a productive member of society yet? Why not just let natural selection take over and eliminate the weak? The same goes for the elderly who are no longer productive members of society and sap valuable resources from the 18 to 50-year old's who *are* productive members of that society?

**We do it because life is precious—all life.**

And why do we believe that life is precious—because we have been made in the image of God—a merciful and compassionate God, Who created us and put the sanctity of life in our hearts.

Folks, there is no mercy and compassion in the jungle—there's only the survival of the fittest.

Man is unique from the animal kingdom because our Creator made us unique! Only man has the capacity to reflect the glory of his Creator in the way of love, compassion, mercy and kindness.

The only explanation for morality is the existence of God who is a moral God and Who made man in His image and put His moral law into our hearts.

Creationism is the only thing that answers the question of man's origin and makes sense of life.

Hopefully now you see how important the first verse in the Bible is—it doesn't just introduce the book of Genesis, it becomes the foundation for understanding and living our lives on the earth.

Without the first verse in the Bible life is nothing more than an exercise in futility—in other words, *"life without God is a meaningless life not worth living"*.

But fortunately, that isn't true, there is a God who created everything and everyone—in fact, the Bible says that, not only are we not an accident—we are God's masterpiece!—

*"For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us for a purpose, so we can do all the good works he planned for our lives even before we were born."* (paraphrase of Ephesians 2:10)

And so, God created you on purpose for a purpose—and He has been preparing you for that work even from before you were born

The apostle Paul mentions this in Galatians 1:15 when he was giving his testimony how that it pleased God, *“Who separated me from my mother's womb and called me through His grace...”*

Our lives are the product of God’s creative genius—whether we live up to our potential is up to us, but just so you know—you are not an accident as evolution teaches!

Okay, so Peter is warning us that in the last days mockers will come—and what primarily will they mock?

He tells us that the focus of their mocking will be to ridicule the biblical teaching that Jesus is going to literally and physically come back to the earth—**“Where is the promise of His coming?”**

- *There are 7 specific references to the new birth in the Bible*
- *Roughly 80 references to baptism—water and Spirit*
- *But there are over 500 references with regard to the Second Coming—by far the broadest and most referenced subject in the Bible*

But in particular, Peter tells us that they will mock the idea that God will judge the entire world with devastating, catastrophic judgments *before* Jesus comes back to establish His Kingdom. (Revelation 6-19) They will mock that idea and dismiss it out of hand with the sarcastic rebuttal—**“For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation.”**

Whether you realize it or not, Peter is laying out the doctrine of *uniformitarianism*.

Naturalism forms the foundation for the theory of evolution—and evolution is built on the doctrine of *uniformitarianism* (1865).

### **What is uniformitarianism you ask?**

The dictionary defines uniformitarianism as:

*“A geological doctrine that processes acting in the same manner as at present and over long spans of time are sufficient to account for all current geological features and all past geological changes”*

In other words, all the geological changes to the earth’s crust have taken place slowly over long periods of time uniformly as opposed to suddenly thru cataclysmic upheavals (catastrophism).

Peter goes on to indict them for their willful ignorance on this subject—

#### **2 Peter 3:5-6 (NKJV)**

**<sup>5</sup> For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, <sup>6</sup> by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water.**

Peter first of all makes reference to the God of creation who by His word brought forth the heavens and the earth (which originally was one land mass standing in and out of the earth's oceans)—

In other words, God exists and wasn't shy about getting involved in world history by creating the physical universe in the first place. Furthermore, Peter goes on to say that God wasn't a 'distant deity' (Deism) and certainly wasn't shy when He intervened in human history by destroying the world with the Flood in the days of Noah.

It's interesting that he said with regard to the Flood that the people of this world often **"willfully forget"** this fact—what is he talking about?

Since all mankind came from Noah's sons—all mankind remembers the Flood.

Of the more than 200 cultures from all over the world, each of them has a Flood story in their cultural history—the following aspects of the story are common:

- *88% describe a favored family that survives*
- *70% attribute their survival to a boat*
- *95% say the sole cause of the catastrophe was a flood*
- *66% say that the disaster was due to man's wickedness*
- *67% record that animals were also saved*
- *57% describe that the survivors ended up on a mountain*
- *Many of the accounts also specifically mention birds being sent out, a rainbow, and eight persons being saved*

And as long as Peter brought up the Flood and uses it as a basis for teaching that another worldwide judgment is coming—let's briefly take a look at the Flood next time and try to answer some of those that mock and dismiss it as legend and not fact.

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