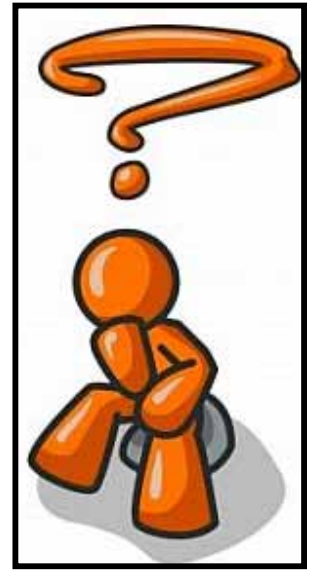


# What About ... Pope Francis

By REBECCA S. MAY

Pope Francis recently addressed the *Pontifical Academy of Sciences*, saying, “When we read about Creation in Genesis, we run the risk of imagining God was a magician—but that is not so. God is not a demiurge or a magician, with a magic wand able to do everything.”

“Evolution in nature is not inconsistent with the notion of creation, because evolution requires the creation of beings that evolve....” Therefore, according to Francis, it is a “grave sin against God” to destroy the environment (Travis Gettys, ‘God Is Not a Magician’: Pope Says Christians Should Believe In Evolution and Big Bang,” *rawstory.com*, October 28, 2014). It is not a secret that the Catholic church is pro-Darwinian-evolution. So, in one respect, there is nothing shocking with the pope’s comments here. But, if we look carefully at Pope Francis’ reasons as to why he is pro-evolution, if we observe his supporting statements, we learn not his view of evolution but his view of God and the Bible.



## We run the risk of imagining God was a magician.

According to the pope, it is risky to read the Bible. If you do so, on your own without the help of the church, you “run the risk” of misinterpreting it. You might come to the conclusion that God is sovereign over the heavens and the earth (John 1). You may get the impression that life did not evolve by Darwinian evolution but reproduced after its own kind (Genesis 1). And that God sustains His creation, *upholding all things by the word of His power* (Hebrews 1:3).

## God does not have a magic wand so that He is able to do everything.

According to the pope, the idea that God can do anything is imaginary. This is an interesting perspective, one which David did not share. David said, *Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps* (Psalm 135:6). Daniel would disagree with the pope as well, having said, *All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’* (Daniel 4:35). It seems that Luke would side with David and Daniel, having said, *nothing will be impossible with God* (Luke 1:37). To Isaiah, God said, *My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure* (46:10). Whereas the pope confuses what man can do with what God can

do, Jesus was not confused, having said to them, “*With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible* (Matthew 19:26).

## Evolution requires that beings evolve.

According to the pope, evolution dictates what beings can and cannot do. Is evolution in charge or is God sovereign over nature? The Bible says, *The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all* (Psalm 103:19). I realize that in quoting the Bible, I risk misunderstanding what it is trying to say about the sovereignty of God. But it sounds like the Bible is saying, “God’s sovereignty rules over all.”

## It is a grave sin to destroy the environment.

Because the pope believes in nature’s sovereignty, it must be a grave sin to destroy the environment. Even if the pope succeeds in preserving the earth, God has promised to destroy it. *By His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men* (2 Peter 3:7). Nature does not judge morality. Evolution does not judge morality. It is God, who is not only the sovereign Creator, He is also the righteous Judge. *He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead* (Acts 17:31).