

The Results of Evolutionary Theory as Applied to Biblical Studies

The evolutionary theory has had tremendous effect upon Bible study, much more I think than most people realize. The result of it has had a devastating effect upon Christian testimony and Christian belief. I thought tonight I would summarize some of the principal teachers and developments in this direction.

First I would like to say there are only really two views of the world. Various types of each of these, but fundamentally two views. One is that the universe is a marvellous creation, formed and directed by a master craftsman. The other view is that the universe is an accidental development by pure chance without purpose or meaning.

The word evolution is an unfortunate word. I think this is one place where the devil really put it across--his getting this word evolution widely used. Because the word does not give an idea really of what the theory of evolution is. Evolution simply would mean change and of course change is universal. No son is exactly like his father. Everything is constantly changing.

Now there are various limits as to how far various things can change. But using this term evolution as if those who oppose it simply believe in a static universe, puts us on the defensive. And it's so obvious that change is constant. In most aspects of life there are areas within which change is confined. These areas are impossible for us to lay out clearly. If anybody in 1900 had undertaken to describe what the world would be like in 1980, I don't think he would have come at all near to it. If anybody had said when I was in college that a person could have breakfast in London, lunch in New York, dinner in Los Angeles, I'm sure everybody would have thought he was absolutely out of his head. It would have just seemed impossible. That's only 60 years ago.

The way things have changed, the universe is full of changes. This word evolution gives a false a false impression to what the evolution movement is really. Really the correct term for this would be the theory of accidents. That's very important in connection with Darwin who is generally thought of as the father of the evolutionary theory. There were evolutionary theories before Darwin. But that which Darwin stressed was that it was all accident. That there is no purpose, no plan, it is all accident.

Well now of course in our own lives we find that accident tears down; accident does not build up. It is comparatively rare that succeed in something of importance purely through accident. We do have unexpected results in things we do, I don't think we would properly call that accident. But there are thus two fundamental viewpoints. Of course the Bible from the very beginning has had as its central teaching that this world is a very marvellous creation, formed and directed by a master craftsman. That is a fundamental idea and approach which Christians have held through the ages.