

Science and faith

Dr Stephen Hayes

South Hants Origins Workshop

14th June 2017

Science is great!



Science is great! As far as it goes.



Outline of presentation

- What is science?
- What do we mean by faith?
- Are science and faith in conflict?
- Has Christian faith hindered science?
- Important Christians who were scientists
- Does evolution depend on science or faith?

What is science?

Science IS

- About measurement
- Can be tested
- Operates in the world of matter, energy and natural law
- Open to correction by facts and evidence
- Dependent on assumptions

What is science?

Science IS

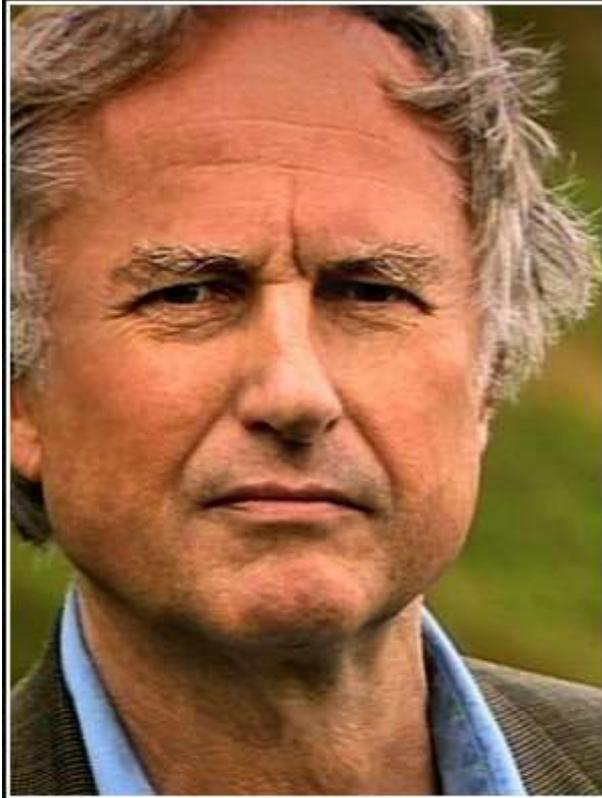
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Science IS NOT

- Competent to make statements about spiritual matters.
- Able to guide us on morals
- Equal to materialism
- The only measure of truth

What is faith? Oxford English Dictionary

- Complete trust or confidence in someone or something, e.g. *'this restores one's faith in politicians'*
- Strong belief in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual conviction rather than proof.
- A particular religion, for example *'the Christian faith'*
- A strongly held belief ... *'men with strong political faiths'*



Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence. Faith is belief in spite of, even perhaps because of, the lack of evidence.

— *Richard Dawkins* —

AZ QUOTES

Peter Higgs criticises Richard Dawkins over anti-religious 'fundamentalism'

Higgs boson theorist says he agrees with those who find Dawkins' approach to dealing with believers 'embarrassing'



i Prof Peter Higgs said he was relieved not to win the Nobel physics prize this year. Photograph: Murdo Macleod for the Guardian



SCIENTIFIC BLOGGING
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Richard Dawkins Misrepresents Science, Say British Scientists

By News Staff | October 31st 2016 02:55 PM | 38 comments | [Print](#) | [E-mail](#) | [Track Comments](#)



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Thanks, but no thanks, say British scientists about controversial British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, primarily known for his criticism of religion.

A majority of those surveyed who mentioned Dawkins' work during research interviews reject his approach to public engagement and said his work misrepresents science and scientists because he conveys the wrong impression about what science can do and the norms that scientists observe in their work.

Do not be deceived by philosophy (Colossians 2:8)

- **Science is about measurement**

- Materialism is a set of assertions about things we cannot measure
- Materialism is therefore a philosophical position, i.e. a **belief**.
- It is reasonable to assume materialism when we are working with material (e.g. metals, rocketry, electricity, agriculture, medicine etc)
- The successes of science in the material realm does not entitle scientists to make pronouncements about immaterial matters

Who has faith?

- All of us, including...
- **Football fans**
- **Professing Christians of all kinds**
- **Muslims** (*Sunni, Shia, Sufi, Amadhea etc*)
- **Socialists** (*'for the many, not the few'*)
- **Conservatives** (*'2 strong and stable'*)
- **Evolutionists**
- **Agnostics** *yes, they **believe** that we can't/don't know if there is a God or not and/or that it's not really very important (see Pascal's Wager)*
- ...but some faith positions are based on less evidence than others.

Evidence versus faith in evolution

- Molecules to man evolution has never been observed
- There is no viable mechanism
- It violates numerous natural laws, e.g. biogenesis, the deleterious nature of mutations, information, entropy

- At best, molecules to man evolution is a failed hypothesis
- Evolution is accepted by faith, and the philosophy of materialism

D M S Watson quote

- “The theory of evolution itself, 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.”
- ***‘creation, is clearly incredible’*** = a faith position based on the philosophical assumption of materialism

Richard Lewontin on science and religion

- It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by ***our a priori adherence to material causes*** to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counter-intuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. ***Moreover, that materialism is absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door.***

* <http://creation.com/amazing-admission-lewontin-quote>

How did we get here?

God

- **God simply exists** and is the origin of everything .
- God purposes, designs and creates and sustains.
- God is the uncreated first cause of all else.
- **This is what theists believe**

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Not God

- **The cosmos simply exists** and is the origin of everything.
- The cosmos has no purpose or design. We are accidental.
- The cosmos is the uncreated first cause of all else.
- **This is what atheists believe.**

In the beginning.....

- SOMETHING had to 'simply exist'

Charles Darwin the believer

*'I can see no very great difficulty in believing that natural selection has converted **the simple apparatus of an optic nerve** merely coated with pigment and invested with a transparent membrane into an optical instrument as perfect as any as is possessed by any member of the **Articulate class**'*

Charles Darwin the man of faith

'I can indeed hardly doubt that all vertebrate animals having true lungs have descended by ordinary generation from an ancient prototype of which we know nothing furnished with a floating apparatus or swim bladder.'

NB Darwin asserts 'I can hardly doubt...' however later in the same sentence is forced to admit 'we know nothing.'

*How is this not faith '**..the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**'? (Hebrews 11:1, definition of faith)*

The conflict or warfare model

- Popularised by T E Huxley
- Continued by Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, Sam Harris, Brian Cox and others like them
- The warfare model basically states ***‘Science and faith are at war to the death, only one can win and the winner is science.’***
- The conflict model is rightly called a ***category error.***

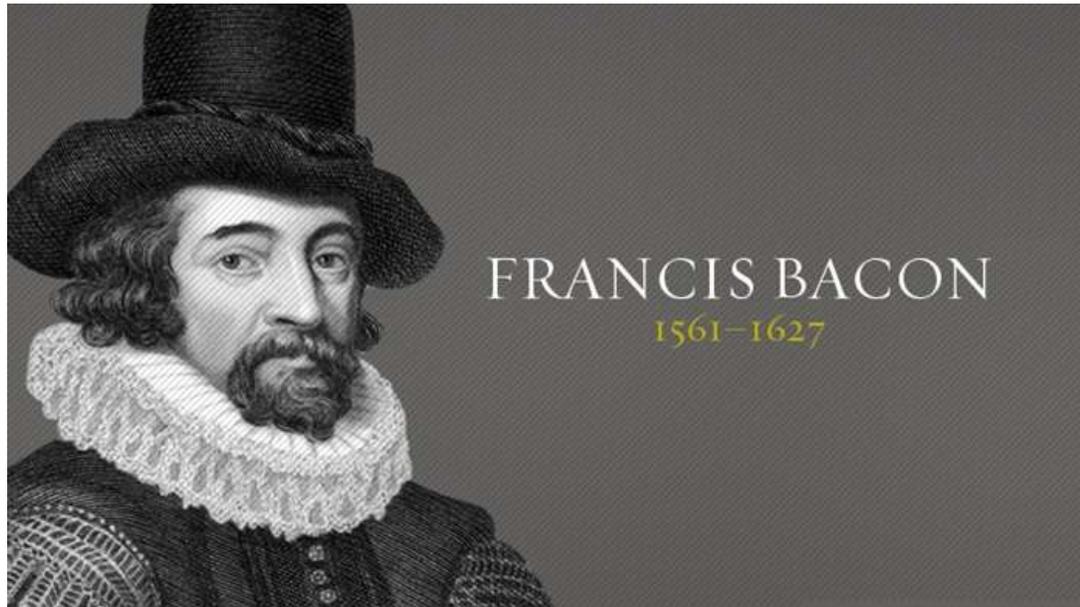
Ask a silly question.....

- What do you get if you cross a carrot with a cucumber?
- **You can't cross a carrot with a cucumber.**

A few Christians who were famous scientists

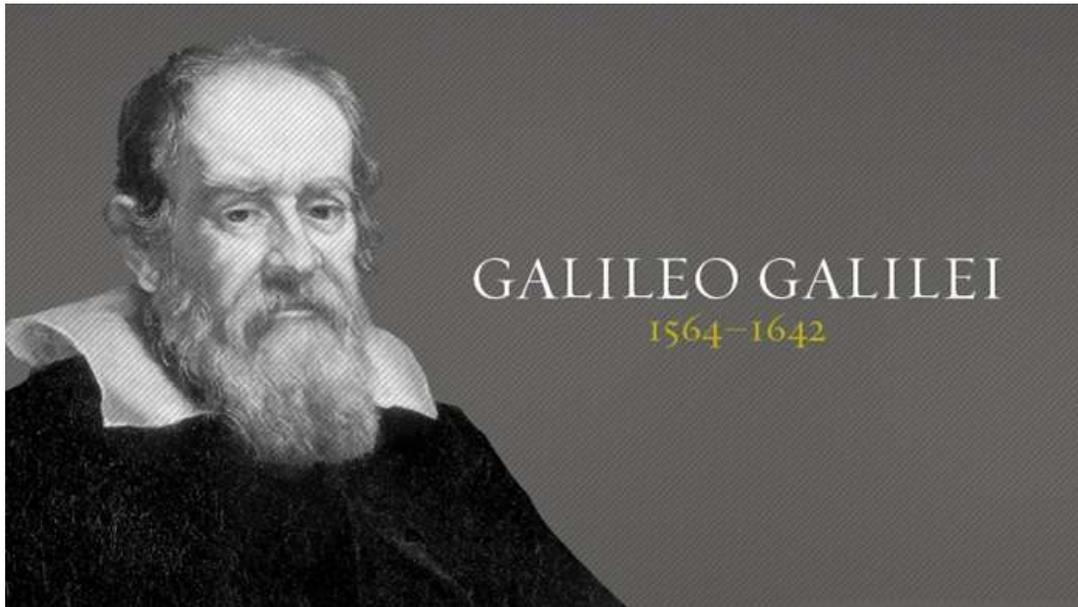
- Bacon
- Galileo
- Newton
- Pasteur
- Pascal
- Mendel
- Maxwell
- Faraday
- Von Braun
- Damadian (inventor of the MRI scanner)

Francis Bacon



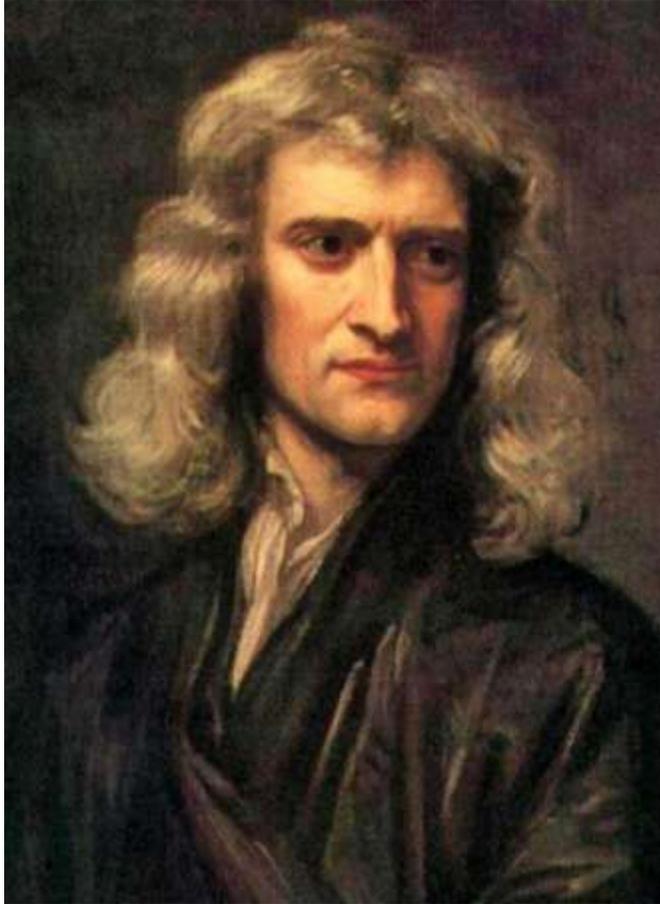
- Effectively invented the scientific method
- Proposed a new science based on experimentation, inductive reasoning, and the betterment of the human condition.
- Inspirational to founding of [The Royal Society](#)
- Described as a 'devout Anglican'
- In his will, he included this final prayer:
"When I thought most of peace and honor, thy hand [was] heavy on me, and hath humbled me, according to thy former loving kindness. ... Just are thy judgments upon my sins. ... Be merciful unto me for my Savior's sake, and receive me into thy bosom."

Galileo Galilei



- Professing Christian
- ***"God is known by nature in his works, and by doctrine in his revealed word."***
- His quarrel was not with the church, but scientists of his day
- Made observations of moons orbiting planets and calculated that earth revolved around the Sun
- Was wrongly persecuted by the church/state power of his day

Isaac Newton- an unorthodox Christian but no atheist



- Ranked with Einstein as one of the greatest physicists of all time. Also wrote extensively about theology- including an unorthodox view of the Trinity.
- Developed Laws of gravity, planetary motion, light, calculus and numerous other achievements
- ‘Newton’s theology profoundly influenced his scientific method, which rejected pure speculation in favor of observations and experiments. His God was not merely a philosopher’s impersonal First Cause; he was the God in the Bible who freely creates and rules the world, who speaks and acts in history. The biblical doctrine of creation undergirded Newton’s science.
- Newton believed in a God of “actions [in nature and history], creating, preserving, and governing ... all things according to his good will and pleasure.”
- (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_views_of_Isaac_Newton)

Robert Boyle



- Professing Christian
- Did good science concerning the expansion of gases with heat
- Discovered Boyle's Law

Blaise Pascal- Mathematician, inventor and theologian



- *'In faith there is enough light for those who want to believe and enough shadows to blind those who don't.'*
- Opposed Voltaire and other 'Enlightenment' atheists of his day
- **'Pascal's Wager'** it is insane to reject Christ as there is so little to gain if we are right, so much to lose if we are wrong. ***'If you win, you win all, if you lose, you lose nothing. Therefore believe.***

Blaise Pascal



- He tested the theories of Galileo and Torricelli (who discovered the principles of the barometer), culminating in his famous law of hydraulics, which states that pressure on the surface of a fluid is transmitted equally to every point in a fluid.
- He added important papers on the vacuum, on the weight and density of air, and the arithmetic triangle. He developed the theory of probability, which is still used today.
- He invented the syringe, the hydraulic lift, and is credited with inventing the wristwatch and mapping out the first bus route in Paris.

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/people/evangelistsandapologists/blaise-pascal.html>

Gregor Mendel

Man of Science, Man of God:



- Did experiments crossing different varieties of peas
- Made fundamental observation about genetics and inheritance
- Generally considered the founder of the science of genetics.
- His work was 'buried' since it was unsupportive of Darwinism.

Who: Gregor Johann Mendel

What: **Father of Modern Genetics**

When: July 20, 1822 - January 6, 1884

Where: Heinzendorf, Hapsburg Empire (Modern-Day Czech Republic)

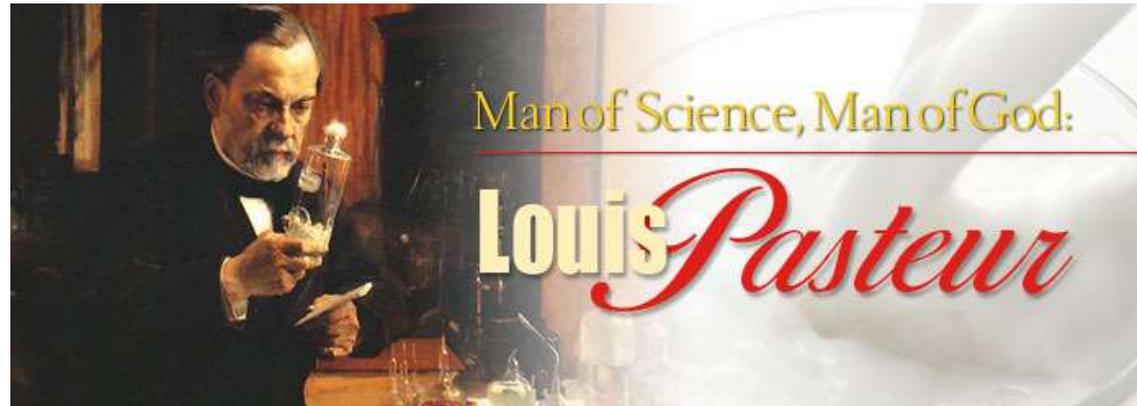
Gregor Mendel was an Austrian-born, German-speaking Augustinian monk who is famously known as the founder of the modern study of genetics, though his work did not receive much recognition until after his death.

Gregor Mendel- priest and discover of genetic science



- Mendel's paper was rejected at first, since he evidently produced it as a counter to Darwin's theory of pangenesis, which was popular at the time and accepted as being responsible for inheritance.²
- In 1868, Mendel was elevated to the position of abbot, and his scientific work was largely displaced by his administrative and ministerial responsibilities. He died in 1884 at the age of 61 from chronic kidney inflammation, and the abbot who succeeded him burned most of his papers.
- <http://www.icr.org/article/4126/>

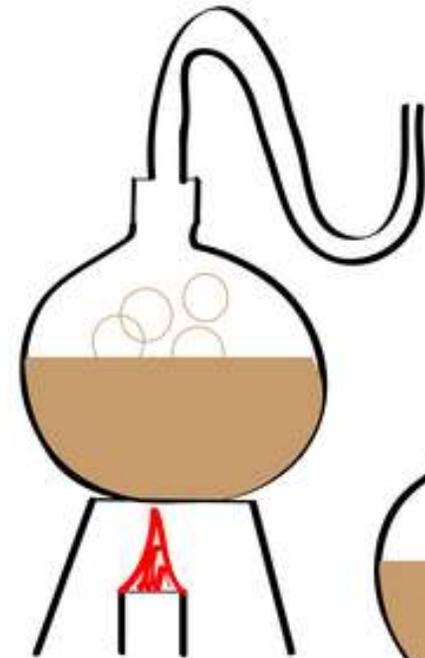
Pasteur- founder of the science of microbiology



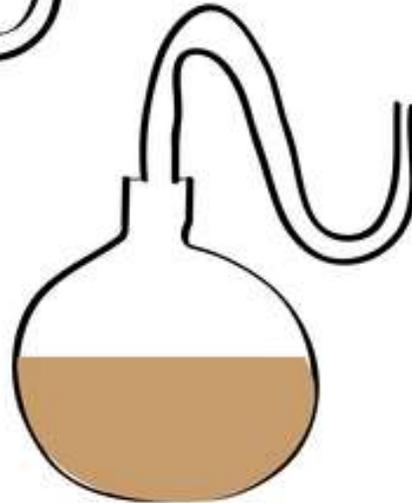
- Pasteur conducted experiments comparing organic material that was exposed to air with organic material that was not. Nothing grew in the sealed or filtered vessels. This empirically demonstrated that the fermentation in the open containers was caused by the growth of microorganisms from the air, not spontaneous generation, thus proving biogenesis (life begets life). His studies led to the practices of sterilization and "pasteur"ization, particularly in the fields of medicine and food preparation.
- 'father of microbiology' <http://www.icr.org/article/4155/>

Pasteur showed life only came from life.
Founded the science of microbiology.

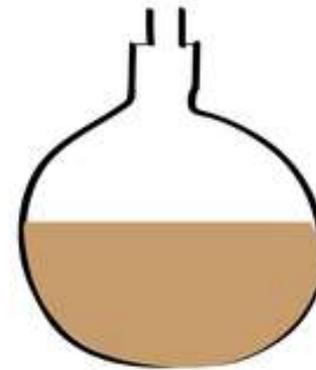
Pasteur's Test of Spontaneous Generation



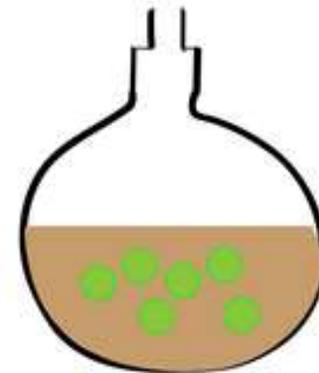
Broth is Boiled



Broth Remains Free
of Microorganisms



Curved Neck
is Removed



Microorganisms
Grow in Broth

Louis Pasteur

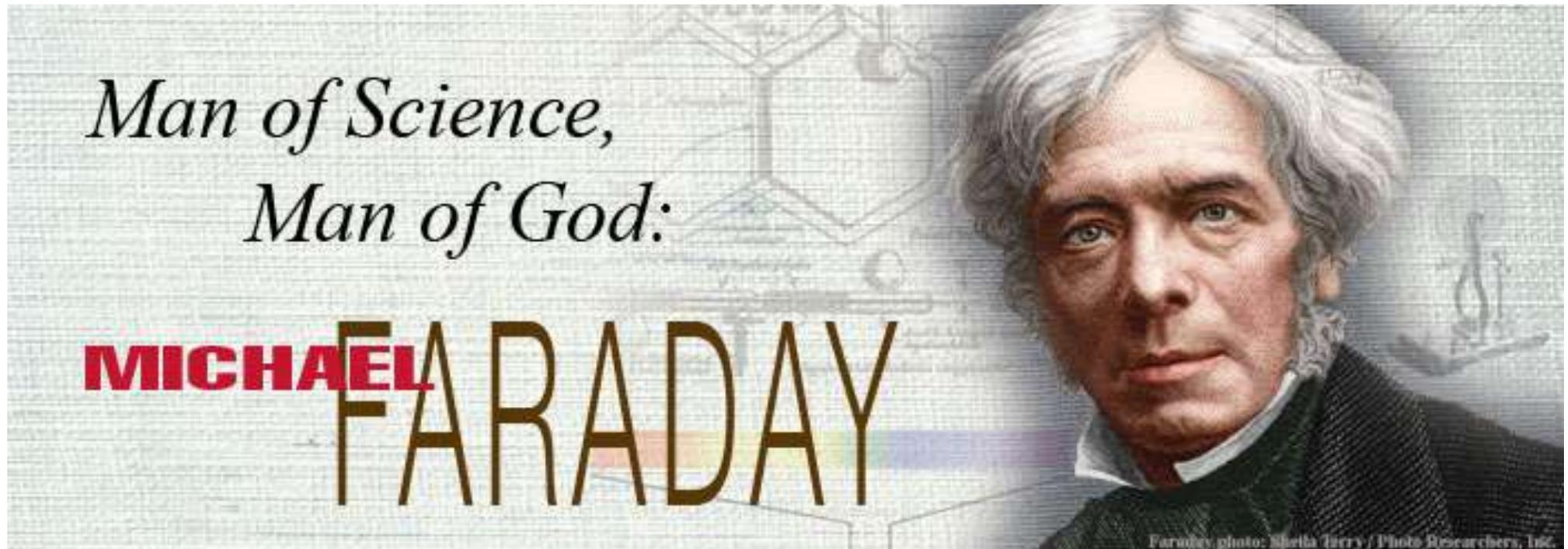
- In 1880, Pasteur and his pupils began research into hydrophobia, or rabies. At the time, treatments included cauterization with hot irons, stifling sufferers between two mattresses, and other useless "remedies." Pasteur isolated the rabies virus and developed both a non-virulent and a virulent vaccine.[†] The non-virulent version was given to a nine-year-old boy bitten by a mad dog in 1885. The vaccine succeeded, as it did in subsequent cases. On October 26, 1885, Pasteur officially presented his research on hydrophobia, preventative vaccines, and vaccination treatment applied after infection, and this work was highly praised.
- On June 4, 1887, the Pasteur Institute was established in Paris so Pasteur and his researchers could expand their work on infectious diseases.⁴ A university was also named for him, and he received high honours and acclaim from his peers, years after he had endured their criticism

Pasteur versus Darwin- Pasteur wins.

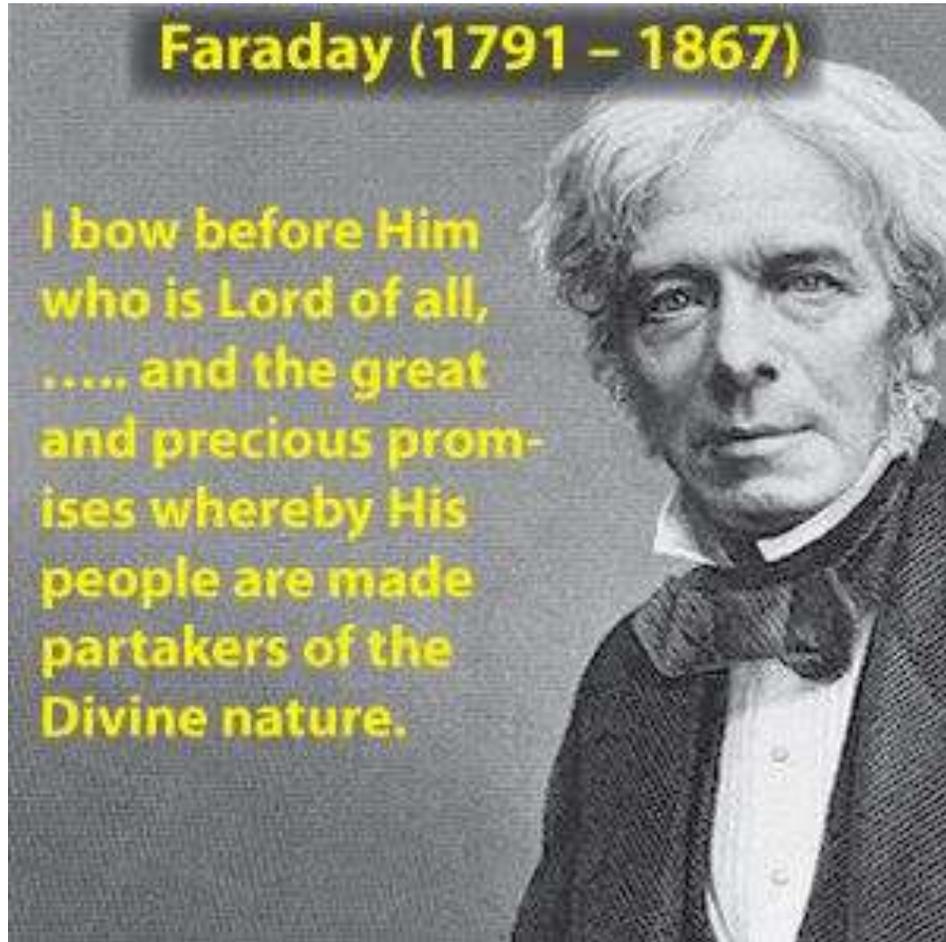
- Pasteur was a devout Catholic and was "regarded as conforming with the biblical account of the creation."
- At that time, the concept of spontaneous generation was widely accepted, which maintained that life was generated by non-life (i.e., maggots appeared to arise out of exposed animal carcasses).
- Darwin used this theory, also known as abiogenesis, to propose that the first life forms miraculously grew out of a "*warm little pond, with all sorts of ammonia and phosphoric salts, lights, heat, electricity, etc.*"
- **Pasteur's work was science, Darwin's position was based on his FAITH.**

Michael Faraday

- Made major contributions to physics (electromagnetism)
- Discoverer of benzene (a vitally important organic chemical)
- Church elder and preacher in nonconformist Bible church



Michael Faraday- physicist and nonconformist elder



- *Yet even in earthly matters I believe that "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead," and I have never seen anything incompatible between those things of man which can be known by the spirit of man which is within him, and those higher things concerning his future, which he cannot know by that spirit.³*

Maxwell-physicist and Christian

- ***“One scientific epoch ended and another began with James Clerk Maxwell.”***
- Don't believe me? Well, I wasn't the first person to say it – Albert Einstein said it first.
- When Einstein was asked if he had stood on the shoulders of Newton, he replied: ***“No, I stand on Maxwell's shoulders.”***

Maxwell (1831 – 1879)



... committing myself to God as the instrument of His will, not doubtfully, but in the certain hope that that Will will be plain enough at the proper time

Maxwell's prayer

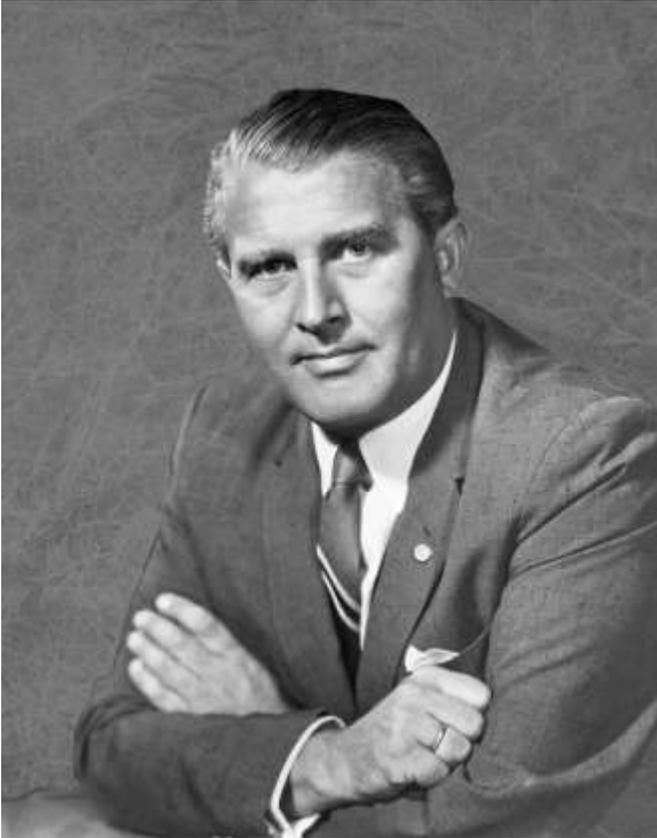
- Maxwell was convinced that scientific investigation and the teachings of the Bible were not only compatible but should be linked together. This was reflected in a prayer found among his notes:
- *“Almighty God, Who hast created man in Thine own image, and made him a living soul that he might seek after 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.”*

Werner von Braun-founder of rocket science



- Joined Nazi Party in 1937 (was told he had no choice)
- Developed German V2 rocket, hoped it would be used for space
- Taken to USA after WW2, worked on American space programme
- *'We knew that we had created a new means of warfare, and the question as to what nation, to what victorious nation we were willing to entrust this brainchild of ours was a moral decision more than anything else. We wanted to see the world spared another conflict such as Germany had just been through, and we felt that only by surrendering such a weapon to people who are guided by the Bible could such an assurance to the world be best secured.'*
- Subsequently converted to Christianity, apparently genuinely. Saw no conflict between faith and rocket science.
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wernher_von_Braun

Werner von Braun- from Wikipedia entry



- Later in life, he joined an Episcopal congregation,^[72] and became increasingly religious.^[76] He publicly spoke and wrote about the complementarity of [science and religion](#), the afterlife of the soul, and his belief in God.^{[77][78]} He stated, "Through science man strives to learn more of the mysteries of creation. Through religion he seeks to know the Creator."^[79] He was interviewed by the [Assemblies of God](#) pastor C. M. Ward, as stating,
- ***"The farther we probe into space, the greater my faith."***
- In addition, he met privately with evangelist [Billy Graham](#) and with [Martin Luther King Jr.](#).
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wernher_von_Braun

Raymond Damadian

The not-so-Nobel decision

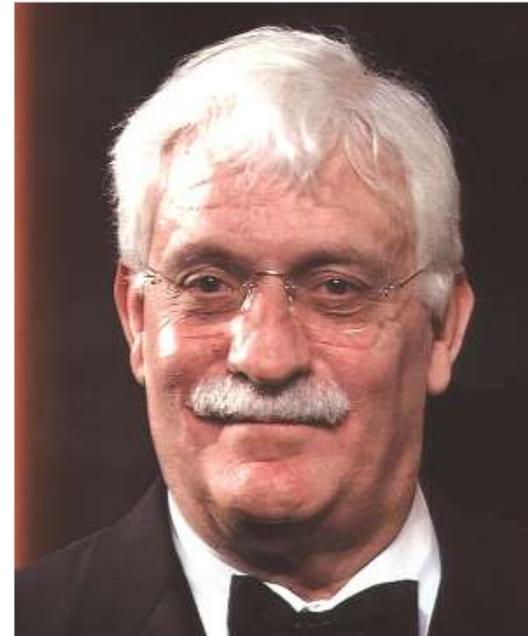
Recognition denied for achievement of great scientist Raymond Damadian—who is also a creationist

by *Carl Wieland*

Anticreationists often try to pretend that there is no prejudice against biblical creation in 'the world of science'. But creationists have long known that things are not like that in the real world. We even have to publish our own peer-reviewed journals; any paper which does not bow to materialistic axioms on origins has a snowball's chance in a blast furnace of getting published in a secular journal.

In fact, some editors have made it very clear that they will go to great lengths to keep their respective journals free of such 'corrupting influences'. Then there was the well-publicized case of Forrest Mims, the highly-skilled science writer. His employment by *Scientific American* was openly denied on the grounds of his creationist views—even though the subjects he was paid to write on were not remotely related to origins.

In June 1994, *Creation* magazine ran a [feature article¹](#) on Dr Raymond Damadian, the inventor of the MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scanner. This medical breakthrough has saved many lives. We wrote how Dr Damadian had been awarded the United States' National Medal of Technology. He has also been inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame, alongside Thomas Edison, Alexander Graham Bell and the Wright brothers, where he was awarded the Lincoln-Edison medal.



Raymond Damadian.

Damadian, inventor of MRI scanner, was wrongly denied his share in the 2003 Nobel prize

- As the agnostic/deist Canadian philosophy professor Michael Ruse has written of his own deep concern....

“.....Damadian is a Christian, says Ruse, whose beliefs include the Genesis account of creation: ‘Adam and Eve the first humans, universal flood, and all the rest.’”

- Ruse says that in the eyes of the Nobel committee, ***‘it is bad enough that such people exist, let alone give them added status and a pedestal from which to preach’.***



- Dr Damadian says emphatically that his greatest scientific discovery was to find that ***‘the highest purpose a man can find for his life is to serve the Will of God.’***
- He says that he is tremendously encouraged by the creation science ministry and blessed by it, calling it ***‘a courageous exposition of the truth’*** and a vitally important message for America today.

It is worthy of note....

...that the great scientific revolution of the last 400 years or so did NOT arise in Buddhist, Hindu, animist, Muslim or atheist cultures, but from a highly Christianised European and American culture.

The Judaeo-Christian world view is not only not OPPOSED to science, but historically has provided a very SCIENCE FRIENDLY culture.

Evidence for the Christian faith

- The extraordinary history of Israel and the Jews
- **Many Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in Jesus** (see Luke 24:27)
- Jesus' miracles and Resurrection
- Positive benefits to individuals, families and society of living authentic Christian life (superior ethical values and world view)
- The inner witness of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer
- Nothing better is on offer (alternatives such as atheism, Hinduism, Islam etc produce much worse results, ***'by their fruits you will know them'*** Matthew 7:15-20)

Summary of 'science and faith'

- Both can be done badly or well
- Either can be misunderstood, misrepresented and misused
- All truth is God's truth
- Truth cannot contradict truth
- **Test everything carefully-much is at stake!**

Finally, on 'category error' ...

Wise men do not use a paintbrush to insert a screw
Nor do they use a screwdriver to paint the ceiling
Or blame a hammer for not being a violin.

Don't be a fool (Psalm 14:1 'the fool says in his heart ***'There is no God'***)

Final thought

- If science and our faith appear to conflict, the science could be wrong, our faith could be wrong, or there could be a misunderstanding.
- Nature cannot, by definition, be used to investigate supernature (if any), there is a clue in the phrase, SUPERnature (super= above).
- Naturalism (nature is all that exists) is a philosophical assumption.
- None of us is fully informed
- All of us are biased.

- ..therefore choose wisely.

Pascal's Wager

- If the Christian's beliefs are wrong, he will never know anything about it, as on his death, he will enter into absolute nothingness and lose all consciousness for ever.
- If the atheist's beliefs are wrong, he will face an angry God and full accountability, with the possibility of an eternity of conscious torment.

Pascal's Wager

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- If the atheist's beliefs are wrong, he will face an angry God and full accountability, with the possibility of an eternity of conscious torment.
- Place your bets.....

'He who made the eye, does He not see?'

Psalm 94:9

