

The Necessity of Death

July 30, 2017
John R. Wood

“The young lions roar for their prey,
seeking their food from God.”

Psalm 104:21 (ESV)

Overview

1. What is death?
2. History, theology & the univocity of being
3. The theological problem of physical death
4. Death - the dilemma of modern medicine
5. Immortality and a good death

Discovering the significance of Biological Death [Soma or *Psychikon*]



Carolus
Linnaeus
(707-1778)



Georges
Cuvier
(769-1834)

Discovering the significance of Biological Death [Soma or *Psychikon*]



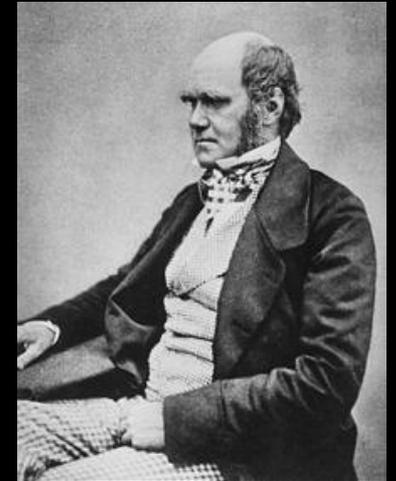
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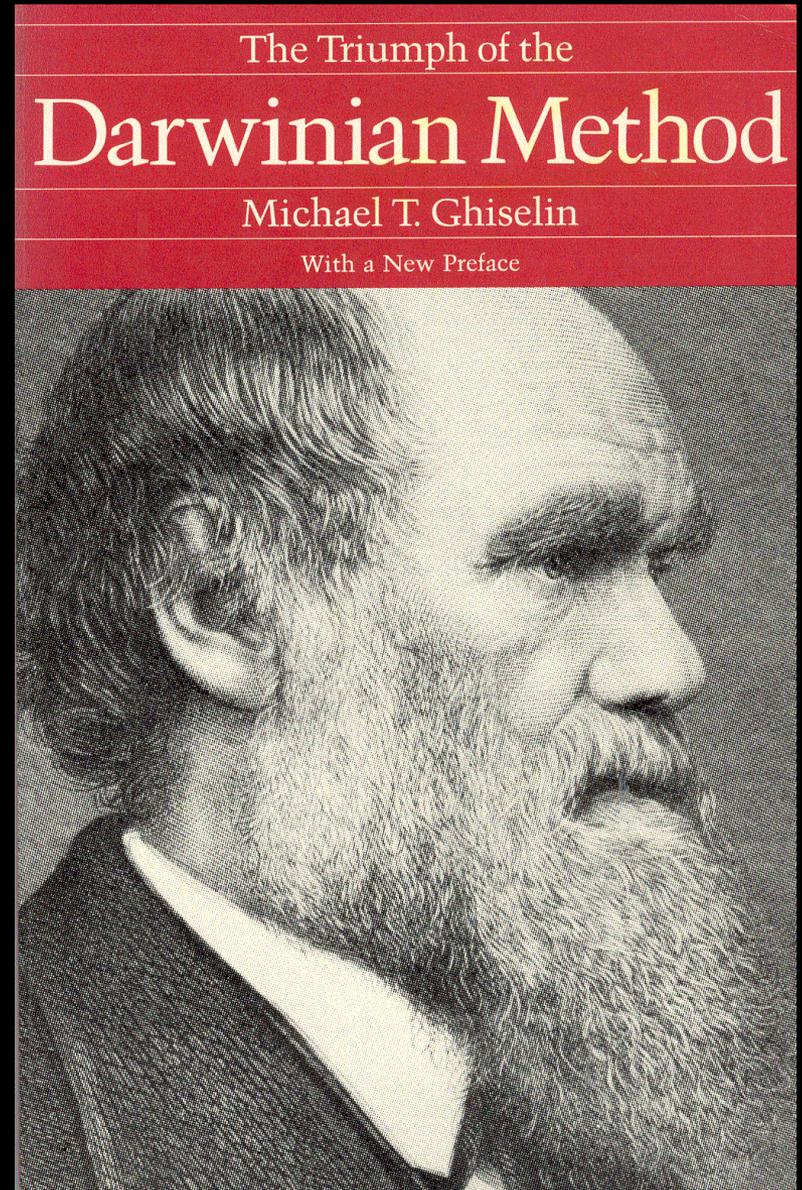
Thomas R.
Malthus
(1766-1834)



Charles
Darwin
(1809 - 1882)

The Darwinian Method has widely been thought to present challenges to a Biblical understanding of God's creative works

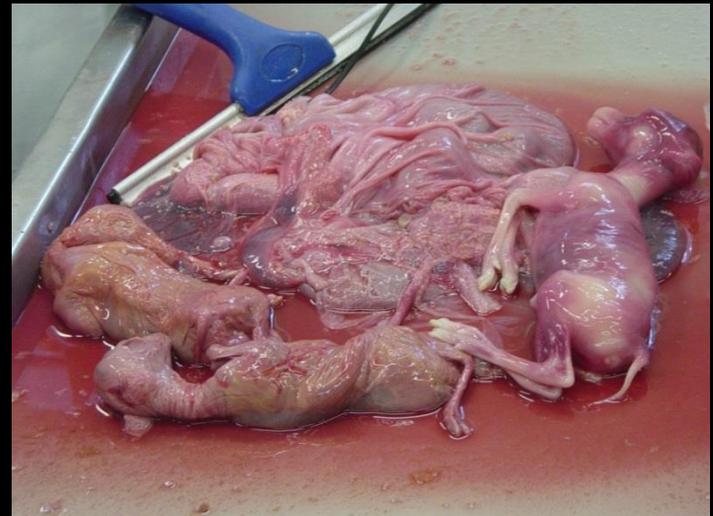
Natural Selection is one of the basic mechanisms of evolution, along with mutation, migration, and genetic drift.



Types of Death

1. Starvation
2. Malnutrition
3. Predation
4. Parasitic Disease
5. Accident
6. Failure to find a mate
7. Failure to be born

Colin Vaux (1993) *Ecology*
2



Vitality of Death

Critical Functions of Programmed Cell Death

- * Animal & Plant Development
- * Health, Aging and Senescence
- * Ecosystem Formation
- * Biosphere Processes

For more on the phenomenology of biotic death

1. June Issue of PSCF 2016

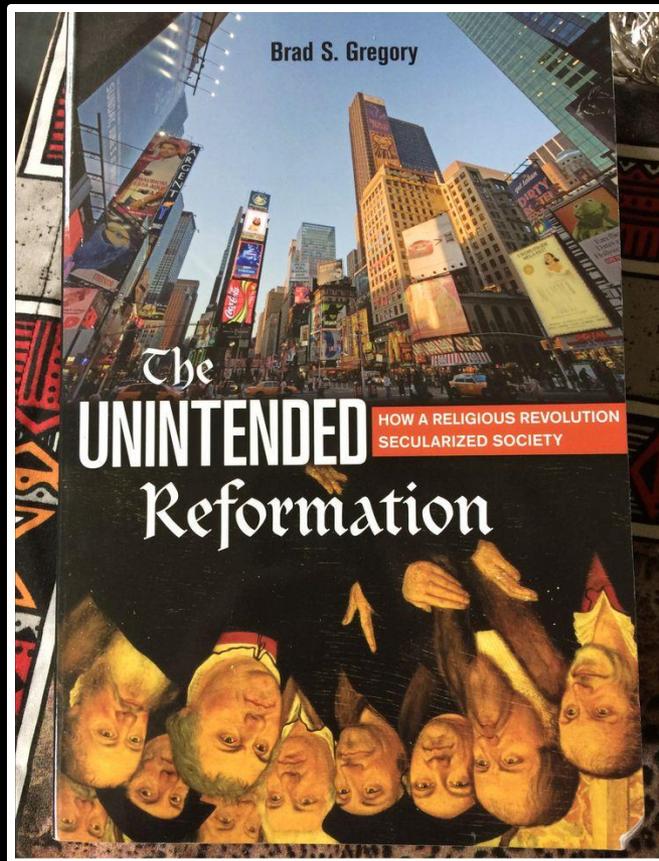
An Ecological Perspective on the Role of
Death in Creation

2. CSCA YouTube

www.csc.ca/

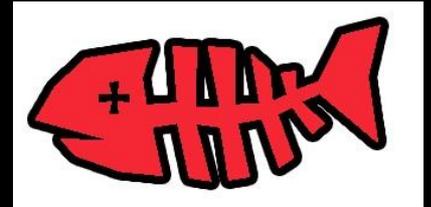


Are We Reaching a Dead End On Death ?



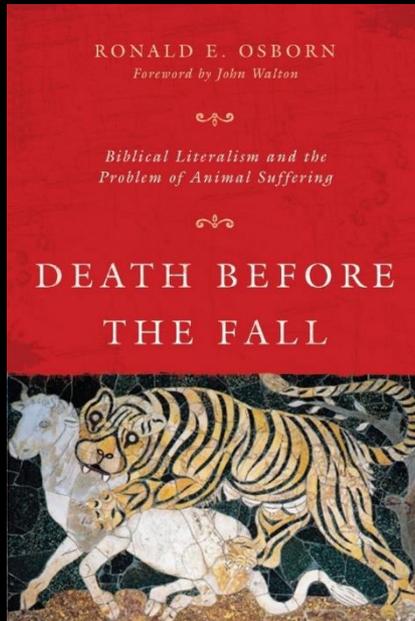
A Brief History of
Univocity of Being

From John Duns Scotus
to
Mark Noll and
Brad Gregory

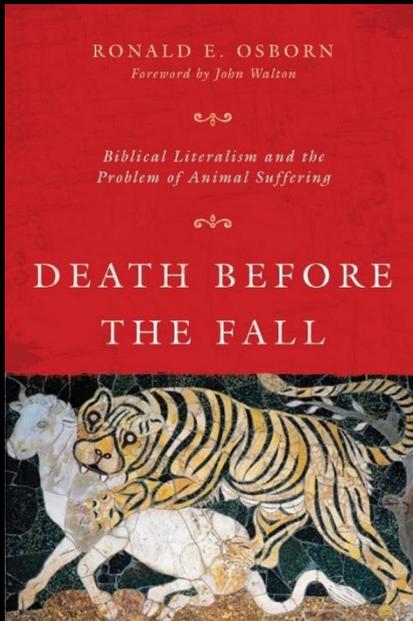


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Theorizing Death and Creation Care



Challenges to the “Traditional View” of death in the bible



Challenges to the “Traditional View” of death in the bible



Ecological “Blind Spots” in the Structure and Content of Recent Evangelical Systematic Theologies. (JETS 2000)

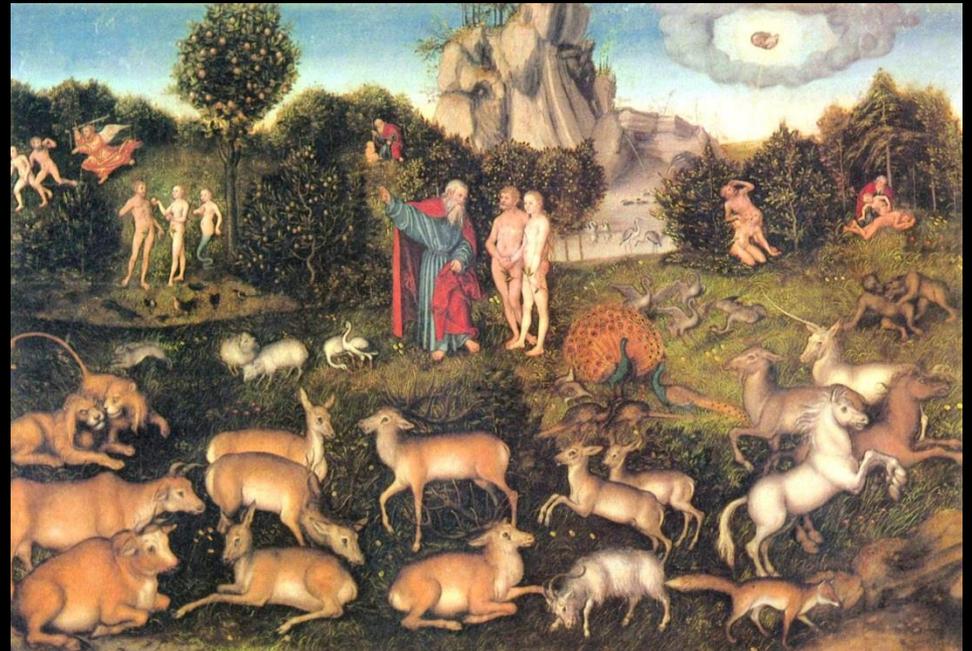
John Jefferson Davis

Physical Death Ecological Applications to Creation Care

1st – Biotic death present from the beginning

Genesis 1

Are fruitfulness and
death twins in
Creation?



1st – Biotic death present from the beginning

2nd – Land is a gift that includes death

What do
you see?

Death?



3rd – Flourishing depends upon endings

The pruning metaphor

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

John 12:24



Death and the Gospel

Physical Death

Ecological Applications to Creation Care

4th – Theodicies will not likely answer – suffering and death are not a problems to be avoided

“Selection hurts, but it is not in itself an intentional agent. Selection in itself is not immoral, but simply amoral. Gregersen (2001)

“The world as created is both good – and mortal... All things die. All things must die. That is how they are called into being.” Santmire (2000)

Theologians assert the necessity of death

Karl Barth – “Ending time”

Robert Farr Capon – “Let me tell you why”

Robert Jensen – “Death is a boundary to finitude”

Niels Gregersen – “Cannot be reduced to sin”

Paul Santmire – “Embrace the ecology of death”

Whole Body Transplant – “*HEAVEN*” Are We Craving Biotic Immortality?

“It wasn’t that I just woke up one day and said, ‘I want to do a head transplant’,” the neurosurgeon said, while laying out his procedure that could, he argued, represent the key to everlasting life.



Dr. Sergio Canavero
The Surgeon

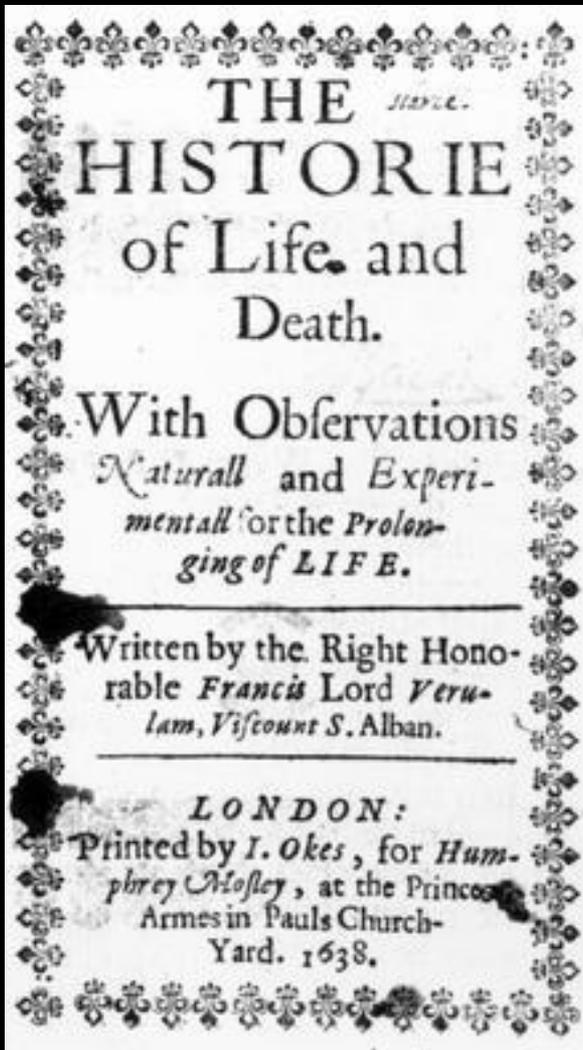


Valery Spiridonov
The Volunteer

Texas-PEG Nanoribbons Spinal cord repair



Dr. James Tour and William Sikkema



Francis Bacon
1638

Dilemma of Modern Medicine

For it is my hope and desire that it will contribute to the common good; that through it the higher physicians will somewhat raise their thoughts... that they will become the instruments and dispensers of God's power and mercy in prolonging and renewing the life of man...

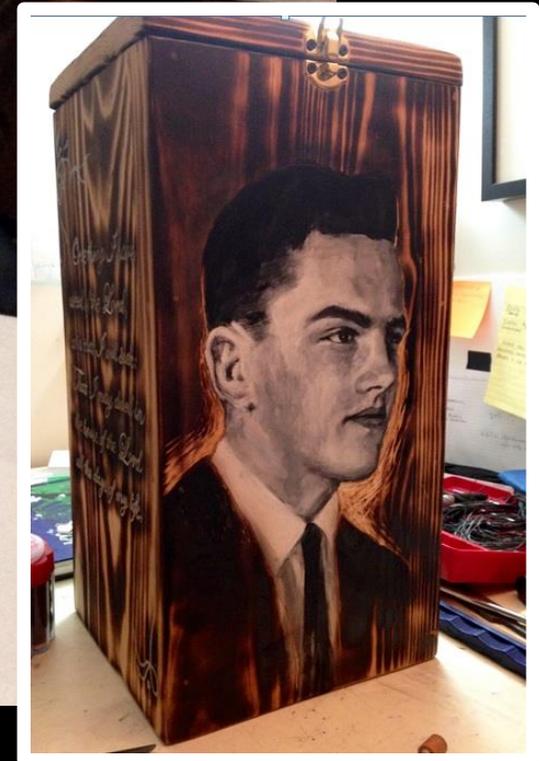
Three biomedical and one population challenge for the traditional views on death.

1. Whole body transplants and organ replacement technologies
2. Gene editing – CRISPR/Cas 9
3. Physician assisted dying
4. The aging baby boomer population

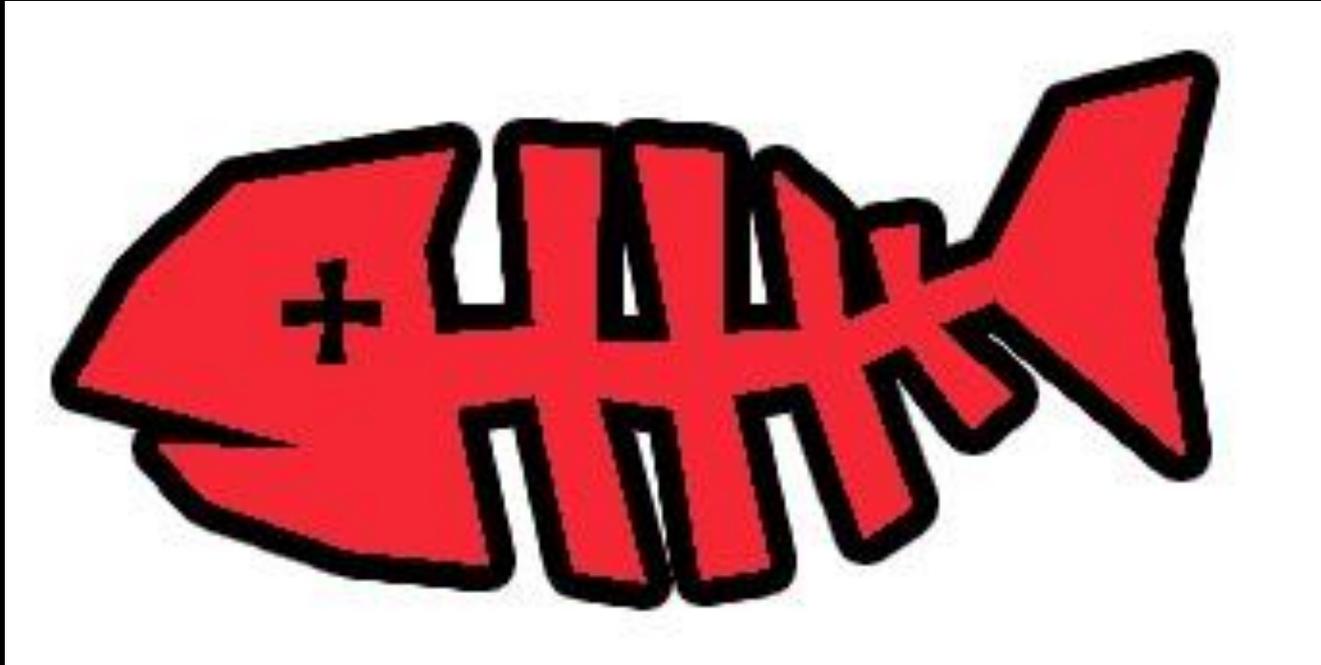
Finishing Well



Rev. John Bonham and
Grandson Conner Cantelton



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Questions