

The Bible and Science

Some years ago, the noted British brain scientist, Donald M. Mackay and Dr. R. Hooykaas, from the Netherlands taught a course together Bible and Science at Regent College, Vancouver, B.C. Dr. Mackay, the author of such books as *The Clock Work Image, Human Science and Dignity, and Brains, Machine and Persons* was asked to comment upon his course. Mackay replied that the course did not focus on the creation-evolution debate but was instead directed toward developing a positive attitude towards science.

Mackay was right. We need a positive attitude towards science. Even many Christian students think of science in conflict with religion. They believe that the Christian faith is strictly a personal matter, confined to home and church. Consequently, they have bought into the secular argument that science and the scientific method are purely objective. Hence many fear science. They are afraid that it will undermine their faith. But pure objectivity does not exist as personal beliefs, interests and judgments intrude even into scientific thought. The thinking of all scientists is based on presuppositions; it is simply a question of which presupposition one chooses to begin the process. Of course, every area of scholarly endeavour, research, the arts etc., is based on presuppositions. For example, the nineteenth century German philosopher Hegel applied his evolutionary philosophy of history to the history of philosophy, tracing its path to the emergence and most inclusive philosophical system of all - the one which he himself had developed. In contemporary-art the cubists and expressionists may paint human forms, but the person is missing from the body and the beauty, joy, and harmony are lacking in nature. Christian philosopher Arthur F. Homes points out that these artists tell the truth about how modern man sees life: dehumanized, and for some, empty of meaning and joy.

What approach should Christian have towards science? There is no area of legitimate research forbidden to believers. They joyfully recite the ancient Apostle's Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth..." With this presupposition they affirm that nature is a work of God to be admired, studied, and managed. They confess that the Creator knows all about His creation so that all truth about everything is His. As Holmes said, "All truth if God's truth... all of life and history is known to and governed by a good, wise, and powerful creator." Christians, therefore, instead of fearing science, should see scientific research as a high and holy calling of God leading to worship. I am thinking of the notebooks of Copernicus, Kepler, Newton and Pascal, which overflow with praise to the Creator.

The study of God's creation is not a secular but a godly task. Research chemist with a major Eastern U.S. chemical Dr. Marina Saltman testified that when she and her husband enter their scientific laboratories, it is with a humble and determined prayer to God that their work that day would bring blessing to man and praise to God. And Marina said that every day is a day of potential discovery

of something new about the wonder of nature and God's created order. Bible and science are not in conflict. A Christian scientist or science student approached nature as God's handiwork. As the psalmist said it so well: "Great are the works of the Lord: they are pondered by all who delight in them" (Psalm 111:2).