



Not Just Science: Questions Where Christian Faith and Natural Science Intersect

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This book argues that it is possible for our study of the natural world to enhance our understanding of God and for our faith to inform and influence our study and application of science. Whether you are a student, someone employed in the sciences, or simply an interested layperson, Not Just Science will help you develop the crucial skills of critical thinking and reflection about key questions in Christian faith and natural science. The contributors provide a systematic approach to both raising and answering the key questions that emerge at the intersection of faith and various disciplines in the natural sciences. Among the questions addressed are the context, limits, benefits, and practice of science in light of Christian values. Questions of ethics as they relate to various applied sciences are also discussed. The end goal is an informed biblical worldview on both nature and our role in obeying God's mandate to care for his creation. With an honest approach to critical questions, Not Just Science fills a gap in the discussion about the relationship between faith and reason. This is a most welcomed addition to these significant scholarly conversations. Ron Mahurin, PhD Vice President, Professional Development and Research Council for Christian Colleges & Universities

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

Questions Where Christian Faith and Natural Science Intersect What should liberal arts students studying at Christian colleges and universities be asking themselves as they study natural science? This book enables students to think critically about how the Christian worldview influences our perceptions in the area of natural science. The book acquaints students with foundational questions important to the practice of natural science, as well as God's mandate to care for his creation.

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C H A P T E R 1 Many authors have noted the close interaction between Christianity and science. Although the two are often assumed to be in conflict, a more positive relationship between science and faith is evident from their overlapping histories. The direct influences of Christian ideas on the success of science are often difficult to assess. However, their mutually supporting roles are evident in history, even when they sometimes appear to be in conflict. In fact, the roots of modern science can be traced to early Christian thought, and both science and faith can be seen as historically interrelated efforts to understand the physical universe and its creative source. Are natural science and Christian faith locked in conflict, or is there evidence of cooperation between the two? Perhaps the most typical view of the relationship between science and faith is one of conflict or confrontation, even though the emphasis on this 'warfare' model has greatly diminished at the scholarly level. Historically, the idea of warfare between science and Christianity developed during the latter half of the nineteenth century with the rise of positivism and evolutionary theories. Before this time, a close relationship between the two was evident from the number of pioneering scientists who were Christians and the number of clergymen who participated in scientific activities. The growing professionalism of science in the nineteenth century led to a spirit of competition and confrontation with the religious establishment. The increasing conflict and the formulation of a warfare model were supported by two influential books. John William Draper published the first edition of his *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* in 1874. Andrew Dickson White published his two-volume *History of the Warfare of Science and Theology in Christendom* in 1896. Both books had a strongly positivist and antireligious view of history, and both portrayed the natural sciences as the champions of academic freedom and the liberators of humanity from religious oppression. The popular interpretation of Darwinian theory in terms of the 'survival of the fittest' seemed to support this warfare model, with science replacing religious authoritarian claims in the struggle for cultural supremacy. In the first half of the twentieth century, logical positivism claimed victory in the supposed warfare between science and Christianity. The positivist's view was that only empirically verifiable knowledge is valid and that all other kinds of knowledge are opinion and emotion, literally 'non-sense.' Of course, this view itself was not empirically verifiable, but it became the dominant view for nearly fifty years. In the second half of the century, increasing historical analysis of science began to show the close relationship between science and culture and the way science changes with shifting cultural ideas and values. In the twentieth century, certain fundamentalist Christian groups who saw the natural sciences in opposition to a more literal interpretation of the Bible embraced the warfare model. For example, a recent book by Henry Morris, president of the Institute for Creation Research, that attacks the theory of evolution is entitled *The Long War against God*. The book treats modern evolutionary theory as the

continuation of Satan's attempt to dethrone God. At times the popular media assume the conflict view in discussing the relation between science and religion, often concluding that science disproves religion. Do cooperation and convergence offer a legitimate model of understanding issues at the intersection of natural science and Christian faith? A more fruitful and historically accurate approach to the relation between science and Christianity is one of cooperation and convergence rather than confrontation and conflict. This view emphasizes the Augustinian idea that 'all truth is God's truth' and that advances in science should be seen as adding to God's revelation in nature. In such a view, the content of Christian theology will sometimes influence and motivate scientific work, and discoveries in the natural sciences will sometimes clarify and correct Christian thought. Some of the most important features that distinguish modern science from its ancient Greek heritage can be identified in the early centuries of the Christian church, especially in the christological controversies that dominated Christian theology for more than a millennium. Christian ideas have influenced scientific thinking at several points in history. Such ideas are also essential in any attempt to understand science from a Christian perspective. An understanding of the divinity of Christ emerged early in Christian thought, leading to a stronger foundation for theoretical science. Starting from biblical sources, Christian thinkers developed the Greek Logos concept and applied it to Christ as the divine reason and Word of God in the creation of the world. The Logos doctrine together with the doctrine of creation provided a basis for the assumption in science that nature is an ordered cosmos, which is in some degree intelligible to human understanding. It reinforced the growing Christian conviction of the unity of creation, which led to the eventual defeat of the pagan tendency to deify nature and the Greek view of celestial perfection, both of which had hindered the full development of science. The humanity of Christ and its relation to His divinity took longer to work out but was no less important for a Christian understanding of nature. The doctrine of the incarnation reinforced a new appreciation for the dignity of labor, the reality of matter, and the goodness of creation---themes that eventually provided support for the development of experimental science. In the scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, several mediating and sometimes heretical views of Christ were used to explain scientific ideas concerning the unity and vitality of nature. These views also served to motivate the practice of science and its application to social needs.

1. EARLY CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENTIFIC ORDER What did early Christian thought contribute to the acceptance of Greek science and the origins of modern science, and how does modern science differ from Greek science? Did the concept of Logos have anything to do with the acceptance of Greek science? In late antiquity, the rational traditions of Greek science and philosophy were shifting toward ethics and theology, with an increasing emphasis on mysticism and magic. Neoplatonic authors were adding esoteric religious ideas to the Greek emphasis on the unchanging perfection of the celestial realm beyond the moon. Early Christian thinkers began to develop their own intellectual tradition to counter these pagan ideas, leading eventually to a Christian assimilation and development of Greek science. They based their idea of the divinity of Christ on John 1:1--14, where Jesus is revealed as the Logos or 'Word' of God. The Logos concept had a long history in the Greco- Roman world, beginning with Heraclitus in the fifth century BC as the principle of harmony and order in a universe of continual flux. In Stoic teaching, the Logos was the divine power that orders and maintains the cosmos.

Users Review

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Lacey Clements:

This Not Just Science: Questions Where Christian Faith and Natural Science Intersect book is simply not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is actually information inside this reserve incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This specific Not Just Science: Questions Where Christian Faith and Natural Science Intersect without we realize teach the one who reading through it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't be worry Not Just Science: Questions Where Christian Faith and Natural Science Intersect can bring if you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' come to be full because

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