

SCIENCE VERSUS RELIGIOUS FAITH

A good definition for science is - let the evidence speak and take nothing on faith.

Religion does not agree with this for it would be science if it did. It may say evidence is a gift from God but does take a lot of stuff on faith. Faith is invariably an attitude of trust that God has given truth to such and such a person. And prophets depend on each other. Moses trusted what he believed God was telling him for it fitted in with what other prophets had said. Jesus was heavily dependant on Moses being a true prophet so that he could establish his own claim. Jesus more than anybody was dependent on the framework set up by previous prophets and their revelations.

Religion

If science cannot refute the content of faith it can refute faith being a safe way to live and think. Religion likes to tell you science does not refute its faith content but does not tell you that science by default regards faith is fit only for ignoring. That is even more important than science debunking some doctrine. It attacks the core of religion and faith. Religion and faith claim to be of extreme and central importance which means even an undermining counts as attacking but science does more than just undermine.

Science does not spell out what we are to believe. It spells out what the evidence says. That is not the same thing as saying we must or should believe. Giving the evidence that x poisoned the dog makes the other person believe but does not say they must or should.

It is not science faith versus religious faith. It is science versus religious faith.

Secularists and atheists are accused of believing only what they understand. Understanding isn't everything. But beliefs you understand ought to be valued more than ones you do not. Scientists agree and live that philosophy.

Science is pro-faith that constantly looks for correction and greater understanding and it accomplishes this through testing theories. Religious faith is faith you stick with even when the evidence refutes it. The two forms of faith are as different as night and day. Science if you understand it as faith opposes religious faith. It has to.

Science accuses many religions if not all of blind faith. They are believing without evidence or against the evidence. The religions say, "Okay science says that only science helps you be sure about things. But it never did an experiment to prove this. It is blind faith itself. Science is as much an assumption as assuming our faith is correct is." That overlooks the fact that the whole point of any experiment is to be sure. Science is not arguing in circles.

The Church likes to claim today that there is no conflict between science and the Christian faith. We are told that science is about the how and religion is about the why. This is the idea that science is one form of knowledge and religious faith is another.

But science approaches all things with an open mind. Christianity does not. It says it is your duty to believe what ever its God says.

Science is about doing experiments to determine the truth. Christianity never does experiments to test its theories. Even if the faith claims to be supported by some evidence, the Christian appeal to this support is just a gimmick. It doesn't really care about the evidence in itself. It only uses it to trick thinking people into embracing Christianity. It needs to present an aura of sufficient credibility.

Scientists may have many disagreements but they use the same method. They experiment and test. Religion doesn't do that at all. It doesn't have a reliable method for testing its claims.

Religion however is often forced to submit to science.

It is thought that there are no laws of nature. But then let us not use the word laws but the word regularities. Science needs to assume regularities otherwise it has no method for testing anything. Religion pretends to believe that it is a law of nature that dead people stay dead. They say dead people stay dead but Jesus was an exception for he rose again. But how do they know that he is the only exception? They say the evidence tells them. But evidence is not everything! Perhaps it happens a lot and no evidence is left behind? What gives them the right to assume that dead people staying dead is really a regularity?

The person who does not believe that anybody rose is more supportive of regularity than they are.

The supernatural attacks science. It denies regularity. It cannot be tested. It provides then no direction for doing research.

It is good that the believers sometimes revere evidence - but in practice it is only a few top level Christians that even bother analysing the evidence. They are the only ones who use it. This makes the vast majority of believers to be mere superstition fans.

There has always been good Catholic scientists, good Muslim scientists and good atheist scientists. To do science, one does not need to belong to any religion or to have any religious faith.

Science only hopes to be good science not perfect science. Because scientists are human and imperfect, science has to be always under suspicion of imperfection. Religion argues, "Science is imperfect. If science does not believe miracles happen, then we can put that down to the imperfect knowledge given us by science." But if science can be imperfect despite all the precautions being taken, it follows that science though imperfect should get more trust than religion. Religion does not have the testing procedures and so it will be more prone to human error than science. Remember, that if science doubts things it doubts the supernatural most of all.

Religion today says science answers the how while religion answers the why. For example with evolution, some Christians claim that we evolved and that is how we came to be. But why were we evolved? Their answer is that God our father made us to have a love relationship with us. That is actually a scientific statement for science can check that evolution helps our wellbeing. A universe made with a loving purpose should not look like a universe with no loving purpose at all. But it does. Evolution is only part of the story - most of the terrible things that happen show it has made us into monsters. Hardly a great evolution in spiritual terms!

Science is more than a method of looking at what exists. It explains things. It gives the why too. It says that as far as it can see, we were not made for a purpose. We evolved through luck and chance.

When science is told about this God whose existence cannot be proven does that mean science has to reject God? Why can't it just suspend judgement? If science rejects God's existence or simply does not take a stand then clearly science will not accept God until evidence turns up. But suspending judgement on God IS rejecting God too. God by definition is all that matters so if science cannot find him then science is bad or there is no God. God is not to be seen as an object but as a loving entity and the personification of love. God is found in verbs not nouns.

Science knows there are things it will never find but until it gets indications they exist it treats them and thinks of them as non-existent. So science does not have to say there is no God. Ignoring God is science's way of saying it.

Catholicism bizarrely accepts what science says about the characteristics of living things. Eg breathing and so on. The communion wafer does not breathe and it is supposed to be alive. This is a total repudiation of science. Religion not only is unscientific with God but has many doctrines that are equally unscientific.

Ideology or methodology

Science is not an ideology. It is a methodology. Religion is an ideology. Those who argue that science is an ideology assume that it can be reconciled with other ideologies such as religion. To get science and religion to agree means that science is no longer science.

Science has only two dogmas: one is to doubt and challenge what is accepted by us as believable or true. The other is that we must change our ideas if the evidence justifies it. Science comes up with theories - doubt is helpful but doubt alone is not helpful. We need to have opinions and beliefs which comprise our theories.

Even when something is proven, science still refers to it as a theory. The reason is that though its a fact, science is based on doubt so it cannot call it anything but a theory.

In contrast, religion treats its teachings as statements of fact. There is none of the humility of science there!

God is the ultimate fact in religion - religion says that if hypothetically we had to choose between saying a prayer to God and science then let science go. The importance given to the God theory surpasses science's devotion to facts. Science considers such extremism to be inappropriate.

Religion is authority. Popes and Bibles claim to teach with God's authority. But science wants to endlessly probe and search for proof and truth and overthrow authority. If you listen to authority it is not because it is an authority but because the

evidence happens to say the authority is correct.

Christians love to say that the claims of Jesus can be shown plausible without science. So that is saying that science does not tell you what to believe about Jesus. What if it cannot? Suppose it cannot. But then it can declare that the evidence for Jesus being God's self-revelation is good and that the contrary evidence is not. It can measure the evidential value. To say the evidence for x is good is not the same as saying you advocate x as true. But it is saying you should advocate x as true. Christians say that faith includes the acceptance of evidence as a gift from God. If so, then the love science has for evidence is

It is clear that the thesis, science is about "how" and "why" but religion is about "what for" is nonsense. It tells science that if it can investigate and answer "what for" it must not for that is religion's territory. The notion that science must keep out of religious questions and religion must keep out of scientific questions is odd. There would have to be overlaps. If Jesus died and rose today in the presence of scientists that would be a clear overlap. Religion comments on maths about how three persons can be one being and maths is a part of science.

To assert the supernatural is automatically to oppose the scientific method. That is always fundamentalist no matter how easy going and moderate the religion proclaiming it is. It is essentially anti-truth and that is worse than dishonesty. And religion goes about saying, "Science is not the only source of truth" as if science claims to be that! In fact science will always be superior to religion for it is the sole source of verifiable truth despite not being the sole source of truth. And if science had the tools it would claim to be the sole source of truth. And there is plenty of dishonesty coming from religion in the science and religion debate. As a last resort, it falsely accuses scientists of being obsessed with destroying its teaching and thus of fabricating evidence against religion. That is just an absurd conspiracy theory. Who is your real friend? Tough talking no-nonsense science? Religion?

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