so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky

- Philippians 2:15

What hath Stuttgart to do w/ Jerusalem?
Exploring a Model of God as Process Engineer
Dominic Halsmer, ASA Mtg, Belmont University, 7/20/13
The Problem of Evil/Pain
For God’s wrath is being revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who, in wickedness, try to suppress the truth, because that which can be known about God is evident in them; for God has made it evident to them.

For since the creation of the world, His invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

- Rom 1:18-20 (author’s translation)
“Meditation on [God’s] works enables us, at least to some extent, to admire and reflect on God’s wisdom…

We are thus able to infer God’s wisdom from reflection upon God’s works…

This consideration of God’s works leads to an admiration of God’s sublime power.”
“[God is pleased] to manifest his perfections in the whole structure of the universe, and daily place himself in our view, that we cannot but open our eyes without being compelled to behold him…

[The human body] bears on its face such proofs of ingenious contrivance as are sufficient to proclaim the admirable wisdom of its Maker.”
Wahlberg argues that rather than inferring the existence of God, humans perceive intentionality and intelligence when they observe natural systems.

I argue that a particular kind of intelligence is perceived: exquisite engineering expertise.
We all solve the inverted pendulum problem within about a year!
Objections to “Designer” & “Engineer”

‘God is never spoken of as a “designer” in the Bible’

God is not a “divine engineer” or “omniscient technician”
“Three Models of Making: Prime Mover, Craftsman and King – Alternate Theistic Frameworks for Teaching Origins” (December 1987)

“The Divine Craftsman, is not the God of the Scriptures.” → Deism

Bible presents God as Process Systems Engineer
‘The concept of technology is not foreign to the Bible; in its canonical form, it is replete with references to ancient technologies of many types... God is sometimes presented in the OT in a manner that we would today call a systems engineer. He creates (designs) a universe and world and places within it creatures, including human beings. The NT continues this theme of technologies...

The sacrificial death of Jesus is presented as an act that was designed (in modern parlance “engineered”) and sanctioned by God as a means to present a spotless “lamb” who takes upon himself the sins of the world.’
“Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die…

But God does not take away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him.”

2 Samuel 14:14
God, as a kid, trying to make a chicken in the lab

Lessons from Gen 6:5f
What could Brokenness Afford?

- Significant opportunities
- Compassion, kindness
- Grow strong & useful
- Learn truth, humility
- Drawing good out of evil
- The “beneversal”
God as Process Systems Engineer
Refining his people in the furnace of affliction

Multiple verses on God refining his people
“See, I will refine and test them, for what else can I do because of the sin of my people”
- Jer 9:7

“All I will test and refine them, for what else can I do because of the sin of my people”
”Looking Through Pascal’s Window”
by John T. Mullen (Bethany College, Kansas)

Universe as soul-making device (John Hick) or drawing board
John Avise,
UC Irvine
Affordance-based Reverse Engineering of Natural Systems with Possible Corruption

Dominic Halsmer, PhD, PE, Dean of Science & Engineering
Ken Weed, PhD, Professor of Chemistry
Sean McDonough, Undergraduate Research Student
Christian Engineering Education Conference
Trinity Western University, June 2011
Reverse Engineering Questions

• How does the system work?
• How was it formed?
• How does it relate to other systems?
• What is its function or purpose?
• Has it experienced damage or corruption from its initial state?
• How has this corruption affected its functionality or affordances?
J. Maier proposes the concept of **affordance** (what a system provides to an end user, or to another system)... as an underlying and unifying principle in the science of design, & reverse engineering.
Affordances capture important interactions within the Designer-artifact-user system (big picture).
Affordances are also key to capturing important interactions during reverse engineering studies.
"The universe is full of magical things patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper."
Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic.
Any sufficiently advanced technology may also be confused with malevolence.

“Subtle is the Lord, but malicious He is not.”
-A. Einstein
It was good for me to be afflicted so that I might learn your decrees. The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.
“Science without religion is lame;
Religion without science is Blind.”

”The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.” - Matthew 21:14

Model → Increases faith, knowledge & worship of God
And God Rested…