

# Born to Win

## Darwin Versus Reason

by Ronald L. Dart

Funny thing about scientists: most of them believe in God (at least in general terms); but let someone suggest that we inform high school science students that there *are* people who believe in Intelligent Design—that there is a Creator—they start sounding like chickens who have seen a fox in the coop. No, that’s unfair. Only *some* scientists sound like chickens; but without a program, it’s hard to tell the Dominique from the Rhode Island Red. I *will* say that the flap over Intelligent Design is encouraging. The attempt to silence opposing views is a sure sign that we are on to something. Now that said, let me admit right off the bat that science has very little to say about origins. They can theorize about the origins of life, but no one has been able to demonstrate that it’s possible to create life intelligently on purpose. So I have to assume doing it unintelligently or accidentally has not been demonstrated either. I don’t mind scientists concluding that God’s existence (or non-existence) is outside their purview. The problem arises when science tells us with certainty that nature is all there is, was, or ever shall be. Do they tell us that? Oh, yeah. They tell *our children* that. That sentence comes straight from a children’s book about nature titled *The Bears’ Nature Guide*. (It’s based on the popular Berenstain Bears.) American scientist Will Provine said this (and I quote him):

Modern science directly implies that the world is organized strictly in accordance with deterministic principles or chance. There are no purposive principles whatsoever in nature. There are no gods and no designing forces rationally detectable.

*William Provine - Evolution and the Foundation of Ethics*

Now, as I said, I wouldn’t mind so much if they’d leave that stuff alone and just talk about what *is*; but when they start trying to tell our children that there is no God, they have stepped over a line.

Now notice, he says in this statement that there are two things that control everything. One is “deterministic principles”. Determinism is...

a theory or doctrine that acts of the will, occurrences in nature, or social or psychological phenomena are causally determined by preceding events or natural laws

*Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary - “determinism”*

In other words, your freedom to turn right or left at the next intersection is an illusion. It is causally determined by preceding events or natural laws. The other thing he mentioned is “chance”. In other words, life is a crap shoot. Now, these are the things that science tries to tell our children this is the way things are in the world. Everything is determined by something else, and it’s all a matter of that or it’s a matter of chance.

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, writing in the January 2006 issue of *First Things*, made an important point on this issue. More than one point, actually, but one that made me lay down the journal and stare into space for a few minutes. Here's what he said. Now, get a grip, because this may seem counter-intuitive to you at first. He said,

Prior to both science and theology is philosophy, the “science of common experience.” Its role in these crucial matters is indispensable.

*Christoph Cardinal Schönborn - The Designs of Science*

Now, let me repeat it so you'll be sure you get it. “Prior to both science and theology is philosophy”, which he calls the “science of common experience”. Now, some folks will have a little difficulty in agreeing that *prior* to theology is philosophy, because we like to think in terms of theology being divinely revealed. But he's right as he *defines* philosophy; he calls it the science of common experience.

Now, let me see if I can explain this in terms of theology. You probably have a Bible there in your house; and if you are a Christian, you accept that Bible as the ground of your faith. You are right to do so, but I doubt you have ever asked yourself how you *came* to that point of view. “Well, the canon of the Bible was established long ago. The books that belong in the Bible were decided by the Church”, is what some people will tell you. Really? I ask. On what basis? And by what authority? And if someone had the authority to decide what went into the Bible and what did not, then that someone has greater authority than the Bible. And if that is so, where did that someone get his authority?

Now, it doesn't take long, if you think this through, to understand why some people accuse us Christians of circular reasoning. But they would be wrong. Consider, first of all, what the Bible *is*. It's not one book, it's many books; and that's important. Just take the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Have you ever wondered why we need *four* of them? I mean, why do we need four? Why not just one guy, sit down, pull all of this stuff together, and write us a comprehensive account of the ministry of Jesus Christ? Or, you might even ask, why didn't Jesus just write this stuff down himself so we'd know exactly what he said and what he meant? Well, Jesus answered that question. He answered it himself; in John 5, verse 31, he said this:

#### John 5

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<sup>31</sup> If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid.

And, you know, if you sit down and you think about that for a moment, you can see that that's true. If Jesus simply testifies about himself... well, his testimony is not admissible. For a testimony to be valid, you have to have a disinterested party. You have to have someone who is a witness, who saw this happen, who is not the person himself. It is a fundamental principle of Biblical law (you can look it up for yourself) [**Deut. 17:6, 19:15; Num. 35:30**] that two or three witnesses are required to establish a matter in law. The four gospels are the affidavits of not two, not three, but *four* witnesses of the ministry of Jesus, of all that he did and said, of his death, and of his resurrection. *We* believe Jesus rose from the dead because we have more than four witnesses that tell us that he did. And philosophy, the science of common experience, tells us that when we have heard the witnesses, we know what is true.

When it comes to the Bible as a whole, we have more than four witnesses. We've got a bunch of them. In fact, the writer of Hebrews, in the twelfth chapter, says,

#### Hebrews 12

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<sup>1</sup> Therefore seeing we also are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside

every weight, and the sin which does so easily ensnare us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us[.]

Because, you see, most of us who are Christians have taken the Bible; we've taken the testimony of all these witnesses; we have sat down, and we have read it, and decided whether we believe it or whether we don't. So you see, before we can have a theology, we have to have reason and common experience, and we have to examine the evidence. Cardinal Schönborn calls this philosophy, and he says it must *precede* both science *and* theology. And he is right. Before you can accept *any* authority, you must determine *rationally* whether the authority is legitimate or not. You make this determination by *reason*. In other words, reason precedes everything. I remember I was engaged in a theological argument with someone once, and he said, "Look, you're just using human reason." Now, basically what he meant was I was using human reason instead of just believing what the Bible said (which was a false dichotomy, anyhow, but never mind that). Human reason is the only kind of reasoning I've got. I'm not a Vulcan; I'm not from another planet. My mind operates on the system of reasoning that God implanted in every man who has ever lived on the earth. Human reason precedes everything.

Now, Cardinal Schönborn cites an interesting example, one anyone can understand. He's tackling the fundamental idea of Darwinism, which is *randomness*. In other words: random variations, followed by natural selection, account for all the diversity of life we see around us. He cites an illustration offered by Steven Barr to show that the real issue is not mere randomness. Barr said this:

If the word "random" necessarily entails the idea that some events are "unguided" in the sense of falling "outside the bounds of divine providence," we should have to condemn as incompatible with Christian faith a great deal of modern physics, chemistry, geology, and astronomy, as well as biology[.]

This is absurd, of course. The word "random" as used in science does not mean uncaused, unplanned, or inexplicable; it means *uncorrelated*.

*Stephen M. Barr - The Design of Evolution*

Now, what he's trying to tell us here is that, if we're going to look at things as being totally random—that there are all kinds of events that fall outside of divine providence—then we have to conclude that a great deal of science (not merely biology, but physics, chemistry, and everything else) falls *outside of* and is *incompatible with* Christian faith. He doesn't think so; neither do I. He continued to say,

My children like to observe the license plates of the cars that pass us on the highway, to see which states they are from. The sequence of states exhibits a degree of randomness: a car from Kentucky, then New Jersey, then Florida, and so on—because the cars are uncorrelated: knowing where one car comes from tells us nothing about where the next one comes from.

*Stephen M. Barr - The Design of Evolution*

This is the idea, he says, of randomness.

And yet, each car comes to that place at that time for a reason. Each trip is *planned*, each *guided* by some map and some schedule.

Okay. Cardinal Schönborn says this,

First of all, we must observe that the role of randomness in Darwinian biology is quite different from its role in thermodynamics, quantum theory, and other natural sciences. In those sciences randomness captures our inability to predict or know the precise behavior of the parts of a system (or perhaps, in the case of the quantum world, some intrinsic properties of the system). But in all such cases the “random” behavior of parts is embedded in and constrained by a deeply mathematical and precise conceptual structure of the whole that makes the overall behavior of the system orderly and intelligible.

*Christoph Cardinal Schönborn - The Designs of Science*

In other words, we know that if we heat water to a certain temperature, it will begin to boil. This is quite predictable. It is controlled and constrained by a deeply mathematical and precise conceptual structure. He goes on to say,

The randomness of neo-Darwinian biology is nothing like that. It is simply random. The variation through genetic mutation is random. And natural selection is also random: The properties of the ever-changing environment that drive evolution through natural selection are *also* not correlated to anything, according to the Darwinists. Yet out of all that unconstrained, unintelligible mess emerges, *deus ex machina*, the precisely ordered and extraordinarily intelligible world of living organisms. And this is the heart of the neo-Darwinian science of biology.

*Christoph Cardinal Schönborn - The Designs of Science*

Now, the Cardinal is going to take this a step further which clarifies the issue quite a bit. I know this is complicated, but let’s see if we can blow some of the fog away. The Cardinal takes us a step further into Barr’s analogy of the license plates. He says,

Suppose the Barr family sets out on a trip southward from their home in Delaware—and, while hearing a brief introductory lecture on the proper meaning of randomness, the children start writing down the state of each passing license plate. After hours have passed, the children, pausing at their work, provide the following report: While each individual car’s license plate does indeed seem uncorrelated to the previous and next, or to anything in the immediate environment, there may nevertheless be a pattern in the data. At first, almost all the license plates were from Delaware. A little later the majority shifted to Maryland. A few hours after that there was a big upswing of District of Columbia plates, mixing in near-equal proportion to the Maryland plates. A short time later the majority became Virginia plates. Now they see a dramatic shift to North Carolina plates. Is there a pattern here? Is there a reason one can think of for that pattern?

*Christoph Cardinal Schönborn - The Designs of Science*

Well, of course there's a pattern there; and there's only one explanation for it: They started their trip in Delaware, passed through Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia. At the time of the report, they were in North Carolina.

Now, how can we be *sure* of something like that? Well, because of the science of common experience. This is what philosophy is. It is how we render judgments in things that affect our lives. It's how we convict criminals and send them off to prison for the rest of their lives. Paul, writing to the Romans, makes a similar philosophical appeal to reason on the *very issues* that we're talking about here. He wrote to the Romans and said,

**Romans 1**

*AKJV*

<sup>15</sup> So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

You have to realize that gospel had been formulated, it has been discussed, it had been analyzed in the face of three and four witnesses. And then, finally, Paul himself, had to come face to face with the resurrected Christ; so we have yet another witness. He says,

**Romans 1**

*NKJV*

<sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Suppress what truth? What would there be that men are covering up? Paul continues,

**Romans 1**

*NIV '84/AKJV*

<sup>19</sup> since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them.

<sup>20</sup> For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Oh...well, how could they have been so without excuse? Because of *the science of common experience*. Because rationally, Paul says, when you look at the evidence, when you look at the world, you don't need test tubes, you don't need wires, you don't need meters, you don't need any of this stuff. You can step outside, you can sit down under a tree, you can think about and work your way through what you can see and know, and you will have *no excuse* for denying the existence of God. He continues in verse 21 to say,

**Romans 1**

*AKJV*

<sup>21</sup> Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

<sup>22</sup> Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

These are men who would say, “Look, *we* know. You just listen to us.” And they turn out to be fools in the end.

**Romans 1**

AKJV

<sup>23</sup> And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things.

This is *painfully* close to what a Neo-Darwinist would tell us happened—that, really, it isn’t God; it’s birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; and we have sort of arisen through an evolutionary process from all this stuff.

**Romans 1**

KJ2000

<sup>24</sup> Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves:

<sup>25</sup> Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

They’ll sit there and they will tell your children, in little books given to children, that nature is all there is, or was, or ever will be. Paul said,

**Romans 1**

KJ2000

<sup>26</sup> For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

<sup>27</sup> And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is shameful, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was fitting.

It’s kind of shocking to hear Paul’s condemnation of homosexual behavior in such raw terms in today’s world, isn’t it? And yet here it is. I don’t know how to explain it other than simply read it and...look this is what men have done. And the odd thing about it is: what they’re doing runs completely contrary to what they think evolution would teach about the world. Because evolution has to do with those aspects of nature that can *procreate*—that can, by some process, reproduce themselves. Homosexual behavior can’t do that.

By the way, I learned something I didn’t know recently: a man’s sperm has a characteristic that screens it somehow from a woman’s immune system. Normally, her body would attack the sperm as a foreign organism, just as her body would normally reject an organ transplant. If you gave a woman a kidney transplant, you’d have to give her ciclosporin—something to suppress her immune system lest her body attack and destroy the kidney designed to save her life. The sperm has a quality that prevents that from taking place. Now, consider that in the light of the transmission of sexually-transmitted diseases. Most disease organisms are fought off successfully by the body’s immune system, but those that come along with the sperm cell are protected from that, and the body doesn’t see them as foreign objects. Darwinian biology contains no ethical or moral content, and so there is no way for it to warn us, before it’s too late, of the dangers of some kinds of human conduct.

Let me repeat: Darwinian biology contains no ethical or moral content. If there’s no immediate adverse affect to something, we do it again. There was a country song a few years ago titled *If It Feels Good, Do It*, and that philosophy seems to have taken deep root in the present world. The issue in all this is

“whether the human intellect can discern the reality of design in the world of living things.” Let me repeat that: the issue is “whether the human intellect can discern the reality of design in the world of living things.” Schönborn said,

In science, the discipline and methods are such that design—more precisely, formal and final causes in natural beings—is purposefully excluded from its reductionist conception of nature.

*Christoph Cardinal Schönborn - The Designs of Science*

And, you know, we are seeing this clearly in the debate over whether Intelligent Design can be included in the science curriculum. It is claimed that it is *not* science; it’s theology and it should be confined to the theology classroom. No one bothers to mention that in the public schools *there is no theology classroom*. So the idea that the human intellect can discern the reality of design in the world of living things is ruled *off the table* and discussion is not allowed.

This might not be so bad if science would restrain itself from teaching that there is no Intelligent Design, if they would restrain themselves from saying that nature is all there is, if they would abstain from teaching our kids that there is no God. But if science is going to teach origins without design, then the other side must be admitted to the discussion. By the way, have you ever wondered why, in spite of the educational system since Darwin came along, human beings continue to believe in God as Creator and Designer? How could we possibly, in the face of academia, the media—all of the stuff that’s dumped on us—still believe in God? Well, it’s because the human intellect *can* discern the *reality* of design in the world of living things. It’s because of the science of common experience: philosophy.

There’s a curious parallel in the public life of this country. In spite of all the efforts of the educational system, the news media, and the persistent lying of some politicians, we keep right on electing conservative congressmen, senators, presidents. I still shake my head in amazement that George Bush, a man who is *not* an effective communicator, got a majority of the people in this country to vote for him. Why? It’s because of the science of common experience. Human beings are *rational*, and those that think before they react *know* when they are being lied to. There is something down inside of our gut that, if we will just listen to it, lets us know when people are lying. And as a consequence, we look at what we see, we hear the news media, we hear what our instructors tell us in college, and we come out of there still believing in God.

The uncertain faith of the West is in danger of being overrun by the certainty of militant Islam, and we’re in danger. It remains to be seen how far we will run down this road before we decide we have gone far enough—before careful examination of the evidence of everyday experience emerges to call us back to our senses. Schönborn noted,

Today, spirit-matter dualism dominates Christian thinking about reality.

*Christoph Cardinal Schönborn - The Designs of Science*

And he is *dead right*. So many Christian people now have divided the world into what is real on the one hand and what is spirit on the other, as though spirit itself is not real. I mean, I *knew* that; I just didn’t know what to call it. We, who call ourselves Christian, have allowed ourselves to be *duped* into accepting the divide between science and “faith”. We have allowed those who would marginalize us to define the issues and define the terms. They allow us to have our faith, our religion, our theology as long as we keep it to ourselves.

A rabbi has written a book, deeply concerned about the Religious Right, who he thinks wants to establish a theocracy in this country. He seems to have missed the *real* story. The phenomenon he is describing is nothing more than people of faith *pushing back* against the ACLU and their ilk, who seem to be determined to allow only a *civic* religion in this country—what some would call a “secular society”. That is simply not possible. The nature of man requires a faith, and what is happening is that Darwinism is to become the new faith, while those that believe in God are allowed (for now) to maintain their faith as long as they keep it out of the public square.

Here’s the crux of the matter: Some want us to believe that the argument is between science and faith. It’s not. It’s an argument between science and *reason*. You might be able to rule faith out of the classroom based on the First Amendment; but how on earth can you rule out *reason*?

Until next time, I’m Ronald Dart.

Transcript of a *Born to Win*  
radio program by  
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