

Evidence for Design and the Difference It Makes
By William A. Dembski

Evolution is hard to square with Christian faith. People do it, but people do lots of crazy things, like eat crushed glass. When historian of biology Will Provine describes evolution as “the greatest engine for atheism ever invented,” he is on target. That’s not to say evolution requires atheism. But the converse is true: atheism requires evolution. To be an intellectually fulfilled atheist demands that one embrace an evolutionary creation story. That’s why intelligent design is such a potent antidote to the new atheism. By undermining the atheists’ creation story, on which atheism depends, intelligent design undermines atheism itself.

But what’s the evidence for intelligent design and why should we take it seriously? Such evidence of design abounds. Sean has touched on it here in this book. Perhaps the two best places to study such evidence in detail is Stephen Meyer’s *Signature in the Cell* and my own (co-authored with Jonathan Wells) *The Design of Life*. The case for intelligent design has grown considerably stronger in the last decade, and young people are in a much better position to resist the challenge of evolution than when I got into this business thirty years ago. But even with the state of knowledge back then, it quickly became clear to me that material forces such as natural selection had very limited creative power and could not adequately account for the complexity and diversity of life.

The sense that unintelligent evolution can’t work and that intelligent design is an indispensable requirement for life has served as a ballast in my Christian walk, keeping me from being swayed by materialist arguments that weaken and cheapen the faith. These days, evolution is increasingly used as an ideological weapon to undermine the sanctity of life, traditional marriage, and a host of other traditional norms by arguing that evolution excludes their permanent validity (after all, everything is evolving, including those norms). Intelligent design, by showing that we are designed to operate within certain constraints (constraints established for our benefit!), has enabled me calmly to embrace the abiding truths of Christianity without worrying whether the newest intellectual fad is going to sweep them away.

Of course, in the end the question is not whether intelligent design allows us to live a more serene Christian life but whether it is true. But precisely because our best scientific evidence confirms it’s truth, intelligent design supports Christianity in a way that evolution never has or could. Intelligent design, while not the Gospel, has in my life proven itself to be a good friend of the Gospel.