

Quentin Road Baptist Church

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I have now published over sixty columns in *The Village Reporter*. It seems everywhere I travel in town, people mention reading it. As expected, some columns are more popular than others. By far, the most popular column was the one on the Hammond, Indiana, First Baptist Church. The reason why, I was told by several readers, was because we hear so much negative about churches, that something very positive was welcomed. Readers' interest has motivated me to do another column on another very successful ministry, that of Quentin Road Baptist Church located in Lake Zurich, Illinois, near Chicago.

The church was founded by Dr. James and Linda Scudder in 1971. It began as a small store-front church on Fullerton Avenue in Chicago. It grew into its present megachurch size and is yet another example of where teaching Genesis has not hurt growth, but has instead seen God richly bless the church and its ministry.

One of my main interests is church growth, so when I visited the church, one question I wanted answered was "why was this church so successful? On my first trip to Quentin Road Church, I noticed that down the hall was a dinosaur femur. That's right, a dinosaur femur. I knew then that this church was anything but a typical church. And it became apparent that this difference was a key reason for its phenomenal growth.

The church was very welcoming to me and my message, partly because the creation issue was frequently touched on in sermons and the many films produced by the church, as well as by the presentations of other guest speakers. The congregation realized that Adam's sin, and the payment for that sin, was why Christ's sacrifice on

the cross was required. Consequently, the creation of Adam as the first man (1 Corinthians 15:45a) was central to the Christian message. For this reason, my message from the pulpit there on creation supported, and reinforced, the importance of accepting God as the creator of humans and all life, as taught in Genesis. This view was matured by the church. After the service, the crowd around my book table required the church staff to man the book table to allow me to discuss concerns about the creation worldview with church members. It was clear that their questions and comments were well-informed and showed a good knowledge of the issue. This includes the recognition that evolution is, more often than not, the doorway to atheism. Removing this impediment opened the door to Christ.

The church stresses a sound Biblical worldview and the entire Bible, including the often ignored passages. I have on my list of sixty PowerPoint presentations, one on the Bible's teaching regarding sexuality, including transsexualism and homosexuality. Rarely were these topics selected from my list by churches. At Quentin Road, the lead pastor said, "there is no problem covering this issue. Just be tactful and scriptural." I covered the topic in two sermons, fully expecting some flack. I received none, which surprised me. While talking to church members after the service, I asked several people why my message was accepted without mumbling. The people I talked to said the reason was because they knew the scriptures, and my sermon simply reinforced them, giving parishioners reasons for the wisdom of the Bible's teaching.

The church's rapid growth allowed support and further extensions of their ministry. They started Media Ministries for their "Victory InGrace" television and radio station. In 1979, a Christian school was begun, eventually covering grades 1-12 using the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) curriculum. In 1985, Quentin Road began a preschool. Today, it has nearly 2,000 children enrolled annually, and is one of the largest Christian preschools in the nation. The school's mission is to assist parents in educating their children by helping them develop a heart for God, a sound Biblical worldview, and a desire to impact their families, churches, communities, and country for Jesus Christ. Dayspring Bible College & Seminary was founded in 1982. In 2012, the College purchased a 13-acre campus in Mundelein, Illinois with seven buildings. Part of their doctrinal requirements includes belief in, and the acceptance of, a literal six-day creation as recorded in Genesis, Chapter One, and in the fourth commandment (Exodus 4:11).

Readers might wonder what is the point of that dinosaur femur in the church. The reasons include the fact that creationists love dinosaurs, as do most young people, and the Bible mentions dinosaurs several times. Job 40:15-24 describes a herd of massive animals the Bible calls “behemoth,” which can only refer to sauropod dinosaurs such as *Diplodocus* or *Brachiosaurus*—dinosaurs with long necks and gigantic tails as long and massive as tree trunks of the cedars of Lebanon (Job 40:17); definitely not like the diminutive tails of rhinos, hippos, and elephants as often claimed by those who doubt creationism!

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