

Gravity, George Washington, & God

By Joelee Chamberlain

Everyone asks questions, don't they? Well, asking questions is a good thing, because that is how we all learn. That's how babies learn; that's how children learn, that's how grown-ups learn, and that is how scientists and inventors come up with new ideas. They all ask questions and then try to find the answers.

Yes, we can ask questions and learn about all sorts of things, can't we? But what's the most important thing to learn about? Yes, the most important thing to learn about is God, isn't it? So today I'm going to ask you some questions and then see how the answers can help us learn more about God. Now, at first the questions may not seem to have anything to do with God -- but they do!

My first question then, is, can we see the wind? Now you might say, "That's silly! We see the trees and other things blow around!" And in a way you would be right. But when we see the trees bending or a piece of paper being blown along the sidewalk, are we actually seeing the wind itself? No, we aren't. Think about that a minute. We are seeing what the wind is doing, but we don't really see the wind itself, do we? Why, if we were in a house somewhere and there were no trees around and nothing else that the wind could move, the wind might be blowing, but we wouldn't know it was blowing by just looking out of a window, would we? No. We'd have to go outside and feel the wind on us, or something would have to come along that could move in the wind. But even then, we would only be seeing what the wind was doing, wouldn't we? We would not be seeing the wind itself, would we? So, the wind would be there, even though we don't see it, and we learn about the wind because of what the wind does, don't we?

But what is wind? Wind is just air that is moving very fast. But what about air? Can we see air? Air is everywhere, but when we're standing in the room and breathing in the air, do we see the air itself? No. But if the air weren't there, we'd wouldn't be able to breathe. You might say, "But once I saw birthday candles blown out, and then I saw smoke." Yes, you saw the smoke. The smoke was floating in the air. But the smoke was smoke; the smoke was not the air itself. But air is there, even though we don't see it, isn't it?

Okay. Let's think about sound. We hear sounds all the time, don't we? Birds singing, or people talking, or cars going by, or thunder. Those are all sounds. But do we actually see the sounds? No. But what is sound, anyway? Sounds are a special kind of wave that travels through the air. The sound waves go through the air, and when the sound waves go into our ears, our ears turn the sound waves into words or music or other sounds so that we can hear them.

Another thought about sound is that if we were deaf, we wouldn't be able to hear the sounds, would we? But would the sound waves still be there even though we couldn't hear them? Yes, they would. Our ears just wouldn't be turning the sound waves into sounds, but the sounds would still be there. It's just like a blind person who can't see things; but the things are still there, aren't they? Or if we close our eyes, we don't see things, but the things are still there, aren't they? But we'd have to open our eyes to be able to see the things, wouldn't we? It's the same way with sound. Our ears have to be

able to turn the sound waves into sounds for us to be able to hear them. The sounds are there -- but we don't see the sounds, do we?

It's the same when people speak. When your mother tells you that dinner is ready, do you see the words? No, of course not! The sound waves have come out of your mother's mouth, these sound waves have traveled across the room and into your ears, and then your ears have turned the sound waves that her words made into words you can hear.

Here's something interesting and fun you can do. Sometime when someone is talking to you, ask him if you can put your hand on his throat. If you do, you will feel a sort of funny buzzy feeling. That buzzy feeling is called vi-bra-tions. What you are feeling is the air coming out of the person's lungs and passing through the vocal cords inside of the neck, which turns the air into sound waves. And then, again, the sound waves come out of that person's mouth and go into your ears where the sound waves are turned into words, and then you hear the sound waves as words. You can do it to yourself. Just put your hand on your throat and talk or sing. Do you feel that? (It feels funny, doesn't it?!) You are feeling sound waves being made!

And did you know that some sound waves are so big and make such great big vibrations that they can make our windows rattle?! Yes! Have you ever heard a car go by your house with the radio on very, very loud, and your windows rattled? I have! And once I was in a restaurant after a big thunder storm, and a window had a big crack in it. The waitress told us that the thunder sound wave had been so strong that it had actually broken the window! We had heard the thunder, and we saw the crack, but we hadn't actually seen the sound of the thunder itself. We could only hear the sound of the thunder and see what its sound waves had done to the window, couldn't we?

But if there were no air, the sound waves wouldn't be able to travel, and we would not hear anything! So there are two things having to do with sound that we don't see -- we don't see the sound itself, and we don't see the air that the sound waves travel in. But we know they are both there, because we hear the sounds.

But let me ask another question. Have you heard of something called gravity? Well, what is gravity? Gravity is a mysterious force that makes things fall down, isn't it? If we accidentally knock a cup off the table, it falls down onto the floor, doesn't it? Gravity is what makes it hit the floor. If there were no gravity, the cup would just float there in the air! But do we actually see the gravity itself? No. We only see what the gravity does. But just because we can't see gravity, does that mean that gravity isn't there? No. The gravity is there, and that's why the cup or whatever else that is pushed off the table will always hit the floor (unless we catch it first, of course!). So, gravity is there, even though we don't see it. And we learn something about gravity because of what it does, don't we?

And scientists have learned about the air and wind and sound waves and gravity because of what these things do.

Now, there are many other things that we can't see but that we know are there because of what they do, but let's stop with the ones we just talked about and think about something else. Let's ask another question. How did those things get there? Yes, how did the wind get there? How did the air

get there? How can sound waves be made? How can our ears be able to turn those sound waves into words or music or whatever they are? How did gravity get there? Those are lots of questions! Now, these things just couldn't have happened by themselves, could they? So how did those things get there? Well, these questions all have the same answer -- and the answer is God. God made them.

Yes, God made all of those things, and God made the whole world. Some of the things God made we can't see, like gravity and air and sound waves and wind. But also many of the things God made we can see, like oceans and the sun and trees and plants and animals and people. Yes, trees and plants do come from seeds and these give us fruit and other food. Also, animals and people do have babies. But where did the very first trees and plants come from? Or the very first animals? Or the very first people? Yes, God made them. (I told more about this another time in "The Master Builder". Maybe you can listen to that, too.) And God made the things that we use to make things out of, too. For instance, God made trees, and we get boards from the wood of trees so we can build houses; and God makes wheat grow, so we can use the wheat to make flour for bread and cakes and pizza.

So, even though we don't see God, we can know about God because of what He does, can't we? Just like even though we don't see the wind and air and sound and gravity, we can know about them because of what they do! And we learned about God and about these things He made by asking questions, didn't we?

Well, scientists had asked questions about air and sound and gravity. Then they had worked to find out the answers, and then they had written about these things they'd learned. And now we can read the things they wrote and learn about them, too.

But let me ask another question. It has to do with reading, too. And, yes, this won't seem to have to do with God at first, either -- but it will!

You've heard of George Washington, haven't you? He lived about 200 years ago and was a big general and the first president of the United States of America. But how do we actually know about George Washington, that he really lived and did the things he did? We know about George Washington because people who saw George Washington and people who knew him wrote about him. And these people who knew and talked with George Washington wrote down what he said and did. Then other people read the things that these people had written about George Washington, and they put these things about him into our history books and encyclopedias. Then we can read what the other people wrote. So we learn about George Washington because of what we can read about him, don't we? Things written by people who knew him or heard him talk.

And the same is true of God. We can read about God in the Bible. The Bible is a book written by many men over hundreds of years. The Bible tells us about things that God said and did. But where did the Bible come from? Well, the Bible is divided into two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament, isn't it? The Old Testament tells about the time before Jesus came to earth, and the New Testament tells about when Jesus came to earth and what happened then.

In the Old Testament God helped people write things down. God even talked to some people; these people are called prophets. And sometimes God made it so that some of these prophets could

even see Him when He was talking to them. And the prophets wrote down what God said to them, and these things are in the Old Testament. And now we can read the Old Testament and learn many, many things about God from it.

Then in the New Testament we also learn about God because of what men wrote about Him. But this is a little different than the Old Testament way, because most of the men who wrote in the New Testament had actually been with God here on earth! Now, how could that happen?

Well, you see, the New Testament tells us that God loves us so much that God the Father sent God the Son into the world to actually become a human being (though He was still God at the same time), and then it goes on to tell about His life here on earth. And when God came to earth as a human being, He was named Jesus, wasn't He? At Christmas time we celebrate when Jesus (the Son of God) came to earth as a little baby, don't we? Yes, at Christmas time we celebrate when God the Son became a human being on earth, when Jesus was born. Then when Jesus grew up, He did many miracles, proving that He was Who He said He was, that is, that He was God as well as a man. And Jesus taught people about God and how to please God and how to love God and to love each other, and Jesus taught people how they could be able to go to heaven someday. Many, many people saw Jesus and heard Him talk and saw His miracles.

And there were some men who had been with Jesus, the Son of God, for several years when He was here on earth. And these men saw the things Jesus did and they heard what Jesus said and they talked with Him, and then they wrote down what they saw Jesus do, and they wrote down what they heard Jesus say. So they had actually been with God when He was here on earth and could write about Him, couldn't they? And some other men talked with people who had known Jesus very well. And these other men then wrote down what they heard that Jesus had done and said. And what all of these men wrote is in the New Testament part of the Bible. And now we can read the things they wrote in the New Testament and learn about Jesus, the Son of God.

And God helped both the Old Testament writers and the New Testament writers to write these things and other things down. And that's what we call the Bible. The Old Testament and the New Testament. Old copies of parts of both the Old and New Testaments, copies hundreds and even thousands of years old, have been found, and they say the same thing as the Bibles we have now.

So, just as we can learn about George Washington by reading things written about him by men who knew or heard him, in the same way we can learn about God by reading things written about God by men who knew or heard Him.

So those are two ways we can learn more about God. One way is that we can read about Him in the Bible. And another way is that we can look around us at the things God has made and see what God has done.

But there is another question we need to ask, the most important question of all. And that question is, how can people be able to go to heaven someday and be with God? Well, the Bible gives us the answer to that question, too. Now, sins are bad things we do -- and everyone has sinned haven't they?! I've sinned, you've sinned, everyone has sinned -- everyone, that is, except Jesus. Jesus never

sinned. But the Bible tells us that because Jesus loved us so much, He died on the cross for our sins to make a way for us to go to heaven when we die. (That's why He came to earth, wasn't it?!) But He didn't stay dead, did He? No! Three days later Jesus was alive again! That's what we celebrate at Easter time, isn't it? Yes, at Easter time we celebrate that after Jesus died on the cross for our sins and was buried, then 3 days later Jesus was alive again, and He stayed alive. And after Jesus was alive again, hundreds of people saw Him alive again. And some of them wrote about seeing Him and hearing Him talk after he was alive again, and that is in the New Testament part of the Bible, too. And if we trust the Lord Jesus to save us from our sins, He will. And that is how someday we can go to heaven and be with God, by believing in Jesus, trusting Jesus to save us from our sins. And why did Jesus do this? Because He loves us so very much.

Yes, we need to trust the Lord Jesus to save us from our sins, then God will be like a Father to us, and then we can be with Him in heaven someday. But even now if we have trusted Jesus to save us from our sins, then here on earth now, we can pray and read the Bible and do what God says. And that helps us to love God more and to love people more.

So, those are the answers to some questions we asked that would help us to learn more about God. Again, how did we get those answers? One way was by learning about things that we can't see that God made, like the wind and gravity. And also by looking at things we can see that God made like trees and the sun. So, we learned about God Whom we don't see by what He has done. And another way we learned about God was by reading about God in the Bible, reading things that were written by people God talked to or who actually knew Jesus, the Son of God. We also learned that He loves us very much. And we learned how we can someday be with God.

So, gravity, George Washington, and God. We learned about gravity by what it does. We learned about George Washington by reading things written about him. And we learn about God by both what He does and by things written about Him.

But let me tell you something else that is really exciting. We can't see God now, can we? -- But someday we will see God!! Yes, if we have believed in Jesus the Son of God, we will see Him in heaven when we die, but -- also someday the Lord Jesus is going to come back to earth! And then He will set up a kingdom on earth and be King of the whole world! And then we will not only see God, but everyone who has ever believed in Him will be able to be with King Jesus in His kingdom forever!

I have believed in the Lord Jesus, trusted Him to save me from my sins. And Jesus said that if a person believes in Him, then that person could go to heaven someday and be with Him. And God always keeps His promises, doesn't He?! And I know that then in heaven I will see God. And also when Jesus comes back to earth and is King here, I know I will see Him and be with Him then. I hope you will be there, too.

