

# Evolution and Unification Thought

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The words that I am sharing are in direct opposition to the theories of Charles Darwin. Yet it is through these words, not Darwin's theories, that we will achieve a world of peace. This is because my words witness to the fundamental principles of creation.

Sun Myung Moon

“Everybody Wants True Love,” April 1999

## **PREFACE**

When I was a student at Unification Theological Seminary from 1976 to 1978, Reverend Sun Myung Moon (whom we affectionately and respectfully called “Father”) often came to visit. He taught us how to make nets and catch fish in the nearby Hudson River, and we frequently accompanied him on walks in the woods while listening to him talk. He advised us, among other things, to pray every day at the same time and in the same place to discover what God wanted us to do with our lives.

Through my prayers, my studies, and Father's talks, I decided that my calling was to challenge Darwin's theory of evolution (“Darwinism”), according to which all living things are descended from one or a few common ancestors that have been modified by the natural selection of random variations. By attributing all features of living things to unguided natural mechanisms Darwinism makes God superfluous, except perhaps as an impersonal first cause that long-ago set in motion a process incapable of producing designed results.

In the 1970s, the major ideological threat to our relationship with God was Marxism, and many of my fellow Unificationists were actively engaged in opposing it. I was convinced that once Marxism was vanquished the principal threat would be Darwinism, and I began preparing myself to challenge it. Among other things, I took advantage of

every opportunity to go to New York City to read articles and books on evolution in the Columbia University biology library.

In 1978, when Father offered some of us scholarships to pursue doctorates in religious studies, I went to Yale to study theology. I studied all aspects of Christian theology, but I focused on the Darwinian controversies with the goal of getting to the root of the conflict between Darwinian evolution and Christian doctrine. I learned that biblical chronology played almost no role in the nineteenth-century controversies; by 1859, when Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, most theologians had already accepted geological evidence for the age of the Earth and re-interpreted the “days” in Genesis as long periods of time. Instead, the central issue in the nineteenth century was design.

God created the cosmos with a plan in mind, and that plan included human beings as the goal of creation. The affirmation that we are created in the image of God is among the most basic in all of Christianity—and other theistic religions as well, including Unificationism. Yet Darwinism contradicts it. According to Darwin’s theory, we are accidental by-products of purposeless natural processes. Thus design and purpose are at the center of the conflict between Christianity and Darwinism. One man who saw this clearly in the nineteenth century was Princeton theologian Charles Hodge, who was widely respected until he dared to criticize Darwinism in his 1874 book *What Is Darwinism*. After that, the academic establishment relegated him to oblivion.<sup>1</sup>

After receiving my Yale Ph.D. in 1986 I worked for two years as director of the International Religious Foundation in New York. But I still felt called to challenge Darwinism, so I resigned my position in 1988 to return to graduate school in biology. When Father heard about this he advised me against it, wisely pointing out that I was too old (I was then 46). After deep prayer, however, I decided to do it anyway, and in 1989 I entered a Ph.D. program in biology at the University of California at Berkeley.

Although I was skeptical of the creative power of random mutations and natural selection, I had not yet questioned Darwin’s other basic claim—that all living things are descended from a common ancestor. As a biology graduate student, however, I learned how weak the evidence for universal common ancestry really is. Then, in 1992, I met Berkeley law professor Phillip E. Johnson, who had just published his incisive and seminal book *Darwin On Trial*—the main point of which was that Darwinism is materialistic philosophy masquerading as empirical science.<sup>2</sup>

In 1993, Professor Johnson hosted a small meeting of scientists and philosophers who thought—contra Darwin—that some features of living things are better explained by an intelligent cause than by unguided natural processes. I was invited to the meeting, where I met some of the people who are now prominent in what has become known as the intelligent design movement.

When I finished at Berkeley in 1994, I was asked to write something for other Unificationists explaining why I went for a second Ph.D. even after Father had advised me against it. My essay was subsequently posted on the Internet.<sup>3</sup>

After several years of working as the evening-shift supervisor in a medical laboratory and doing post-doctoral biology research at Berkeley, I moved in 1998 with my family to Seattle to work with the Discovery Institute's Center for Science and Culture, which was fast becoming the worldwide center for intelligent design. In 2000 I published *Icons of Evolution*, showing that many textbook images used as evidence for Darwin's theory were exaggerated, distorted, or even faked. Angry Darwinists attacked me in print and on the Internet; some even cited my 1994 essay (incorrectly) as proof that I was just mindlessly following orders from Reverend Moon. In 2002 I responded to their attacks in "Critics Rave Over *Icons of Evolution*."<sup>4</sup>

*Icons of Evolution* was critical of the evidence for Darwinism, but it did not deal with intelligent design. In 2006, however, I published *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Darwinism and Intelligent Design*, and in 2008 William A. Dembski and I published *The Design of Life*.<sup>5</sup>

*Evolution and Unification Thought* summarizes — and adds to — criticisms of Darwinism and arguments for intelligent design from these earlier books. It also brings together some of the relevant theological insights I gained from my studies at Unification Theological Seminary and Yale Graduate School. My hope is that this book can serve as a primer for readers who are interested not only in the philosophical, theological and scientific controversies over Darwinism, but also in the potential contributions that Unification Thought could make to their eventual resolution.

The list of people who have helped me in this work is long and distinguished. To the names already listed in *Icons of Evolution* and *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Darwinism and Intelligent Design* I would add Dr. David S. C. Kim of Unification Theological Seminary; Dr. Sang Hun Lee, Dr. Sung Bae Jin, Prof. Hisayoshi Watanabe, and Mr. Akifumi Otani of the Unification Thought Institute; Dr. Tadaaki Shimyo and Dr. David Burgess of the New World Encyclopedia. My wife Lucy deserves special thanks for her help with the manuscript. Of course, neither these kind people nor the Unification Thought Institute are responsible for what I have written, but without their encouragement and guidance I could not have come this far, and I am deeply grateful to them.

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