

calling us to return to the Jesus Way of unfailing love, radical forgiveness and scandalous hospitality.

Tragically, like Esau in Genesis 25, those who claim the “Christian” label may opt to “sell our birthright” in exchange for the savory soup of power, prestige or popularity. At least Esau felt satisfied for a moment. But when our inheritance is used up, traded away, or misused, all that’s left is emptiness and regrets.

## CHRIST OUR INHERITANCE

So what’s the good news? I’m grateful to remind you that our inheritance is not actually finite! Jesus Christ is an infinite source of God’s grace and mercy.

*Those who turn or return to Jesus find that God’s love is an inheritance that is higher, deeper, longer, and wider than what we can ever earn, spend or squander.*

Regardless of the cultural pendulum swings, Jesus is the wellspring of eternal life now, both real and present “to the end of the age.” His table is always open to everyone... even the prodigals who thought they “used up” their inheritance.

The culture in which we live may have forgotten the One whose inheritance they spent, but he doesn’t say, “Too late, too bad,” but rather, throws wide his arms and says, “Whosoever will may come.” □

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# Science vs. God?

Grant Corriveau

**I** hear you’re a Christian. You don’t actually believe all that crap, do you?

I’d never flown before with first officer Dan. We’d completed our initial preparations for our early-morning flight. Now we had a few moments in the Airbus flight deck to wait for the final details of aircraft loading to be completed around us. This was a welcome opportunity finally to have a sip of that rapidly-cooling morning coffee I’d carefully stowed in the cup holder beside me and relax just a bit. It was also a good chance to begin discovering something about the other person I would be sharing these cramped quarters with during the long day’s work ahead of us. That’s when Dan turned to me and said, “I hear you’re a Christian. You don’t actually believe all that crap, do you?”

I probably choked a little on my coffee at his direct, though obviously good-natured, broaching of the topic. Religion, along with politics, are subjects that pilots usually avoid because of the many ‘hot buttons’ and our need to work together as a team. That day, however, largely due to Dan’s wide smile and friendly manner of expressing himself, I was more than willing to engage with his question. I appreciated that he was treating me like an adult—not a child with whom he should be careful not to destroy fantasies about Santa Claus and Easter Bunnies.

During our flights together, over the next few years, we had many fascinating conversations exploring truth, reality, and what we can even know about any of it. More interesting still, while our interactions were often passionate, they were never combative or toxic.

Thanks to Dan’s persistent and intriguing questions about my views of the world, I often had to dig deep to “suss out” what I claimed to believe. Sometimes I had to backtrack from positions I realized were untenable. More importantly, I came to realize that it is entirely feasible for people to discuss ‘hot button’ topics respectfully, patiently, and persistently—and to even become friends while doing so.

## FROM “IT IS WRITTEN!” TO “SCIENCE SAYS!”

The topics Dan and I covered then are topics I still enjoy digging into today. I do this with friends of various faiths,



worldviews, backgrounds, nationalities, and experiences. Over the years, when it comes to understanding “how we got here,” I have noticed a transition in the Central Story we each carry within. I’ve noticed a tidal shift from “It is written!” to “Science says!” And sadly, both these strong exclamations represent an attempt to stop us from questioning and thinking through the issues. Let me explain.

When I was in my formative years, way back in the 50s and 60s, a religious explanation was widely accepted as the premise for everything. We and our universe were created by a Higher

Being of some sort, and on some deep level, this was **“not to be doubted or questioned.”**

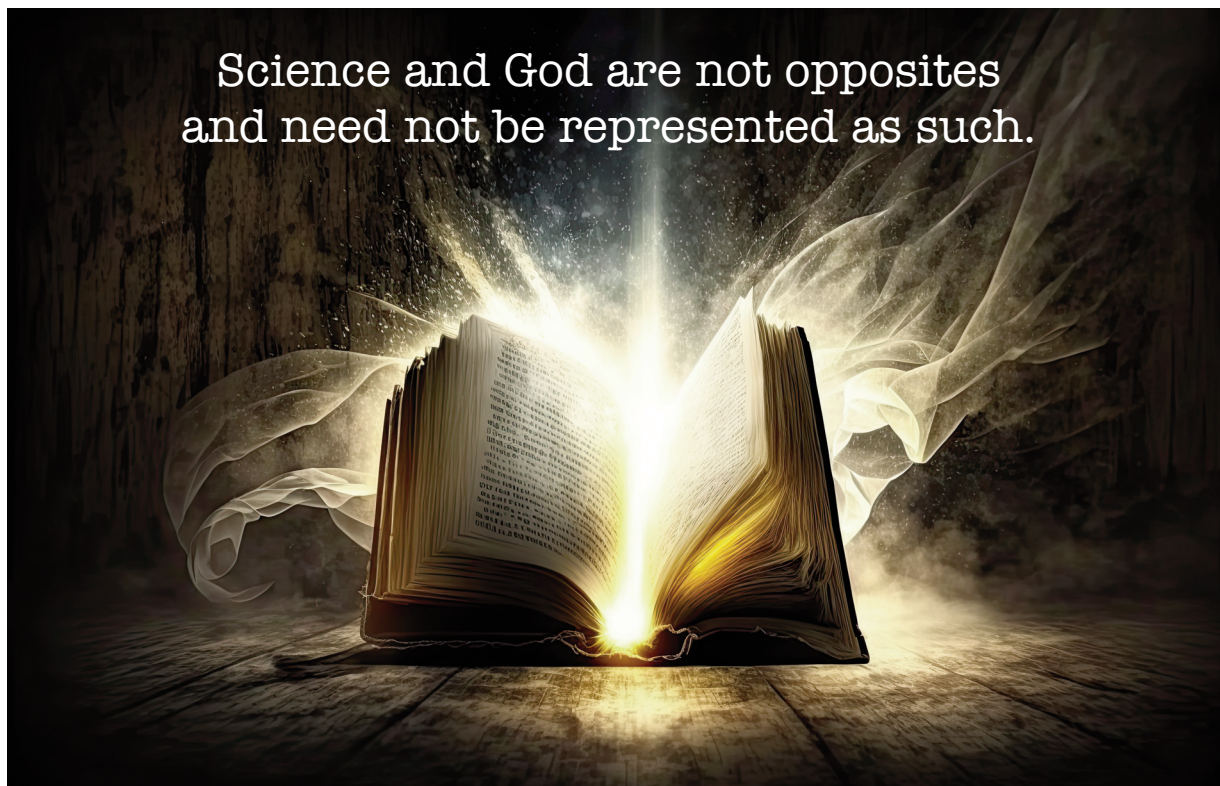
Nowadays, a scientific explanation is most widely accepted. An event known as The Big Bang brought the universe into existence by means not yet explainable, and life within this universe is a random interaction of “the right conditions” along with “eons and eons of time.” This scientific version depends heavily upon Darwin’s Theory of Evolution and accepting it as fully explaining all life as we see it today, in all its profusion and complexity. Somewhat surprisingly, this scientific version also can be expressed from an attitude similar to the religious one: Darwin is **“not to be doubted or even questioned.”** This all suggests to me that while our Central Story has moved on, our human nature remains firmly intact.

Today, one of the most famous advocates for this scientific explanation, often termed “neo-Darwinism,” is Richard Dawkins. He is best known for his book, *The God Delusion*, as well as his public advocacy for Atheism.

## BEYOND DICHOTOMIES

A harshly-polarized and antagonistic atmosphere exists today between these two Central Stories, often characterized as—“Science vs. God.” ***I maintain that Science and God are not opposites and need not be represented as such.*** In general, I suspect that those who promote this dichotomy are revealing how, on a fundamental level, there is an age-old power struggle involved. Humans, once in control of ‘the story,’ seldom enjoy being undermined by a new one.

At any rate, in such an



atmosphere, it is more important than ever that those of us seeking to follow Christ conduct ourselves accordingly. We must rigorously avoid being drawn into hostility and ill will towards others. 1 Corinthians 13 says, *“If I ... can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, ... but do not have love, I am nothing.”*

With this caveat in mind, and hoping not to merely add ‘fuel to the fire’ of rancorous arguments, I am encouraged by those well-qualified scientists who find no problems reconciling their scientific activities with their faith in God.

I now believe that  
whenever and  
wherever  
I see ‘cruciform’  
(self-donating) love,  
I see Christ.

## EMBODYING CHRISTLIKE LOVE

Throughout my life, I’ve observed that the way we embody our beliefs often speaks louder than our words. Over several decades, my vision for what it means to ‘follow Christ’ has evolved. ***I now believe that whenever and wherever I see ‘cruciform’ (self-donating) love, I see Christ.*** It doesn’t matter if the person demonstrating this love calls themselves Atheist, Buddhist, Muslim, Jew, Christian, Democrat, or Republican or

belongs to any particular church or group—or doesn’t. When I see Love—I see God. Christ-like love resides deeply within us and is evidenced more by our actions than our words.

I often think of ‘Christ in us’ like this: Long before we even had a word for gravity, human beings tripped and fell and were hurt or even killed. Gravity just is—whether we comprehend it, or not. So too, I believe that all people are formed in God’s image expressly to house the fullness of God’s love—whether we comprehend it or not—or have terms for it or not. It just is. At

least, that’s how I see it from my perspective, which I strive to keep Christ-centered.

I’m retired from flying professionally now. But Saturday mornings often find me sitting around the table at my local airport flying club. There are usually a lot of loud conversations flowing and some heated

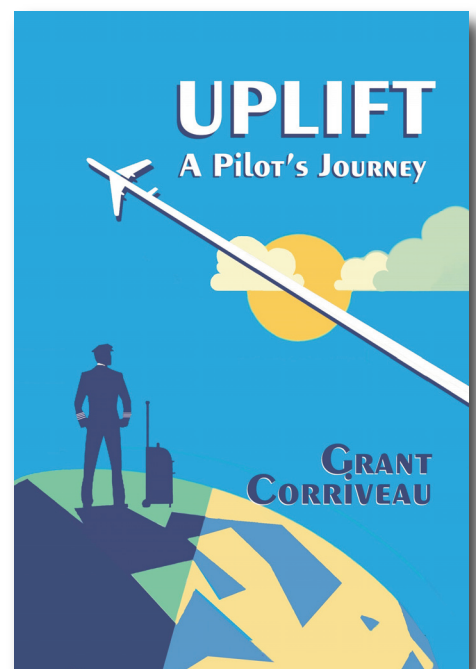
arguments and strong opinions expressed by this mostly old-guys crowd as they deride political leaders or argue about controversial topics. I sometimes find myself praying inwardly: “Lord, help me see this person as you see them and love them, just as you love me.”

I’ve also noticed that whenever a visiting pilot—a stranger to our airport—encounters problems, members of this same group will jump up to help. A flat tire? “I’ve got a spare in the back of my hangar that’ll fit your plane—no problem.”

Suddenly, no one cares about

religious or political stripe or ancestral history. The visiting pilot is just another fellow traveler in need of help. And help is given generously, without any expectation of compensation. That’s the moment when my head prayer is answered. Some days I “see Jesus” in the most unexpected places.

I know this as a microcosm of what’s happening every day in the world around me. Most recently, and close to home, in the wildfires and floods striking Canada and the USA this past



summer, I saw people needing rescue and others rushing in to help. No one was asking about beliefs or politics. They just reach out to help or be helped.

I dream that one day we will experience Emmanuel—God among us—in everyone, everywhere, all the time. Call me a heretic—you wouldn’t be the first. □

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