

I. HOW I BEGAN MY SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH

I. HOW I LEARNED TO BE OBJECTIVE IN MY SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH.

Have you ever thought back through your life to search for what made you what you have become? Often people think back over their past to explain or excuse their bad behavior or despicable character. These people do not intend to change for the better. On the other hand, searching our past to evaluate our former decisions can be very revealing and solidify our determination to retain a modicum of nobility in our lives. We are responsible for our actions, and understanding our past can give us solidarity for the future. The decisions we make on our road of life can make a profound difference in our own character, and in our family, acquaintances, friends, the people around us, our country and the world.

A. How I came to trust Jesus Christ as my Savior.

In my counseling and ministry over several decades I have often heard the excuse for making the wrong decision because someone else has claimed one belief system but actually did exactly the opposite of what they said they believed. This person is known as a hypocrite. This is a non argument. It has always been hard for me to justify my doing anything stupid just because someone else did something else that was stupid. Ultimately, we must take responsibility for our own character and actions in the decisions we make. The rewarding life comes from the strengthening of our character by noble choices along the way, and refusing to accommodate ourselves to the unwise, the ignoble, the unjust and the evil, even though others are accepting that kind of behavior as normal in our society. We must objectify our thinking to make us into what we should be, regardless of our background or what others have done around us. After all, it is not what others have done that count in our own lives. We are responsible for what we are and do. Good behavior stems from good character. Wisdom is developed through consistent application and practice of the spiritual qualities that have come from our intentions and the sound spiritual knowledge that we have accumulated. Good behavior comes from solid character, and is a spiritual consequence of our real self, not from behavioral training. Truly good deeds are a product of good character. Good character is not produced by doing things that are considered good in the eyes of others.

In thinking back over my past, I sought to answer my initial questions. Why did I make the decisions that I made? What decisions did I make that were wise, or unwise? How did the encounters that I made make an indelible difference in my life? What strengthened my character? Did I strive for nobility, or merely the appearance of respectability? Who am I and what should I be? Am I noble in character, or just a play-actor? This is how I became what I am and how I think.

1. My parents' calling to serve Christ in Africa.

Both my mother and father trusted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior very early in their lives. When they were in their teens, they both committed their lives to honor Christ and to serve Him in whatever they did in life. They both prayed about their decision to ask the Lord to direct

them into the area of service where they would be the most effective. My mother grew up in Pennsylvania and my father grew up in Michigan. They both felt the Lord was calling them into medical work, and they both gave their lives to become missionaries to Africa. My father trained as a surgeon in the University of Michigan Medical School, while my mother trained as a nurse in Sayre, Pennsylvania. My father took his internship at Sayre General Hospital where they met, fell in love, and finally were married. After a year of study of tropical medicine in Belgium, they traveled to the Belgian Congo (Zaire) to minister to the people in that country.

2. Liberalization of the mission society.

My parents found most missionaries deeply committed to Christ and faithfully serving on the mission field. They had wonderful fellowship with many missionaries and national Christians. They enjoyed their work for their first term on the field and found the medical cases that they encountered interesting and challenging. As the people responded to their medical care they also began to listen and respond to the message of the gospel. During this time, however, my parents noticed a change in the attitudes and doctrine of the new missionaries being sent to the field, and a hardening of the older field leaders. There was a definite shift of emphasis away from Biblical doctrine to a liberal, social gospel of merely serving the nationals without introducing them to faith in Christ. During their furlough in 1934 and 1935 they discovered the reason for this change. There were individuals in the home board leadership of their mission that did not believe the basic Biblical doctrines subscribed to by the mission group, and they were engaged in a political struggle to change the direction of the mission, both by seizing the leadership at home as well as sending only missionaries that agreed with their doctrinal stand and purpose. The leadership in the home mission board had tried to recruit my parents to represent their doctrinal position in Africa and my parents decided to adhere to the Biblical position they had agreed to at the beginning.

3. Opposition to effective evangelism.

One of the results of this struggle to take over the mission board was in the suppression of effective evangelistic efforts in the foreign areas of service. Although my parents were medical missionaries, they still realized that evangelism and training of the nationals were two of their primary purposes for being in Zaire. My father stated concerning missionary calling, "If you cure a person's disease you only help him or her for a few years at the most. If you introduce people to Christ as their personal Savior, however, you have an everlasting effect and have cured them for eternity. That is the primary purpose of Christian missions." They immediately began training their national helpers to be able to perform all types of technical skills in the hospital as well as training national evangelists and Bible teachers to work with the people who came in for medical help. Because of their emphasis of talking to each patient about Christ and praying with each person that came in for their help they immediately saw a great response to the gospel and hundreds of people trusted Christ as Savior. These results also drew unexpected opposition from some other missionaries, who tried to block any further surgery in the hospital and tried to stop the work in the station hospital.

4. Sabotage of the work.

The field counsel called a meeting to discuss what must be done and promptly informed my father that they had voted that there would be no further operations in the hospital. My father told them that he was the doctor placed in charge of the hospital by the people who sent him from the United States, and that he would treat all diseases in the proper ways as he considered appropriate. The leaders of the missionaries in that particular group then began stealing his medical equipment, medicines, and bandages as they arrived from the States and hid them in their basements. When the shipments failed to arrive and the hospital ran out of the desperately needed medicines my father wrote to the drug companies from which the hospital equipment and medicines were ordered to inquire of the delay. They informed him that the medicines and equipment had been delivered on the mission station dock several months prior to his inquiry. Upon investigation, the native workers told him where they were ordered to take the medicines and the lost shipments were found. When the missionaries were caught with the stolen medical materials they excused themselves by claiming their authority to take any equipment they wished. They also became physically abusive to us as children and started a slanderous letter-writing campaign against my parents who were proving so effective both in evangelism as well as serving the people through their medical work. This slander that they were spreading was proved to be false by the field director and stopped by the churches at home in the States.

5. Mistreatment of the nationals by missionaries.

One of the results of their negative attitude toward Biblical doctrine was seen in their mistreatment of the natives. In Matthew 23:8, Christ tells the disciples not to insist on being called Rabbi, a term of respect and distinction for religious leaders. The missionaries, on the other hand, insisted that all who met them would take off their hats and bow in respect. If anyone did not see them approach or forgot to show the proper respect he would have his hat knocked off his head and his face slapped. These missionaries would also have their native help whipped with hippo hide whips for minor infractions of their rules. The natives were stronger Christians than these missionaries and dealt with these injustices with forgiveness and tolerance.

6. Confronting the truth and making the right choice.

One day when I was a small boy I saw a missionary slap the face of a wonderful old African man for forgetting to tip his hat. The old man was a devout believer in Christ and had become my close friend. I was so angry that I sat in the corner of our yard sulking about what I had seen. After a short time he noticed me and came over and sat down beside me. He asked me if I was angry at the injustice that had happened to him. When I told him that was why I was angry he made a statement I shall never forget. He said, "One should never turn away from the truth regardless of those who claim the truth but act as unbelievers. Jesus Christ is the truth. Trust Him, not them." I then went in to the house and talked to my mother about what had happened and she led me to trust Christ as my personal Savior. Many children of pastors and missionaries rebel and have a very difficult time with what they see. I have never regretted my decision for Christ.

B. Factors that led to my committing my life to Christ.

Realizing Who Jesus Christ is, what He had done, and trusting Him was the first step in my growth. But I still had to get over my bitterness at the persecution and antagonism from those whom we believed that we should have been able to trust. No matter what my parents did to help these antagonistic missionaries, the ones who were against what my parents were doing and their mistreatment of us as children weighed heavily on me as a teenager.

1. Injustice and a bitter teenager.

In 1938 my parents were scheduled for furlough in the United States. Just before they were scheduled to leave a missionary had a ruptured appendix and had to have an emergency operation to save his life. My parents had to give up their reservations for their trip home in order to save his life. In nursing him back to health my mother caught an infection that he had and became very ill. During the Second World War my mother's health broke with double mastoid infection, tuberculosis and meningitis. Due to the war and the submarine activities destroying the shipping in the Atlantic, we were trapped in Africa and were not able to bring her to the United States for the needed advanced medical attention not available in the jungles at that time. Without that medical attention her auto-immune system was weakened, she lost her resistance to disease, and spent much of the rest of her life as an invalid. Many of the missionaries who desired to change the doctrinal stand of the mission opposed the work of my parents and abused my sister and me in order to intimidate my parents. I could never understand how the very missionary for whom they had sacrificed their furlough could turn against them and join their opposition. Ministry ceases to be enjoyable while serving in a situation where those who should be friends and co-workers are vicious and attacking. It becomes torture. One expects the unsaved to act in this way, but it is devastating to receive abuse from those claiming to believe in Christ and serve Him. Being constantly beaten, insulted, pushed, threatened, and intimidated is very discouraging to children and tends to develop bitterness and rebellion in young people. I was no exception. I could not reconcile the testimony of those who claimed to trust Christ as Savior with the atrocious way they lived and the way they treated others. At the end of the Second World War my parents were able to move back to the United States and my father took a position in a hospital in Michigan.

2. My father's perspective concerning opposition.

The work with evangelism and the training of nationals to do the hospital work, evangelism, and Bible teaching was very warmly received among the people, but was resisted among the negative missionaries. One of the first times in many years the nationals were treated with respect and had close fellowship with missionaries through the ministry of my parents. There was much prejudice among the missionaries and they had adopted a colonial philosophy in dealing with the people. Consequently when the unbiblical missionaries responded negatively toward the relationships my parents were building with the natives my parents strengthened their bond with the nationals. My father said, "A person is known for his enemies as well as his friends. One should have the right kind of enemy as well as the right kind of friend. Praise the Lord for the opposition of the devil. It means that we are accomplishing something right in the eyes of the Lord."

3. Losing fear and the development of courage.

The acceptance and proclamation of truth should not be subject to intimidation and pressure. Many attempts are made to change the minds of others by pressure salesmanship and peer pressure. The truth can be verified on the careful objective demonstration of fact. I learned not to respond to fear at an early age. One day my father was giving medical examinations in an outlying village. I accompanied him. We were gone all day and returned to our home after dark. We were driving down a single lane road hacked out of the jungle. There were just two ruts with jungle on both sides. About 3:00 AM we rounded a bend and saw in the headlights a herd of elephants slowly running toward us. My father said to relax and see what the elephants would do. He taught me Proverbs 3:5,6 while we saw the elephants part at our truck, force their way through the edge of the forest and continue on their way. In the original Hebrew, Proverbs 3:5 and 6 states, "Trust (an act of the will) the Lord with all your heart (emotions), and do not rely on your own understanding (intellect or mind). In all your ways (behavior) give Him the preeminence, and He will straighten your wanderings." I had been afraid because of the mistreatment of others up until this time. From that time onward I determined not to allow fear to determine my actions, but to practice trusting the Lord and to hold to the facts. I began to look at courage as a characteristic that I wanted as a common factor in my life.

4. The reality of responsibility.

One day after returning to the United States my father was called on a medical emergency out in the country and he asked me if I would like to go along with him. While we were driving I began to think about all the things that had been done against our family in Africa. My father saw my expression and asked me if the injustices of the past were bothering me. When I told him that they kept coming back in my memory and that I hated what had been done, he responded in a way that changed my whole perspective for the future. He said, "You must remember that **you are not responsible for what those other people have done in the past. You are only responsible for what you do.** Make sure that you live in a way that is pleasing to Christ. All of these problems will take care of themselves." This statement opened my eyes to the reality of independence of choice and the need to do what was right regardless of whatever was accepted by others and practiced as normal behavior by those who had assumed the leadership. We are all responsible to do what is right.

5. The decision to honor and serve Christ.

My father's statement sparked a change in my own thinking. I realized that I was not accountable for what others did, nor that I should respond because of what others might do. I also began to understand that I could not blame others and their sins for my own misdeeds. I had to take responsibility for my own actions and attitudes. I decided soon after this advice to honor and serve Christ with my whole life.

C. My early studies in science and empirical objectivity.

I always seemed to have an interest in science, especially in the study of living things, both plants and animals. Some of my earliest memories were of our pet monkey, Ringbell, and of catching frogs and carefully playing with scorpions. At one time my sisters and I had over 58 species of exotic jungle pets, many which had been domesticated and roamed freely around our home. A baby elephant was born in our back yard. There was always something interesting to study and my interests in science started early. When I began to study science in the university I had no prejudices. I did not care whether organic evolution had occurred or not, but wanted to learn the truth. I believed that God existed, but I reasoned that "if God had wished to create all things through a process like evolution, who were we to argue against Him?" I still feel the same way, but have discovered that much that has been taught as science is not only unfounded in fact, but is contradicted by fact.

1. Laboratory technique and careful observation.

In beginning my studies in science, one of the first skills that I had to develop was to objectively and thoroughly observe the facts. Science involves the careful collection of observable, measurable data that demonstrates reality. Hypotheses are substantiated or negated through carefully collected facts. When we began to develop our techniques of observation the biology professor would look into our microscope, then look at our drawings, and rumple our drawings up and dramatically throw them away. He pointed out that we were drawing what we expected to find from looking at the pictures in books, and that we were not drawing what was actually on the microscope slide. He made us start over, emphasizing that we must only observe what is there, not what we imagined. On the next inspection of our work, if we had not drawn things that were not there, he would look for specific details we had left out of our drawings, but were clearly on the microscope slide. He would point out how many details were omitted without telling us which details. He wanted us to find these details for ourselves, and thus, develop our skills of observation. It was only after we had drawn what was actually present on the microscope slide to the satisfaction of the professor that we were allowed to progress to another level of the study program. Proper laboratory techniques demand careful observational skills. Science is involved with finding the carefully observed and measured facts and interpreting these facts to explain reality, not merely to support hypotheses and beliefs. The more skillful one becomes in observational skills, the more that person is able to delve into the observable but unseen through more complex and finer laboratory techniques which give careful measurements and objective results.

2. The scientific method.

Webster's New World Dictionary defines science as "systematized knowledge derived from observation, study, and experimentation carried on in order to determine the nature of principles of what is being studied. . . a branch of knowledge or study, esp. one concerned with establishing and systematizing facts, principles, and methods, as by experiments and hypotheses . . . skill or technique based on systematized training." (Guralnik, 1970). The Scientific method consists of several steps for carefully and objectively studying any natural phenomenon and deriving the

principles and natural laws that explain the phenomenon. Using these laws and the resulting formulas we are able to apply what has been learned in science to every day life.

All scientific study is based on certain assumptions. We assume that the universe and all within the universe is real and reflects actual existence. With this concept of reality we assume that all the phenomena in the universe are able to be experienced through experimentation and objective measurement. We assume that all causes have effects and all measurable effects have observable causes. We assume that the material universe and the laws governing the universe are comprehensible, based on the careful observation, measurement, and interpretation of carefully collected factual data. Science is also based on the assumption that all matter reacts consistently in relation to natural laws and that these natural laws can be derived from the careful interpretation of objectively gathered data. Almost all areas of knowledge can be subject to scientific scrutiny, and many theoretical conclusions considered scientific can be legitimately questioned from a scientific perspective.

In scientific investigation and problem solving there are many approaches called "scientific method." The actual steps within the "scientific method" will be varied, depending on the complexity of the investigation or the problem solving process. All approaches to scientific study will contain elements of (1) awareness of apparent factual conflicts or lack of knowledge that should be investigated, (2) the careful definitions of problems, (3) the careful gathering, recording, and classifying of raw data concerning the phenomena studied or problems to be solved, (4) hypothesizing concerning the cause or effect of the observed phenomena, (5) placing the data into logical and meaningful order to show the significance of the data gathered, (6) experimental or statistical testing of the data to verify the logical conclusions reached, (7) correcting former theories and beliefs according to newly observed contradictory data to the previously held position, (8) the formulation of natural laws that allow predictions to be made from the knowledge learned in the scientific investigation, and (9) unifying all that is learned from these careful observations into a unified system of knowledge or thinking. There are no contradictory factual data, merely conflicting theories derived from incomplete understanding of collected objective facts or in erroneous approaches to investigating reality. There are no conclusions that cannot be questioned in science. Accurate scientific conclusions can be demonstrated both in accumulated data and in usage. Scientific study can apply to history, literature, investigation of crime, industry, and other areas of intellectual pursuit. I believe that a scientific approach can even be used in investigating the spiritual realm, in establishing the credibility of the existence of God, the inspiration of the Bible, the historicity of Jesus Christ, and many other spiritual areas of belief. My question was whether a scientific approach to studying God was valid. Although the scientific approach does not allow us to discover everything we need to know about God, it can substantiate the existence of God and demonstrate that we already have the instruments that we need to further study spiritual matters.

3. Embryology lab and the awakening of skepticism.

As I studied science I realized that I was responsible to evaluate observable evidence rather than merely accepting the conclusions of my teachers in the early years of my studies. One day in the embryology laboratory the professor was lecturing about the evolutionary principle of ontogeny

recapitulating phylogeny, or the belief that a developing embryo follows the process of evolution in its development from the single celled stage to birth. The professor was discussing the tail stage when I pulled my microscope over and looked at my sagittal slides of that stage of the embryo. I noticed that the primitive gut ended near the end of the "tail", and not under the beginning of the "tail" as would have been the case if it had been a true tail. Secondly, I noticed that the leg buds or cells that would become the hind legs were formed up in the abdominal area of the embryo, and on successive embryonic slides migrated down to near the end of the "tail" where they developed into the pelvic girdle and legs. Thirdly, I noticed that the embryo did not have any more segments than the adult had vertebrae. I asked the professor about these observations. He became very agitated and stated that no one should challenge such a well-proven principle as organic evolution. I realized that for some the theory of evolution had become a religion, and that I should interpret the data and observed facts for myself. The professor's angry and rude reaction awoke me to a healthy skepticism which made me question the conclusions being taught and look for verifying or contradictory facts which might shed new light on the subject being studied.

4. The decision to investigate for truth.

I became extremely aware that much that was taught under the study of science was, in fact, the ill-founded conclusions and almost religious convictions of those who had adhered to yet unfounded theory and that these conclusions may not be the logical results of true scientific investigation. Sometimes one specific fact or piece of contradictory data can negate a whole theory or system of thinking. The problem in embryology class did not necessarily negate the whole of the teaching of the theory of organic evolution in itself. The data on the spinal development of the embryo, on the other hand, did negate what the professor was teaching in embryology class concerning the "tail stage" of the developing embryo. I determined that I would look into the facts and accumulated data for myself and would try to negate or verify the theories based on the discovery of fact, not in the convictions of others. I set this principle as a foundation for my future studies and also established this principle for my teaching, trying to present factual data to verify why we believe what we believe, not merely stating my conclusions. I learned that reality is founded on objectively measured truth, and that my beliefs or the beliefs of others were worthless unless substantiated on objective truth.

D. The shaping of my empirical theological position.

The study of theology is little different than the study of science. Truth and fact are not determined by a majority vote and by personal opinion. Reality exists independently of what people believe and fact is fact whether anyone recognizes it or not. In science the objective is to observe, measure, interpret, and use reality. Without a strong foundation in reality one either gets fiction or insanity. If there is a God, and the spiritual realm is real, then it is important that theology also have its foundation in careful observation of all the facts, interpretation of those facts to bring one into an understanding of the truth, and application of what has been learned. The principles of science and scientific study can also be applied to theological studies. There is a major difference between theological fact and religious imagination. There are many different opinions and religious beliefs today. Much that is believed is in error. With a solid scientific approach to our study of God and the

supernatural we can bring our position closer to reality.

1. The choice of Dallas Theological Seminary.

I graduated from Wheaton College with a B. S. in science. When I decided to study theology I began to investigate the better seminaries to help me find the best theological school that would give me the best foundation for my theology. Many schools had few opinions and stated, "These are all the ideas about this doctrine. One opinion is as good as another. Take your choice." Some schools held strong opinions in their theological stand but did not seem to know why they believed as they did. They would state: "This is sound doctrine. You must believe it by faith. You cannot question why it is true and investigate any further. Otherwise you are an apostate and can no longer study here." I chose Dallas Theological Seminary because the stand of the seminary was, "Here are all the ideas concerning this doctrine, but here is why we believe what we believe to be true." Then the professors would exegete from the Greek or Hebrew Scriptures and look at all evidence available and objectively demonstrate the textual facts where any particular doctrinal conclusion was founded.

2. The emphasis for careful Biblical study methods.

The theological position of Dallas Theological Seminary was not founded on majority opinion, but on a careful objective, scientific study of the facts of the Bible. The professors of theology seemed to have the same careful, objective approach to finding the truth that I had developed in my studies in science. Their approach to finding truth was objective, careful, logical, and reasonable. It is a pleasure for a scholar to study in an environment that is safe, stimulating, and rich. It is also intensely gratifying to be in an association with other people who are in an unbiased search for truth. When the professors are also advanced seekers of truth then any discrepancies or different opinions can be discussed in a rational manner and all facts considered. New and contradictory facts in the discussion do not destroy the continuity and cordiality of the association, but allow for correction of error in theological conclusions and the growth of demonstrable knowledge. Without this intellectual honesty there is no real intellectualism. This concept of intellectual honesty extends to the discovery of all truth, regardless of the area of discipline being investigated. Otherwise there is only superstition and intellectual relativism.

3. Occasional professors' mistakes.

I have always thoroughly enjoyed studying in the environment of intellectual honesty and have had the privilege to study under some of the most gifted and knowledgeable teachers in their specific disciplines in the world. Dallas Theological Seminary was no exception. The stand of the professors was based on the careful observation of the facts and a logical interpretation and application of the results. When there were genuine questions they were recognized and answered. I trusted my professors to be honest and to teach what they knew.

One day one of my professors was explaining the argument of a minor prophet. We were all enjoying his explanation and his use of the blackboard to chart out the meaning of the Bible book. I suddenly realized that he had missed the whole point of the book. It made me realize that no man

was infallible. I also realized that no matter how good a person was, how much he or she knew, or how accurate he or she was in teaching, that no one was immune from making mistakes and teaching foolishness. I deeply respected that professor and still respect him. His contribution to the spiritual welfare of the whole world has been great and he has been greatly used by the Lord in His work. This was his only mistake that I ever observed. I had many other internationally recognized great teachers. I rarely found them making a mistake that was clearly contradicted by specific observations of facts although I did find errors on occasion. I learned that one should not listen to teachers without using discernment and should evaluate all teaching to insure that the teaching was in harmony with all the facts. A teacher is only a resource for a good student. Teachers can point the way to learning and can be a great help to scholars, but the responsibility for learning rest with the student.

4. The decision to assume the responsibility for my own studies.

I came to realize that I was responsible to investigate all important factors for myself. Each of us is responsible for his own scholarship. I determined at that time to investigate all teaching for myself, to use my own judgement for what I would accept, to weigh all conclusions against all known facts available, to reject all theoretical contradictions to fact, and to assume responsibility to stand with the verified truth. I believe that all truth is mutually compatible and is God's truth. All reality coexists and fits together in one harmonious whole. No fact contradicts any other actual fact. The contradictions to learning are in faulty conclusions based on incomplete knowledge of all pertinent facts or in preconceived, prejudiced conclusions that omit facts that contradict the conclusions reached. Acts 17:11 became the rule for my theological study and I determined to "welcome the Word with all readiness of mind and scrutinize the Scripture daily to see if what was being taught was the truth." In the Greek, this passage emphasizes specific ideas. The concept of nobility was that the people in Berea were better born or of a more noble character than the people of Thessalonica who had violently just rejected the news that the Apostle Paul was trying to tell them. In Berea, the people did not react with violence, but instead, welcomed the telling of the truth, listened with a keen mind (*prothumos*), and scrutinized the Scriptures daily to see if by some slim chance (the optitive mood) the Apostle Paul was telling them the truth.

Conclusions.

Although you learn throughout your whole life, you will never come to a position where you know everything that is to be known. You have to build your knowledge on a firm and stable foundation. We never come to an end of our learning process in this life. If we do stagnate, this is the first phase of death. We no longer have curiosity. Purpose becomes mere survival. We no longer have direction. Life becomes boring. We become rigid in our thinking. Often we accept what others are teaching without evaluating whether what is being taught is actually established by objective facts. It is far better to maintain your desire to learn and your quest to make your life accomplish what will change history than to suffer the boredom of stagnation. True nobility is produced in individuals that cultivate a greatness of character founded in integrity, honesty, benevolence, sound knowledge, justice, mercy and compassion for others. This does not happen by accident. People are not born with nobility. They cultivate it. They cherish it. They practice it in

their own lives. And they try to pass on the legacy of nobility to future generations.

I know what I chose. What will you decide for your life?

II. THE NEUTRALITY OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH.

Reality is neutral and all real facts support reality. All truth is God's truth. There is no knowledge that is a threat to honest scholarship. False intellectualism suppresses truth for the purpose of promoting an unsound agenda or untenable philosophy. Real intellectualism weighs the factual evidence and brings all theory into harmony with the evidence. Objective factual data can disprove or correct popular but erroneous theories. True science does not take sides to prove a position to the exclusion of all other positions until the other positions have been demonstrated to be unfounded on fact. True science also is easily corrected when contradictory evidence is brought to

light and presented. True science reconciles theories to bring them into harmony with reality, and does not aggressively promote one theory over another at the exclusion of any solid data.

A. The usage of ambivalence in discovering a true position.

True science is ambivalent to proving any specific point or promoting any unsupported agenda. True scientific investigation is not subject to the whims and desires of the investigators or the teachers who support any specific theory or agenda. Curiosity and emotion play a part in all scientific investigation. The creative art of discovery gives great satisfaction to those who have been in the lead of the investigation and discovery. Scientific investigation, on the other hand, must be carried out in a sterile atmosphere emotionally to insure that the conclusions of the investigation are not warped, diluted, or tainted with the emotional desires or beliefs of the investigators. All theoretical conclusions are subject to honest inquiry and question and there should be a willing and honest discussion of the reasons for the conclusions and the resulting implications. It is true that the mind should be rigid in retaining proven solid data, not allowing for the denial of factual data, but the mind should be flexible in re-evaluating conclusions. The true scientist should not enter any investigation with prejudiced opinions and hidden agendas, but should enter honestly with hypotheses that are subject to change when the facts and the analysis of the actual data warrant a correction of theory or the redefinition of what is currently accepted. When the factual data does not support any specific position then all tenable positions should be considered without bias and open discussion should not be subject to ridicule or prejudicial prohibition. There should not be any subject that should not be open to careful investigation and discussion.

B. Cognitive dissonance and the alerting of the mind to error.

Dissonance in music is when two or more notes are unharmonious or discordant with each other. Dissonance in music is sometime used to alert the mind of an incomplete musical idea and to bring mental satisfaction when the apparent dissonance is resolved. In science facts are harmonious and fit into a complete universal system. The mind of the unbiased scholar seeks for a harmonious resolution in understanding the reality of the mechanics of the actual system under consideration. Cognitive dissonance occurs when systems of factual data seem to clash and where one piece or system of data seems to contradict other pieces or systems of factual data. This causes temporary confusion in the mind of the scientist. This temporary confusion, in turn, awakens curiosity in the sane and healthy mind and demands further investigation until the apparent contradictions are resolved and there is broader understanding of the harmony of the two formerly dissonant philosophical systems along with the mechanics that explain the harmony of the whole. Even when factual systems of data seem to contradict one another, the facts still fit into a broader system than the mind comprehends at the time of the dissonant encounter.

The healthy mind continues to study the apparent dissonant concepts and the related facts until the contradictions are resolved and the broader system is understood. Healthy scholarship is constantly discovering new facts and consistently relates or integrates the new data into the system of understanding until the conclusions of former studies are corrected to actually reflect reality. Theories and scholarly conclusions are always changing as new factual information is discovered

and are corrected to reflect the broader understanding of the total information received, including the integration of all new factual data within the system of understanding of the whole.

(1) The sensorimotor and preoperational mind

There are several steps in the development and maturation of the mind. These steps are linked with the biological maturation and the development of the neurological system as the body grows and develops. If the body develops normally then the individual becomes capable of developing mature thought patterns as a normal cognitive activity. The mature mind can think in multiple variables at the same time and is capable of harmonizing the factual knowledge accumulated throughout life. The immature mind, however, looks on things according to their surface appearance and can believe in two mutually contradictory conclusions or theories at the same time and feel no intellectual stress or dissonance. If this characteristic continues beyond around age 12 then the person is usually retarded in their intellectual development and is slow or limited in their ability to think in mature ways. These people may attain status as "intellectuals" but they major in repeating the conclusions of others and do not really think for themselves. Sometimes this is referred to as being educated beyond their intelligence.

(2) The developing concrete and formal operational mind.

The maturing mind begins by investigating on a factual basis and comparing and combining two variables at a time to fit into their structure of knowledge. The person using concrete operations thinks in two variables and joins two ideas together at a time. This is slower, but is dealing with actual material things or ideas to build a composite system of knowledge. By using the intellectual function of comparison and contrast it is more difficult to not be aware of cognitive dissonance where it is realized that two mutually exclusive ideas or philosophies contradict each other and forces the individual to reconcile the differences or to reject the false conception. About the age of twelve or thirteen, the mind begins to think in three variables or more. This development of growth greatly accelerates the speed of thinking and learning. It allows the individual to absorb many more ideas or concrete facts into their system of understanding and to file what is being learned into a more readily retrieved or remembered accumulation of knowledge.

(2) The emotionally unstable mind

The unhealthy mind, on the other hand, tends to refuse to resolve apparent dissonance and correct premature and erroneous conclusions. Changing the former system of belief is too painful for the unhealthy mind. It is far easier and more comfortable to the unhealthy mind to deny the new factual data that clashes with the old conclusions than it is to correct the conclusions to bring them in harmony with reality. The emotionally unstable mind feels stress in encountering intellectual awareness of apparently contradicting factual data with the unstable mind. New data is denied and implications are rejected without a careful integration of the new data and a correction of conceptual errors. The emotionally unstable mind is unable to correct the errors of past accepted theories because of the stress of admitting cognitive dissonance, the difficulty of careful investigation, and the correcting phase of admitting previous error. Sometimes the implications of the new factual data

are rejected by the statement, "Why, if that were true, we would have to completely rewrite the textbooks."

(3) The closed religious mind

The closed religious mind also often draws its conclusions from the teaching of others and the pressure of peer groups. This way of thinking accepts dogma based on the teaching of high-pressure leaders. These leaders make the believers feel guilty if honest questions arise that might introduce factual data that contradict the accepted theory or dogma. Often those who teach concerning spiritual matters have added doctrines that are not supported by any factual Scriptural documentation. By labeling this way of thinking as "the closed religious mind" I do not mean only people who accept religious teaching as truth without questioning these teachings. The principle also extends to those who doubt the accumulation of factual data and deny other possibilities than the conclusion they accept while refusing to consider new contradictory factual data. They are fearful that the trauma of changing their minds and the probable peer pressure that they fear will be brought to bear against them if they waver in their former stand. Much of the argumentation concerning which is the best Bible translation is not brought about by careful inspection of the translation in comparison to the original texts and the careful corrections of whatever errors have crept into the translations, but is founded on the blind faith in another's opinion, taking the opinion as a religious truth. Truth is not determined because of a majority vote, nor should our factual position be formed or change contingent on the peer acceptance. Our faith should be founded on careful evaluation of the facts as carefully investigated and reported by honest scholars with sound minds.

(4) The senile mind

When a person grows old and the body begins to break down, there is a confusion of logical process. Fear and frustration are evident. Memory fails. The logical process becomes more limited than formerly and the ability to learn is diminished. The positions that have been previously accepted as truth become comforting and the confrontation with new factual data that contradict and tend to correct former positions become frightening. If a person accepts a position based on peer pressure earlier in life, this senile thought pattern becomes even more unsettling. Unfortunately, much that is accepted in science or religion is accepted because of peer pressure, not through careful investigation of the facts. Those who accept positions without actual knowledge become set in their ways and any change disturbs their tranquility. They feel obligated to argue the peer position and fight about their former stand rather than pursue truth by considering the newly related factual data.

C. Skepticism versus the inquiring mind.

Skepticism is defined by Webster as, "the philosophical doctrine that the truth of all knowledge must be in question and that inquiry must be a process of doubting." (Guarlnik, 1970.) The Skeptical mind comes to all learning situations with the presupposition that truth cannot be known and that all knowledge is to be doubted. With this presupposition as a foundation of scholarship the existential philosophy of learning becomes inevitable in stating that "Truth is what

you believe," not that "Truth exists by itself and it is the responsibility of scholars to document and explain reality." Skepticism is usually selectively applied in studies by ignoring evidence contradictory to the philosophy being proposed or throwing doubt on controversial facts, while selectively presenting only the data that support the belief system of the investigator or teacher. Any questioning of the proposed theory or philosophy (a valid form of skepticism) that cannot be objectively answered is considered as a questioning of the authority of the teacher and is discouraged through the attack against those who raise the questions and illuminate the contradictory factual data.

True science and true scholarship demands an enquiring mind. There is a place for questioning and skepticism within true scholarship. The difference between the skeptical mind and the questions raised by true scholarship is that with the skeptical mind all knowledge is filtered to **deny the credibility of certain factual data**, especially when the data contradict the proposed theory. The biased skeptical mind rejects the facts. True scholarship, on the other hand, **evaluates any theory or philosophy** in the light of the factual data demonstrated, and corrects the theory. True scholarship, therefore, closes the mind to rejecting all proven factual data, but keeps a focus on the implications for all new solid data, the integration of all new data into the unified field of knowledge, and a readiness to correct any conclusions that are not fitting with all the facts.

D. Taking a new stand concerning faith and fact.

All knowledge demands a certain amount of faith. One must have faith that reality is knowable. One must have an analytical faith that the facts observed adequately demonstrate the reality of truth under investigation. After collecting an adequate amount of factual data one must have faith that the hypothesis accurately demonstrates the truth of reality. One must also have faith that if contradictory evidence is noticed in the future, the new factual data does not negate truth or reality but fits into the whole of reality. One must have faith that incorrect concepts of reality can be corrected by the discovery of new factual data without denying reality. One must also have faith in intellectual honesty which is able to question any conclusion where there is contradictory evidence without destroying the truth. Truth does not exist because it is believed. Truth or reality exists on the basis of fact. It is the responsibility of all true scholarship to discover the truth and act on what is found to be true.

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III. REDEFINING FAITH.

When we talk of faith we are referring to trusting knowledge to be adequate to answer the questions in life or to adequately reflect reality. When we speak of faith in certain people, we are referring to the people who have proven themselves trustworthy over a long period of time. When we speak of faith in Christ, we are referring to far more than merely believing about Christ, that He lived, died, and rose again. We are speaking about believing about Him, but we are also speaking about placing our trust and confidence in Him to do what He said He would do if we trusted Him (John 3:36). Faith in Christ includes believing that He is God Himself in the flesh (John 1:1–3, 14), dying for our sins (John 3:16), and that trusting Him is an act of our will where we recognize and accept Him as our God manifest in the flesh and Savior (John 1:12), and where we submit to Him to do His will (I John 2:3, 4).

A. Faith is not blind.

Faith is not blind. While it is true that faith includes an element of lack of knowledge, it is also true that faith is placed where there is sufficient knowledge to be able to judge that the predictions or promises of the future are reasonable and that it is reasonable to expect them to come to pass as stated. When faith is properly placed in reality, it is not lack of faith when the believer studies further and discovers factual data that adds further substantiation to the reason for faith. If faith is placed in reality, the more one learns about the object of faith the more that faith is demonstrated to be realistic. It is not wrong to investigate the unknown if pursued honestly and properly. The more one learns, the more one is convinced that the faith is based on reality.

B. Hebrews 11:1, 2

Hebrews 11:1, 2 states, "Faith is the confident anticipation of things that are being assured (hoped for), the accumulation of demonstrated evidence that substantiates the predictability of things not yet observed" (from the Greek New Testament). Faith is the confidence of the mind and the spirit and it demands a subject of focus. When we have faith in a person we call it trust. We are confident that person will act with the same character and stability that has been demonstrated over a long period of time in the past. The word used for "confident assurance" (hypostasis) speaks of the physical reality or existence of facts or material entities in themselves. It is speaking of facts that exist without needing support in anything else. The word used for hope or assurance (elpis) does not mean a superstitious hope in unsubstantiated myths and legends. It was used for reasonable expectations for the future of factually supported data that can be scientifically investigated and used to predict the future founded on the study and understanding of the past. The Greek word for evidence (elegchos) is a legal term for the collection and objective presentation in a court of law of the body of evidence which establishes the reality of the case being tried and convinces the hearers of the reality of the issue being presented. The word "seen" (blepo) means to see with the eyes as an objective observation. Faith is not an unintelligent belief in myths and superstitions. Faith is a confidence placed in the knowledge of the past and the predictability of the future because of objectively observed factual data demonstrating exactly what happened in the past, and collected sufficiently to be able to predict the future with a reasonable degree of accuracy. This faith in carefully collected factual data to understand the past and predict the future is used in science, scientific historical study, criminal investigation, industry, and should also be applied to the building of confidence in the spiritual realm.

C. Substantiation of past historic fact.

Too often history is written by those who have a hidden agenda to promote their own message. Factual data is gathered that agrees with the author's agenda, and the facts that contradict the philosophy that they are promoting are ignored or denied. The study of history, like science, should be neutral and should concentrate on the factual data that demonstrate exactly what happened and why the events of history occurred, and history should not be corrupted to hide the ugly or to deceive future generations. One can only learn from history if the historical events are presented accurately and in a substantiated manner. The art and science of archaeology and objective scientific

historical research establishes the past and gives wisdom for the decisions for the future. As in “politically correct” reconstructed history, as well as in the evolutionary scientific investigation of nature the same mistakes are made, and too much time is spent teaching and promoting unfounded theory as though the position promoted is the established truth. This is the same error that foments all the denominational controversies through time. If we follow the philosophy and methodology of many so called scientists today, we would still believe in a geocentric universe and that the earth was flat. Their insistence in their philosophy as truth and resistance to anyone questioning their conclusions is not scientific method. Even the Bible teaches that the earth is a sphere (Is. 40:22), that it is suspended in space (Job 26:7), and that it turns on its axis (Job 38:14). The flat earth dogma was neither scientific nor Biblical.

D. Relying in the future founded in the past performance.

Most people separate science and religion in their minds. The claim is made that science is the investigation of reality whereas the belief in God is a matter of subjective feeling. Faith is not wishful thinking. Although Santa Claus, the Easter bunny, and the tooth fairy are myths, they are not a matter of faith as we speak of it in this discussion. True faith is trusting that the causes will produce relatively the same effects as they have in the past. If used in reference to science we can assume that the results of the natural laws will produce the same phenomena as in the past, and that we can predict the future effects with accuracy if we have considered all the important factual variables that are indeed the causes. Faith can be the discovery of objective facts that indicate the existence of an intelligent designer of the universe and all that lies within it. Faith is trusting the stability of the intelligent design of the universe, trusting the intelligent designer to do as He has promised, and applying the natural laws already discovered to the applications of the future as well as explaining what has happened in the past.

Is there adequate evidence that an intelligent designer exists? Can mankind believe in that Intelligent Designer? How has this Intelligent Designer manifested Himself through creation? How can people find relationship with that Intelligent Designer? This is what we plan to investigate.

IV. THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD AND THE INVESTIGATION OF FAITH

It is expected that an objective, systematic method will be used in the investigation of nature, history, crime detection, or any other pursuit demanding a clear collection of factual data and an establishing of reality. All too often, however, the investigations of matters of spiritual import are not followed with the scientific care that is demanded if the truth is to be known. If issues that last for a time are important enough to study them with care, it seems more important to investigate matters that may have eternal implications with even more care and accuracy. There is much that we will never know or understand in time. We have been given very few glimpses into the distant future. With care and diligence we can see farther ahead and rest assured that our future will be secure. This objective study will remain the major contention and methodology for the rest of this work.

The baselessness of unsupported presuppositions.

Before we continue to think about issues and factors that are harder to document and quantify, let us think about the process that will be followed in our investigation. It is important to follow objective processes in all unbiased evaluations and investigations of human knowledge. Many times we can clearly understand the factual data that is being observed. Often, however, we can only hypothesize concerning the significance and meaning of the observed data until much more data has been collected and interpreted. At the best, our hypothesizing and theories are tentative, temporary, and partial until better factual data verifies the truth of the interpretation. Any scientifically pursued study is constantly changing and is constantly corrected and updated to make it harmonious to all the specific factual data that is being discovered. No scientific theory is sacred within itself. When scientific theories are contradicted by more recently discovered or previously ignored facts the theories should be corrected to integrate all known factual data so that the theory or hypothesis more accurately describes reality.

A. Scientific investigation explores for the possible and searches for the probable cause and effect.

Regardless of the discipline or subject, scientific investigation seeks to understand both historical and present reality, discover the laws which govern nature, and use the knowledge gained to innovate use of what has been learned as well as use the knowledge to predict the knowable future. These uses of scientific investigation are effective intellectual tools to help bring stability, health, creativity, productivity, assurance, and happiness to those who use the knowledge well. This chain of scientific investigation in the pursuit of knowledge links understanding of causes and effects to be able to predict the effects of specific factors, to be able to manipulate nature and creatively manage our environments and our lives to make them more meaningful. Through this process we bring the un-conceived into the realm of the possible, and through application make the possible a reality. The creative abilities of mankind depend on being able to understand the cause and effect relationship of chains of reactions and events, their implications, and to be able to imaginatively transform the available into new usage and previously unknown mechanisms.

B. Shutting the mind to the possible by entering investigations with unsupported presuppositions sabotages true scientific investigation.

It is true that learning with an open mind results in the shutting of the mind for certain disproved theories and hypotheses. For example, these theories and hypotheses become interesting artifacts to be remembered as false ideas that did not work. On the other hand, when honestly investigating any area of knowledge, one must keep an open mind to the possibilities that are supported by the mass of collected factual data. When the factual data agrees with the related theory or hypothesis the theory or hypothesis can be retained. Often, however, the conclusions reached are not based on complete understanding of all the available facts gathered, or these conclusions are based on incomplete data yet to be discovered. Fallacy also creeps into systems of knowledge where conclusions are reached and accepted emotionally and religiously, and any questioning of the theory or hypothesis is considered as an attack on the art of science itself as well as on all accumulated knowledge. This happens both in religious and scientific circles where the conclusions reached are neither warranted by evidence either factually or spiritually. Careful and honest pursuit of knowledge must guard against misrepresenting theory as truth, rejecting newly discovered

contradictory evidence for the sake of political harmony and publicly accepted dogma.

C. The use of hypotheses.

In research, information is gathered in the form of factual data. When enough factual data is observed and gathered the available research will give some indication of its significance. The trend of the significance of the factual data will normally lead scientific investigators to make guesses concerning the meaning of the collected data. These guesses are usually called hypotheses.

1. The positive and the negative hypothesis.

A hypothesis can be stated in a positive or a negative way. A positive hypothesis states the educated guess in a positive way. As an example in research we could say, "There is a significant difference between the intelligence of the rural population of Iowa and the intelligence of the population of New York City." Another statement of a hypothesis could be, "Dinosaurs still exist in the jungles of Africa." "God does exist" is also a positive hypothesis. In research, as in life, we often state our hypothesis in negative terms as a "null hypothesis" for the sake of leaving alternative hypotheses for consideration. A parallel null hypothesis could be stated, "There is no significance difference between the intelligence of the rural population of Iowa and the intelligence of the population of New York City." We could say, "Dinosaurs no longer live in the jungles of Africa because they are extinct." "God does not exist" is a null hypothesis.

2. The problem of reaching scientific conclusions founded on lack of evidence.

Often conclusions are reached when there is no factual data to support the hypothesis concerning the object being investigated. People will say, I do not believe that is possible because I have never seen it happen. The Russian Cosmonaut, Uri Gagarin, looked out the window of the spacecraft and stated, "There is no God. I do not see Him." This was an argument founded on lack of evidence. An argument based on lack of evidence is no logical argument. Much that is labeled scholarship today is based on lack of evidence. These arguments fall the first time any evidence is discovered to the contrary. The least that can be said by honest researchers with lack of solid factual data or evidence is that there is not enough factual data to be able to reach a valid conclusion. Atheism is an argument based on no evidence or evidence ignored. It is not an honest intellectual argument, because to be honest the researcher would have to claim that he or she knows everything that is to be known in all the universe of knowledge, and still finds no evidence for the existence of God. The agnostic argument that the individual has not seen or recognized enough evidence to demonstrate the existence of God and that his or her ignorance prohibits formulating a conclusion until further factual data can be found is more honest. In other words, it is easier to prove that God exists than it is to prove that He does not exist.

Under a null hypothesis, after you have analyzed all the collected factual data and have not found enough factual data to arrive at a conclusion you have merely retained the question. If the data analysis once demonstrates something to actually be reality the principle or existence of the discovered truth is established, providing the conclusion is founded on the proper interpretation of

the factual data and actually represents reality. The first fresh dinosaur artifact, photograph, or living specimen produced today would be decisive in rejecting the hypothesis that dinosaurs are extinct.

D. Conservative and skeptical errors are similar.

Regardless of the source of error, there is a similarity in the patterns of thought that result in these errors. One of these thought patterns is a blind acceptance of what has been taught without independently evaluating the factual data that is supposed to support the conclusion. These errors are perpetuated through insisting that the dogma be believed without question as a matter of "faith." This type of error is often found in religious circles and is ridiculed by those who would detract from what is being said. Science also has suffered from the same problem of unsupported dogma. Much time is wasted in teaching science by teaching the theory of evolution as a dogma that must be believed rather than teaching the processes of scientific investigation, the facts of science and the applications of these facts in creative problem solving. Those who raise serious factual questions or those who doubt the theory of evolution are ridiculed and ostracized as not really belonging to the community of scientists.

1. Which logical approach is correct?

The study of science, history, or religion should be neutral and honestly seeking the truth of reality. No honest intellectual investigation of truth should approach the investigation with a preconceived conclusion and then try to support that conclusion with selected factual data while ignoring any contradictory factual data. No question that is honestly posed should be ignored or rejected as unworthy. No contradictory factual data should be hidden to support one conclusion over another. No historic or scientific conclusion should be contrived or promoted contrary to the observed and collected factual data unless labeled as speculation (theory) or fiction. No pressure should be placed on anyone to believe unsupported conclusions. No subject should be forbidden for discussion in any academic setting, but minds should be convinced through the argument and persuasion of factual proof. No wisdom or application of lasting value will come from deceit or pressure to accept without question what is not understood.

Faith is not blind acceptance, but is a confident hypothesizing founded on past careful observation, the collection of factual data, and the discovery of the laws that govern the interaction of matter, the behavior of beings, and the trends toward the future. Faith in God can be based on observable facts and a confidence that God Himself also follows certain inalienable laws that govern His character, His purposes, and His creation.

2. Which logical approach is unacceptable?

Any approach to knowledge or philosophy that is deceptive or causes people to cease honest investigation is a false intellectual approach. Any persuasion that demands the acceptance of any conclusion by blind faith without question is anti-intelligence and out of character with sound science, history, or religion. Any argument that negates collected, verifiable, factual data which contradicts what is currently believed because of a previously held position is no longer honest. Any

presentation of a theory that hides contradictory factual data or does not allow honest questions to be raised against the current theory or hypothesis is scientifically, historically, or religiously dishonest.

3. Voltaire's argument.

The great French philosopher, Voltaire, believed little, but he did like to argue. When approached concerning faith in God by several of his atheist friends, Voltaire argued for the presence of God in the following way. Belief in God also implies that there is life after death, with a heaven and a hell. If there is no God then there is no life after death, but the dead cease to be. Eternal life comes from believing in God and Jesus Christ. Not believing in Christ and living an unrighteous life will result in eternity in hell. If one dies believing in God and there is no God then that person has lost nothing but has gained a good life and has been a productive member of society. If the atheist dies and there is a God, then the atheist will spend eternity in hell and has lost everything. Although Voltaire did not believe this argument himself, there is a measure of truth in what he said. Careful investigation of all the factual data may give us more than blind faith and lay the foundation for confidence in the reality as well as the application for what we believe. Further, this testable faith can also lead us on to greater maturity in understanding, faith, character, and citizenship.

E. The improbability of proving a negative hypothesis and the finality of establishing a supported positive hypothesis with a demonstration of factual data.

To say that something does not exist is a false hypothesis for the most part. Hypothesizing that something does not exist, some condition never was met, or some historical event did not happen from lack of evidence is an argument from silence. Anyone proposing this type of conclusion is using faulty logic or is dishonest in the argument. The argument from silence argues from a position of claiming to know everything that can be known in the universe, past, present, and future, and is claiming to know surely that of all reality the subject never happened, does not exist, and/or cannot ever happen. These people confuse the concepts of fiction, speculation, and fact. A negative hypothesis is always an open hypothesis and is never concluded except by contradictory factual data. A positive hypothesis is concluded and demonstrable through sound factual data. It is always more sure to prove something exists by solid evidence than to deny existence through lack of knowledge except in narrow questions as with establishing the absence of a chemical substance in a specific chemical solution or compound.

1. The atheistic approach to religious scholarship.

The atheist says in his heart, "There is no God" (Ps. 14:1). The Bible calls the person that speaks with this finality a fool. It is easier to find evidence that God exists than to ignore the evidence that is available and conclude His non-existence. The atheistic position is a dishonest position from a scientific standpoint, and anyone claiming to be an atheist is also demonstrating that the tenants of atheism are accepted on a religious basis of blind faith rather than a process of thorough investigation and careful scientific thought.

2. The agnostic approach to religious scholarship.

The agnostic approach to the existence of God is more honest scientifically. The agnostic states, "I do not know of enough solid evidence that convinces me that God exists." The dishonest agnostic, like the atheist, stands in the position of unbelief but refuses to investigate the evidence for the existence of God and does not care whether or not God exists. The honest agnostic, on the other hand, will investigate the factual evidence and will allow himself or herself to be convinced by the truth if the evidence is conclusive enough to warrant such a conclusion. The honest agnostic also recognizes the responsibility that accompanies knowledge.

3. Truth is not determined through a majority vote.

Truth is not dependent on opinion, regardless of the number of scholars holding a specific opinion, nor does the argument rest on the recognition of the qualifications of the scholars holding that opinion. Truth is self existing regardless of the individuals supporting it or casting doubt on truth as a reality. Truth is never determined by majority vote. It is honest to ask true questions, admit doubt in a scientific investigation, and continue to hold a disputed concept in doubt while under investigation. It is dishonest to reject all conclusions through doubt without consideration regardless of evidence. Many authorities are quoted in research to substantiate an intellectual position. To be honest, however, one must have an open mind and continue to investigate until the position has been demonstrated through fact. When truly searching for knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, one must look at the factual evidence that substantiates the conclusions and not merely accept the opinions of the "experts."

4. The establishment of fact through solid data.

The laws of evidence that are admissible in a court of law are defined and clear. The evidence is not to be based on the opinion of the witness but must be a clear statement or presentation of the observed facts. The laws of science are also clear and well defined. For a set of factual data to be accepted the data must be observable, measurable, and reproducible if experimental in nature. In other words, the truth must be able to be verified through a mass of carefully collected data that is able to be studied by others and the conclusions reached reevaluated to determine their scientific accuracy. Any theory of science is constantly subject to investigation and any contradictory evidence forces the honest scientist to reevaluate the theory, correct it in accordance to the contradictory factual evidence, and harmonize the theory with the factual evidence. Actual truth is factual and will be in harmony with all other factual truth. The "laws of science" must always be changing as new factual data is discovered to bring the man-defined "laws of science" into harmony with the actual laws of science that define reality as demonstrated through the mass of collected factual data. The verification of history should also be founded on carefully collected and analyzed data that demonstrates the truth of what actually happened in the event in history being investigated. The verification of factual data should be the foundation for our hold on reality.

When I was studying science in a well-known university in 1952 I mentioned to my botany professor that I had seen fern trees in the Kevu volcanic region of the Belgian Congo now known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He was insistent that fern trees were extinct and, as proof, showed me a statement in an older textbook of one of the leading botanical authorities that stated that fern trees were extinct. Shortly after the Second World War people began to report having seen fern trees all over the tropical world and specimens of living fern trees are now seen in most botanical gardens. It only takes one solid fact to establish the truth of reality and to overturn fallacy in theory.

F. The honesty of investigation founded on forensic proof versus the intellectual dishonesty of a closed, preconceived mind.

Unfortunately many who hold to "scientific theory" or to Biblical doctrine unsupported by the text of Scripture assume that the theory is established scientific law or that the doctrine they are teaching is accurate Biblical teaching, and tenaciously defend the errors of their theory as though they possessed the immutable truth. When this happens it is usually because the proponent of any theory or dogma has accepted the theory as his or her religion, and not because of an unbiased search for the truth substantiated by factual data. This rigidity only destroys harmony in global or spherical thinking. Rigidity interrupts the recognition of the implications of new factual data that are being discovered, and allows individuals to hold mutually contradictory concepts simultaneously in cognitive dissonance. Although the discovery of new factual data and realizing the implications of that data is exciting, the seeking of truth and knowledge must be carefully neutral in the process, not biased in only attempting to defend outdated and erroneously held popular opinions. Honest scholarship in most scholarly pursuits constantly discovers new data and is constantly correcting the currently held opinions to more accurately describe reality substantiated through fact.

III. THE USAGE OF SUPPORTED PRESUPPOSITIONS IN SEQUENTIAL SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION AND INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS.

THE ACCUMULATION OF SUBSTANTIATED DATA AS A FOUNDATION FOR INTELLECTUAL AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF.