

CREATION MOMENTS

Proclaiming Evidence for Truth

THIS WEEK'S CREATION MOMENT

Darwin's Childhood Influences



For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. – Romans 8:5

There is an abiding myth that Charles Darwin began life as a Bible-believing Christian and only left the faith because of the evidence he saw during his famous voyage on the Beagle. Like many myths, this one has very little truth in it.

Charles Darwin's paternal grandfather was Erasmus Darwin. He had published his own version of a theory of evolution in a book called *Zoonomia*. Erasmus Darwin's book was published in 1794 – 15 years before Charles's birth. Erasmus's son Robert inherited many of his father's views. Socially, he was profoundly pro-liberal, anti-Tory, and, according to the author of a biography of Charles Darwin, Robert Darwin was "at heart probably an atheist." The views of these two prior generations cannot have been unknown to the young Charles.

Many would object that the boy Charles was probably influenced more by his mother, Suzannah, who was a pious church-goer. However, the church she attended was the Unitarian Church in Shrewsbury – a denomination which denies essential tenets of the Christian faith, such as the inerrancy of Scripture and the deity of Jesus Christ. The pastor of the Unitarian Church, William Case, operated a school in his house which Charles attended in his formative years. Moreover, Suzannah's father was Josiah Wedgwood of pottery fame, who, along with Erasmus, was a member of the Lunar Society, dedicated to bringing the French Revolution to England.

Charles was not responsible for these prior generations, but it defies logic to suppose that he was not influenced by them. Our conclusion has to be that Charles Darwin was never a genuine Christian believer.

Ref: McNaughton, I. and Taylor, P. (2009), *Darwin and Darwinism: 150 Years Later* (Day One), pp. 18ff. Image: Charles Darwin, aged seven, Public Domain.

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