

Beginnings – ORIGIN *(Where did we come from?)*

- **Only Two Choices**
- **Realize the Significance**
- **Is it Faith or Science?**
 - LAB - Lookable, Accessible, Breakable
- **Guess at the Evidence**
- **Inspect the Evidence**
 - Universe = "Decay"
 - Age of the Earth = "Can't Say"
 - Origin of Life by Chance = "No Way"
 - Evolution of Species and Man = "Lacks Genes and Tweens"
- **No Compromise**

DON'T - Death, Orders of Creation, Names in genealogies, Ten Commandments refer to seven-day week

Intent of Life – LIFE *(Why are we here?)*

- **Love - GOD and MAN**
- **Increase - GROW**
- **Faithfulness - Time, Talent, Treasure**
- **Eternity – Past, Present, Future**

Authority – POWER *(Who's in charge?)* A God Who is:

- **Personal and Loving**
- **Omnipotent**
- **Wise and All-Knowing**
- **Everywhere and Eternal**
- **Righteous and Reliable**

Standards – RULES *(What are the rules?)* God's rules are:

- **Revealed supernaturally, not derived by reason**
- **Universal and apply to everyone, everywhere, all the time**
- **Loving**
- **Enforced**
- **Steadfast**

R - Realize the Significance

OK. Let's say you concede that there are only two real answers to the question of origin. Is it really that important what you believe about where we came from?

YES, IT IS IMPORTANT!! Your answer to this question is vital to everything you believe and do and hope. Why? Because:

If God created us as He said He did, He owns us and He has the right to say what's right and wrong

If God did not create us, no one owns us and no one has the right to say what's right and wrong

If God owns us He can tell us what is RIGHT and what is WRONG whether we like it or not. We can choose to do things that He says are wrong, but we can't change the fact that they are wrong. We can choose to do something He says is right and it will be right even if everyone else thinks it is wrong.

On the other hand, if God did not create us as He said then there are no fixed standards for right and wrong. Certainly there are laws and customs that we decide and enforce, but they are always subject to being changed by the next generation of people in power. The rules can continually change because no one has the power to make them ultimate and final. In this scenario all standards of right and wrong are simply opinions.

Do you see why this is such a vital question? Our daily decisions about what we do and don't do revolve around our sense of right and wrong. If someone offends you is it okay for you to pull out a gun and shoot him/her? Why or why not? Where did you get that idea? If you thought you wouldn't get caught and decided to shoot would that make it OK if you got away with it? Would it be OK in a different time period or in a different country?

Let's look at a few questions to demonstrate the significance of whether God or man establishes the standard for right and wrong:

If Person A's life is inconveniencing me, is it okay for me to end Person A's life if I have the opportunity?

This is the question we face today on issues such as abortion, euthanasia (a sanitized word meaning "good death", presumably from the perspective of someone still living), starvation of handicapped infants, medical decisions to refuse care to the elderly, and others.

- **If God owns us**, He says that He is the author of life and that except for capital punishment, self-defense, or war He does not condone the killing of people. One of the earliest sins recorded in Genesis is the sin of murder where Cain killed Abel.
- **If God doesn't own us** then we have no standard of right and wrong, just opinions that we think best serve our interests. Presumably the stronger (politically, militarily, financially) will enforce their opinions on the weaker. The younger stronger generation may decide to do away with the elderly because they cost too much to keep. But that cost doesn't seem too high when they themselves grow older and find that they now are no longer the "strong." If Reason is your source of authority ***your opinion of whether it is right to kill the less useful people will depend on whether you are one of them.*** But it will still be only an opinion and you have no reasonable basis for saying anything is "wrong." All you can say is whether you like it.

Why do people get married?

Is marriage just tradition? Why is marriage necessary when you can just live with someone?

- **If God owns us**, God says in Genesis that He instituted marriage so that man would not be alone and so that husband and wife can become one. Later He tells us that marriage is also to produce godly offspring and to model the relationship between Christ and His Bride, the Church. Marriage between one man and one woman for life is the only sanctioned union.
- **If God doesn't own us**, we can make up our own rules about marriage. Many people today (including many in our government) are rejecting the idea that marriage is the only right way for a man and woman to join lives. If no one owns us and has the right to establish right and wrong then this is a logical conclusion. Why don't we change the definition of marriage to include any type of live-in arrangement? Why does it have to involve a man and a woman? If you can get enough people to agree with you to make it legal then you can enforce your opinions on everyone. You can even force employers to pay for medical benefits for any type of "marriage" partner. The thing you can't really do is say that it's "right" since that would imply an absolute standard which you say doesn't exist.

Why do we have to wear clothes?

Many people probably haven't thought much about this question. The concept of modesty is falling out of favor. In the U.S. we hear of legal attacks to protect "free speech" if an organization tries to establish any dress code related to modesty.

- **If God owns us**, we need to wear clothes that cover the private parts of our bodies. God gave clothing to Adam and Eve as a covering for sin in Genesis. Because of our sin nature, nakedness produces lustful thoughts and destroys modesty and purity.
- **If God doesn't own us**, there is no absolute standard from God and we're just left with opinions about clothes. If you say "so what?" then think how you would react when your co-workers,

neighbors, children's teachers, plumber, etc., stop wearing clothes. With at least some of them you would probably want to say "that's not ri....." but you would have to bite your tongue on that last word since you don't own them and can't tell them what's "right".

These and many other examples illustrate why the question of where we came from is so foundational to how we think. If we reject the notion of a Creator Who owns us, we are also rejecting the notion of any absolute rights or wrongs in the world because there is no one to set the standards. No absolutes may sound good if I think it gives me freedom, but no limits on what others can do is not a comforting thought! **Without a Creator we can argue about preferences but we can't insist on justice.**