


TALKING POINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a "transforming church". We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to "discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness." Since "Talking Points, Walking Points" is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to "dive deep" too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled "Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time", are perfect for private reflection.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- 1 What three predictions does Darwin's branching-tree model make about the fossil record? In contrast, what does the Biblical account predict instead? Which predictions do we observe?
- 2 What conclusion do evolutionists draw from the fact that Archaeopteryx had both reptile-like and bird-like features? Is that conclusion the only one which can be drawn? Why or why not?
- 3 What is the significance of Proverbs 18:17 when applied to the examination of fossil evidence?
- 4 Google "abductive reasoning". What does it mean, and what is its relevance to the creation/evolution debate?
- 5 Why is the Cambrian explosion a serious problem for Darwin's tree-of-life model (and not just a minor complication)?
- 6 Why is it critical that we observe a loss of genetic information rather than an increase?
- 7 How does Romans 8:20–21 connect to what we observe about mutations?
- 8 One's worldview shapes how we interpret the same evidence. Where might your own assumptions be quietly shaping how you see an issue? How could you test the validity of your assumptions?
- 9 If creation reflects the work of a Designer, how should that shape the way you think about people?

- 1 **Evolution predicts that:** [1] lower classification levels (species, genus, family) should diversify before higher levels (class, phylum); [2] the number of distinct body plans should increase slowly at first and then more rapidly; and [3] there should be abundant transitional fossils linking every level of the classification hierarchy.
Scripture predicts that: [1] Life should appear abruptly and fully formed within fixed “kinds,” [2] the number of distinct body plans should only decrease over time through extinction (since creation is finished), and [3] there should be no transitional forms between major groups.
- 2 Evolutionists conclude that Archaeopteryx had to be a transitional evolutionary form, between reptiles and birds. No, this is neither the only nor the best conclusion to draw about Archaeopteryx! Why? Because there are living bird species with “so-called” reptilian features and living reptile species with “so-called” avian features.
- 3 The evolutionary account has gone largely unchallenged because it’s told first and repeated often (in schools and documentaries), and that it needs to be “cross-examined” rather than simply accepted because it sounds confident or familiar.
- 4 It’s a method of reasoning used in the historical sciences for weighing which of several possible past causes best accounts for present evidence, based on questions like whether the cause has been observed to produce such effects, whether it was actually present, and how much of the data it explains. It is useful because questions about origins can’t be directly observed or repeated in a lab, so the best one can do is compare the explanatory power of competing causes (mindless evolutionary processes versus an intelligent, designing God).
- 5 Because Darwinism predicts a slow, branching accumulation of small changes leading gradually to new body plans, but the fossil record instead shows major animal phyla appearing abruptly, with the total number of phyla declining afterward through extinction rather than continuing to increase — the opposite pattern from what Darwinism predicts.
- 6 Because building genuinely new structures or body plans requires entirely new genetic information. Darwinism requires this—yet we never see it!
- 7 Creation is “in bondage to decay”—declining not improving. Darwinism predicts and requires improvement.
- 8 Be prepared with your own brief, concrete thoughts on this, but let group members go first.
- 9 If creationism is true, then human beings are not merely highly-evolved animals—we are unique image-bearers of God. We must treat humans with dignity, from the moment of conception to natural death.



Make plans as a group to use this summer's conference as an outreach to neighbors and co-workers.

Jim Dieffenderfer speaks the first three Sundays:

- Sunday morning, July 5 Entering into the Debate
- Sunday morning, July 12 Evaluating Evolutionary Icons
- Sunday morning, July 19 Evolution's Fatal Flaw

Then, Dr. Terry Mortenson of Answers in Genesis will speak the final Sunday morning, followed by evening sessions Sunday, Monday and Tuesday:

- Sunday morning, July 26 Evolution v. Creation: Why Does it Matter?
- Sunday evening, July 26 Ape-men, Adam and the Gospel
- Monday evening, July 27 Millions of Years: Unscientific Origin, Catastrophic Consequences
- Tuesday evening, July 28 Noah's Flood: Washing Away Millions of Years

Learn more about Dr. Mortenson's here:



Sermon Summary

The historical sciences evaluate competing explanations by asking: (1) Could the proposed cause produce this effect? (2) Was it present at the right time and place? (3) How much does it explain? (4) Is it the only viable explanation? This session focuses on question three, applying it to four prominent evolutionary icons. The two competing explanations are: mindless mutation plus natural selection, and purposeful creation by God (Proverbs 18:17).

Darwin's Tree of Life Darwin's tree proposes that all life descended from a single common ancestor through gradual mutation and natural selection, producing increasing diversity over vast time. Using the Linnaean classification system (Kingdom → Phylum → Class → Order → Family → Genus → Species), evolutionary theory predicts: (a) lower taxonomic levels should differentiate before higher ones; (b) new body plans (phyla) should appear slowly and increase over time; (c) the fossil record should contain vast numbers of transitional forms. The biblical creation model predicts the opposite: life appears abruptly and fully formed, variation occurs only within created kinds (roughly equivalent to Family or Order), distinct body plans decrease over time through extinction, and no transitional forms exist between major groups. The fossil record supports the creation model. The Cambrian explosion shows nearly all animal phyla appearing suddenly and fully formed, without precursor lineages. The number of phyla peaked near fifty and has since declined through extinction. Transitional forms are absent throughout the record—a fact Darwin himself acknowledged as "the most obvious and serious objection" to his theory, and one that evolutionary paleontologists such as Stephen Jay Gould have continued to affirm.

Archaeopteryx Archaeopteryx possesses both reptilian features (teeth, wing claws) and fully formed avian features (wings, feathers). However, possessing characteristics from two groups does not qualify a fossil as a transitional form without documented intermediate stages showing gradual transformation. No evidence exists for how legs became wings or scales became feathers. Evolutionary specialists including Larry Martin and Alan Feduccia classify Archaeopteryx as an extinct bird, not an ancestor of modern birds. Its features are a mosaic of fully formed structures, not a transitional sequence. The fossil does not demonstrate the incremental change evolutionary theory requires.

The Hominid-to-Human Progression Three fatal flaws undermine the credibility of the hominid-to-human narrative. First, the fossil evidence is highly fragmentary and subject to wide interpretive variation. Classification criteria are poorly defined, and researchers' conclusions differ substantially based on whether they adopt "splitter" or "lumper" methodologies. Second, proposed evolutionary markers—bipedalism, brain size, and tool use—fail to account for normal variation within ape and human populations. Living tree-dwelling primates share features cited as evidence of bipedality. Neanderthals had larger average brain sizes than modern humans, yet *Homo erectus*, Neanderthal, and Cro-Magnon brain sizes all fall within the modern human range. Primitive tool use is also found among fully human populations today. Third, personal and ideological bias has significantly distorted the field. Notable frauds—**Pitdown Man** (human skull paired with a doctored ape jaw, accepted for ~40 years), **Ramapithecus** (orangutan teeth misidentified for fifty years), and **Nebraska Man** (a peccary tooth used as trial evidence in 1925)—were embraced uncritically. Paleoanthropologists such as Gareth Nelson and Geoffrey Clark have openly acknowledged that conclusions in the field are driven more by theoretical commitment than by evidence.

Drug-Resistant Bacteria Bacterial antibiotic resistance arises through three mechanisms: (1) intragenomic shuffling, which exposes pre-existing latent genetic information; (2) lateral gene transfer, which shares existing genetic information between bacteria; and (3) mutation, which alters antibiotic binding sites. None of these mechanisms generate new genetic information. Resistance mutations typically involve a loss of specificity and function—bacteria resistant to streptomycin, for example, have degraded ribosomes and cannot compete outside antibiotic environments. This represents a net loss of genetic information, not a gain. No known mutations increase genetic information or specificity. The accumulation of mutations over time degrades the genome—a phenomenon evolutionary geneticists term "genetic load." This pattern of decay is consistent with Romans 8:20–21, which describes creation as subject to bondage and decay.

Each of the four icons, when cross-examined, fails to support evolutionary theory and is better explained by the creation model: the fossil record's abrupt appearance of fully formed life; Archaeopteryx as an extinct mosaic bird; hominid fossils as either extinct apes or fully human remains with exaggerated distinctions; and bacterial resistance as genetic degradation rather than innovation.

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

Pastor Jim dug deeply into the evidence—or, lack thereof!—for evolution. Take one of his research cards per day and ask yourself questions such as:

- **Does it appear that evolutionists are being objective, honest investigators?**
- **Does Pastor Jim appear to be handling the evidence honestly and carefully?**
- **Why did I never hear this stuff in school? What's going on here?!**

Darwin considered the lack of transitional forms to be "the most obvious and serious objection which can be urged against the theory" of evolution.¹

"We've got to have some ancestors. We'll pick those. Why? Because we know they have to be there, and these are the best candidates. That's by and large the way it has worked. I am not exaggerating."³

"Paleontologists have paid an exorbitant price for Darwin's argument. We fancy ourselves as the only true students of life's history, yet to preserve our favored account of evolution by natural selection we view our data as so bad that we never see the very process we profess to study."²

"...we select among alternative sets of research conclusions in accordance with our biases and preconceptions—a process that is, at once, both political and subjective. [He goes on to confess] ...that paleoanthropology has the form but not the substance of a science."⁴

Drug resistance does not imply macroevolution!

- Drug resistance due to mutation involves a loss of information in the genes
- In fact, there are no known mutations that increase genetic information
- Mutations go the wrong way
- Creation is wearing out, not increasing in complexity (Romans 8:20-21)

**What questions do you still have?
Come back next week to learn about
"Evolution's Fatal Flaw"!**

¹ Charles Darwin's own words, quoted in Geoffery Grant's **Creation—Remarkable Evidence of God's Design**, page 193.

² Direct quote from celebrated Harvard paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould in **Evolution's Erratic Pace**, page 14. In fact, Gould called the absence of transitional forms in the fossil record the "trade-secret" of paleontology!

³ American Museum of Natural History's Dr. Gareth Nelson on how evolutionists chose "intermediate fossils"!

⁴ Quote by Geoffrey Clark, paleoanthropologist formerly of Arizona State University.

⁵ Pastor Jim's conclusions after studying the purported macro-evolution of microbes to resist antibiotics.