This is the first of three Riddel Memorial Lectures given by MacKay in 1977. The lectures have been collected into a book entitled *Science, Chance, and Providence*.

**Goal:** Show that Christian belief is not just compatible with science, but that the two “belong together as naturally as root and fruit” (p.65)

- counter-argument to those who see “irreconcilable contradiction” (p. 64) between the two, which MacKay claims “can be seen to be false whether or not one accepts the truth of biblical Christianity.” (p. 65)

**Approach:** Begin by exploring what Christians believe about Creator and the nature of the world and show that the “scientific mind” emerges naturally from those beliefs.

1. Dynamic Stability: world is not eternally self-sufficient, but depends on its Maker for daily continuance
   - different from purely mechanistic model of creation
   - example: physical objects exhibit macro stability that is really the result of “uncountable myriads of events at the atomic or subatomic level”.
   - examples: television; pong
   - Col 1:16,17: “in him all things hold together”
   - rest of article to show that this framework “offers all the support needed both for the scientific enterprise and for the life of Christian faith” (p. 68)

2. Science in a Created World, two emphases in Bible:
   - (a) man is commanded to “make use of created order intelligently”
     \[ \Rightarrow \text{ “for someone with appropriate talents, to gain knowledge and understanding of the created order...can be a duty” (p.69)} \]
   - (b) God is a “free and unconditional Creator”
     \[ \Rightarrow \text{ not possible to deduce how nature will be from first principles, so experimental approach is required} \]

3. Science based on “Customs of the Creator”
   - Question: if God is free to do what he wants, what hope is there that experimental methods will make “coherent sense of the patterns of events”?
   - Answer: important grounds for optimism based on character of God
     - God of order, dependability, and faithfulness \[ \Rightarrow \text{reasonable to look for orderliness in pattern of observed events} \]
     - “To explain something scientifically means to show that it 
     ough not to have surprised anyone who knew the initial conditions and the general customs of the Creator.” (p. 71)
     - science is looking for predictions based on precedent
     - God is not bound to follow precedent, but he “encourages us to believe that his sustaining activity has both structure and purpose.”
     - science can be pursued without presupposition of God, but this doesn’t “warrant disbelief”, rather this is predictable from these beliefs
   - Miracles
     - God may at any time choose to break precedent
     - miracles are not irrational and incoherent but “fitting...given the circumstances and his concern for those involved.” (p.73)
     - miracles are not an intervention by a God who is usually hands off, but a change of mode by a God who is always hands on.

**Concluding remark:** The scientist “may find much of value for the defense of the biblical faith; but Christian’s motive for it can never be one of apologetic expediency. His one desire must be to do the fullest justice to all the data given him by God, to whom he will be accountable for keeping the record straight.” (p. 75)