

The team heads over to the beautiful coastline of sunny Southern California, chartering a boat off Dana Point for a dolphin excursion.



Discussion Leader: Dr. Stan Hudson was a geology major at the University of California at Riverside before becoming a Christian. He then shifted his studies to theology, eventually earning a Doctor of Ministry degree at Fuller Theological Seminary. Today he combines both interests, co-hosting the weekly radio program "Sink the Beagle," a light-hearted approach to creationism and evolution issues. He currently pastors two churches in the university towns of Moscow, Idaho and Pullman, Washington.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1. These words are the most important words ever written. In them God is introduced to us as our Creator. In them God is revealed as having existed before our universe. And it could be said that all of the rest of Scripture is based upon the assumption that these words are true.

1 QUESTION:

A "doctrine" is a teaching or belief about something. The subject of creation and whether it happened like the Bible describes has ramifications for many doctrines: the origin of sin and death, the need for salvation and many others. Can you think of how this would be so?

ANSWER:

If sin was not the way death entered the world and death not an intruder to God's original plan, why would the Bible emphasize the need of salvation and a Savior? It would greatly harm our image of God if evolution, a process that is built on thousands of generations of tooth-and-claw suffering and death, was in fact the way God created new creatures (and man!). All doctrines have at their core an impact on our image of God.

2 QUESTION:

This program showed Matt, Tiffany and Paul traveling to southern California to see up close dolphins. As the tour guide said, dolphins are the only wild animals that "play" with man, and they aren't doing it with food on their minds! How does play jive with the theory of evolution?

ANSWER:

Not very well. Creatures are supposed to be fixated on preserving their genes (making babies) and surviving; everything else should be a waste of time at least, if not ultimately counter-productive. One could see a remnant of God's perfect creation in the dolphins' behavior, harking back to a time when mankind and animalkind were friends.

DEFINITION:

GENESIS—The first book of the Bible, the book which is especially a record of beginnings. Such things as life, death, mankind, the world, Israel, Babylon, marriage, language, seasons, the Sabbath and the origin of many other things are historically recorded. It is believed that Moses, dwelling in Midian, highly educated and motivated to help Israel understand its chosen status with God (as well as the problems of sin and suffering), wrote this book with perhaps the assistance of his father-in-law Jethro, a priest of God. Under God's command he returned to Egypt to share this book with the slave nation of Israel. And since the information was helpful for all succeeding generations (including ours) God preserved it as a historical record.

3 QUESTION:

The program mentioned that there are many kinds of dolphins in the world. The largest type was a surprise. What are the “world’s largest dolphins?”

ANSWER:
Killer whales!

4 QUESTION:

Mart De Groot brought up the idea that Genesis 1:1, 2 may be describing an event of creation older than the six-day creation account that follows. In other words, God might have created the universe (and the earth) in the distant past, leaving the earth “void and without form” until he wanted to create life on it. This idea, sometimes called the “passive gap theory,” doesn’t help any age of the earth problems...but there are some attractive features to this theory for science. Would it matter one way or the other?

ANSWER:

It wouldn’t matter much if it was understood that God was not *dependent* upon matter to create from. Some Christians have thought that before the six days of creation God had already created life...and it degenerated into some kind of failure (with dinosaurs and so on). Then He restarted things in Genesis 1:3. This lessons deals with the obvious problems of that theory.



5 QUESTION:

Dr. Gerald Winslow, an ethics professor, suggested that the creation account of man was taken by some to mean man was “the summit of creation” and that he could do what he pleases with the world. But Dr. Winslow suggested that man was more like a steward, left in charge to manage responsibly the planet and its resources for the Creator. Do you agree?

ANSWER:

With the mounting evidence of pollution and its ruining effects on the environment, it’s not hard to think we could do a better job with the pristine world God created. But it’s also nice to know that God will someday restore things to their pre-curse condition.

6 QUESTION:

JoAnn Davidson shared the idea that God must have really enjoyed creating life on earth...that it must have been fun! How does this idea affect your image of God?

ANSWER:

Cool! The thought that God got really excited when mankind was created (me!) forms a very appealing image of God.



DEFINITION:

MORPHOLOGY—The study of the physical forms of living creatures. The structural similarity of some life forms is thought to support evolution from a common ancestor (for example, animals having hands, flippers or wings); creationists would counter they suggest a common Designer.

7 QUESTION:

She also pointed out that Job 38:7 records the happiness of other beings when God created the earth: “when the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted for joy.” Compare this with the Job 1 council where the “sons of God” came for a meeting with God (and Satan was present apparently representing the earth). Many see in this reference the concept of other planets and civilizations existing before our planet. Have you ever thought about this possibility?

ANSWER:

Little green men? Not! But the universe seems so large and our earth so small...why not think that a Creator God has been doing what He enjoys doing most, creating beings He could love and be loved by?

8 QUESTION:

The boat guide recounted correctly the popular thinking that dolphins evolved from ungulates (hoofed animals); millions of years ago they supposedly left land, lost their legs, had their nostrils come together and move to the top of their heads, lost any fur they may have had and so on. We’ll pass on the discussion involving the problems of the genitals! The guide went on to suggest it takes “faith” to believe such a big jump in evolution really took place. Does it?

ANSWER:

It takes faith to believe in any creation account, including the Biblical story where “God spoke and it was done” for dolphins and the rest of creation. It may seem easier to believe in *miracles* when there is a *Miracle Worker* present.

DEFINITION:

SABBATH—The seventh day of Creation Week, providing a weekly opportunity for God and man to celebrate the act of creation in fellowship. The Hebrew word Shabbat literally means “to cease.” In the context of creation, God was seen as “ceasing” from an active week of creating; as a memorial man was commanded to also “cease from work” The Sabbath is the subject of the Fourth Commandment.

9 QUESTION:

Another origins concept that came up in this program was the difference between microevolution and macroevolution. MICROevolution is the changing of a kind of animal into variations of that same kind (like a wolf being a grandfather to dingos, foxes and poodles)... whereas MACROevolution is the changing of one kind of animal into a distinctly different kind of animal (like microbes eventually becoming microbiologists!). Is it a problem for creationists to support microevolution without affecting their beliefs in Genesis? Is there scientific evidence for microevolution?

ANSWER:

It’s easy to see relationships in nature. Many woodpeckers are quite similar. Bears, squirrels, cats...there are many kinds of animals that the differences that exist in the species level doesn’t prohibit an image of grandfather bears eventually leading to brown, black, grizzly and other kinds of bears. This is observable sometimes in nature. The Flood story makes even better since if the first post-Flood generations had great variability in their offspring; this would account for the diversity we see today. But amoebas to warm puppies is another thing!



10 QUESTION:

However, Matt had a hard time with this. He couldn’t bring himself to draw a line between micro- and macro-evolution. This was Darwin’s position, too. He thought little changes over very large periods of time would produce very large changes. Does the fossil record support this?

ANSWER:

Yes and No! There are many extinct kinds of animals and plants buried in the fossil record. Are they extinct because they changed into more modern forms? Then why is there such a lack of transitional forms (the missing links)?



11 QUESTION:

Ekkehardt Mueller pointed out an interesting problem should Christians believe in evolution: could one still believe the teaching that God will miraculously make us into new creatures (our characters now, our bodies later), if we don't believe in God's first miraculous creation?

ANSWER:

This is a common problem if miracles are discounted. There are many beliefs in the Bible that are at least partly supported by events that would be hard to prove in today's science-oriented age.

12 QUESTION:

The program closed with the observation by Matt that the subject of creation can sure bring strong emotions out in people. Why is this such an emotional and personal topic?

ANSWER:

Maybe at some level of consciousness the ramifications of whatever you believe in seem huge and important. Plus all of this affects one's own self image, a highly personal topic. Other than that, sure beats us!

DEFINITION:

EVOLUTION—The changing of one form of life into a different form, through the passing on of inherited genetic traits. Charles Darwin thought the selecting mechanism for which traits would be passed on were those that increased survivability. There are different views of evolution: #1 Change within basic types (like wolf to German shepherd to terrier—sometimes called “microevolution”; evolutionists and creationists believe this definition of evolution to be scientifically supportable through observation. #2 Change from type to type (like amoeba to fish to reptile to bird—sometimes called “macroevolution”); only evolutionists believe this to be scientifically supportable. #3 The belief that life has evolved generally as secular science has taught, with the addition that God has directed that evolution (called “theistic evolution”).

