

Victory of the Lamb – April 19, 2020 – “Who Told You That”

Romans 1:18-23 – Science Disproves God – Pastor Bill Limmer

Have you made anything in this “stay at home” season? I have seen on social media a number of you working on your lawns. Amazing! I have seen woodworking projects. Great job. Some of you are making creations in the kitchen? They all look so good. Usually when I create something in the kitchen, I create a mess. God made a creation too. He is not a megalomaniac but he thinks it is pretty cool. In fact, he said, “It is very good.” So good he is still allowing us to enjoy it.

Today we are beginning a new series called Who Told You That. In this series, we’ll examine a number of misunderstandings about the Christian faith. We’ll look at what people have come to believe and what the Bible, particularly the book of Romans, says about these issues. Today we are going to consider Who Told You That Science Disproves God.

As we go back to a foundation time in science discovery and progress, we see that there is a **battle that didn’t need to be fought**. Here is something most people today don’t know. “From the thirteenth century onward into the 18th, in effect, every major scientist explained his motivations in religious terms.” (p222 How Christianity Changed the World.) Science and faith were not separate.

Those of you into science will likely know these names: William Occam of Occam’s razor, Nicolaus Copernicus who figured out the world was heliocentric (really heliostatic), Johannes Kepler and the three laws of planetary motion, Blaise Pascal who is known for Pascal’s law, Kelvin who determined that – was absolute zero, and Robert Boyle the father of chemistry. What do they all have in common? They were Christian. In fact, Blaise Pascal was a defender of the faith. Pascal said, “We only know God only through Jesus Christ.” And then there are the Boyle Lectures which were evangelistic lectures for the mission field. But likely nobody told you that. But if you are like me, you were given the impression that these guys didn’t believe in God.

Did you know that Many leading scientists of today are Christians. Francis S. Collins, a physician and the geneticist behind the Human Genome Project, is the director of the National Institutes of Health. He is also founder of the BioLogos Foundation (biologos.org), a group that fosters discussions about the intersection of Christianity and science. Collins has said, “Science and faith can actually be mutually enriching and complementary once their proper domains are understood and respected.” Real science and real Christian faith are much more alike one another than many people suspect. Steve Thompson: “I Imagine that God is pleased when His people apply their God-given curiosity and intelligence to uncover the secrets of His creation.” There is a battle that never needed to be fought. God never tries to disprove science. He is the God of science.

But now we are in a **battle that must be fought**. As most of us feel, there is tension today between science and faith. But the issue is not with the foundation of science or with the foundation of Christianity. Two reasons for this battle: Christians have said things that the Bible doesn’t say. They have gone farther than what God has said in his Word. The other: the philosophy that came out of the Age of Enlightenment, a philosophy that celebrates reason. A philosophy by which humans understand the universe and improve their own condition. The goals of rational humanity are knowledge, freedom, and happiness and a parody of love called toleration. The philosophy of the Age of Enlightenment actually goes way back in history. Let me take you way back into the middle of a story that took place in a garden. Genesis 3:1-5 “**Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”² The**

woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,³ but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’”⁴ “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman.⁵ “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Like Eve, the philosophy of the Age of Enlightenment bought into and bit into the fruit of self-reliance.

The result is what we see in **Romans 1:18-23** The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who **suppress the truth** by their wickedness,¹⁹ **since what may be known about God is plain to them**, because God has made it plain to them.²⁰ For since the creation of the world **God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen**, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. (Great job with the home, seriously, I couldn’t do it. But make a mountain, a river, out of nothing.)

²¹ For although **they knew God**, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened.²² Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools²³ and **exchanged the glory of the immortal God** for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

5 things – **suppress the truth, knowledge that is plain to see, invisible qualities clearly seen, they knew God, exchanged the glory of God for something less** (Like replacing a flood light with a 1watt bulb.

The result is humanism and secularism. Humanism gives God the second the chair. I am first. Secularism has no place for God at the table. Both displace the God of science and the Bible. He is the same God. Today some, but by no means all, scientists are humanists and or secularists. In this way of thinking they along with all humanists and secularists are pushing God out of the picture. This isn’t true science, this is philosophy.

The philosophy of enlightenment has no story, no script, for a moment of crisis except for fear and panic. Do you see that in our culture today in the middle of this pandemic? It was here before too. It is just highlighted now. Here is why Enlightenment doesn’t have as its catalyst love, namely God.

Here is not just knowledge, not happiness, not just freedom, not just toleration but the truth 1 John 4:8 **God is love.**

There is a battle that didn’t need to be fought, a battle that needed to be fought, and **a battle that is won by love.** NT Wright – “The more we realize just how mysterious the world is, just how puzzling justice and beauty and love are, the more we should delight in seeing the puzzles and paradoxes rushing together in the story of Jesus, and supremely in his death and resurrection. . . It is a love story.”

Here is God’s love he has for us and wants us to share. **Romans 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.**¹⁷ **For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last,**^[a] **just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”** The gospel is based on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus rose from the dead. The greatest of these is love. We see how love works at the cross. The cross is God demonstrating his love for all people, even people who don’t believe in him, even for people who hate him, even for people who don’t believe in him. **Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** My favorite sidewalk chalk writing at the Chapel was – you may not believe in God but he believes in you.

If you want true knowledge, you have to love. And to learn about true love, you have got to end up not only at the cross but on the cross.

Laminin adhesion molecules hold every cell of our body together. Without it. We fall apart, literally. Here is what it looks like. It looks like a cross. God is holding us together in love.

What does love look like today? It turns the other cheek. It doesn't fire back in hostility. It serves joyfully not just the people who love you, like you, approve of you. It serves joyfully those who don't approve of you, or accept you, those who don't have the same political thoughts you have, or the same religious beliefs you have, or the same scientific thoughts as you, or the same thoughts about the pandemic that you have. It puts others first.

Here are some ways you can love today. Pray for others and for their best physical and spiritual well-being. Maybe you can do this as you take a walk through your neighborhood or go to pick up your groceries. Encourage people by writing messages in chalk on your driveway or sidewalk. Take a pic of it and post it on social media. Phone a friend. Set up text groups to check in on each other. If you are musical sing from your porch or sing on FB. Jacky has the gift of sewing. Chapman should rewrite his love languages book and include sewing. This is how she loves. She sews face masks for health care workers or public safety officers. Use your gift. What is your special gift of love? Share it. Because, as we see the truth in Jesus, love wins!