



up walls and making it happen. It *had* to happen because the laws of the universe demand that it happen — given enough time.”

By the time night fell, Bob and Bill had reached a wooded area beside a stream. They set up their tent, built a campfire, cooked and ate their dinner, and then stretched out by the fire for a period of relaxation. “You know,” Bob said thoughtfully, “when I look up at the stars like this, I’m overwhelmed at the greatness and the power of God! They say there are hundreds of millions of galaxies, that space is endless — yet God had the power to make not only all that is out there, but everything that is in every microscopic cell of every living thing! It makes you wonder what it will be like, one day, to actually



be in His presence, to see Him as He is! What will it be like to be judged, to answer for the way we’ve lived the life He gave us?”

“When I look at those stars,” Bill said with a laugh, “I think of the fourteen-and-a-half billion years it took for all of this to make itself! And I don’t think of God at all. I made up my mind a long time ago — there’s not any God! We’re never going to round a corner of existence and suddenly open our eyes to see some powerful spiritual Being whose presence is everywhere. When the writers of the Bible talked about Him being so great and glorious that everything around Him just automatically fell at His feet and worshiped Him, they were lying. There’s no great God, and there’s no Jesus Christ!”

That night Bill died, and “...he lifted up his eyes...” (Luke 16:19-31).

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Betty Burton Choate

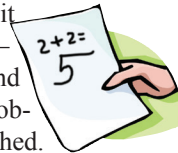




He Lifted Up His Eyes...

Betty Burton Choate

Two men walked along a road on a bright summer day. Bob stooped to retrieve a small sheet of paper fluttering at his feet. “What’s this?” he asked. “Oh. Nothing important — just a young child’s school paper, maybe even homework. Look, what a struggle it was to form the numbers — he’s probably in first grade. And here he’s missed an addition problem: $2+2=5!$ Wrong!” he laughed.



“No, your explanation requires purpose and intelligence,” Bill disagreed. “I would say that over several million years that paper slowly and gradually formed itself. What seems to be a child’s writing and arithmetic problems is only the effect of weathering through the ages.”

Bob looked incredulous, but he said nothing. A little further down the way they topped a rolling hill. Stretching away as far as the eye could see were fields of knee-high ripening grain. “The man who runs this farm is



a powerful organizer!” he remarked. “What kind of planning and equipment would it take to cultivate and harvest thousands of acres like this?”

“You’ve got it wrong again,” Bill responded. “This just looks like a farm, but it isn’t that at all. Millions of years ago little rows began to develop, and then finally when the soil was just right, seeds began to blow in from great distances and to settle here. The result is what you see, but it took millions of years to happen.”

“Do you mean no thought and no expertise went into this at all?” Bob asked.

“Nope. It just happened. You know, given enough time, anything can happen!”

Just then a sporty red car whizzed past, and Bob jumped aside to keep from being hit. “Man! Did you see that?! He must have been going a hundred and fifty miles an hour! I wonder who made a car with that powerful an engine, to go that fast?”

“Well,” Bill answered, watching the car whip out of sight, “nobody made that car. You know, given enough time, things just gradually evolve. Through a natural selection process, they



improve themselves, so that now you see that bright red car flying down the road at a terrific speed. But such a marvel didn’t happen overnight! It took hundreds of millions of years.”

Topping another hill, they could see the outline of a city in the distance. “You know, some smart architects designed those buildings,” Bob said. “It’s a huge city, but beautiful. Sometimes I wonder how anybody has the daring or vision, or whatever it takes, to launch into the planning and construction of such monstrous complexes. I wouldn’t know where to begin!”

“Where you begin is billions of years ago, when all of this was a primordial plain, with cooling volcanoes and hot-house gases,” answered Bill. “You know that physics and chemistry contain all the laws necessary to pull these elements together. Being here, and given enough time, those laws demanded that things come together like this — and so, there you have it! There was no great architect behind the design! And there was no mighty builder laying foundations and putting

