

## Introduction

Do you know anyone who has ever questioned their faith? Or have you ever known of a church fight over doctrine? Or maybe a denomination that believes it is the only RIGHT denomination, and all others are going to hell? Have you ever known of a particular congregation that believes it has all the right answers and is willing to fight all others who believe differently? While I am all for “keeping the faith” and being solid in my beliefs, it is arrogant to think that “we” have all the right answers. Further, it is not God’s way for us to tear down someone else because they don’t believe as we do. Could it be that maybe, just maybe, we don’t have all the right answers...for we “know in part and prophesy in part” (1 Cor. 13:9 NIV). I know a man that once hung on a cruel bloody timber that once said, “They know not what they are doing” (Luke 23:34 NIV).

Somehow making this standard response, saying, nobody has all the answers...so don’t worry about it, just doesn’t cut it; it just doesn’t help, does it? The wars between people and between denominations still go on. People are hurt; why are Christians so mean to one another? We are to tell of the love of Jesus Christ, yet we often display the same hatred found out beyond the church walls; nonbelievers see it and say, just look at those hypocrites, there is nothing there for me! I just don’t get it; we are to love one another. Everyone takes a stand on something, we should, this is not bad, but please know that you only have partial truths. Paul said that “We don’t know everything, and our prophecies are not complete.” (1Cor. 13:9 LB) Would we want a God that has limits; a God that could be fully understood? I don’t think so. I’m not suggesting you cave-in to false religions and doctrine, oh no! But what I am suggesting is that you become a strong Christian, set for you a firm foundation in Jesus, and then stand upright secure in your beliefs that Jesus Christ is Lord. Let the Holy Spirit do your fighting and you be loving to all as Jesus was and still is. Jesus tells us to love our enemies (Matt 5:44 NIV), yet the churches hurt their own brothers and sisters (hardly being enemies) over these partial understandings we lock on to so vigorously. Should we then stop from searching for a higher understanding? Never! The Apostle Paul once said, “I struggle for what is ahead, I run toward the goal, so that I can win the prize of being called to heaven. (Phil 3:13+14 LB)”. My point is “how” we run the race, not “should” we run the race.

Throughout history each group, each age thought they had all the right answers; and it became like a plateau of thought and then the common norm. Did thinking stop there? No, the next group came along, took another step forward and built upon the past. They looked afresh at what was around them, coupled with the new knowledge gleaned from the last

step, and then they took another step forward. It is like a staircase; to get to the top, you must simply take one step after another. At each step, should you stop and look around, you would see things at a higher level, a higher perspective, a world differently seen. The next question that comes to my mind is, where we are today, what is our vision, and what will our next step be? This book is not “the next step”; oh no, I daresay if I may be so bold, it is a quantum leap forward!

A quantum leap forward...yes, a bold statement. Yes, but there is sound reasoning to suggest that this is the case. The reason this book is different from the others that search for truth, or deal with theology and cosmology, is that it shows you how to look differently at the world and Universe around you. The answers to your questions and the questions of the ages are right in front of you. Not one group is ALL right...but you'll find there are multiple positions on the main issues of our time...that are all right at the same time! No, I'm not suggesting we water everything down to some lukewarm mush, so repulsive, it is neither hot nor cold, and having zero substance is worthless dribble. Proper viewing of “the facts” is a matter of perspective. You have to open your eyes to a different way of viewing facts. The age-old war between the scientists and the theologians will find peace,, if each side will study these pages. The problem will be that neither side will do this. Each side of the Christian - Scientist tug-of-war will simply keep pulling on their side of the rope, afraid to let go and view beyond their red sore hands; they both will be dragged through the mud hole. The Christian that puts down science as humanistic, afraid to look and study, could find their spiritual views strengthened if they would simply stop pulling on their rope for a moment. Drop the rope and look around you, see the world differently through the scientific fact found in this book. The opposite will also be true, if the scientists could only drop their creed for a moment, they will find answers to their questions by using more spiritual eyes as they too search for truth; this, of course, will never happen...it is like taking the equal sign out of a math equation...they just are not that flexible.

What is impossible in one paradigm (pattern of thought) maybe easy for another paradigm. What are your models, how set are your patterns, and how do they control you? Where are you stuck in a way of thinking that will automatically filter out new orthodox thought, new truths, and keep you from seeing beyond your own defensive walls? This book is about opening your eyes again to see creation in a new way.

Walls constructed by people, be they based on religion, politics, scientific thought, or whatever, are most often defended to the death. This has become so ingrained into people that a person changing his mind is often ridiculed as a personal weakness. For crying out loud, how have we come

to this poor situation! If you are not changing your mind, then you are not learning anything new! In your learning, you can become strengthened in your position, as if you were building up your muscles at the gym; through this strengthening, the fear of attack diminishes and defensive walls become unnecessary. You also can test your thoughts to make any course corrections so you strive to stay on track for truth. Christians are encouraged to do this; The Apostle Paul said we know in part, and that even he was striving toward the high calling of Christ. He felt he was still growing, all the while remaining on focus with Jesus Christ. You can stay Biblical, learn and grow, not wasting energy to build any walls, and yet still keep the misdirection's from a corrupt culture from affecting your walk in faith. This is a focus of this book and what orthodox learning does for you.

Albert Einstein would read Mr. Edwin A. Abbot's little book called "Flatland", about a 3-dimensional man visiting a 2-dimensional world, every year to break himself out of normative thinking. The walls you build may protect you from attacks, but they also stop you from seeing truths beyond your wall. If you build a wall, you are stuck with what you have on your side of the wall. It may be a real possibility that you just might be missing the paradise just waiting for you on the other side of that wall, but you in your deadness will not be able to see it. The Hebrews, sitting on the East bank of the Jordan River, found this out the hard way. As we look at Numbers 13:25-33, only Caleb and Joshua said to move forward into the land God promised, Canaan. The other 10 blinded "spies" created poor arguments of walled cities, the people were like giants (the Nephilim), and the dumbest excuse of the bunch...the soil was unsuitable to grow crops (yet 5 verses earlier they said the land was rich with milk and honey?). What did this blindness cost them? Unable to see beyond their fears, it kept them from receiving God's promises for another generation and their death.

Scientists, and those that only believe in science for their truth, will dismiss any faith-based declaration as being without proof and therefore it just can't possibly be correct. This is their "wall", constructed for their own defense. Proof doesn't have to come out of a test tube! Why can't proof be born out of your vision and common sense? Go ahead, put forth your vision and your common sense, test it and see if it holds water. I can refute evolution without any scientific DNA studies...why can't you? Only a brief look at the history of science will show how it has changed as new discoveries are made. What makes everybody think their stated position today is the final truth? I think not. Don't misunderstand; I think scientific discovery is awesome! This is what I'm trying to declare to my Christian brothers and sisters for their enrichment, but it doesn't mean it is absolute. I promise you, there is much more "out there".

If evolution is a system that grows from primordial one-celled organisms to complex man, why then do some creatures “evolve” and some don’t? What controls whether one changes from monkey to man, and a dragonfly or shark or lizard or nautilus doesn’t “evolve” at all? A little common sense, please. Open your eyes, put your brain in gear, drop your preconceived notions, and you’ll come up with the same conclusions. There is no evolution from specie to specie, but only some limited adaptation within a given specie itself, adjustments made for found climate. One look at foxes, bears, rabbits, etc. show white fur in white snow climates verses their brown brothers and sisters in warmer climates. Animals do adapt. Some don’t eat very often or some live in hot arid environments and have ways to stay cool, not burn their feet, and retain water; but they don’t evolve from other species.

Those that believe in evolution have made “the theory” a hardcore “scientific fact”, so to break them out of their now “normative thinking” takes much more than a ton of dynamite. The “norm”, according to Webster, is an authoritative standard, or model, or principle of “right action binding on the members of a group and serving to guide, control, or regulate proper and acceptable behavior.” The problems arise when the group’s action and beliefs are shoved down the throats of those outside the group and then become the only acceptable right and the only proper acceptable behavior for everybody else. We see each of these individual group members standing up with “the party line” supporting the thinking of the whole group; in fact, it is just that thinking that is the glue that holds the group. I understand that, and by itself, it is not bad. Common thinking is exactly what is needed to even form a group first. The problem I have is when that group’s thinking becomes “fact”, then every event is judged against this manufactured fact, and so forced onto everybody else. Do we not have a choice to not buy into the other group’s position? Why should I take abuse and be subject to hate-filled ranting just because I don’t subscribe to the group’s normative thinking? So set in their thought patterns these evolutionists are, that whenever someone comes with a different thought, they ridicule and put them down claiming the different idea simply the ridiculous ranting of a madman. One only needs to ask Mr. Ben Stein, and many others who have been targets of the evolutionist mudslinging crowd. I thought scientists were to be open to new ideas...how silly I must be. My idealistic hope within the pages of this book is to put forth simple common sense arguments that an open thinking person (not a rigid thinking person) can look afresh again. So locked-in are the evolutionist to destruct the creation school of thought, few will ever have the eyes to see real truth, though there are a few. The most brilliant evolutionist will never know “who” created the Universe and “why” it is created; to only know that “it exists” is way too shallow.

Some scientists, starting out as self-confessed atheists, have come to see the light in the origins of life and the light of mankind as being God designed? Maybe, just maybe there is indeed something there; maybe, just maybe it could possibly be true! So, why do we see the irrational rantings of those steeped into science, as they put down such ideas of a God-designed or God-created Universe? The venomous arguments, so filled with hatred, put down the nonscientific purveyor of real truth as an idiot for not being a scientist or following scientific method. What? Only a scientist can convey a truth? What are they afraid of? While I applaud any attempt by anyone to think and stretch toward new horizons, again a simple look at history shows the scientists have been wrong time and time again.

Truth is truth. No play on words here; it either is truth or it's not...plain and simple. Arrogant to say? Not in my view; I search only for God's truth, not Haven's truth. Most people will say, "It is truth as I see it". What the heck is that? Something we can all grow on? So often what we call truth today will be half-truth tomorrow and wrong a week from now. Why is this? I guess it's always been that way; just look at science. One day the scientist says he has "the answer" or "the discovery" of whatever, and then in the next generation taking the next step on top of this discovery learns a different new truth. Why is this? Simple, we "learn". The more we see, the more we understand, the more we understand, the more we see and the closer to the real Truth we get. Why has Stephen Hawking struggled against physical limitations to spend his whole life in a wild search? Sometimes the more we see the more we find out what we don't know. New questions, hard questions, open. It all takes time. No, we won't fully get there, that is, to pure Truth...not until we are with Jesus in His Glory, but we can move toward a fuller understanding of that Truth. It is this movement I pray people gain from this book. It is so exciting; I only wish I can only give you a taste of it.

Some say change is unavoidable; just look at our world in the last 100 years. Cosmology, biology, theology, and sociology...all those "ologies" have changed as new thinkers have come along. But one thing hasn't changed...first century Christianity is still alive and well; it is the real Truth, nothing has lasted as long. Science is changing quickly by comparison; there is no such thing as scientific Truth with a capital "T". Science is in a constant state of flux because we learn more which changes our datum, and we build better tools with which to see the world around us, out to the edges of the Universe. This book is firmly based on 2000 years of Christian Orthodoxy; it is not "new age" or some other cultic mish-mash. This is also not a watered-down "blending of religions", trying to please everyone and not offend anyone. This book is not "politically correct". Unfortunately, someone is going to be offended, not by my design, but by

his or her rigidity and blindness. Of course there are denominations, congregations and individuals out there that have twisted the truth around to suit their own agendas; but the message of Jesus Christ has held up for 2000 years, this I follow. Through this book your faith will be strengthened. This book will help you see the wonderfulness of God's creation and Real Truth. This book will help you be more tolerant of those Christians that temporarily have different views from yours, and more tolerant of the scientists, even though it won't be reciprocal. It is also my hope to open the eyes of some scientist because they too will grow and be strengthened by this book. I'm not holding my breath on this point however; sadly they typically will choose the reality in a test tube over the reality of God's Word in the Bible. The odd thing that I hope to expose within the pages of this book is that both Christian and scientist just might have the same truth. Today you can't see it, but tomorrow, if you have the eyes to see, you may both see Truth more clearly...yes, see it as a beautiful whole creation all at the hand of God.

Not everybody will embrace this book. Oh no, people typically resist change, even if the change is more honest and truthful; so blinded they have become. New ideas are resisted if those ideas are sensed as some threat to their old preconceptions. Yes, some will find this book a threat. Think about it. If you hold an idea that you are the greatest, and someone comes with proof that you are not the greatest; will you embrace that proof? Who wants to be shown that they are wrong...especially in the age of high-dollar government grants where you must produce "something" new and different. "Publish or die" they say. Today, often hype trumps truth, and this book is strictly about truth. I don't care about hype or spin or making someone look good; I have no agenda but to follow the Holy Spirit. Yes, I know, many will disclaim this book just because of that last remark; but that's okay, I don't write this book for them, I seek only the Truth with a capital "T", God's Truth. Pray about what you read in this book, and follow the guidance from the Holy Spirit. My sole purpose is to hear my Lord say, "well done good and faithful servant". I am not driven to seek out praises from one side or another. If you find your eyes opened, your heart moved by a personal love from our Creator, and you find a deeper appreciation of who God is and what He did for you, then my 20 year effort has been extremely worthwhile. Amen.

May God bless you and keep you close to Him,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Haven D. Mankin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'H'.