

An Ode to Francis Collins

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Longtime NIH director, Francis Collins, announced his resignation of the post last week. For the past twelve years, Dr. Collins has served as the head of the most important health institution in the nation while guiding the country's scientific research under three presidents. Before becoming director of the NIH, Collins led the Human Genome Project in its daunting (and successful) mission to sequence the human genome. During his stint as NIH director, the agency's budget grew by over \$11 billion and funded the nation's top labs in Alzheimer's, cancer, opioid, and vaccine research. Throughout his tenure, Collins maintained and promoted his deep-seeded Christian faith to the scientific and evangelical communities. As a fellow Christian, Collins provided a role model to me for what a scientist can do with their faith. Because of Collins, I have felt confident in sharing my own faith with peers. For that, I introduce the following Ode to Francis Collins.

To a young Mr. Collins,

A naïve,

Like me,

Student of the world.

You walked along genomes

And leapt between chromosomes,

Named the unknown,

And defended a doozy.

To a young Mr. Collins,

Thank you for learning.

To a young Dr. Collins,

At home in Michigan,

You put genes in your focus.

Huntington's Disease

And cystic fibrosis:

Nothing was off limits

To a young buck like you.

To a young Dr. Collins

Thank you for searching.

To a wise Dr. Collins,

The NIH you called home,

You made it your mission

To map the genome.

Successful as you were—

I'm sure you'll agree—

You never forgot

Students like me.

To a wise Dr. Collins,

Thank you for leading.

To a wise Mr. Collins,

Though you step away

From the helm of your mission,

You have plenty left to give

Through faith and admission.

You never let go

Of your Christian beliefs,

Promoting them

To the science elite.

In the face of derision

You never lost face

Science is better

When you incorporate faith.

To a wise Mr. Collins,
Thank you for believing.