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***Faith matters when contemplating the Universe.***

One of the most astounding facts about our universe is that we can figure it out: our universe was created to be understood by its own creatures.

First of all, the universe is reliable and predictable: gravity always works. Light travels at the same speed everywhere in the universe. And it all turns out to be built from the same elements no matter where you look: with the modern tools of astronomy, we can now look at the light from distant stars and see the same spectral signatures of elements out there as down here.

When you look up at a clear night sky here in northern Michigan, do you ever wonder why it's dark? Now that we know the universe is full of uncountable galaxies, why isn't the sky bright even at night?

Now that with our most modern telescopes we can see light that comes from near to the time of the origin of the universe, why isn't the entire night sky a vast expanse of white?

It turns out that space is in fact so empty that each of these sources of light—stars, galaxies, the whole astronomical zoo—is individually visible. If the cosmos were even a little cloudy, it would be like a closed curtain and we might never have known just how vast the scale of creation really is. God wanted us to figure out how the universe was made.

John Calvin, one of the deep thinkers of the Protestant Reformation, of which we are heirs, stated that God wrote two books, the Bible and the cosmos. Calvin encouraged us to read both books. As usual, the Psalmist got there first: "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, Mortals that you care for them?"

~Written by Keith Griffioen

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8190 Lincoln Rd. Beulah, MI 49617  
231.882.4241  
[www.benziestandrews.com](http://www.benziestandrews.com)



Benzie St. Andrews | 8190 Lincoln Rd, Beulah, MI 49617

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