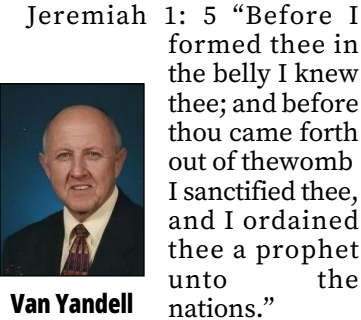


OPINION

Who are you and why are you?

Van Yandell



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Jeremiah 1: 5 “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou came forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”

From the time we enter school, we have been taught individuality. No two of us are alike. We do not look alike; we do not think alike, and our personalities, interests, and abilities are as varied as the stars in the universe. From kindergarten through our senior year in high school, the concept of the individual has been emphasized. Our emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical variances define us as individuals.

At our conception, the chance of us becoming who we are is one chance in hundreds of millions. Had our father's sperm that made us, not “won the race,” we would be a completely different person. The human female ovary usually releases only one egg per cycle (ovulation). The human male, on the other extreme, produces

literally millions of sperm every day of his life. One source states that production rate in the average male is 1500 sperm per second. I asked AI, “If my mother's egg had been fertilized by a different one of my father's sperm, would I be a different person?” The answer received is profoundly convincing and specific.

“Yes, absolutely! If a different sperm from your father had fertilized your mother's egg, you would be a genetically unique individual, essentially a different person, much like a fraternal twin or sibling, but still sharing the same mother and father; every sperm carries a slightly different mix of your father's DNA, so a different combination with the egg results in a new, unique genetic blueprint.”

To consider my existence is one chance in millions is a little scary, but it is also a direct implication. Should I be happy or sad at my existence? This opinion changes daily for many of us, but we must consider the why of our existence.

Psalms 139:13-14 “For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well.”

Many of us have preached and taught that God's creation is specific, planned, and deliberate. Did God actually direct the union of our parents' sperm and egg? Once again, why do we exist as we are?

In the leading scripture, Jeremiah 1: 5, it is conclusively stated that God created Jeremiah for a reason and a specific purpose. Can we apply that reasoning to ourselves? The answers to that question, of course, will be debated for generations to come.

Some argue this verse applies only to Jeremiah. “I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” This could imply a specific reference only to Jeremiah? Had this been the case, why are so many other millions of people, obviously used by God to accomplish some seemingly predetermined task?

Did God create Mohammed, Buddha, and Abraham accidentally, or did He have a plan? If God had a plan for you and me, no doubt He had a plan for them.

Did God create the notable evangelists, missionaries, doctors, scientists, welders, and truck drivers with specificity? In this writer's opinion: Absolutely!

To think of ourselves as biological accidents is depressing and lessens our reasons for

living.

Believing that a spiritual supernatural God exists and planned our being is questionable to many.

For those who prefer to believe that we are all mutations and that our existence is purely accidental, consider the uniqueness of your mind and body.

Could the perfection of our cardiovascular systems, our digestive systems, and our brain functions have evolved by accident? Could the regeneration of our blood/ bone marrow, skin, and the growth of our fingernails be coincidental? Those questions are yours to answer.

Whereas many of us have more questions than answers, what makes sense? Does God know in advance what we will do, what we will become, and specifically, how we will promote His Kingdom? Some of us believe “Of course He does!”

As I have grown older, I have come to understand that I know nothing. All one can do is analyze and evaluate available information, and the things we see and witness that inform our thinking are the existing information.

It appears our best (and possibly only) source of reliable information is the Holy Bible. I

have come to believe everything else is speculation, opinion, fiction, or fantasy. God's word proves itself from within itself.

Can we determine the will of God beyond our own thoughts? Many believe His Holy Spirit teaches us and, in some cases, even manipulates us.

Thus, the verse Proverbs 16:3 “Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established,” takes on a completely distinctive meaning and a separate meaning for each of us.

Submission to God's will and plan for us takes on a new meaning as we realize our differences.

As Jesus told Ananias (Acts 9: 15) that Paul “is my chosen vessel,” each of us has a matchless and irreplaceable purpose.

You are not an accident! The teaching of Savior Jesus as being the one who provides for us eternal salvation by our faith-based belief in Him is a teaching to be told to the world. Evidence points to this as a substantiated fact; we are not accidental beings, and we have a purpose.

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A dangerous war on science

By JAMES BRUGGERS

Kentucky Lantern

Americans have been accustomed to back-and-forth policy whiplash on the environment as Republicans and Democrats move in and out of the White House.

In Kentucky, we've witnessed that tug-of-war up close through the lens of the coal mining industry and electric utilities that burn coal.

For example, after President Bill Clinton tightened pollution controls on coal-fired power plants through a regulation known as “new source review,” which required new or modified plants that increase emissions to install tighter controls, President George W. Bush's Environmental Protection Agency sought to reverse course and was at least partially successful.

After Barack Obama followed Bush, his EPA put in place a raft of pollution reduction rules and programs, many of them targeting coal mining and coal burning — significant contributors to water pollution and global warming. Kentucky Sen. Mitch McConnell dubbed those years as “Obama's war on coal,” and President Donald Trump took steps to reverse many of those environmental initiatives after he was elected in 2016.

Now we have a second Trump administration following President Joe Biden, who did the most of any president to address climate change through legislation (Inflation Reduction Act, for one) and executive actions to boost cleaner power from wind and solar and reduce heat-trapping emissions from cars and other methods of transportation.

This time, when it comes to the federal government's response to climate change and the environment, what is happening goes far beyond a normal tit-for-tat change in public policy. The Trump administration is taking a wrecking ball

to the very infrastructure of climate science — going after the scientists themselves and the institutions that support their work.

Consistent with Project 2025, Trump has sought to neuter NOAA and NASA climate scientists by denying funding and seeking to eliminate climate research programs. And last week, EPA eliminated references to how people were contributing to rising temperatures from some of its climate change webpages.

News of Trump's latest assault broke on Dec. 17, with USA Today reporting that the administration is moving to break up the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado, a leading global climate and meteorology research center. Trump officials complained to the newspaper that NCAR was a “hub for climate alarmism.”

The only thing the administration got right in that statement is that NCAR is a hub.

As Katharine Hayhoe, a climate scientist at Texas Tech University, wrote on Linked In,

NCAR is “quite literally (atmospheric scientists') global motherhood.”

Nearly everyone, she wrote, “who conducts research in climate, atmospheric science, and weather — not only in the U.S. but around the world — has passed through its doors and benefited from its incredible resources.

“NCAR supports the scientists who fly into hurricanes, the meteorologists who develop new radar technology, the physicists who envision and code new weather models, and yes — the largest community climate model in the world. That too.”

Hayhoe concluded: “Dismantling NCAR is like taking a sledgehammer to the keystone holding up our scientific understanding of the planet.”

Fine, let's have the debate about what, if anything, should be done to address climate change, which credible scientists and scientific institutions agree is caused by burning fossil fuels and other human activities. What are the pros and cons of

Kentucky lawmakers, or the Trump administration, adopting policies to keep coal in business and at what cost to electric utility consumers and the environment?

But stifling science promotes a philosophy that ignorance truly is bliss. It goes along with the administration's equally anti-democratic attacks on journalists and attempts at intimidating or trying to silence media outlets.

Shutting down this well-respected global climate and weather science lab is stupid and tragic. This is more than shooting ourselves in the foot. It's shooting the messenger, which is probably the point.

All of this brings to mind the satirical black comedy “Don't Look Up,” starring Louisville native Jennifer Lawrence and Leonardo DiCaprio as scientists who tried in vain to warn the world of a catastrophic comet collision. “We really did have everything, didn't we? I mean, when you think about it,” DiCaprio's character said near the end of the movie.

Concerns about school theater program

Letter to the Editor

Submissions in the Letter to the Editor section do not necessarily depict the views of Winchester Sun staff.

I attended a school program on Dec 6th at RDC. There are many talented students in Clark County, and my comments take nothing away from that talent.

There were songs in the lineup that seemed inappropriate, but I will focus on one.

That song was "omigod" from the movie Legally Blonde. Even with today's lax standards, Hollywood still considers this phrase profanity. If a movie has one instance of this phrase in it, the rating of PG-13 is given. This performance had our students (as young as 12) singing this phrase 35 times. I looked up the lyrics and counted.

Not only was this profane but disrespectful to the students

and audience who happened to be Christians.

This is not my first encounter with inappropriate content in a school program.

Last year, I attended the High School performance of Chicago Jr. It is about two imprisoned women vying for the title of "Merry Murderess". With school violence being a concern, why would a school choose a play that glorifies murder? The play contained

themes of adultery, promiscuity, smoking, etc. Why have students even pretend to smoke when access to vapes and other easy-access nicotine products is also a concern?

I've heard this year's High School play is yet another winner called "Urinetown".

From my research, it is a politically charged play that hates on capitalism.

This is not a good look for Clark County. I have spoken

about these concerns at the school board meeting on December 9th. So I encourage anyone who has a concern with this content to please reach out to the school superintendent and school board members.

Our extremely talented students deserve to showcase their talent in a positive, wholesome way, where the content does not detract from how fabulous they are.

Becky Shepherd, Winchester

Letters to the Editor

Letters must be 300 words or less and are subject to editing for brevity. Please include name, address and phone number on emails and letters. We reserve the right to publish one letter per person per 30 day period. Only names and cities of residence will be published. The Winchester Sun reserves the right to reject any letter. Send to Matt Cizek, 10 Court Street, Winchester, KY 40391 or matt.cizek@winchestersun.com