

Dwelling in God's word:

A STUDY ON

SCIENCE AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH



by PASTOR MARK WORTHING

As a teenager in the 1970s, I avoided telling my science teachers that I was a Christian, as I was accustomed to hearing Christian faith dismissed in the classroom as anti-science.

I also avoided telling my pastors and youth leaders that I was majoring in the sciences, as I was accustomed to hearing science dismissed at church as anti-God.

What neither group seemed aware of is that the Bible actually has a positive view of the natural world and of the knowledge of this world.

See Psalm 111:2 and discuss.

When we study the world God has made, we see in its beauty the majesty of the Creator.

See Psalm 19:1.

In fact, when we look closely at the natural world, we see Christ. It is in and through Christ that all things are created, and that all things are redeemed.

See Colossians 1:16–19 and discuss.

When Job, in the midst of great personal suffering, defends God before his friends, to what examples of God's power does he refer? See Job 26:7–14.

Job speaks about the world hanging in space upon nothing. He speaks of the wonder of the moisture held in the clouds, and of the force of the moon. He speaks of the mystery of night and day and of the work of the wind.

Job, a righteous and godly man, exhibits a remarkable interest in and knowledge of the natural world. But he

recognises that there is much more to learn. He confesses: 'These are only the outskirts of God's ways. How small a whisper do we hear of him!' (Job 26:14).

For Job, understanding God is also about learning. Job knew he still had much to learn about God and about the world God made. Just how much he still had to learn he was about to find out.

When he demands an explanation from God for his suffering, God gives Job a list of questions that look like they came straight off a science exam.

See Job 38:1–39:30.

It's a tough test, and despite Job's knowledge of the natural world, he does not know any of the answers. God asks Job how the earth was made, how clouds are formed, where snow and hail come from, and how lightning works.

God asks if Job understands the ways of lions, horses, ostriches and eagles.

It is in Job's lack of knowledge that God teaches him what he needs to know most. Job learns that there will always be things about the natural world that he does not understand, but the world continues on just fine without his understanding. God is in charge, and Job must trust the God who made the world.

*Knowledge of God and of the world
God creates belong together.*

Knowledge of the natural world strengthens our knowledge of God and our understanding of God's ways. But it is not a replacement for simple trust in the God who stands behind the wonder of the natural world as its creator and redeemer.

See Romans 1:20,21.