

## Does Your Church Ignore Half of the Gospel?

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'Gospel' is an old-English word meaning "good news," specifically, in the Christian use, the good news about salvation. The Gospel includes two parts: God's revelation revealed in His words, the Bible, and His revelation revealed in His works, His creation (see Revelation 14:6-7). The Bible mentions over 120 species of animals and 206 plants, 95 of which are recognized by all contemporary researchers of the floras mentioned in the Bible. In seminary, a major part of the curriculum historically used to train ministers was the study of these 326 plants and animals. Books about plants and animals were, for this reason, until recently, often titled Natural Theology. When I am looking for old books on science, I look in the theology section for titles that reflect this fact.

Darwin is criticized today by many because, when he graduated in 1831, his degree was in theology. Often ignored is the fact that his degree in theology included an extensive study in science, especially botany. Required reading of all Cambridge students in Great Britain then was a science book titled *Natural Theology or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity in Nature* by English clergyman William Paley's (1743-1805). This book defended belief in God based on science. A British theology degree thus for centuries allowed pastors to teach, not only God's word, but also about God's works.

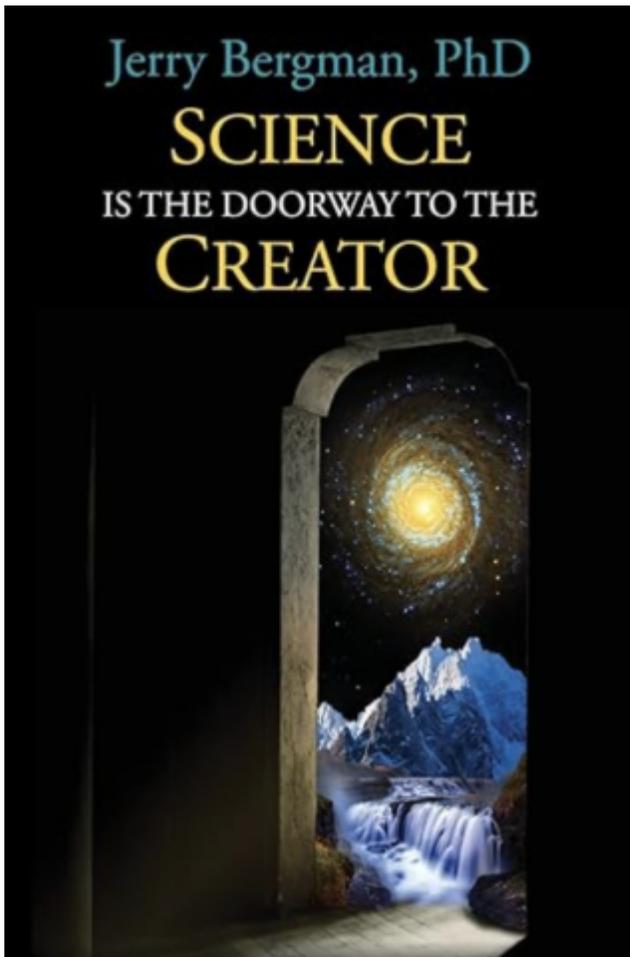
Among the over 430 scriptures that teach about God's works includes the following verses: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his

hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge" (Psalm 19:1). And "For ever since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through His workmanship [all His creation, the wonderful things that He has made], so that they [who fail to believe and trust in Him] are without excuse and without defense. For even though they knew God [as the Creator], they did not honor Him as the creator, or give thanks [for His wondrous creation]. On the contrary, they became [godless, with pointless reasonings and speculations], and their foolish hearts were darkened" (Romans 1:20-21). And "For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, ... all things were created through him and for him" (Colossians 1:16). Even anatomy was honored by God "For you formed my inward parts you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your created works" (Psalm 139:13-14).

Is it not appropriate to discuss some of these wonderful created works in a sermon? If the heavens display the glory of God, viewing the beauty and wonder of the stars, planets, moons, comets, nebulae, and star clusters vividly demonstrate that these celestial objects are all wonders to behold as the Bible teaches. Since 326 created life-forms are mentioned in the Bible, would it not be appropriate to learn a little about these creations created by God?

Darwin's major Cambridge professors included the leading botanist of his day, Professor John Henslow, and the famous geologist Professor Adam Sedgwick. They provided him with the framework for understanding science and the world through observation and experiment. They also taught him the scientific methods of data collection, fieldwork, and inflamed his desire to understand the world of God's creation to His Glory.

Image



So many people came to Christ by studying His creation that I was able to write an over 400-pages long book discussing some of the many well-documented cases. My book is titled *Science Is the Doorway to the Creator: Nobel Laureates, Eminent Scientists and Others Who Reject Orthodox Darwinism*. The reader should ask him/herself how many sermons have you heard in your church on God's creation this year? Ideally at least three or more. Unfortunately, most seminaries no longer include Natural Theology in their required classes, thus most ministers are no longer equipped to preach in this area. This is why persons who are trained in apologetics are available to come to your church to cover this critical subject. Knowledge of life helps one realize why God pronounced all creation good, including bacteria and viruses, both of which are necessary for life. Appreciation of God's creation requires some knowledge of His creation and also of life itself.

One survey of over 500 mainline Protestant churches "found that mindless repetition of ritual dominated many services. Very few ministers spent time exploring the wonders and beauty of God's living and celestial creation." The survey concluded "it is no wonder that droves of members are leaving the mainline churches, never to

return, although some become part of thriving, growing churches.”

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