

Questions & Answers

Part 2: Has Science Made God Obsolete?

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS



A publication of **DISCIPLE**, the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —*Psalm 145:11*
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —*Joshua 22:5*

2018.9.9



Questions for Reflection

- Tell about a time when someone challenged your faith as being false because it is "unscientific".
What assumptions lay behind their challenge?
How would you answer their challenge now?
- Discuss the two limitations of the scientific method Pastor Dan identified (the phenomenon under investigation must be both measurable and repeatable). Make a list of things that fit those criteria.
Now make a list of things that **we know to be true**, but which **cannot** be evaluated by science.
What other methods do we use to evaluate areas of knowledge which science cannot explore?
- Read Acts 17:16-32. Identify key points in Paul's rational, reasoned defense of Christianity.
Identify the two responses of his listeners (v. 32).
Why did some sneer? What rational, reasoned defense did they give for their rejection?
What attitude did they exhibit toward Paul **before** they'd even heard his arguments (v. 18)?
- As a group, role-play reasoned responses to the following challenges:
(Don't just give answers—*asking questions* plays a valuable role in uncovering others' assumptions!)
 - "Science has proven that miracles can't occur. You have to have blind faith to believe in them."
 - "Religious belief is just an evolutionary adaptation to explain things you don't yet understand."
 - "I won't believe anything that can't be proven scientifically!"

Application-Challenge

- Reject closed-minded naturalism. Let **reason** and **evidence** determine your conclusions.
- Read something from a creationist perspective. **The Evolution of a Creationist**, by Dr. Jobe Martin presents rational, reasonable arguments in an easily understood way. And it's **absolutely free**:
<http://biblicaldiscipleship.org/content/evolution-creationist-book-free-download>
- Remember: We can't choose just the items we like, creating a "designer religion" for ourselves. Our faith is supernatural through and through—**or else it is all false!** (1 Corinthians 15:14-19)

Sermon Summary

Last week we kicked off a new, five-part series on the important subject of “worldview”. Everybody has a worldview—whether you know it or not. A worldview is like a pair of sunglasses; the tint colors everything you see. Today we turn our attention to the question of God—and more specifically, “Has science made God obsolete?” I love science. As a kid, I had well-used copies of *The Boy Scientist* and *The Boy Mechanic*. I’d pour over those books. They had plans for doing so many cool things. Dad bought us boys the supplies we needed for making our own gun powder—and my brother once split a tree right down the middle! I love science—and I’m grateful for the conveniences and life-improvements science has given us.

For centuries people used to explain extraordinary events by saying: “God did it.” But now we have a powerful explanatory tool—science—and it seems to explain everything. So—do we need God anymore? Has science made God obsolete? That question is about as logical as asking if your ears have made your eyes obsolete! How so? Ears perceive one sort of information—sound waves—and eyes perceive a totally different sort of information—light waves. How could having the sense of hearing make the sense of sight any less wonderful and necessary? In the same way, although science truly is a powerful tool for exploring and understanding things, like your ears, science can only “pick up” a limited sort of information. Science can only be used to evaluate repeatable events in the material realm, in other words, things that can be measured and weighed. Science is of no use for exploring issues which either are unique, non-repeatable events or which are not material, and therefore not accessible to the five senses. So those are the two limits of science we’re going to look at today.

Science explores things using the following steps: [1] Make an observation, [2] Ask a question, [3] Form a hypothesis, [4] Conduct an experiment, [5] Analyze the data, then [6] Draw a conclusion. But there’s a problem: as powerful as the scientific method is, it can’t, for example, prove what you had for breakfast. The scientific method cannot be used to answer historical questions such as: “Where did the universe come from?” or “Did Jesus rise from the dead?” or “Did life evolve or was it created by God?” Another realm of knowledge which is not accessible to the scientific method is moral judgments. It is not scientifically provable whether or not Nazi medical experiments were evil. Science cannot establish that the research taking place at the Mayo Clinic is good. Nobody can deny that torturing babies just for fun is immoral—yet the scientific method is absolutely incapable of establishing that truth! Moral statements, true though they are, are non-physical. They cannot be seen, touched, tasted, heard, or smelled—yet they’re true. Love really exists—but you can’t weigh or measure it. Science tries to reduce love to chemical reactions in the brain, but we all know it’s more than a phenomenon in your brain. As wonderful as science is, it is totally incapable of accounting for many of the things that are most important to human life—things such as love, kindness, truth, and meaning (Proverbs 15:17).

Most scientists today are “materialists”—they think that everything that is real is only matter and energy. Almost all modern scientists are materialists who’ve closed their minds to any explanation that might involve God. But the Bible records an example of a truly open-minded scientific experiment that took place 3,000 years ago (1 Samuel 5-6)! Jews and Philistines were at war, and the Philistines captured the holiest thing the Jews had—the centerpiece of their worship—the ark of the covenant (in which the Ten Commandments were kept). God struck the Philistine city with what appears to have been bubonic plague: rats infested their cities and ugly tumors appeared on people. The Philistines were in an uproar, and they wanted to end the plague and figure out if the Jewish God really was causing their problems. So they conducted a brilliant scientific experiment! Unlike most scientists today, they designed an experiment without the closed-mindedness of naturalism. They were open to considering the possibility of divine involvement, and so they designed an experiment which controlled for all conceivable naturalistic explanations, and when what happened couldn’t be explained naturally, they were open to the possibility of divine intervention. Today, very few scientists are open minded enough to follow the evidence wherever it leads.

In contrast, most scientists today have decided in advance that supernatural events cannot occur—even if the evidence is best explained by that conclusion. We “suppress the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1:18-25)—and this angers God! Science has not made God obsolete any more than your ears have made your eyes obsolete! Materialistic naturalism—the refusal to acknowledge God’s involvement in his world—is a **worship** disorder (v. 25).

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any passage. We can use it to explore the interaction between the material and the non-material...

Monday— 1 Samuel 5:1-8a

Tuesday— 1 Samuel 5:8b-12

Wednesday— 1 Samuel 6:1-6

Thursday— 1 Samuel 6:7-12

Friday— 1 Samuel 6:13-16

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** read Genesis 1 & Psalm 8.

Need blank copies for doing more

"Five Question Bible Study"?

e-mail: Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) is it found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text?



Science & God “*Cheat Card*”



- The scientific method is a **wonderful** tool for explaining **many** things in our world.
- Science, however, is limited to evaluating **measurable, repeatable** phenomena. It cannot be used to explore **non-material truths** (such as ideas, values, or logic) or **historical events** (such as the resurrection of Christ).
- Most scientists today have made the error of excluding all areas of knowledge which cannot be explored via the useful—but limited—scientific method. They have made this assumption based on their worldview, **not** the evidence.