

# **Catholicism's Evolution Connection a Compromise Typical of Apostasy**

By Matthew Cserháti

## **Introduction**

If you ask an average Catholic person what they think about the creation/evolution debate which is raging across America and Europe it is highly likely that they'll respond by saying that they basically have no problem with integrating evolution with their Catholic faith. A common response is that since the pope, such as the late pope, John Paul II, accepted it, then they as Catholics may accept it as well. Occasionally, they might make a contemptuous comment about six-day creationism. A very high percentage of Catholics are steeped in theistic evolutionary compromises, and we shall see that this compromised position is because of a sad lack of respect for the Bible, and also because of the Roman Catholic Church's rejection of the principle of *Sola Scriptura*.

Many people view the creation/evolution debate as sort of a clash between science, represented by evolution, versus religion, which is equated with biblical creation. Since we are living in a highly modernized age, hallmarked by progress made in all fields of science, Catholics, and even many Evangelical Christians alike, simply feel tense about flying in the face of what seems to be commonly accepted scientific knowledge. Many of these people think that science has already proven evolutionary theory through and through, and that it is simply not worth questioning the evolutionary standpoint of the great majority of scientists. Therefore, they take the road to what they think is an acceptable compromise where they try to "reconcile" or "conform" the biblical account of creation with evolutionary hypotheses, a move which is highly Arminian in nature, in order to look good outwards to unbelievers (mainly atheists), and to make Christianity "compatible" and less "backwards" to unbelievers. Sadly, this is just another folly repeated in the ecumenical spirit of Pope Gregory I, who by compromising Christianity with paganism, in order to draw the pagans of his age into the Roman Catholic Church, but which only ended up with the paganization of the Church. Today, a direct consequence of this compromise is that many people end up rejecting the Bible and being swept into apostasy.

## **What is science about?**

In order to understand this debate deeper, we must take a look at what science is, but also what it is not. First of all, we have to understand that there are two basic kinds of scientific inquiry. On the one hand, we can talk about objective, or empirical science, which deals directly with observing natural processes. On the other hand, we can talk about scientific theories, or rather paradigms, which, since we are all biased human beings, are heavily influenced by our worldview, and which is, therefore, much more subjective in nature, such as evolution or other theories dealing with natural processes having taken place in the distant past.

## **Objective science and origins**

According to objective science, a researcher makes observations of natural processes in the present, and then makes a hypothesis about what he has observed. Afterwards, the researcher devises repeatable experiments to test his hypothesis on the basis of which he either accepts or rejects the hypothesis. The key element here is repeatability and observability. It is through the testing of formulated scientific hypotheses that natural laws can be thus deduced, and our knowledge of nature increased. Based on the knowledge of natural laws, like the laws of

aerodynamics, new technological advances can be made. For example, the airplane industry makes good use of physical laws known to the science of aerodynamics.

When we talk about evolution, we must keep in mind that the theory of evolution states that all living organisms have descended from a single ancient cell, which was a product of chemical evolution coming into being in the primordial chemical soup many billions of years ago. Therefore, the whole entire process of evolution, called phylogeny, from the first primitive, single-celled organism, all the way up to man going through countless intermediate stages is, therefore, directly unobservable. While it is true that there are thousands and thousands of cases where they have observed new species being created from older species, on the first hand, this still does not prove the whole entire phylogenetic evolutionary process from beginning to end, and on the second hand, the observed process of speciation does not in itself contradict biblical creation. The creation account tells us that “... *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.*” Here we can see that the Bible speaks about different “kinds” of living organisms, which are all capable of reproducing according to their own kind – within boundaries. This means that speciation processes observed in nature are in line with what the Bible says. However, the Bible does not speak about genetic continuity between all species as evolutionary theory posits: “*But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. 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.*”

### **The nature of scientific paradigms**

Finally, it is important to note that much of scientific research is done according to ruling scientific paradigms – every scientist new to a field of inquiry is just not going to rediscover every single fundamental principle in his area of research. Much scientific research, for example in biology, is done according to specific concepts, which have been founded by previous researchers.

We can, therefore, see that it is in this way that there really does not exist a clash between science and religion, since (observable) science deals with natural processes and generating data about nature. The conflict exists only between how data generated during the course of scientific research is **interpreted**. It is at this point that a scientist’s worldview comes into play, and according to which certain data is emphasized or de-emphasized. For example, in the area of molecular biology it is a known fact that the genome size of a certain species of amoeba called *Amoeba dubia* is 670 billion base pairs, which is roughly 220 times larger than the size of the human genome (which is about 3 billion base pairs). One would think that according to evolution, the amoeba’s genome would have slowly inflated during the billions of years that would have passed between the amoeba and man, but the fact is that it is the other way around! The sizes of the genomes of quite a large number of living organisms have also been measured, and it has been found that there are large differences in the sizes of genomes between different groups of organisms. For example, the genome sizes of reptiles tend to be larger than that of mammals. This is quite unexpected, according to what would have happened during gradual upwards molecular evolution, and has led not to the rejection of evolutionary theory, but this major discrepancy has been relegated to the status of the so-called “C-value paradox” replete with auxiliary hypotheses, yet awaiting a satisfactory explanation in line with evolutionary “tradition.”

## Jesuits and evolution

Peculiar to the creation/evolution debate is the way the Jesuit branch of the Roman Catholic Church deals with this question, specifically taking a markedly theistic evolutionary stance. The twice-banished Jesuit anthropologist, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, has influenced not only many Jesuit thinkers but liberal Protestants as well, who widely presented his view of creation, evolution, science, and religion as acceptable to non-Catholics. Chardin's theology is thoroughly anti-biblical, which has been deemed as such by even moderately conservative Catholics. It fully incorporates evolution by stating that all life, even God Himself is at different stages of evolutionary development. It completely denies the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross since it states that man is developing morally, instead of being morally depraved, as a consequence of the fall into sin. Eventually, at the end of all time, at the so-called Omega point, God Himself will appear fully formed. Teilhard de Chardin's theology is a pitiful failure, since it ultimately misses its goal of a so-called compromise between Catholic theology and evolutionary science, ending up fully accommodating a pantheistic worldview where God Himself is a developing part of the natural world. All this believed, even though the Roman Catholic catechism states that Adam and Eve, our first parents, really existed:

“The Church, interpreting the symbolism of biblical language in an authentic way, in the light of the New Testament and Tradition, teaches that our first parents, Adam and Eve, were constituted in an original ‘state of holiness and justice.’ This grace of original holiness was to share in...divine life.”

Why, even the concept of the Protoevangelium is confessed on the pages of the catechism of the Roman Church. As we may recall, the Protoevangelium is the promise given by God to Adam and Eve while still in the garden of Eden, after they had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in which He promises that the Seed of Eve will rise to crush with His foot the serpent who led our first parents into disobedience to God and thus into sin.

“The Christian tradition sees in this passage an announcement of the “New Adam” who, because he “became obedient unto death, even death on a cross,” makes amends superabundantly for the disobedience, of Adam. Furthermore, many Fathers and Doctors of the Church have seen the woman announced in the Protoevangelium as Mary, the mother of Christ, the “New Eve.” Mary benefited first of all and uniquely from Christ's victory over sin: “she was preserved from all stain of original sin and by a special grace of God committed no sin of any kind during her whole earthly life.”

“The account of the fall in *Genesis* 3 uses figurative language, but affirms a primeval event, a deed that took place *at the beginning of the history of man*. Revelation gives us the certainty of faith that the **whole of human history is marked by the original fault freely committed by our first parents.**”

*“A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”*

## Rome's disparagement of conservative Protestant creationism

It is at this point that the plot thickens. As we have seen previously, the Roman Catholic Church has cut itself loose from all literal interpretations of the creation account in the Bible, and has officially and widely accepted a compromised theistic evolutionary worldview in order to win converts, instead of heeding the Bible: *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”*

However, it is necessary to take a look at how the Roman Catholic Church deals with the phenomenon of young earth creationism and intelligent design. Here the stance of the Church is extremely perplexing, since it seems that the Church would never pass up the chance for a good argument for the existence of God or proof for the creation of the world. We read in the Charta Oecumenica that the Roman Catholic Church is open to dialogue with not only religions very distantly removed from its own theistic, Trinitarian religion, such as Buddhism, but also with atheism and atheists themselves. Therefore, it is also very saddening, how vehemently Rome attacks young earth creationists and followers of intelligent design, even though biology professor Michael Behe, who is a prominent figure in the Intelligent Design (ID) Movement is himself Catholic. The tone of these attacks is highly arrogant, aggressive, unloving, and unecumenical.

For example, it was reported that in an address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in 1996, Pope John Paul II “**declares war against those Protestant sects** spreading mainly in the United States...who he accuses of setting the church against modern progress.” Hungarian geologists, József Kókay and Imre Magyar, (one Catholic, the other Lutheran) themselves make very disparaging remarks against creationists and creationist geology in their book, “Did the Flood wash away evolution?”. On May 4, 2005, Vatican astronomer and Jesuit, Guy Consolmagno, declared that belief in the creation of the world in six days was a form of superstitious paganism harking back to the days when people believed in nature gods, and that religion must be protected from creationism. Consolmagno, true to his Jesuitism, is also quoted as saying on papal infallibility that “...on matters of faith, followers should accept somebody has got to be the boss, the final authority.” Sadly, in Consolmagno’s view, the boss is not the Lord Jesus Christ and His infallible Word, the Bible, but the pope. “*God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.*”

The question begs itself: Why does the Roman Catholic Church embrace the majority of Protestants in the Ecumenical Movement while harshly disparaging conservative Protestant creationists and ID’ers, even though they belong to the same denomination? Yes, foxy Rome shows the ecumenical face of the meek lamb to the majority of Protestants and Evangelical Christians, but bears her teeth as a raging tiger against conservative Protestant Christians who are not willing to compromise creation or the Bible.

One can understand the stance of the Roman Catholic Church against conservative Protestant creationists when we see how the basic goal of missionary Jesuitism is to completely destroy Protestantism. The Extreme Oath of the Jesuits proves this well; Ignatius Loyola personally proposed to Pope Paul III to deliver Protestantism back to the Roman fold. Therefore, we can see the war declared and waged, according to Pope John Paul II as another battle against conservative Christians who will not submit to Rome and papal authority. The question is: What lies at stake in the evolution/creation controversy, and what does Catholicism have to gain by defeating young earth creationism?

### **Reinterpretation of the nature of sin and the need of redemption by grace**

A core belief of the Roman Catholic system is that man is basically good, and by his free will can seek God, and by good works can attain the grace of God. This belief is so fundamental

to the Roman Catholic belief system that it will reject the plain testimony of Scripture which tells us otherwise; that man is completely depraved and is completely lacking the grace of God; that man is completely lost and *inert*, and completely unable to do anything to save himself.

It is therefore no surprise when, for example, the Hungarian Jesuit, Béla Somfai, declared in an interview that it would be necessary to reinterpret what the Bible says about the relationship between man and God, creation, and original sin.

### **Rome errs when it comes to the nature of man**

This is where evolutionism comes into play. This is the point where we can understand the connection Rome has to evolutionism. Rome correctly believes that man in his original state, before the fall into sin, was created in holiness and in God's image. However, Rome teaches that "being created in God's image" was only an addition (*donum superaditum*) to what man was originally like. Therefore, natural man (*homo naturalis*) "evolves" into supernatural man (*homo idealis seu supernaturalis*) through acquisition of the gift of being gradually made in God's image, making man capable of seeking God with his will. It is because of this that Rome is willing to accept an evolutionary viewpoint of man because Rome believes man to be progressing morally, being the pinnacle of creation, or rather, evolutionary development, so to speak. However, the Bible makes no mention of a neutral, intermediate state as a precedence to man being created in the image of God. Man's **being** (personhood) created in the image of God belonged to the essence of man's createdness. The Bible says: "*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*"

Stemming from Rome's flawed view of man's createdness is a flawed view of sin and man's sinful nature. Rome holds that the fall into sin caused "supernatural man" to revert to his original state of natural man, albeit being "only" wounded by sin.

The doctrine of original sin, closely connected with that of redemption by Christ, provides lucid discernment of man's situation and activity in the world. By our first parents' sin, the devil has acquired certain domination over man, **even though man remains free**. Original sin entails "captivity under the power of him who thenceforth had the power of death, that is, the devil." Ignorance of the fact that **man has a wounded nature** inclined to evil gives rise to serious errors in the areas of education, politics, social action, and morals.

According to Rome, however, man is still capable of seeking God by his own free will and performing good deeds in order to attain salvation. In this way, we can see how evolutionary ideas are interconnected with the Catholic viewpoint of man's character and salvation, and why the Roman Catholic Church would try to make use of it in its eternal struggle against the biblical doctrines of *Sola Gratia* and *Sola Fide*.

### **The utter destitution of man as portrayed by the Bible**

In stark contrast to this, the Bible presents a sobering and startling picture about the utter destitution and depravity of man, making it utterly necessary for Christ to die in our stead on the cross for our own sins in order to regenerate us and to give us new life. Rome grossly underestimates the power that sin has in man's life, completely infecting all areas of his life, like how a strain of bacteria spreads within the body and completely infects someone.

In the book of Genesis, God solemnly warns Adam that he is not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for if he does so, then he will die, not only a spiritual death, but physical death will also beset him: "*And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of*

*every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”*

This is expounded by the apostle Paul who draws a parallel between how the death of Christ is the atonement for sin in Romans, chapter 5: *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”*

This in itself is the reason why evolution and the Bible do not mix with each other, which Rome underestimates. According to evolution, man would simply be the product of a long chain of intermediate life forms, each giving way to the other through the death of weaker species, with man appearing as the apex of development. This means that God would have to have killed a great multitude of living things in order to reach mankind; this is not the picture of a loving God. Contrary to this, as we have seen, all sin and death are the direct result of man’s disobedience to God, his Creator.

If we are spiritually dead, then that means that the only kind of fruit our sins can bear is death itself: *“Then when lust has conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”*

Mankind simply became so sinful after creation that God became so angry with man that he practically wiped him out with the flood in Noah’s days: *“And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.”* Furthermore, since Adam chose to listen to the guiles and the lying promise of the serpent, he therefore cut himself off from God and plunged the whole human race and the whole creation into sin and darkness. When it comes to taking sides, there is no middle ground between good and evil. Jesus makes this clear when he tells the Jews that they are the servants of sin and the children of the devil: *“Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.”* *“Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”* It is for this reason that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had to become flesh in order to save mankind from the consequences of his sin: *“Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”*

### **The good news of the Gospel: spiritual rebirth transfers us from the dominion of death to an eternal relationship with Christ our Savior.**

However, the Gospel of Jesus Christ tells us that the good news is that the Son of God became flesh to bear our sins on the cross for our salvation: *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”* The Bible tells us that if we have faith in Jesus Christ, then we shall be spiritually reborn, and shall be made a new creation, having a relationship with God the Father. Such a spiritual rebirth would be meaningless if man was only wounded by sin, as Rome says. *“For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose*

*again. Therefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*

It is our plea that many Catholics and Evangelical Christians alike may think through the implications that the creation/evolution controversy has on our faith and on the Gospel, so that we may refrain from making such a compromise in our faith, which would have such dire consequences.

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