
QUEEN OF THE SCIENCES

Biblical Theology

The Importance of Theology

Most scientific disciplines have been given English names compounded from two Greek roots, one meaning “organized study,” the other referring to the object of study. Biology is the study of life, geology is the study of the earth, hydrology is the study of water, and so on. The ending of each of these words is from the Greek *logos*, meaning “word,” also translated “answer,” “saying,” etc. As a proper name, it is identified in Scripture with the Lord Jesus Christ, as the living Word of God, the Creator of all things (John 1:1–3).

Whether or not men intended it that way, it is at least providential that Jesus Christ should be thus indirectly identified with the study of His creation. Biology is the science of life, and Christ himself is “life” (John 14:6). Geology is the science of the earth, and He is the Creator of the ends of the earth (Isa. 40:28). Hydrology is the science of water, and from Him flows the “water of life” (Rev. 22:1). We also could speak of the sciences of meteorology, zoology, psychology, sociology, climatology, physiology, and many others, but all must ultimately be ascribed to Christ, for in Him “are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3). “By him were all things created” (Col. 1:16), and He “uphold[s] all things by the word of his power” (Heb. 1:3), so it follows inescapably that true knowledge of any component of His creation must depend ultimately on the knowledge of Christ and His Word.

Therefore, the most important of all sciences, or objects of study, is theology, the study of God. In a special sense, this discipline becomes also Christology, since God was in Christ, and since the Lord Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh (John 1:14). Theology, in fact, once was honored as “the queen of sciences,” though

it has lost this position of public esteem in our modern scientific age. To many it has now become merely a branch of philosophy, known as “philosophical theology,” or “the philosophy of religion.” Scholars speak of different forms of theology — natural theology, rational theology, dogmatic theology, empirical theology, and so on. Latter-day radical theologians are even promoting such concepts as what they call “liberation theology,” equating Christian action with Marxism and revolution.

Since this is not a treatise on theology, however, no attempt will be made to discuss and critique these various theologies. Our interest here is solely in biblical theology, especially the relation of biblical theology to the natural sciences. Biblical theology, of course, is the systematic codification of what the biblical authors, inspired by the Holy Spirit, teach about God — His person, His attributes, His revelation, His works, and His purposes. Other sources of information about God — in nature and in religious experience, for example — can supplement and illumine the biblical data, but only the latter are normative for Christian doctrine. In particular, it is important in the context of this chapter to establish what the Bible teaches about the existence of God and His purposes for man and the universe — created, sustained, and redeemed by Him — in relation to the other sciences as understood today.

Science and the Existence of God

Although it is not possible to develop a completely rigorous proof for the existence of God (after all, Heb. 11:6 says that “without faith, it is impossible to please him!”), the Scriptures do indicate that it is utter foolishness not to believe (Ps. 14:1; Rom. 1:22; et al.). Although there may exist certain philosophical arguments by which one can avoid acknowledging God’s existence, the great solid weight of scientific and statistical evidence, when rationally evaluated, clearly balances the scales heavily in favor of God. One rejects God only because that is the choice of his will, not because of the evidence.

It is superficial to say (as many have said) that since science is based on observation and since God cannot be “observed” with the physical senses, therefore God’s existence is an unscientific belief. There are many scientific entities that cannot be seen with human eyes but whose existence is not doubted in the least by scientists (e.g., electrons). The famous assertion by the first Russian astronauts that they had proved God did not exist since they could not find Him in space was a prime example of the irrational rationalizing by which unbelievers justify their unbelief. Scripture itself says, “No man hath seen God at any time” (John 1:18). “God is Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). The very essence of God’s revelation of himself precludes evaluation by the experimental procedures of the scientific method. Nevertheless, the most basic principles of science (which are themselves assumed in the application of the scientific method) point directly to the exceedingly high probability that God is the true cause of all causes.

Even though it is not possible to prove God's existence by rigorous scientific demonstration, it is even more impossible (if there were such a category) to prove His nonexistence! One cannot prove a "universal negative." To prove that there is no God anywhere in the universe or at any time in the universe, would require omniscience and probably omnipresence as well, which are themselves attributes of deity. That is, one would have to be God, in order to prove there is no God! Dogmatic atheism, therefore, is self-contradictory foolishness.

One may lodge certain moral arguments against God if he wishes. For instance, he may ask why a holy God condones evil in the world if He is able to prevent it. Some would say that God must be either unrighteous or impotent, or both, and thus not really God.

But such arguments assume that man has the right and the ability to judge God, and thus that man himself is really God. They ignore the possibility that God may have a good reason, consistent with His holiness, to allow evil to exist for a brief time and that He will eventually destroy it forever. According to Scripture, God will eventually judge and purge all evil from His creation (2 Pet. 3:10–13), but in the meantime He is calling men to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9), having created them not as unthinking machines but as volitional beings in His divine image, responsible for their own moral and spiritual choices, and having also himself paid the full price for their redemption (1 Pet. 1:18–20).

At the very best, such anti-theistic arguments are specious and self-serving, arrogating to the creature the right to judge the motives and actions of his Creator. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" (Rom. 9:20).

All but the most presumptuous, therefore, must acknowledge at least the possibility that God exists and that we are His creatures. We can, furthermore, examine that possibility in terms of its probability. If we do happen to be His creatures, then our minds and reasoning capabilities are likewise created by Him, and we can use these very entities and experiences as instruments with which to evaluate this probability. If these were not created by Him and if, indeed, there is no God, then it is quite absurd to believe that we can trust our minds and reasoning faculties at all. They are then merely the products of chance and randomness. Victor Weisskopf, while president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, reminded his fellow scientists of the amazing "fact" that non-thinking "Nature" has, as they believe, generated intelligent beings and intelligible systems. "Einstein considered this development to be the great miracle of science; in his words, 'the most incomprehensible fact of nature is the fact that nature is comprehensible.'"¹ Weisskopf perhaps used the term "miracle" inadvertently, but such a development — the evolution of intelligence and intelligibility by random processes from unthinking atoms — would indeed require a mighty miracle.

1. Victor F. Weisskopf, "The Frontiers and Limits of Science," *American Scientist*, 65 (July–Aug. 1977): 405.

Dr. Lewis Thomas, former chancellor of the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan, has commented, “We know a lot about the structure and function of the cells and fibers of the human brain, but we haven’t the ghost of an idea about how this extraordinary organ works to produce awareness.”² In another article this distinguished scientist has noted that “we do not understand a flea, much less the making of a thought.”³ With respect to the idea that complex and comprehensible systems could ever evolve from random process by chance, Thomas rather wistfully laments: “Biology needs a better word than *error* for the driving force in evolution. . . . I cannot make my peace with the randomness doctrine; I cannot abide the notion of purposelessness and blind chance in nature. And yet, I do not know what to put in its place for the quieting of my mind.”⁴

With all due respect, Christian theism provides a clear answer to such a query. An omnipotent, omniscient, personal Creator God provides perfect peace of mind and soul to all who come to Him in faith. Theism does not oppose true science. All the great laws and principles of science lead directly to God as their only adequate source and explanation.

In a modern treatment of this fascinating subject, two authorities have pointed out the almost infinite complexity of the human brain.

The human brain is the most astonishing and mysterious of all known complex systems. Inside this mass of billions of neurons, information flows in ways that we are only starting to understand. The memories of a summer day on the beach when we were kids; imagination; our dreams of impossible worlds. Consciousness. Our surprising capacity for mathematical generalization and understanding of deep, sometimes counterintuitive questions about the universe. Our brains are capable of this and much more. How? We don’t know: the mind is a daunting problem for science.⁵

The amazing phenomenon of consciousness is perhaps the most mysterious of all the mysteries of the human brain. Anthropologist Matt Cartmill, in a Phi Beta Kappa message, has noted this.

The phenomenon of consciousness is the source of all value in our lives. As such, it should be at the top of the scientific agenda. Yet despite its fundamental importance, consciousness is a subject that most scientists are reluctant to deal with. We know practically nothing about either its mechanisms or its evolution. . . .

If consciousness is not algorithmic, then how is it produced? We don’t know. The machineries of consciousness are an almost perfect mystery.⁶

2. Lewis Thomas, “On Science and Uncertainty,” *Discover*, 1 (Oct. 1980): 59.

3. Lewis Thomas, “On the Uncertainty of Science,” *Key Reporter*, 46 (Autumn 1980): 2.

4. *Ibid.*

5. Richard Sole and Brian Godwin, *Signs of Life* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2000), p. 119.

6. Matt Cartmill, “Do Horses Gallop in their Sleep?” *Key Reporter* (Autumn 2000): 6, 8.

The answer — indeed the only possible answer that makes sense — is that we were *created* in the image of God!

Biblical Backgrounds of Science

The basic compatibility of science with Christian theism is even more obvious when it is realized that modern science actually grew in large measure out of the seeds of Christian theism. It is absurd to claim, as modern evolutionists often do, that one cannot be a true scientist if he believes in creation. As outlined in figure 1, most of the great founders of science believed in creation and, indeed, in all the great doctrines of biblical Christianity.

Men such as Johann Kepler, Isaac Newton, Robert Boyle, David Brewster, John Dalton, Michael Faraday, Blaise Pascal, Clerk Maxwell, Louis Pasteur, William

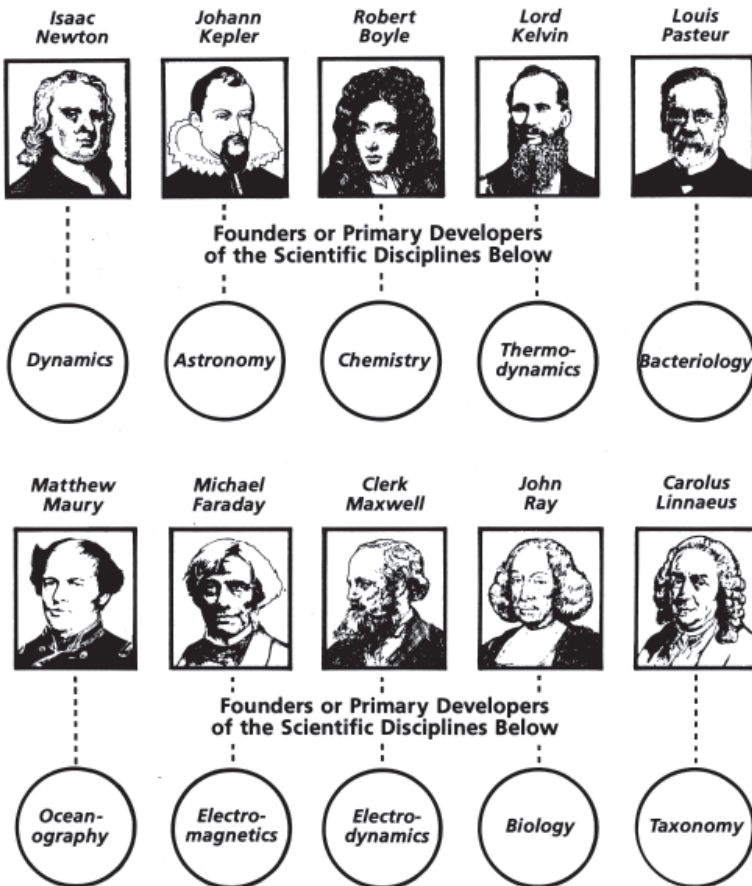


FIGURE 1 — Christian Founders of Key Scientific Disciplines

The humanistic claim that scientists cannot believe the Bible is refuted by the fact that many of the greatest scientists of the past were Bible-believing creationist Christians. See appendix 1 for an extensive listing of these men.