CONSIDER THE BIRDS by Andy Diestelkamp

I enjoy the change of seasons, and my favorite season is spring. I just love seeing nature *spring* to life. Last November my wife and I, inspired by a bunch of cardinals in our cedar tree, decided to put up a couple of bird feeders. It has been a pleasant experience, and now that spring is near the birds and squirrels are becoming much more active and “twitterpated.”

The observation of nature prompts wonder and thought. King David wrote, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). In two other psalms David wrote, “The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Psalms 14:1; 53:1). Yet, the prevailing belief among many is that the heavens declare that a cosmic accident occurred billions upon billions of years ago, and that it is the believer in God who is the fool.

When we observe the animals closely, we not only see them in their best poses in idyllic settings eating at our feeders, but we may also see them regurgitate or defecate and even copulate. To these latter activities, we may have a childish negative reaction; but intellectually we understand that all of these things are natural and that we as humans also do all of these things. Perhaps it is this reality that has contributed to the theory that humans are merely highly-evolved animals. Perhaps it is this evolutionary theory which has contributed to humans behaving like animals.

However, we who study nature and see the glory of God have a perspective that sees significant differences between ourselves and the animal kingdom. Jesus told us to consider the birds and ourselves relative to them (Luke 12:24). The ancient Scriptures affirm that “in the beginning, God created” the natural world (Genesis 1:1). While revealing that God made human bodies out of natural stuff (2:7,22,23), the Scriptures also make a clear distinction between humans and the rest of creation. “So God created man in His own image … male and female He created them,” (1:27) and gave humans dominion over His creation (v. 28). Now, before you dismiss this perspective as merely religious mythology, consider the alternative.

When we describe a person as behaving like an animal, it is generally not a compliment. Yet, if we are simultaneously teaching generation after generation that we are nothing more than animals, can we be surprised to see an increase in animal-like behavior among humans? Thinking that humans are animals has detrimental consequences. For example, sexual promiscuity is prevalent among the animals, and we think nothing of it; it’s natural. We impose no moral responsibility upon animals to exercise self-control over their inclinations to copulate with whomever wherever. If humans *are* animals, then it would be natural for us to be sexually promiscuous as well, and, it is reasoned by an increasing number of people, we should think nothing of it. Indeed, moral opposition to sexual behavior which deviates from the standard revealed by our Creator is often labeled as being hateful.

Is it hateful to oppose sexual harassment? When I observe the birds, I see males attempting to dominate females without their consent. It’s natural! On what basis do we expect humans to get consent from those who have attracted their sexual interests? Those who dismiss God as irrelevant have no answer to this question that is consistent with their worldview. Those who acknowledge God as Creator *do* have an answer that is consistent with the worldview they espouse.

“Of how much more value are you than the birds?” Jesus asked rhetorically (Luke 12:24). We are not animals, and we are not to behave like them. Sexual harassment, abuse, and exploitation among humans is evil because it is contrary to the purpose for which we were created and it dishonors those made in God’s image.

Those who say there is no God *must* say that we are nothing more than animals; therefore, they can offer no logical limits on human behavior. Unbridled human behavior is a known path to certain destruction which ought to give all people pause to consider the will of our Creator. Yet many stubbornly resist the idea of God and complain about the One they don’t believe exists. “When a man’s folly brings his way to ruin, his heart rages against the LORD” (Proverbs 19:3).

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