

## INTRODUCTION

We greatly need God's help as we try to extricate ourselves from the embarrassments we now face regarding the public's attitudes toward creation doctrine. As we consider some of the phases of this task we should keep in mind that we must maintain at least the following beliefs which are related to the truth of creation:

1. Genesis 1-3 is an accurate, divinely inspired, brief historical account of the order and events of God's creation of the universe. It is not to be allegorized or relegated to the category of merely figurative language.
2. Man was created by God, without animal ancestry, in very recent times.
3. This world is rational and to a great extent understandable to man who was created "in the image and likeness of God," and still retains some of that likeness. God invites us to investigate and understand his created world and, to some extent, other parts of the universe.
4. Since God is a God of truth, there can be no contradiction between his special revelation and his general (natural) revelation, and no contradictions within either form of revelation.

### PART I. THE NECESSITY OF IMPROVING OUR IMAGE IN THE EYES OF PUBLIC EDUCATORS AND OTHER PUBLIC LEADERS

Creationists now have the image of being obscurantists who avoid most of the data of scientific research. We are accused of choosing only the kinds of data which we want, in order to obtain the kinds of results we have previously decided should be found. In the 1970's the situation was considerably different. At that time many public educators were honestly trying to listen to creationists and to figure out a way by which they could cooperate with them, e. g., in California, Arkansas, and several other states. Then at the Arkansas trial the whole picture was changed. In that trial, creationists went on record as refusing to recognize large bodies of carefully collected geologic and astronomic data--in addition to the (very proper) rejection of the many alleged evidences for macroevolution and abiogenesis. (Most of the data which the creationists were improperly neglecting or ignoring had to do with the age of the earth and universe.)

During the trial there was a rather prominent emphasis on the young-earth beliefs of the creationists, since the teaching of a very young earth was a part of the written law which was being challenged. (Compare Mawyer, 1982, p. 12.) This emphasis, and the creationists' determination to defend their position that the earth is only a few thousand years old, gave the anti-creationists a vivid and powerful argument against creationism, which they have been publicizing ever since. The creationists should have concentrated on the really strong evidences against macroevolution and abiogenesis instead of trying to use their weak arguments concerning age. Thaxton and Buell (1986, p. 2) state concerning the weaknesses of the creationists at the trial:

The issues in the trial had been so narrowly defined that creation science, as it was called, was acceptable to only a small percentage of the theistic community. Many theists had difficulty with the narrow version of creation science.... So the intramural struggle within theism concerning origins was seized by naturalists to achieve a major metaphysical coup. (Dr. Thaxton is the senior author of the book The Mystery of Life's Origin, Philosophical Library, 1984, and is a well-known defender of special creation.)

The evolutionary biologists and other evolutionary scientists took this opportunity to mount a massive attack against creationist teaching. They now had abundant testimony that creationists--at least the Arkansas ones, and the ones quoted in the trial--ignore and lightly dismiss immense amounts of carefully