

CHAPTER 8

COMPETING VIEWS ON EVOLUTION

DARWIN AND FLOATING PLANT SEEDS

When someone uses the theory of evolution to argue for atheistic beliefs, they are promoting the worldview called *evolutionism*. Many examples of evolutionism appear in popular books and in media stories on evolution. The following is an example of evolutionism we heard on a science segment on a morning radio news program.

The announcer explained a scientific experiment that Charles Darwin did to show how plants could spread across the ocean to distant islands or continents. In the experiment, Charles Darwin took seeds from cabbages, put them in tubs of water, and measured how long they could remain floating. Some floated for many weeks. Then Darwin tested whether the seeds that had floated for many weeks could still germinate. He planted them, and some of them sprouted. Darwin repeated these experiments with many other plants. His experiment proved that it was possible for plant seeds to be carried on ocean currents for hundreds or even thousands of miles and then germinate in new places.

If that's all the announcer had said, the radio segment would have been a nice bit of science education. But the announcer also included an interview with the author of a recent book on Darwin's experiments. He said to the author, "You can find cabbage plants on islands near Antarctica. How would a cabbage get there?" The author replied, "Well, either God put it there, or it got there on its own."

This reply gave the listeners only two choices. They could believe that either God put each species of plant on each island, or the seeds got there by floating on ocean currents without God's help.

The author did not offer any other possibilities—perhaps God could have designed the oceans with currents that would allow seeds naturally to spread around the earth and designed seeds that could survive the journey and still germinate. The author by his statement, and the announcer by his silence, were strongly implying that Darwin's scientific experiment should lead us to the conclusion that God wasn't involved at all.

Other examples of evolutionism in the media often follow the same pattern. We are told that *either* God did something *or* it is scientifically explainable. When evolution provides a scientific explanation, evolutionism says that God is not necessary. As Christians, however, we reject this false choice. We can view evolution as a process that God uses to govern the world and provide for his creatures.