



Science, Faith, and the Limits of Human Knowledge

Introduction

Science and **faith** often appear in conflict, yet both seek truth. Science investigates the natural world through observation and experimentation, while faith trusts in **God's revelation** as recorded in Scripture. Both are limited: science cannot answer ultimate questions of meaning, and faith is not designed to measure natural processes. The Bible calls us to humility, recognizing the limits of **human understanding**: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us" (Deuteronomy 29:29). By exploring the boundaries of science and faith, we gain wisdom for engaging both.

The Biblical View of Knowledge

The Bible affirms that **true knowledge** begins with God: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 9:10). Human knowledge is limited and dependent upon God's revelation. Job confessed: "Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him" (Job 26:14).

Thus, science can reveal parts of God's creation, but only Scripture reveals His ultimate purposes.

The Scope and Power of Science

Science excels at describing how things work:

- Astronomy explains planetary motion.
- Biology describes living systems.
- Physics uncovers forces and particles.

Science has advanced medicine, technology, and understanding of the universe. It reflects humanity's God-given mandate to "subdue" the earth and exercise stewardship (Genesis 1:28).

The Limits of Science



Despite its power, science has limits. It cannot answer:

- Why the universe exists.
- The purpose of life.
- Moral questions of right and wrong.

Paul reminds us that “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God” (1 Corinthians 3:19). Science deals with mechanisms, not ultimate meaning.

The Role of Faith

Faith is not blind belief but trust in God’s revealed truth. Hebrews defines faith as “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1).

Faith complements science by addressing questions of meaning, purpose, and destiny. Abraham believed God’s promise, though unseen, and it was counted to him for righteousness (Genesis 15:6).

Historical Misunderstandings

Conflicts between science and faith often arose from misinterpretation. The church once resisted heliocentrism, misreading poetic texts as scientific claims. Similarly, some dismissed geology or biology as incompatible with Scripture. Yet many scientists were devout Christians, viewing their work as a form of worship.

The lesson is not to pit science against Scripture but to interpret both rightly.

Mystery and Human Limitations

The Bible emphasizes human limitations: “For now we see through a glass, darkly” (1 Corinthians 13:12). Mystery is not failure but recognition of God’s greatness.

Science acknowledges limits in uncertainty principles, chaos theory, and incompleteness theorems. Both science and faith point to realities beyond human mastery.

Complementarity of Science and Faith



Rather than conflict, science and faith can complement each other. Science explores the “how”; faith answers the “why.”

- Science studies creation; faith knows the Creator.
- Science measures processes; faith sees purpose.
- Science builds technology; faith provides moral guidance.

Together, they provide a more complete picture of the truth.

Dangers of Scientism and Fundamentalism

Two errors threaten proper balance:

- **Scientism.** The belief that science alone explains all reality. This denies God and reduces life to matter.
- **Fundamentalism misapplied.** Treating Scripture as a scientific textbook, forcing it into categories it was not written for.

The biblical way is humility, honoring both God’s Word and God’s world.

Christ as the Center of Knowledge

Ultimately, all truth centers in Christ: “In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). He is both **Creator** (John 1:3) and Redeemer. Science reveals His power; Scripture reveals His person.

Knowledge without Christ is incomplete. Faith in Him integrates all truth.

Application for Believers

Believers today should:

- **Engage science with confidence.** It explores God’s handiwork.
- **Hold Scripture as supreme.** It reveals the ultimate truth.
- **Live humbly.** Recognize human limits.
- **Testify boldly.** Show the world that faith and science need not be enemies.

As Paul wrote: “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21).



Conclusion

Science and faith both reveal truth, but in different ways. Science describes the mechanisms of creation; faith shows God's purposes. Both have limits, reminding us of our dependence on God. At their best, science and faith work together to glorify the Creator. The heavens declare His glory, and Scripture proclaims His plan. Recognizing the limits of human knowledge leads us to worship the One who knows all.