

Reason 2: The Limitations of Science

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Ray Bolin: Well, science is definitely limited in the sense that it only can discover things about the material universe. That's all science is designed to do. It's all it can do. And so as we look for evidence for the existence of God, we're not really going to find God as an individual. We're not going to find Him in some place. So science is only able to discern what marks might there be on the universe that indicate that a God does exist. What might we be able to find, either through how nature works, how living systems work, how they're constructed? This is what science can tell us: Is there evidence for an intelligence? Or do things appear, do things really look like they've just come about through a random purposeless process?

That's really where science can help us. It's not going to prove that God exists. It's not going to give us, you know, hard and fast data that we can come and take to our friend and say, OK, God exists because of this. It's not going to do that for you. But what it can show is that a belief in the existence of God, particularly the God of the Bible, is a reasonable belief.

Kerby Anderson: We've got to recognize that science is very limited in its ability to measure whether God exists. We have a telescope that can see in the far dimensions of space, we have a microscope to see into the small dimensions of space, but nobody has ever come up with a spirit scope or a God-scope to see if God is out there. God could very easily exist outside of the space-time continuum. As a matter of fact, that's what the Bible says that He does. So really science is unable to ultimately answer the question of the existence of God. And just because we don't see God doesn't mean that God doesn't exist. It's a little bit like the Russian cosmonauts when they went around the globe for the first time. They looked out this porthole, and they said, *Well, God doesn't exist. We don't see God, so God doesn't exist.* But it's possible that God could have been on the other side of the spaceship, or He could be on another part of the solar system, and

so just because we can't see or measure God does not mean that God doesn't exist.

Scientific method is limited to a process defined by that which is material, measurable, and repeatable. By definition, it cannot speak to issues of ultimate origin, meaning, or morality. For such answers, science is dependent on the values and personal beliefs of those who use it. Science, therefore, has great potential for both good and evil. It can be used to make vaccines or poisons, nuclear power plants or nuclear weapons. It can be used to clean up the environment or to pollute it. It can be used to argue for God or against Him. By its own limitations, science offers no moral guidance or values to govern our lives.

Dr. Dallas Willard: Science is wonderful with technology. And you can do all sorts of things with computers and television and all of these wonderful contraptions, [but it] has absolutely nothing to say about your worth as a human being or what you should do. Nothing. And yet all of the confidence in science is that somehow there's this thing that's called science that will show us the way.

J. Mark Reynolds: There used to be an old commercial that said, "I'm not a doctor, but I play one on TV," and just the presence of a white lab jacket and the voice of authority meant that a product could sell. In some circles scientists have become the new priesthood, and white lab jackets have replaced the backwards [clergy] collar as a sign of authority. So "science says" has for many people replaced "the Bible says." But science can't function that way. Science is a wonderful thing; it was born out of the Christian West, particularly the Protestant north. Science was given its very foundation and heritage through biblical Christianity. We're pro-science. So we don't go along with anti-science ramblings of pseudo-scientists, astrologers, and people like that. Yet at the same time, science is a means toward discovering a certain sort of truth using certain sorts of methodologies, and so it's limited. It can't give us the whole truth or anything like the whole truth.

J. P. Moreland: People today are realizing that scientific naturalism—which is the view that the physical world is all there is, the world that we can see with our senses is all there is—that really isn't adequate to explain life and to meet the deepest needs of the human heart. So people realize there has to be more to life than their brains and chemistry and physics. And they're turning to spirituality. What worries me though is that they're turning

to spirituality uncritically. They've stopped thinking when they turn to the spiritual life, and they need to continue to think very carefully about the form of spirituality they embrace.