

Can Science and Faith Co-Exist?

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[0:00] Every time I'm experiencing this kind of weather, when I'm in the elements, whether it's the typhoon or the heavy rain, I'm reminded how small I am. Every time I worship, I'm reminded how small I am. Julian, how small are you?

About the same. I'm 5'5.7". What are you? 5'2.5". You see, people like Julian and I, we need to make every little bit count. 5'5.7 rounds up to 6'0".

Of course, I love worship because it just shrinks me back to my real size. Because I don't know about you, when we go about our day, when we go about our lives, we just get bigger and bigger. When we get bigger and bigger, our egos get bigger and bigger, our burdens get heavier and heavier. It's when you leave, it's when you go and when you just empty yourself in front of a holy God and then you're like, Oh, actually, I am really small. Not as small as Julian, but I'm pretty small. And that just fills you with joy. It fills you with joy and then you want to head out and then you want to scatter and go. And this summer, we've been going through this series and of course, we've had typhoon and everything kind of disrupts the things.

[1:12] But we've been talking about, okay, we gather here and then we scatter and then we go. And when we go, people have questions for us. We've only got two more weeks to go for this.

And today's one is going to be about science. So I was, if you don't know me very well, I was a science teacher for seven years in England. More specifically, biology. I wasn't great at biology, but I was even worse at physics and chemistry.

But biology was my thing. Who remembers their science lessons? Who likes their science lessons? Can you raise your hand? Wow, I see hands going all over the place. All five of you. Excellent. That's great. Mark was brave first.

Mark, can you tell me one thing you remember from your science lessons? Cell cycle. Whoa. Cell cycle. Smart man. Of course, he's in the field of science right now. Let's just go around and see. Hank, you were in school not too long ago. Do you remember anything about science? What do you remember? What's the subject that you remember sitting in? Chemistry. Okay, I won't dare ask you any more about that.

[2:11] I don't know chemistry. Gaps, the British education. What do you remember from a science lesson? Photosynthesis. Plant biology.

Do you remember the equation? Who remembers the equation? Okay, if you're a student right now, you're not allowed to answer. Photosynthesis. What's the equation to photosynthesis? Don't avoid eye contact.

Don't avoid eye contact. All right, I'll let you consult your partner. What's the equation to photosynthesis? I'm talking about the light independent reactions and the light dependent ones so see who remembers any of those. All right, we're going to panic. Do you remember? You don't remember? Your science teacher, your science teacher is hurting in pain. Come on, brave souls. Sam, Mr. Lugge.

No? Oh my goodness. No, no, not yet. The students, you guys are still fresh in your memory. Like, let's go back to the people who don't. Come on. Any brave adult, remember? Agnes.

Of course you do. Mark, don't be the teacher's pet. Don't do that. Don't do that. John C., do you remember anything from school? Did you go to school? Oh dear. Okay, fine. Come on then.

[3:46] Carbon dioxide plus water is glucose plus oxygen. There we go. A round of applause. Oh my goodness. You guys. You guys.

Okay. All right. Science. This isn't really a conversation I hear too much now, but I'll tell you, I heard it a lot maybe 10, 15 years ago. Especially as a science teacher, they're like, oh well, I don't believe in God. I believe in science. Have you heard of that one? I don't believe in Jesus. I believe in the

theory of evolution. And there's always this science versus faith conundrum that we had. And actually as a science teacher, I used to love talking about this. Love talking about Charles Darwin. Love talking about the theory of natural selection. Love talking about the guy just before him, which is Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, who actually had his own theories of what this whole world is really about. And often I would say to a lot of people, the students, hey, science and faith, they're not our enemies. This isn't the North London derby. This isn't Arsenal versus Spurs. This is, this is a compliment, complimentary. Actually, science and faith can work together. Well, maybe another way to put it is science tells you how things work, but faith tells you why they bother to work in the first place. Science tells you why things, how things work, sorry. But faith tells you why they bother to work in the first place. And you can't pitch these two things against each other because scientists, there are plenty of scientists who are very famous for being Christians. Galileo, he got into a lot of trouble. He was a devout Catholic through the whole of his life, but he got into so much trouble because as a scientist, he was looking at the universe. He was like, I don't know if the universe revolves around the earth. And then he started talking about this more, writing essays about this more. And the church were like, no, we believe that the, everything revolves around us, the earth. He's like, oh, I don't know. That's not what the evidence says. And he got into tons of trouble. He even got thrown into prison. But actually, a lot of it wasn't even science, it was politics, admittedly. But he actually went on this journey. Isaac Newton, the one who sat under a tree and then decided to basically talk about gravity and the laws of motion. Did you know that Isaac Newton wrote more about theology than he did about quantum physics? Albert Einstein. Albert Einstein technically wasn't a Christian. Thank you very much. You're a great. I'm going to take you everywhere with me. Okay. Albert Einstein technically wasn't a Christian, but he wrote this letter to this little girl in sixth grade, Phyllis, who asked him, do scientists pray? And this is what he said. My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble mind.

[6:45] So he didn't quite get to the point where he recognized Jesus as Lord, but he recognized there's something, there's someone out there that is far more intelligent than I. And he would also say science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind. Science and faith. One tells you how things work. The other tells you why they bother to work in the first place. If anything, science, what I'm going to pitch to you today, as you may hear people talking about this, is science really is just a signpost to Jesus. Science is really a way to point us to him. And I'll talk a little bit more about those kinds of things. And we're going to use, of course, the Bible to talk about this. So can I invite to stand for the word of the Lord? I'm reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans in chapter one. For his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Claiming to be wise, they became fools. So let me read that again. Romans chapter one. Should I'm going to go with verse 19? For what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them for his invisible attributes, namely his eternal power and divine nature have been clearly perceived ever since the creation of the world and the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God and they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools. This is the word of the Lord. Please take a seat.

So my pitch to you today is that actually science is a signpost to Jesus, that actually creation simply points you to the creator. Okay. And so we're going to look at this and you look at this passage here in Romans. He's talking about this. He's saying, what can be known about God? First of all, what can be known? You can't know everything about God. Never believe anyone who says they know exactly who God is and how he's like and everything that he's done and how he did it and how he created the universe and the world in seven days. If someone tells you, I know exactly how God did it, then that can't be God. Surely I would be very skeptical of someone who feels as though they know every, that's, that's the whole point. Even Einstein would admit, we can't know everything. Our minds are futile.

They have limits. And yet it says here, for what can be known about God is plain to them because God has shown it to them, shown it through what? Shown it through just creation. Those of you who have traveled this summer and we've had the chance to, we've been able to get out of Hong Kong

and the concrete jungle and just be out and just see green and just see blue. And you look and you're like, creation is beautiful. You think about just the history of mankind. If you think about a tribe in South America and you think about people all the way on the other side in Asia, somehow without even talking everyone since the beginning of time, every tribe has agreed there is something out there. And untouched peoples in the middle of a rainforest will still agree with someone who is a scientist in Tokyo that there is something out there. We don't truly know what it is. We're trying to understand what it is. We have theories about what, who he is or whether he's a he or all these things. But everyone, don't you think everyone agrees that there's something out there that this world and what we can see isn't all there is. It's like Ecclesiastes 3 when he says he plants eternity into the heart of man. It's telling us there's something that's beyond just this world. It's in our hearts. We can't explain it. We can't describe it. But yet it's there. We can see. If you look around creation, you will see this everywhere. You see how creation works. A couple of weeks ago at a Young Life camp, Ellen was speaking at the camp and she was sharing and giving different examples about how creation is just so beautifully made and how intricate it is. Dolphins give each other names. Dolphins actually, when they're young, they're actually allowed to come up with their own little whistle. And then the other dolphins will actually learn that whistle. And so when they're trying to call them, they will actually call each other by their own name so they can give each other their own names. Water buffaloes in Africa, they actually vote. What do they vote about? This is interesting.

When they're all sat together on the field, just chilling, they will all point. They will all sit facing a certain direction to say that this is the direction I think our herd should head. And so they would all sit. And of course, they don't do much, so they'll sit there for a long time.

[11:37] But eventually, one by one, they'll all start pointing and sitting towards the right direction. And when they've all voted and decide, OK, this is the majority vote, we head south. That's what they do.

Isn't that fascinating? Isn't that fascinating? There's dragonflies who migrate from India to Africa every year. And it's very, very important that they migrate from India to Africa, because they will then go to Africa. And what do they eat? They eat mosquitoes. And why is that important? Malaria. And if they stop flying to Africa, then malaria cases will rise in Africa. Trees. Trees, you may think, are just individual trees, but they talk to each other. How do they talk to each other? There's a network underground where all of them are connected. We've all heard of the aspen tree. And aspen grove is a whole group of trees. Actually, in Utah, there's an aspen grove that basically, actually, people know it's called pando, where actually all these separate trees within this aspen grove are actually all connected. You could even argue that they are all one tree. Isn't it incredible? Birds. Actually, I'm actually terrified of birds. That's one of the things that I'm really scared of, especially those bright, sharp colored ones. But when they fly, they know how to fly from one part of the world to another and not get lost and keep formation.

What? I can't even keep my family in formation when I walk through a gift shop. How do they even do that? Salmon, as they swim upstream, they actually take nutrients from the ocean back into the river forest. And those nutrients will then feed that ecosystem so that birds and bears and trees will all get fed. That's why sitting in nature is so important. Because when you sit in nature, when you sit by, look, and if it's too far for you and it's too hard for you and you don't like hiking, then you just go to Repulse Bay and you just sit and you just look out and you see the waves coming in and out and you're like, you know what? This world, this earth will operate fine without me doing anything.

Because God has already put it all into motion.

You look inside the human body. You look and see, what's the body temperature that's good for us? What's 37.5 is what the UK biology textbooks teach?

[14:03] 36 and some of us teach slightly different things. But what happens if it goes a little bit above? Dr. Arrow hates being pointed out to you. So I want to point it out again. Dr. Arrow, what happens when the body, let's say, hits 40 degrees? Why is it so dangerous? Something about enzymes.

They denature. Does anyone remember the word enzymes? Yes. Enzymes have special shapes. They're like jigsaw puzzles. They fit together and they work really well. But as soon as the temperature goes high, they start to basically denature and they dismantle. They lose their shape and they don't do the reactions anymore. How do you control your blood sugar? You have hormones like insulin and glucagon, which are in charge of carrying the blood sugar around and

making sure that your body stays in balance. Does anyone remember what the word for balance is? There we go. Homeostasis. When everything stays in balance. I tell you, it will take a very brave man or woman to look at the human body and go, yeah, it happened by accident. Yeah, I don't know. I think I still think over thousands and thousands of years, random particles banged together and eventually became who we are now.

I read a book one time and there was an author who actually had someone come up to him and say, hey, I don't believe in any of your stuff, in your Christian stuff, because I believe that actually we're all random because we are all products of just random particles banging together. And then the author said to him, well, doesn't that mean your thoughts are also random? So how can I take what you're saying seriously? Because it's all random. There's got to be something else that explains all of this stuff. And honestly, this is the one topic that really, really lifted me. One final biology example for maybe the people who are especially muscly. Where's Ude? Ude is a muscle guy.

How does your body even control itself? You're sat here right now, you know, because you've got muscles that actually hold yourself together. And when Ude goes and lifts those weights in the gym and pumps the iron and gets his testosterone going to attract a member of the opposite sex, what's happening in his body? The actin and the myosin are basically pulling and contracting. And then of course, they break when he's in the gym. Why? Why do we want them to break Ude? Because they come back bigger.

That is why. Can you see, can you see that creation has to point towards a creator? We're sat here and it sucks because the water is just ruining all our plans. But the plants need the water because when they mix it with carbon dioxide, they then produce glucose that then animals eat. And then we eat those animals so we can have life. They take the carbon dioxide and they give us what?

[17:09] Oxygen. Can you see there is a whole creation revolving around you to allow you to be where you are right now? God is revealing himself to you through that. He's made it very obvious. You can't sit here and go, no, I don't believe. Well, why would you even trust in your own thoughts if you don't believe that there is a God who gives you meaning, who gives you purpose, who intricately creates you?

Psalms 19 says, the heavens declare your glory, the skies proclaim your handiwork. You look outside and you just see creation and you're like, there's something, something more. If there isn't, why do you even admire? Why do people hike all the way up to dragon's back?

Why do they even admire what there is? Everything's just random anyway. You see a baby dying on the street. Well, if it's just all random, then why are you heartbreaking for that baby? Because it's all random anyway. It doesn't, it's meaningless. There's other animals eating other animals. There's got to be more. Science tells you how things work, but I think faith tells you why they bother to work in the first place. You see, if we don't believe that, what happens here? Let's see, verse 20. And in the things that have been made, that's what can be seen. So they are without excuse.

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools. Maybe a few decades ago, that's what happened. Science started to really make jumps. So people are like, oh no, no, this is disproven the existence of God. But science would say, hey, don't trust me.

Don't believe in me because I can't save you. I'm only here to tell you how things work. And by the way, I change every few years. That's why they're called theories. That's why they're called discoveries. Because we're constantly figuring things out. I don't think Annabelle is here, so I'm a little bit less nervous talking about this. But did you know that it was only in the late 19th century when actually we discovered that actually germs were a thing? That we had a theory of germ theory, because before that we believed that we got sick because simply the air was bad.

[19:22] And it was the miasma theory. But it was only when we discovered that actually microorganisms exist, that even on our skin, that there are microorganisms that we can't see. Especially lots in teenagers.

But we only see those things. And then we discover penicillin, antibiotics. How? By accident in 1928. Because he leaves and the scientist just sees this, oh, the germs aren't growing here. What's here?

And you see actually scientists, pioneering scientists will say this. That actually science is simply a discovery of creation. It's just a discovery of God. One astronomer says that actually science is

basically thinking God's thoughts after him. Discovering to seeing what he has actually put in place. Science says don't believe in me. Artificial intelligence says do not believe in me. This summer, through some of our travels, I've relied extensively, extensively on perplexity, DeepSeq, and ChatGPT.

Why do I need all three? Because I need to cross-reference. Because they're not always correct. And if you look, if you use DeepSeq, and you look, one time DeepSeq was adamant. I said, can I drive to Shenzhen Bay and park there so I can go to Shenzhen? And he says, yes, you can go there. There is a car park right at Shenzhen Bay checkpoint. Go park there. So what do Christina and I do? We drive towards Shenzhen Bay checkpoint. And then there's a forbidden sign that only authorized vehicles are allowed to go.

And I said, well, the DeepSeq said I could. So then I asked DeepSeq, hey, I thought you said that there was a car park that I could. And he's like, oh, the user is questioning my judgment. Let me do a bit more research. This is the DeepThink part, which is completely creepy, by the way, but do have a look at it. And then I was like, oh, many apologies. There is no car park at Shenzhen Bay. I nearly got arrested.

[21 : 26] But that's the thing. AI is still just growing. It's that's the whole point of science. It's discovering what God has already done. Creation is evidence for God's existence. That's what I'm here to say.

And actually, even if you are adamant that science is the way, you know that science also needs faith. You cannot study science without having some faith. If you're saying, okay, I'm going to do this experiment tomorrow in India, and it's going to be about physics. You have an assumption. You have a moral assumption, a faith that actually there will be gravity existing in India tomorrow. You need to have that kind of faith to be able to do those kinds of things. You also need to have another assumption, another faith, which is actually what you're thinking is actually rational and not random. And you need to decide, okay, well, this is, I'm going to do this, and I'm going to rely on this.

How do you, how can you prove it? You cannot. You cannot prove that you are thinking rationally. Science also requires faith. Science tells us how things work. The Bible tells us why they bothered to work in the first place, or rather, the Bible tells us who made it all work.

The science, this, this Bible is not really a science textbook necessarily, but it's about the story of a scientist who went into the lab to save his own creation. Do we believe that? And there's a final passage that I want to look into today because I've got a special thing coming up.

[22 : 52] But if anything, I just want you to remember, science tells you how things work, but faith tells you why they bother to work in the first place. And if science is a signpost, the real question is, what is it pointing us to? And here it is, Colossians chapter one. If you have your Bibles, I'm talking about your paper Bibles. If you only have it on your phone, then feel free to carry on scrolling on Instagram. Colossians chapter one, verse, let's see, where shall we go today?

Let's do 15. Let's go for it. Let's be a bit more brave. 15 to 20. If science is a signpost, I'm here to tell you that this is what it's pointing us to.

Okay. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him, all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things and in him, all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him, all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. Jesus. Science is a signpost towards Jesus. Jesus is the substance of God's creation. Jesus is the reason why we are here. Jesus is God's pattern for all creation.

He exemplifies God's faithfulness to mankind. He also exemplifies and displays and models mankind's faithfulness back to God. This was how we were supposed to be designed. Jesus came to show us the way and say, this is how you live. This is why you live. And this is how you trust God. Even when it leads to suffering.

Even when it leads to the cross. This is how you do it. And I will show you that this way is the way that leads to life. When man makes his own choices, it leads to death. But this is how we do it.

[24 : 57] I mentioned at the beginning, I said, science is a topic that maybe I talked about a lot 10, 15 years ago, but it actually has died down a little bit. I think the question is this. A lot of people

have stopped asking, well, is anyone out there? Because I think everyone agrees there is something out there.

Because everyone is starting to see the limits of science, seeing the limits of knowledge. Science itself, the word just means to know. And we're constantly just growing in our knowledge and our discoveries. And actually, the more you find out, the more you realize what you don't know, he's like, whoa, this is so much bigger. Our minds cannot comprehend. And we're heading into another phase of trusting in something else with AI. It's a huge thing. Tim Cook said recently that actually, the dawn of AI is just as big as the dawn of the internet.

There is so much uncertainty. There are so many things that we don't know yet. For us, can we remember that actually, all of this points to Jesus. When you see creation, you see that actually, it's not really about is anyone out there. The next question that people are asking now is, is anyone out there who cares for me? You've stopped asking, how did this world come about? We know it's here. We know that there's someone out there. The question now has become, well, does anyone out there actually care for me? So actually, the next generations growing up are less about science versus faith. It's simply just about, well, who am I meaning to, who am I supposed to connect with? Communion. Who can I have an authentic relationship with? Because I'm starting to see that this world is filled with darkness and fake posts. How can I know what is real? And how can I know who actually cares for me? Creation, brothers and sisters, points us to the creator. Science is a signpost to Jesus. And he cares for you. And he loves you. You see, it was God's original design.

When he created the garden to walk with Adam and Eve, he was just, just let me be with you. Nothing else. You don't need to do stuff for me. I just want you to be with me. Would you just be with me? And I know you need this. I know you want this. And yet we just numb ourselves, distract ourselves with all these other things, entertain myself with all these other posts and all these other shows. And then you realize that actually it still doesn't satisfy us because you were meant for something more. You were meant for genuine, deep connection. So drag yourself out into nature. Not today, another day. Drag yourself out into nature and sit and humble yourself under the mighty hand of God. Look and cast your anxieties onto him and know that he cares for you because he has got a whole system of nature working to feed you, to sustain you. And he holds all these things together. In him, all things were held together. He is the sustainer of life. We know this. We deep down know this. And how do I know we know this?

When we end up in the hospital and the doctor says, hey, actually, there's nothing else we can do for you. We're just waiting now. Every time we face, at least for just our physical ailments, and we get to the point where we're like, even a doctor can't help me, even a scientist can't help me. And then what happens? And then we know. And then we turn back to the thing that we have deep down always known, but we have been claiming to be wise.

[28:30] But then we've actually been futile in our thinking. And it's that moment when we go, actually, God, I realize that I am not in control. I thought I was in control. I thought my doctor was the best oncologist I could find in Hong Kong. But yet here I am submitting to you.

Submitting to you. Letting science point me back to you. Creation is his love letter to us.

Let us use our telescopes. Let us use our microscopes to look and discover God's fingerprints all over. Be filled with just confidence that actually Christianity is question-proof in the sense there is no question that's too big. If you're sat there going, I don't know about this whole faith thing yet, but I'm worried to ask questions because I grew up in an education system and I grew up in a church that doesn't allow me to ask questions. Ask away. Can you imagine there's a God that's small enough that just because you have a few questions that it all falls apart, then we don't want to have that God. Ask away. But remember this. Christianity is all about connection. It's all about connection to a savior. Why? Because it's called Christianity. It's in the name. You're here not because you are intellectually satisfied. You're not here because you want to prosper here. You're here because you want to be connected to a person. That's why you're a Christian.

That creation, let everything around you point towards him. And you'll realize this love letter that he's been writing for you all along, that he's recruited dolphins and whales and trees and dragonflies to revolve around you, to sustain you. He is divine. We are all part of this one tree that is held together by him. Can we remember that? C.S. Lewis says this, the more we understand the universe, the more meaningless it becomes unless God exists. The more we understand about the universe, the more meaningless it becomes unless God exists. I hope that encourages you that all of this is still about a creator eager to connect with his creation.