

SCIENCE AND RELIGION
GRADED PAPER 2
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The thesis and arguments

You attempted an interesting thesis—that there are deeper and more significant commonalities between science and religion. Unfortunately, you claimed that the similarity was in the methods, and then failed to support that claim. In presenting the approach to devising new theories/doctrines, you highlighted the **differences** in their methods. You highlighted that both applied reason to their domains, but that is a loose claim that you were unable to make more specific. Finally, you showed that both Christianity and science faced harsh opposition at their inception; that claim is true, but its import is unclear.

Most of your arguments are meandering and filled with irrelevant detail. None of the body of your text persuaded me of anything; in fact, it was difficult to determine what the target of each argument was. You conclude with a standalone statement that, “Science was inevitable.” Unfortunately, you do not make clear **why** it was.

The writing

Your writing suffers from frequent misuse of words. In too many places, the wrong term is used, making your meaning difficult to decipher. Your wording is sometimes contorted and confusing. The structure of your arguments also needs to be tightened and more directed.

Items marked on the paper

- (1) So they both search for truth (whatever that is). OK, but that hardly allows you to conclude their their **methods** are related.
- (2) If you’re trying to convince me that science and religion use similar methods for inquiry, this paragraph isn’t helping. It’s loosely organized, and its direction is unclear. Worse, it seems to emphasize the **differences** in methods.
- (3) I am baffled. What is this history about the early Christians and then early scientists supposed to prove? Why the detail? Even if I accept your accounts, it’s not at all clear what parallel I’m supposed to draw, nor what its import would be.

Grade: C+

Reading the Fine Print: Finding Connections between Science and Christianity

Science and religion ~~work to~~ explain the world and its purpose, respectively. Even though science—what is contemporarily considered science—arouse in the 16th century (Russell 7), it would be wrong to categorize its model for extrapolating truth separate of Christianity's. Science takes what can be observed and experimented on to explain the physical world. The scientific

Why not?

wrong word

wrong word as from

awk

process has gained world-wide acceptance as a fundamental approach for observing and perceiving the world. Christianity views a person's faith as the main proprietor of answers to otherwise unanswerable questions. The Holy Scriptures serve as the legend of which the faithful may look to for guidance. The processes for finding truth in science and Christianity are similar

wrong word

what?

to

Huh?

because they factor in evidence and experience. Even though one uses a systematic approach and the other uses the Bible, both work to provide a better understanding of the world; they are in a perpetual search for truth. What separates the two is a disagreement of the other's resources to

①

grammar

word choice

find answers. In his book *Religion and Science*, Bertrand Russell states that "the conflict between theology and science [is] quite as much a conflict between authority and observation" (16).

Christians and scientists strive to conceptualize and identify processes through similar means: too vague. These are quite different in each field. evidence, reason, and a reusable method. Even though scientists and faithful Christians base

So far, unconvincing.

facts on different terms, the methods of procuring evidence, the search for truth and their historical patterns wishy washy. share commonalities.

In the search for evidence, science starts from the ground up, using observable information to see too vague & informal. "Science starts, not from large assumptions, but from particular facts discovered by observation of experiment" (Russell 13). Nothing is excludable in

meaning?

vague

the search for scientific truth, at least until otherwise proven wrong. Science can cast a larger net

to get a wider array of answers. In the search for answers, scientists, with the concrete evidence to

back up such claims, have given us an alternative way to look at the world's universal position *what?*

along with explanations for life processes. We can live twice as long as we could have a century

ago thanks to medical and technological advancement. We know we are made up of trillions of

cells and that atoms and elements make up everything. We can attribute reasons for natural

Not helpful examples.

occurrences to natural phenomena. Because of science, the world seems more understandable.

"A religious creed differs from a scientific theory in claiming to embody eternal and absolutely

certain truth, whereas science is always tentative, expecting the modifications in its present

theories will sooner or later be found necessary" (14). Christianity takes the omnipotent approach;

since God is all knowing and almighty, this fact provides enough evidence to explain everything. *which? then why didn't it?*

If God is not the reason then it is unnatural, ungodly and therefore evil.

Relevance?

As far as reasoning and methodology are concerned, science and Christianity share a

common goal but differ tremendously in reaching it. *w.c.* "Scientific researchers propose hypotheses

as explanations of phenomena, and design experimental studies to test these hypotheses. These

steps must be repeatable in order to dependably predict any future results." By using the

scientific process observable, empirical, and measurable information is subject to specific

principles of reasoning. Christianity, again, sees the issue of reason and method as how well the

word of God can be applied. What the Church decreed as reason was to be accepted as such, or

else. The Bible, if it does not explicitly exemplify how to answer something, guides people to the

answer. One example given by Russell in which a man finds the secular answer for why he

should not commit murder to be inadequate, he finds reason (and fear) enough not to commit

murder once God is said to find the man accountable in the afterlife (Russell 11). Accordingly,

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R

Huh?

grammar

Why not? Justification?

there should be no further inquiry beyond the fact that God is the reason to do certain things and abstain from others. He holds the evidence, He is the reason, and only He knows the method.

Further questioning of Christianity's method has led to persecution, excommunication or worse.

What is your point?

Similar how?

Science and religion go through similar pains to explain our world. The histories of

science and Christianity intersect many times because of a pattern of adaptability, ideological and fundamental revolution that only differs in the details. Early Christians were persecuted by the Roman Empire because they lacked piety and were suspected of trying to undermine Roman civil order. For the first 300 years, Christianity wore a scarlet letter that gave the Romans reason enough to blame its believers for city fires, famine, spread of diseases and civil uprisings. The torture, sacrifice and stoning of early Christians was a result of their heretic forms of praise.

Even though it was not the only monotheistic religion at the time, Christianity was seen as a frangely mangled metaphor Like who? thorn in the thumb of the Roman Empire by many contemporary scholars and philosophers

(persecution ceased with the first crowned Christian Roman Emperor, Constantine).

Too simple. Relevance?

Science also faced ridicule, persecution and deadly opposition during its infant years. For centuries, nothing could refute what the Church said to be true. The Church's political power had also made it the only place where knowledgeable men could go. However, we see a change in this monopoly of knowledge by the time power is shared by the Monarchs? Church and wealthy families.

The first "scientists" were apart from the Church in the sense that their explanations had less to do with God and more so with observations in nature. Even though most of the first proposals of heliocentrism, Earth's sphericity, and the idea of antipodes were attributed as alternate meanings of God's will, the Church could not allow itself (or the Holy Scriptures) to be put into question. "Those who questioned creeds weakened the authority, and might diminish the incomes, of Churchmen...they were thought to be undermining morality...Churchmen felt that

Relevance?

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had good enough reason to fear the revolutionary teaching of the men of science” (Russell 9). Copernicus withheld any attempt of publishing his idea of the Revolutions for more than thirty years. Peter Apian, according to Russell in *A History of The Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, had the “foremost duty was to teach SAFE science,” and could not show support of Copernican theory. To avoid the stigma the Church associated with alternative theories, early scientists closeted their ideas

Why?
Science was inevitable. There has never been a time in human history when the current authority was not met by skepticism. Don't anthropomorphize. Science did not have the intention of becoming the enemy of anyone; because it was so different (non-Christian) it immediately divided thought into two schools. Even though each group finds truth via reason and evidence from different places, No justification. science and religion use similar models of adjustment to new observations and ideas. They perceive, question, challenge, and—if the new idea is reasonably supported with evidence—accept or adapt. The Church adapted to a growing belief in one god, salvation, and free will. The scientific community was the result of a growing concern of what constituted truth and the connection between what is observed and what laws governs us. In this respect, finding similarities between science and Christianity is comprehensible.