

# Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of the Rappahannock

“Science and Spirituality—  
Contradictory or  
Complementary”

August 30, 2009

# Opening Quote

“Science can purify religion from error and superstition.”

“Religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. “

“Each can draw from the other into a wider world in which each can flourish.”

“We need each other to be what we can be, what we must be, what we are called to be.”

Pope John Paul II

# Today's Talk

*“Science and Spirituality—Complementary  
or Contradictory?”*

By Rafael Espericueta,

(Professor of Mathematics, Bakersfield College, Bakersfield, California.)

[Hot Link to the Paper](http://shimmeringvoid.com/science_and_spirituality.htm)

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# Science and Spirituality: Some Working Definitions

❖ *Philosophy* is the study of general and fundamental problems concerning matters such as existence, knowledge, truth, beauty, law, justice, validity ...it is often divided into five major branches: logic; metaphysics; epistemology; ethics; and aesthetics.

# Science and Spirituality: Some Working Definitions

- ❖ **Science** (from the Latin *scientia* meaning “knowledge”) refers to in its broadest sense to any systematic knowledge-base or prescriptive practice that is capable of resulting in prediction or predicable outcomes. *In its more restrictive contemporary sense, it refers to a system of acquiring knowledge of **natural** world based on the scientific method, and to the organized body of knowledge gained through research based upon this method.*

# Science and Spirituality: Some Working Definitions

- ❖ **Religion** is an organized approach to human spirituality which usually encompasses a set of narratives, symbols, beliefs and practices, often with a supernatural or transcendent quality, that give meaning to the practitioner's experiences of life through reference to a higher power, God or gods, or ultimate truth.

# Science and Spirituality: Some Working Definitions

❖ ***Spirituality*** is a sense of connection by an individual to a reality beyond the physical world and oneself, which may or may not include an emotional experience of awe and reverence. Spirituality may also include the development of the individual's inner life through practices such as meditation and prayer. This may or may not include a search for God, or for metaphysical completion.

# Science and Spirituality: Some Working Definitions

❖ ***Dogma*** A doctrine or code of beliefs accepted as authoritative and true without proof.



## ***“Dogma”***

(A doctrine or code of beliefs accepted as authoritative and true without proof) ***is the enemy of Science, Spirituality and of Religion***

# On Dogma and Doubt

If "*Dogma*" is the great enemy of Religion, Science and Spirituality, then the strongest ally of these quintessential human endeavors is "*Doubt*", and the patron saint of all three is *Thomas*, The Doubter, The Disciple of Jesus, and the purported author of the mystic Gnostic Gospel of Thomas.

David W. Rowden, Ph.D.

# Three Qualities Shared by Spirituality and Science

✓ Great Faith

✓ Great Doubt

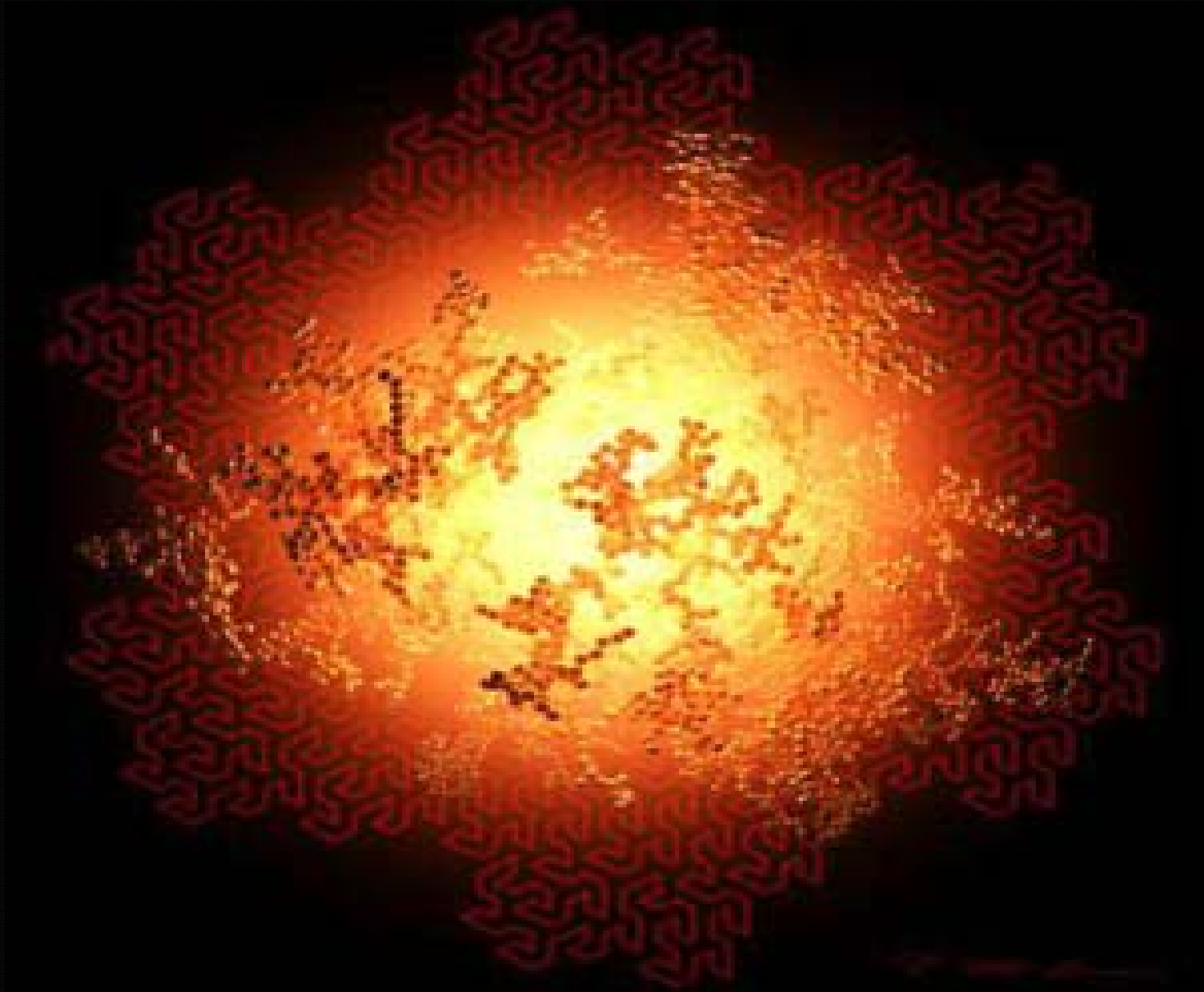
✓ Great Determination

# Poetry and Fractal Geometry

“To see a world in a grain of sand  
and heaven in a wild flower, hold  
infinity in the palm of your hand  
and eternity in an hour.”

William Blake

# A Fractal Mandala



# Closing Circle Quote

“Science without religion is lame. Religion without Science is blind.”

Albert Einstein