

Science and Religion

Or

Science and Morality

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Science Without Religion is a Mess

When man appeared on this earth for the first time, he was a totally helpless creature. He was terribly afraid of the wild creatures around him. Natural phenomena like lightning thunder, earthquakes, floods and drought used to frighten him to the bones. He was at a loss to understand the appearance of solar and lunar eclipses, falling meteors or comets in the sky. Some of those who were accepted as wiser amongst the group invented the concept of religion and God. The ignorant men got something to fall back upon, something to pray to for help in time of crisis, disease and death. Religion then took several forms and shapes, good as well as bad.

As civilization advanced further and science started marking its appearance, some people started asking how and why things happened as they did. They started calling for solid convincing explanations for all observable phenomena. This new knowledge and old faiths came into clash with each other and gave birth to opposing camps of science and religion. The clash continues even today.

Science has come to dominate the world in the modern times. It has made man jump forward with a leap, built up a glittering civilization and opened up innumerable avenues for the growth of knowledge. Man has reached the moon. He is exploring space. Yet there is something essential that is lacking some vital element that is missing. Science has ignored the ultimate purpose of life. It looks at the facts alone. It has cut off all relations from religion which has always helped in the development of humanity.

The recent advancements in the field of science and technology have further alienated man from religion. We are at the threshold of a new era. The scientific achievements have turned distance into nothing. These have enabled us to go round the globe within hours and carry on conversation over long distances between places as far away as New York and Moscow. With the help

of science man of situation. But along with all these have come vice, greed, selfishness, and depravity. Machines have led to capitalism, exploitation, unemployment, ever crowding and slums. The monster of science and technology has run amok. It has become a danger to the finer values of life.

It is clear that humanity has fast withdrawn from God and Church. Science has occupied the chaste citadel of pious religion. This has resulted in a confusion in the mind of man.

Man, certainly knows what is right and what is wrong. He knows the differences between virtue and vice. Everybody has his beliefs, values and ideals. We may not profess any religion but we cannot afford to be irreligious.

Whether we are conscious of it or not, most of us worship at the invisible altar of some unknown God, some ideal, personal or international and offer sacrifices to it. Religion is a safety valve and it will continue ensuring some safe course for humanity. Voltaire, a great French philosopher rightly remarked, "Even if God did not exist it would be necessary to invent Him." Science without religion would be complete mess.

The discord between the scientist and the seer is very unfortunate. They treat each other with suspicion. Each feel that there is danger to his existence from the other. Of late, however, there has been a realization that the energies of both these forces, instead of being contradicting and self-cancelling, be harnessed and channelized for the welfare of humanity. If science and religion join hands, the world can certainly be transformed into a heaven of peace and prosperity.

Religion does not necessarily mean dogmatism, fanaticism or superstition, it only aims at providing a moral base to human life-style and actions. Religion does come into clash with knowledge. In fact, any knowledge devoid of morality is suicidal. If true religion or morality is allowed to drive the ship of knowledge in the high seas of life, it would certainly become a boon and blessing.