

Science: Facts and Faith

What do we *see* when we look at rain falling? Frost covering the ground? Trees in the forest? Lightning and thunder? Andromeda Galaxy? Grand Canyon?

The faith of a man or a culture will determine how the surrounding world is viewed. All thinking is founded upon faith. Other words for faith are:

- Presupposition. *Pre* means before and *supposition* means belief without full evidence.
- Premise: a proposition antecedently supposed (e.g. the axioms or postulates of Euclidean geometry).
- Precommitment: a preliminary act or pledging of trust.
- Paradigm: a model that provides a basis for understanding the facts.

Faith conditions the way the facts before us are understood and interpreted. Consider a fish and a submarine. The facts about both are that they have tails and navigate underwater. Consider two *faith* scenarios. First, assume that similarity equals common ancestry. When interpreting the facts by this faith, we conclude that the fish is a highly advanced, miniaturized great-nephew of the submarine. Second, assume that similarity equals a common designer. When interpreting the facts by this faith, we conclude that both were designed to work underwater; one by man, the other by God. Note that with the right *facts* but a wrong *faith* you can come up with the *wrong* answer for all the *right* reasons!

Astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle, in *Highlights in Astronomy*, said, "Facts are always analyzed in terms of the prejudices of the investigator. The prejudices are of a deep kind, relating to our views on how the universe 'must' be constructed."

Scientist Alfred North Whitehead, in *Adventures in Ideas*, said, "The relevance of evidence depends upon the theory that is dominating the discussion."

Paleontologist Stephen Jay Gould, in *Ever Since Darwin*, said, "Facts do not 'speak for themselves'; they are read in the light of theory."

Ideas have consequences. Ian T. Taylor, author of *In the Minds of Men*, said "... presuppositions can not only make us see what does not exist but can also prevent us from seeing what does." In 1959, paleontologist Louis Leakey found a bit of a skull bone and two teeth in Nairobi, Kenya. He said, "We knelt together to examine this treasure ... and cried with sheer joy. For years people had been telling us that we'd better stop looking, but I felt deep down that it had to be there. You must be patient about these things." Note that Leakey knew what he found *before* he examined it; he was finding proof for a theory already accepted. The Piltdown man forgery is a classic case of how a few men, blinded by their own presuppositions, deceived and duped an entire generation (from 1912 until the hoax was uncovered in 1953). Concerning this, John Reader, in *Missing Links*, said, "When preconception is so clearly defined, so easily reproduced, so enthusiastically welcomed and so long accommodated as in the case of the Piltdown man, science reveals a disturbing predisposition towards belief before investigation."

What are the roots of evolutionary *faith*? The basis is anthropological. Michael Denton, in *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, said, "The entire scientific ethos and philosophy of modern western man is based to a large extent upon the central claim of Darwin's theory that humanity was not born by the

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creative intentions of a Deity, but by a completely mindless, trial and error selection of random molecular patterns.” An outstanding British biologist, D.M.S. Watson, said in the magazine *Nature* (1929, vol. 123), “... the theory of evolution ... a theory universally accepted not because it can be proved by logically coherent evidence to be true but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible.” The building of modern science is founded upon, not evidence, but a paradigmical prejudice. Quoting C.S. Lewis, “Was it devised not to get in facts but to keep out God?” In summary, evolution must be understood as *man’s attempt to flee from God*. If God is Creator and is now sustaining every atom of His creation, then man is *faced with reminders of Him wherever he looks*. Rebellious man is suppressing the truth clearly seen in creation (Romans 1:18-20).

Since the roots of evolutionary faith are anthropological, then the touchstone of truth is man’s reason. This culminates in the absolutization of the scientific method; that is, only what can be proved by man’s reason is true. Revelation from a transcendent, Creator God is *not* a source of knowledge. But, by this very definition, evolution *cannot* be scientific! According to Denton, “The basis of the doctrine of evolution consists *not in an experimental demonstration*, but in its general harmony with scientific thought.”

For the evolutionary faith, matter is ultimate. Corliss Lamont, in *The Philosophy of Humanism*, states that “... Nature itself constitutes the sum total of reality, that matter-energy and not mind is the foundation stuff of the universe ... our cosmos does not possess a supernatural and eternal God.” Man is therefore only a product of the cosmos and is conditioned by it. Life is defined chemically and physiologically.

Finally, for the evolutionary faith, the physical laws of the universe stand before us as impersonal absolutes.

What are the consequences of this faith? Quoting Lamont, “... the central concern is always the happiness of man in this existence, not in some fanciful never-never land beyond the grave; a happiness worthwhile as an end in itself and not subordinate to or dependent on a Supreme Deity.” Compare this statement with I Corinthians 15:32. According to Denton, “The social and political currents [communism, fascism, socialism - J.N.] which have swept the world in the past 80 years would have been impossible without its [Darwinian Revolution - J.N.] intellectual sanction. It is ironic to recall, that it was the increasingly secular outlook in the nineteenth century which initially eased the way for the acceptance of evolution while today it is perhaps the Darwinian view of nature more than any other that is responsible for the agnostic and skeptical outlook of the twentieth century.” The Darwinian Revolution is nothing but a philosophy of despair. We are pieces of driftwood washed up on the shore of fate. Modern Education has proclaimed this “evangel” for decades. The result is students who look at the Grand Canyon and say, “Praise and honor to Strata, Subsidences, and Uplifts.”

In contrast, what are the roots of biblical *faith*? The basis is theological. Biblical faith looks at what God has said in His revealed word. The Bible reveals God to be the Creator, Triune, Sovereign, Just, Good, Infinite, Eternal, Personal. The universe is His handiwork. Biblical faith admits man’s rebellion and trusts in God’s redemption in Christ. Biblical faith sees man to be accountable to his Creator. Man faces his Creator everywhere for no fact exists apart from God.

Since the roots of biblical faith are theological, then the touchstone of truth is revelation. True knowledge comes from God; apart from this, we have, not knowledge, but misinformation (Psalm 36:9;

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Colossians 2:1-3). The purpose of the Bible is to correct our faulty, sin-corrupted vision so that we might see the world in truth.

For the biblical faith, God is ultimate. Man is responsible before Him to obey His directive to take dominion over the creation (Genesis 1:26-28). James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879) was a pioneering scientist in the field of electromagnetism. This prayer was found in his own handwriting after his death, “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 on 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.”

Finally, for the biblical faith, every physical “law of nature” is simply man’s attempt to categorize the faithfulness of God in the performance of His omnipotent sustaining word of power (Hebrews 1:3). We may determine the “cause and effect” nature of the universe by observation, but we must always keep in mind that the *first cause* of these laws is the triune God.

What are the consequences of this faith? William Haller wrote in *The Rise of Puritanism*, “Men who have assurance that they are to inherit heaven have a way of presently taking possession of the earth.” Stanley Jaki, in *The Origin of Science and the Science of Its Origin*, observed that “the history of science with its several stillbirths and only one viable birth, clearly shows that the only cosmology, or view of the cosmos as a whole, that was capable of generating science was a view of which the principal disseminator was the Gospel itself.” Biblical faith generated modern science. The scientific enterprise must now be subservient to biblical faith. Then, and only then, will its discoveries and products serve the “City of God” and thereby bring healing to the nations (Revelation 22:2).

Biblical faith will open our eyes to the wonders of God’s creation. The *Netherlands’ Confession* states: “Before our eyes as a beautiful book, in which all created things, large or small, are as letters showing the invisible things of God”

“Great and marvelous are Thy works” (Revelation 15:3).

“But now ask the beasts, and let them teach you” (Job 12:7).

“Great are the works of the Lord; they are studied by all who delight in them” (Psalm 111:2).

What do we see when we look at the rain falling? He sends the rain on the just and unjust; He draws up the drops of water; they distill rain from the mist (Matthew 5:45: Job 36:27). Frost covering the ground? From the breath of God ice is made (Job 37:10). Trees in the forest? The trees of the forest will sing for joy (Psalm 96:12). Lightning and thunder? Listen closely to the thunder of His voice, and the rumbling that goes out from His mouth. Under the whole heaven He lets it loose, and His lightning to the ends of the earth (Job 37:2-3). Andromeda Galaxy? The heavens declare the glory of God (Psalm 19:1). Grand Canyon? Hallelujah! for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns (Revelation 19:6).