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# God answers it all

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I recently heard Charles Colson tell of a discussion he had with Christian leaders in England. He asked them, "What is Christianity?" They were a diverse group, and gave diverse answers. "Christianity is God's love expressed to humans," said one. "It's one way to understand God," said another. One said, "It's Christ's work to redeem lost people through His death and resurrection."

Colson told them they had all missed it.

Charles Colson, you may recall, was convicted of crimes related to the Watergate cover-up. While in prison this brilliant attorney, who had been "Nixon's hatchet-man," began to question his power-mongering ways. A friend led him to investigate the truth of Jesus Christ, and Colson turned his life over to faith in Christ. His turn-around was remarkable: instead of using political maneuvering to serve his own needs, he founded Prison Fellowship to serve the needs of those he once would have considered least like himself.

He also applied his powerful intellect to matters of Christian thinking, and thus he raised this question with the

group in England. Certainly he agreed that Christianity can be described as God's expression of love, and His redemptive work through Christ. The problem, Colson said, was that these answers did not go far enough. "Christianity," he said, "is the explanation for everything."

"The explanation for everything." Now, there's a provocative thought. Could it be true? To begin to answer that, we have to back up a step: What would it actually mean if it were true? What could it mean for Christianity to be the explanation for everything?

Obviously it's not that we should look in the Bible for the answer to every question. The Bible doesn't tell us tomorrow's weather, how cell division happens, or how computers work. What it does instead is provide a foundation for understanding.

It starts with the first sentence (which Christianity of course shares with Judaism): "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Thus we know where all creation came from. That fact is certainly foundational to everything else.

The Bible further tells us that God is a rational God and that He desires to be known by His people, both through His Word and through His creation. This means we can expect the world to make sense. Don't underestimate how important that is! Historians of science tell us it is no coincidence that science only really got off the ground in Christian Europe.

Christianity teaches that God created the universe as an expression of Himself, so it's worth investigating, and that it reflects His mind, which is why it exhibits the intelligible order that it does. No other culture, except those strongly influenced by Christianity, has believed the natural world to be both worthy of study and able to be understood.

The Bible teaches little by way of scientific facts, but it explains why science itself works. As physicist Paul Davies wrote in the New York Times, "the very notion of physical law is a theological one in the first place, a fact that makes many scientists squirm. Isaac Newton first got the idea of absolute, universal, perfect, immutable laws from the Christian doctrine that God created the world and ordered it in a rational way."

As the proverbial fish does not recognize what water is, we may not see how this mind set pervades our thinking. But we can see it where people deny it. I once took part in an extended online dialogue with a man named Jacob, who denied this rational and personal core to all of reality. For him, even arithmetic was up for grabs. Is 2 + 2 = 5 wrong? Not for Jacob, who wrote:

"The teacher trains the child to emit the signs that the teacher was taught to emit and their teacher was taught to emit and the people that certify teachers were taught to emit. Or said differently, of course 2 + 2 = 5 is an illegitimate answer. The child would probably

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be corrected, or retrained, if they said that it equaled 5."

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According to Jacob,  $2 + 2 = 5$  is not false, it's socially "illegitimate." (This was truly his belief; he maintained similar positions throughout many rounds of discussion.) Such a view seems outrageous and incomprehensible to many, especially those who are about my age (50-ish) or older. It is not so strange to younger people, who have grown up with a much looser cultural connection to Christian convictions. If you cannot understand Jacob (he is admittedly an extreme case), at least take him as a demonstration of a point. One who cuts oneself free of the foundation by which the world makes sense, can easily drift off in directions where it doesn't.

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This is but one brief illustration of what Colson was getting at. Much more could be added if space allowed. But was his statement true? Is Christianity really the explanation for everything? Again, space will not allow me to address that question here the way it deserves (though I'm happy to do so at [www.thinkingchristian.net](http://www.thinkingchristian.net)).


Here I'll speak instead to fellow Christian believers. We believe that God created everything, that He is Lord of everything, and that all things are for His glory. Have we considered how this impacts everything we do and all that we are? Christ Himself is the basis, the foundation, the reality behind every reality. So Christianity should affect not just our worship or our morality, but also our professional lives, our relationships, our personal goals, families — indeed our total outlook on everything.

*Gilson is the director of strategic processes for Campus Crusade for Christ. He can be contacted through his blog at [www.thinkingchristian.net](http://www.thinkingchristian.net).*

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