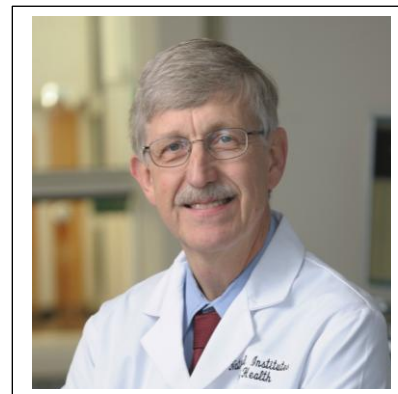


## **‘The Road to Wisdom’**

**is the name of a book written by the American Geneticist, Dr Francis Collins.**

As the head of the National Institute of Health in USA, he was responsible for advising President Trump on the Covid pandemic. He also led the speed race to find a vaccine, which proved to be more effective than anyone



had hoped. As we saw, his advice to the White House was not as well received as were the conspiracy theories, such as injecting bleach to kill the germs, and the denial of vaccine efficacy. Many Americans, including some Christians, distrust scientific evidence, claiming that vaccines cause autism, climate change is just political propaganda, and environmental destruction is economically justified.

During the pandemic Collins received countless abusive messages and threats, mainly from fellow Christians with the mistaken belief that all scientists are atheists out to discredit faith. Dr Collins is one of the best-known Christians in the field of science. His heart felt Christian hope is that people will come together to combat the untruths peddled through social media.

As a young scientist Collins, like others, wondered if science and religion were in conflict. He gradually came to consider the teachings of Jesus seriously and is yet to find any conflict between his career and his faith. He quotes the Nobel prize winning physicist, Werner Heisenberg, the author of the uncertainty principle: *“The first gulp from the glass of natural sciences will turn you into an atheist, but at the bottom of the glass God is waiting for you!”*

Francis Bacon said: *‘God gave us two books – the Bible and the book of God’s works of creation.’* Collins says he reads both, daily, as a scientist. Science and faith are both exploratory disciplines, subject to setbacks and failures. He recommends *‘humility and frank admissions of mistakes as an antidote to mistrust and grievances: a powerful solvent to melt walls of resentment.’*

*“If we are serious about travelling down ‘the road to wisdom’, we have a lot of lessons to learn.”* Uncertainty is a fact of both life and faith. Faith gives us no easy answers, but hope and courage in the face of uncertainty. Churches have a key role in serving the world by offering space for spiritual growth in the light of facts, evidence, reason and knowledge – to equip believers for tough times in life.

***Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. (Psalm 90.12)***