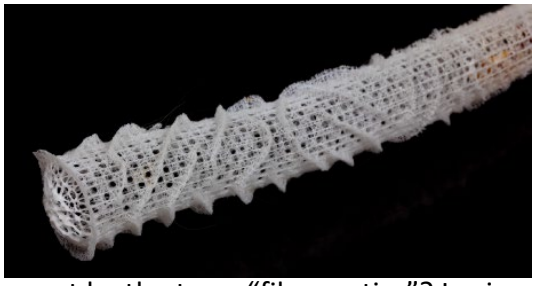
Fort Payne church of Christ

The Weekly Moment

A Weekly Motivational Message

Wednesday, April 29, 2020

A Sponge with Fiber Optics



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The last time you picked up a phone to call your business partner about a work project, you might have been using fiber optics. The last time you logged onto the World Wide Web from your home computer, you might have been using fiber optics. We hear much about fiber optics these days, but what, exactly, is meant by the term "fiber optics"? In simple terms, a fiber-optic cable has a core (center) made of very thin glass. Light can travel through the glass and relay light signals that can reproduce sound and other information. Fiber-optic cables stretch thousands of miles all across the world, and can send information quickly and efficiently.

But there are some problems with these cables. First, since they are glass, they can be brittle, which means they can crack and break. Digging up the cables and replacing them is very expensive. Second, in order to produce the cables, factories must use very high heat, which also is very expensive. Fiber optics are amazing, but they could use some improvement.

Interestingly, scientists have found an amazing sponge that has wonderful fiber-optic "cables." The sponge, called the Venus Flower Basket, lives in the deep waters of the ocean. This sponge produces several fiber-optic cables that grow out of its base. These tiny cables are about as wide as a single human hair, and grow to be anywhere from 2 to 7 inches long.

The fibers produced by the Venus Flower Basket have several advantages over the manmade ones. First, they are produced in cool temperatures. If we humans could learn to copy this, we could save millions of dollars. Second, the fibers from the sponge are very strong and flexible, and do not crack and break like the ones humans produce. In fact, the fibers from the sponge are so flexible they can be tied into a knot. If scientists could learn to make such strong, flexible fibers, we would not have to spend as much time and money repairing our current fiber-optic cables.

Dan Vergano, in an article for *USA Today*, wrote about the Venus Flower Basket. He quoted several researchers who had been working with the fiber-optic cables of the sponge, or some other facet of biomimetics (the science of copying nature). George Matsumoto, a marine researcher of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute in Moss Landing, California, said: "Nature often provides us with a better way of doing thing [sic]." He went on to comment that sponges have evolved varied traits over more than 400 million years (2003).

It is amazing that many scientists who are working in the field of biomimicry do not acknowledge the implications of their work. It is a self-evident truth that where there is design, there must of necessity, be a designer; where there is a painting, there must be a painter. Those who study biomimicry freely acknowledge design in nature. For example, what seems to be the official Web site on biomimicry offers a course from its home page titled "Biologists at the Design Table." In the course summary, under the heading of "Workshop Logistics," the site describes the participants in the course as those who are "biologists and naturalists with a passion for the natural world, an understanding of sustainability and an interest in applying nature's **elegant design strategies** to human challenges" (n.d., "Biomimicry," emp. added).

Supposedly, then, over a period of billions of years, nature developed "elegant design strategies"—the likes of which even our most educated, brilliant minds have yet to plumb the depths. And yet we are to believe that this "design" somehow originated by a process of blind, evolutionary chance. Such a conclusion steps beyond bounds of logic.

Intelligent scientists have been working on fiber-optic cables for many years, just to get them to work as well as they do now. Yet, the Venus Flower Basket has strong, flexible fibers that are produced in cool temperatures. If there is design, which is even more intricate and efficient than that produced by highly intelligent humans, then the designer of such must have an intellect equal to or greater than the humans themselves. The writer of Hebrews accurately noted: "For every house is built by someone, but he who built all things is God" (3:4). God's design in the sponge's fiber-optic "cables" proves that animals like the Venus Flower Basket did not evolve. Design demands a Designer.

Think about it.

Here's hoping you'll make the *"most of your minutes"* this week.

Hope to see you at Bible Study *soon!*

In Christian Love,

Bob Strickland