



Whose Science?

(based on an excerpt from a Tim Keller sermon)

“Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”

John 20:30-31

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Often people ask why things like DNA and other scientific information is not in the bible. Then others like to try to turn Genesis 1 into a science textbook on the origin of life. While there is an enormous amount of history in the bible, the bible is not a science textbook, and for good reason. Keller points this out in one of his sermons, when he asks the question, “If God were to put science in the bible, whose science would He use?” Would he use the science of ancient Egypt? Ancient Greece? Rome? The dark ages? The enlightenment? The 20th century? The 24th century? Whose science would he use? Keller’s point is that science is always changing, and that today’s science is often tomorrow’s joke and yesterday’s heresy.

If God had put today’s scientific understandings in the bible, the people who read it thousands of years ago would have been confused by it and not given it a second chance, since it varied so greatly from their current worldview and understanding of the physical world. And the people a thousand years from now would read it and laugh, because they know how wrong we are today about whatever ‘flat-world’ theories we are currently embracing. Keller has a saying (loosely quoted) that we “laugh at our grandparents ideas, and our grandchildren will laugh at ours.” Each generation thinks they have cornered the market on truth, laughing at what their predecessors believed. And each successive generation cannot believe the absurdity of what the previous generation thought was true. And on and on it goes.

God did not intend the bible to be a scientific textbook. The bible is more of a letter to us that explains the relational side of God and His intentions to us, in terms that we can understand, and in a way that is applicable to every generation. What book other than the bible is as readable and applicable today as it was when it was originally written thousands of years ago? In this respect the bible is quite unique, even divine. It transcends time in its ability to speak to every generation of humans equally with such a high degree of applicability.

Then there is the fact that Science is God’s book as well – He is the author of science - so why include science in the bible, when the scientific world is self-explanatory all on its own? It needs no book, because it is a book. The created world reveals aspects of God to us that cannot be contained in a book the size of the bible. We would probably have to cover the planet in libraries to contain all of the books required to explain the science of the universe fully, from sub-atomic particles to deep space and everything in between, down to the smallest detail. We have only begun to vaguely understand the rudimentary

principles of the creation, and have a long way to go to say that we fully understand any aspect of the universe. It simply would not fit in one book. So God enabled us to study the creation and learn about science that way, and Christians have led the way in the field of science for centuries. It is only recently, because of the latest flat-world theory (Darwinian evolution as the origin of species) that science has drifted away from Christianity, or should I say been hijacked and dragged away from Christianity. But it will fail, as all attempts to disprove God do, and science will return to its Christian heritage of being a field of study determined to understand God more clearly by studying His creation.

The bible is not a science textbook, and for good reason. Whose science would God have used if it was His intent to explain the workings and laws of the created universe in the bible? How big would the bible have been in order to contain such an enormous amount of information? Why not just give us the ability to figure out the universe ourselves, which is what He has done, and what we are doing, using the field of science. When our understanding of the bible and science disagree, we must use wisdom to determine which understanding is correct. God and the created world are not changing in terms of their basic tenets, but our understanding of them does change, as we learn more over time about both His word and His creation.

As Christians we must always have the humility to be willing to revisit our understanding of a biblical text when discoveries reveal that we may have misunderstood it or need to update our current translation of God's word, especially when the meaning of words changes. As scientists we must always remember that God created the universe, and we must be willing to let go of theories when it is clear that our conclusions are incorrect or impossible, rather than clinging to them in order to support our worldview, manipulating them to either prove or disprove something about God. Perhaps we can say that the study of creation tells us what God did and how God did it, while the study of the bible tells us that God did it (who) and why God did it. Each appears to have its place in God's plan to reveal Himself to humanity. And that is the primary point, that the creation and the bible were both given to man to reveal God to us, that we may know Him.

Lord God Almighty, we come before You in Jesus name, and we thank You for Your perfect word. We also thank You for Your perfect creation, and all of the amazing aspects of it that we can study while we are here on earth. Help us to more fully understand You and know You by studying both Your word and Your created universe. Give us a hunger and a thirst to seek You in these two books You have given us. Give us the humility to accept when we our understanding is wrong, the courage to hold our ground when confronted with lies, and the wisdom to know the difference. Guide us into all truth, for Your names sake. In Jesus name we pray, amen.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

2 Timothy 2:15

"But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

2 Peter 1:20-21

Other Verses to Consider

“Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

“You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

2 Timothy 3:14-15

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”

Hebrews 4:12-12

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.”

Deuteronomy 29:29

“He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.”

Ecclesiastes 3:11

“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”

Romans 15:4

“Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.””

Luke 24:44

“Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light unto my path.”

Psalm 119:105

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.”

John 5:13

God's Two Books (Creation and the Word) Delineated in Psalm 19

Psalm 19

Book One – the Created Universe

*The heavens are telling of the glory of God;
And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.*

² *Day to day pours forth speech,
And night to night reveals knowledge.*

³ *There is no speech, nor are there words;
Their voice is not heard.*

⁴ *Their line has gone out through all the earth,
And their utterances to the end of the world.*

*In them He has placed a tent for the sun,
⁵ Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his
chamber;*

It rejoices as a strong man to run his course.

⁶ *Its rising is from one end of the heavens,
And its circuit to the other end of them;
And there is nothing hidden from its heat.*

Book Two – God's Written Word

⁷ *The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul;
The testimony of the Lord is sure,*

making wise the simple.

⁸ *The precepts of the Lord are right,
rejoicing the heart;*

*The commandment of the Lord is pure,
enlightening the eyes.*

⁹ *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the Lord are true; they
are righteous altogether.*

¹⁰ *They are more desirable than gold, yes,
than much fine gold;*

*Sweeter also than honey and the drippings
of the honeycomb.*

¹¹ *Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;
In keeping them there is great reward.*

¹² *Who can discern his errors? Acquit me
of hidden faults.*

¹³ *Also keep back Your servant from
presumptuous sins;*

Let them not rule over me;

Then I will be blameless,

And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.

¹⁴ *Let the words of my mouth and
the meditation of my heart*

Be acceptable in Your sight,

O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer.”