

12

Scientific Truth is Infinite

I WONDER IF ANY of you went to hear the famous scientist, Professor Stephen Hawking, when he visited Hong Kong in 2006. If you did not hear him, I am sure you will remember him on the television screen sitting on his invalid chair – an elderly man, twisted in body by illness, but very active in his mind.

Even before his unfortunate illness, which he suffered during his first year in university, he had gained a reputation for research into scientific truth. After his illness, his material world became smaller, limited by his invalid chair. But one thing his physical disability could not imprison on that chair was his mind. That remained open to infinity in his search for truth.

He believes that some day the whole truth of our universe will be revealed. Whether or not he is right remains to be seen. It is an interesting possibility.

One thing we can learn from Professor Hawking is that the enormous scientific discoveries of the last century (wireless, television, computerization, and more) will not stop. The mystery of the origin of the universe still leaves much to be learned in the years to come. Over 400 years ago, the Italian scientist, Galileo Galilei, discovered wonders in the sky that led him to conclude that the earth was not a flat place with heaven just above it. He realised that the earth is round. Unfortunately, the Catholic

Church tortured him to make him deny that that was true. The Church believed that the earth was flat, because the Bible refers to “the four corners of the earth”.

Today we do not torture people who make scientific discoveries. We all need to keep our minds open to future scientific progress, and not stick to old beliefs that are no longer valid. On the other hand, we should not accept specious claims that have no scientific proof. For example, since man has begun to fly in space, some have speculated that people from other planets may have entered the earth’s atmosphere and some have even claimed to have seen Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO). Some day that may indeed happen, but we need to wait until there is genuine scientific evidence.

My advice is: seek truth, listen, consider, but accept only what can be proved to be true by scientific facts.