

**The Institute for Christian College Teaching**

**GOD, NATURE, AND LEARNING  
AN INTEGRATIONAL APPROACH**

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Foundations for the Integration of Faith and Learning

The principal thesis of this proposal asserts the need in Christian education for an integrational approach to the study of God and nature. By the term "nature" we refer to the totality of the physical environment, both in form and function, created by God and external to man. Basic, however, to such a stance in which nature and its Creator infuse all academic arenas is an initial understanding of the integration of Christian faith itself with learning.

Christian education needs integrating factors. Consequently, Christian educators have increasingly promoted, in word if not always in practice, the integration of faith and learning. Faith, in this context, is defined not merely by intellectual belief, but as an openness and whole-hearted commitment to God's revelation of truth. Undergirding then the integration of faith and learning is the perspective that God is the ultimate origin of all truth (Jms. 1:17) and that He desires to communicate this knowledge to His created beings (Isa. 1:18). The channel of communication of God's truth is to be found in the Word--whether the Written Word of the Scriptures or the Living Word as manifested in the Person of Christ. Christian education, therefore, must be Christ-centered and Bible-based.

The integration of Christian faith in learning, however, is flung upon troubled waters whenever educators become world-focused rather than Word-focused, conformed to a secular worldview rather than transformed to the mind of Christ (Rom. 12:2). What frequently follows is that God is relegated to a corner of the "Christian" program--a prayer at the beginning of class, an occasional proof-text, chapel talks, or pious teachers. The religion classes become small islands of spirituality in a secular sea. Christianity is compartmentalized and treated as a peripheral. A devastating fragmentation of life is the inevitable result.

While prayer, prooftexts, and piety may indeed occupy a place in an authentic Christian school, of themselves they are insufficient to justify its existence. A Christian institution must be completely Christian or it is not Christian at all, for Christ declares that "he that is not with me is against me" (Matt. 12:30). Each subject must be taught from a Christian perspective. It must have spiritual significance or it is insignificant for the Christian. Every thought must be brought into captivity to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5) and all things are to be done to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). Christianity thus embraces the totality of life. It is a wholistic worldview, a supernatural orientation, an eternal perspective. We must not strive only to possess Christianity; we must be possessed by it. We do not need Christianity merely to accompany education. We need genuine Christian education--for life and for eternity.

Integration hence must be more than a mingling of two factors. Faith and learning must meet and merge in a dynamic union. They must fuse to become a pervasive driving force. If this marriage were to be ignored, the consequence would be a disintegration of both the faith and the learning. And neither unthinking faith nor faithless thought is desirable for the Christian. Integration is, therefore, imperative for it is the formation of the Christian mind.

#### A Rationale for the Integration of Nature and Christian Learning

The Word of the Almighty God lies at the very foundation of learning. Committed Christian education must be clearly Word-focused. Frequently, however, we ignore the full scope of God's Word. While acknowledging both the Written Word and the Word Incarnate, we overlook the Illustrated Word of God. Nature, this illustrated edition of God's Word, must also permeate all Christian education. Throughout much of educational history and in present

practice, the study of God's creation has been confined almost exclusively to the domain of the physical sciences. It is the transcendent dimension of nature, however, which furnishes the key which unlocks the relevance of the Written Word and forms a catalyst for the integration of faith and learning in all subject areas.

Why should the Christian study nature? If properly approached, the study of nature may (1) cultivate reverence for the Creator and a love of the beautiful, (2) impart a deeper understanding of the incredible complexity, balance, and interdependence within God's creation, (3) bring a clearer perception of color, form, and music, (4) give an abiding love of the creation and a sense of companionship with the life out of doors, (5) cultivate an appreciation and concern for the natural environment and the effect of people's actions upon it, (6) penetrate the devastating problem of sin and God's redeeming grace, and (7) lead to a clearer understanding of the laws and operations of nature, the laws that operate in human life, and the great principles of truth that govern the spiritual universe.

The Christian also possesses an adequate Biblical base for integrating a Christian view of nature in education:

1. It was the Living Word who formed all nature, including mankind (Gen. 1; Jn. 1:1-4). In essence, all Scripture and indeed all profession of Christian faith is predicated upon the recognition that "in the beginning, God created" (Gen. 1:1).
2. Christians often think of their mission in terms of the gospel commission (Matt. 28). This, nevertheless, was not mankind's first mandate. At the creation, man and woman were commissioned to care for and cultivate the earth and all of its forms of life (Gen. 1:27-28).
3. Man has been given a day of rest wherein to specifically view nature from a spiritual context (Ex. 20:8-11). The Sabbath stands as a memorial of creative power.
4. Throughout Biblical history, men learned of God through contemplating His works. The original curriculum designed by God included the study of nature (Gen. 2:15). In Eden, the Garden was the classroom and nature was the textbook. This system of education serves as a model for learning throughout human history. Moses, for example, learned in the school of nature, amid the solitude of the mountains. Here he

inculcated the virtues of meekness and faith. David, Joseph, and John the Baptist also prepared for their spiritual mission by receiving an education in nature.

5. Christ gained knowledge from the great library of the natural world. He studied the works of God and found therein spiritual lessons. These teachings garnered from the pages of nature later served as both content and illustration when He taught others, often in a rural setting. The works of God were connected with the Word of life, the things of nature with the spiritual truths of the Scriptures. That which was indispensable to the Redeemer must always be non-negotiable to the redeemed.
6. Near the close of the history of the world, Christians are given a message to proclaim to the entire world with great power: "Worship Him who made" (Rev. 14:6-12). While we have greatly emphasized through our sanctuaries and celebrations the first segment of this message, the second portion which points to the Lord of the Creation has gone relatively unnoticed. The duty to worship God, however, is based upon the fact that He is Creator and we are the creatures.
7. In the new earth, man will continue to study the knowledge of God as it is revealed in nature (Isa. 11:6-9).

Nature and the Christian faith thus are not diametrically opposed. They spring from a common origin in the Living Word. Nature, in order to be fully appreciated, must be examined from a religious perspective. It is God's design that all of His children should study the natural world in the context of spiritual truth. Indeed, unless the study of nature is combined with a spiritual insight, it will be impossible to interpret nature aright. A secular scientist can expound upon many aspects of the natural world. It is the Christian, however, who recognizes God's work and His love expressed richly in each facet of nature. He only can appreciate the significance of God's communication to man through the creation.

Above all other individuals, the Christian also recognizes the limitations in an investigation of nature. He knows that man is confined to a sensory range, precision limits, and the element of uncertainty. All of the essential data may not be perceived, or the data may be valid and the interpretation faulty. Research into the natural world is also circumscribed by the fact that nature can often be only observed and not controlled.

The Christian hence makes certain assumptions regarding the natural world: (1) God, in the beginning, created all of heaven and earth. (2) God reveals Himself both in nature and by revelation, with the latter superseding the former. (3) While nature reflects God's character, the mirror has been marred by the existence of sin. These assumptions permit the Christian to look through nature and behold nature's God--the One who creates, upholds, and saves.

It is Christianity which gives purpose to nature. From the Christian standpoint, the aim in an understanding of nature is twofold: (1) to glorify God and (2) to improve the welfare of man (Mk. 12:30, 31). To accomplish this, a power is necessary above and beyond the purely scientific. That power is found in a vibrant faith relationship with the Living Word. Knowledge drawn from nature must unite with that truth which God has revealed in His Written Word. Facts and formulae are to blend with the life of faith.

#### The Place of Nature in Christian Education

Nature, as the illustrated edition of God's Word, must find its place in Christian education. Based on the discussion of the previous sections, it would seem that the most effective method would be an integrational approach. In order to achieve a wholistic Christian life for the student, there should be a three-dimensional integration of faith, nature, and learning. To reach such a vision, faith and nature must permeate each facet of the Christian curriculum.

What relationship should faith and nature develop in Christian education? God, in order to prepare His chosen people for the return of the Messiah triumphant, has revealed in a definitive manner His own character and His plan for humanity. The prime and foremost revelation from God is found in the Bible, which should hold first place as foundation and focus in Christian education. The book of nature, however, comes next in importance for it is

the dynamic process wherein God acts, revealing both His character and His purpose. It is designed to serve as a prism to illustrate the mind of God. Consequently, in an integrational approach, Christian faith and the creation serve in a complementary and inseparable relationship in which the natural world remains subordinate to the Written Word--both, however, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

In order to successfully carry out a Christian integration of nature in the educational program, each teacher must seek means of promoting the relevancy of the creation to the subject under consideration. Such an approach, which we might label as intradisciplinary, would be essential in order to achieve a wholistic integration of faith and learning. We cannot afford to relegate a study of nature merely to the physical sciences. The Word of God in its entirety--Living, Written, and Illustrated dimensions--must find its relevance to each discipline. Although many integrational models for God and nature could be used within a discipline, two of the most helpful may be the illustrative and the thematic.

In the curricular program of a school, it is beneficial to provide an interdisciplinary focus for any integrational factor. This is needed in order to fortify intradisciplinary integration so that it will not fade into a meaningless drift. More importantly, however, it is necessary in order to provide a forum for the consideration of cross-disciplinary themes for that integrational factor. In defining the place of the Bible in Christian education, for example, it is generally held that while the Scriptures should become relevant to any subject under consideration, there should also be a special forum--perhaps a religion course--wherein concentrated study can be given to the cross-disciplinary themes of the Written Word of God. This proposal maintains that just such an interdisciplinary focus should be provided for nature as the Illustrated Word.

While we will consider both the intradisciplinary format and an interdisciplinary paradigm in this proposal, they will be examined separately in that order. It should also be noted that while the focus of this proposal is upon education at the tertiary level, many of the recommendations may be modified for use at other levels.

#### Intradisciplinary Integration of Nature

It is through the creation that we may become acquainted with the Creator. Each course in a Christian institution of learning should combine the natural and the spiritual in the process of learning, connecting within the given subject area the works of God with the study of His Written Word. While endeavoring to provide a sampling of various means of integration, this section will not seek to develop a comprehensive analysis of the integration of nature within each discipline nor within a given subject area. Rather we shall explore some of the potential inherent in a within-subject integration of God and nature, reserving for the individual teacher much of the direct application in her discipline. In an institutional setting, significant headway might also be made towards an integration of nature through a faculty seminar which explores means of incorporating nature in the various subjects.

#### Illustrations from the World of Nature

An initiation into the means of integration often begins with an illustrative approach. While not we would not necessarily hold this method as the most effective model, it is nevertheless a viable form in the integration of God, nature, and learning. The Scriptures themselves abound in life lessons discovered in the natural world. Simple illustrations of profound meaning arise as we begin to study nature in the light of eternity.

In first exploring illustrations from the animate world of nature, we shall endeavor to demonstrate relevant ways in which nature may speak to the various subject areas in a Christian manner. It will be seen, however, that special emphasis has been given to areas other than the physical sciences wherein nature already holds an established curricular position.

In the botanical world, students of the fine arts may be taught a basis for aesthetic purity and simplicity in the beauty and symmetry of the flowers and trees. While researching the complex problems of society, the awareness may be instilled that, even in life, the harvest is simply a reproduction of the seed which is planted. When considering the world of vocations, students may be led to recall that Adam's first assignment was to care for the earth. They may then evaluate the present impact of various types of industry and technology upon the environment. The student of environmental factors may note that just as God covers the hillsides to prevent erosion, so we may be protected when covered by Jesus Christ. Students of advanced mathematics may discover evidence of the Designer in the logarithmic spirals at the tips of opening ferns repeated in breaking waves and nautilus shells.

In the animal world, the student may ponder the marvels of bird migration. A spiritual dimension of career guidance awakens. If God can so equip the birds, He is also able to guide us throughout life (Isa. 30:21). In the construction of a Christian philosophy, the consequences of sin and the grand view of the great controversy may be traced in the "sparrow's fall" (Matt. 10:29).

Throughout all of living nature, the students may come to understand that the laws obeyed by the plants and animals reveal the fact that life is under the masterful guidance of an infinite God. They may realize that, because our God is the Creator, the re-creation of the human heart and the revitalization of the righteous at the resurrection are indeed possible.

Illustrations germane to each discipline also appear in the inanimate world of nature. In this arena, however, we will modify the means of integration and seek to illustrate the manner in which nature may direct the student to spiritual truth. These examples may be of particular value to the teacher of the physical sciences.

"The heavens declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19:1). Both the first and second heavens, represented by the clouds and stars, point us towards the third heaven--the throne of God. As we view the constellations which have guided many travelers on distant voyages, we behold the Bible as the guide of our pilgrimage. From the serene path of the stars across the sky, we may learn steadfastness and consistency. In the meteor streaking through the atmosphere, we may understand the flicker, the transient nature of life upon this earth.

The geological formations also constitute an avenue for examining God's power and His steadfast love for man. Students may learn that God does not change, that His promises and His Word stand fast forever. The massive rocks and towering mountains, provide us with a record of the past, particularly with evidences of the Flood in fossils and upturned strata. In so doing, they link the natural and the spiritual.

As the minerals are studied, the teacher may, for example, lead his students to analyze the properties of salt. They may observe how salt imparts a distinctive flavor permeating that which it contacts, how it makes one thirsty, how it preserves, and how it does not have to be in the majority in order to flavor the soup. Then they may endeavor to find and share new meaning from a passage such as Matt. 5:13, "Ye are the salt of the earth." The students may also cultivate crystals, note their symmetry, and trace this order and beauty to its Cause.

Intradisciplinary Themes

In any discipline, a deeper form of integration than the illustrative model is often possible whenever the teacher utilizes a thematic approach. In this format, for example, the lessonbook of nature can be used as one of the principal textbooks to which reference may frequently be made. From this resource, students should be lead to discover themes which run through the spiritual, natural, and educational realms. As a result, they may see the harmony between nature, Christianity, and learning. They may come to realize that all these domains and their uniting themes proceed from the same Author.

Perhaps the greatest Christian theme that can be integrated with nature in a subject area is that of the great controversy between God and Satan, that cosmic conflict between good and evil. Components of the theme include the sin problem in nature as evidenced for example in storms and earthquakes, and the gift of God's saving grace. The Christian student may be lead to trace the mileposts of this great controversy: the creation, the fall, redemption, and restoration. Through nature, the scholar may also come to address the world in terms of the allied themes of God's supremacy and earth's transient nature. God's sustaining power may be appreciated and the entire creation seen as dependent upon the Creator.

Another theme can be found in the concept of stewardship. Mankind has been given the earth both to develop and to preserve. This involves not only advancing the frontiers of science and technology, but also in maintaining a protection of the environment. Hereby the student may come to understand the relation of the natural world to the whole of life and eternity.

A further theme is encountered in an understanding of the character of God. Here the creation speaks directly to its Maker and we hear its testimony. The Creator Himself desires that we should associate the glory of

the natural world with His own nature. In the creation, students may be lead to contemplate the infinite love and power of God. The invisible will be illustrated by that which is seen. God's wisdom, truthfulness, and eternal grace will be better understood by the students. In the order and design of natural law, for example, students may come to recognize the evidence of an omniscient Designer who has laid patterns throughout all the strata of life.

These thematic examples may serve perhaps as a launching pad, a stimulus to further discover the spiritual meaning of nature and integrate its potency in Christian education. Whatever form of integration the teacher chooses to employ, it is essential that the Christian educator strive to achieve a functional means of uniting the study of God and nature in each curricular component of Christian education.

#### An Interdisciplinary Focus

In previous sections, we have recognized strategies by which faith, nature, and learning may be integrated in specific disciplines of the Christian curriculum. The methods illustrated have by no means exhausted the potential. Much of the integration will spring from the particular topic, environment, activity, group of learners, or other variables. The most vital component, however, remains the spiritual worldview of the teacher.

Provided with this worldview, the teacher will endeavor to unite the natural and the spiritual into a wholistic body of truth. This is accomplished most effectively whenever nature--God's second book--is considered as a total entity. We lose much of the meaning to be found throughout the sphere of nature when we fracture the whole into disciplines, and then compartmentalize the fragments into various subjects, and finally dissect the poor subject in the laboratory.

Pedagogically, we would advocate as a superior form of integration an interdisciplinary Christian focus to the study of nature. Such an interdisciplinary approach would not depend solely upon a religious, scientific, or philosophical perspective, but would seek a wholistic rendition. One way in which this might be achieved could be through a course offering entitled "God and Nature". Such a course would focus directly on the book of nature and the written Word. As a vital interdisciplinary course offering, "God and Nature" would preferably occupy a place in the core curriculum. And although presented here from a collegiate perspective, it could be adapted for any level of the educational process and could occupy a quarter, semester, or an entire academic year.

#### Description and Goals

A description for the course "God and Nature" might read as follows:

A survey of the natural world from the perspective of the cosmic conflict between God and evil. This course endeavors to achieve a direct encounter and exploration of the wholistic forms of nature, to develop an understanding of fundamental issues in the relationship of nature and Inspiration, and to foster a personal discernment and communication of spiritual truth as found throughout God's creation. Includes extensive learning experiences in direct contact with nature.

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be better able to:

1. Identify attributes of God reflected in nature.
2. Observe spiritual meaning in nature.
3. Appreciate the beauties and marvels in God's created works.
4. Apply to personal experience the lessons derived from a study of nature's laws of life.
5. Inspire children and adults with an admiration of God's love, power, and wisdom as revealed in His created works.
6. Clarify the relationship of nature and Inspiration, especially as this concerns origins, catastrophic events, and problems resulting from sin.
7. Summarize key concepts from Scripture regarding nature and the benefits to be derived from its study.
8. Develop a Sabbath enrichment plan that includes contact with God through nature.
9. Experience the increased happiness that can be found in a study of and relationship with nature.
10. Cultivate a lifelong interest in the natural world.

11. Reaffirm a personal commitment to the Creator through the study of His created works.
12. Develop an increased desire for a home in the new earth.

#### Content and Method

The content of the course would center about three major themes: (1) issues in nature, (2) pages from nature, and (3) lessons of nature. Through each of these themes, both nature and the Written Word would point backward to Eden, forward to heaven and the new earth, and upward to God.

The major issues to be analytically examined include the role of God in nature, origins and catastrophic events, the great controversy in the natural world (especially as this concerns the presence of sin and grace), inspiration and science, and the stewardship of the earth. These issues and their presuppositions would be discussed from a committedly Christian and yet nonauthoritarian perspective, recognizing the open system of truth. In dealing with the issue of origins, for example, the process would not be so much an attack upon evolution nor a defense of creationism as it will be a study of God's truth and His purpose in the framework of eternity. All issues will be considered from the vantage point of Christian faith and learning.

Pages from the book of nature to be explored might include stars and planets, trees and flowers, edible wild plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, insects, marine life, and minerals and rocks. The emphasis in this theme would be to become familiar with the forms of nature evident in the environment surrounding the student.

In the final theme, the major focus would be upon the spiritual meaning in nature. The student would experience the observation, communication, and application of spiritual lessons in nature to her personal life.

To adequately address these themes, it would be necessary to enlist an instructor whose expertise would include each of these major areas in the

course. As this could pose a barrier, a better plan might be to utilize a team-teaching approach in which one individual serves as the course coordinator and surrounds himself with two or more additional instructors who could teach sections in their particular areas of knowledge and experience.

The two major textbooks for the "God and Nature" course would be the Bible and the book of nature. Additional texts or recommended readings could be selected from the bibliography listed with this proposal.

#### Learning Activities and Evaluation

Integration is not simply a tack-on. To unite spiritual truth with a study of the natural world requires careful planning. The following examples represent learning requirements, in addition to readings and class participation, which may serve to activate this integration:

1. Participate in guided nature walks with specific spiritual study goals (such as: find nature objects which will help us imagine what heaven will be like, or find objects which illustrate the great controversy).
2. Collect object lesson materials from nature (could include photographs) which might be used for illustrating talks.
3. Prepare and share nature object lessons in class practice and in real life situations (such as child, youth, or adult groups).
4. Describe the characteristics of God which are suggested by His names in the Bible drawn from the world of nature.
5. Examine the principles and purposes of nature study as portrayed in the Bible. Discuss these in small groups.
6. Analyze masterworks in poetry, art, and music inspired by nature.
7. Construct a nature trail focused on spiritual object lessons.
8. Prepare, plant, and care for a vegetable garden or participate in a campus beautification project (such as identification plates on campus, the establishment of a bird bath and Feeding station, or the creation of a natural beauty spot). Keep a log of the insights gained and present these in a summary report.
9. Participate in study trips to a museum of natural history, fossil beds, or other natural learning sites.
10. Experience a weekend in a natural wilderness setting. Study the Written Word and the book of nature jointly in these surroundings. Provide time for meditation, exploration, sharing, and fellowship.
11. Identify common plants and animals, and discover their purpose in God's great design.
12. Explore pages from God's second book in which one has a special interest. This may be evidenced, for example, with individualized projects such as nature collections appropriately labeled (cut wood samples and leaf prints, pressed flowers, dried cones and seeds, shells, nature stamps, casts of animal tracks), with a display of

nature photography (preferably thematic such as a focus on intricate design and function), or with drawings, paintings, carvings, or poetry based on nature.

In as many learning activities as possible, the students should step beyond the classroom walls and out into nature, perhaps even into a wilderness setting. "Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air and they shall tell thee" (Job 12:7). The natural surroundings themselves will lead the hearts of the learners away from the attractions of the world and toward purity, peace, and God. In order to understand the messages of nature, however, the student must learn to be observing and inquiring. He must acutely develop his senses, collect, and retain the information around him. He must have firsthand experiences in measuring, in classifying, and in tracing cause/effect relationships. Such an awareness is to be awakened by the Christian teacher.

Student evaluation in this course will be determined by an individual level of mastery and not as a statement of relative position within the group. Such a measurement may be based upon such conventional factors as examinations and reading reports, or it may be derived from a comprehensive consideration of the learning activities and projects, perhaps in consultation with the student's perception of his mastery of the course objectives. In any case, the evaluative procedures should be formulated in a manner consistent with the Christian perspective.

#### Results of an Interdisciplinary Approach

Across the broad spectrum of nature, divine truth should begin to reveal itself to the student. He will begin to see the footprints of God in the order and design of the intricate systems of nature. He will comprehend meaning and purpose. Soon an awareness will arise that there is a cause for everything found in nature. Something created the path through the woods;

something causes a rustling in the branches. The mind can then be lead to inquire, "Is there not a great First Cause?" In the search for this Cause, the student may be guided to behold Jesus Christ, the Alpha and the Omega--the beginning in creation that reaches to the end in salvation. God will be seen as the primary Cause, the Controller of events, and the sovereign Redeemer. The dependence of all creation upon the Creator will be understood.

Through the observation of nature, the learner may begin notice patterns--circles, spirals, multiples of threes or fours. As he observes, he may begin to ask the purpose of what he sees. He may then perceive the laws of God at work in nature. He may also notice that breaking this balance of nature results in ruin, as he may see evidenced in the problem of pollution. A first-hand experience in the natural environment will thus lead to a clearer perception of the complexity and interdependence of God's creation and will create a concern for the natural world and man's effect on it.

The student will also come to recognize nature as an expositor of God's character. God's love, His power, and His laws will be seen evidenced in the natural world. The value of obedience, trust, simplicity, and the ministry of love to others may be discerned. God's loving thought, His skill and omniscience will be vindicated. Through faith, the student will see the hand of God continually working for the good of man amid the chaos which sin has brought. He will be led to realize that all that is true and right is consistent with God in all of its manifestations. The natural will be interpreted from the perspective of that which has been revealed.

The results of this interdisciplinary approach upon the learner then are substantial. The student will become observing. His soul will be invigorated, his character refined, his spirit awed, and his mind will be filled with peace. He will weigh the transitory against the unchanging. He will see unity in diversity. The human will be brought into intimate

relationship with the divine, and man will be recreated into the image of God.

#### Conclusion

All of the preceding concepts are but a guide for the Christian teacher to a personal experience in the integration of faith, nature, and learning. The principles and illustrations are only examples of the potential which may be discovered. While it is important to have constructed a general plan for this integrational venture, there should not be a regimented, inflexible protocol for either the teacher or the students. Sometimes it is best to let the students discover the miracles in nature rather than simply inform them. Let them open nature's door. Encourage them to think of their own lessons and insights.

When you ask a student "What did you learn in class today?" and she answers with a spiritual lesson set in the context of nature, you will know that the integration of faith, nature, and learning is indeed becoming a reality. The scholars will be well on their way to the personal realization that nature is but an effect whose cause is God.

For the teacher, the integration of faith, nature, and learning may open up a whole new dimension in his soul temple. In the works of nature, he may begin to read God's thoughts. He may come to realize that even as the natural world is a reflection of God, so all things in life are but an image of the grand movement of eternity. There may be formed within a spiritual perspective which holds that "all truth is God's truth."

Nature and the Bible were joined together by the divine hand;  
what God hath joined together let no man put asunder.  
--Charles Tyndall

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