

**June 14, 2015**

**O. Intro:**

Adam Gopnik, wrote an article in the New Yorker in 2013 about faith and belief, "We know that...in the billions of years of the universe's existence, there is no evidence of a single miraculous intervention with the law of nature."

\*This is an extraordinary statement of dogma, or faith.

\*How do we know that? How could we know that?

\*Of course he can make this statement because of his presuppositions...

\*"All there is is the natural, the supernatural does not exist. Therefore the only evidence he will accept regarding a miracle must be "naturalistic" evidence. Which of course if the evidence is naturalistic, it can't be a miracle."

\*It is circular reasoning:

-Since miracles do not exist there can be no miracles because miracles do not exist.

\*Listen to Chesterton's perspective on this, published in 1908...over a hundred years ago...it shows this is not new or unique to our time.

"But my belief that miracles have happened in human history is not a mystical belief at all; I believe in them upon human evidences as I do in the discovery of America. Upon this point there is a simple logical fact that only requires to be stated and cleared up. Somehow or other an extraordinary idea has arisen that the disbelievers in miracles consider them coldly and fairly, while believers in miracles accept them only in connection with some dogma. The fact is quite the other way. The believers in miracles accept them (rightly or wrongly) because they have evidence for them. The disbelievers in miracles deny them (rightly or wrongly) because they have a doctrine against them...It is we Christians who accept all actual evidence—it is you rationalists who refuse actual evidence being constrained to do so by your creed.. —G. K. CHESTERTON, FROM ORTHODOXY

\*We have been in the gospel of Mark since the beginning of this year.

\*One thing has been clear is that this is a book of miracles...from beginning to end.

\*Christianity is a miraculous faith, the gospel is the miracle of:

-Incarnation, substitutionary atonement on the cross and resurrection from the dead of Jesus.

\*The Greek word for miracle is a word that means "sign."

\*As we have discussed time and again, a sign points to something other than itself.

\*No sign says... "A Sign"

\*The signs, the miracles point to Jesus, they authenticate his announcement, his mission and message...they point beyond themselves to ultimate reality.

**Mark 6:53** When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. **54** As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. **55** They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. **56** And wherever he went — into villages, towns or countryside — they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.

\*Jesus had just miraculously healed over 5K, he had walked on water, and calmed the wind.

\*Now back on shore lots of sick folks were healed; some were healed just by touching his clothes.

\*John uses hyperbole to let us know that the things we have written down in the gospels are but a fraction of the miraculous things Jesus actually did.

**John 21:25** Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

\*So let's talk about miracles today since they are a prominent feature of the Bible and our faith.

\*They are also controversial, confusing...by definition...relatively rare.

\*If the Red Sea parted next Tuesday at noon and a group of people walked across on dry land it would be considered a natural occurrence by secular scientists.

\*They may not know why it happened but they would not attribute it to a divine being...they would spend years writing papers on it and discussing the phenomenon.

\*But what if a large group of people were fleeing a murderous king and his army on foot, and were being led by a man claiming to be God's spokesperson.

-Then just as the large group of helpless people were standing on the shore of a sea, with the angry army rushing towards them bent on their destruction... the spokesperson held out his arms and at just that instance the sea parted.

-Then the people crossed the dry seabed on foot and just as they reached safety the sea closed on the army destroying them.

\*Well, it would take a great deal of faith to not call it a miracle or to not believe God intervened.

\*But such is the climate we find ourselves in...Even the scenario I described would be attributed to forces completely within the material realm...no God, no miracles.

\*Why...because it cannot be, so it is not.

\*Sometimes Christians...feel sheepish when admitting to a belief in miracles, especially if talking to a person of science.

\*As if "science" has somehow disproven miracles...which of course, it can't.

\*A scientist can presuppose that they cannot exist...but this is a statement of faith, not a provable fact.

\*There is no science in the statement, "Miracles do not exist."

-This is not based on evidence, or proof, but purely on a "belief system"...a sort of religion.

\*In fact, if they were open-minded to the possibility, the facts are firmly in the favor of miracles.

Ludwig Wittgenstein(philosopher and mathematician) said "the great delusion of modernity is that the laws of science explain the universe for us. The laws of nature describe the universe...but they explain nothing."

\*A miracle is an interruption of the normal processes of the "the natural system" from outside that system.

\*We don't believe that Jesus rose from the dead through some natural process...that is impossible.

\*In the natural order in which we live, there are no processes in existence that would allow a three-day dead man to come back to life.

\*We believe God injected power into the natural process from where he exists apart from our system.

\*He is not tied to the physical universe...he lives in existence independent from it...but not uninvolved in it.

\*So a scientist who says miracles cannot exist because all that exists is a closed system (the natural order) is using circular reasoning.

\*How would he know that we live in a closed system unless he could somehow get outside of it or get information from beyond it...telling him this is all there is.

\*But if he could get outside it or get information from outside it...then of course it would not be a closed system but an open one.

\*The evidence within this system has always pointed to a designer...from the Psalmist a few thousand years ago...**Psa. 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. 2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.**

To: William Paley's Watchmaker argument 200 years ago, "If you see a watch laying on the ground, you assume there is a watchmaker...the world is much more complex than a watch."

\*Some have tried to counter his argument, but it has never been adequately refuted.

\*Little did he know how complex this "watch" truly is.

\*The current science reveals more design than people even 25 years ago could have imagined.

\*About 12 years ago the most prominent atheist of the 20th century, Anthony Flew concluded that an intelligent being must have designed the universe.

\*It made international headlines and made his followers angry and disillusioned...he undermined their "faith in disbelief in God."

\*He came to this conclusion based on the fact that the complex genetic code in DNA could not be accounted for without a designer.

\*He was an honest man...he did not become a Christian...but he became a non-atheist.

\*The evidence is there, everywhere...in the existence of the physical universe as well as the signs planted in the natural order from outside of it...pointing to someone much bigger than the mere natural.

\*These signs planted in the natural order are what we call "miracles."

**\*We've seen lots of miracles in Mark, we will see lots more the next 6 months...**

\*So...today, let's talk about the topic of miracles in a little more detail.

\*But Let's start with the universe itself, the place where God has posted his "signs"

\*After all, just because we are used to it and it is "natural" doesn't mean its existence is not miraculous in origin.

\*Christy and I watched a sci-fi movie last weekend and a main character said something like, "With so many planets that you don't even have a number big enough to describe them, you are so arrogant to believe you are the only planet with life?"

\*This is a common statement in movies the past few years...sounds good...but it is actually outdated.

\*We know of so many conditions that are absolutely necessary for a planet to support life that not only is it improbable to the point of impossible for life to exist on other planets.

\*Our existence here on earth is a statistical and scientific impossibility.

\*"Terry, I don't think you understand the word impossible...since we exist."

\*I said our existence is a statistical and scientific impossibility...otherwise known as a miracle.

\*There are hundreds of examples, great videos and books out there...I've seen and read a number of them...I'll give a sampling of some the evidence.

\*If Earth were slightly larger, it would have more gravity and the atmosphere would become toxic with methane and ammonia.

\*If it were slightly smaller, water would not stay down but would dissipate into the atmosphere...we don't do well without water.

\*Speaking of water, it is a miracle in itself...water becomes more dense until it hits 39.2 degrees Fahrenheit, then it begins becoming less dense so by the time it is a solid it floats.  
-So lakes don't freeze from the bottom up killing fish.

\*Water has a number of rare qualities, all of them essential for life on earth as we know it.

\*If earth rotated slightly slower the temp swings between night and day would be deadly.

\*If it rotated slightly more quickly it would produce impossible high winds (Jupiter has winds around 1000 miles per hour).

\*Speaking of Jupiter, if we didn't have the big fellow, space junk would hit us a thousand times more frequently...it has 318 times our gravity and since it is gas it just swallows stuff whole or deflects them out of our solar system.

\*The moon, if it were slightly bigger our tides would be over 100 feet, if it were smaller there would be no tides and the coastal seawater would not be cleansed and replenished...life as we know it would not exist.

\*If the moon were not the exact distance or at a different angle life would not exist.

\*There are many, many other factors...they add up in staggering fashion.

\*The odds of a planet supporting life based on the "known factors" is 1 in ten to the 50th power...this is an impossibly high number.

\*Fred Hoyle, an astronomer who coined the term "Big Bang" admitted that the facts shook his faith in atheism.... "A common sense interpretation of the facts suggest that a super intellect has monkeyed with the physics and well as the chemistry and biology...the numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question."

\*So what have non-believing scientists done with this super abundance of evidence that points to a created, finely tuned universe?

\*We haven't even discussed the inner-verse of the human DNA. Which shook Anthony Flew free of his atheism.

\*The current answer for the obvious and clearly miraculous nature of the universe is a theory of "multi-verses."

\*This is the idea that an infinity of other universes exist...so that of course by chance one will possess all the variables perfectly right for everything to exist...and we are the lucky ones who live in that universe.

Eminent physicist John Polkinghorne has said: "Let us recognize these speculations for what they are. They are not physics, but in the strictest sense, metaphysics (beyond physical...faith statements). There is no purely scientific reason to believe in an ensemble of universes."

Richard Swinburne said "To postulate a trillion-trillion other universes, rather than one God, in order to explain the orderliness of our universe, seems the height of irrationality."

**Life itself is a miracle:** We know that the universe is not self-creating, it was designed by God...he made it as our home.

\*Who created God? No one. He is uncreated. Something has always existed.

\*The facts point to God.

**\*Once you conclude that God created the universe as a miraculous act...it is easy to believe that he can do any sub-act within that universe as well.**

\*If he can create oceans, surely he can divide one and allow people to pass through.

\*If he can create life from scratch of course he can resurrect a life.

\*And so on.

\*So let's get personal about miracles...because even if I believe they are possible and historical...what difference does it make for me?

**\*It's an important question here's some reasons why?**

1. Some people live for a miraculous experience:

- "I want, I need a miracle to authenticate my faith."

\*It is a focus on what God can do rather than on God himself.

\*It's why if you ever hear of some strange phenomenon...the image of Jesus on a taco shell, or a person back from the dead, or a healing...people flock to that story and that place.

\*They are desperate for "proof" that this is not all there is.

\*A new TV series that airs in a couple of weeks is called "Proof"

- About a surgeon who searches for proof of life after death.

\*Like the movie Flatliners that came out 25 years ago.

\*Miracles have never "fixed anyone or taken away the need for ongoing faith, obedience, endurance."

\*Look in the Bible.

\*Elijah...shortly after an amazing set of miracles, is depressed and wanting to die.

\*Last week...the boys saw Jesus feed 5K plus and in a couple of hours were living in fear.

\*I personally experienced a very public and for me a powerful miracle...asked my mentor about it the next day.

"You still had to get up today and choose to love your wife, go to work, walk with Jesus...put it in your backpack and keep hiking."

\*Miracles point us to Jesus, our all and all...we don't need them in order to know him, trust him, love him.

\*To look for a miracle to "fix your faith" is like going on a "cruise to fix a marriage"

\*A cruise can make fun memories in a good marriage but it is merely a temporary distraction for a bad one.

\*A miracle won't fix a hard heart...ask the boys in the boat from last week's narrative.

\*A miracle is not a substitute for training in godliness.

2. Some feel like second-class citizens in the kingdom...riding in coach, others are in first class...because they have not "gotten their miracle."

\*Some of the greatest Christians of wide impact left no record of a miraculous experience: Lewis, Wilberforce, Newton, Bonhoeffer

\*Of course, that's not entirely true...conversion to Christ is certainly a miracle...but many want more or different than that.

3. Sometimes we wonder what is appropriate to ask for or believe is possible for us now.

\*There are those whose theological system do not allow for miracles. (some forms of dispensationalism/liberal theology)

\*There are those whose systems require miracles if it is to be authentic faith.

\*What are we to do with the miracle stories in the bible...are they ancient artifacts...not to be experienced today?

\*Are we supposed to be seeing them everyday and it is our lack of faith that prevents them from happening?

\*How do we apply those narratives to our lives?

## **MIRACLES**

1. Man from Hindu Background in Boston (Mr. Clean, Angel outside his door).

2. Hands on my chest to keep me from death or injury.

3. Man in subway leaving his family.

\*George MacLeod, used to say, **"And if you think that's a coincidence, I wish you a very dull life!"**

4. God spoke to me about three things, my brother across town praying at the same time heard the same three things...long-range things, one was related to starting River.

5. Earnest...dream about a young man making bad choices.  
-God spoke about a pastor having an affair

\*I have personally seen more than this and if we shared stories we would come up with many, many more collectively.

\*The point of telling a few is to illustrate a point.

\*The point is we live in an open, not a closed universe...God has and still intervenes when it fits his purpose.

\*I picked a few stories I know personally and can verify rather than something I read in a magazine or book...I can't verify them.

\*Question remains: why doesn't God intervene more often?

\*Why doesn't he do something miraculous for more people?

\*What is his decision making matrix for miracles...I mean with all the suffering in the world, it sometimes seems he chooses to do "petty miracles" and not act when the stakes are high.

\*Why speak to me about something in advance and allow a child to die of cancer?

\*Seems like a misuse of miracles.

"God, give him the miracle, he's dying...don't waste it on me."

\*It's not like God is a genie with limited "wishes"...his signs are not wishes...they point to him.

\*He alone knows how and why the signs he uses accomplish his purposes.

\*We are to "ask for what we desire even as we grow **hearts** in which **he is** our chief desire."

\*This is our lifelong journey...we are to grow in our confidence in him so that we are able to trust him in everything.

\*Which brings us to an important question:

**"If we thank God for the good things, why not blame him for the bad?"**

\*One person glows about God's love because he provided in miraculous fashion...but another person is devastated because they did not have their prayer answered in the way they hoped.

\*The happy person with the answered prayer is told to "praise God"

\*But the devastated person would not be encouraged to "blame God".



\*So with God it seems it's always, "Heads he wins, tails we lose."

\*The athlete who raises a pointer finger to God after making the game winning catch, why doesn't he raise his middle finger to God after dropping the game losing one?

\*I'm not being profane or funny...its a real question.

\*If you listen, you will hear it being asked...with some degree of anger at times.

\*"You Christians are dumb, you can't have it both ways...if you are going to thank him for the good, you need to be prepared to blame him for the bad."

\*What's wrong with this thinking?

\*Either I blame God for the bad and thank him for the good or I don't get to thank him for the good at all.

\*There is another possibility.

\*I can thank God in the good and the bad.

\*I can learn to trust God for **all** that he brings into my life.

\*Does this mean I must "thank God for evil done to me and others?"

\*No, it doesn't...it does mean we can come to believe that God is able to bring good from anything...that nothing surprises him or over powers him.

\*We really don't have to understand everything in order to trust him (we just think we do)

\*If you don't believe its possible to trust without complete knowledge...you haven't considered a small child...they do this every minute of every day...live trusting without complete understanding.

\*We are, after all, children.

\*Never the less it is normal and healthy to not want to suffer.

\*It makes good sense to avoid suffering in legitimate ways...physical, mental, relational

\*So, its to be expected that we would ask God to take suffering from us and those we love.

\*That being said life is more than merely avoiding suffering.

\*In fact living merely to avoid suffering is a sure way to life of suffering.

\*"I will not suffer relationally so I will avoid close relationships, in which case I will suffer relationally."

\*"I will not suffer physically, I will give all my time and effort to avoiding physical disease, or injury...in which case I end up worshipping and fearing my own body...and suffering for it."

\*Life is not about avoiding suffering nor is it about merely embracing suffering (As the Buddhist philosophy would tell you).

\*Life is about the glory of God, relationship with him.

\*We will suffer but we do not need to suffer without meaning.

\*Viktor Frankl, holocaust survivor wrote... "Those who have a 'why' to live, can bear with almost any 'how.'"

### **Conclusion:**

**If the whole universe has no meaning, we should never have found out that it has no meaning: just as, if there were no light in the universe and therefore no creatures with eyes, we should never know it was dark. Dark would be without meaning. C.S. Lewis**

\*Life is about meaning; we are drawn to it with an inescapable pull.

\*A movie about the life of Stephen Hawking that won an academy award. "The theory of everything."

\*Based his ex-wife's memoir of their relationship...a love story that ended in divorce.

\*Hawking is one of those whose answer for the obvious design of the universe is a theory of a multi-verse.

\*He said the universe is self-creating because of gravity...when asked where gravity came from he said..."M-theory"

\*Multi-verse...we are just lucky enough to be in the universe where the impossible happened.

\*Hawking has spent his life trying to create or find meaning...it has been the driving force in his very difficult life.

\*Why? How does his worldview explain this need for meaning?

\*How come those who say that the world is without meaning other than what we can create in our selves...live otherwise?

\*It is because meaning is hard-wired in us...it is in the fabric of creation.

\*There is meaning, because God exists...he meant to create us, we mean something to him, his very existence is the foundation for all meaning.

\*The **meaning** of miracles is derived from the reality of God.

**Col. 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.**

\*By him, for him.

\*Since God is God...he alone is our greatest good.

\*He is not merely "The Theory of Everything." ---he is the basis for everything, the explanation for everything. The reason for everything.

\*He is no theory...he is Ultimate Reality..."In the Beginning God!"

\*Any and everything that points us to him is good.

\*Any and everything made and done by him is made and done with intelligence and good purpose.

\*Why would God miraculously intervene to pay for an electric bill in the nick of time and not intervene to heal a cancer?

\*I don't know...I do know it is vitally important to trust his decisions.

\*Life is chiefly about training to trust...there are a million paths that people take in this training.

\*It can be frustrating, exasperating, confusing, interesting...to see how differently people's lives unfold.

\*Yet, again, we are required to trust and be faithful with what we have been entrusted with.

**John 21:17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"**

**Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. 18 I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." 19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!" 20 Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. 21 When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" 22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."**

\*Jesus was giving Peter instructions for his life...Including some facts about how Peter would die.

\*Peter looked over at John and said, "what about him?"

\*Common approach to God's will for our own lives...to wonder about his will for others.

\*Jesus' responded with..."How is my plan for him your concern...doesn't change anything about my plan for you...you must follow me."

\*We all must follow Jesus on the path he has laid out for us...we cannot afford to be sidetracked by the plan and path he has for others.

\*Can you trust him with this?

\*If you experience miracle after miracle...or see nothing like a miracle in your life...the challenge is the same, the opportunity is the same..."you must follow Jesus."

\*He is your greatest good...in the end, all who know him will see him face to face and that will be the great equalizer...all who see him and love him, end up equally blessed.

## SMALL GROUP NOTES

### Intro:

1. The Biblical word for miracle means "sign." What does this indicate about the purpose for miracles?
2. Have you ever experienced a miracle or known someone personally who has a miraculous story that you believe is credible? Briefly describe the experience.

### Read:

**Mark 6:53** When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. **54** As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. **55** They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. **56** And wherever he went — into villages, towns or countryside — they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.

### Discuss:

1. Ludwig Wittgenstein(philosopher and mathematician) said "the great delusion of modernity is that the laws of science explain the universe for us. The laws of nature describe the universe...but they explain nothing."  
\*What is the difference between describing and explaining?
2. What does this passage mean in regards to the evidence of creation for a creator?  
**Psa. 19:1** The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. **2** Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.
3. If you are not familiar with William Paley's "watchmaker" argument "Google" it. Do you find his argument compelling? Why or why not?
4. The complexity of the physical universe, including human DNA has caused a number of formerly atheist philosophers and scientists to "doubt their doubts." How does it help you personally to contemplate the order and design of the physical world? Are there specific things that help you the most? (A baby, sunrise, ocean, etc.)
5. Terry listed three reasons why the subject of miracles is important for us:
  - a. Some believe they need a miracle to validate their faith.

b. Some feel like "second class" Christians because they have not experienced an overt miracle.

c. Many don't know what to think or believe about miracles on a practical level.

\*Do any of these reasons resonate with you personally? Why or why not?

6. Many people struggle with the apparent contradiction of "Thanking God for the good but not blaming him for the bad." The biblical answer is that we "Thank God for the good and the bad."

\*What do you think about this and why?

\*If you believe this to be true, how have you found it difficult to put into practice?

\*How you been able to put this into practice?

7. Viktor Frankl, holocaust survivor wrote... "Those who have a 'why' to live, can bear with almost any 'how.'"

\*Do you agree with this? Why or why not?

8. Talk about this quote, do you agree or disagree and why?

"If the whole universe has no meaning, we should never have found out that it has no meaning: just as, if there were no light in the universe and therefore no creatures with eyes, we should never know it was dark. Dark would be without meaning."

C.S. Lewis

9. "The meaning of miracles is derived from the reality of God."

**Col. 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.**

\*What do you believe this statement means and how does Col. 1:16 fit in?

Apply:

**Read:**

**John 21:17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"**

**Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. 18 I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." 19 Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!" 20 Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. 21 When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" 22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."**

\*Spend a few minutes silently thinking about the following questions:

\*How have you struggled with comparing your life and experiences with God to those of others you know or have read about?

\*How might this passage help you going forward?

\*Pray out loud or individually about the response of Jesus to Peter and its application to your life.

**"If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."**

**THE GOSPEL OF**

# MARK



**“FOR EVEN THE  
SON OF MAN  
DID NOT COME  
TO BE SERVED,  
BUT TO SERVE,  
AND TO GIVE  
HIS LIFE AS A  
RANSOM FOR  
MANY.”**

**MARK 10:45**

**J. STILL**

**Mark 6:53-56** When they had crossed over, they landed at Gennesaret and anchored there. As soon as they got out of the boat, people recognized Jesus. They ran throughout that whole region and carried the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. And wherever he went — into villages, towns or countryside — they placed the sick in the marketplaces. They begged him to let them touch even the edge of his cloak, and all who touched him were healed.



**John 21:25 Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.**

**"The great delusion of modernity is that the laws of science explain the universe for us. The laws of nature *describe* the universe...but they *explain* nothing."**

Ludwig Wittgenstein

**A miracle is an interruption of the "normal processes within the natural system" from outside that system.**

**Psa. 19:1-2 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.**

**Our existence...a statistical and scientific  
impossibility**

***"A common sense interpretation of the facts suggest that a super intellect has monkeyed with the physics as well as the chemistry and biology...the numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question."***

***Fred Hoyle  
(coined the phrase "Big Bang")***

## **"M-Theory"**

**"Let us recognize these speculations for what they are.**

**They are not physics, but in the strictest sense, metaphysics. There is no purely scientific reason to believe in an ensemble of universes."**

**John Polkinghorne**

**"To postulate a trillion-trillion other universes, rather than one God, in order to explain the orderliness of our universe, seems the height of irrationality."**

**Richard Swinburne**

**Once you conclude that God created the universe as a miraculous act, it is easy to believe that he can do any "sub-act" within that universe as well.**



**1. Some people believe they  
"need" a miracle.**



## **2. Some people feel like second-class citizens in the Kingdom of God.**



**3. Sometimes we just don't know what is appropriate to ask for or believe.**

**“And if you think that’s a coincidence, I wish  
you a very dull life.”**

George Macleod

**What is God's miracle decision making matrix?**

**We are to ask for what we desire even as we  
grow hearts in which he is our chief desire.**

**If we thank God for the good things,  
why not blame him for the bad?**



***Life is much more than avoiding suffering.***



**“If the whole universe has no meaning, we should never have found out that it has no meaning: just as, if there were no light in the universe and therefore no creatures with eyes, we should never know it was dark. Dark would be without meaning.”**

**C.S. Lewis**

**Col. 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.**

**John 21:17-22** The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, “Follow me!” Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. When Peter saw him, he asked, “Lord, what about him?” Jesus answered, “If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.”

**Will you trust him with this?**

***“If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.”***

**Jesus**