

WHY THE BIBLE STANDS ABOVE NATURE

“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35)

There are those who promote the idea that God has given us two books of comparable value—the Bible and the “book” of nature. This is similar to the claim that being alone with nature is a spiritual experience, even superior to gathering in church with the saints. These ideas may appeal to Christians from the backdrop of God creating the world. But, though nature is the work of God, it is spoiled by sin and is readily misinterpreted through the deceitful lenses of unbelief. There are many nature lovers—or nature huggers—in hot pursuit of their particular agenda on how to save the earth. These ideas are often contrary to the good of the human race. They show a marked preference for animals and are based on evolutionary “science,” not on a true understanding of nature. These piecemeal solutions will do more harm than good.

On the other hand, the Bible is the verbal communication of God and the only direct information on the power of God to bring eternal life. And yes, it is an authoritative manual of human responsibility and accountability for human good. The Bible gives understanding for living in a world where the highest good is to do the will of God.

So whatever nugget of fact the “nature book” contains, if pursued apart from the Bible and the knowledge of God, the effects will turn destructive.

So let’s back up and look at the truth in nature as observable by science. The sun itself leaves a daily demonstration of the glory of God wherever people are found (Psalm 19:1). The wonderfully rich complexity of created things bears witness to the unseen God. This leaves the agnostics, atheists, and all unbelievers without excuse (Romans 1:20). Nature actually commands a search for God.

In fact, this creator-friendly evidence found in nature has generated the so-called intelligent design movement. This movement comes from scientists who have documented compelling evidence that nature could not have generated itself. Yet they stop short of identifying with the God of the Genesis Creation account. For some, this may represent an opportunity to make the Christian faith plausible. To me, it’s a rather meaningless pursuit, a bit like proving that Santa Claus doesn’t descend our chimneys, yet not introducing the birth of Jesus, the Saviour of the world. While it’s refreshing to see remarkable evidence showing Darwin’s theory of origins wrong (evidence readily available to any inquiring mind), we will see why this has not really led to a return to the God of the Bible.

To understand this, we need to distinguish between Darwin’s claim that we had a “no God” beginning, and its result—the powerful shift brought into modern western philosophy.

Without God, why not turn this world into a vast playground where everyone can pursue every desire, undeterred by the God of the heavens? What could be more liberating than to live with no commandments, no sin, and no judgment? Isn’t it only logical—and certainly with great relief to many—

that people can happily and shamelessly discard the old moral virtues? (I say shamelessly, because our culture proudly promotes the things that were once considered shameful, even while Christians are increasingly ashamed of the tenets of Christian faith). People have no more worries about the claims of conscience and no weight of absolute truth upon irresponsible behavior.

But we need to understand something else here. The godless model has done much more than remove the restraints to personal “fun.” It has completely revised the of meaning and purpose in human existence. It bleeds integrity from every aspect of culture, whether marriage and family, education, business, media, politics, government, or science.

And there is still a darker side. Sure, we always had people living contrary to law, such as drunkards, liars, thieves, adulterers, rapists, baby killers, murderers, and homosexuals. But then, even they knew they were wrong. These were simply not the acceptable norm. These were behaviors to be restrained and punished.

Now the tables are turned. This new worldview is diametrically opposed to the Biblical standards of justice and morality that once dominated the culture. The old view is now the “wrong” one. The process has moved from the claims of Biblical righteousness being discouraged, to being vilified, to being banned, and currently even to being criminalized. (Witness the current strong-arm tactics propelling the same-sex marriage issue).

But no, the godless model is not turning the world into a vast happy playground. It spawns costly, but ineffective science. It turns governments against their own people. It undermines security and corrupts financial markets. Worst of all, it destroys the very cradle of civilization, eroding human values, morals, and dignity to animal level. It turns traditional marriage into a superficial option, and leaves children physically and morally destitute—easy prey for violence and crime.

This Darwin-inspired philosophical system has taken on a life of its own. It is now independent of the evolutionary zeal that brought it to birth. While true science has the necessary evidence to close the door on Darwin’s theory of origins, this does not translate into a readiness to reopen the door to God.

How can this be? The Bible calls it a “reprobate” mind (Romans 1:28). It’s tragic enough to be ignorant of God, but far more lethal to live in defiance of God. It destroys sound judgment and provokes the enmity of God. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For 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; so that they are without excuse:

“Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” (Romans 1:18-25).

This, then, is the essence of the sad story. Once people refuse Bible truth they lose their capacity for understanding the truth about themselves and about the natural world. Ancient cultures imagined gods

in nature and turned to the worship of the sun, moon, and stars. They cast off the God of creation and elevated nature and animals into sacred positions. They fashioned and worshiped gods of their own making, as some still do in various regions of the world.

Today's secularists hold themselves to be wiser than the ancients. They don't stand and pray to the sun, neither do they bow the knee to material idols of their own making. Rather, in the denial of God, they fancy themselves to be in the place of God. This allows them to disengage the conscience and to practice their basest perversions. These moderns are worthy of greater judgment than the ancients. For the most part, the truth is readily accessible. If they don't own a Bible, they could quickly find one.

We are all exposed to the glories of nature every day. But obviously, nature will hold still for whatever truth or lies may be assigned to it. Nature is not a very specific or accurate teacher. Even while the world and its two inhabitants were still perfect, Adam and Eve rated the forbidden fruit above the commandment of God. That's the problem with holding nature as a book comparable to the Bible. It lends itself to disconnecting from the truth. It is the Scriptures—not nature—that unerringly point to God and to the answers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The bible clears up misunderstandings about nature. Nature does not resolve misunderstandings about the Bible.

~Lester Troyer