

Science Cannot Explain What You Think It Does



Oxford mathematician and apologist John Lennox is joined by Samuel Marusca and Justin Brierley at the Practical Wisdom Conference in London to discuss faith in the age of science. John Lennox challenges conventional beliefs about science's explanatory scope, and exposes that science doesn't even explain what you think it does. Lennox delves into the assertions of Richard Dawkins and Stephen Hawking, who propose that the Universe originated from nothing, presenting a compelling case for creationism.

I always liked to read books about science when I was a kid, especially books about physics, inorganic chemistry, and electronics. I'm not intimidated by an atheist's doubts about God or the Bible no matter how brilliant the world considers that atheist to be. When theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking said, "Because there is a law like gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing," I thought that's one of the dumbest things a person could say! The universe did not and cannot design itself. Gravity and matter alone cannot create anything. Information is also a requirement to create something. Information is inherent in design. DNA is the code of creation of life. A code contains information. Information can only come from an intelligent source. When you see words written in sand on a beach, you're not going to think it happened by a random process of nature.

These are some of the main points of the discussion. Please also listen to the video below.

Partial transcript

- There's this notion that God and science are alternatives in terms of explanation, and for a long time I couldn't understand why people as bright as Stephen Hawking constantly said to the public, "You got to choose between God and Science. And I realized for a long time that part of the reason for that was they didn't understand the nature of scientific explanation. We need to realize that the God explanation and the science explanation are different kinds of explanations. For example, Why is the water boiling? Well, because the heat energy is agitating the molecules of water. That's a scientific explanation. But I could equally well say it's boiling because I want a cup of tea. Now that is an agent-personal explanation. Think about those two explanations. They're different but they do not compete, they do not conflict, they complement each other. And I often say to people the God

explanation is the agent-type explanation. God is the explanation of why there is a universe at all and why there are scientists there to study it. He's not competing in that sense at all, we need both.

- Isaac Newton wrote what was perhaps the most brilliant book in the History of Science, Principia Mathematica, and he dedicated it to with the hope that thinking people would see in it evidence for the existence of a Divine intelligence behind the universe.
- I'm a mathematician, the very fact that we can do mathematics to me is an indicator that this is a word-based universe. The very fact that in biology we've discovered the longest word, the human genome, 3.4 billion letters in the chemical alphabet is evidence of an intelligent mind.
- Apologetics has nothing to do with being apologetic. It comes from the Greek word apologia which means giving a defense of something. I don't like the word apologetics because it sounds like an apology. We should have translated it. All we did was take it straight out of Greek and transliterated it. It's much better I think to say, "persuasive evangelism" and the most persuasive thing about your experience if you're a Christian here tonight is your experience of Christ.
- Reason and faith are not in opposition. You need reason even to read the Bible.
- People get very confused about it, and one of the reasons for that confusion is that they call me an apologist. I don't like that. I try to persuade people and I use argument, but the key to the effectiveness of that is that when Paul stood up and reasoned in Athens and reasoned everywhere else, Paul was using his abilities, but he wasn't trusting them. And the danger for Christians often with a high education is that they start to trust their reason, and they use God when they get stuck. Real Christianity is to use our reason and all the abilities He's given us but to trust Him. That's the key. It seems to me and that solves a lot of difficulties. We must be aware that the arguments are all important, but we trust God. And if we're trusting God, we'll know how to move and detect whether questions are genuine or not.
- Many people simply need the stones out of the way so they can see clearly what the Gospel is, but in the end, God is not a proposition, He's a person. Christ is not a set of propositions. He's a person. So what is being offered to us is a relationship of trust with a person. That's a huge thing, a relationship with the One who created the universe.
- We need to know not simply what we believe, but why we believe it because you cannot open your mouth in a multicultural pluralistic society like what we've got here without people misunderstanding misrepresenting or simply just being curious. And we've got to answer always said Peter, be ready to give an answer to people who demand a reason for the hope that is within you but do it with meekness.