

## Is "scientism" not science the problem where religion is concerned?

Laws can be made by agents or merely discovered by them. Science claims not to make laws but to find them. Mathematics is one thing that forces itself on everybody. You cannot avoid having to live with it. Science uses mathematics to implement and explain its findings. By testing, science finds that we don't need to just assume mathematics the findings of science always verify mathematics and whatever it is that science is looking into. For example, when science tests to see if cats can reproduce puppies it finds out that 1 is 1, a mathematical principle, is true. Every finding is dual. To find the answer to one maths question is to call all the other answers wrong. There are endless nos implied by every yes.

Mathematical proofs can show that x does not exist by showing x is mathematically impossible. But they cannot show that x exists.

Mathematics shows us that there is no such thing as one human being who is also a dog. 1 is 1 means a tree is not a brick. Mathematics cannot show that there is no such being as a creature who has a man's body and an animal's head like a Minotaur. Mathematics by definition is against magic – a Minotaur who got his head through a spell is a mathematical impossibility. Even if that spell is attributed to God the creator of all it is still an impossibility.

That aside, God surely should be able to set up mathematics or the universe in a way that the mathematics shows he exists! He could be a mathematical proof or a probability.

Scientism is thought to mean that all you care about is natural mundane causes and reject the supernatural just because you have no way of examining it. Ignoring the supernatural is also rejecting it for it means you don't take it seriously. All science does this despite religion telling it to consider that there is more than material things. All science has to do it.

We see now that scientism is not just scientism but "mathematicianism". That's two threats to faith and theism now in one!

Laws can be blind or set up by agents. When religionists think of laws they mean laws set up by God. When atheist scientists think of laws they mean blind regularities. So do we have an overlap them for both sides can test to see what temperature or so is there like they can test anything of a science nature? The overlap is only in the method not the theory. There is no way to think of anything that is there or real without bringing a theory into it. What the religious person does then is NOT science - but a simulation.

Science cannot be expected to say the laws come from a personal agent such as God for even if God won't change them science cannot assume he won't. Science then would be unable to trust today's proven findings to apply tomorrow. The method of science is based on assuming the laws are just there and nothing put them there and that is why they stay there. **IT NEEDS STRESSING: LAWS ARE TRUSTED BY SCIENCE BECAUSE THEY ARE JUST THERE AND THEY ARE PERMANENT FOR THERE IS NOTHING TO CHANGE THEM.**

In science, you test things with experiments not arguments. But that does not mean arguments are totally out of the equation. The machines are arguments as it were in physical form.

Everybody's starting point and the starting point of all disciplines such as psychology and philosophy and theology and science is that logic and mathematics are to be presupposed to be correct.

Science is the best tool for exercising logic and mathematics and discovering truth. Science supposes that science and mathematics and logic all go together. They all verify each other. They are three things in one. A sort of holy trinity in one God!

Against this people give examples of truths that cannot be proven scientifically or shown to be probably true by

scientific means.

- Logical and mathematical truths. It is said that science cannot prove that 1 is not 2. But in fact it can. Logic and mathematics are ultimately about one thing how a is a. An apple is one apple and it so obvious that a test or experiment is not needed. Science depends on experiments for the not so obvious and the rest is its own experiment in a way. It is said that "reasoning is not the same thing as philosophy for that would make everybody a philosopher." But it does. They are not professional dedicated philosophers but they are still philosophers. Not every carer is a nurse.

- Metaphysical truths. If you know that the world around you is real that is a metaphysical truth. But is it? Metaphysical seems to be about magic and the supernatural. Knowing the world is there does not require metaphysics but physics and testing with your hands and eyes. Metaphysics is about what is non-natural or magical.

- Ethical truths. Science cannot show that you are being immoral if you kill sick babies. But it does show that babies can be sick and be killed. That is more important than showing killing them is wrong. The wrongness depends on it being the truth that a baby can be killed. You cannot prove it is wrong to kill a baby unless you can prove the baby can be killed. If you save a baby because a baby can live who cares if you are not doing it because you think it is morally good? Science is actually better than morality.

- Aesthetic truths. Science cannot prove that a painting is beautiful. Aesthetic truths are subjective and not real truths. A flower that is beautiful to one can be ugly to another.

Last but not least we have

- The truths of science as won through testing and experiment meaning science is the most reliable way to know anything. The scientific method uses experiments and tests to show the truth. But there is no scientific way of proving that some evil spirit is not manipulating the tests and making the universe look organised and regular to us when it is not.

Also it is said that to define science as the best or only reliable way to know things is a statement that science cannot verify for it is a philosophical statement not a science one. What experiment can you set up to test that what experiments show you really is the only reliable truth or probably is?

The answer to that is if you test water to see if it is drinkable you do not need another experiment to show that the way you have tested is right. Also, the experiment being of value is a philosophical idea one way but not in another. It does not matter if science cannot verify the philosophy side. Does it matter that mathematics cannot show that Napoleon was an emperor? The philosophy is irrelevant.

Some like to insult the perception that science and religion are against each other or at least that science is against religion by calling it Scientism in a derogatory sense. Scientism is thought to be not truly science but like it. It is seen as an ideology and thus intolerant.

Religious people label any science they don't want to hear as scientism!

But think of the numbers of irreligious scientists! That should tell us that most of what is called scientism can't be and most who are accused of are being misrepresented. 93% of National Academy of Sciences members dismissed the notion of a person-like God who you can pray to and have a relationship with. Incredibly believers make a lot out of the remaining 7% who do believe! They go on as if that is all that matters out of those brilliant scientific minds. But intelligent people do not necessarily get it all right or agree. The low percentage matches the notion that the scientists are just mistaken. And their belief is not intense so it is relatively unimportant. They are not St Teresa of Avilas. It does not mean they claim there is strong or sufficient scientific evidence for a God - even if there were a designer it would not mean it is like the Christian God or personal in any sense. And as for "prayer" it is not necessarily always seen as a way to make things happen in the sense that God will not do them if not asked. It can be more about acceptance of what comes than anything else. The 7% persuades some that we have a god shaped hole and that is what is driving this 7%! That is a bad thing if there is no evidence for God.

And it may be only the 7% that significantly has that hole and a god shaped hole can be there without a God putting it there. If there is such a hole then it is an authentic need or is it down to some form of psychological damage? Whatever! The lesson is that if religionists do not like how science forces you to ignore God as a real working power then science opposes God. To ignore the God who by definition is too important to be ignored alone is enough to be categorised as scientific atheism.

Scientism is supposed to say that only science gives knowledge while the softer view is that it gives us not the perfect way to know but THE NOT A reasonably accurate way. Hard scientism says that there is nothing known except what science has demonstrated. This is supposed to be going too far. If it is or if it isn't it is still the case that religion in method is against science. Religion gives no tests to even ensure that your spiritual experiences are real. It has no tests at all never mind a scientific one. Science does not need hard or soft scientism in order to be against or a threat to religion.

It is clear that soft scientism, and that is the one that stands out as true to most of us, is an additional refutation of religion.

Scientism is a pejorative term beloved of religionists and their sympathisers which is used to prejudice religious believers against science. It tries to make out that science is or can be dogmatic and bigoted against religion and refuse to learn from it. Science is about questions and these questions are invariably sceptical. It is like, "I will not believe this unless I have to on account of the evidence." Science is not belief in the normal sense but critical belief that it continually tests and challenges. Scientism as in deciding religion is just not true without caring about evidence is not science and good science is always labelled as scientism when the believers do not like its findings.

Science does not hate anything that is not scientific. It just ignores it. It does not say that science alone gets at the truth. There are truths that science will never verify but which are nevertheless true.

When people say science is a faith even if not a religious faith, they are referring to the fact that science has faith and belief that nature will work a certain way - it is orderly and regular. But science is based on experience and on doubting that experience and checking it out rather than belief and faith. Science tells you what will happen in the natural world and it happens. Science observes the universe and how it works - it is not making assumptions.

Is it true that science has faith or belief in reason? Some answer that reason for the scientist is a tool that works and that is all. You do not need to believe in the existence of your screwdriver to use it. A mad man who believes there is no screwdriver in his hand though he senses that there is could still use it. If you think a calculator is always wrong that will not stop you getting the right answer as long as you follow the instructions.

Some religious people say that when science acts like a religion, a conflict will appear with say Christianity. They seem to mean something like this. "Science cannot prove that Jesus rose from the dead even if he did so it is a religious truth - if it really happened. But when it enforces the view that Jesus did not rise, it is acting like religion in the sense that it is putting forward doctrines that are not scientifically verifiable." If scientists become religious in that way, if their unbelieving dogmatism can be understood as religious, then that creates an interesting problem. Should such scientists have the same rights as religion under the law? If science makes dogmas out of what has not been tested then that is not science. That is the bottom line and the religious people are setting up a straw man.

Those who oppose scientism as they call it seem to have a problem with science stating its teachings are factual. They would deny we know anything before they would let the truth and honesty of science refute or threaten their faith.

## Interpretation

Some contend that science is fact and religion is opinion. To this it is answered by believers that when you are given facts you must interpret them. You can interpret them wrong. Believers are saying then that what is called scientific fact is really just scientific interpretation. Its not really fact as far as science is concerned. We are told that the need for interpretation means that what science says is not necessary fact. But religion must have a bigger problem with interpretation than science does for it does not use tests and methods to get at the truth and no

religion agrees with the next religion. Science cares about evidence which gives it little scope for misinterpretation. Science does all it can to avoid interpretations being imposed on its findings. It aims for what speaks for itself and avoids the need for interpretation. If it misses that aim it does not want to. Religion is really exaggerating science's danger of misinterpreting. Is science misinterpreting or could it be when it says a cancer tumour that is easy to remove must be cut away? Science tests and retests in order to minimise the need for interpretation.

If science has a handicap in the area of interpretation, then why does science have a greater level of agreement than religion has? The answer is that science's claims are testable and religion's are not.

What is not testable should be treated with caution - if you get involved then do not get too involved!

Finally

It is said that science cannot give us morality or something that is an okay substitute for it. Science gives you a ought and without an ought you cannot even think about moralising or working out what is morally right or wrong. Science does have an ought – stick to observation. This is so reasonable and simple and we must see that condemnations of scientism are just nasty.

In the religious vocabulary, scientism is an insulting word to describe the view that science is the only reliable way to know anything, that anything that science cannot answer is not worth discussing - eg morality and religion. Scientism is said to be hostile to anything that isn't scientific - it is called bigoted. In fact if such biased bigoted scientism exists, its bad effects are minimal and its servants are few. Usually if science comes up with some truth that religion despises, it tries to call it scientism in order to make it look bad. Religion accuses science of going across the boundary into religion where it does not belong but religion itself intrudes on the realm of science.

Hard Scientism is the belief that the only truths are those verified by science and that there is no reason to believe anything else. It doesn't claim that scientific truth is the only truth. It only claims that scientific truth is the only believable truth.

Soft Scientism is the belief that there is reason to believe things that are not verified by science. But it teaches that science is the best way to discover truths. It teaches that science is the most authoritative way.

To describe scientism is to see that it is correct and does not really involve bias. Religious belief cannot be as important as testable scientific belief. That is why scientism is right. It is that simple.

Science is about observation and reporting it. It does not have an agenda and when it does it is not science. There are better suspects for having an agenda than science!

A science theory, to be valid, must explain everything but it cannot do that if paranormal or godly or spiritual powers can tamper. Even if they do not tamper they still look as if they do and that is as bad.