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## **IT DOES MATTER IF THE EARTH IS OLD!**

As many of you know, I believe the creation ministries are vital in spreading the Gospel today. Many do not realize that most will not give the thought of Jesus Christ a chance unless they first understand Genesis and God as Creator. I have had many people tell me that as long as you believe in Jesus Christ, it doesn't matter if you believe the earth is millions of years old. Maybe it doesn't matter for your salvation, but I guarantee it matters when it comes to your witness about Christ and your blessing received here on earth.

Paul wrote in Corinthians, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames" (1 Cor 3:11-15). Notice that as long as you have the foundation of Jesus in your life, you will be saved. However, if you build upon your faith of Christ with wood, hay or

straw (evolution, abortion, pornography, etc.) the Day with a capital D will burn those works up and you will suffer LOSS because of it. However, if you respond to God's love by building with good things such as being obedient to God's Word in addition to your faith in Christ, you will be rewarded in heaven. I have already experienced earthly rewards in accepting a young earth. It wasn't until I unconditionally accepted God's Word that my faith blossomed and I could bear good fruit in abundance through the vine that supports me, Jesus Christ. That is why Creation is important for your earthly and heavenly blessings. Those that reject a literal creation will "suffer loss" in heaven, even though they will be saved. I say this because anything other than the literal Word of God is man's opinion (hay and straw). As for your witness, that will be explained in the remainder of this newsletter.

When Peter or Paul preached to the Jews, people who knew of God as their Creator, they always taught Christ crucified, died, and resurrected immediately. For example, when Peter had his vision of the clean and unclean animals being lowered down from the four corners of the earth in Acts 10, he is called to the house of the Gentile, Cornelius, who was a God fearing, righteous man. Again, when Paul goes to Antioch in Pisidia and preaches to the Jews in the synagogue, he goes directly to tracing the line of Jesus, leading all the way to the cross (Acts 13). Also, among those in Thessalonica, Paul preaches in the synagogue of the Jews, where, "As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ" (Acts 17:2-3). The same "Christ centered" style of preaching occurs at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-10) and everywhere else in which the listening audience already had the background of Scripture and God as Creator.

On the other hand, if those listening were Scripturally uneducated

Gentiles, Paul first spoke of God as Creator of the universe. For example, in Lystra when Paul healed a cripple, the Gentiles who saw this miracle, cried out, "The gods have come down to us in human form! Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker. . . . But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting: 'Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them'" (Acts 14:11-15). Once more, while in idol-filled Athens, Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, a rocky hill west of the Acropolis where the council met, and said, "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands" (Acts 17:22-24).

"God as Creator" style of preaching among the Gentiles is essential because "we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (I Corinthians 1:23). The Gentiles did not have the knowledge of the Old Testament as the Jews had, and therefore, this Christ who rose from the dead seemed foolish because they were unaware of the coming Messiah or the deliverance He was to bring. The Jews, however, had Moses and the prophets, all of whom spoke of the coming deliverer who, in their minds, was to set up an earthly kingdom. When Christ did not establish their earth-bound kingdom He became a stumbling block to them. As a result, when Paul was among Jews he needed to open their eyes to the prophecies of the Messiah and His deliverance. But when among the Gentiles, Paul had to establish a foundation, one which the Jews already had, that the one and only God created

the universe and that this same God has provided a Redeemer for our sins.

When we examine these different evangelistic styles we need to apply them to our mission today. Ken Ham, of Answers in Genesis, grew up in Australia and observed the much needed missionary outreach which took place in his country. Ken Ham once noted the huge success of bringing people to Christ which Billy Graham had in Australia in the early 1950's. Unfortunately, the evangelists in Australia today do not have nearly the success that Billy Graham had preaching the Gospel, because today's society has become more like the Gentiles and less like Jews, lacking Biblical knowledge, especially that of Old Testament. Despite this lapse, we continue to preach to them as if they were of Jewish background, knowing Scripture in both heart and mind. The information contained in the Old Testament is vital to the Gospel. If we do not understand the bad news (fall into sin) in Genesis, how can we comprehend the good news (means of salvation) in the New Testament?

There has been a change in the attitude and Biblical knowledge of society. Church and Sunday School attendance have dropped for young and old alike; school prayer has been taken out of the public schools; sexual perverseness has grown; Adam and Eve have become mythical characters and Christianity as a whole has become a quick Sunday fix for the guilty conscience. Even our laws show signs of a wicked generation. We have the same constitution that we had before abortion. Did the constitution change? No, rather the hearts of men changed.

Our once prepared ground was ready for the Gospel seed to be planted and take root, but the societal grounds are now overtaken with weeds and thorns, choking the message, sometimes before it can sprout. We must, therefore, go forth and clear the ground and prepare it, once again for the Gospel. "This is what the LORD says

to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem: 'Break up your unplowed ground and do not sow among thorns'" (Jeremiah 4:3).

Likewise we see in the Parable of the Sower how important prepared ground is. "As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear" (Matthew 13:4-9).

Jesus later explained this parable to the Apostles, telling them that the Gospel must be received by people who have been prepared for it. No longer are we preaching to a society of Jews, but rather to Gentiles. Until our fields are prepared for planting, the Gentile society will not be able to accept the message we have to share; therefore, Creation Evangelism is of utmost importance, not to replace the Gospel but to prepare the ground of human hearts for It.