

July 30-31, 2016

Thoughts from the pastor,

As I try to help people understand the possibility of God one of the problems I face is that the last generations have been taught that science is the only answer. Whether it is the hard sciences like physics and chemistry or the other sciences like the social sciences, the problem is that they have been taught that if science hasn't figured it out already it will do so very soon. Getting around that limited view of reality is difficult at best. It is not because their arguments are fool-proof but rather it is because they have been taught that anyone who doesn't believe this theory is a fool. So like I mentioned last week Christians, especially priests, are seen as clowns. The way that I offer to bypass this roadblock is to use science to open up a possible way of looking at the Judeo-Christian God.

I suggest thinking in terms of our efforts as humans, trying to create robots. This can only work if the person presenting the idea has really thought through some of the situations that are involved in this endeavor. This is not that hard because we have all had plenty experiences with computers that we can use to extrapolate into the problems of robotics. We are currently at a level of self-driven cars. We have all heard some of the disaster stories that these have had as they start out. But we are just at the start of this research. It has a long way to go but we can already fear some of the problems.

My personal fears involve the fact that when I am around computers, they don't work the way that they are supposed to work. I have been faced with a particular task that I need to do on a computer that I have been told is possible. I call an expert and they say that I should do this, this, and then this. It sounds so simple. I do the three steps and it doesn't work or even messes up the computer. So I have the expert do the three steps and about half the time I get a good laugh because it doesn't work for them either. This is funny because I know that they just presumed I was a computer moron and it would be easy for them. Imagine this problem as I ride in a self-driven car. What are your fears?

What if God is looking at us like computerized robots. He made us with a body that was meant to last in the environment He designed it for. The hardware for the computer was good. The software for the computer was good. Even the place He made for us to live and thrive was good. The problem was that He designed us to be capable of being creative and even loving. He actually wanted us to end up a part of His family. But the first of these creations, not Frankenstein but Adam and Eve, used their creative abilities to turn on Him. The second generation, Cain and Abel, ended up turning on each other. It was like a virus had infected His work and messed up their software, which created situations that messed up their hardware. Now they were faulty and dangerous. What could He do?

He put them in a timeout, out of the garden, to help them see the consequences but things just got worse. The Sodom and Gomorrah story we had for the 1<sup>st</sup> reading last weekend was very timely. God has sent warnings about the virus and these same prophets were presented with software patches that could contain the virus and keep it from spreading. The problem was that the very thing that made us so amazing also made us vulnerable to the virus. Our Wi-Fi connection with God was disrupted by the virus. That same connection made us susceptible to influence from other virus infected entities, which perpetuated the problems and made the repairs that God was trying to achieve very temporary. Our ability to love degenerated to lust. He even tried to clear out all but a few of us with the hopes of the remnant being able to accept the repairs more readily. But after the flood, Noah and his family ended up growing to be just as problematic. To reboot would only put us back to the initial problem that our freewill was creating. What was God to do? Stay tuned.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank