



God and Science

Vern S. Poythress, Ph.D., Th.D.



What Issues?

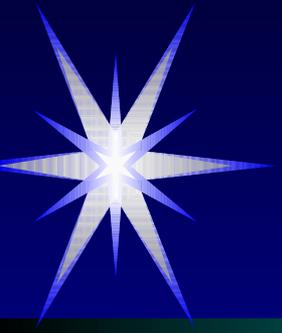
- ▶ Hot button issues
 - ▶ Days of creation; age of universe
 - ▶ Darwinism
- ▶ Have a framework:
biblically-based framework for science
- ▶ Destroy the opponent?
 - ▶ Or humbly love him?



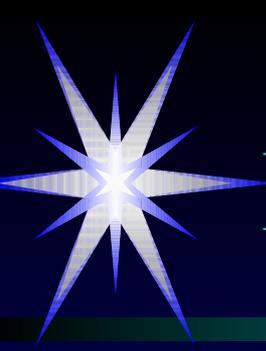








I. Scientific Law



Regularity

regular



regula
(Latin)

= rule



“ordered according to
some established rule,
law, principle, or type”
(Webster’s Dictionary)

We depend
on it!



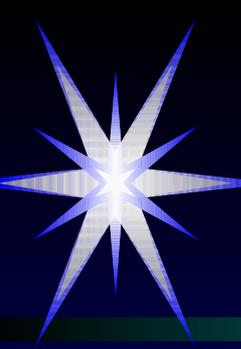


Scientific Laws

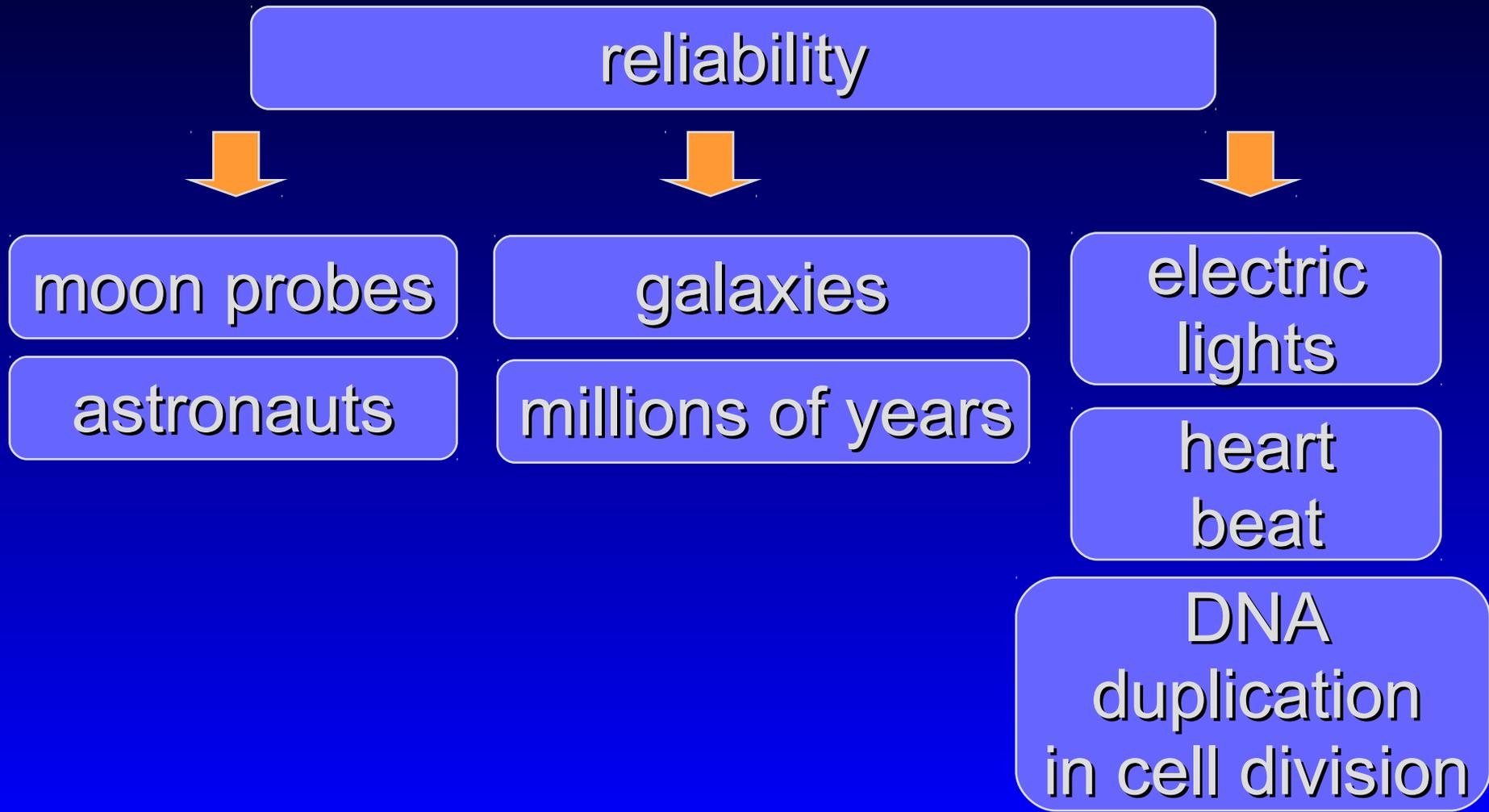
- ▶ Newton's laws
- ▶ Dalton's law
- ▶ Kirchhoff's laws

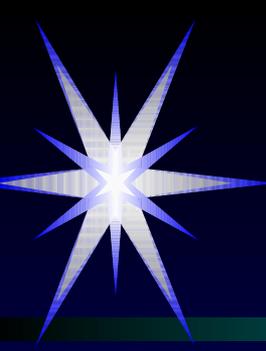


And more!



Reliability of Law





Sameness of Law

all places



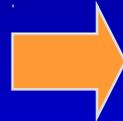
omnipresent

all times

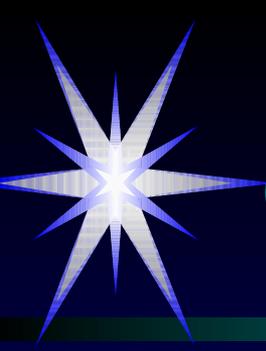


eternal

not changing



immutable



Characteristics of Law

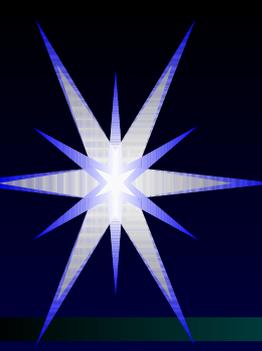
- ▶ Immaterial
- ▶ Invisible
- ▶ Omnipotent
- ▶ Truthful
- ▶ Transcendent
- ▶ Immanent



characteristics
of God

Why?





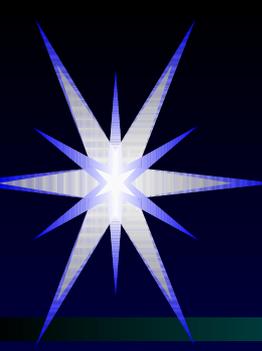
God's Rule (seasons)

Genesis 8:22 (God's promise to Noah):

While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.

A good thing!





God's Rule (weather)

Psalm 147:17-18:

He [God] hurls down his crystals of ice like crumbs;
who can stand before his cold?

He sends out his words, and melts them;
he makes his wind blow and the waters flow.



control



Problems with Miracle?

Miracles

impossible?



attested in
the Bible

breaking law?



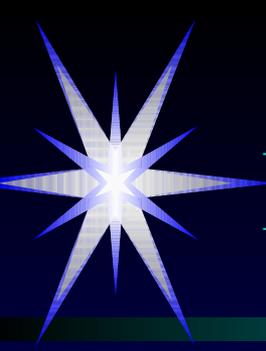
no

God's word not
broken

outside law?



God's rule is
comprehensive



Miracle in a Biblical Framework

surprising us

contradicting
our guess
about law



harmony
with Biblical
teaching

conforming to
God's plan



Is the Law Personal?

law



law-giver

rational

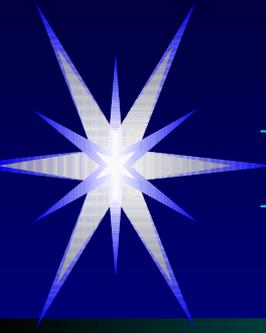


only persons
can reason

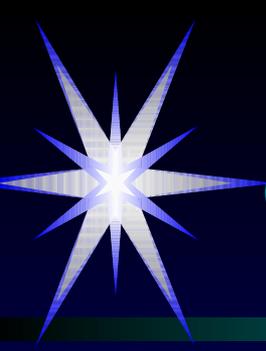
language-like



only persons
use language



II. Understanding God's Law



God's Speech (= Law)

Language involves:

speaker

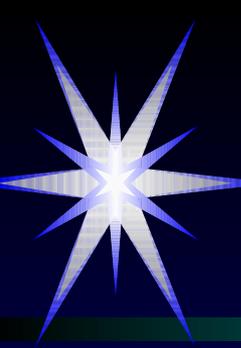
word

breath

power to send
out and effect

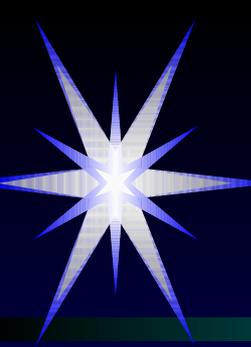
Father

Word



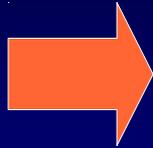
The Word Who Is God

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. (John 1:1-3)



God Ruling

Father



Word



creational
law

God as
source.



expression of
the Father in
the Word

rational,
articulate,
harmonious



The Spirit of God

Language involves:

speaker

word

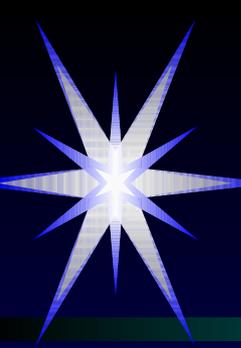
breath

power to send
out and effect

Father

Word

Spirit



Spirit and Breath

By the word of the LORD the heavens were made,
and by the breath of his mouth all their host.

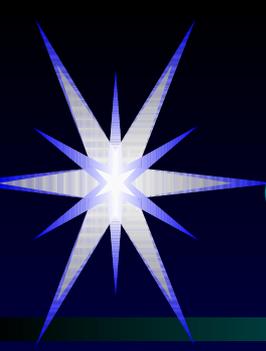
(Ps. 33:6)



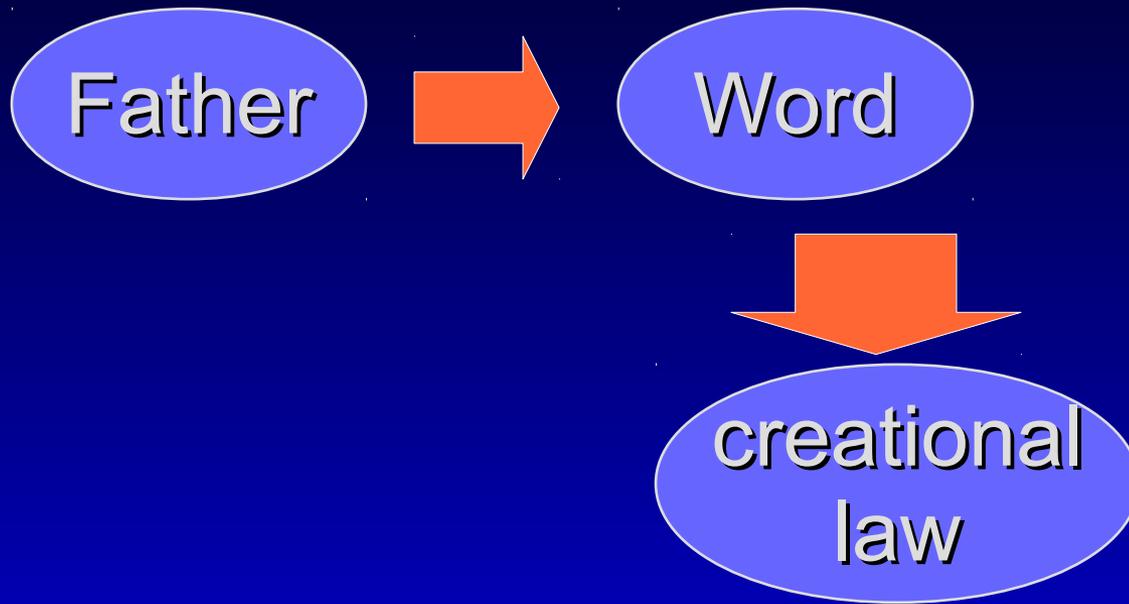
Hebrew:
ruach



also, Spirit

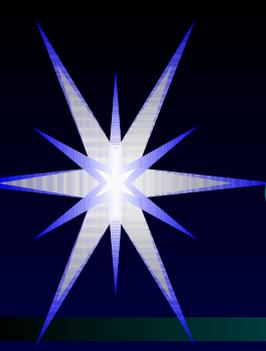


God Ruling through His Spirit

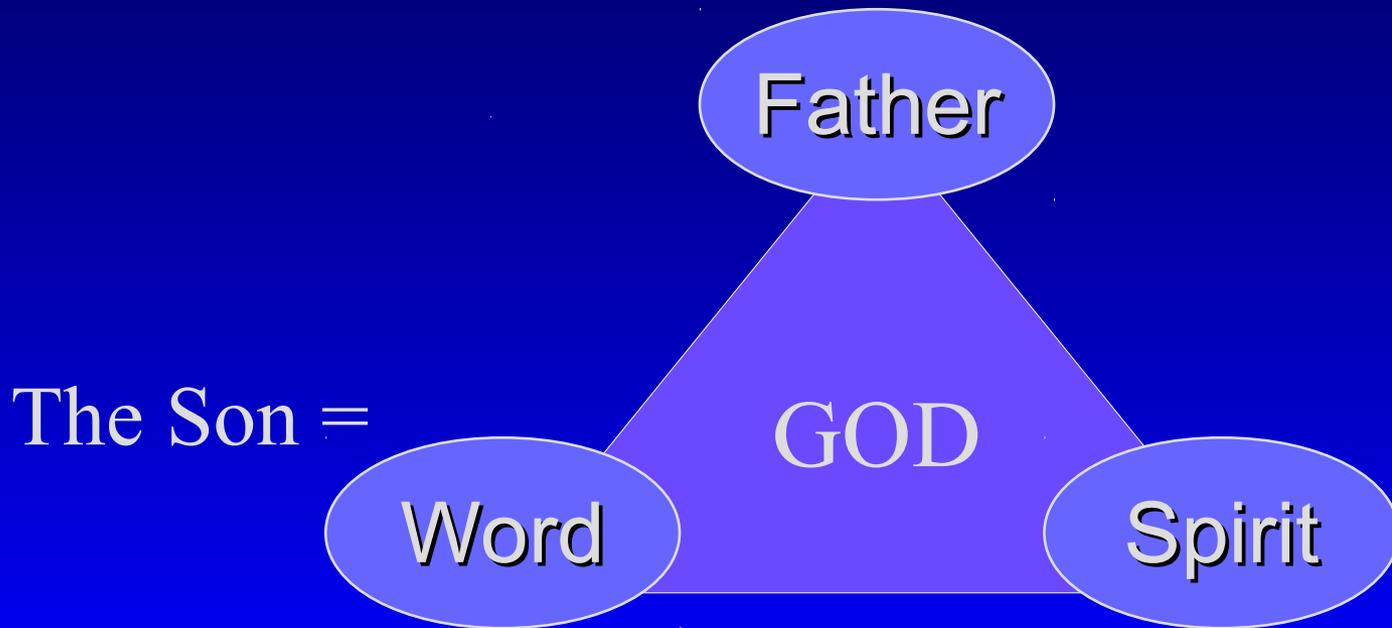


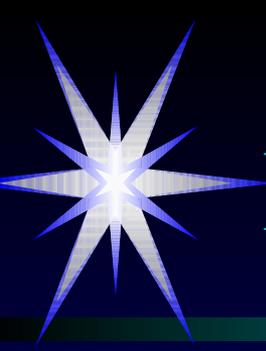
expression of the Father
in the Word
through the Spirit

under
perfect
control

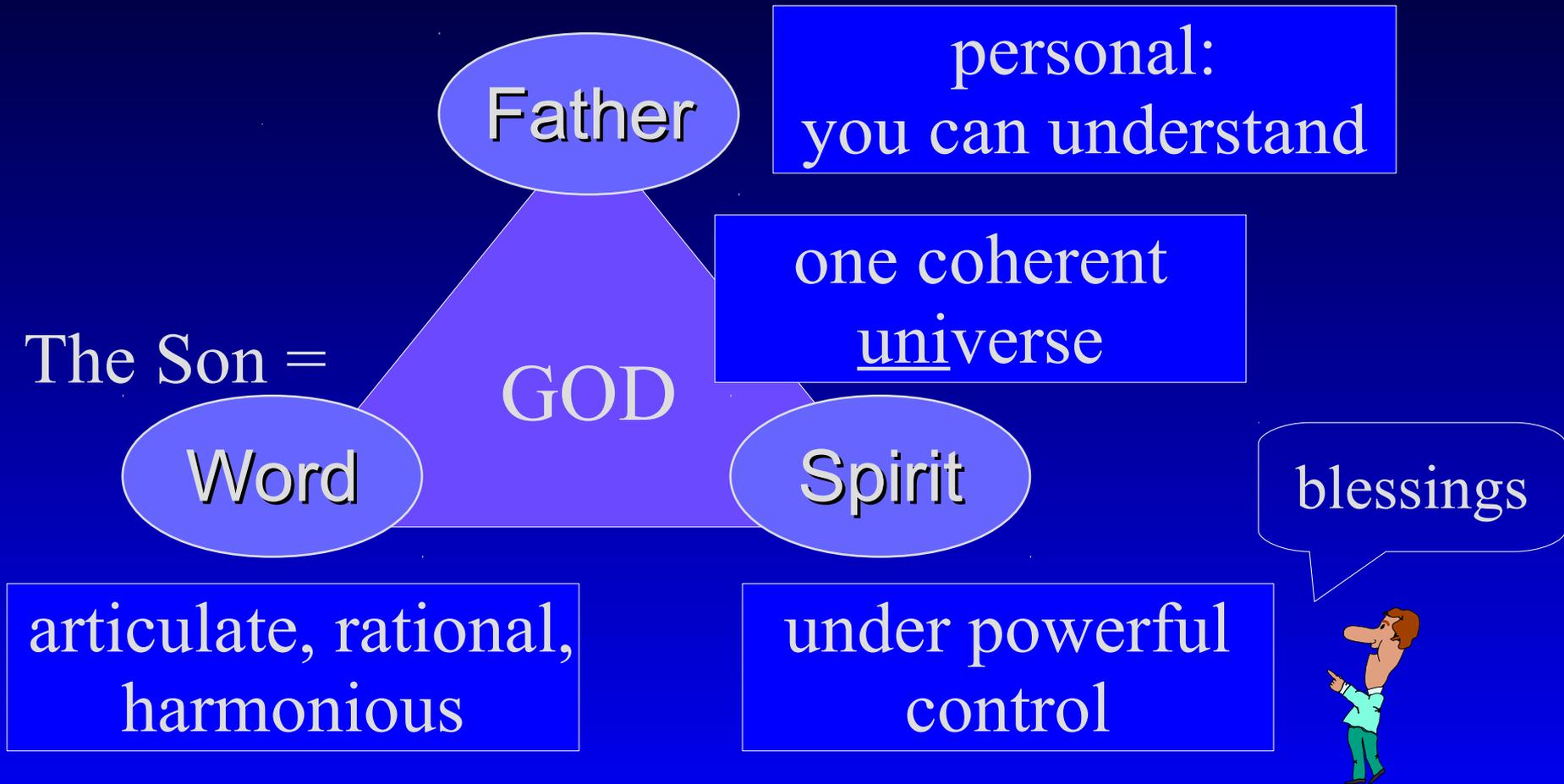


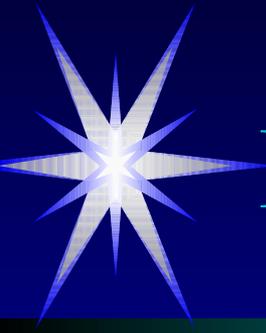
God Exists in Three Persons





Implications for Science



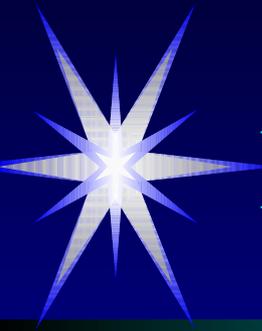


III. Natural Disasters and Evil

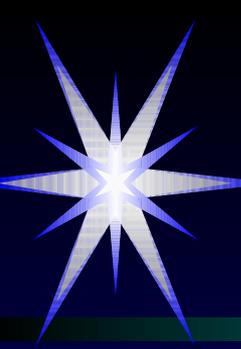


Good and Evil

- God created the world good (Gen. 1:31)
- Humanity rebelled (the fall, Gen. 3:6)
- Sin has effects (Gen. 4:8)
- God curses the ground (effects on nature, Gen. 3:17-18)
- Disaster shows need for redemption (Rom. 8:20-25)
- Disaster reminds us of judgment (Luke 13:1-5)



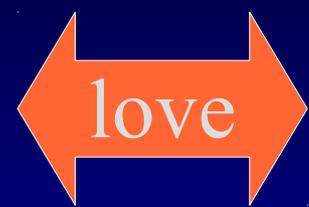
IV. Harmonies in Law



Reflection of Harmony

original
harmony

Father



Son

derivative
harmony

image
on earth

Wonderful!





God's Dwelling in Christ

"... and they shall call his name Immanuel"
(which means, God with us). (Matt. 1:23)

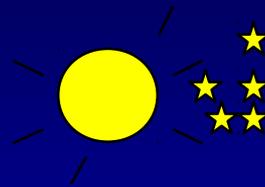
And the Word became flesh
and dwelt among us. (John 1:14)

But he was speaking about
the temple of his body. (John 2:21)



Pattern of the Universe

in universe



BIG

in tabernacle



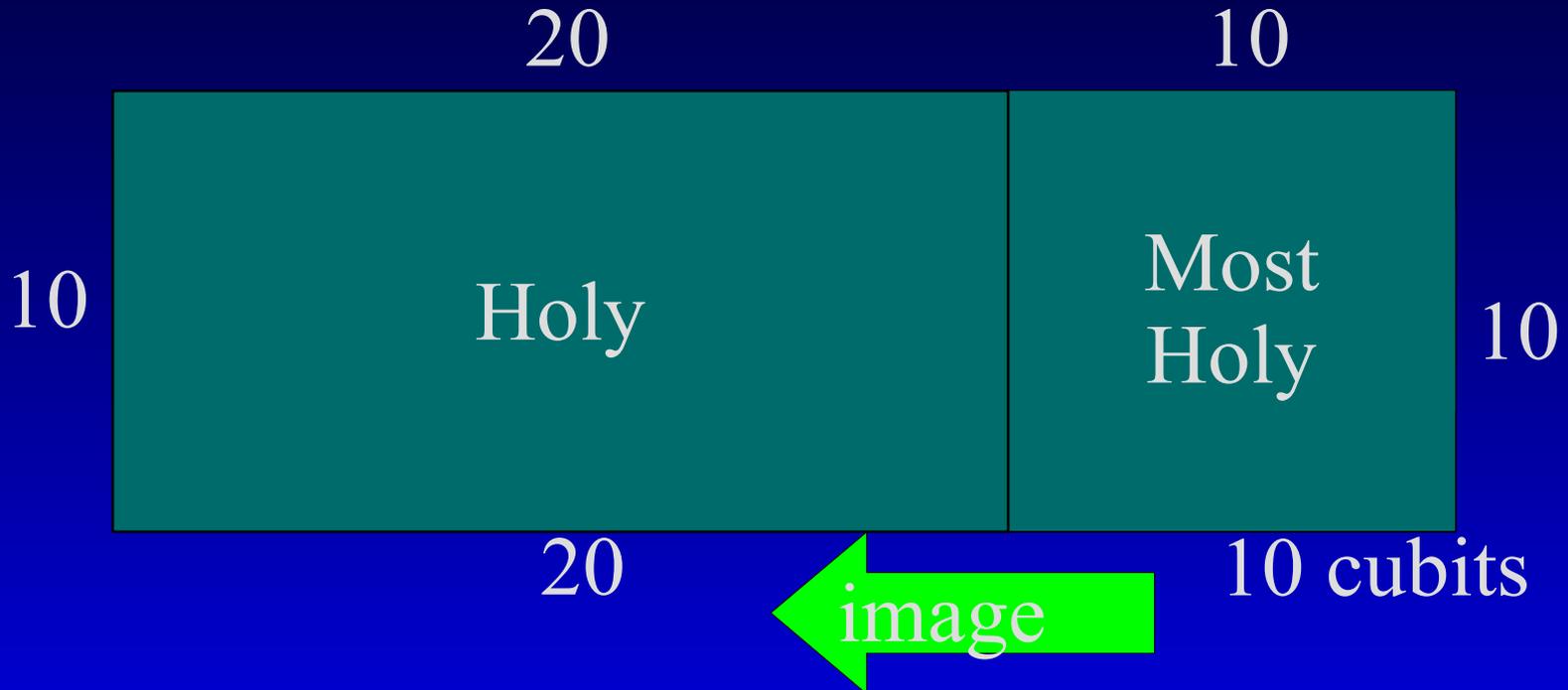
little
model

Image!





Proportion



Proportions express an image



Proportions in the Universe

proportions?



proportions
here



universe



tabernacle

BIG

little
model



Physical Proportions

Car travel:



time	1 hr.	2 hr.	3 hr.	4 hr.
distance	50 mi.	100 mi.	150 mi.	200 mi.

Proportions-- distance : time

distance in harmony with time

Speed = distance/time = 50 miles/hour

speed = distance:time = d:t

harmony

Go!





Acceleration

Plane travel:



time	1 sec.	2 sec.	3 sec.	4 sec.
speed	20 ft/s	40 ft/s	60 ft/s	80 ft/s

Proportions-- speed : time

Harmony-- speed in harmony with time

acceleration = speed/time = 20 ft/s/s

acceleration = s:t = d:t:t



Newton's Second Law

$$\mathbf{F} = \mathbf{m} \mathbf{a}$$

force = mass X acceleration

force is proportional to mass

harmony

force is proportional to acceleration

harmony

acceleration is a proportionality:

harmony

$$a = d:t:t$$



Math in Physics

speed = distance : time

harmony

The World

Math

simple motion

number
proportion

general motion

calculus

forces

differential
equations

physics, engineering,
and hard sciences



Maxwell's Equations For Light and Electricity

finds double-depth
proportionalities
in time and space

symmetric
in 4 dim.

$$\square \mathbf{A}_\mu =$$

$$\frac{4\pi j_\mu}{c}$$

proportion

electric
charge

speed of light
(proportion)

represents
electric and
magnetic force

four separate
equations

beautiful
symmetry



“The first point is that the enormous usefulness of mathematics in the natural sciences is something bordering on the mysterious and that there is no rational explanation for it.”
--Eugene Wigner

“It is not at all natural that ‘laws of nature’ exist, much less that man is able to discover them.”



God's Explanation

By the word of the LORD
the heavens were made,
and by the breath of his mouth
all their host. – Ps. 33:6

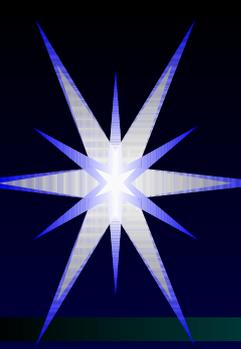
The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;
by understanding he established the
heavens. – Prov. 3:19



Why!



V. Practicing Love in Science

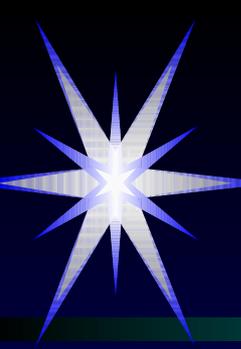


Practicing Love in Science

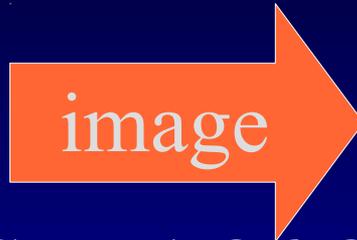
- Motive of love: Understand God's ways
- Honesty: Seek God, not a substitute
- Loving others: help others to see
- Preparation: let God be God

motive



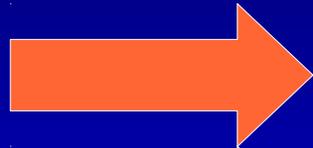


The Image of God in Science



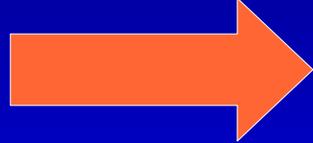
Gen. 1:26-28

➤ God loves



➤ Capacity to love

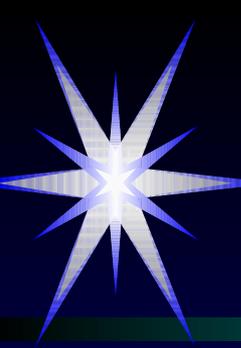
➤ God knows



➤ Capacity for truth

➤ Capacity for science

➤ Capacity to love
God in science



Integrity in Science

- ▶ Knowing God
 - ▶ knowing in love
 - ▶ loving to know
- ▶ Subordinate to God
 - ▶ loving to submit
- ▶ Ideas for law
 - ▶ loving God's mind
 - ▶ theory making
- ▶ God can surprise
 - ▶ Experiment
 - ▶ loving surprises



God's Greatness

In them he has set a tent for the sun,
which comes out like a bridegroom
leaving his chamber,
and, like a strong man, runs its course
with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

-- Ps. 19:4-6



God's Law to Us

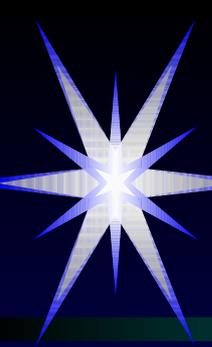
The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple;
the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;
the commandment of the LORD is pure,
enlightening the eyes.

-- Ps. 19:7-8



God Showing Himself

- Romans 1:19-20
- Psalm 19:1-2
- Romans 1:21-23



Psalm 19:1-2

The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.

