



Number 200

“EXPLORING MY STRANGE BIBLE!”

February 2026

This article is from a podcast by Tim Mackie titled “Exploring My Strange Bible”. It can be found at: <https://bibleproject.com/podcasts/surprising-actual-story-genesis-1-2/> He has a Ph.D. in Hebrew from the University of Wisconsin. His words are in quotation marks and are italicized.

In this podcast he explains:

1. The Old Testament account of creation is a compilation of the various creation stories which existed before the Old Testament.
2. The Bible is an ancient text which is hard to understand.
3. He further undermines the credibility of the Bible by giving illustrations of where he suggests the Bible is wrong.
4. There are conflicting Biblical creation stories?

THE BIBLE CREATION STORY IS A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM PRE-EXISTING CULTURES

“Instead of creating their accounts ex nihilo, its Latin for out of nothing, a good pun in the book on creation, anyway, the composers of

scripture developed their traditions in dialogue with some of the great religious traditions of the surrounding cultures particularly those that originate from Mesopotamia and Egypt, as well as those of the more immediate Canaanite neighbors.”

The first graphic illustrates what he is saying. Creation stories from preceding cultures were compiled into Genesis. Each of the cultures more or less made up their creation story independently and the Jewish people learned from them.

The teaching is that as there were other creations stories written before Genesis was written, the Old Testament must have been copied from them. It has a certain logic, but it is not the only explanation.



A MORE REASONABLE APPROACH

The second graphic shows my understanding of the situation with creation happening at the top and people spreading out. As they disseminated, their memory of the original creation story would have evolved and varied.

After the flood, there was again only one starting family and only one creation story, the original one. Again, people begin to spread out, and the creation story evolved and varied again.

After Abraham, a major split was seen. From Abraham’s son Isaac came the Jews

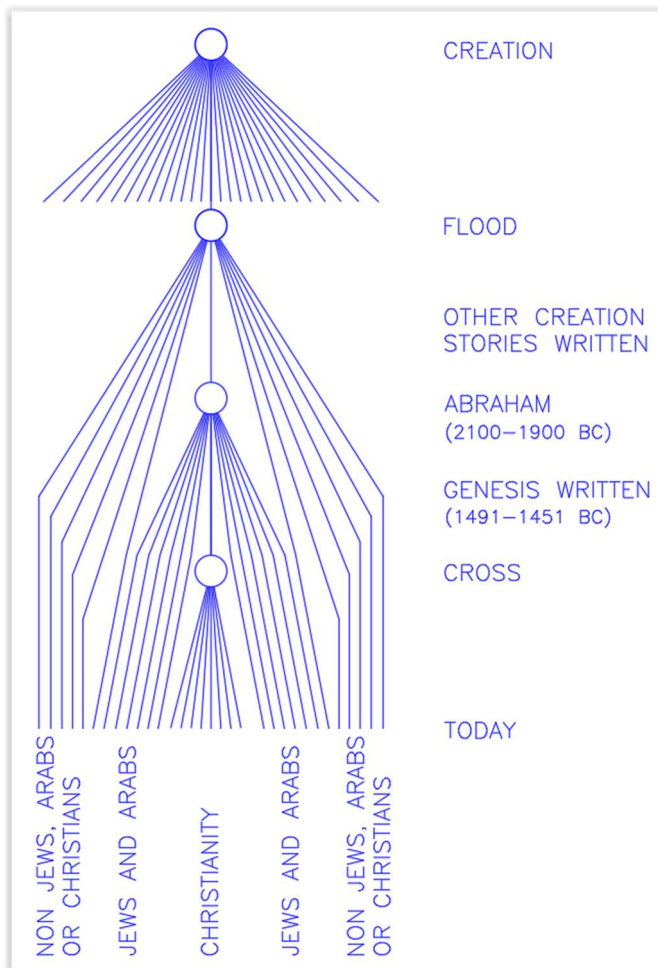
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and from Abraham's son Ishmael came the Arabs. Again, these people begin to spread out, and the creation stories evolved and varied again.

When Jesus came and died on the cross, Christianity began and Christians begin to spread out, and the creation story evolved and varied again. As the creation stories at this time were constrained by what the Bible actually says, there would be less additional variation in that group.



The point to this is not that various creation stories came together to make the Biblical creation story, but rather that the Biblical creation story evolved to become varied creation stories, even before Genesis was written. Tim Mackie has it backwards. We

are all descendants of Abraham and recipients of the Biblical story of creation. It does not matter that some of the evolved creation stories were written down before the Biblical creation story. That is just the way things happen sometimes.

THE BIBLE IS AN ANCIENT TEXT

"Instead of creating their accounts ex nihilo, its Latin for out of nothing, a good pun in the book on creation, anyway, the composers of scripture developed their traditions in dialogue with some of the great religious traditions of the surrounding cultures particularly those that originate from Mesopotamia and Egypt, as well as those of the more immediate Canaanite neighbors."

"Those early chapters of Genesis are a Hebrew Israelite author talking and addressing to their Babylonian, Egyptian, Canaanite neighbors."

"They speak in terms of an ancient Near Eastern perception of the world and should be interpreted within that setting."

"Reading the Bible is a cross-cultural experience which means that you need to put aside our ways of thinking about the world and step into another culture's ways of seeing things."

"It is full of idioms like 'It is raining cats and dogs' so we need to put aside our way of thinking and learn enough to think like the ancient people thought."

That should make it intimidating to read the Bible.

This subject is one of my pet peeves. I have had numerous Bible class teachers who knew some Greek or Hebrew and would imply that we could not understand the Bible unless we knew the Greek or Hebrew that they did. They were prepared to give us the word. In my understanding that made them



the clergy and us the laity or ordinary people.

Therefore, if they understood Greek and not Hebrew, they should then only teach the New Testament classes and not the Old Testament classes. If they understood Hebrew and not Greek, they should then only teach the Old Testament classes and not the New Testament classes. A small congregation with no scholars would be in trouble as to what to believe.

What we need to do is get a bunch of scholars together and translate the Bible from ancient Hebrew and Greek language so we can just read it today in contemporary English. They can understand the idioms of the ancient world and translate them into today's English idioms.

Wait! That is a translation and has been done hundreds of times. All you need to do is find a reliable translation and even us laity or ordinary people can read it. We don't have to be ancient Hebrew or Greek scholars. We just need to be able to read good contemporary English translation.

I personally use the New American Standard Version as a good compromise between readability and faithfully translating the Bible. On difficult questions I have several other translations to study as well as Nestle's Interlinear Greek-English New Testament and The NIV Hebrew-English Old Testament for more in-depth questions.

I am fully confident that I can pick up a contemporary translation of the Bible and get God's message from it.

That is not to say that your understanding of the Bible will not be enriched learning more about their culture and languages.

SCIENTIFIC STATEMENTS

He further undermines the credibility of the Bible by giving illustrations of where he thinks the Bible is wrong.

PILLARS OF THE EARTH

*1 Samuel 2:8 "He raises the poor from the dust, He lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with nobles, and inherit a seat of honor; **For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, And He set the world on them.**"*

He says "the pillars of the earth, the Lord set it on pillars"

Job 26:11 "The pillars of heaven tremble and are amazed at His rebuke."

Psalms 75:3 "The earth and all who dwell in it melt; It is I who have firmly set its pillars."

Job 9:6 Who shakes the earth out of its place, And its pillars tremble;"

The term "pillars of the earth" brings to mind that the Earth is flat and is supported by columns on something else which is likely flat also. What is the Earth actually supported on? It is suspended in a balance between the gravity pull of the Sun and centrifugal force. Imagine trying to explain that in 1491 BC when neither the concept of gravity or centrifugal force were even known. I would suggest that gravity and centrifugal force are the "pillars of the earth" and the Bible is correct. They used the languages and concepts available to them to tell the stories.

HE REFERS TO THE EDGES OF THE EARTH

I cannot find the term "edges of the earth" in the Bible. I study from the New American Standard Version on Logos Bible Software and Google AI searches. With hundreds of Bible versions available, I cannot assure you that it is not in one of them. It would not be



unreasonable to consider continental shorelines to be edges of the Earth.

What the Bible does say is:

Isaiah 11:12 “And He will lift up a standard for the nations and assemble the banished ones of Israel, and will gather the dispersed of Judah from the **four corners of the earth.**” A reasonable metaphor for the most distant places.

Acts 1:8 “but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the **remotest part of the earth.**” Again, a reasonable metaphor for the most distant places.

MOUNTAINS HOLD UP THE SKY

“Well it says on the book of Psalms, it’s the mountains that hold up the sky.”

As near as I can find, Psalms nor any other part of the Bible actually says that.

For our discussion, we are going to presume it says something like that and see if it is true.

Google AI says an average cumulus cloud weighs about **1.1 million pounds (500,000 kg or 500 tons)**, equivalent to about 100 elephants. So why does it stay up in the air? Turns out that you can imagine our air being like a bathtub with the cloud floating in it because the cloud is lighter than air. The atmospheric air would be the equivalent of the water. The weight of all the air and the clouds are literally supported by the land or sea mass below them, as bathtub water is supported by the bottom of the bathtub. When clouds are over mountains, the mountains are literally supporting them. Probably not what the author of Psalms was thinking, but still true. Similarly, most prophecies and advanced scientific

statements were likely not understood by the authors.

CONFLICTING BIBLICAL CREATION STORIES?

“Genesis chapter 2 and the scholars have been long aware of this, Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 have two distinct narratives when it comes to human origins, and this is the point of contention.” “So in Genesis 1, you have a sequence of events where you have land, plants, animals. Humans are the pinnacle of creation in Genesis chapter 1. In Genesis Chapter 2, humans come first.” “You just got a huge problem right off the bat.” Tim misses the most interesting point.

The creative period in Genesis 1 is divided into 6 days. People frequently try to tie these days into the 24-hour rotational period of the Earth. The Earth did not even exist at the start of day 1 to start the clock.

The entire creative period in Genesis 2 is referred to as “the day”. The conflict would be that if the days of Genesis 1 were 24 hours, how long would the day of Genesis 2 be”

The solution to the apparent conflict is that the days of Genesis 1 are unique periods and in sequence, so the order of creation is important. The day of Genesis 2 is one large period covering all the days of Genesis 1, and amenable to other ordering sequences, such as importance. Man being most important was listed first.

IN SUMMARY:

The Old Testament account of creation is correct as is demonstrated by scientific proofs such as are discussed in [https://occg.institute / topical lessons / the bible and histories / biblical scientific statements](https://occg.institute/topical-lessons/the-bible-and-histories/biblical-scientific-statements).



The Bible was written in ancient times, but contemporary translations make it readable for all of us.

The Bible proves it's credibility by giving numerous scientific proofs which could not have been known at the time and by the lack of inclusion of contemporary myths, such as are discussed in [https://ocg.institute / topical lessons / the bible and histories / biblical scientific statements](https://ocg.institute/topical-lessons/the-bible-and-histories/biblical-scientific-statements).

The apparent differing sequences of creation in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 are not a conflict but rather a different way to describe the event.

Benton F. Baugh

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SOME INTERESTING LENGTHS OF DAYS:

Mars: 24.7 hours (very similar to Earth).

Mercury: 58.6 Earth days (very slow rotation).

Venus: 243 Earth days (rotates backward, longer day than year).

Jupiter: ~9.9 hours (fastest day in our solar system).

Earth's Moon: 29.5 Earth days.

Earth 24 hours (23 hrs. 56 mins)

Even the Earth's day is not 24 hours now. As the Earth's rotation is slowing down (making days longer), one would have to wonder if it was ever 24 hours long but rather will be at some time in the future.



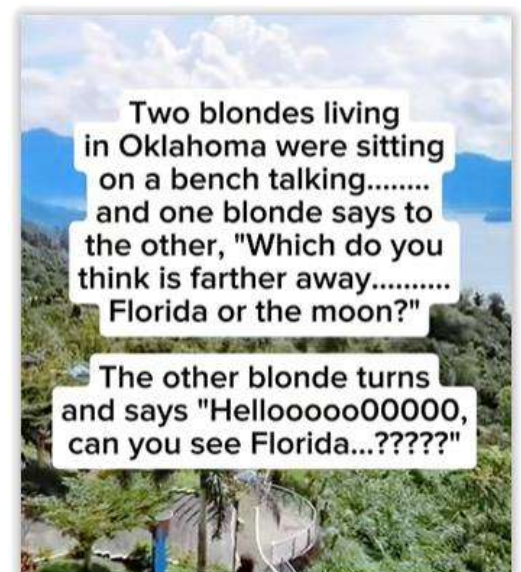
Converse to Convert

Reach out in Love
Respond to anguish.
Sow seeds of truth.
Use words sparingly,
Say what is given to say
by the Holy Spirit
to heal the soul.

Sing from the heart.
Make a new start.
Draw close to Christ,
Seek the Lord
while He may be found.
Become safe and sound.

"Grace mercy and peace
will be with you
from God the Father
and from the Lord Jesus Christ"
(2 John 3)

Larry S. Grubbs, Harrison, Ohio





GOD CREATED!

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. (Gen.1:1) So God **created** the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. (Gen. 1:21) So God **created** mankind in his own image, in the image of God he **created** them; male and female he **created** them. (Gen. 1:27) For you **created** my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. (Psa. 139:13) This only have I found: God **created** mankind upright, (Eccl. 7:29)

Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who **created** all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. (Isa. 40:26)

It is I who made the earth and **created** mankind on it. My own hands stretched out the heavens; I marshaled their starry hosts. (Isa. 45:12) He who forms the mountains, who **creates** the wind, and who reveals his thoughts to mankind, who turns dawn to darkness, and treads on the heights of the earth—the Lord God Almighty is his name. (Amos 4:13) For in him all things were **created**: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or

authorities; all things have been **created** through him and for him. (Col. 1:16)

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Eph. 2:10) You were blameless in your ways from the day you were **created** till wickedness was found in you. (Eze. 28:15) They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served **created** things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. (Rom. 1:25) neither was man **created** for woman, but woman for man. (I Cor. 11:9)

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you **created** all things, and by your will they were **created** and have their being."

(Rev. 4:11) And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who **created** the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, "There will be no more delay! (Rev. 10:6) "See, I will **create** new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind. (Isa. 65:17 NIV)

Elizabeth Brown, Texarkana



Impossible for Evolution: #156 Autothysis

Imagine a group of ants or termites deciding to die to protect their fellow ants or termites. It goes against the survival of the fittest concept, it is survival of the group concept. Many animals will die to protect their offspring.

We humans are pretty good at putting our lives at risk for others, but to intentionally die for others is much rarer. Jesus did it.

Back to the ants and termites. How would an ant or termite intentionally die to protect his colony? He or she could do battle with invaders, but that is putting their lives at risk, not suicide. They can't pick up a pistol and shoot themselves, and if they did it wouldn't be defending the colony. Elephant herds commonly "circle their wagons" with the young in the center to protect them from predators such as lions.

The plan of the ants or termites would need to be:

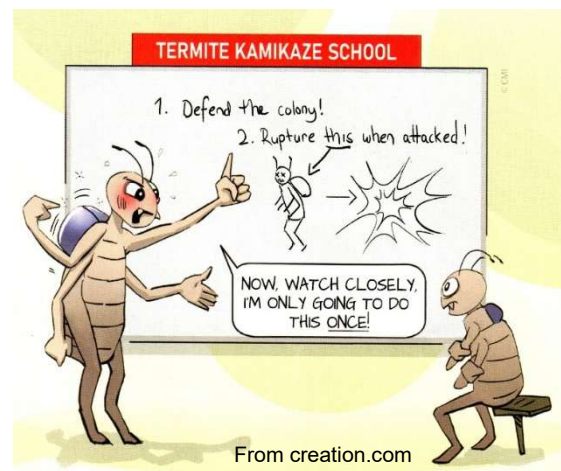
1. Preparing holding pouches close to their salivary glands.
2. Creating a gland for secreting a laccase enzyme as in stable solid form and passing it to the holding pouches,
3. When endangered, rupture the pouches and mix the laccase enzyme with saliva to form benzoquinones in a sticky highly toxic brew.
4. Make sure you coat your enemy with the toxic brew.

The name of this process of blowing yourself up to defend your colony is autothysis.

Autothysis (from Greek for "self-sacrifice") is an extreme defense mechanism in some

social insects, like ants and termites, where an individual animal deliberately ruptures its own body, often exploding to release sticky, toxic chemicals that trap or kill predators to protect the colony. It's a form of altruistic suicide, exemplified by Malaysian carpenter ants and certain termite soldiers that sacrifice themselves in a chemical burst to block invaders.

This exchanges the evolutionists' theory of survival of the fittest to survival of the colony. It exchanges survival of the selfish for survival by the altruistic.



The first question is how do you evolve something which if you try it out you blow yourself up.

A second question is if you have a pouch of chemicals on your back, how do you know to explode it and how to explode it?

A third question is when you explode it, how do you know to mix it with saliva? There is no school for this.

Clearly, autothysis is not the product of blind survival of the fittest evolution. It is in conflict with survival of the fittest evolution. It is something an intelligent designer would do seeing the overall needs of a community.

That intelligent designer is God.

Benton F. Baugh



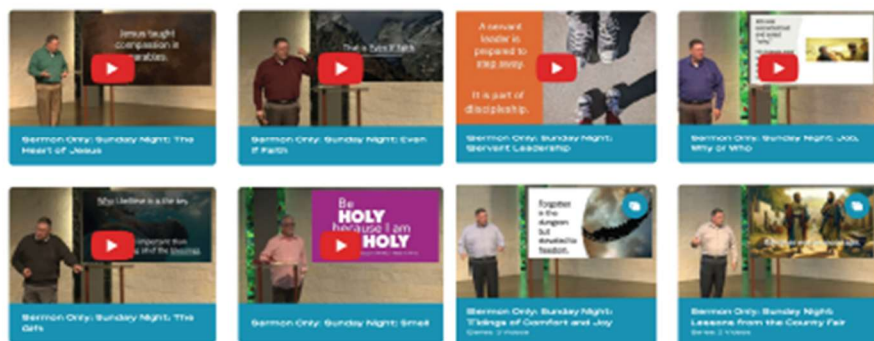
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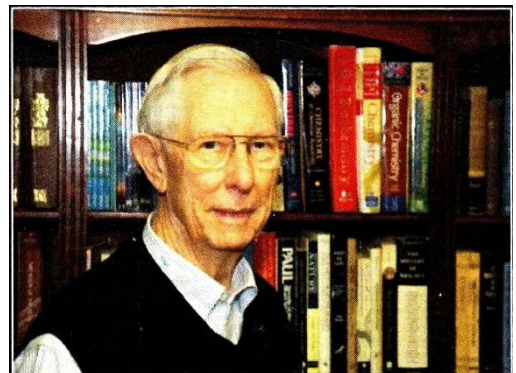
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An excellent book to read by Don England. Don is an Emeritus Professor of Chemistry at Harding University where he has taught for 45 years.



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YOU
REALLY
THERE?**

2ND EDITION



My recommendation is that I bought a copy for each of my children and grandchildren. Don eloquently answers a lot of the questions about God which they will have from time to time. Yours children and grandchildren will also have questions. **As a further recommendation, I now have also bought Christmas books for my siblings, nieces, and nephews. It is well received by all. My sister is now using it to teach a ladies class.** Available on Amazon

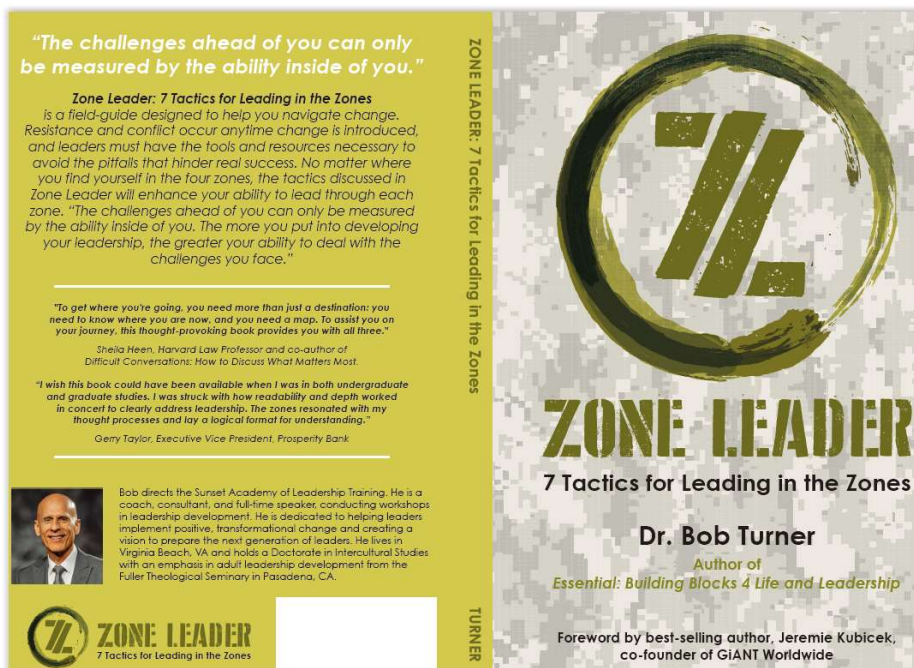
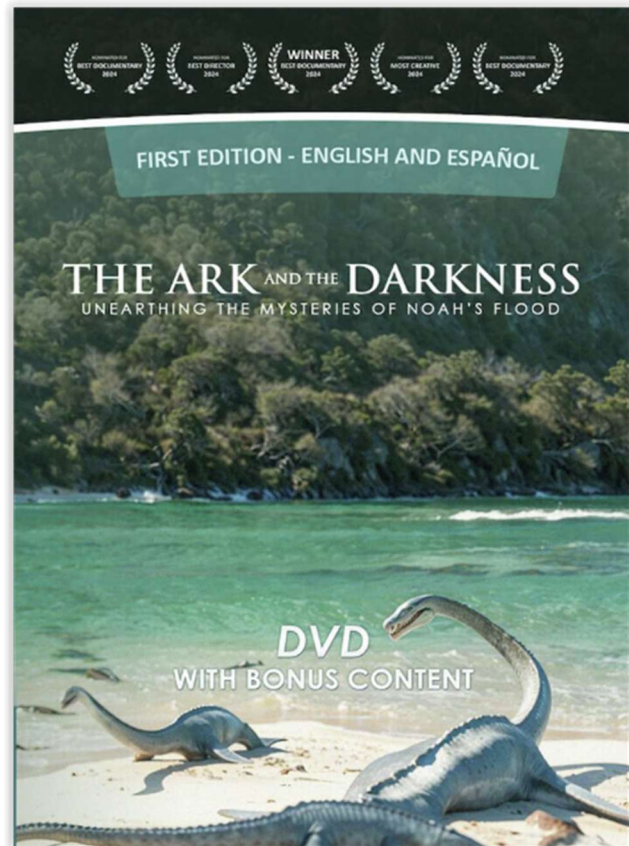
Benton Baugh



THE ARK AND THE DARKNESS

A friend loaned this DVD to me. After watching it twice, I bought my own copy to loan to my kids and grandkids.

Several speakers give fresh insights into the nature of the Ark and the flood which you will find intriguing. In addition to an excellent presentation, it provides many facts and figures which will be interesting to you. This should be shown in every high school class, and adult classes as well.



An excellent book to read.
Available on Amazon.



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**BABY BOOMERS
(1946-1964)**

-12% of today's workforce;
value stability, loyalty, and
legacy



**GEN X
(1965-1980)**

-27%; independent, pragmatic,
delivery-focused



**MILLENNIAL
(1981-1996)**

-34%; purpose-driven,
collaborative, growth-oriented



**GEN Z
(1997-2012)**

-27%; inclusive, tech-native,
values transparency

**GEN ALPHA
(POST 2012)**

The emerging workforce-
digital-first, fast-learning,
entrepreneurial

**THE EARLY CHURCH
DIDN'T GROW BECAUSE
THE WORSHIP WAS
ENTERTAINING.
IT GREW BECAUSE
THE PEOPLE WERE
CONVICTED.**



**Be patient. I'm
from the 1900s.**



*Someone stole my coffee cup. I'm headed to
the police station to
look at mugshots.*

Barry and Ace

10 Places you should stay silent at all cost:

1. Be silent if you don't know the full story.
2. Be silent if you feel unable to control your emotions.
3. Be silent in the the heat of anger.
4. Be silent if your words can destroy an amazing friendship or relationship.
5. Be silent if you are unsure about the topic or lack knowledge.
6. Be silent when someone is sharing their struggles and vulnerability.
7. Be silent if you can't talk without yelling.
8. Be silent if your silence can save your bonds.
9. Be silent if speaking will only serve to boost your ego or seek validation.
10. Be silent if your words can betray someone's trust.

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