Some years ago I came across a sad instance of the effect of thus presenting the ideas of a certain period as if they were what the Bible teaches. I was attending a meeting of people with Christian backgrounds who had been trained in science. The president of the group gave a paper on the question of evolution. He described his early upbringing, saying that his associates had been strict fundamentalists, and adding, "to them evolution was a dirty word." "However," he said, "I have had to change my views." Then he went on to present the evidence that had led him to do so. He said that a certain type of bird is found near one end of a rather large island in the Pacific. A short distance away there is another variant of the same species. Though differing slightly the two types can interbreed. Going a little farther, one finds a third variant, differing somewhat from the second, and it and the second can also interbreed. A similar situation exists regarding the remaining variants, reaching to the other end of the island, about six or seven in all. Thus there is a gradual progression across the island. "Yet," he said, "the variants at opposite ends of the island cannot interbreed." He continued, "If a great catastrophe had destroyed the middle portion of the island, we would say that there were here two different species, since they cannot interbreed. As it is, the fact that each group can interbreed with the group next to it leads us to call them all one species." This seemed to convince him that evolution must be true.

CONFUSED THINKING

Surely there was a great confusion of thinking here. The Bible nowhere says that no two types of creatures that cannot now interbreed were ever interrelated. The Bible nowhere says that what Genesis calls a "kind" is the equivalent of what Linnaeus called a species. To find that a certain development might have occurred among a particular type of birds is altogether different from assuming that all creatures have developed from a single ancestor by a natural process.