

# The divide between science and religion essay example

[Education](#), [Discipline](#)



Over the years, science and religion have been presented as diabolically opposed to each other, but this does not always have to be the case. Nonetheless, it is important to study scientific processes independently. Broadly speaking, science is a body of knowledge which involves the systematic study and interpretation of natural and physical phenomena. One of the interesting things about science is that there is always something new to learn; therefore, science is not static. People who are immersed in the study and development of one or more sciences are known as scientists. Scientists are human beings, with the same capacity to make mistakes as everyone else, but there are some unwritten rules which govern the discipline. Consequently, scientists are expected to maintain a professional touch in their work and contribute to the development of the scientific field. This calls for the scientists to discern the implications of their work and the potential limitations. Although some people feel that scientific work should consider human ethical and moral values, it is important to look at scientific phenomenon using a purely scientific approach.

Science involves an in-depth study of what appears to be conventional. It goes further to include a logical explanation of natural and physical phenomena. As a result, it is common for scientists to inquire of complex natural processes and come with plausible explanations. This is what scientists are obligated to do and drive the growth of the discipline. In some cases, scientific work differs from religious teachings. This prompts some people to opine that one of the two disciplines is wrong, and the other is right. However, scientists who have been dedicated to their work have argued that the two disciplines do not have to be mutually interdependent. It

is true that there are some points of divergence, but this should not prompt people to try and merge the two together.

One of the early scientists who entrenched this was Charles Darwin. Darwin was dedicated to the study of scientific processes. For instance, during one of his journeys on the Beagle, Darwin noticed the variation of species from one location to another. This led him to come up with the theory of evolution. In his theory Darwin opines that the variations could have resulted from: (1) natural selection whereby the environment selects the species which aids its survival (2) action of the environment whereby the non-adaptive varieties do not survive (3) use and disuse of some parts. The theory of evolution appeared to be a diversion of the popular creation theory found in the Genesis chapter of the bible.

Apart from Darwin, other scientists have also supported the idea that there is no conflict of interest between religion and science. Stephen Gould, for instance, uses Darwin, who himself was trained as a minister, as an example to put across this point. Gould argues that the creation version is more of religion and philosophy than science. Therefore, there is no need to try and advance the creation theory as a scientific fact because it is not.

Nonetheless, there has been a distinct divide between religion and science. In some cases, both disciplines have gone to the extent of presenting “facts” which point out the weaknesses of the other. However, according to Gould, scientific processes should be viewed using a purely scientific approach only.

For instance, Gould points out some things which puzzled theologians; they could not convincingly explain why nature’s victims suffer. Gould wondered,

“ If God good and creation reveals God’s goodness, why do nature’s creations suffer?” Gould goes further to use the mysterious ways of the ichneumon wasp to explain this point further. The parasite (ichneumon) kills its host in a complex and brilliant manner. However, the behavior of this insect should be viewed as nonmoral -it is neither good nor bad. The concept of evil is limited to human beings only. The nature is not concerned with it, and if we apply morality to nature, we would then view nature as a reflection of our own beliefs and values. Instead, we should view nature as something which is strictly apart from human values. Gould is also opposed to the idea of seeing the animal world as ethical as the human world. Although this thought is inviting, Gould asks us to reject it. Instead, we should see the world as it is.

Gould uses metonymy -the idea of using a part of something to represent the whole- to make his point. The behavior of the ichneumon stands for the nature of God; therefore, those who use the animal behavior metaphorically like that of people contradict themselves by rationalizing the behavior using theological arguments. Therefore, it is important to use a purely scientific approach to science. Science can be used to explain how we are here, while religion can be used to explain why we are where we are. This would save us the trouble of looking at scientific work from a human moral and ethical point of view.

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