

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 84

Dearest grandchild,

It is hard for me to understand the pressure you are facing to abandon your faith in God. It was bad when Granny and I were your age, but I'm sure it is much worse now. The idea that you cannot be a Christian and a scientist is patently false. As we have mentioned before, the late Dr. Henry M. Morris in his book "Men of Science - Men of God" lists over 100 scientists who believed in God. These men were not fringe people but leaders in the foundations of virtually every scientific discipline.

Leonardo da Vinci for example, was not only a famous artist who painted The Last Supper and other famous works, he was also a scientist whose studies in dynamics, anatomy, physics, optics, biology, hydraulics, and even aeronautics were foundational to scientific investigation that would come later. By all accounts he not only believed in God but displayed the high moral standards associated with his faith.

Rather than list the many scientists in the book, let us today focus on only one. I have chosen **Sir Isaac Newton**, as he is considered by many to be the Father of Modern Science. Newton was born at Woolthorpe, Lincolnshire, England on Christmas Day 1642. He was born both premature and sick and it seemed unlikely that he would live. By the grace of God he did. His hardships were augmented by the fact that his father died two months before he was born, and his step father died when he was 14. God orchestrated the training of young Isaac so that he learned the discipline of hard work, hardship, and difficulty.

From a very early age this devout disciple of Christ manifested an interest in both science and the Bible. His scientific accomplishments are so vast and well known that he is considered the "Father of modern science". He is called "Sir Isaac" because in April 1705 he was knighted by Queen Anne of England. Unfortunately, his religious writings were not made public for 200 years.

Newton's scientific genius came to be widely known via his revolutionary discoveries regarding the three laws of motion. Even today these discoveries provide the cornerstone of modern physics. His law of universal gravitation is still valid after 300 years of testing. His calculations about gravity provide the key to plotting trajectories for travel in space. His mathematical insights are the foundation of calculus. His insight into optics is celebrated as "Newton's theory of color". He also discovered the whole spectrum of colors in white light and formulated the inverse square law for orbiting heavenly bodies.. His reflecting telescope made obsolete all before it. Among his many other honors, in 1696 he was made Warden of the Royal Mint. He held this prestigious position for the rest of his life. He was also a distinguished Member of Parliament.

Newton, however, actually spent more time writing about theology than science. His belief in a Creator is even reflected in his famed Principia Mathematica. He wrote in this scientific document: "*This most beautiful system of the sun, planets, and comets, could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being....This Being governs all things, not as*

the soul of the world, but as Lord over all; and on account of his dominion he is wont to be called Lord God "pantokrator," or Universal Ruler...."

Indeed, Newton wrote about 1.3 million words on biblical subjects. He was convinced that scientific investigation actually leads to a greater knowledge of God. His voluminous writings about God were not discovered until 1936 when his non-scientific writings were sold at auction.

Newton's understanding of God came primarily from the Bible. As we have mentioned before, he was an avid study of the Scriptures from a very early age. He was especially interested in miracles and prophecy, but was also active in Christian benevolence, providing Bibles for the poor, and helping to build 50 new church buildings in London.

The following link provides a brief video about his life:

<http://www.history.com/topics/enlightenment/videos/isaac-newton-and-a-scientific-revolution>

There is an old legend that Newton began to think about gravity when he saw an apple fall from a tree. He deduced that if gravity could affect an apple on the tallest tree, perhaps it could also reach the moon. He was right! Gravity not only holds the moon in orbit about the earth, it also holds the earth in orbit about the sun. Gravity, in fact, is an integral part of the entire universe.

The same bold reasoning led Newton to believe in God. He believed that studying the creation helped him to understand the Creator, and vice versa. There is no conflict between physical truth and spiritual truth. The late Henry M. Morris in his book "Men of Science - Men of God" lists over 100 scientists who believed in God. These famous scientists were not unknown and irrelevant, but key men in the foundation and development of virtually every scientific discipline. What Newton was to gravity, Kepler was to astronomy and Faraday to electromagnetics. What Morse was to the telegraph, Pasteur was to bacteriology, Fabre to entomology, and Lister to antiseptic surgery. Like Sir Isaac Newton, you too can be a man of science and also a man of God!. Remember! Just as you cannot escape from gravity, neither can you escape from God!

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce