

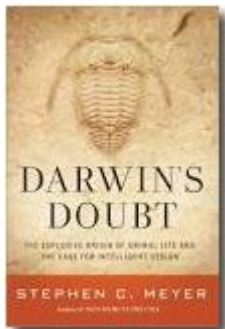
# Darwin's Doubt

*Dr. Ray Bohlin reviews Stephen Meyer's book Darwin's Doubt, showing that the sudden appearance of complex animal forms in the Cambrian cannot be explained by evolutionary mechanisms.*

## The Essence of the Cambrian Explosion



The fossil record of the Cambrian Period has been known as a problem for evolutionary theory since Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859. Darwin was aware of the sudden appearance of complex animal forms in the Cambrian from his own collecting in northeastern Wales. Complex animal forms such as trilobites seemed to appear with geological suddenness with no apparent ancestors in older rocks below them.



In his 2013 book, *Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design*[\[1\]](#), Stephen Meyer quotes Darwin from the *Origin of Species*: "To the question of why we do not find rich fossiliferous [fossil-bearing] deposits belonging to these assumed earliest periods prior to the Cambrian system, I can give no satisfactory answer. . . . The case at present must remain inexplicable; and may truly be urged as a valid argument against the views here entertained."[\[2\]](#)

Meyer provides some of the historical context of this period and Darwin's disagreement with the eminent paleontologist of his day, Louis Agassiz of Harvard. Darwin's solution to his dilemma was to suggest that the fossil record is incomplete and that he fully expected that abundant fossils would be found to indicate the evolutionary origin of these Cambrian

animals. However, in the intervening century and a half, the problem has not been resolved. If anything, as we have gained more knowledge of animal life and development and found numerous deposits of periods just prior to the Cambrian, the problem is worse than Darwin perceived.

Early in the 20th century, a rich Cambrian deposit was found in the Canadian Rockies, the Burgess Shale. Entirely new organisms were found exquisitely preserved, many with soft-body parts well preserved. Then in the mid-1980s, an even earlier Cambrian deposit was found in Chengjiang, China. This deposit revealed an even richer diversity of organisms than the Burgess Shale, and even finer soft-body preservation—even down to eyes, intestines, sensory organs and stomach contents.

Later work in different parts of the world had timed the Cambrian explosion to a roughly 5-10 million year time frame around 530 million years ago [with the Cambrian period itself beginning 543 million years ago] in the evolutionary time frame. Though that's a very long time, even for evolution, it's practically instantaneous when discussing the origin of entirely new body plans. As Meyer faithfully recounts, Darwin's dream of an ever-increasing rise in complexity and diversity is shattered by the geologically abrupt appearance of both complexity and diversity.

What has been referred to as "Darwin's doubt" could be more aptly referred to as "Darwin's headache." In this article I will explore some of the additional problems this sudden explosion of animal body plans poses for evolution. While committed evolutionary materialists pretend to not be disturbed by these developments, those with open minds are questioning this long-held theory and giving new consideration to Intelligent Design.

## **Evolutionary Explanations of the Cambrian**

# Explosion

Even Darwin recognized the Cambrian as a puzzle for his theory. Darwin hoped that further exploration of fossil-bearing strata would reveal the ancestors of the Cambrian animals.

In the early 20th century, Harvard paleontologist, Charles Walcott, found a new Cambrian deposit in the Canadian Rockies, the Burgess Shale. The Burgess Shale contained new creatures never seen before and was able to preserve some soft-body parts, also never seen before. This proposed an even greater problem than Darwin knew. Older deposits were still not revealing the ancestors of the Cambrian, but now there was even more diversity and novelty than anyone had imagined. The discovery of a predator, the up-to-meter-long *Anomalocaris*, demonstrated there was a well-defined ecosystem with plant producers, plant consumers and carnivores.

The origin of the Cambrian fauna seemed to turn Darwin's theory on its head. Darwin expected all animal life forms to be descended from a single common ancestor through a lengthy process of descent with ever-so-slight modification. But these Cambrian novelties appeared quite suddenly with no ancestors. That is not evolution as Darwin envisioned it. Walcott suggested two reasons for the disparity. First, he suggested that the immediate Pre-Cambrian deposits containing the Cambrian ancestors were to be found on the ocean floor. Subsequent off-shore drilling for oil provided a unique opportunity to test this hypothesis. But most of the sea floor is much younger than the Cambrian. If there were Pre-Cambrian deposits, they no longer exist.

Walcott also tended to be a "lumper" in taxonomic terms. That means he fit fossils into already existing categories whether they fit well or not. This appeared to minimize the explosive part of the Cambrian. But additional field excavations in the Burgess Shale, as well as in different parts of the world,

revealed that many of these Cambrian creatures were unique and that their descendants are not known today—they are extinct. The novelty of Cambrian forms is more pronounced than ever.

The late Stephen J. Gould of Harvard famously described the uniqueness of these Cambrian creatures when he said; “Imagine an organism built of a hundred basic features, with twenty possible forms per feature. The grab bag contains a hundred compartments, with twenty different tokens in each. To make a new Burgess creature, the Great Token-Stringer takes one token at random from each compartment and strings them together. Voila, the creature works—and you have nearly as many successful experiments as a musical scale can build catchy tunes.”[\[3\]](#)

Fossils have been found in sediments older or below the Cambrian but these fossils do not appear to be ancestors of the Cambrian creatures. They were also quite unique and most are now extinct. The mystery remains.

## **Libraries of New Genetic Information Needed: Pronto!**

All Darwin had to examine were the unique animals found in Cambrian deposits. He knew nothing of genetics and the need for new genetic information.

Paleontologist James Valentine has gone so far as to say that probably all the living animal phyla had their beginning in the Cambrian period, over 500 million years ago. We do find multi-celled animal fossils 20-30 million years before the Cambrian, but only sponges seem to resemble anything we find in these deposits.

A phylum is an upper level of classification. For instance, all vertebrates are in the same phylum. Insects, crustaceans, and spiders are also in the same phylum. The phylum represents organisms with a distinct body plan though there may be many

variations on that theme. In order to have all these new body plans or phyla appear in the Cambrian in a geological instant, you need a lot of new genes or genetic information. Different types of cells are needed. New genes are needed to grow new body plans out of a single-celled fertilized egg. With different cell types come different kinds of functions and cell types each needing specific gene products to give them their unique functions.

When protein sequence and gene sequence comparisons were begun in the late 70s, there was an expectation that comparing gene sequences would solve relational puzzles among living organisms but that by comparing genes from different phyla, it could be determined how phyla were related. The Cambrian fossils offer no such clues since most animal phyla appear at nearly the same time. But several decades of gene sequence comparison studies have revealed no consistent evolutionary scheme. As Meyer summarizes, "Many other studies have thrown their own widely varying numbers into the ring, placing the common ancestor of animals anywhere between 100 million years and 1.5 billion years before the Cambrian explosion."[\[4\]](#)

Meyer does a great job of articulating why there would need to be an information explosion along with the Cambrian explosion. Accounting for all this new information, in a relatively short period of time, by known processes is a herculean task. If evolution solely depends on a Darwinian model, then mutation and natural selection must be able to account for the explosive rise of new genes and regulatory gene networks during the Cambrian. Meyer spends several chapters working this through. Achieving the extreme specificity of proteins through the slow, plodding, processes of mutation and natural selection appears impossible.

In the next section I address an even greater difficulty of the Cambrian explosion. Darwinism has always needed a slow gradual accumulation of genetic change. However, with the relatively quick appearance of very different forms of animals

in the Cambrian, is Darwinism up to the task?

## **The Exasperating Problem of New Body Plans**

Darwin understood nothing about how animal body plans are laid out and built in the early embryo.

Since Darwin's time we have learned a great deal. And none of what we have learned offers any help in deciphering how all these new body plans originated in such a short geological time period in the early Cambrian. The overall structure and shape of an organism is laid out early in embryonic development. Particular genes necessary for development are tightly controlled in when and how they are expressed. These genetic regulatory programs operate only in early development and they limit the possibilities of the final form of the organism.

Biologists use a classification term, phylum, to refer to the largest category of animals and plants. Humans belong to the Phylum Chordata, which includes all the vertebrates. Insects are in the Phylum Arthropoda, which includes crustaceans and spiders. These two phyla possess very different body plans, and the genetic programs to build these plans are very different in the earliest stages, even in the first few divisions of the fertilized egg. The Cambrian demonstrates that these very different body plans arise in less than ten million years of time geologically. Is that possible? All Darwinism has to work with as the source of genetic variation, are mutations.

In 1977, French evolutionist Pierre Paul Grassé noted that mutations don't provide any real evolutionary change. Mutations only seem to provide only a slightly different variety of what already existed.[\[5\]](#) Twenty years later, a trio of developmental biologists noted that modern evolutionary theory explained well how the already fit survive and

reproduce. But just how organisms came to be that way, the modern theory seemed silent.[\[6\]](#) Evolutionary biologist Wallace Arthur explained that modern textbooks told the same stories about how finch beaks and the color of moths changed to suit their environment, but nowhere was it discussed how the organism as a whole came to be so integrally functional.[\[7\]](#)

These problems have been further addressed in recent years but nothing seems to propose any clear answers as to how new body plans could have appeared in such a short span of evolutionary time.

Steve Meyer summarizes his review of these difficulties in the light of the Cambrian saying, “The Cambrian explosion itself illustrates a profound engineering problem the fossil data does not address—the problem of building a new form of animal life by gradually transforming one tightly integrated system of genetic components and their products into another.”[\[8\]](#)

## **An Opportunity for Intelligent Design**

I have documented how the sudden appearance of new forms in the Cambrian creates mysteries in terms of the fossils, genetics and developmental biology.

In chapter 18, Meyer turns his attention from the observation that modern evolutionary theories do not explain the sudden appearance of all the major animal groups in a short burst of geologic time, to what can explain the Cambrian Explosion. He carefully argues that Intelligent Design has all the causal power to bring about what is needed in the Cambrian.

Initially he summarizes the conclusions of two important evolutionary students of the Cambrian, Douglas Erwin and Eric Davidson. Together these scientists have listed a few of the observations any evolutionary cause must explain. First, whatever the cause of the Cambrian Explosion, it must be able to generate what is referred to as a top-down pattern. That

is, the broad general categories of animals appear before there is any refinement in these characters. Second, the cause must be capable of generating new biological forms relatively rapidly. Third, this cause must be capable of constructing, not just modifying, complex genetic regulatory circuits.

They also note, as Meyer reports, that no existing theory of evolutionary change can accomplish any of these necessary events.<sup>{9}</sup> Davidson and Erwin are quite insistent that the processes operating in the early Cambrian were fundamentally different from anything operating in nature today. That's a tall order. But Meyer adds a few more prerequisites for a cause for the Cambrian Explosion. In addition to the need for rapid development of a top-down pattern, new body forms and creation of new genetic regulatory circuits, Meyer observes that this cause also needs to generate new digital information in the DNA and new structural information that cells use routinely. There also needs to be the development of new types of information that are precisely coordinated to specify brand new body plans.<sup>{10}</sup>

A designing intelligence may be the only sufficient cause that can accomplish all of these events within any time frame, let alone the 5-10 million years of the Cambrian Explosion. Meyer concludes the chapter by writing, "The features of the Cambrian event point decisively in another direction—not to some as-yet-undiscovered materialistic process that merely mimics the powers of a designing mind, but instead to an actual intelligent cause."<sup>{11}</sup>

Clearly when all the evidence is reviewed as Meyer does, the conclusion of Intelligent Design is nearly impossible to avoid. To ask how a designing intelligence did all this is to insist on a materialistic explanation for an immaterial cause. More is yet to be discovered, but if the pattern holds, Intelligent Design will become even more robust in the future.

## Notes



1. Stephen C. Meyer, *Darwin's Doubt: The Explosive Origin of Animal Life and the Case for Intelligent Design* (New York: HarperCollins, 2013).
2. Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, Chapter X (pp. 235, 252-254), quoted in *Darwin's Doubt*.
3. Stephen J. Gould, *Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1989), p. 217.
4. *Darwin's Doubt*, pp. 105-106.
5. Pierre-Paul Grassé, *Evolution of Living Organisms* (New York: Academic Press, 1977), p. 87.
6. S. Gilbert, J. Optiz, and R. Raff, "Review—Resynthesizing Evolutionary and Developmental Biology," *Developmental Biology* 173 (1996): 361. "The Modern Synthesis (Neo-Darwinism) is a remarkable achievement. However, starting in the 1970's, many biologists began questioning its adequacy in explaining evolution . . . Microevolution looks at adaptations that concern only the survival of the fittest, not the arrival of the fittest."
7. Wallace Arthur, *Biased Embryos and Evolution*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 36. "Textbooks of evolutionary biology have for years trotted out the usual old stories about how birds' beaks evolve to match their food items, or how moths' colours evolve to match their background. But where are the equally detailed studies about the importance of one body part matching another."
8. *Darwin's Doubt*.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 355.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 358.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 381.

# Evolution and the Pope

## Are Science and Religion at War?

We have just passed the one hundredth anniversary of one of the more important books written about the interaction of science and Christianity. The book's title, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, says much about the book.

Andrew White wrote the book in 1896 to justify his belief that a university should be without any religious affiliation. He was the founder and first president of Cornell University in New York and was very outspoken in his views about the hindrance religion has been to scientific progress. It was White who popularized the view that there was a war between science and Christianity, and that in all cases science had ultimately been shown to be right.

*A History of the Warfare of Science and Theology in Christendom* is one long polemic attempting to show that religion has always held back the advance of science. The author maintains that if only theology would quit sticking its nose into the tent of science, everyone would be better off. Well into this century the book was regarded as being an important statement on the tension between science and religion.

One hundred years, however, has changed the tone of the discussion. Today many historians of science would agree that Christianity was a significant foundation for modern science, even though it is now viewed as an outmoded belief. For

several reasons, then, it came to be commonly accepted that Christianity had played a key role in preparing the way for the development of modern science. First, Christians assumed they lived in a world that could be understood because it was created by a rational God—the same God who had also created them. This gave early scientists some reason to assume that nature might obey laws that could be known. Speaking about the view of the universe that the Church gave to the culture around it, the great mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead said early in this century, “When we compare this tone of thought [the faith in reason and the regularity of the universe] in Europe with the attitude of other civilizations when left to themselves, there seems but one source for its origin. It must come from the medieval insistence on the rationality of God.”

Second, not only was the universe understandable because a rational God made it, but the Bible encouraged believers to look at God’s creation for signs of His handiwork. For example, as early as the Psalms David had proclaimed, “The heavens are telling of the glory of God” (Ps. 19:1). Scriptures such as this one, and many others, encouraged Christians to study nature to understand how it glorified God. Christians were confident that nature’s design would show forth God’s glory.

However, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries much happened that eroded Christian confidence that they lived in a world crafted by God. In particular, Darwin’s theory (that all organisms were descended from a common ancestor and that any appearances of design could be explained by natural selection working over long periods of time) came to have great acceptance among almost all scientists. For many the theory of evolution came to be seen as the complete answer as to why the world is as it is. For them, there was no need at all for a Creator or God to explain anything because evolution could, or would, explain everything.

A notable example of this position is the famous statement by astronomer Carl Sagan, "The universe is all that is or ever was or ever will be." With these words he began his immensely popular series about the universe, *Cosmos*. His words are the creed of the materialist (i.e., if it can be counted, measured, observed, experimented on, understood by natural laws, then it is real). Anything else is either meaningless or, at least, not scientific. According to this view, mountain goats are real because we can see them, touch them, put them in zoos. Angels, on the other hand, are not real because we can do none of these things to them. Science has to do with facts, and if there is any place for religion it is in the consideration of morals or ethics or those other areas where there are no facts.

But some people, such as Stephen Gould, a palaeontologist at Harvard, have remained open to dialogue on how religion and science can coexist. In his monthly column for *Natural History* magazine, he recently put forth his latest elaboration of how evolution, science, and religion are related. His proposed resolution of this issue is the theme of this essay.

Stephen Gould, the evolutionary writer and scientist, addresses what are the proper bounds of science and religion in a recent *Natural History* magazine. He proposes a complete answer to the problem of how they relate to one another. Simply put, they don't interact at all. "The net of science," says Gould, "covers the empirical universe: what it is made of (fact) and why does it work this way (theory). The net of religion extends over questions of moral meaning and value. These two magisteria do not overlap."

The Roman Catholic Church uses the term *magisterium* to refer to its authority to teach in areas relating to the Bible and its interpretation. Gould borrows this term and applies it as well to the legitimate area that science teaches. So the Church may speak about moral issues and science about matters of fact and theory. For this somewhat unbalanced division he

creates the wonderful phrase “nonoverlapping magisteria.”

## **Has the Pope’s View of Evolution Evolved?**

Gould is certainly free to pontificate. However, what is somewhat mystifying is how he draws in Pope John Paul II as a prime supporter not only of his interesting distinction between science and religion, but also as a firm supporter of evolution!

On October 22, 1996, Pope John Paul addressed the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. The theme of their conference was to be the origin of life and evolution, so John Paul helpfully laid out what the Church had said over the last fifty years.

The Pope made clear that his predecessor, Pope Pius XI, had “considered the doctrine of ‘evolutionism’ a serious hypothesis.” But, John Paul says, “Today, almost half a century after the publication of the encyclical [of Pius XI], new knowledge has led to the recognition of the theory of evolution as more than a hypothesis. It is indeed remarkable that this theory has been progressively accepted by researchers, following a series of discoveries in various fields of knowledge. The convergence, neither sought nor fabricated, of the results of work that was conducted independently is in itself a significant argument in favor of this theory.”

That is as far as John Paul’s statement goes: evolution has moved from a serious hypothesis to a theory with significant arguments in its favor. Yet from this statement, Gould triumphantly draws an amazing observation:

*In conclusion, Pius had grudgingly admitted evolution as a legitimate hypothesis that he regarded as only tentatively supported and potentially (as I suspect he hoped) untrue. John Paul, almost fifty years later...adds that additional data and theory have placed the factuality of evolution beyond*

*reasonable doubt. Sincere Christians must now accept evolution not merely as a plausible possibility, but also as an effectively proven fact.*

Is this really what the Pope said? We'll now look more carefully at Gould's interpretation of the Pope's statement.

## **Does Evolution Fit the Truth About Man?**

Stephen Gould, writing in *Natural History*, makes the Pope say something far more significant, and from Gould's point of view, a concession of defeat. How does Gould paraphrase John Paul's statement? "Sincere Christians must now accept evolution not merely as a plausible possibility, but also as an effectively proven fact."

Nevertheless, either by reading too rapidly or possessing too much enthusiasm for his own position, Gould misses critical distinctions that the Pope's announcement makes. To argue that the Pope's statement ("new knowledge has led to the recognition of the theory of evolution as more than a hypothesis") means that "sincere Christians must now accept evolution not merely as a plausible possibility, but also as an effectively proven fact" is ludicrous. Gould almost twists the Pope's statement to contradict what he does say.

In fact, in his next paragraph, the Pope states: "A theory is a metascientific elaboration, distinct from the results of observation but consistent with them...Furthermore, while the formulation of a theory like evolution complies with the need for consistency with observed data, it borrows certain notions from natural philosophy."

"Metascientific" means going beyond the realms of science into an abstract, philosophical arena. So, the Pope says, evolution is more than a hypothesis; it is a theory, but as such, it also is "distinct from the result of observation" and borrows from philosophy. His next statement is one Gould may have

skipped over:

*And, to tell the truth, rather than the theory of evolution, we should speak of several theories of evolution. On the one hand, this plurality has to do with the different explanations advanced for the mechanism of evolution, and on the other, with the various philosophies on which it is based. Hence the existence of materialist, reductionist and spiritualist interpretations.*

So, rather than saying the words Gould puts in his mouth, the Pope actually says that not only is evolution based on a philosophy, but there are several theories, and he goes on to rule out some of them, at least for Roman Catholics. "Theories of evolution which, in accordance with the philosophies inspiring them, consider the spirit as emerging from the forces of living matter or as a mere epiphenomenon of this matter, are incompatible with the truth about man."

Gould wants the Pope to say, "You talk about science, and I'll talk about religion. You can have the world of facts, and I'll take what's left. These areas won't overlap with each other, and we'll each stay in our own gardens." But the Pope is unwilling to follow Gould's convenient (for science) scheme. Instead, he firmly declares "The Church's magisterium is directly concerned with the question of evolution, for it involves the conception of man." This is what all of us who are Christians should be saying. Evolution, as it is usually put forward, is not just a theory about ancient data. It is also a philosophical statement about where man came from and what, if any, importance he has. While Gould claims his scientific views are not related to his moral views, his words give little support to this.

**Is       Christianity       Concerned       About**

# Evolutionary Theories?

Early in his essay Gould has dispatched creationists with a few quick paragraphs. "Creationism does not pit science against religion, for no such conflict exists. Creationism does not raise any unsettled intellectual issues about the nature of biology or the history of life. Creationism is a local and parochial movement, powerful only in the United States among Western nations, and prevalent only among the few sectors of American Protestantism that choose to read the Bible as an inerrant document, literally true in every jot and tittle." Well, so much for a fair, informed assessment of one's opponents.

First he defines out of existence what creationists see as a central argument by merely saying "no such conflict exists." Then he proceeds to caricature creationists as a fringe group only found among a small group of Protestants. Prior to this he has equated "scientific creation," the view that the earth was created in six days and "only a few thousand years old," with all of creationism, which he fails to note includes even those who believe in evolution and an earth billions of years old, but believe God superintended the process.

Gould's claim that "creationism does not raise any unsettled issues" ignores significant questions that have been raised about how life first arose from chemicals, about the source of the genetic code, and of the origination of new biological structures. But does the Pope truly believe in Gould's nonoverlapping magisteria? Gould's summation of the opening of John Paul's speech is that he "begins by summarizing Pius's older encyclical of 1950, and particularly reaffirming the NOMA principle [nonoverlapping magisteria] nothing new here."

Is this really what the Pope said? He begins by saying that "the origins of life and evolution [are] an essential subject which deeply interests the Church, since revelation, for its part, contains teachings concerning the nature and origins of



man. . . . I would like to remind you that the magisterium of the Church has already made pronouncements on these matters within the framework of her own competence.” This hardly sounds like there is no overlap between what the Church teaches and science. Toward the end of his remarks John Paul flatly contradicts Gould’s neat distinction: “The Church’s magisterium is directly concerned with the question of evolution for it involves the conception of man.” So it would seem that Gould has used those parts of the Pope’s speech which he likes and disregarded the rest.

Two points are important here. First, while Gould sets forth an interesting view about the relationship between science and religion and gives a new name to what used to be called “complementarity,” it is not the view espoused by the Pope, and is almost antithetical to it. Second, Gould himself does not abide by this strict separationism in his own views, even when he claims to. When Gould actually makes his own moral position clear, it is hard to escape the conclusion that it comes directly from his views and philosophy as a scientist.

## **Why Trust Your Mind If No One Made It?**

“As a moral position...I prefer the ‘cold bath’ theory that nature can be truly ‘cruel’ and ‘indifferent.’” This is the summary of Harvard paleontologist Stephen Gould in his *Natural History* essay on how science and religion should relate to each other. “Science,” Gould says, “covers the empirical universe: what is it made of (fact) and why does it work (theory).” Religion is left to cover “questions of moral meaning and value.”

Gould calls his position nonoverlapping magisteria and claims the Pope holds the same view. As we stated earlier, this is far from true. But Gould then goes on to describe the moral view he takes.

Gould’s position, which he immediately claims is not “a

deduction from my knowledge of nature's factuality" is "nature was not constructed as our eventual abode, didn't know we were coming... and doesn't give a \_\_\_\_\_ about us (speaking metaphorically)." He says he finds such a view "liberating...because we then become free to conduct moral discourse...in our own terms, spared from the delusion that we might read moral truth passively from nature's factuality." It is indeed hard not to draw the conclusion that Gould has read his view about the process of evolution into his own moral position. How does he know that nature was not constructed for us if not from his studies of the natural world? How would he know it doesn't care about us unless somehow he saw this in his studies? Where else might he get such ideas?

In his speech, Pope John Paul II spoke quite candidly of his view of evolution:

*And, to tell the truth, rather than the theory of evolution, we should speak of several theories of evolution. On the one hand, this plurality has to do with the different explanations advanced for the mechanism of evolution, and on the other, with the various philosophies on which it is based. Hence the existence of materialist, reductionist and spiritualist interpretations.*

Stephen Gould has a materialist philosophy behind his theory of evolution. He believes that the material universe is all that exists, and that our own consciousness is a chance phenomena and does not come from a Creator. So, for Gould, where else can he draw his views about the meaning of life and what might be moral? His very thinking is a chance product of evolutionary processes that had no design, either to produce man or to give him a mind. Nonetheless, Gould trusts his mind not only to be able to distinguish between science and religion, he is sure that they should not influence one another.

Gould's view is a version of what is the common denominator of much of science today. At all costs religion must be kept out of science, or else science will cease to exist. Only material answers can be given to any question because the intervention of a Creator would negate the laws that govern science. What is missed in all of this is that without a Creator of some kind, not only is there no basis to trust the human mind to make true observations, but there is no reason to suppose that it would matter. Why worry about science or religion, and certainly why worry about whether they could have a negative effect on each other? If there is no God, there can only be arbitrary judgments. It is God who gives meaning to what we say and believe.

Christians serve a rational God who made both them and the world. On what does Gould base his trust in either science or the mind?