

UFOs Appear Over England and Mexico

An unidentified flying object made headlines recently when it appeared over southwest England, and a “flying saucer” was spotted last week over Mexico. Is your first inclination to believe that these were probably visits from outer space?

Your answer may depend on whether you went to church last Sunday, but not in the way our culture expects.

It's conventional wisdom that faith makes us less scientific and more gullible. However, research indicates the opposite: the less religious people are, the more likely they are to endorse empirically unsupported ideas about UFOs. In addition, the Pew Research Center has discovered that those who attend religious services less than weekly are more than twice as likely to claim they have encountered a ghost.

Writing for *The New York Times*, psychology professor Clay Routledge cites these studies to argue that those who are less religious still search for transcendent meaning, though in non-religious ways. He is undoubtedly right. There is a “God-shaped emptiness” in us, as Pascal noted. If we will not fill that emptiness with God, we will fill it with something or someone else.

However, there's more to the story.

What if those who are religious are therefore more biblically literate? What if one of the reasons they are less likely to believe in ghosts and UFOs is because they know what God says about these fictions? Could it be that being more biblical makes us more scientific, not less?

If all truth is God's truth, it must be so. The same God who created the Bible also created nature. Both are revelations of

his wisdom and power. Both point to the same Author. The more we know God in Scripture, the better we can see Him in creation.

I believe that the synergy between Scripture and creation helps explain the decline in religious commitment in America today. Skeptics claim that the more we learn about the world, the less we need or trust God's word. But I believe that the more time we spend in nature, the more our souls are drawn to nature's Maker.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the average American spends 93 percent of life indoors. Even five minutes spent outdoors has been shown to improve both mood and self-esteem. A full day in nature is especially beneficial.

In short, our technologically-enabled withdrawal from creation is starving our souls.

David was a shepherd before he became a king. He knew something about our theme, testifying that "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night declares knowledge" (Ps. 19:1-2).

When last did you make time to listen for your Creator's voice? When will you?