
From evolution to eternal life

How I was freed to come home to my Creator

By Sandy Fairservice

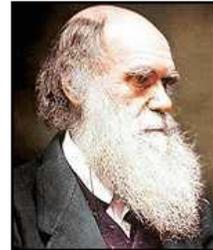
As a young Scottish boy I was taught a little of the Bible through the church I was sent to in. I could recite the books of the Bible in order, and knew that the Old Testament was written largely in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. I knew many of the accounts we know as Bible stories, like Noah and the flood, Daniel in the lion's den, and Samson and Delilah. I was also taught that Jesus Christ was a real person and that he died on a Roman cross to take the penalty of our sin. But these were only stories to me, because I was only seven or eight years old.

Evolution as a fact

Later, my family moved to New Zealand, and my education continued there. As a teenager, I was taught firmly in biology classes that all living things had come about by random processes—by accident. The teacher said that even humans had emerged from the primitive biological soup, and that we were related to every other creature. This was evolution, I was told, and it was fact.

To my teenage mind evolution made a pretty good case, but I remembered the other view, that God had created everything in six days—bugs, animals and humans. So I was undecided, and lived with intellectual conflict for some years.

Eventually I decided for evolution, but immediately I felt a great loss. I felt cut off from something, and a profound loneliness flooded over me.



Charles Darwin, the lapsed Christian who defined evolution.

World events

Then world events took a hand. The American president, John F. Kennedy, stared down Russian premier Nikita Khrushchev, who was sending nuclear missiles to Cuba. At the height of the crisis, many in New Zealand thought that nuclear war might erupt, and that everyone would die either immediately, or later in great suffering. Despite my non-religious position, I remember taking the empty milk bottles down to our gate one dark night and thinking, "It will be all right. God won't allow us to destroy the world." And he didn't.

Another event shook us all up. Premier Sukarno of Indonesia began his belligerent policy of confrontation, and landed some troops in Malaya. New Zealand and Australia were worried. There was a chance that I might be called up in the military service ballot, and be sent overseas to fight—and to die.

About this time, my parents decided we would return to live in Scotland, so we packed up and moved back. On the way, reality struck me again when, in the Caribbean, United States military jets buzzed our passenger ship as we rounded the western flank of Cuba.

My search

After a few years in Britain, with more experience of life, I returned to New Zealand, my real home, and followed my technical career in the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation. Now, aged 23, I began to feel I needed some spiritual answers to life, because evolution-based science was not providing them. I read books, tried to talk with a Christian broadcaster, who did not respond, tried going

to church (I was late and did not go in), and even tried reading the Bible, which was meaningless to me.

Then I was sent to Auckland to conclude my electronics training, and lived in the Auckland YMCA. A young man, who had watched me take part in a lively discussion at the meal table, approached me one Sunday evening. "How is your spiritual life?" he asked. "I don't have any," I replied truthfully. "Would you like to talk about it?" "Yes."

In his room, over coffee, he pulled out a Bible. "Just a minute," I said. "I have problems with this book." I ticked them off on my fingers. "I'm not convinced that this book is reliable, or its accounts of the creation, the flood, the miracles or the miraculous life of Jesus."

I was now about to learn my first lesson in how to think. "Do you believe that God exists?" the young architecture student asked. It was a good question, and I pondered it for a while. I thought of what I had been taught by both sides, and of my loneliness and fear and the failure of evolution-based science to provide answers about life. So I said, "Yes, I think he probably does exist." "In that case, God, by definition, could have done anything he liked, including create the universe from nothing." I couldn't refute his logic. "Further, if the creation of the universe were possible, then the rest would be easy; all the miracles in the Bible, including raising Jesus Christ from the dead, and keeping the biblical records reliable."

The explanation

I conceded the point. "Okay, then tell me the rest of what the Bible says." So this young man, Peter, only a year or so older than me, explained: God had created our first parents, Adam and Eve, to enjoy their company forever, and for them to enjoy his. But they had disobeyed God, and forfeited their relationship with him.

From time to time I cross-examined Peter, and he gave me good answers.

He continued: the descendants of Adam and Eve (that's you and me) were rebels and hated God. The penalty for rebellion against God was and is death, first spiritual, then physical—for we all die, don't we? But God in his love came to earth in the form of Jesus Christ. As a perfect man, he died in our place as a blood sacrifice for our sins. He did this so that we might be forgiven and receive the eternal life we had lost through the disobedience of Adam and Eve. Quickly, my mentor pointed out the most famous verse in the Bible, John Chapter 3, verse 16:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life." It was all in there—the Son of God taking my sin on himself, dying so that I might not have to perish in punishment, and giving me eternal life.

Peter pointed out that this offer required a personal response—"whoever believes." Believing was an act of commitment, to be made in prayer to God, along the lines of: "I believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins. I am sorry for my sins. Please forgive me and give me eternal life. Thank you."

After some heavy thought, I made that prayer. Immediately my fears and loneliness vanished and I became a new man, from the inside out. I was filled with joy because I had come home to God, my Creator. Steadily, my life changed for the better and my parents and friends noticed the quiet revolution that was taking place.

As for evolutionary science, I have since looked at its evidence and the evidence for the created world, and the global, catastrophic flood of God's judgment in the days of Noah, and have concluded, as do many scientists, that the evidence supports the Bible's accounts. I have come to believe that the Bible is our oldest and only reliable history book, written by eyewitnesses.

I have been following Christ for almost 40 years, and have found my relationship with him to be spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually satisfying. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lives within me, as he does in every believer, and he guides me and helps me live a good life. According to his promise, he has given me eternal life, and when I die I believe I will be with him forever, even to see the terrible day when he comes again to judge the people of the world for their wickedness, and to remake this decaying universe.

You too can join the company of forgiven rebels right now by praying as I did. When you trust him with your future, you will realize that you have no alternative but to follow him for the rest of your life.
