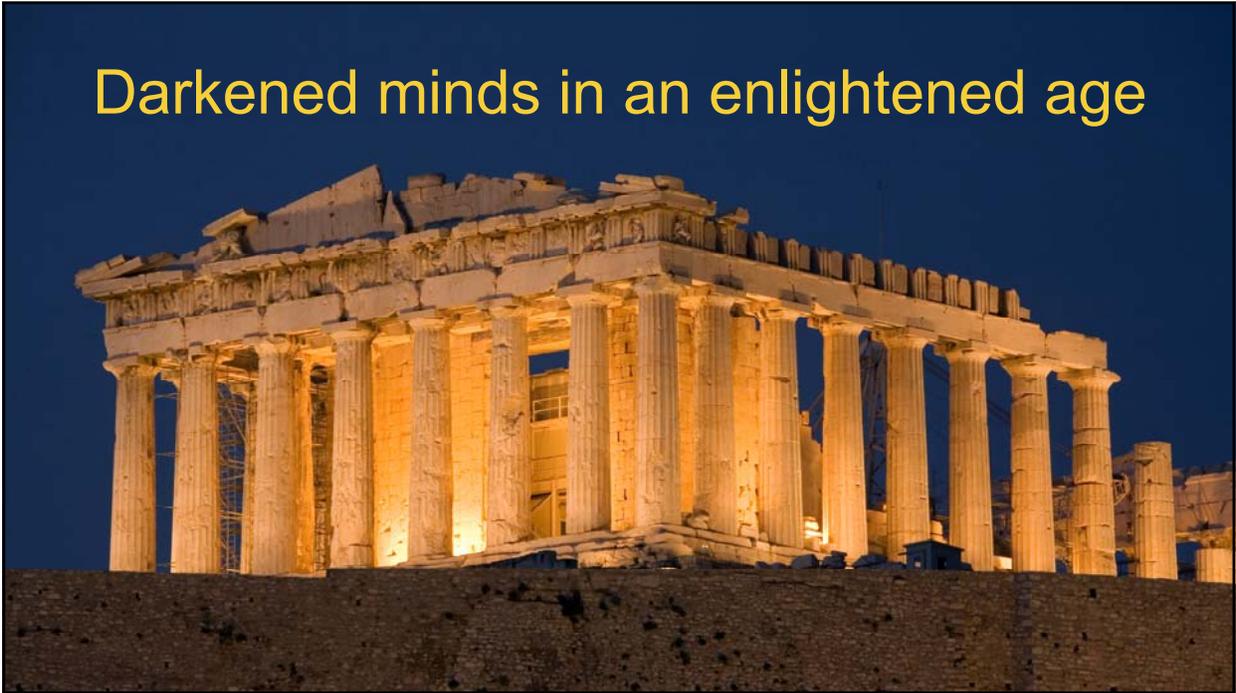


Darkened minds in an enlightened age



General Omar N. Bradley

“[H]umanity is in danger of being trapped in this world by its moral adolescents. Our knowledge of science has clearly outstripped our capacity to control it. We have many men of science; too few men of God. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount. Man is stumbling blindly through a spiritual darkness while toying with the precarious secrets of life and death. The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants.”

2 Tim 3:7 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! ... ⁷always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

“To the unbelieving world, rife with skepticism, anti-supernaturalism, rationalism, mysticism, and the hopeless despair each produces, the Christian offers the only message of hope. Man is not a cosmic accident, a personal being trapped in an impersonal universe. There is a God who is both the creator of the universe and its sovereign ruler. Not only does He exist, but He is also knowable and has revealed Himself to man. God created men to know Him and through that knowledge to glorify Him. Man’s intimate knowledge of God was lost in the Fall but is restored through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Sin is forgiven and alienated people are reconciled to God for time and eternity.” John MacArthur



Acts 17:16-31 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. ¹⁷Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there. ¹⁸Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, "What does this babbling man want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods," because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new doctrine is of which you speak? ²⁰For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean." ²¹For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing. ²²Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said,

“Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; ²³for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: ²⁴God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. ²⁵Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. ²⁶And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings, ²⁷so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

²⁸for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, ‘For we are also His offspring.’ ²⁹Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising. ³⁰Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”



“Athens illustrates to what great heights of achievement man can ascend and still be ignorant of God. Athens illustrates what knowledge amounts to apart from divine revelation. ... Athens was famous for mathematics, philosophy was virtually a Greek invention, and the Greeks also pioneered the way in political science – yet for all of that, Greek civilization was spiritually bankrupt. They populated Mt. Olympus with gods made in the image and likeness of men. They projected the lines of human personality into infinity and, because the lines they projected were those of fallen man, they created a pantheon of fallen, dead gods. ... Greek philosophy found out many truths but never found *the* truth.” John Phillips

There is none so blind as he who will not see

Epicureans believed that pleasure and the avoidance of pain were the chief end of man. They were all about **indulgence**.

Stoics believed self-mastery by being ignoring pleasure and pain were the chief end of man. They were all about **indifference**.

1 Pet 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

1 Cor 9:22 I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

1. Realize that God is.

Acts 17:22-23 “Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; ²³for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

The Bible does not offer a formal proof that God exists. Rather, it states absolutely that God exists. In the end, accepting God's existence is a matter of faith. But, man does have a natural, innate knowledge of God, planted there by Him in creation and an ability, if employed, to see His handiwork in creation.

Ps 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.

Rom 1:19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

- **The cosmological argument** (cause & effect)

- Every effect must have a cause.

Heb 3:4 For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.

- Everything that begins to exist has a cause. The universe began to exist. Therefore, the universe must have a cause.

- **The teleological argument** (creation reveals design, therefore there must be a designer)

- The order and complexity of the universe could not have arisen by chance.

Ps 94:9 He who planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who formed the eye, shall He not see?

- Intelligence comes from intelligence, moral judgment from a moral being. To argue that they came from dead matter is the height of folly.

Then why does man not believe?

The reason is not intellectual or rational, but spiritual.

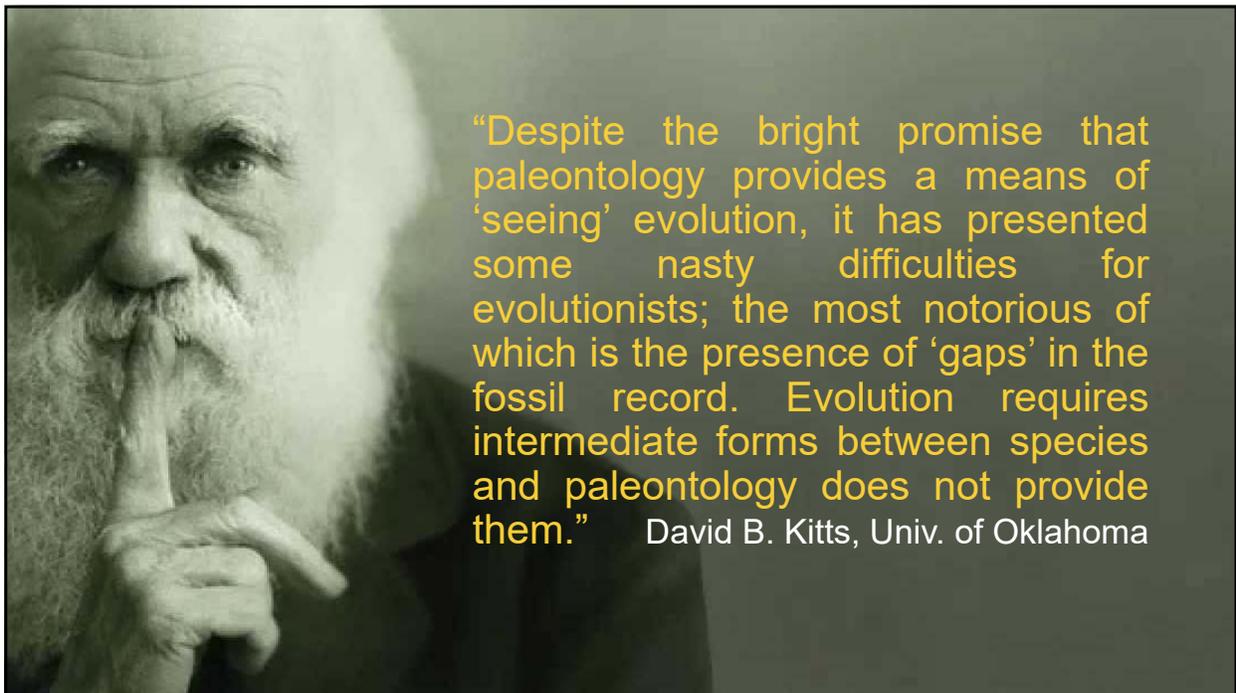
Ps 14:1 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good.

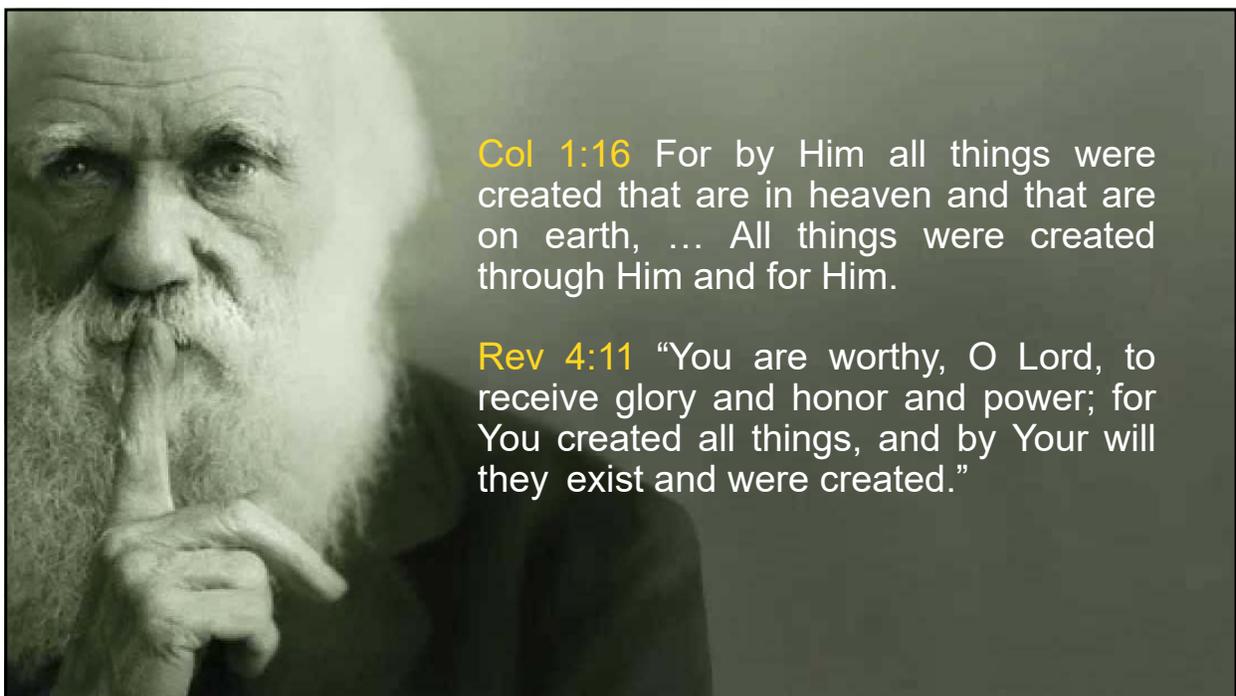
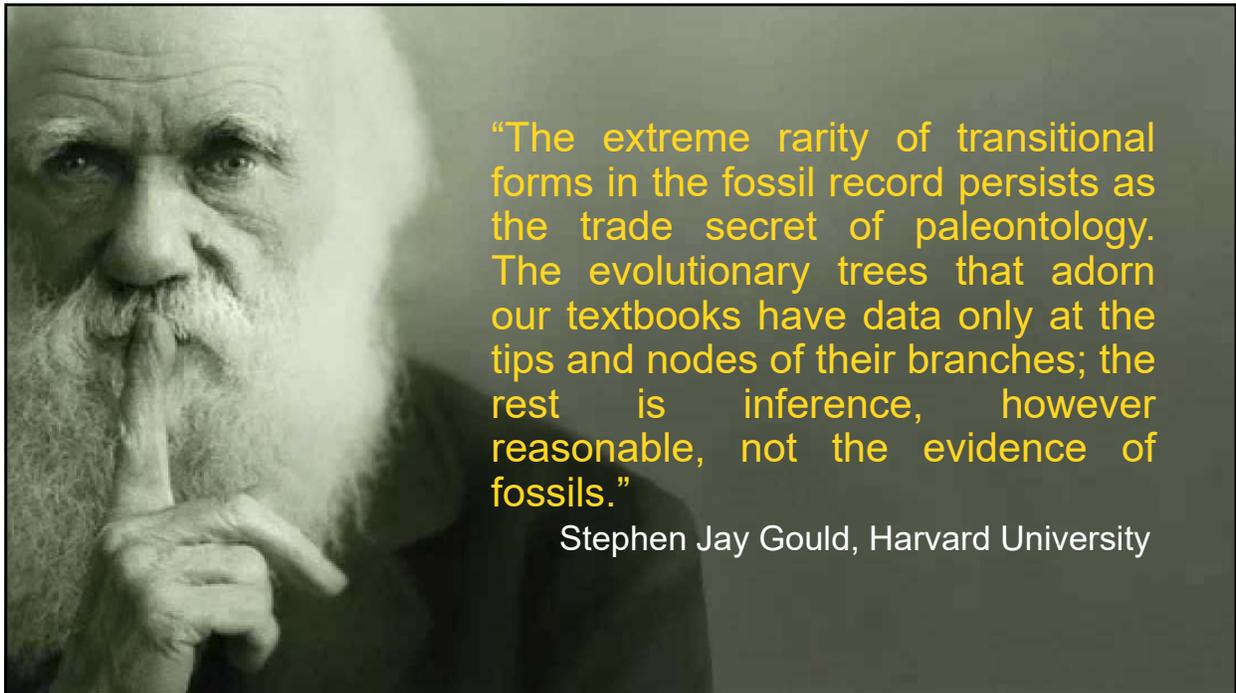
Rom 1:20-23 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²²Professing to be wise, they became fools, ²³and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

2. Realize who God is.

(17:24-29)

- **Creator** – made the world and all things in it (24a)





- **Sovereign -**

Gen 14:19 God Most High, possessor of heaven and earth;

Ps 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.

103:19 The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all.

- **Source –**

Act 17:28 for in Him we live and move and have our being,

Rom 11:36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever.

3. Receive what God has done.

(17:30-31)

Heb 10:19-20 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,

Jn 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Acts 4:12 Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Acts 17:30-31 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained.

Rom 2:16 in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Jn 5:22 For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,