

Why Christianity Must Be Included in Science Education

by Dr. Jay L. Wile

Qualifications

- College Professor (former and current)
- Helped Develop Indiana's Only Residential High School for Gifted and Talented Students
- NSF-Sponsored Scientist with More Than \$200,000 In Research Grants
- Became Interested in Homeschooling Because of Excellent University Students Who Were Homeschooled
- Currently writes homeschooling and Christian apologetics materials for Berean Builders Publishing

1. It is difficult to teach something properly if you don't refer to its source.

Imagine teaching a class on U.S. Law without ever mentioning the U.S. Constitution.

Since God is the source of science and the One who laid down the scientific laws, it is hard to teach them without referencing him.

2. Christianity produced science in its current form.

In 1938, Dr. Joseph Needham asked a famous question: "Why was China overtaken by the west in science and technology, even though ancient China was advanced compared to ancient Europe?"

His research to answer that question resulted in a book series called *Science and Civilisation in China*," named one of the 100 Best Nonfiction books of the 20th century by the Modern Library Board.

He Gave Three Answers to His Question

The first two dealt with Chinese law and bureaucracy. This is his third reason:

"...the autochthonous idea of a supreme being, though certainly present from the earliest times, soon lost the qualities of personality and creativity. The development of the concept of precisely formulated abstract laws capable, because of the rationality of the Author of Nature, of being deciphered and re-stated, did not therefore occur."

In other words, science could only develop in a culture with the correct concept of God!

Dr. Loren Eiseley, Benjamin Franklin Professor of Anthropology and the History of Science at the University of Pennsylvania

“In one of those strange permutations of which history yields occasional rare examples, it is the Christian world which finally gave birth in a clear, articulate fashion to the experimental method of science itself.”

As a result, a Christian view of science is the most coherent.

Roger Bacon, the father of the scientific method, put it this way:

“For the grace of faith illuminates greatly, as also do divine inspirations, not only in things spiritual, but in things corporeal and in the sciences of philosophy...”

This is Why Many Scientific Breakthroughs Occurred Because of Scientists' Christian Faith

Nicolaus Copernicus put the sun at the center of the universe specifically because the geocentric model was too messy, and he said that this went against the nature of God, who is the “the Best and Most Orderly Workman”

Sir Isaac Newton went against the scientific consensus of his day by believing that the same laws which operate on earth operate in the heaven. Why? Dr. Morris Kline says it was because Newton believed:

“God had designed the universe, and it was to be expected that all phenomena of nature would follow one master plan.”

Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz developed binary logic and the binary number system (which is the basis of modern computers) to be able to more effectively communicate Christianity to the pagans.

In a letter to Duke Rudolph of Brunswick, he wrote:

“After all, one of the high points of the Christian faith, which agrees least with the philosophers and is not easy to impart to pagans, is the creation ex nihilo through God’s almighty power. Now one can say that nothing in the world can better present and demonstrate this power than the origin of numbers, as is represented here through the simple and unadorned presentation of One and Zero or nothing.”

3. Science makes the most sense in a universe created by the God of Christianity.

Nobel laureate Dr. Eugene Wigner says, “The first point is that the enormous usefulness of mathematics in the natural sciences is something bordering on the mysterious and that there is no rational explanation for it.”

Christianity provides the rational explanation:

“[The universe] cannot be read until we have learnt the language and become familiar with the characters in which it is written. It is written in mathematical language, and the letters are triangles, circles and other geometrical figures, without which means it is humanly impossible to comprehend a single word.”

Christianity provides a rational explanation for the amazing design you find in nature.

The cell has a molecular machine (ATPase) that converts energy into units that the cell can use easily. Those units are called ATP. When the researchers looked at the efficiency of this machine, they found:

“...the maximum work performed by F1-ATPase per 120° step is nearly equal to the thermodynamical maximum work...Our results suggested a 100% free-energy transduction efficiency.”

Christianity Helps Give us Physical Insight

Modern physics tells us that light (as well as subatomic particles, are BOTH particles and waves. This is called **particle-wave duality**.

This comes from the fact that sometimes, light and subatomic particles behave like waves, but other times, they behave as particles.

The current view is that they exist in BOTH STATES simultaneously, and the way you observe them determines which way they behave.

This is difficult for many students to accept or understand, but if they have learned about the Trinity, it makes more sense. The God who made nature has three identities all at the same time. Why wouldn't some of His creation at least partially reflect that?

Nobel-Prize-Winning Astronomer Antony Hewish

“...the simplest piece of matter, a hydrogen atom, cannot be accurately described without including the effects caused by the cloud of virtual particles with which it is surrounded. There is no such thing as truly empty space. Quantum theory predicts that even a perfect vacuum is filled with a multitude of particles that flash into and out of existence much too rapidly to be caught by any detector. Yet their existence modifies the motion of electrons orbiting protons in a calculable way that has been verified by direct observation. The ghostly presence of virtual particles defies rational common sense and is nonintuitive for those unacquainted with physics. Religious belief in God, and Christian belief that God became man around two thousand years ago, may seem strange to common-sense thinking. But when the most elementary physical things behave in this way, we should be

prepared to accept that the deepest aspects of our existence go beyond our common-sense intuitions.”

4. Students learn science better when it is presented in a Christian framework.

On the ETS Proficiency Profile, a test used to measure the quality of a college education, students at Patrick Henry college routinely score in the top 98%, including on the natural sciences portion.

The school teaches all its science classes from a young-earth creationist view.

While there are several factors involved in the success of those students, one of them is the Christian viewpoint from which the science is taught.

Why?

The classes contrast the modern, atheistic view of science with the Christian view of science, producing an adversarial view.

Studies show this is the best way to teach ANY subject, including science.

An article in the journal *Science* reviewed 18 studies that evaluated the effectiveness of three kinds of learning activities: (1) ones that involved argumentation, (2) ones that involved a group working together to make a single product, and (3) ones involving experimentation.

The activities involving argumentation produced the most learning gains.

Incredibly enough, one study indicates it is still the most effective, even when some of the ideas being debated are *known to be incorrect!*

In Fact, This is How Real Science Works

Dr. Jonathan Osborne, Emeritus Stanford University Professor of Science Education:

“Critique is not, therefore, some peripheral feature of science, but rather it is core to its practice, and without argument and evaluation, the construction of reliable knowledge would be impossible...Science education, in contrast, is notable for the absence of argument.”