



"VITAL ARTICLES ON SCIENCE/CREATION"

impact

January 2003

Impact #355

GLIMPSES OF CHRIST THE CREATOR

by David Demick, M.D.*

The nature of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, one and equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, is a primary doctrine of the Christian church. Thus, Jesus Christ was also the co-Creator of the universe, a prime participant in the entire process of creation. His apostle John phrased this idea in parallel with the opening verses of Genesis 1:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made (John 1:1-3).

The apostle Paul also stated:

For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him (Colossians 1:16).

This truth, however, is not generally highlighted in the narrative portions of the Gospels. There, Christ's recorded teachings focus on His mission of human salvation, and on calling His hearers to repentance from sin. While He claimed to be one with God the Father (John 10:30), to have existed with the Father before the world began (John 17:5), and did miracles to prove His power over the created order (John 20:30-31), He did not in the Gospel records refer directly to His own role in the creation of the cosmos. Nevertheless, at a few points in the Gospels, the insights of Christ the Creator shine through His words.

For example, tucked away in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount is an admonition not to be anxious about food or clothes. Jesus used examples from nature to illustrate His point, and He said:

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these (Matthew 6:28-29).

*Dr. Demick is a practicing physician in Hastings, Nebraska.

This is a remarkable statement, standing in stark contrast with the evolutionary philosophies known among the ancient Greeks and Romans. Like their modern counterparts, these held that the “simpler” forms of life sprang from the earth in a haphazard and spontaneous fashion. For example, three centuries before Christ, the philosopher Epicurus offered an evolutionary worldview of random, purposeless naturalism that is strikingly similar to the modern evolutionary view:

The atoms in their eternal whirl, after many combinations and dissolutions, finally became united into what we call “the world.” At first the earth was a lifeless lump of clay, but gradually it began to put forth grass and shrubs and flowers, just as animals and birds put forth hair and feathers. Life came next. Birds began to fly . . . and beasts prowled . . . Some of these species were adapted to their environment and were thus enabled . . . to survive. Others were . . . the freaks of nature, the victims of a blind experiment in a planless world, and they were doomed to extinction. Man, the protagonist in this interesting play without a plot, was the last to arrive on the scene.¹

It is worth noting that this philosophy, like modern evolutionism, takes a low view of the wonderfully designed features of the world. It is part of sinful human nature to unduly exalt human work, and to abase or ignore the work of the Creator. For instance, in the provision of clothing, it is easy to focus on the human work involved, such as harvesting of plant fibers, weaving and sewing of cloth, processing and applying dyes, etc. To the narrow humanistic understanding, such human work seems more complex and important than the simple, familiar opening of a flower, or the growth of a tiny seed. On the other hand, Martin Luther, with his deep reverence for God, was much closer to the truth when he said: “If thou couldst understand a single grain of wheat, thou wouldst die for wonder.”² Even more so, Jesus Christ, with the all-seeing eyes of the Creator, knew centuries in advance of modern science the incredible microtechnology that is involved in the mere opening of a flower, and the formation and coloring of its petals. Thus, he was able to say with truth and confidence concerning the flowers that “even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” In another portion of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes another remarkable statement with profound scientific implication. This one concerns the human body:

The light (Greek, *luchnos*, lamp) of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single (Greek, *haplous*, free from defect, unspotted), thy whole body shall be full of light (Greek, *photeinos*, full of light, shining, bright). But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light (Greek, *phos*, radiance) that is in thee is darkness, how great is that darkness! (Matthew 6:22–23).³

As with the rest of the Bible, the primary purpose of these verses is moral instruction, not scientific instruction. In the context of the surrounding verses, and the culture of Jesus’s day, they are a warning against selfishness and greed.⁴ They are another example drawn from nature, with a natural phenomenon being used to illustrate an unseen spiritual truth. Yet, the higher truth has no meaning unless the natural truth is also sound. Jesus’s words specifically mention light in the eyes “filling” the whole body, implying a systemic physiologic effect for light perceived

through the eyes. Is this a fanciful idea? It would have seemed so until recently. However, developments in neurophysiology have shown that light sensation in the eyes is indeed important for the healthy functioning of the entire body. These medical advances shed further light upon these verses, and wonderfully reveal the genius of Christ as Creator.

The long story of the unravelling of this scientific truth begins with the anatomical discovery in ancient times of the pituitary body, located just above the nasal passages, close to the base of the brain. It was thought for centuries that the pituitary was an unimportant small gland involved in nasal secretions. Its real purpose remained obscure until the late 1800s, when physiologists were amazed to find that it is actually the “master gland” of the endocrine system, exerting control over other important glands such as the thyroid, adrenals, and gonads. In the mid-1900s, it was further discovered that a small complex of neurons just above the pituitary, called the hypothalamus, regulates most of the pituitary. The importance of the hypothalamus is underscored by this summary from a current physiology textbook:

Thus, the hypothalamus, which represents less than 1% of the brain mass, nevertheless is one of the most important of the motor output pathways of the limbic system. It controls most of the vegetative and endocrine functions of the body as well as many aspects of emotional behavior.⁵

This series of discoveries concerning the pituitary and hypothalamus was followed by the discovery in 1972 that some optic nerve fibers provide a direct sensory link from the ocular retinae to the hypothalamus in mammals, independent of the visual cortex of the brain. This accessory pathway for light stimulation to the brain was called the “retinohypothalamic tract.”⁶ The stage was now set for establishing a physiologic link between sensation of light in the eyes and the overall function of the rest of the body.

Another small part of the brain, the pineal gland, needs mention at this point as an important component of what physiologists were beginning to call the “photo-neuroendocrine system.” Like the pituitary, the pineal’s existence had been noted from ancient times, but its function was unknown. Understanding the function of the pineal organ took a step backward for a century after 1859, when Darwinian wisdom decided that it was no more than a largely useless “vestigial organ.”⁷

However, modern insight into the importance of the pineal began with the discovery in 1958 that it secreted a hormone called melatonin, which has several important positive physiologic effects. With regard to the light-brain-body interaction, melatonin has a circadian (daily) rhythm of secretion which affects the daily sleep-wake cycle. Studies have shown a functional link between the pineal gland and the suprachiasmatic nucleus, or “clock” center of the hypothalamus, and it has been demonstrated that their daily rhythms of activity are closely tied together. Thus, through the hypothalamus, pituitary, and pineal glands, light impulses conducted through the ocular retinae have far-reaching effects on the entire body, quite independent of the sense of sight.

This scientific work has demonstrated an increase in medical usefulness over the past generation. It gives a physiologic basis for the increased occurrence of mental depression in winter, especially in higher geographic latitudes, caused by the

progressive loss of daily light. It also gives a physiologic basis for the medical problems experienced by many shift workers, who have to maintain a sleep-wake rhythm out of synchrony with the daily light-dark cycle.⁸ It has also shown how blind people whose daily physiologic rhythms run out of synchrony with actual day and night can be successfully treated.⁹ These phenomena show our need for strong light in a regular daily cycle, perceived through the eyes, for the well-being of the entire body.

As research continues to be done in this area, it may be expected that more beneficial aspects of the photoneuroendocrine system will emerge. And, for the Christian, this new science of light's good effects on the human body has additional meaning. Not only does it give us greater confidence in the complete reliability of the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, but it also "illuminates" in a wonderful way the promises of God for the future. The Christian is the glad possessor of Christ's promise of eternal life in the glorious and unending light of His presence, in the city of sparkling jewels and crystal which He is preparing for those who believe in Him (Revelation 21:10–27).

To conclude, a close examination of these verses from the Sermon on the Mount in the light of modern science reveals the great knowledge and insight into the nature of Christ the Creator, even when His words are aimed at moral teaching. Thus, we find the words of Christ, like other portions of Scripture, to be "as silver . . . purified seven times" (Psalms 12:6), with layer upon layer of meaning and truth.

Acknowledgements are due to Dr. Chaney Bergdall of Huntington College, and to Dr. Jerry Bergman of Northwest State College of Ohio, for their advice and assistance.

References:

1. Thomas, H. and Thomas, D. L., *Living Biographies of Great Philosophers*, Blue Ribbon Books, 1941, p. 44.
2. Bainton, Roland, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*, Mentor Books, 1955, p. 168.
3. Scripture quotations from the King James Version with amplified word meanings from *Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, Eerdmans, 1970.
4. France, R., *The Gospel According To Matthew*, Inter-Varsity Press, 1985, pp. 138–139.
5. Guyton, A., *A Textbook of Medical Physiology*, W.B. Saunders, 8th ed., 1991, p. 652.
6. Klein, Moore, and Reppert. *Suprachiasmatic Nucleus: The Mind's Clock*, Oxford University Press, 1991, introduction and chapter 1.
7. Bergman and Howe. *Vestigial Organs Are Fully Functional*, Creation Research Society Monograph #4, 1990, pp. 49–55.
8. Moore-Ede, Sulzman, and Fuller, *The Clocks That Time Us: Physiology of the Circadian Timing System*, Harvard University Press, 1982, pp. 330–341.
9. Sack, Brandes, et al., "Entrainment of Free-Running Circadian Rhythms by Melatonin in Blind People," *New England Journal of Medicine*, vol. 343, no. 15, Oct. 2000, p. 1070.



© 2003 by ICR • All Rights Reserved

Single Copies 10¢ • Order From: **INSTITUTE FOR CREATION RESEARCH**

P.O. Box 2667, El Cajon, CA 92021 • Available for download on our website (www.icr.org).