

Michael: *The Future is Calling Us to Greatness* is the main program that I have been delivering throughout 2014, along the route of the Great March for Climate Action. It's the main evening program that I've been delivering. Great March for Climate Action began in Los Angeles on March 1 and ended on November 1 in Washington, DC.

Connie and I spoke at about a hundred churches and colleges along that route, mostly churches. It was about fifty people, full-time, that did the whole three-thousand mile stretch. Other joined in major cities. These people were suffering in some of this. I ended up speaking in several of the rallies along the route. This was the major thing that Connie and I both did throughout 2014.

It was a great honor to march with this sign, Climate Change is the Moral Issue with Ed Fallon who is right there, walking with the walking stick next to me, and the woman on the left of me in this picture, the one in the purple was Mayor Miriam. She walked every mile and she was seventy-one years old. That's what gave structure to this.

The Future is Calling Us to Greatness: Right Relationship to Reality in the 21st Century and Beyond. The other title that I sometimes used or supplemented it with was the *Reality is Lord: A Scientific View of God and Why This Matters on a Rapidly Warming Planet.*

I will use the words god and reality interchangeably. I'll make the case why it's not only legitimate to do that, but why it's important for religious people to do that. I did a TEDx talk back in May of 2014, called *Reality Reconciles Science and Religion*, and all that content is also included in this program.

There are many different paths to living in relationship with reality, of course, there is no one way. The path that I am particularly passionate about, Connie and I both, is the path of factual faith or sacred realism. We are both religious naturalists.

There are many ways to think or speak about god. There is many religious or theological ways as there are traditions. There are a number of philosophical ways, most famously Paul Tillich spoke of god as the ground of all being. There are many psychological ways of thinking and speaking about god.

What I will be offering isn't really any of that. It includes much of that what I am offering, what I am suggesting, what I am claiming is that this

is the one scientific, evidential way that we can speak about god. In other words, stepping back and looking at how god talk has been used throughout human history all over the world, what can we say with confidence about god talk, religious language in that regard?

My great mentor Thomas Berry died a few years ago, at the age of ninety-four. He called himself a geologist. Not a theologian but a geologist, and this quote just helps set the context for this program. “We are talking only to ourselves. We are not talking to the rivers. We are not listening to the wind and the climate. Most of the disasters that are happening now are a consequence of that spiritual autism.”

Another Berry, Wendell Berry really understood the power of personification and he gets this. The two are not related that I know of. Wendell Berry said, “Nature is party to all our deals and decisions and she has more votes, a longer memory and a sterner sense of justice than we do.”

Now, I’ll come back to this theme of personification. It’s just so vital. I consider it the single most important scientific discovery about religion in the last hundred years that our brains inherently personify, we relate, we have relational brains and we have done that, traditionally, through personification, that is giving human characteristics to what’s other than human or more than human.

Hollywood is starting to get it. Just very recently, Conservation International came out with a series of videos with Hollywood big stars, giving voice to various aspects of reality of nature. Here is one example, you will recognize the voice, and I am sure.

“Some call me Nature. Others call me Mother Nature. I’ve been here for over four and a half billion years. Twenty two thousand five hundred times longer than you. I don’t really need people, but people need me. Yes, your future depends on me. When I thrive, you thrive. When I falter, you falter, or worse, but I’ve been here for eons. I have fed species greater than you and I have starved species greater than you.”

“My oceans. My soil. My flowing streams. My forests. They all can take you or leave you. How you choose to live each day, whether you regard or disregard me doesn’t really matter to me, one way or the other. Your actions will determine your fate, not mine. I am Nature, I will go on. I am prepared to evolve. Are you?”

NatureisSpeaking.org is where you can find these other videos, as well. Each of them is about a minute a half to two minutes long. I'll be sharing one more. That of course was Julia Roberts speaking as Nature. I'll be sharing one more here in just a little bit.

Just a little background. My wife Connie Barlow is a science writer. She has written four science books from *Gaia* to *Selfish Genes* and *Evolution Extended*, both MIT Press books. *The Ghosts of Evolution* was [Amazon.com's](http://Amazon.com) top recommended science book when it first came out in 2001, for several months. *Green Space, Green Time: The Way of Science*, you could say the spirituality of science, it's one of the leading books, one of the most respected books in the whole field of religious naturalism.

Michael Dowd is my name. My background is in Christian ministry. I pastored three churches over the course of a decade. Although I did have one foot in the Unitarian Universalist Association during that whole time, I was a member of the Church of the Larger Fellowship.

I've also done sustainability and transformational education and I have written two books. *Earth Spirit*, back in 1999 and my more recent book, *Thank God for Evolution*. The book I am working on now and will complete in 2015 is really the content of this program.

Connie and I have been living on the road since April of 2002. You can probably see the side of our van there. We've got the Jesus and Darwin fish kissing with hearts between them. It definitely gets us some interesting looks in conservative parts of the world. It has also gotten us some interesting press. For example, *The New York Times* magazine did a feature article on my book and I was on *CNN Lou Dobbs*, and here I am on *FOX and Friends* on Sunday morning.

Now, my mother, who only watches *FOX News* was watching. I was pretty pleased, but at the beginning, they were rather skeptical. After five minutes, they were like, "*Thank God for Evolution*, that's a book whose time has come." Now, this is *FOX News*, and so I was pretty pleased.

We've spoken to just over two thousand groups over the last twelve and a half years and they break down into radically different populations. I can do the exact same program in any of these settings and I know from experience, we actually handed out feedback forms for about three and a half years, that about ninety percent of my people have been enjoying my program and many think that it's just fabulous.

That's I think because we focus on the sacred side of science, the inspiring side of what's being revealed evidentially. I'll be talking a little bit more about what Religion 1.0 and Religion 2.0 are in a few minutes here, but Religion 3.0 is not a religion. It's a set of values, priorities and commitments that are uniting tens of millions of religious and secular people around the world.

They really hover around two core commitments, the commitment to living a right relationship to reality, whether we use secular or religious names for reality and the need to co-create a just and healthy future. In fact, I think really the second one is the primary one, co-creating a just and healthy future is our first and primary commitment and living a right relationship to reality is the only way that we can do that and have joy in the process.

People across the god-ism spectrum, from theist to atheist and everything in between, in fact that middle term, Connie and I created as a bridge building term, you can pronounce it createist or createist. I've also heard it described as mytheist that is all god talk is mythic. That's a positive thing, that's not a negative thing.

Naturalist and super-naturalist align with these two principles. Skeptics, humanists and free thinkers, of course, but also moderate to liberal people in virtually all religious traditions. I know that, because I've spoken in all of these groups.

I've also been, throughout 2014, interviewing just the cream of the crop, literally. I've interviewed fifty-five of the world's top thinkers and actors and activists on peak oil, climate change, sustainability and a few leaders that help us hold this inspiring stuff in inspiring ways. This airs in late January, but that's also been by this title, *The Future is Calling Us to Greatness*.

Right relationship to reality is what has always mattered for all species. Any species that doesn't live in right relationship to reality goes extinct, period, and humans are no different. Words create worlds. That is the worldviews that we live and move and have our being within are co-created by the language that we use. This changes over the centuries.

I am just now reminded that all of the photos that you'll be seeing, other than the few galaxy shots, all the photos, Connie has taken those as we've traveled North America over the last twelve and a half years.

Words create worlds and language changes over the centuries. What we call reality, what we call nature, what we call the environment and climate and weather, the ancients personalized. They had an I – thou relationship to, they called god, or if you lived in a polytheistic culture, the gods. We don't merely believe this, we know this. The evidence is compelling. I'll do a whole piece on it here in a few minutes.

Whatever else it means to live in right relationship to reality, it's got to include living in right relationship with the air, the water, the soil and the life of this planet. It's also got to include living in right relationship to future generations. Besides, I love showing off my granddaughter. I dedicate this program to Aila-Renee and to her grandchildren.

Loyal Rue is one of the world's most significant philosophers of religion, and he's written a number of books. This one is called *Religion is Not About God*. What he means is religion is about our relationship to reality and yes, reality has been personified as the various gods and goddesses, but if religion is doing its job, what it's supposed to do is help us live in right relationship to what's fundamentally, undeniably, inescapably real.

I love this quote. He said, "The most profound insight in the history of humanity is that we should seek to live in accord with reality. Indeed, living in harmony with reality may be accepted as a formal definition of wisdom. If we live in odds with reality, foolishly, then we will be doomed, but if we live in right relationship with reality, wisely, then we will be saved."

He goes on to say that, "All cultures have had at least a tacit understanding of this fundamental principle, but what we're less in agreement about is how we should think about reality, what we should do to put ourselves into harmony or alignment with reality."

That makes total sense when you realize these two fundamental questions, what's real or how things are and what's important or which things matter, would have been answered differently at different times in history and different places around the world. It's like the five blind men and five blind women, five blind people experiencing the elephant.

If you've got five blind people that are each experiencing a different aspect of reality, different aspect of the elephant, if you've got five different theologians, you get five totally different theologies. Believe it or not, religious differences are not a whole lot more complex than that.

Reality, for example, hundred thousand years ago, in a band of family in

South Africa is very different than reality fifty thousand years ago in a tribe. Then, you get a bunch of tribes interacting. They face some crisis, some challenge, some chaos, some difficulty. They figure out how to align the self-interest of each tribe with a new level of complexity and a chiefdom or a kingdom emerges.

Then you get a bunch of chiefdoms and kingdoms interacting. This is how the world has become as complex as it is. All the world's religious traditions reflect regional collective intelligence about what's real and what's important. What we now need isn't just regional collective intelligence. We don't need just tribal collective intelligence. We now need our best globally produced answers to what's real and what's important.

That's what science is. You don't understand science if you think it's just another language game. The post-modernists have it wrong on this. Science reflects humanity's global collective intelligence. You've got Christian scientists, Buddhist scientists, Hindu scientists, atheist scientists, scientists of all religious traditions and no religious tradition, and even anti-religious scientists that are all contributing to our best collective understanding of what's real and what's important or how things are, and which things matter.

Now, this begs the question, what's religion? Is religion just supernatural otherworldly ism as some criticize? I suggest to you, no. By the way, this is me that you can see at the bottom there. This is Deer Creek Falls in the Grand Canyon. This actually goes up a hundred and forty feet. Connie and I rafted for a week down in Colorado River through the Grand Canyon with a bunch of geologists and science people from the National Center for Science Education about your years ago. It was fabulous.

Religions are mythic maps of what's real and what's important. When I say mythic, they personify, usually unconsciously but they have I – thou personal relationship with reality. Also, all religions produce personal wholeness and social coherence. There is no religion in the world that doesn't consistently produce personal wholeness and social coherence, and all religions provide consistent access to the feeling states that humans have always needed to thrive.

Human beings don't thrive. We can't thrive, if all we can do is look to the future with fear. We can only thrive when we can look to the future with trust, including trusting that we are not going to be here forever. We are going to die. Different religions have different beliefs that get people to trust, but they all get us there.

Same thing, we can't thrive as human beings if all we can do is look to the past with resentment or guilt, or bitterness. We can only thrive when we can look to our past with gratitude. In fact, now we have secular ways. Therapy is a large part of secular way of helping us to find something to be grateful for where before all we had was guilt or resentment, or bitterness.

Same thing, we can't thrive as human beings. We don't thrive, if we are overwhelmed by the challenges of the day. We can only thrive when we are inspired to be in action, whatever the challenges may be. As we all know, compost happens. Life just throws us piles of junk to deal with sometimes. How do we stay inspired to be in action, whatever the challenges are?

All religions, through different belief systems, get us to trust, gratitude and inspiration. We didn't have knowledge that could get us there. We only had beliefs until recently. We now have knowledge that we can all agree on but not in the way that disses religion, but in a way that helps the religious traditions themselves to evolve.

Now, I did a program a couple of years ago where I actually was asked by a Christian congregation in Canada. This was filled with a bunch of scientists. "How can we use god talk in a way that's accurate scientifically?" You know that Tina Turner song, *What's Love Got to Do with It?* I created my own version, so humor me here.

What's god got to do, got to do with it? What's god but an ancient mythic notion?

What's god got to do, got to do with it? Who needs Poseidon, plate tectonics to make the ocean?

I know, a little corny but that's what we are going to talk about now is what's god got to do with it? Now, if you lived in the Pacific Northwest, say, five hundred years ago and there was this huge boulder in the middle of a field, no other mountains anywhere nearby, what would your people, your tribe, your culture, what story or stories would be told about how that boulder got there?

Anything this weird, this cool or this interesting demands a story. Not having a story simply wasn't an option. My hunch is, "God did it," would have been the way virtually any culture would have talked about it, or the goddess or great spirit, but some divine entity, and then some story would

be told about how god put it there.

In the 1930s and '40s, J. Harlan Bretz, a geologist started noticing these interesting geological features in the Pacific Northwest. Now, there is no geologist in the world that would debate how that boulder got there in Eastern Washington, because seventeen times, the glaciers came south and the glaciers went back. Talk about climate change, just in the last two and a half million years, seventeen times.

When the glaciers came south, they blocked the Clark Fork River, which is right at the top of that image there, creating glacial Lake Missoula and it filled up this enormous lake that was almost as large as Lake Superior in terms of water volume. When it was filled to the brim, it would break the ice dam and within forty-eight hours, all of this water would rush to the Pacific Ocean.

These icebergs would carry boulders and drop them along the way. The water got caught in the Willamette Valley, south of Portland, Oregon and it couldn't get out and so it dropped a lot of sill, which is why the Willamette Valley to this day is one of the most fertile valleys in the world, and this happened dozens of times.

Five hundred years ago, how did that boulder get there? God did it. Sixty, seventy years ago, geologists started saying, "God didn't do it. It happened through natural causes," and what we can now finally appreciate is these are different ways of saying basically the same thing. The words god and evolution are both pointing to the same divine creative process, both answer the question, "How did we get here? How did everything get here?"

One uses the mythical, relational language of religion. The other uses the literal or empirical language of science. Arguing whether it was god or evolution that created everything is like debating whether it's Uncle Sam or the US Government that insists we pay taxes every year or like quarreling over whether it was Gaia or plate tectonics that created the oceans and the mountains. Such silly and largely unnecessary confusion will remain the norm, until we get and celebrate, again, what I consider to be the most important discovery about religion in the last hundred years, which is personification.

James Hillman, the famous psychologist said it this way. He said, "Loving is a way of knowing, and for love to know, it must personify. Personifying is thus the heart's mode of knowing. It's not a lesser, primitive way of

apprehending, but a finer one. To enter myth, we must personify and to personify carries us into myth.”

He is using the myth not as an untrue story, but the way that Joseph Campbell used the term, a narrative that puts us in the core with the nature of reality. Personification, as it turns out, is necessary, it is vital for understanding the world’s myriad myths and religions and for distinguishing factual from fictional claims about any divine being, any entity, any spiritual being and it’s vital.

You can’t understand the world’s myths and religions and you can’t understand the distinction between factual and fictional claims about god if you don’t get personification.

Martin Buber, the famous theologian, back in the mid-20th century wrote this book called, *I and Thou*, and he talked about the radical difference between having an I – It relationship to reality and an I – Thou relationship. He basically said that we continue to treat nature as an ‘it’ that we think we can use to our benefit by simply exploiting it, he said, “We will cause our own extinction.”

Yet, that’s exactly what we’ve been doing. We’ve been treating nature as a complex clock, because what happened was we invented pendulum clocks back about six hundred years ago. We started using clocks as our basic metaphor, basic analogy for reality. The problem is, if you think of nature as a complex clock, it does two things.

One is it completely trivializes the notion of god. God is no longer understood as imminent and omnipresent. That is there is no place god stops and something else starts. God is no longer thought of as a synonym for reality, god is now thought of as a supernatural being outside a mechanistic cosmos, a material, mechanistic universe, and so god becomes completely trivialized that you can either believe in this supernatural being or disbelieve in it.

Nature becomes desacralized. We no longer relate to nature as a thou to be honored and respected. We now think of nature as an it, to be used and exploited by us, and the consequences have been catastrophic.

Thomas Berry, my great mentor, said it this way. He said, “The world we live in is an honorable world. To refuse this deepest instinct of our being, to deny honor where honor is due is to place ourselves on a head-on collision course with the ultimate forces of the universe.”

He said, “This question of honor must be dealt with before any other question. It’s ultimately not a political, economic or even an environmental issue. It’s ultimately a question of honor. Only the sense of the violated honor of earth and the need to restore that honor will awaken in humans the passion and energy needed to co-create a just and healthy future.”

Gregory Bateson, one of the leading intellectuals of the last seventy-five years said it just as powerfully. He said, “If you imagine god as outside nature vis-à-vis nature, and you think of yourself as created in the image of god, you will naturally and inevitably think of yourself as above and outside of the things around you. As you unrightfully claim all mind to yourself, you’ll see the world around you as mindless, and therefore not entitled to moral or ethical consideration. The world will seem to be yours to exploit.”

He said, “If this is your estimate, your relationship to nature and you have an advanced technology, your likelihood of survival will be that of a snowball in hell. You will die either of the consequences of your own hate or simply from overpopulation, and overgrazing.” You can add climate change in there too.

Nature is nothing like a complex clock. We are the result of 13.8 billion years of unbroken evolution. We are nature becoming to know itself. We are the universe becoming aware of itself, literally. There is not a scientist that I know in the world would debate that.

Ludwig Wittgenstein was one of my heroes or one of my intellectual mentors – I never met him – in seminary, and he talked about language games. He was one of the most famous philosophers of the twentieth century, probably the most famous philosophers, and he loved to piss off other philosophers and theologians.

What he said was basically that virtually all theological problems and most philosophical problems are caused because we don’t understand the way language works. For example, I am going to list a whole bunch of words here and try to think about what they have in common. Life, time, wind, breath, reality, nature, climate, universe and environment.

None of these words existed for the Hebrews. None of these concepts existed for the Hebrews. Now, clearly, what we mean by these existed for the Hebrews, but the Hebrew word for time was the same as the distance. Hebrew word for both wind and breath was the spirit of god, *ruach adoni*,

ruach Elohim. In other words, they had a personal I – Thou relationship to what we call the wind or what we call the breath.

You didn't need to believe in the spirit of god. You couldn't not experience the spirit of god. If you were experiencing the wind or if you were experiencing the breath, you were experiencing the spirit. The only time that the spirit leaves you is when you die, you don't breath. This does not have to be understood in an otherworldly or supernatural way.

Now, whatever life was doing, whatever reality was doing, whatever the climate was doing would have been interpreted. We can't not interpret. That's what our brains do, and how the Hebrews interpreted all this was Yahweh, the Lord. You may think you are the lord of your life, reality is lord.

This is the slide that I just want to spend a little bit of time on, because it is the core of what I want to talk about until we get to climate change. The difference between fictional and factual, or you could say the difference between unnatural versus undeniable, understanding of any god, any goddess, any divine entity or whatever.

For example, Poseidon was not the god of the oceans. Poseidon was not the spirit of the oceans. Poseidon was a personification of the incomprehensibly powerful and capricious seas. In other words, Harry Potter is a fictional character. I can read about Harry Potter in the literature. I can have an imaginary conversation with Harry Potter in my mind, close my eyes, but I can't experience Harry Potter in the real world with my senses, as it were.

If you think of Poseidon as the spirit of the oceans or the god of the oceans. That's fictional, that's unnatural. If you think of Poseidon as a personification of the seas, that's undeniably real. If you are in either coast in the United States, it doesn't matter whether you believe in the oceans or not, the oceans are inescapably real.

In fact, here is another example of Hollywood getting with it and Conservation International. Imagine this as Poseidon might be talking to us, speaking to us today.

"I am the ocean. I am water. I am most of this planet. I shape this. Every stream, every cloud and every raindrop, it all comes back to me. One way or another, every living thing here needs me. I am the source. I am what they crawled out of. Humans, they are not different. I don't owe them a

thing. I give, they take, but I can always take back.”

“That’s just the way it’s always been. It’s not their planet anyway, never was, never will be, but humans, they take more than their share. They poison me and they expect me to feed them. Well, it doesn’t work that way. If humans want to exist and [inaudible 00:27:33] and off of me, I suggest they listen close. I am only going to say this once. If nature isn’t kept healthy, humans won’t survive, simple as that.”

“I could give a damn with or without humans. I am the ocean. I covered this entire planet once and I can always cover it again. That’s all I have to say.”

Again, I recommend all of the videos on the Nature is Speaking website. The same thing could be said for any god, any goddess or any divine being or entity throughout human history. Helios was not the god of the sun or the spirit of the sun. Helios was a personification of what we call the sun. You didn’t find atheists living two or three thousand years ago saying, “I don’t believe in Helios. Whatever you mean by this big ball of flame and light that gives us life. That’s what I am talking about.”

Gaia was not the goddess of the earth or the spirit of the earth. Gaia was a personification of what we call earth. Eros was a personification of love or lust, not the spirit of love or lust. One of the reasons why the ancients spoke about the immortality of the gods is that humans are born, humans die, humans come, humans go. Lust is always there. Gaia is always there. Helios is always there. Poseidon is always there.

From our vantage point, these are eternal and again, don’t take my word on it. Please, Google any of these terms, anthropomorphism, deities, personification, gods, goddesses, personify. In fact, you can put god, goddesses, personify and put Aztec, China, India, Greece, Rome, any place after that and you’ll find dozens of webpages and all the various gods and goddesses, and what aspect of our inner reality or our outer reality, or in some cases both that god or goddess personified.

Notice the radical difference between believing in Gaia and honoring Gaia, between worshipping Poseidon and respecting Poseidon. This is what Wittgenstein was getting at, language trips us up. In this book, *Faces in the Clouds* by Steward Guthrie, *A New Theory of Religion*.

It was written in 1994. Oxford University Press. Fabulous book. I highly recommend this book and it’s now one of the foundational texts in an entire

research discipline called Evolutionary Religious Studies. There is a hundred or more scholars working in this field. Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, atheist scholars all trying to understand religion from our best evidential understanding from a lot of different disciplines.

See, a factual view of god transcends belief or disbelief. It doesn't matter whether we believe in reality or not. Reality is something that every plant, every animal and every human being cannot not experience, inwardly and outwardly. That's why I love this quote from Philip K. Dick.

He says, "Reality is that which when you stop believing in it doesn't go away," and I think there is at least three things, maybe more, but there is at least three things that we can say confidently are real to that degree. Time is real, whether we believe it or not. 13.8 billion years of the past brought this moment into being. Clearly, the present moment is real, and if we act as if the future is not real, we will condemn future generations. Time is real.

Nature is real. Our inner nature, our outer nature, our social nature and our interpreted nature. Nature is real, whether we believe it or not, but so is mystery. I am not just talking about what people refer to when they speak of the transcendence. Yes, it includes that, but I am speaking about everything that we don't know and everything that we don't even know that we don't know.

Whatever else the word god means, as an evolutionary theologian what I am meaning by it is nothing less than a personification, a personal name for time, nature and mystery. Reality personified.

In fact, Thomas Aquinas, one of the Christian church's greatest theologians, said 750 years ago, he said, "A mistake about creation will necessarily result in a mistake about god." Now, if that's true, what it means among other things is the more we learn about the nature of the universe, the nature of creation, if we are not updating what we mean when we even use the word god, we may have definitions and understandings of god that are so outdated that they may no longer be life-giving. In fact, they may be deadly.

I've been speaking a lot and others too about ecology is the new theology. Obviously, when we think about it, what I mean is that any notion of theology that doesn't include ecology is trivial and impotent. It's not for the times.

Think about this, every characteristic that we attribute to the divine derives

from our experience of nature. If we imagine god as beautiful, gracious, loving, awesome, powerful, majestic or faithful, it is because we have known or experienced beauty, grace, love, awe, power, majesty or trustworthiness in the world.

If we lived on the moon and that's all we and our ancestors had ever known, all of our concepts and experience of the divine would reflect the bareness of the lunar landscape. Now see, this is obvious when you think about it. We're just not used to thinking in these terms.

A few months ago, I preached at one of the most famous buildings in the world, actually in the top one hundred famous buildings, Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple in Chicago, which is Unitarian Universal's church now. I love this quote. He says, "I believe in god. Only, I spell it N-A-T-U-R-E."

Again, remember, the word nature didn't exist two or three thousand years ago. This is not merely pantheism. Pantheism emerged in 1709. It was coined that term by John Toland as a confront, as a way of countering this mechanistic worldview, thinking of nature as a complex clock.

Thomas Berry has this amazing quote. He says, "All human activities, programs, policies and institutions must henceforth be judged primarily by the extent to which they inhibit, ignore or foster a mutually enhancing human-earth relationship." If you want in one nutshell our vision of the future, the only way into a healthy future, it would be this sentence, in my opinion.

See, theology that includes ecology is pro-future. Theology that doesn't include ecology is anti-future. I think this is one of the fundamental distinctions going into the future, whether your institution, whether your religion, whether your theology or doctrine of this, that or the other thing, is it pro-future or anti-future? Is our economics pro-future or anti-future? Is our way of doing governance pro-future or anti-future?

Now, I am going to use both secular and religious names and you are going to see both are legitimate. You can't understand how reality or god created complex life if you don't understand extinctions. You can't understand how reality or god created the Great Lakes or healthy soil in the northern part of the world if you don't understand glaciers. You can't understand how reality or god created the periodic table of elements or planets or life, or even the atoms of our bodies if you don't understand red giants and supernova explosions.

Watch this photo carefully. You surely can't understand how god or reality created continents and oceans and mountains, if you don't understand plate tectonics. See, we've only known about plate tectonics, we don't believe that the Atlantic Ocean is growing at the same rate that our fingernails grow. We know it. We've got the satellites to measure exactly how fast the Atlantic Ocean is growing and how fast the Pacific Ocean is shrinking.

We've only known about extinction for two hundred and ten years, for glaciers, hundred and seventy years, supernovas for maybe seventy-five years, and the plate tectonics for sixty-five years. This is revelation but it's evidential revelation. Evidence is how god or reality is speaking to us today. Evidence should be considered modern day scripture. It's our main source of divine guidance today. Scientific evidence, historic evidence and cross-cultural evidence.

Any time, any tradition, any culture, any scripture anywhere in the world says, "God said this, god did that," what follows is always an interpretive personification. We know of no counter-examples in the history of humanity and it's only our inability to read mythical literature that's made us blind and deaf to what god or reality has been revealing now centuries through evidence.

You open up the Book of Amos or any Old Testament prophet and it says, "Thus saith the Lord," and you've got two paragraphs. It sounds like, if you just take it literally, that somebody was there with a tape recorder, catching some voice booming from the sky, but it wasn't like that at all.

If you could go back in time like a time machine and record the moment of divine revelation for the nightly news, you'd see some old guy sitting at a table, penning himself or dictating to a scribe what he saw was real, what he sensed was emerging, and then speaking a word of warning to the people that was basically, "Folks, we need to get right with god or else. We need to get right with reality or we will perish." That's the fundamental stance of a prophet.

We are not going to see, we are not even going to be aware of who are the prophets alive today if we think these prophets were people channeling some otherworldly entity or predicting the future.

God is a mythic or sacred or I – Thou name for reality. That is time, nature, mystery, as it truly is, a meaningful interpretation. God is a supremely natural personification of reality, not a supernatural being whom really

created reality. Said in another way, god is reality with a personality, not a person outside reality. In fact, all gods and goddesses are personifications, not persons.

I often say in my evening programs at this point, please no whining, because often, devout religious people and anti-religious people start whining in the opposite direction. It's like sometimes theists and devout religious people will say, "Wait a second. Are you saying that my god is only a personification?"

No, not entirely, because whatever reality is in its essence, includes mystery. It will always transcend anything we can know, think or imagine, but yes, I am saying that anything we can say or think about god is a personification, but atheists start whining often in the opposite direction. They'll say, "Wait a second. If this is true, then my argument that god doesn't exist just evaporates."

Unfortunately, that is true, but as long as there are theists and religious people who by the word god, they mean a supernatural terrorist who says basically, "Believe as I tell you to believe, or be tortured forever," you're probably going to have the need for some atheist to say, "That's a bunch of bunk."

Again, don't take my word on it. Google any of these terms anthropomorphism, deities, personification, gods, goddesses personified. Read the book *Faces in the Clouds* by Stewart Guthrie or just Google the term, evolutionary religious studies. There have been a couple of times *New York Times* bestselling books that have come out of this.

In fact, Jonathan Heidt has this *New York Times* bestselling book, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Differ on Politics and Religion*, comes out of this discipline.

I believe that one of the great collective insanities today is the current theism versus atheism debate. You've got tens of thousands, maybe millions of people that are wasting their time, arguing whether or not god is real or whether or not god exists when the one real god, named the reality, nature, time, personified or not, we've been out of right relationship to.

We are betraying the future. We are betraying nature. We are betraying mystery and yet, you've got thousands of people, maybe millions of people that are arguing whether or not god exists. Here is the thing, because we've been out of right relationship to reality, we are about to experience

consequences of Biblical proportion.

Now, Evangelicals will often ask, “Do you have a personal relationship to god?” I think it’s a great question, but if we don’t have a personal and honorable relationship to time and honorable relationship to nature, and an honorable relationship to mystery, we don’t have a personal relationship to god, I don’t care what our beliefs are.

If you don’t have an honorable relationship with time, nature and mystery, don’t tell me about your beliefs. You don’t have a personal relationship with god. Let me speak about it in the opposite. A dishonorable relationship to time is if you think time only goes back a few thousand years or you think, “Who cares about the future? Jesus is coming back.” That’s a dishonoring of time.

A dishonorable relationship to nature is when you think we could continue to use the air, the water and the soil as a garbage can and a dishonorable relationship to mystery is if you think your tradition has all the answers for everything.

Coming back to these two fundamental questions, what’s real? That is how things are and what’s important, which things matter. Religion 1.0 is the authority of elders. It’s the collective intelligence at the tribal level. It’s before we had writing. Our stories of what’s real and what’s important would have naturally morphed, evolved, shifted and changed through time.

Religion 2.0 is when we start writing these down, which we’ve only had for five thousand years, writing. In fact, most of the scriptures in the world are a lot less than that, but it’s the authority of collective intelligence, the groups of people, in this case usually men, who decided which books were in and which books were out.

For example, in the Christian tradition, you had these bishops in the third and fourth centuries that were trying to decide, of all these gospels and the letters and epistles, which ones were authentic, which ones felt true. This was collective intelligence.

The problem is, whereas Religion 1.0, these stories about what’s real and what’s important could have shifted and morphed over time, until they’d get declared the unchanging word of god, then they can’t evolve. The only thing that can evolve is our interpretation of the stories.

Religion 3.0 is the authority of global collective intelligence. You’ve got

the collective intelligence of elders, the collective intelligence of the groups of people that decided what was scripture, what wasn't and in this case, it's the collective intelligence, Religion 3.0 of global collective intelligence, the authority of evidence.

Now, this doesn't mean that Religion 3.0, the evidential reaffirmations is what I often call it, that we should ignore the wisdom of elders or that we should ignore the wisdom of scripture, not at all, but we should never allow the wisdom of a small group of elders or even a large group of elders, or the wisdom of scripture to supersede, to be held higher or more important than the authority of global collective intelligence for god is revealing through evidence. There is a cost. There is a suffering when we do.

Now, if you are an atheist or a humanist, you are not going to be suffering with these things, but if you are a religious person like I am, these are going to be a little bit painful. Youth are abandoning their parents' faith in record numbers. I read a survey recently that 1,200 people a day in America leave the church and don't come back. Most of them are young people and when you ask them why, the conflict with religion is one of the top reasons.

The new atheists are mocking religion and many of them are doing so by promoting bible study. I'll come back to that here in a minute. The highest rates of teen pregnancy, alcoholism, spouse abuse and porn addiction are in the most bible believing parts of the United States and evangelicals are behind left behind. They are in denial of factual revelation, regarding big history.

There was a poll just a few months ago that talked about seventy-seven percent of evangelicals deny a 13.8 billion-year universe. Seventy-six percent deny evolution and fifty-eight percent of evangelicals deny the reality of climate change. This is a huge voting bloc. I believe that climate is the single greatest moral issue in human history and there is many people that are coming.

In fact, recently the Vatican said the same thing. Connie was just telling me about that this morning. Connie and I had our climate change come to Jesus moment about two years ago. In December of 2012, we watched David Roberts' TEDx talk called Climate Change is Simple. I used to show this in my programs but I stopped doing that when I included the Conservation International videos, but I strongly encourage people to go and watch the remix. Remix is where there was some music added to it. Just that video, it's very powerful.

Basically, climate change went from the back burner to the front burner for us, and it's going to remain that way.

We have an email newsletter that we put out about four-five times a year, called *Evolutionary Times*. This is our main website, TheGreatStory.org and that TEDx talk by David Roberts, plus a lot of others, science based videos, some of the best science educational videos on climate change, you can find right there on our website, on climate science.

Now the AAAS, the American Association for the Advancement of Science the largest and most prestigious science body in the world, just came out just a few months ago with an uncharacteristically prophetic What We Know campaign. I say prophetic, it was. Based on scientific papers, for example, published between 2001 and 2012, ninety-seven percent of climate scientists agree that climate change is real. Humans are the main cause and we must take immediate action to avoid condemning our children and grandchildren to a literal hell in high water.

That was up until 2012. If you look at from November 2012 to December 2013, we are now talking about ninety-nine point nine percent of the climate scientists that are publishing are agreeing on that. Now, if you poll Americans and you ask Americans, "Do you think that the scientific community is divided on this issue?" forty percent of Americans say that yes, they think the science community is divided. How is that possible?

My mother's favorite news outlet is one of the reasons, but this book here, *Merchants of Doubt* by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway, the subtitle is *How a Handful of Scientists Obscure the Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming*. This book uncovers the face of evil today. If the word evil can mean anything in the modern context, it's got to mean those who are pursuing their own benefit, their own wealth and destroying the future, harming the future calling in that process.

Here is the thing, we now know that tobacco industry had proof, they knew, we had internal documents that they knew in 1962 that their product caused cancer, emphysema and other problems, as well, and yet they successfully confused the issue over the course of fifty years to avoid the kind of regulations that would be not in their financial self-interest.

Now, those same scientists and those same PR companies are working and guess who they are working for? Coal, oil and gas. As I said, I think this is the face of evil today.

I consider Bill McKibben a modern day prophet. He says, “It’s simple math. We can burn less than 565 giga-tons of carbon dioxide and stay below two degrees Celsius of warming. Anything more than is catastrophe for life on earth.” The only problem, fossil fuel corporations now have two thousand seven hundred and ninety-five giga-tons in their reserves, five times the safe amount and they are planning to burn it all, unless we rise up to stop them.

Prophets aren’t people channeling another world or entity, or predicting the future. Prophets are people speaking on behalf of reality and doing so with unflinching authority. I consider James Hanson a modern day prophet. He’s one of the most respected scientists on climate has been now repeatedly arrested. When I say repeatedly, I mean repeatedly. Look the bottom picture, he’s got a smile on his face. He knows these guys now.

When you ask him, why this level of activism, he himself says why. It’s his grandchildren. One of the best books on climate change, called *Storms of Grandchildren: The Truth about the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity*. Here he is with Amy Goodman for about forty seconds, on *Democracy Now*.

“These protests are what we call civil resistance, in the same way that Gandhi did. We are trying to draw attention to the injustice, because this is really a moral issue, analogous to that faced by Lincoln with slavery or by Churchill with Nazi-ism, because what we have here is the tremendous case of intergenerational injustice, because we are causing the problem, but our children and grandchildren are going to suffer the consequences.”

“Our parents didn’t know that they were causing a problem for future generations, but we do. The science has become very clear and we are going to have to move to a clean energy future, and we could do that. There would be many other advantages of doing that. Why don’t we do it? Because of the special interests and because of the role of money in Washington.”

See, that’s one of the reasons why a campaign finance reform is so vital. Now, when I speak of the evidential reaffirmation, I am just talking about something that’s actually impacting every religion in the world. It’s going to make the Protestant reaffirmation look puny in comparison, because it’s all about evidence as modern day scripture and it’s impacting every religion in the world.

In fact, here is a core insight from this understanding that reality is lord.

Reality is god. Facts are god's native tongue and if we don't come into right relationship with god, reality, nature soon, we are condemning our children and grandchildren to hell. Not an otherworldly mythic hell, a literal hell.

Now, people always want to know, "What can I do? What can we do?" There is a number of things. We can all change our light bulbs, drive less and fly less, and start growing some of our food. There is many things that we can do individually, but there is one major systemic thing. I encouraged Al Gore's Climate Reality Leadership Corps, 350.org, highly recommend and CarbonTax.org and EnergyEnterprise.com and Citizens' Climate Lobby are all focused on the same one thing, which is we have to put a fair price on carbon pollution. We can no longer allow the free or subsidized polluting of the commons, it's insane to do that.

Everybody can get involved. Whatever individual thing, that's fine, but get involved in Citizens' Climate Lobby, get involved in some of these organizations, Sierra Club and other things, as well, but definitely check out CarbonTax.org and I highly recommend, especially to people who are on the Conservative end, politically or religiously, EnergyandEnterprise.com.

In fact, one of my heroes, literally, is a Republican in South Carolina, Bob Inglis. He is with EnergyandEnterprise.com. Here is a quote that just nails it. He says, "I favor a conservative approach that marshals the power of the market and doesn't increase the size of government. Here it is in a nutshell. Put all the costs in all the fuels and eliminate all the subsidies, and then watch the free enterprise system solve the energy and climate problem."

Bam! He nails it, and that's exactly all the leaders in the climate change movement say we have to do it. It's the one system, I think, because what this does is it marshals the entire power of the market to help all of us move in the right direction. It begins to create a system so that the cheaper, easier, more convenient to do is the right thing to do.

Right now, the cheaper, easier, more convenient thing to do is usually the wrong thing to do. That's why James Hanson calls this fee a Revenue Neutral Fee and Dividend. It's not just taxes that go into the government. It gets refunded to citizens so that people on the lower end of the socio-economic brackets aren't unfairly disadvantaged.

Now watch, here it is. This is not projection, this is the last sixty-two years, this is a fact. Notice that the Arctic is warming twice as fast as the average.

1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2012. That was the last sixty-two years. It's now picking up steam.

Coming back to these painful questions, again, if you are humanist or atheist, these won't be painful to you, but they are painful to many of us religious people. Why is the most prosperous in Christian nation, filled with genuinely good people betraying the future? Why is traditional religion shrinking in the West and secularism growing so rapidly?

These are the liberal churches. This is the Catholic seminaries, but this is the Southern Baptists. It's not just the liberals. Why are some of the new atheists excitedly promoting bible study? P. Z. Myers, he is the most widely read science blogger in the world, fifty thousand people every day read this guy's science blogs. This is a direct quote. He says, "There is no surer way to make an atheist than to get them to actually read the bible."

How can he say that? Because they focus on the gruesome passages. For example, if you take a straightforward crass reading of the morality of the Old Testament, you could sum it up as obey the Lord or die. In the New Testament, it's believe in Jesus or fry. Yet, our own government defines terrorism this way. The United States Department of Defense defines terrorism as a calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear, intending to coerce or intimidate others in the pursuit of goals that are generally religious, political or ideological.

Now the good news, if you are a religious person, is that god is not a cosmic terrorist. Mike Earl, *Bible Stories Your Parents Never Taught You*, tens of thousands of people are going from being devoutly religious to atheists, they are just bypassing the liberal Christianity, they are becoming atheists because of this guy's *Bible Stories Your Parents Never Taught You*. Volume One is the Old Testament. Volume Two is the New Testament.

It's all free. It's audio-recorded. You can download it to your iPod, you can watch it on You Tube, *Bible Stories Your Parents Never Taught You*. I've never known anybody to be able to watch or listen to the Old Testament and New Testament, volume one and two, and remain a biblical literalist. It just rocks people out of literalism. These are atheists, excitedly promoting bible study.

Why are rates of teen pregnancy, alcoholism, domestic violence and porn addiction highest in the parts of America where the vast majority claim that they are saved from their sin? My first TEDx talk that I did two years ago, back in 2012, called *Why We Struggle and Suffer Now* was on

evolutionary psychology and brain science. Anybody who believes that the reason that we're tempted by various things is because our great-great-great-grandmother ate an apple is going to be clueless about how to live in integrity, when I speak in Christian context, living in Christ, in integrity. It's the only way to have freedom.

I had three evangelicals come up to me. It was Grand Rapids, Michigan, which is where this was done. It's a very conservative part of the world and within a two and a half hour period, after my program, I had three evangelicals come up to me independently and all three of them said basically the same thing, which was, "I was a young earth creationist until I heard your program. Now, I've just got to accept evolution. I've just got to do it in a god-honoring way."

In fact, one young man, he was probably in his mid-20s. He said, "I always thought that evolution was about Darwin, DNA and dinosaurs. I didn't know it was about how to live a more Christ-like like and have healthier relationships." See, this is the practical side of an evolutionary worldview.

Then finally, why have biblical literalists been on the wrong side of history regarding most factual and moral issues over the past five hundred years? I think all five of these questions can be answered by one painful cartoon. "Onward steed, in search of truth!" Bible tucked under the elbow, going the wrong way.

That's why I encourage every minister, every priest and every rabbi to subscribe to Science News. It comes out once a week. It's the best short encapsulated, really well written summaries of what I call god's evidential revelation. That's what's being revealed about reality through evidence. I encourage everybody, every minister and priest to preach from evidential revelation, at least once a season, if not once a month or more often. I think young people will come back into the churches.

In fact, the denomination that I pastored three churches in, the United Church of Christ, many liberal churches value the Jesus Seminar, this 19th and 20th century liberal scholarship, they did the fine work, the important and necessary work of the deconstruction of biblical idolatry, but what we now need is the constructive work. The United Church of Christ has had the slogan now for the last twelve or thirteen years, called "Called is still speaking," and all this emphasis on the comma. Don't put a period where god puts a comma and all this stuff.

Do you know what's happened to the United Church of Christ over the last

twelve, fifteen years? It's continued to shrink, and I think it's going to continue until we finish the sentence with an exclamation point. God is still speaking, and facts are god's native tongue. If we preach with that kind of thing, young people will find the church relevant again.

A factual view of god in revelation calls forth boldly pro-science, pro-future prophetic speech. Now, if you could say they are being redundant there, all prophetic speech is pro-future. Here, I want to introduce you to a modern day prophet, a poet, a friend of mine, Drew Dillinger and a poem of his, because we need to engage the artists, the storytellers, the musicians, the poets and the playwrights. This is what grabs our hearts are those art forms. Here is a prophetic poem:

"This poem is called *Hieroglyphic Stairway*."

"It's 3:23 in the morning and I am awake, because my great great-grandchildren won't let me sleep.
My great great-grandchildren ask me in dreams 'What did you do while the planet was plundered? What did you do when the earth was unraveling? Surely, you did something when the seasons started failing,
As the mammals, reptiles, birds were all dying,
Did you fill the streets with protest when democracy was stolen?
What did you do once you knew?'
I am riding home on the coma train.
I've got the voice of the Milky Way in my dreams.
I have teams of scientists feeding me data daily and pleading I immediately turn it into poetry,
I want just this consciousness reached by people in range of secret frequencies contained in my speech.
I am the desirous earth, equidistant to the underworld and the flesh of the stars.
I am everything already lost.
The moment the universe turns transparent and all the light shoots through the cosmos,
I use words to instigate silence.
I am a hieroglyphic stairway in a buried Mayan city,
Suddenly exposed by a hurricane.
A satellite circling earth, finding dinosaur bones in the Gobi desert.
I am telescopes that see back in time.
It's 3:23 in the morning, and I can't sleep, because my great great-grandchildren ask me in dreams, 'What did you do while the earth was unraveling?'
I want just this consciousness reached by people in range of secret

frequencies contained in my speech.”

It's not just my great, great, great-grandchildren. All I have to do is look into my granddaughter's eyes. She is the future calling me to greatness.

We are in the midst of what I think will be known eventually as the great reckoning. That is where humanity has been out of right relationship to reality and we are now about to experience consequences of biblical proportion. Hopefully, it will also be the great homecoming.

The prodigal species, we've squandered our inheritance. We're waking up to our predicament in the pigpen, as it were, and coming home to god, to reality.

What I am about to say is going to make what I've said up until now fairly tame in comparison, so brace yourself. Obsolete and impotent notions of god and god's word are killing us, shrinking the church, destroying the world and condemning our children and grandchildren to hell on earth.

Just when religion's moral guidance and righteous reverence for life has been most needed, it's been most absent. Why? Because the church has been blind and deaf to what god has been revealing for centuries now, largely because of what I call the triple idolatries. Idolatry of the written word, idolatry of the otherworldly and idolatry of beliefs.

Yes, I know, this is very politically incorrect to speak this way, and yet, I have to. I want to make sure that I am not misunderstood. By idolatry, I don't mean anything so goofy and trivial as bowing down to statues or rocks. By idolatry, I mean making your ultimate commitment, your primary concern to something that doesn't deserve to be or that betrays and defiles the future.

Idolatry, the written word is when you think god's best guidance, there is our best map of reality is frozen in time in some ancient text. Idolatry of the otherworldly is where you think god resides is only outside time and nature, and idolatry beliefs is when you think any one belief system is the only one right way to right relationship to reality.

See, good people are dangerous and great people can engage in great evil when their map of reality is outdated or when they privilege ancient mythic texts over current evidential revelation. See, this matters societally also, not just these five questions I had before. It's not a surprise that America is not leading the world with regards to our response to climate, because forty-

one percent of Americans believe these are the end times anyway, so why bother?

There is no sense of commitment to what the world will be like a hundred years or a thousand years from now, if you think that Jesus is coming back in the next twenty, thirty years.

This notion that the past is rooting for us, I mean, of all the tens of thousands of things that will give your life meaning throughout the course of your life – and now, obviously I am speaking mythically, I am personifying the past, but of everything that will give your life meaning over the course of your life, the final meaning of your life is your legacy.

The past is rooting for us is maybe one of the most important and useful belief systems, again, not belief like it's the truth, but it's useful truth. Past is rooting for us and the future is calling us to greatness. These fundamental moral categories, good, bad, great, evil, these fundamental moral categories have always in all cultures been defined by how we impact others and how that ripples out to the future.

If I do something helpful to you or to others, or the future, I've done a good thing. If I harm others or harm the future, I've done a bad thing. If I sacrifice in order to be a blessing to others or the future, I've done a great thing or a heroic thing, but if I self-centeredly serve my own needs, screw others, to hell with the future, I've done an evil thing.

This is not moral rocket science. We don't need Ten Commandments to tell us this. I am going to put up a word here that I am willing to bet most people will never have heard, [inaudible 01:03:20]. I consider it one of the most important words in the English language. Thomas Jefferson used it all the time and it's an indictment of our culture that we don't understand what it means.

[Inaudible 01:03:27] is the ability to use to benefit from, to enjoy land, anything natural, and to profit from it, but not in a way that it diminishes it for future generations or destroys it in any way. We've been in radical violation of [inaudible 01:03:44]. See, the future owns the land, we don't. You could say god owns the land, reality does, and the future does.

I am going to be as bold as I can be here, and I am not channeling an otherworldly entity, and I am not predicting the future. I am suggesting that if we give reality a voice, what is reality saying to us today? You tell me in your own heart whether you think god, reality is saying these things.

“Facts are my native tongue. Honor evidence as scripture. Repent of your idolatries or face hell in high water.”

I preached a sermon in a large Unitarian church just outside of Denver and the title of the sermon was God Rebukes the Religious Right: Repent or Face Hell in High Water. It was a climate change sermon and they gave me a standing ovation, which didn't surprise me in a Unitarian church, but I preached that same sermon, God Rebukes the Religious Right: Repent or Face Hell in High Water at a Baptist church in Houston, Texas and they gave me a standing ovation. That, I burst into tears. I was not expecting that at all.

“Nature is my secular name. Obey my laws or perish. Abandon apocalyptic thinking, it is an abomination.”

A book that was written not long ago, a couple of years ago, by John Michael Greer. He is literally my favorite author in the world. I've read nine of his books. Connie and I just love this guy's writings. *Apocalypse Not* is one of them. Everything you know about 2012, Nostradamus and the rapture is wrong. It's the 3,200-year history of end times thinking and the tragedy and the suffering that has resulted from people who believed that the end of the world was right around the corner, both secular and religious people.

Interestingly enough, completely independent of this, Brian Paisley, in Canadian television, did virtually the same thing. The same 3,200-year study of end times thinking and the tragedies, and Paisley never heard about John Michael Greer, and nor has John Michael Greer heard about Paisley. I've since introduced them to each other, but absolutely fascinating.

Purge plutocracy. That is where money rules government. Purge plutocracy and end corporate personhood. Stop polluting the commons. Tax carbon now, and then stop measuring success in insane evil ways. Again, the word evil, I am meaning when you know that you are benefiting, but harming the future in the process.

The way we've been measuring success is collective insanity. In fact, here is a prophet from forty years ago.

“Too much and for too long, we seem to have prevented personal excellence and community values in the mere accumulation of material

things. Our gross national product now is over eight hundred billion dollars a year, but that's gross national product. If we judge the United States of America by that, that gross national product counts the air pollution and cigarette advertising and ambulances, [inaudible 01:06:51] our highways, a carnage."

"It counts special locks for our doors and the jails for the people who break them. It counts for the destruction of the redwood and the loss of our natural wonder in chaotic thrall. It counts napalm and it counts nuclear warheads and armored cars for the police to fight the riots in our cities. It counts rifles and [inaudible 01:07:20] and the television programs which grow by violence in order to sell toys to our children."

"If the gross national product is not allotted to the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play, it does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debates or the integrity of our public officials, it measures neither our rifts, nor our courage, neither our wisdom, nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country. It measures everything in short, except that which makes life worthwhile and it can tell us everything about America, except why we are proud that we are Americans."

I can say the good news, according to science, the gospel according to science around climate change, I can do a whole program and I have done a whole program on this topic, but around climate change, I can say the good news in five words: we can see it coming. Never before in the history of the entire world, not just our species, never before in global history has any species been able to see a potential extinction level event coming in time to prepare for what is already baked in the system and to ward off the worst of it. That's good news.

Carl Sagan said this very powerfully. He said, "How is it that hardly any major religion has looked at science and concluded, this is better than we thought? The universe is much bigger than our prophet said, grander, subtler, and more elegant. God must be even greater than we dreamed. A religion old or new that stressed the magnificence of the universe is revealed by modern science might be able to draw forth reserves of reverence and awe hardly tapped by the conventional faiths."

"Sooner or later," he suggested, "Such a religion will emerge." Now, I believe he was correct in the intuition but dead wrong in the detail, because it's not a religion that's emerging, it's a set of values, priorities and commitments, a worldwide meta-religious movement has been emerging

for decades, largely unnoticed at the nexus, at the intersection of science, inspiration and sustainability. In fact, beliefs are secondary.

What unites us is a pool of common values, priorities and commitments, regarding living in right relationship to reality, whether we use religious or secular names for reality, and working together in the service of a just and thriving future for all.

This isn't just me saying this. Paul Hawken, in *New York Times* bestselling book, *Blessed Unrest*, how the largest social movement in history is restoring grace, justice and beauty to the world. I actually like the subtitle of the hardcover better, *How the Largest Movement in the World Came Into Being and Why No One Saw it Coming*.

That's what this conversation series that I have been doing also throughout 2014. I've been interviewing literally the cream of the crop, some of the top experts in the world, on climate change, peak oil and resource depletion, sustainability and how to hold all this scary stuff in ways that inspire us to work together across ethnic, religious and political divides so that we can ensure a just and healthy future.

I also did a series back four-five years ago on the advent of evolution of Christianity, where I interviewed literally the cream of the crop in terms of Christians, the most respected scientists, theologians, ministers, the top Catholics, the top Protestants, the top Evangelicals, and what we all agreed on – this is the interesting thing – we have lots of differences, some major differences.

Some of us are conservative, some are liberal, some are naturalists and some are super-naturalists, but what we all agreed on was these fundamental things. We all had deep time eyes, that is an evolutionary understanding of reality. We all had a global heart and a global commitment. That is our commitment wasn't just to our own soul salvation or our own religious group, or our own nation state, but our commitment was really to the health and well-being of the entire life of which we are a part.

We all valued evidence as in some very real sense divine revelation. Some felt comfortable, like I do, calling it modern day scripture, others didn't feel comfortable with that language, but we all agreed on these fundamental things.

The book I am working on now, I don't know what the final title will be,

but I am playing with Religion 3.0 or Reality is Lord. Basically, religion as if the future mattered, sacred science, evolving faith and saving humanity. I am suggesting that these six principles unite tens of millions of us around the world.

Reality is our god. Evidence is our scripture. Big history is our creation story. Ecology is our theology. Integrity is our spiritual path and ensuring a just and healthy future is our mission.

Now, you don't have to use this combination. You could say, if you are a secular person, reality is my ultimate commitment. Evidence is the way reality reveals itself, and so on. If you are a conservative religious person, you might not frame it this way, you might say it this way, that my god includes reality, my scripture includes evidence. My theology includes ecology, and so on.

No matter what our attempts to inform, it is our ability to inspire that will turn the tides. I am almost 6'1". I am 6' and about half inch. These guys are tall. The guy on the left is John Mather, he is a NASA Senior Astrophysicist. He is the 2006 Nobel Prize winner in physics. The guy on the right is Craig Mellow, he is the 2006 Nobel Prize winner in medicine and physiology.

The reason that they invited me to the Library of Congress is they both had read my book and they were doing a program together there, called The Origins and Evolution of Life in the Universe. Craig sent me an email and said, "Michael, you've got to come to the Library of Congress to get your picture taken with us." He said, "It would be great for your book." You bet I got there.

Here is what they said about my book. John Mather said, "The universe took 13.7 billion years to produce this amazing book. I highly recommend it." Trust me, as an author, it just doesn't get any better than that. Craig Mellow said, "The science versus religion debate is over. A must-read for all, including scientists."

Now, this never did get me on *Oprah*, but I did have a meeting with the vice-president and the executive producer of the Oprah Network, about the possibility of creating a show called *Soulful Science*. We'll see, but we did create an eighty-second book trailer. I want to share that with you.

[Trailer presentation]

As I mentioned before, TheGreatStory.org is our main website. Connie Barlow, my wife is the webmaster. Most of the stuff that we have is linked from there or can be found there. In fact, the climate science videos, I want to again point that out, but also what is the Great Story? It's a fabulous connection to some of the best videos and audio, text stuff, in terms of what's called Big History, the academic concept of discipline and Big History or the epic of evolution, the universe story is the way Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry talked about it.

What's new? All the stuff that we've added since 2004, I think, Connie has annotated, so you can get a good overview of the entire website from the What's New page. The evolution of psychology and brain science stuff, all the practical spirituality kind of stuff can be found there. Kids' curricular. If you work with kids, have kids or grandkids, Connie has either created or assembled from others some of the best stuff for kids there.

Death. Connie does, in fact, we've both done a whole bunch of programs on death and mortality from a sacred science perspective. Lots of great stuff there. We have You Tube channels, we have three different podcasts. Everything that we've done is linked pretty much from our Bio pages, so you can find a lot of stuff on either one of our Bio and Resource pages.

One of the big projects I've worked on recently is God in Big History, and Connie's major project is called Climate Trees and Legacy.

We are always looking for writing retreats. If you have a second home or a vacation home and you wouldn't mind us housesitting, please let me know. My email address is michael@thankgodforevolution.com. We also, honestly, appreciate donations. That's what allows us to do free programs when we work with high school and college students, and that sort of thing. You can donate right there.

Again, that's our website, TheGreatStory.org. Thank you.