

# “The Facts of Life”

Romans 8:18-27

As you probably know by now, Creation is a very popular topic of mine. However, as someone who enjoys the field of science, when speaking of God creating the heavens and the earth, it is easy to get caught up in the science and focus all our energy there – how modern evolutionary theory violates numerous laws of science such as the laws of thermodynamics or the law of biogenesis. Not to mention the fact the nature tends toward chaos, not order. Things do not become better arranged or more orderly over time. Things decay. Chaos, the breaking down of that which was once orderly is the tendency of nature. This is true in science and even more so with our sinful life.

But, in this conversation, it would be a disservice if all the facts we gave were scientific in nature. When dealing with the historical fact that God created the heavens and the earth, there is no point more important than understanding that this is a fact solely because God’s Word says that it is a fact.

On my old computer, I had a screen-saver program called “Creation Facts.” Had it for years – I kind of miss it. When I ordered this screen-saver, I anticipated it being different than it was. The box says, “It introduces enlightening facts...about God’s creation in a beautiful and enjoyable way.” I anticipated that it would state the known scientific evidence that disproves

the evolutionary hypothesis. It does some of that, but nothing very specific.

Most of the facts stated are right out of the Bible. It makes statements such as, “Earth was not the end result of evolving stars or a ‘Big Bang.’ The Sun, Moon, and stars were created after the Earth – and after the plants” as the book of Genesis records the happenings of the fourth day of creation.

And my favorite “fact” from this screen saver is: “Creation took place in six literal days, as stated by God in very strong terms. Experts have failed to devise a biblically-defensible case otherwise.” That struck me as an amazing insight, yet it is so simple. The fact of the matter is that the Bible, God’s Word, is the only source of truth. This is the first and most basic rule for interpreting Scripture. No matter what hypothesis or theory someone proposes, it must be biblically defensible.

Sometimes we tend to over-think things – at least I do. We try to open our minds and expand our reason rather than simply open God’s Word. One of my favorite quotes is from the Roman orator Seneca who once said: “We do not know what we should do because we have learned unimportant things. Indeed we do not know what is salutary because we have learned only the things that destroy us.”<sup>1</sup> He said this, and he didn’t even have the internet or tabloid papers as examples. We have learned unimportant things and the things that destroy us.

When we look at the world, God’s masterpiece of creation, we tend to focus on the struggles of life, on what it takes to survive or succeed, rather than on what it takes to be a child of God. We need to have Paul’s attitude as he says: “I consider that our sufferings of this present time are not worth

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<sup>1</sup>LW 25:361.

comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”

Not that our present sufferings are trivial or meaningless. Illness is real. Storms are real. All life is precious. The chaos of this sinful world is maddening. Through the years, our families and our church have been greatly affected by illness, injury, and death. What Paul is telling us is that we need to be focusing our attention on the reason why our present sufferings are not to be dwelt upon, that is, God would have us focus our attention on the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. It is through Christ’s suffering and death that God’s masterpiece of creation has been freed from its slavery to sin, its bondage to sin, its “bondage to decay” – as Paul refers to it.

We have been freed from the guilt of our sin. And even though everything in the world, even our own bodies, continue to decay – sin and death have no mastery over us. They can no longer destroy us. We have obtained the “freedom of the glory of the children of God.”

Understanding the historical account of creation is so important, because only by understanding creation, the Fall into sin, and God’s immediate promise of salvation, can we understand our relationship as children to God our Father. In the beginning, God created the world and he created His children to be pure and perfect. But now, as Paul says, the world is in “bondage to decay.” The sin of Adam has eroded away that of which God had once said, “and it was very good” [Gen. 1:31]. Now that Christ has suffered and died to free us from that bondage to decay, we see the “firstfruits of the Spirit.” Those “firstfruits” are our faith in God’s Word, and the forgiveness that faith brings.

As long as we live on this earth, we only see the beginnings of what

Christ has done to restore creation to its full perfection. Only those Christians who have departed this life have seen the perfection of what God intended for us all along.

This is not to say that the grace and forgiveness known in this life is trivial or meaningless; far from it. The blessings that God has abundantly poured out on each of you are tremendous and incomprehensible. As I said last week, even the most insignificant blade of grass is a gift from Him. But the physical and even the spiritual blessings of this life are only a faint foreshadowing of the eternal glory waiting for those who die in the faith.

The most important “fact” that you can know is that God sent His Son Jesus Christ to pay the ransom price to free you from the bondage to sin. Only in Christ is creation restored to its full perfection in the eternal kingdom that we will know more fully one day. In the beginning, God intended there to be no sin, no sickness, no injury, and no death. When sin and death entered the world, God gave the world hope through the promise of a Savior.

And now the world waits patiently for the day to come; we wait patiently for the greater portion of our inheritance and the fullness of our inheritance revealed in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Until then, we continue to place our faith and trust in the only source of truth and life: God’s Word – which tells us, as we read in Paul’s letter to the Romans, how creation has been liberated (set free) and we have obtained “the freedom of the glory of the children of God.”

The sufferings of this present time are real. The pain we feel when we suffer loss is real. But these sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” Rejoice in the freedom of the Gospel. Wait patiently in the hope of the resurrection. Amen.