



Scientists WHO CHANGED OUR lives

— by Dr. Peter Hammond

ON A DAILY BASIS EVERY ONE OF US finds our lives entangled, burdened and improved by science. Whether through medicine or technology, our lives have been changed by science. Our cars and our computers, our glasses and our cell phones, e-mails and aeroplanes – all these technologies are not only examples of science but are tangible evidences of the fruit of the Christian Faith.

Those who try to characterise Christians as anti-science are wrong. Modern science is a fruit of the Protestant Reformation. As **Francis Bacon**, the father of the scientific method, once put it: “There are two books laid before us to study; to prevent us falling into error; first, the volume of the Scriptures which reveal the will of God; then the volume of the creatures, which express His power.” God reveals truth through special revelation in the Bible and through general revelation in nature.

PIONEERS OF SCIENCE

Historian **Robert G. Frank** pointed out: “The predominant forms of scientific activity can be shown to be a direct outgrowth of a Puritan ideology.”

The great astronomer **Johannes Kepler** (1571 – 1630), the founder of celestial

mechanics, declared: “My wish is that I may perceive the God whom I find everywhere in the external world in like manner within me.” Kepler was a brilliant mathematician and astronomer, who contributed to the scientific revolution with his work on the planetary orbits, laws of motion and the scientific method. Kepler’s accomplishments formed the foundation of modern theoretical astronomy. Kepler argued: “Truth in religion is based on the Word of God in Scripture, while truth in natural science is based on evidence and reason.” Kepler viewed all of science as man attempting to “think God’s thoughts after Him.” Kepler was the father of the modern satellite and of modern space travel.

Sir Isaac Newton (1642 – 1727), the father of calculus and dynamics, was a scientific genius and a dedicated Christian. Newton formulated the theory of gravitation and the laws of motion. He made vital contributions to mathematics, astronomy and physics. Newton maintained that there were two key sources of knowledge - one revealed in the Bible and the other revealed in nature. Newton dedicated his life to know the Word of God (the Bible) and to know the works of God (Creation).

Blaise Pascal (1623 – 1662) made vital

contributions to mathematics and technology that helped with the development of the computer. Pascal invented the first adding machine. In his honour, a computer language is named after Pascal.

Charles Babbage (1792 – 1871), the father of modern day computer science, described the world as a great computer, and God as the programmer. Babbage was essentially a mathematician and regarded mathematics as the best preliminary preparation for all other branches of human knowledge. He believed that the study of the works of nature, with scientific precision, was a necessary and indispensable preparation for understanding and interpreting their testimony of the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Author.

Joseph Lister, the English surgeon who developed antiseptic surgery and the use of chemical disinfectants, stated: “I am a believer in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.”

James Simpson (1811 – 1870), the founder of gynaecology and anaesthetics, was inspired by the Scriptural passage that God made Adam fall into a deep sleep before taking the rib from him, to develop chloroform, and pioneer the beginnings of modern surgical anaesthetics. Before this, operations were conducted at hazardous speeds on conscious patients.

Lord Kelvin formulated the temperature scale, which begins at absolute 0. He formulated the science of thermodynamics and gave us both the first and second laws of thermodynamics, including entropy. Lord Kelvin was the first scientist who used the concept of Energy. He declared: “With regard to the origin of life, science... positively affirms creative power.”

Carl von Linnaeus created a labelling system for natural science, where each organism was given a Latin name in two parts, the genus and the species. Linnaeus laid the foundation of natural history by devising a system of classification whereby any plant or animal could be identified and related to an overall plan. His method forms the basis of the systems still used internationally today. Linnaeus created a universal language that all scientists could understand and use to communicate the ideas and findings of their selected fields of study. This monumental innovation by Linnaeus was inspired by the Bible. Linnaeus had an encyclopaedic knowledge of nature and Scripture. Linnaeus, a firm believer in the Bible, laid the cornerstone of all scientific

names, which are used to this day.

Samuel Morse (1791 – 1872) was one of the greatest innovators in the field of communications. Morse was the man responsible for the development of the modern telegraph and morse code. The first words sent by the first intercity telegraph line were from Numbers 23:23 “*What hath God wrought?*” The telegraph was a major step in the development of modern communications. By innovating cabled communications, Morse laid the first network of instant communications through the telegraph poles, which were the forerunners of telephones.

Matthew Fontaine Maury has been called ‘The father of oceanography.’ He was the first person to chart shipping routes throughout the world and pioneered the establishment of ‘Sea Lanes.’ This was an enormous contribution to safety and reduced the time that ships would spend at sea. Inspired by the Scriptures (which, for example in Psalm 8:8 speak of “*the fish*



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of the sea that pass through the paths of the seas”) he systematically collected information from naval vessels and merchant ships on currents, weather, winds, etc. Maury

made it possible for electric cables to be laid across the ocean to transmit messages in minutes, instead of weeks by vessel. Maury declared: “The Bible is authority for everything it touches...the Bible is true; and science is true...the Great Architect planned it all.”

George Washington Carver (1864 – 1943) devoted his life to the study of nature, stressed soil improvement and crop diversification. Carver did pioneering work in the production of useful synthetic materials. He developed over 100 products from the sweet potato alone, and from the pecan nut produced 60 useful products. He made his inventions freely available to mankind, refusing large sums offered for their commercial exploitation. Carver declared: “I discover nothing in my laboratory...but I can do all things through Christ. I am God’s servant, His agent, for here God and I are alone. I am just the instrument through which He speaks and I would be able to do more if I were to stay in closer touch with Him. With my prayers I mix



GALILEO AND HIS SPYGLASS

my labours and sometimes God is pleased to bless the results.”

Prof. Howard Kelly in his book, ‘Scientific Man and the Bible’ declared: “I accept the Bible as the Word of God. Whatever there is in civilisation that is worthwhile rests on the Bible’s precepts.”

CHRISTIANITY CREATED SCIENCE

The irrefutable fact is that Christianity gave birth to modern science. The scientific revolution began in the Protestant Reformation and the Bible played a vital part in the development of scientific discovery. Every major branch of science was developed by a Bible-believing Christian. The Bible essentially created science.

Dr. James Kennedy in ‘What If Jesus Had Never Been Born?’ points out that science could not have developed among those who worship Allah, because of Islam’s fatalism. Nor could science have been birthed from Hinduism or Buddhism, because of their belief that the world is an illusion. Neither could modern science have arisen in our modern humanistic culture, because of the humanist’s belief that life is irrational and illogical. By rejecting the notion of absolutes, humanists reject the very foundation of science. If there are no absolutes in nature, then results in experimentation can only be relative. If everything is relative, then engineering, and other branches of science, become impossible.

A proper, philosophical base for investigating the universe was needed, and only the Christian doctrine of creation provided that base. The Creator established laws for people and laws for the natural world. A created universe was expected to have design, order and purpose. Man, using his created, rational mind, would study this ordered universe in a rational way and seek to discover its laws. Modern science is based upon this assumption of scientific law. In



addition, the moral Laws given by the Creator establish the ethical basis for science.

WHO IS ANTI-SCIENCE?

Scientists must be honest and truthful. If this universe were not created, if it is merely the ‘product of chance’, then no intelligence would be involved. There could be no reason to expect such a universe to operate in a rational or consistent way. Man’s mind would also be a product of chance and would not be capable of reason or logic. So, a materialistic philosophy could not provide any foundation for science. Many ardent atheists dominate science today, but they are working off the foundations and presuppositions laid by Christianity.

In the realm of physics, **Sir Michael Faraday** is acknowledged as one of the greatest scientists of all times. He discovered electro-magnetic induction, without which we could have no motors or engines. He invented the generator. Faraday was a devoted Christian who declared: “The Bible and it alone, with nothing added to it nor taken away from it by man, is the sole and sufficient guide for each individual, at all times in all circumstances. Faith in the Divinity and work of Christ is the gift of God and the evidence of this faith is obedience to the commandments of Christ.”

Many atheists like to characterise ‘believers’ as anti-science, and anti-medicine. Yet, it was the ‘believers’ who pioneered every branch of science and medicine.

So the next time you start the engine of your car, use an appliance powered with electricity or undergo an effective operation, with anaesthetic, in a germ-free hospital environment, remember the Christian scientists who, with God’s inspiration, made it all possible. ■



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