

Can a Scientist be a Christian?



Scientists and Christians, at their best, each seek truth. Many find Scientific and Christian truths to be in harmony. This is true today, and it has been true since the beginning of Science as we know it. Many of the basic theories that shape science came from Scientists who were also Christians. Some of them are listed here.

René Descartes

"I hold that all those to whom God has given the gift of reason are bound to employ it in the effort to know him and to know themselves."

The developer of *Cartesian* coordinates, this philosopher, mathematician, physicist, and devout Roman Catholic is perhaps best known for his foundational statement "I think, therefore I am."



Blaise Pascal

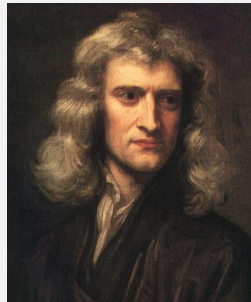
The influential contributions of this mathematician, physicist, and inventor resulted in both a computer language and SI unit of pressure being named after him. He also wrote in defense of the scientific method.



He is also known for ***Pascal's Wager***, which states that if reason cannot decide God's existence it is better to wager that He does exist; seeking faith that produces infinite gain if you are right and, at most, finite loss if you're wrong.

Sir Isaac Newton

Newton's *Principia*, including the three laws of motion, is considered to be among the most influential books in the history of science. His contributions to physics, natural philosophy and mathematics are well known.



Less well known is the fact that Newton spent more time studying the Bible than studying science: "I have a fundamental belief in the Bible as the Word of God, written by those who were inspired. I study the Bible daily." He also wrote more on religion than he did on natural science.

Gregor Mendel

This Augustinian priest became the father of modern genetics because of his study of trait inheritance in pea plants within his monastery's experimental garden.



Georges Lemaître

This Catholic priest, physicist, and astronomer developed the 'hypothesis of the primeval atom', which critics called the ***Big Bang Theory***. The name stuck even after the theory was shown to be true.



Francis Bacon

This founder of the modern scientific method wrote that "a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion."



Here and Now

Francis Collins, director of the NIH and manager of the Human Genome Project; ***Kenneth Miller***; and ***Constance K. Walker*** are Christians and Scientists whose writings on the harmony between faith and science are on hand here. ***BeaconsOnTheHill.org*** is a web page listing some of the over 70 Christian faculty on campus who are glad to continue the discussion.