

Chapter 19: Science Is Something God Created Humans to Do

Section 19.1: Science Belongs to Christianity

Main idea: the basic assumptions that allow modern science to work are assumptions that reflect a Christian worldview.

[Nature is orderly, Man is creative (image of God), and Man has authority to use Nature (dominion mandate).]

Section 19.2: The Ultimate Functions¹ of Science

I. A tool for discovering the glory of God

A. Accomplishments of twentieth century space science

1. In the 1960s – every launch of a manned rocket was front page news
2. Culminated in the moon landing, 1969
3. Practically everyone who was alive then can recall exactly where they were when Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon, July 20, 1969

“That’s one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind.”

a. Words composed by Armstrong *after* the moon landing was successful

b. Thought to do so earlier would be presumptuous, since landing was no sure thing

4. Another astronaut had this to say about his experiences on the moon

I felt that I was literally standing on a plateau somewhere out there in space, a plateau that science and technology had allowed me to get to. But now what I was seeing, and even more important, what I was feeling at that moment in time—science and technology had no answers for it, literally no answers. Because, there I was—and there you are, there you are, the earth: dynamic, overwhelming, and I felt that the world was just ... There’s too much purpose, too much logic. It was just too beautiful to have happened by accident. There has to be somebody bigger than you, and bigger than me.... There has to

¹ Modified from “The Ultimate Purposes for Science”, Mark L. Ward, *Biblical Worldview: Creation, Fall, Redemption* (Greenville, SC: BJU Press, 2016), 292.

be a creator of the universe.²

5. Biblical worldview principle observed by astronauts: Rm 1.20

a. Creation communicates God's eternal power and divine nature

b. Creation communicates God's glory

B. Other aspects of creation, observable by science, that communicate God's glory

1. Geological formations (Iguaçu Falls)

2. Biological creations (honeybees and honeycomb)

British evolutionary biologist, J. B. S. Haldane, was asked what nature taught about God, gave a mocking reply, "God has an inordinate fondness for beetles."³ – there are over 4,000 species of beetles, Haldane thinks that makes God look ridiculous.

- Some of those species develop over time by the process of breeding and speciation, but...
- God delights in his creation, and created a plethora of living creatures, and hundreds and thousands of species among various kinds of creatures.
- God's creation reflects the abounding love of God expressed in creating a profusion of life. This is the glory of God.

3. Cellular structure (blood cells)

4. Astronomical wonders (Moon in eclipse)

"There are beautiful things in this universe we have never seen and never will—sunsets on faraway planets and a thousand other splendors known only by their Creator—that have no apparent evangelistic purpose."⁴

² Gene Cernan, *In the Shadow of the Moon* (DVD) (Los Angeles: Mirage Productions, 2008), 1:30:00.

³ Paul Spencer Sochaczewski, *An Inordinate Fondness for Beetles* (Singapore: Editions Didier Millet, 2012), 195, quoted in Ward, *Biblical Worldview*, 292–93.

⁴ Chris Krycho, "Speak the Truth in Beauty: A Review of *Echoes of Eden*," Mere Orthodoxy (website), February 11, 2015.

C. One function of the tools of science is “to reveal and describe the gloriously creative and unfathomably wise work of God”⁵

1. Example: a study of the flight of birds using a sensitive microphone
 - a. Pigeons: noisy travelers
 - b. Peregrine falcons: much less noisy
 - c. Owls: almost silent – the mice they hunt never hear them coming

Increasingly advanced scientific instruments allow men to observe things like this, to “look closer, listen harder, and even feel more keenly the truths God has placed into His creation”⁶

2. Since science is a tool for discovering the glory of God it takes willful suppression to deny this (Rm 1.18)
3. Consequently, science doesn’t prove a godless, materialistic, evolutionary view of the universe, quite the contrary
4. Because of the fall, science also reveals the effects of human sin on the universe, but God’s glory is nevertheless always evident

II. A tool for loving your neighbour

A. The needs of your neighbour addressed by science

1. Problems of an undeveloped creation
 - a. Science develops better building materials through research and development
 - b. Science develops more efficient transportation

Both housing and transportation are things you and your neighbour need, regardless of the fall. There are many other things like these where science is a tool for loving your neighbour.

⁵ Ward, *Biblical Worldview*, 293.

⁶ Ibid.

2. Problems of a fallen creation

- a. Science develops better drugs, therapies, understanding of the human body
- b. Science develops stronger and more efficient prisons and law-enforcement techniques

Both healthcare and law enforcement as needs are consequences of the fall. There are many other areas like these where science is a tool for loving your neighbour.

3. Using science to solve problems people have is part of the Creation Mandate, subduing and having dominion (Gen 1.28)

- a. The majority of scientific research today is beneficial to humans – even that done by non-Christian scientists
- b. The conflict between “religion” and “science” is a conflict of worldviews, not a conflict of “myth” versus “reality”

Conclusion:

The ultimate functions of science are to reveal the glory of God and to be a benefit for the needs of others:

- Giving God Glory
- Loving One's Neighbour