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# Shadrach Youth Ministry

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## Thoughts on Creation

*"...and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear"* (1 Peter 3:15).

There has been an ongoing, heated debate about evolution, Intelligent Design (ID), and creation. If you've not been following the debate, you may not realize how stirred up people can become over these issues. Actually, evolutionists are trembling at the advances of true science that have been blowing holes in their theories, but you would never know it by listening to them: "Evolution is fact—not a theory—and cursed be anyone who dares to question the fact that it is fact!!!" (not an actual quote). The fact is: evolutionists are running scared, and they are doing all they can to discredit any who question them.

What are some of evolutionist's responses to the advances of creationism and ID? Basically, because creation is connected with the Bible and God, then it is religion and not science, and never the twain shall meet—in *their* eyes. They've gone so far as to state that anyone who believes in God cannot be a real scientist, subsequently rejecting any of their scientific findings. And although most ID proponents are not creationists, the theory still sounds too much like religion to evolutionists, i.e. intelligent design might indicate the presence of an "Intelligent Designer."

By the way, what is ID? It is the understanding that many biological organisms are too complex to have arisen by themselves or by chance (actually scientifically true, called irreducible complexity). ID recognizes that all substance has design and that it could have only emerged through the means of some intelligent source. Sounds good, but is it a safe theory to hang our hat on? Not really. Many, if not most, IDers do not believe in God as Creator, and some actually believe aliens to be their "intelligent designer." Although evolutionists have called ID religion (one judge even ruling thus), it is very much based on observable science (excluding where the organisms have come from – the interesting intelligent "sources").

Because the Bible's God is the Creator of all things in the universe, ourselves included, and we know Him to be a God of created order, we then know that such order should be discernable to our human understanding. True science is nothing more nor less than observation of what God has created. As Christians, we should not be ashamed to own true science as our own. We should be thankful that our Heavenly Father has given us five senses to study and rejoice in all things created. John Ray, considered the greatest English naturalist of his time (1627-1705), stated, "The treasures of nature are inexhaustible...If man ought to reflect upon his Creator the glory of all his works, then ought he to take notice of them all and not to think anything unworthy of his cognizance?" Some of our greatest scientists of the past—Bacon, Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Pascal, Boyle, Newton, Linnaeus, George Washington Carver—and many of the present are Creationists, believing that God created the whole of the universe in six days as is recorded in Genesis 1 & 2.

Why is this truth of Creationism not known? The lie of evolution is being shouted louder than anything else right now: public schools and universities, the media and Hollywood, most natural museums, etc. Sad to say, even many churches and "Christian" colleges have fallen for the lies of Satan, having blended creation with evolution (called theistic evolution – believing that God "created" organisms through evolutionary means over millions and billions of years) and have been responsible in part to the destruction of many people's faith. Once you begin to question the veracity of God's Word in any one point, it is then easy to question it at other points as well.

The truth is: evolution is not your answer to origins! God's unchanging Word is! Next month, I will endeavor to share with you many of the huge gaps in evolution's theory and help you to see that it takes greater faith to believe in the claims of evolution than it does to believe in a God Who has revealed Himself through His Word and His Son, Jesus.

To check up on more Creation "truth," I suggest you peruse a couple of websites or subscribe to good creation materials. "Answers in Genesis" and "Institute for Creation Research" (ICR) are both good websites to check out. It is not necessary that you know a lot. But it is good to know enough to give an intelligent answer to someone who thinks we came about by chance. – Don

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## Witnessing Report by Chelsea Johnson

God sat me next to a German lady on our way home from camp (whose name I found out later was Christine). We chatted a bit and then she went to a different car. During that time, God had been pressing on my heart that I needed to witness to someone on the train. I began reading the Word and preparing myself through prayer, trusting the Lord to do the rest.

When Christine came back, the Lord supplied the boldness I needed to ask her very gently, "Do you believe in life after death?" God was helping me so much! She responded openly, told me what she thought and how she wasn't sure. We talked about this for some time.

When God showed me that it was time to go deeper, He led me to use 'The Way of the Master' approach (Seeing a program by Ray Comfort within the last six months really made sense to me. It uses the Ten Commandments to show people their sin and at the same time God's holiness and justice. The first question to ask is: Do you think you are a good person? Most people say 'yes'. Then you go into disillusioning them by using the Ten Commandments in questions.)

I asked: "Are you a Christian?" She responded: "I'm a good person, I haven't killed anybody or anything like that; yes, I guess I'm a Christian." After asking her if she had ever lied, stolen, used the Lord's name in vain, or murdered anyone by hating them in her heart, I was able to explain to her that because God is perfect, He cannot allow sin into Heaven. I then shared with her the example of a criminal who faces the judge's sentence with no hope of mercy until someone intervenes and pays the fine that sets him free. God helped me tell her what Jesus had done on the cross, how He rose again, and what He's doing now. I encouraged her to read the gospel of John; she said she would. I then explained if she wanted to follow Jesus, she needed to confess herself a sinner, believe that Jesus is God's Son who paid the penalty for our sin and rose again; then simply do what the Bible says to do.

Throughout our discussion, God was enabling me to answer the questions Christine asked. I also had several opportunities to share scripture with her. When we had finished talking, she told me she felt like crying and asked me why I had decided to talk to her. She thought it was so strange that I had happened to sit next to her on this trip. I didn't think it was so strange.

What an honor to be used of the Lord! It's very humbling. I've learned a few things through this experience: 1) Be gentle. 2) Be patient. 3) Listen. Don't ask someone a question and jump on their case for answering wrong; find out why they answered the way they did. 4) Be prepared. And, lastly, but definitely not least: 5) Depend on God. Don't witness in your own strength. What an honor to be used of the Lord! It's very humbling.

### 3rd Trimester Assignments: Due April 10th, 2006

Servanthood, Witnessing, Book Reports, and Isaiah 53 memorization (we need a signed note from your pastor that you have satisfactorily recited the memorization to him in person).

## Jesus Is with Us in the Furnace – Shadrach report by Brett Sanders

In the book of Daniel, there are several stories that highlight a spirit of complete trust in the Lord through faith. Daniel was in the lions' den and only asked that God would have His will on his life and so God rewarded his faith by sparing his life, allowing him to have a deeper relationship with the Father.

As we look at the faith of Daniel's brothers, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, starting with Daniel 1 verse 8 to the end of the chapter, it gives a good insight as to who these men were and what it is that we must learn from this book. These men heard the voice of Jesus telling them that they must not eat of the king's food or drink of the king's cup and so they made a decisive decision to have faith in the knowledge of their heavenly Father and not of their earthly king.

All that scientists and nutritionists know about food and diet, we all would have known the king's foods would have been fatty meats that would appeal to our taste buds but would have had negative affects on our overall health over a period of time. The brothers, however, listened to Jesus and they ate the kinds of things such as fruits, vegetables and drank water so in the end found this knowledge to eat things that we now know are 10 times better than of eating meat and drinking wine.

This brings us to the point that we must look at what these people knew about diet and exercise and the brothers trusted in the Lord even though they knew so little about health and diet. Jesus blessed them all in such a wonderful way through wisdom, knowledge, and learning, while giving Daniel the gifts of understanding dreams and visions.

I want to focus in on Shadrach – even though all of the brothers are clear examples of how we can be lights in the world and have true faith though our daily devotion to Jesus in all circumstances that come into our everyday walk with God. In chapter 3, I am completely overwhelmed with all that Jesus is trying to tell us. In the first two verses, King Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue (another god) is the first thing to go wrong besides the hearts of all the magistrates and leaders (governors, captains, judges, treasurers, counselors, sheriffs, and rulers of the provinces). However, when the King established the golden statue, it broke the first of the Ten Commandments, *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."* When the king made this sin, it took away his clear judgment to see what the magistrates and leaders were trying to do when they proposed to the king that they command all the people to worship the statue when the trumpets sounded. The king was clouded by his bad decision to build it and clouded by his pride in agreeing to kill anyone that would not bow to the idol or worship another god.

I want to illuminate this passage from a verse in John 15:19, *"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."*

Does the world hate Shadrach and his brothers? YES! They hate them because they are a friend of Jesus and the salt of the earth; Jesus was the salt of the earth and as a result was crucified. If we are to be a friend to Jesus and for Jesus to be our friend we must be hated by the world. Shadrach and his brothers loved God, and as a result of that love wouldn't worship the statue. Jesus tested these men of their faith so they could grow stronger.

> Please be praying for the "Spring" Shadrach Weekend in Montana, March 17-19, 2006. There may be quite a few youth who will experience Shadrach for the first time. Pray for God's protection in travel, guidance, blessing & anointing during the weekend!
> Thanks!

After these brothers were set up by the magistrates and the leaders, they knew one thing: to never take there eyes off of Jesus. They had faith that the Lord would be in control of their destiny and never once doubted Him. They continued to worship and cry out to the Jesus for mercy and guidance even though they knew it could cost them their lives.

So when this was put into law, the magistrates and the leaders brought these men before the king to be judged according to the law. When the king knew that these men did not obey the law, he said unto them in chapter 3:14, *"Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?"* Verse 15; *"and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"* The brothers answered in verse 17: *"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king."*

This is the faith that can and will move mountains and as we push on in our own faith, we must never be complacent of the faith the Lord Jesus has placed in us. As the brothers were thrown into the fiery furnace, God stayed with them and spared their lives and used the furnace to refine their every edge to be that of gold in their hearts and souls. This not only showed to the magistrates and the leaders that God is in control – Jesus shows us how we can learn from this and take wisdom to fight any battle that comes into our life. As we walk closer with God, He will give us refining moments so we can become ever closer with Him. Praise the Lord! We are thankful that Jesus has prepared a way in which all mankind can pick up their cross and follow Him. In all that we do as young people, we must take these responsibilities serious, and may we never surrender the glory of Jesus Christ; may God grant us a few trials by fire so that we can see the path less traveled.

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## Lies Women Believe and the Truth That Sets Them Free

By: Nancy Leigh DeMoss – Report by: Claire Schuerman

I sent an email out earlier to the girls, but let me say again that this book has been so amazing. When I first cracked it open, I have to confess that I was of a cynical mindset because I didn't think I believed any lies sown by the enemy, and I was very proud in that fact, BUT boy, was I WRONG!! This book covered 40 major lies that are common among women, and they were split into 9 different categories. In almost every single category, I had at least believed 2 or 3. As God dealt with me, it became clear that the foundations of my faith that I had once trusted to be solid really had cracks and fissures, and some (lies) I couldn't see due to my spiritual blindness!! But Thank God for His grace and mercy!!! Even though it really hurt to read this book and look into God's mirror, I know and feel that it was so very good for me. I also enjoyed this book because in the very last chapter, there are listed 22 basic truths for the lies studied and Bible passages to go along with them. I can't praise the Lord enough for this truly growing experience!

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## *Miracles in Progress*

I recently read a message by David Wilkerson on miracles. He stated that we too often think that miracles are instantaneous events like a sudden healing or a sudden conversion. However, there is a kind that can be even more frequent, and that is the type of miracle that can be called a *miracle in progress*. A progressive miracle takes months or years to evolve and is not often recognized as the miracle it really is. Bro. Wilkerson's thoughts got me thinking about a few examples of that.

Think about Joseph. It truly is a miracle that God brought him from being the son of a sheep herder to the ruler of Egypt. But, that miracle took years and years to take place. And, many times, it looked like he was going the opposite direction of the miracle because of other people's wrong choices. What kept him within this miracle that he was unknowingly in was that he made the right choices himself. His brothers, Potiphar's wife, the negligent baker all made some very poor choices that affected Joseph's life in extremely negative ways, *but when God has a plan, He accomplishes that plan*! Joseph was the only one who could derail that plan. Others could mistreat him and apparently change the entire course of his life, but as long as Joseph responded correctly, God's plan went on! That's exciting! You don't have to be a victim! Things that go awry in your life can be part of *the miracle in progress* for you if you will keep your heart and attitudes in check!

Think about Samuel Morris. The young man who was tortured by other tribes in Africa didn't realize that someday he would have an impact for Christ on young people in America at Taylor University. That's a miracle of God! The abuse by the tribes and the sea captain on the way overseas were both part of the *miracle in progress* in his life.

What is going wrong in your life right now? Believe it or not, even the carnality of other people can be part of the miracle in progress in your life. Or…their carnality might derail you forever and ever, if you let it! It all depends on how you choose to react. Will you try to be a prince/princess in your heart like Joseph and Samuel Morris even in the dirty dungeons that others force you into? Can you respond with dignity and joy – letting Christ speak and act through you? Not rubbing it in to the carnal ones on how hard they are making it for you? This will open wide the doors for miracles in your life. Remember that neither Joseph nor Samuel knew what was ahead – all they could see was the situation they were in, yet they still kept their hearts. Don't stop God's progressive work in your life. Let the miracle happen. –Karin