

Listen, I've never heard that before, but I knew that big thud was coming. Da da da da da da da. How are you guys this morning? Listen, I was in Vegas last Sunday morning. Don't judge me.

It all went fine. It was good, actually. But I am so glad to be back here with you all. We've started this series. Alan started it last week, called asking for a friend, and it references this idea that we all have questions sometimes that we are just hesitant to ask out loud.

We don't want to embarrass ourselves with a display of ignorance. And so we say something like, this, is a sausage and mushroom pizza still good if it's been left out for three days? Asking for a friend? No, this is when I thought this was funny. Where in the Bible does it explain exactly how to turn water into wine?

Asking for a friend last week, Alan delved into a hard question that comes up a lot. How could a loving God send people to hell? And if you have ever had that question, I encourage you to watch and listen. From Alan, from last week's sermon. He did an excellent job of covering that question.

So this week we're asking another one that comes up. As a Christian, here's how the question goes. What are we supposed to think about science asking for a friend? What we mean by that is, is there a way to reconcile the two?

Let me assure you, as a Christian, you have a long lineage of men and women of faith who thought a lot about science. And the contributions they made to mathematics and biology and chemistry and physiology and cosmology not only broadened our understanding of the world that we live in, the material world, but it also took them deeper into their faith. Max Planck, who was a German physicist, said this, it is not by accident that the greatest thinkers of all ages were deeply religious souls. You might find it hard to believe, given the seeming antagonism that sometimes we're told exist between faith and science. But I'm hoping that after today, you won't feel like you have to check your brain at the door when you come into the church.

And if you're a student or if you work in a science field, you won't feel like you have to check your faith at the door to the classroom or the lab. I'm going to pray and then we're going to dig in. Heavenly Father, we thank you. We're thankful to you for many things, the way you have spoken into our lives, the way you've brought grace and hope and mercy and freedom into our lives. But we're also thankful that you have surrounded us with your glory.

This world that you created bears your fingerprint all over it. Your hand scattered the stars into the galaxy and your hand twisted the strands of DNA that make up our genetic code. So we pray that we would

not be afraid to open our eyes to see your glory behind the glory of your creation.

We thank you, creator and sustainer of the universe, for bringing us into your world. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen. My dad loves puzzles. He loves the kind that come in the box and you scatter them all over the dining room table and they sit there for three months while you try to go about your daily life.

He loves those kind of puzzles. But he also loves riddles. And he has one riddle. If I were to ask Pam right now what the one riddle is, she would be able to tell you. And it goes like this.

A man without eyes saw pears on a tree. He did not take pears, and he did not leave pears. Now, how can that be? My dad loved that riddle. I mean, he's still with us, so he still.

He loves that riddle. He tells that riddle every time someone asks for a riddle. That's the one he comes up with. And he loves to see the expression on your face go, huh, that doesn't even make sense. And then as you try to figure out how.

I don't understand how that would work. And then as you slowly sort of start to grasp how that riddle is answered, you can see it's like he's got wrinkles on his eyes, sort of wrinkle up, and he's like, uh. Uh huh. He starts to laugh. A grin spreads across his face.

He loves to see you solve that riddle. It reminds me of this verse from proverbs. It goes like this. It's in proverbs 25 two. And this is the King James new King James version says this, it is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

Now, you might go, huh? But here's what this is saying. God loves puzzles and riddles as much as my dad does. The created world is full of puzzles and riddles. And here's the truth.

He has designed us and created us with the impulse and the intellect to search out those mysteries. And the way we search out those mysteries is what we call science. Wait, I thought science and religion were, like, opposed to each other. I know it's hard to get that out of your mind, but I don't think Jesus saw it that way. Now, Jesus doesn't come right out and say, hey, you guys should all become scientists.

But he does bring up science in a little, little passage. And it's found in Matthew, chapter 16. Where the Pharisees and Sadducees are coming to Jesus. And they're questioning him. And they want to test him a little bit.

Here's how the scriptures read. The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him. By asking him to show them a sign from heaven. Jesus replies, you might recognize this passage. Because it's one of the first sort of meteorological sayings.

That I learned growing up. Jesus replies, when evening comes, you say, it will be fair weather. For the sky is red. And in the morning today it will be stormy. For the sky is red and overcast.

Now, you know how to interpret the appearance of the sky. But you cannot interpret the signs of the times. So Jesus quotes one of the earliest weather forecasting. Maybe you learned it too. Goes something like this.

Red sky at night, red sky at morn.

Isn't that cool? Jesus knew that saying too. I bet his dad taught it to him. Now, Jesus, when you get up, if it's red sky, you're gonna need to wear some. Wear a raincoat.

Take an umbrella with you. In the context of faith, these guys want to sign. They want to sign from the skies, from heaven. So they can believe in Jesus. And Jesus responds, you can observe the sky's appearance.

And you can make deductions about what is to follow. Whether you're to take an umbrella or not. But it's possible, he seems to say, if you look a bit deeper to see more. There's more than what immediately meets the eye. Like a puzzle or a riddle.

The heavens reveal more to those who are willing to look a little deeper for them. The red sky at night, for example, doesn't just talk about how the evening's gonna be quiet and peaceful. If you want to see beyond the red sky to the one who created the red sky. Then you could be reminded of God's desire. To quiet us with his love.

And to bring peace into our lives. That red sky in the morning. Well, not only does it remind us of a God who sends showers and storms to water. And refreshed and nourish the earth. But it also speaks of a God who does the same for us.

He cares for us. He nourishes us. He surprises us sometimes with his power. He awakens us with his love. So we can see right there a little bit of both.

And the science of meteorology can, if we're willing to look beyond it, point us to God. But that's not the only surprising place. In preparing for this sermon, I got sucked into several rabbit holes on the entrance webs. Am I the only one that that happens to?

I got sucked into this whole thing of Fibonacci number sequences. Does anyone besides me know what those are now? Yes. So, okay, so we got two. Okay, hold on to your hats.

If I'm wrong, don't correct me on this. Okay? A Fibonacci number sequence goes like this. It's a sequence of numbers that are sort of built on each other. So I think we have it up there.

Zero plus one equals one. And then you take the one, and you take the sum of the previous. The one plus the one, and you get a two, and then you do the same thing. You take the sum, and then you add the previous number, the one, and you get a three. And you do this all the way down.

You got 1235, 813, 21, 35, 55. And here's the cool thing about it. You might say those numbers. So what? So what?

But when you graph those numbers, you get an interesting thing. You get this curve. Do we have a picture of that graph? Because it is really, really cool. So you see the one and the one, and then you two, and then you three, and then you get the five, and then you got the eight.

So you see where this is going. Anyone following me? If not, look it up later. It's really cool. It's really cool.

So this little graph, this little curve here, again, it can just be cool. But if you begin to look beyond it, you see this little curve show up in so many different ways. So if you're looking at a flower and you look in the middle of that flower, like a cone flower or a sunflower, you see these little seed pods. And that curve is replicated in the way these seed pods spiral out. If you've got a.

If you can picture a pine cone in your hand, looking down on top of the pine cone, those little. Those little seed pods circle around. Circle around in this Fibonacci square path. Fibonacci number sequence pattern. A nautilus shell.

You see it there. A fingerprint. If you've got very pronounced fingerprints, you can see it on your own fingers. You can see that replicated. If you look into space, when we look at the Milky Way, when we look at the galaxies, we see this curve replicated again and again.

Creation is filled with these. I mean, I encourage you to do a deep dive like I did. If this even halfway interests you because it is absolutely crazy inspiring. Creation is filled with these fibonacci spirals. Someone said, if God has a fingerprint, it looks like that creation bears his fingerprint all over if we're willing to look for it.

So, another deep dive. It's funny how one way leads onto way. Robert Frost said that in a poem, but it's true of science as well. So you start with fibonacci spirals, and then you get to dark energy and dark matter. Now, that's a little bit of a leap, but let me explain what I mean.

So, in the mid 1950s, a guy named Georges Lemaitre discovered that space and the universe are expanding. Because they are expanding. You can back up that expansion by reversing time a little bit. We all do this. I mean, none of us reverse time, but we know how to look back in time.

So we follow the expansion backwards, and we get to a point where it necessarily began. Now, even those of us who aren't believers have heard of this idea of the big bang. The big bang at one point in time was pretty controversial. Scientists didn't really believe that it had a beginning. It just always was.

So it may seem obvious to us that everything had a beginning, but it was an earth seeking realization to astrophysicists of his generation. So the question is, well, what initiated the beginning? And now, what is the driving force behind this continuous expansion of the universe around us? Well, you and I might quote John one, which says this. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God.

And the word was God. We would say that's driving the expansion of the universe, the logos of God, the energy of God. Now, scientists don't use John one to describe this process. They call it something else. They call it dark energy.

Dark simply meaning we don't know the source of this. It's not visible, but the universe is expanding. And as the universe expands, planets and stars and dust circles around the largest masses. You saw sort of a picture of what that looks like. This gravitational pull is exerted because of the mass of planets and suns.

And so you see things orbiting around, spiraling around, except when it seems like it doesn't. So in the 1970s, with a jewish astrophysicist by the name of Vera Rubin, and she noticed that planets and stars in other galaxies in this ever expanding universe were orbiting in unexpected and yet somewhat seemingly controlled ways. But they seemed to be orbiting around something that wasn't there. Now, how can that be? She asked.

This is a riddle. This is not how gravity. This is not how general relativity should work. Something must be there, even if we can't see it through any of our technology. And so to this riddle, they proposed a solution, a possible answer.

She and her partner described it as dark matter. You have dark energy, and they said, this is dark matter.

They originally estimated it took up 5% of the the known universe, this dark matter. The numbers now are like 85% is what they're estimating. Who knows how far it will advance beyond that? Again, a controversial idea, but NASA has picked it up. And on their website, you can read the definition of this dark matter.

So here's how they describe it. Dark matter is a mysterious substance that makes up the majority of a galaxy's mass and forms the foundation of our universe's structure. It is an invisible glue that keeps stars, dust, and gas together in a galaxy. Now, science is still sort of guessing at what dark matter is, but I see a connection with this passage from colossians where Paul says this. In chapter one, verse 15, he says, the son Jesus is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

Verse 16. I didn't put it up there, but you can look it up. For in him, all things were created. We would say, yes and amen. Things in heaven and on earth.

Yes and amen. Things visible and things invisible. Verse 17 says it this way. He is before all things. And get this.

In him, all things hold together. He is the glue that keeps the universe's structure in place, from the spiral of a pine cone to a nautilus shell to the unexpected spiral of that galactic gravity. Heaven and earth are filled with riddles and puzzles that I believe point us to our creator. I believe it should make us excited about science, not afraid of it. It certainly made these guys excited.

A guy named Robert Boyle lived back in the 16 hundreds. He's one of the founders of modern chemistry, and he pioneered the modern scientific method. And he said this, that a deeper understanding of science was a higher glorification of God. A guy named Leonard Euler. He was a mathematician, a physicist, an astronomer, a geographer, a logician, an engineer.

He founded the studies of graph theory. If you ever did graphs in high school algebra, you blame Euler. He's the guy that decided it would be a good idea to put X's and Y's in mathematical equations. So once again, if you failed algebra, you got to blame this guy right here. But here's the deal.

When he wasn't creating algebra and calculus, you know what he was doing? He was writing gospel tracts. He was explaining to the world who Jesus was. There's a guy named Arthur Compton. I don't like to admit this, but he was a baptist.

He was also a physicist. He discovered that light can behave as a particle as well as a wave. And he coined the word photon to describe a particle of light. Many of you know Gregor Mendel. He was a monk who founded the science of genetics just by watching how peas grew in his garden.

A guy named Bernard Reimann. He was a devout Christian. He died reciting the Lord's prayer. His transformative work in geometry laid the foundation for Einstein's theory of general relativity. It wouldn't have happened without this guy, Isaac Newton.

Many of you know Isaac Newton, the guy who figured out what gravity was. We know him because of his contributions not just to gravity, but in many other ways. He was an amazing scientist. But by his own admission, he says, I spend more time studying the Bible than I do math and physics. And then there's Charles Townes.

Charles Townes just died ten years ago, but he established that the Milky Way has a supermassive black hole at its center. He was part of the NASA Apollo program, and he received a Nobel Prize in physics. And he was an author who wrote books about how he saw science and his faith coming together more and more and more with each new discovery. Closer and closer all the time. These are.

There are hundreds examples of these. Listen, I'm limited by time. I gave you some of the ones that I found most interesting, and I had to put on the shelf. Others. I'm thinking, oh, that's a good one, too.

There are hundreds of these examples of men and women who were pastors and teachers and evangelists and prayer warriors and elders in their church, people who wrote books and gospel tracts. All of them would say that their faith led them into the field of science. But there's a whole other group who would say that science led them to faith. A guy who's still around. His name was Francis Collinse.

He began as an atheist. He was a geneticist and an atheist. But as he studied genetics, he saw more and more evidence of some sort of intelligence behind creation, behind this genetic stuff. His team, through their studies, discovered genes for cystic fibrosis, Huntington's disease, neurofibromatosis. Say that seven times real fast.

He became a believer in intelligent design, but he became a Christian because he saw the men and women who were dealing with those diseases, the men and women of faith, how they dealt with this, and it changed his life. He became a follower of Jesus. He was the director of the National Human Genome Research Institute for 15 years. There's another guy, Wayne Bowen. Wayne Bowen is currently a professor of biology and neuroscience at Brown University in Providence, Rhode island.

It's an Ivy League school. This guy is brilliant. Sean Green says he has more letters following his name than I have in my name. Here's how Sean knows him. He was a small group leader at Sean's church when he was in Rhode Island.

Wayne's focus as a researcher was on something called sigma receptors. And these are little proteins that are found in, in tissue cells in your body. And Wayne's focus of research is how these sigma receptors connect and work with cancer cells, because Wayne is convinced that if they can figure out exactly the relationship between these two, he can figure out how these sigma cells can fight cancer cells. And Wayne says this, of all the molecular biologists that he works with throughout the world, he can only think of two who would consider themselves atheists. Everyone else believes in some kind of intelligent designer.

Now, they're not all Christians. They may not all believe in the Christian God, the God of Christianity. They may not all be followers of Jesus, but when they look at the complexities of the world, they conclude that someone is behind it all.

And it's humbling for Wayne. Wayne says, I've been studying the same protein for over 26 years and I still find out new things about it all the time. 26 years and I'm still finding new things out about this little sigma receptor. He says, it makes me go, God, you are amazing. David said the same thing in Psalm eight.

He says, when I consider the heavens and the things that your fingers have formed, the moon, the stars, which you have ordained, what is man that you are mindful of him and the Son of man that you invite to meet you in this field of science. Wayne does not believe that a career in science means he has to leave his faith behind. He certainly doesn't believe that following Jesus means he has to check his brain at the door. I think Wayne would agree with the writer of Proverbs. I think he would say it is to the glory of God to conceal a matter.

And it is the glory of kings to get in there and search it out every Easter. Our family has a tradition. I bet yours does, too. We hide Easter eggs for the little kids. We have a special part, special place in the yard where we hide those.

We make it pretty obvious. Basically, we just lay them on the ground. Sometimes they're just on the sidewalk, just there where any little kid could trip over him, cry and then some adult picked that egg up that he tripped over and put it in his basket. We make it real, real obvious. But for the older kids, we make it a little bit harder.

It's fun to hide those Easter eggs in some clever places and watching them find them as you sort of cheer them on from the sidelines is a blast. Now, here's the deal. We don't hide those Easter eggs from the

kids. I do that with Hershey's, Reese's pieces. But we don't hide the eggs from the kids.

We hide the eggs for the kids. We hide them for the kids. God doesn't conceal these matters from us. He conceals them for us so that we can use our intellect, we can use our natural curiosity that he has created us to have to search these matters out. My dad and his riddles remind us that the world is full of these puzzles, full of these riddles that we are just now opening the lid of the box and scattering those out so we can begin.

We're turning over the pieces and sorting out the corners and the edges from the interior now, starting this process.

But that's what we were created to do. We were created to search these things out. So what's a Christian to think about? Science a lot. A Christian should think about science a lot and look for the fingerprint of God on all of it.

Here's a final thought. Like the Pharisees and the Sadducees, we can figure out what a red sky means for the day and miss completely what it means for eternity. We can fill our heads with all the knowledge of the universe and somehow miss Jesus, the one who is holding it all together. But Jesus. But Jesus holds it all together, and he wants to do the same for you.

So today, if you've never trusted him with your life, today is the day to do that. To say, I am ready to trust Jesus with my life. Next Sunday, we're having a baptism, and I'm just gonna put this out there. If you are considering baptism, next Sunday is the time to do it. The water will be warm, I promise you.

We got that heater going. We cranked it up. It's gonna be nice and warm. You won't be the only one. But I want to invite any of you who are ready to make a decision for Jesus regarding baptism to say, yes.

Let me know about it. If you've never trusted Jesus with your life, today is the day to say, Lord, you created the universe and you created me. I'm ready to trust my life to the one who created me. And then, as we share in time of communion, this is an opportunity for us to say, creator of the universe, the one who has his fingerprints all over everything, who manages the cosmos, noticed me and said, I want you. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, it is humbling when we consider the heavens, when we consider the ways your fingerprints are all over the thing, the way your hands have formed not just the planets and the sun, but you formed us. It is humbling. What is, man, that you give us any thought at all? Who are we that you should deign to meet with us? And yet the word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have beheld his glory.

Lord, we thank you for the salvation that you have gifted to us by your grace and your mercy. Today, as we take these symbols, these little portions of matter, juice and bread, remind us that those little tangible things behind them is something unimaginable, the grace and mercy of the great, great God of the universe, who loves us. We give you thanks. We praise you. What a wonderful name.

What a powerful name. What a beautiful name. Jesus. Amen.

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