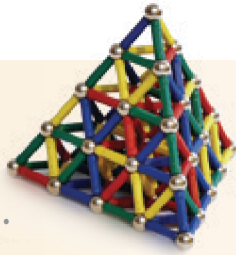


SCIENCE & YOU *Visible creation showing the invisible God*

Unseen Reality

We're surrounded by the invisible.



Not everything that is real can be seen. My five-year-old son and I enjoy making geometric shapes using magnets molded into plastic rods which then cling to small steel balls. Bringing the magnet close to the ball causes the ball to be drawn toward, and held to, the magnet. The force that causes the ball to move is real, but invisible. Magnetic fields can occur naturally or be generated by electric currents. They can be measured and manipulated, but they are invisible to human eyes. Instead, what can be seen or felt are the effects of magnetic fields on objects like steel balls, iron filings, or even other magnets. The effect is called a “force” because one can feel the pulling together or the pushing apart of two magnets, depending on how they are oriented, when held close together.

Other examples of unseen reality and its effects abound. For centuries the causes of disease were not known, in part because viruses and bacteria could not be seen. Though invisible to the unaided eye, the effect of the plague bacterium was deadly. Called the Black Death, it killed 30 million peasants in 14th century Europe. In the 16th and 17th centuries, the all but invisible smallpox and influenza viruses swept through the New World with devastating effects, killing an estimated 100 million people in what one historian called “the Great Dying”¹. We cannot see moving air, or the nitrogen, oxygen, and carbon dioxide molecules that are part of air, but its effect is called wind. We see light of different wavelengths or colors, but most of the electromagnetic spectrum from gamma rays to x-rays, ultraviolet, infrared, radar and radio/TV waves are invisible to

humans. Even so, the effects of these energy waves are very real. For example, x-rays are used for medical diagnosis, ultraviolet light fuels the production of Vitamin D in human skin, and modern aircraft and ships navigate and communicate using radar and short-wave signals.

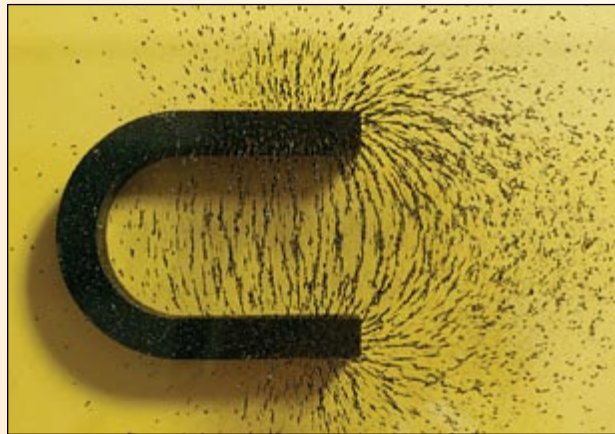
If we believe so often in things that are unseen because we see their effects, isn't it also reasonable to believe in a God who, though He cannot be seen, has shown us His reality by the effects He has in the universe, in history, and in the lives of real people? Some have come to believe that only what can be

measured by gauges, instruments, and detectors is real. But this is true poverty of the spirit because what then becomes of the reality of love, of beauty, and of faith?

Magnetic fields can be made visible by iron filings on a sheet of paper. Wind that takes up smoke or debris becomes visible. Special glasses detect infrared heat sources and television signals become images on a screen. Unseen reality can be made visible. Such is the miracle of the incarnation: the unseen, but real, God making Himself visible in the person of a baby. And the name of this “effect” is Jesus. ☪

—MICHAEL G. WINDHEUSER, PH.D.

1 A. Nikiforuk, *The Fourth Horseman. A short history of epidemics, plagues, famines and other scourges* (New York, NY: M. Evans & Co., 1991).



“For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.” (Rom. 1:20)