

Christianity and Science: Partners in the Search for Truth

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Qualifications

- University Professor From 1990 - 1995
- 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 junior high school and high school science courses for homeschooled students

Modern Science Is a Result of Christianity

“The mind’s vision that is turned away from its light is necessarily turned toward darkness and idleness until, in some way coming through the external senses out into the external sensible light, it in some way finds again a trace of the light born in it. When it stumbles upon that, it begins—as if awakened—to seek the proper light...”

-Robert Grosseteste, Commentary on Posterior Analytics (c. 1220)

The father of the scientific method was a student of Grosseteste

“Hence in the first place there must be readiness to believe, until in the second place experiment follows, so that in the third reasoning may function.”

“It is necessary, therefore, that the intellect of man should be otherwise aided...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...”

-Roger Bacon, Opus Majus, Part Six, Chapter on the Second Prerogative of Experimental Science

Serious Historians Understand This

Loren Eiseley was the Benjamin Franklin Professor of Anthropology and the History of Science at the University of Pennsylvania and once said, “Ironically, I who profess no religion find the whole of my life a religious pilgrimage.”

- <https://religiousnaturalism.org/loreneiseley/>

“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.”

-Loren Eiseley, *Darwin's Century* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1958), p. 62

Werner Heisenberg, one of the major players in the quantum revolution understands this

“Before we discuss the validity of this method even in our present science, we should perhaps briefly ask for the basis of confidence, which led Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler on this new way...I think we have to state that this basis was mainly theological. Galileo argued that nature, God’s second book (the first one being the Bible) is written in mathematical letters, and that we have to learn this alphabet...Kepler is even more explicit...he says: God created the world in accordance with his ideas of creation. These ideas are the pure archetypal forms which Plato termed Ideas, and they can be understood by Man...”

-Werner Heisenberg, Smithsonian Institution Lecture, Washington, D.C., April 24, 1973

This can be seen in the works of many great scientists

1. Nicolaus Copernicus wrote:

“For a long time, then, I reflected on this confusion in the astronomical traditions concerning the derivation of the motions of the universe's spheres. I began to be annoyed that the movements of the world machine, created for our sake by the best and most systematic Artisan of all, were not understood with greater certainty by the philosophers, who otherwise examined so precisely the most insignificant trifles of this world.”

2. Johannes Kepler saw God in his astronomy:

“For in the sphere, which is the image of God the Creator and the Archetype of the world-as was proved in Book 1-there are three regions, symbols of the three persons of the Holy Trinity – the center, a symbol of the Father; the surface, of the Son; and the intermediate space, of the Holy Ghost.”

Kepler stared at tables of Tycho Brahe’s (and others’) observations of the planets for 18 years to come of up with his three laws of planetary motion.

Why? Because he thought he was looking at an image of God.

3. Sir Isaac Newton went against the scientific consensus of the day and took a relationship he discovered on earth and applied it to the heavens.

Why would he do that?

“This most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful being. This Being governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as Lord over all.”

Once Again, Serious Historians Understand This

“The thought at *all* the phenomena of motion should follow from one set of principles might seem grandiose and inordinate, but it occurred very naturally to the religious mathematicians of the 17th century. God had designed the universe, and it was to be expected that all phenomena of nature would follow one master plan. One mind designing a universe would almost surely have employed one set of basic principles to govern related phenomena.”

-Dr. Morris Kline, mathematician and historian

4. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz developed binary logic and the binary number system (which is the basis of modern computers).

One of the reasons he developed the math component was 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.”

5. John Ray (1627 – 1705) was an Anglican priest (and fellow of Trinity College) who studied nature to get illustrations for his sermons. He refused to sign the “Act of Uniformity” an oath he disagreed with. He lost his position as a result, and with financial support from a student, decided to devote his time to studying nature so that he could learn more about God.

He wrote a book, *The Wisdom of God as Manifested in the Works of Creation*, about his studies and what he learned about God through them. It became the most popular scientific work on botany for that century.

Today, we say he is one of the parson naturalists, clergymen from the 1600s to the 1800s who studied nature simply to learn more about God. Along the way, they made many discoveries

Gilbert White (1720-1793) studied his garden and made notes. Those notes turned into one of the most important scientific books on plants and birds.

William Kirby (1759-1850) said, “The author of Scripture is also the author of Nature: and this visible world, by types indeed, and by symbols, declares the same truths as the Bible does by words.” He pioneered insect study.

Francis Morris (1810-1893) studied nature so that he could write books that extolled God’s majesty as shown in nature. He became an authority on birds and insects.

6. James Clerk Maxwell, the father of electromagnetism, regularly prayed for the Lord to guide his scientific research. One of his prayers that was preserved:

“Almighty God, Who hast created man in Thine own image, and made him a living soul that he might seek after Thee, and have dominion over Thy creatures, teach us to study the works of Thy hands, that we may subdue the earth to our use, and strengthen the reason for Thy service; so to receive Thy blessed Word, that we may believe in Him Whom Thou hast sent, to give us the knowledge of salvation and the remission of our sins. All of which we ask in the name of the same Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

Notice his emphasis:

- He wants God to teach him to study nature
- He wants to follow the Bible’s command to have dominion over the earth
- Ultimately for the knowledge of Salvation

This was so important to Maxwell that he required Psalm 111:12 inscribed above the doors of the most important physics lab in the world, the Cavendish Laboratory

Some Modern Scientists Still Use Prayer

7. Dr. James Tour is the world’s most important synthetic organic chemist.

He and his research team actually built molecules that act like cars!

They hope to use them to “deliver” other molecules to particular places, like tumors in someone’s body.

“As a scientist, when posed with scientific mysteries that have presented themselves in my research, I have so often bowed my heart and prayed, ‘Lord, make your light shine on this darkness. When no others can see, please Lord, let me see.’ On many occasions, when graduate students have brought their puzzling laboratory results and laid them on my desk, I have been as baffled as they. So remembering [Psalm 112:4], which I had long before committed to memory, I pray for light, and God answers. Surely, meditating on God’s word can cause light to arise in darkness even for the challenges that confront our secular careers.”

Other Modern Scientists Are Motivated like Kepler

8. Henry F. Schaefer, III is the Graham Perdue Professor of Chemistry and the director of the Center for Computational Quantum Chemistry at the University of Georgia.

He has more than 750 scientific publications to his credit and is the second most quoted chemist in the world. He Sees God in Every Advance He Makes

“The significance and joy in my science comes in the occasional moments of discovering something new and saying to myself, 'So that's how God did it!' My goal is to understand a little corner of God's plan.”

Dr. Nathan T. Brewer (homeschool graduate) is not yet as accomplished as the others I have discussed, he has already established himself in the field of superheavy elements, having discovered a new decay chain for one artificial element (Og).

“My Christianity gives me a desire to learn. The world is absolutely breathtaking, and studying the world’s beauty fuels my faith.”