

Faculty Work Comprehensive List

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## Handiwork of Our Creator

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## Handiwork of Our Creator

### Abstract

"Chemistry certainly is a science that seeks to understand how creation works, working at the microscopic level of atoms, molecules, and ions; the basic building blocks of matter."

Posting about understanding the nature of creation from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/handiwork-of-our-creator/>

### Keywords

In All Things, creation, science, matter, Christian stewardship

### Disciplines

Chemistry | Christianity

### Comments

*In All Things* is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

# Handiwork of our Creator

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 [inallthings.org/handiwork-of-our-creator/](http://inallthings.org/handiwork-of-our-creator/)

Carl Fictorie

The typical concept of what science does is that of discovery. Scientists want to understand how creation works, and do that by conducting experiments that test their theories about the nature of creation.

Chemistry certainly is a science that seeks to understand how creation works, working at the microscopic level of atoms, molecules, and ions; the basic building blocks of matter. The concern of the chemist is to understand the structure and properties of the substances that make up matter. Also, chemists work to understand how the substances react with each other such that one substance becomes another.

It is this latter aspect of how chemistry works that introduces uniquely creative facet to chemical knowledge, and also is the basis of very divergent views of chemistry in the public eye. Chemistry does not merely seek understanding, but also seeks to intentionally manipulate atoms, molecules, and ions to create new substances; new materials that are uniquely human in their origin. Through the work of chemistry, we have many vital things, ranging from toothpaste and soap to transportation fuels, to medicinal drugs and food additives. Substances such as the polymers in plastic containers or furniture simply help us to live better and more comfortable lives. Other substances, such as antibiotics, help us manage things that would harm us. In this manner most of us are indebted to the ability of chemists to manipulate matter from one substance into another.

At the same time, many people are repulsed by the word chemical. This word brings pictures of poisoned animals, polluted rivers and lakes, and toxic waste dumps. These problems are often the result of creating new substances that are unable to properly interact with the preexisting structures in the created order.

What does this mean for the Christian? First, the study of the chemical aspects of creation allows us to see the handiwork of our Creator. In chemistry, a relatively small number of elements are able to combine in a myriad of ways to form millions of compounds. Second, as stewards of the creation we are called on to tend and keep. Through creative chemical synthesis, chemists bring new substances into being that enables the creation to grow and flourish. Finally, chemistry is both part of the problem and part of the solution to the effects of sin on creation. The development of new chemical substances results in various forms of pollution. But in contrast, new methods of synthesis and recycling can help to ameliorate the effects of pollution. Thus, in chemistry we see a means of praising a creative, sustaining, and redeeming God and are able, as God's creatures, to share in this work in a small way.