But science alone cannot reveal much more about the nature of God apart from the fact he is infinitely greater than we are. We do not have the power to create a Universe out of nothing, and the God who has done this is far beyond our understanding, and we can only know him because he chose to reveal himself to us. This is what he has done in the Bible; it is a record of God progressively revealing himself to us. It is not a science textbook – for which we should all be deeply grateful since science textbooks are generally hard work to read and quite dull! Even when the Bible talks about how the Universe began, and how life began, it is not concerned so much with the how (questions which can be addressed by science), but with the why and most importantly, for whom – a question which science simply cannot even ask. Reading the Bible in this way, the creation account in Genesis is then not a necessarily a picture of a radiation dominated early Universe, but a picture of its Creator. And the ultimate revelation of the nature of God is Jesus, through whom God explains his love in a way we can understand.

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Further information
www.cis.org.uk
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Bang - General introduction to the Big Bang
www.christianity.co.nz/science.htm - Exploring Christianity and science
www.leaderu.com/everystudent/easter/articles/josh2.html - Evidence for the resurrection

Suggested reading
Bancewicz, R., Test of Faith: Spiritual Journeys with Scientists, Paternoster, 2009
Poole, M., Users Guide to Science and Belief, Lion, 2007
In the beginning God said ‘Let there be light...’

How did the Universe begin?

How do the scientific answer in conflict with the Bible?

Augustine, then, would probably have no issue with the current ‘Big Bang’ picture of the creation of the Universe. Instead of attributing the creation of the world to God only until we have a scientific explanation, we worship God as creator in the light of the scientific explanation. If we only let God have the glory for the amazing things that we cannot explain then it can lead to an unhelpful ‘God of the gaps’ picture - we cannot currently explain how the Universe came into being, so it must be God; we cannot currently explain how life ultimately began so it must be God; we cannot currently explain human consciousness so it must be God. But then the place of God is only in the ‘gaps’ in our knowledge. And, as our scientific knowledge grows and some of the gaps get filled in, the space for God seems smaller.

With this view, science can be seen as a threat to faith; whereas for me the more we know about the vast, yet intricate and beautiful Universe we live in, the bigger and more awe-inspiring is the God who made it all. Here, instead of science being a threat to faith, it’s a way of understanding more about the greatness of God.