According to a 2005 Pew Research Center poll, 70 percent of evangelical Christians believe that living beings have always existed in their present form, compared with 32 percent of Protestants and 31 percent of Catholics. Politically, 60 percent of Republicans are creationists, whereas only 11 percent accept evolution, compared with 29 percent of Democrats who are creationists and 44 percent who accept evolution. A 2005 Harris Poll found that 63 percent of liberals but only 37 percent of conservatives believe that humans and apes have a common ancestry. What these figures confirm for us is that there are religious and political reasons for rejecting evolution. Can one be a conservative Christian and a Darwinian? Yes. Here's how.

1. **Evolution fits well with good theology.** Christians believe in an omniscient and omnipotent God. What difference does it make when God created the universe--10,000 years ago or 10,000,000,000 years ago? The glory of the creation commands reverence regardless of how many zeroes in the date. And what difference does it make how God created life--spoken word or natural forces? The grandeur of life's complexity elicits awe regardless of what creative processes were employed. Christians (indeed, all faiths) should embrace modern science for what it has done to reveal the magnificence of the divine in a depth and detail unmatched by ancient texts.

2. **Creationism is bad theology.** The watchmaker God of intelligent-design creationism is delimited to being a garage tinkerer piecing together life out of available parts. This God is just a genetic engineer slightly more advanced than we are. An omniscient and omnipotent God must be above such humanlike constraints. As Protestant theologian Langdon Gilkey wrote, "The Christian idea, far from merely representing a primitive anthropomorphic projection of human art upon the cosmos, systematically repudiates all direct analogy from human art." Calling God a watchmaker is belittling.

3. **Evolution explains original sin and the Christian model of human nature.** As a social primate, we evolved within-group amity and between-group enmity. By nature, then, we are cooperative and competitive, altruistic and selfish, greedy and generous, peaceful and bellicose; in short, good and
evil. Moral codes and a society based on the rule of law are necessary to accentuate the positive and attenuate the negative sides of our evolved nature.

4. **Evolution explains family values.** The following characteristics are the foundation of families and societies and are shared by humans and other social mammals: attachment and bonding, cooperation and reciprocity, sympathy and empathy, conflict resolution, community concern and reputation anxiety, and response to group social norms. As a social primate species, we evolved morality to enhance the survival of both family and community. Subsequently, religions designed moral codes based on our evolved moral natures.

5. **Evolution accounts for specific Christian moral precepts.** Much of Christian morality has to do with human relationships, most notably truth telling and marital fidelity, because the violation of these principles causes a severe breakdown in trust, which is the foundation of family and community. Evolution describes how we developed into pair-bonded primates and how adultery violates trust. Likewise, truth telling is vital for trust in our society, so lying is a sin.

6. **Evolution explains conservative free-market economics.** Charles Darwin's "natural selection" is precisely parallel to Adam Smith's "invisible hand." Darwin showed how complex design and ecological balance were unintended consequences of competition among individual organisms. Smith showed how national wealth and social harmony were unintended consequences of competition among individual people. Nature’s economy mirrors society’s economy. Both are designed from the bottom up, not the top down.

Because the theory of evolution provides a scientific foundation for the core values shared by most Christians and conservatives, it should be embraced. The senseless conflict between science and religion must end now, or else, as the Book of Proverbs (11:29) warned: "He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind."