

Science and Religion - the Differences

TERMS

Science says: Science is a methodology - its a method for checking and re-checking. Science is a verb not a thing. Religion is a thing.

Science is based on the work of self-correcting scientists and experimenters. It is not based on what they say but on what the tests show.

Ideology - a system of ideas and beliefs and assumptions that is to be taken primarily on faith.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The religious attitude is that if scientists claim to have refuted religious doctrines (that is to say the evidence has refuted them) the believer must hold that the scientists are wrong even if that will never become clear. Faith of that kind and science are enemies.

Science does not choose to believe that the only truth that matters is what which is checked through experimentation and testing. It is forced to. Religion chooses to believe in alleged truth that it says is outside the reach of science. The problem with that is that a system that is forced to align with truth is better than one that is not and the latter is intrinsically dangerous to truth. Even when it gives you the truth it might as well not bother for the reason you accept it is for other reasons than that it is the truth.

THE DIFFERENCES

Science holds that checked and verified truth is the most important truth.

Religion denies this and says that other ways of knowing things apart from science are just as important and sometimes more. There is no concern for how a Muslim "knows" Jesus was not God and a Christian "knows" he was God!!!! Countless examples could be put forward.

Religion is not based on what God says but on what other people say God has said. Even if God has spoken man has taken over God's voice and it is man you are hearing. Religion is really about man not God and God is just a bait. Science demands that experiments not men must get the say.

Science emphasises that the in-between man or woman has to be avoided in favour of learning for yourself.

Religion says: We believe that science is not the only source of truth. God is more important than anything that comes from science. God reveals himself and the truth to us.

Answer: Science cannot function unless it considers truth a good thing. Being good is more important than believing in God. Science sees truth as more important than God and sees truth as a good. It is not true that science is always neutral on matters such as God and the fact that you give your life meaning and purpose by being kind frequently to others. Ignoring God is denying that God takes prime place - it denies that God is to be treated as God.

Religion says: Science and religion have opposite worldviews. Science is about truth and not about living a good life. Religion is about living good. Religion says your actions are not truly good unless they are done to express worship for God. Everything you do must be offered to God.

Answer: Science's unspoken methodology is that all things are to be doubted. It is not scientific to take a scientist's word for it if you can check it out personally. So science wants its claims doubted and tested before they are accepted. The supernatural is to be doubted most for it cannot be tested and doesn't happen as much as the natural assuming it happens at all.

Science is about being good in the sense that you do experiments and reason correctly.

SCIENCE AND FAITH

Religion says: We have faith in the supernatural and it gives us the sense of transcendence. Faith in God is based on our joyful trust in God and in those who he has sent to preach the gospel to us. Faith is good in theory and in practice. We are happy not to check all things out. Faith is not a necessary evil but a blessing and a gift and a virtue. Even the most rigid scientist has some kind of faith.

Religion likes to say that science is a kind of secular faith. The ambition is to deter people from accepting the popular view that faith is bad and science is not faith so it is good.

In science taking the word of a scientist that something is the case is not something to be celebrated. It is a necessary evil at best but only when you really cannot check it out. If this is faith it is not faith in the sense of being joyful trust.

Faith is never good in theory and it is only tolerable in practice. You must believe in theory that if you could check it all out yourself you would.

DIFFERENT QUESTIONS?

We are told, "Science asks how?" Religion says science does not ask why. But if that is true then science assumes there is no need to ask why. Religion says that God is the why and God comes first. So it says there is a need to ask why.

Religion says the why is answered as follows, "God who is love made all things and a rebellion took place causing evil. Evil is not his fault but down to the rebellious. His plan is to see as much love as possible emerge and to make it last forever. Nobody can test if God is acting and nobody can test love and therefore these things are beyond the capability of science."

But science can see if things are really improving.

And science sees love as a chemical reaction and as testable.

And science argues that one day all things will be destroyed.

It is not true that the why is not a question for science. It is. If you try to put certain things beyond scientific examination then the end result is not science but prejudice and half-truth.

Science seeks the theory of everything which is meant to answer why and explain why there is something rather than nothing. We already have most of the pieces of the theory though there is much more to do.

The science is about how and the religion is about why argument is really an attempt to make out that religion can never be refuted by science. Con-artists who want to save their lies from the risk of refutation, must tell religious or supernatural ones.

The argument actually makes any particular religion unconvincing. If science has never anything to say to religion then religion has never anything to say to science. Putting science and religion in two totally separate realms means one can never contradict or undermine the other.

So if Hinduism is as outside of science as Christianity then you may as well choose one or the other for there is no way of knowing what the best or most pro-science choice is. And if one is convinced by one's religion and thinks science has nothing to say to the faith then one is not giving science the importance it demands and deserves.

Science can only say something is inexplicable or unexplained and never calls anything a miracle for there is no scientific test to show that God really did a miracle. If a miracle happens you don't know if God did it. So if religion really believes that science is about the how, then why does it bring in scientists when there is a report of a miracle or healing?

Religion says there is no how without God. So it makes out that the how is inseparable from who and why. Science ignores this. Science and religion then are in conflict and religion is the cause of the conflict.

Also science sees no need for a who when it asks how. It is clear that there has to be a who if nothing happens without a God who is personal doing it.

It is nonsense to say that religion by default does not say how we came to be. Some religions do and some don't. The Bible says that all mankind came from Adam and Eve and that Adam was made from dust and Eve was made from his rib. To say this story doesn't ring true is to read our modern ideas and our better knowledge back into primitive texts. It is to distort them.

Religion asks how, why and by whom - meaning God.

We are told "Science asks how things work while religion deals with another issue, who made all things and why. Thus science and religion do not conflict for they are about separate things."

Science interprets reality as something that has no evident purpose. Assuming there is a purpose will damage the objectivity needed in the experiments and in scientific reasoning. Even a vague idea of purpose is a problem. For example, if science believes that one day many people will be happy forever, it cannot warn against the big crunch - when everything is destroyed. And it does warn! Science could ask, "Why is there life now when one day there will be none but only destruction?"

Science says the answer to why something when there could have been nothing is that there was a cause. It does not say there was a purpose and rejects the very notion.

Religion interprets reality as something that has a purpose and that purpose is revealed to us by God. The purpose is broadly speaking about God's plan for us to be holy in this world and blessed in the next. All that happens is part of God's big design. We refer to this kind of thinking as teleological. The bee cannot exist without honey. In science, this does not mean that something planned for honey to exist so that the bee might exist. It only means something caused this. Something can be caused without being arranged by design. In science, you see causation at work not design.

Science assumes reason is true. Science is not possible unless the laws of correct logic and mathematics are considered to be valid. It follows that even if science does not concern itself about whether or not God exists, it does in the sense that it implicitly rejects belief God if it is irrational. If reason refutes God then God is against the methodology of science. It is against reason. Everything that is discovered has countless implications or possible implications. Science cannot explore them all. It makes the discoveries and may look at a few important implications. If science does not focus on the non-existence of God as in saying, "There definitely or probably is no God" that does not really matter. Ignoring God amounts to saying there is probably no God. And if science will not say it does not matter as long as it implies there is no God. Not saying it does not mean it does not imply there is no God.

Religion answers that "Belief in God is eminently reasonable. The reasonableness or otherwise of belief in God is not science's concern." Says who? Science or religion or both? If God is activity then he could be science's concern even if he is not. The could be is important.

Religion says: We prefer to wait when science finds problems that seem to refute our faith. We refuse to admit that only science can tell us if we should wait. If science disproves God we will still wait until proof comes that science is wrong. Even if we never get this proof we will wait.

A wait and see attitude is simply dangerous. We would get nowhere if we suspended judgement on matters that we have not tested and experimented on and others have. It is arrogance.

You either accept science or you don't. When science shows something is proven it is proven. It is not up to anybody who is not a scientist or to a religion or group to make any excuse for denying that what is proven is proven. It is arrogance for it is not their expertise. It is not up to religion to tell science what science cannot prove or disprove.

Religion assumes that order exists though we may not always be clear on what this order means. It says a designer God can design and plan disorder as well so even that is order in that sense.

Religion assumes far more than that. Assumes that order exists but is sometimes overturned by the supernatural as in the case of miracles.

Religion takes certain doctrines for granted as being true

Science encourages independent verification. Nothing is taken for granted. Science doubts and challenges - everything is false until proven true.

Science says we must make as few assumptions as possible or as is necessary but religion opposes this truth for it consists of many assumptions and each religion has different guesses from other religions

Religion does not. It tends to encourage people to act as if feeling that something is true is a religious experience that verifies itself. It ignores the fact that pagans report such experiences too despite denying the cardinal Christian doctrine that Jesus is God.

Religion says that evidence can tell us when an event is a miracle.

Evidence is always naturalistic. It ignores the supernatural. You must discard any suspicion of supernatural interference with the evidence. Evidence is assuming that there is no supernatural.

Science argues that nature works within a framework of regularity - it is better to speak of it as predictability rather than as law for law can be mistaken for meaning there is a law maker such as God.

Scientists and scholars can never say that a miracle actually happened. That lies outside the realm of science. This creates a bias in favour of inauthenticity or even neutrality. The scientist will say he doesn't know how it could happen if a man has risen from the dead. He or she will say he doesn't know if it really happened. Is that biased?

Religion is biased too - but in favour of authenticity. If you have to have a bias you are better with a bias towards neutrality. Religion opposes this truth. Religion says there are ways of knowing a miracle is true even without science testing it. This amounts to saying that their idea of testing is equal to if not better than science. This is totally unacceptable. Science cares about hard facts and testing and not about testimony or any other kinds of fact so it should not waste its time verifying miracle claims but ignore them for they are just claims.

Science should verify miracles if they are real. Surely God could work with science to provide miracles amenable to testing?

Science does not seek a reward to the extent that religion does. Religion gets placebos and emotional rewards and imagines future blessings from God. Religion promises that those who obey it and believe it will be rewarded by God. The religionist is not happy with rewards such as human praise and with money for they are so easily lost and hard to keep. So he turns to God for better and more lasting rewards. If you give your life and money and another benefits it does not follow that you intended to do it for them. You may do it just because you can. In that case, it is its own reward. What do you trust? Trust science for religion is concerned about imagined rewards which skews its reliability. Religion and moral systems can be regarded as far more biased and mercenary than scientists and atheists.

Religion says: There can be no universe without God

The universe is a self-sufficient, self-contained and independent system. We see no need for God to set it up. It can do without him.

The universe depends on God for everything and even its own existence. Yet God should be able to make a self-sufficient universe. If he has done, then we have no reason to think that the universe implies a God.

Anything supernatural cannot be called on as a causal factor in the universe.

Religion disagrees.

So religion assumes that what looks supernatural really is a caused event. What if it is uncaused?

What if it is nothing that makes a man rise from the dead?

It can. Creation is when something comes from nothing. The Big Bang is not creation. The Big Bang happened to something that was already there. Creation is not a scientific idea. Religion says that creating is current and is not a past event. It does not seem scientific to say that a supreme intelligence would make the Big Bang look like the origin of all things when it is not.

Religion says: we believe that something came from nothing. God made something from nothing, this something exploded at the Big Bang. We don't know why God made the Big Bang look like the start of creation for creation is not a past event but a perpetual miracle. He creates now. It is creation that keeps all things in existence.

Even God cannot make something from nothing unless nothing somehow has the power to become something. The universe can exist without God. If nothing has the power to become something then God is not needed.

Science works on the assumption that nothing has the power to become something.

Even God cannot make something from nothing unless nothing somehow has the power to become something. The universe is created - it cannot exist without God.

A thousand difficulties do not make one doubt. There are some difficulties with evolution and natural selection. Bringing God into it leads to more difficulties. Occam's Razor says there is enough without that. A major difficulty would be the idea of a good God who would willingly devise such a cruel method as natural selection for making living beings.

Religion says: A thousand difficulties do not make one doubt. Perhaps one day, the non-existence of God will be regarded as a scientific fact.

It is a scientific fact that no sign of God's activity has been found.

People will deny it is a fact and say it is a belief or opinion - and they will do this in their arrogance despite understanding the evidence and reasoning behind it. Calling a fact a view or a belief or opinion is a clever way of stopping it being taken as seriously as it deserves. It ignores the fact it is not an opinion that God has not be observed to be doing anything - the evidence says there is no sign of divine action.

If it happens, it will only mean that scientists believe or think that there is no sign of God. It will not be a fact.

Religion sometimes insists that God tweaks the universe in an undetectable way to bring about his plan, But we have no reason to assume that any intelligence is doing that. Surely if there was a plan, it would be necessary to let it be seen that he was acting? Religion is making superfluous assumptions.

Religion says: Science does not see how God works. He moves electrons around and does other things to nudge evolution in the right direction.

Answer: Religion is trying to get science to be open to supernatural explanations without evidence that the supernatural exists. Such an approach only discourages research by scientists.

Religion says: If religion has done evil and harm, science is in no position to condemn. It has done evil too. Unlike science, religion will not destroy the world in a nuclear blast.

Answer: If religion is really as loving of science as it says, what would happen if it took it over to do it? It would censor what it does not want people to know and it would still work out how to make nuclear weapons. Unlike non-believers, it will see using the weapons to destroy the world as something God is still in control over so it might not be really the end for humanity.

Science is a discipline - it is not the people. Thus science cannot be blamed for the nuclear weapons etc that have been developed. Religions wage war over which religion is right and no scientist has declared war yet for science. If science makes a nuclear bomb, you can't blame science if a religion decides to detonate the bomb!