Only Science Addresses Reality?

Dr. Ray Bohlin comments on the hubris of Drs. Coyne and Cobb in their op-ed in Nature*, in which they claim that only science addresses reality. Religion, they say, must be silenced. This alarming sentiment has already met reality in California.*

Would it surprise you to hear that churches may eventually be prohibited from teaching any ideas contrary to Darwinian evolution? "No way!" you say. "The Constitution guarantees freedom of speech! The first amendment guarantees that Congress can pass no law restricting or promoting any religious exercise!"

Well, yes the Constitution does that, but be patient with me and I'll show why the answer to the opening question could be "yes."

In the current issue of Nature, probably the most prestigious science journal in the world, a letter to the editor appeared in the August 28, 2008 issue on page 1049. Two well-known evolutionary biologists, University of Chicago's Jerry Coyne and University of Manchester's Matthew Cobb wrote the letter to complain about a previous editorial expressing hope that the Templeton Foundation, which funds research into the relationship between science and religion, might bring about some helpful resolutions.

Coyne and Cobb couldn't disagree more:

> We were perplexed by your Editorial on the work of the Templeton Foundation…. Surely science is about material explanations of the world—explanations that can inspire those spooky feelings of awe, wonder and reverence in the hyper-evolved human brain.

> Religion, on the other hand, is about humans thinking that awe, wonder and reverence are the clue to understanding a God-built Universe…. ***There is a fundamental conflict here, one that can never be reconciled until all religions cease making claims about the nature of reality*** (emphasis added).
>
> The scientific study of religion is indeed full of big questions that need to be addressed, such as why belief in religion is negatively correlated with an acceptance of evolution. One could consider psychological studies of why humans are superstitious and believe impossible things….
>
> …***You suggest that science may bring about "advances in theological thinking." In reality, the only contribution that science can make to the ideas of religion is atheism*** (emphasis added).

Coyne and Cobb clearly state that religion has no authority to make claims about reality. If science is allowed to persist in this audacious distortion of religion and science, then any kind of teaching that is critical of any aspect of naturalistic evolution would be considered a negative influence on society as a whole. Religion is seen as crossing its constitutionally protected borders.

Biology teachers constantly complain now that what they teach about evolution is contradicted by the churches their students attend. This is obviously quite frustrating. If science is the only branch of knowledge that is allowed to make claims about reality, then religious teachings should not be allowed to interfere.

You may still be thinking that I'm taking this too far. Consider though that the California state university system already refuses to give credit for high school science courses that include anything beyond naturalistic evolution. Many Christian private school graduates in California are finding that their science courses are not accepted at state

universities. Essentially that means you don't get in unless you can make those credits up by taking junior college science courses that meet the evolution-only standard.

State governments may easily decide that they need to help these religious school graduates out by requiring that these religious schools not be allowed to teach religious material that contradicts state-mandated standards. It's a violation of the separation of church and state, after all!

If you ever questioned the importance of the evolution/Intelligent Design controversy, I hope you see the point now. Unless we can convince a sufficient minority in the science community that science is limited and the subject of origins is one of those limitations, we may not be able to legally teach students anything about creation or Intelligent Design.

While Coyne and Cobb certainly don't represent all scientists, they are not alone! Trust me. I watched a video recently of Jerry Coyne making a presentation at a scientific meeting where he basically made the very same claim. NO one objected. He was applauded enthusiastically. Watch it for yourself here. While the whole lecture is worth watching, the last eight minutes when he presents a slide with just the word "Religion" is the key segment.

Coyne and others are trying to establish what Nancy Pearcey called the fact/value split in her book *Total Truth*. To Coyne science is based on fact. Only material explanations are allowed in science since religion is based on personal values and have nothing to do with facts. Therefore if you try to inject your personal values (Creation, Intelligent Design) into the world of facts (science) this is a violation of the rules of science. It's not allowed.

According to Jerry Coyne speaking in the video, the only way to increase the acceptance of evolution is to reduce or

eliminate the influence of religion. The two are incompatible! Coyne is unable to see that he also has a worldview, materialism, which influences how he interprets the data of science. He erroneously believes he is being objective about his interpretation.

This is a cultural battle as well as a scientific battle. For more information and resources from Probe to help you educate yourself and others about evolution and Intelligent Design see browse our articles at www.probe.org. If we don't "tear down strongholds" like this, we may find ourselves behind impenetrable, silent walls.

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"Can I Seek God and Not Believe Only in Christ?"

Hello, I have a question about faith. If I am seeking God and doing his will in order to see and know the Truth, what should I do if I'm not led to a exclusive belief in Jesus Christ. I know what it is to seek God in sincerity. If I am seeking God sincerely and still not able to make a resolute decision on Jesus or am even led to decide certainly that there are other paths to salvation, what should I do? Should I listen to God speaking to my heart or should I listen to the apostles of Jesus who wrote the New Testament. I feel the typical Christian answer would either be to say "Listen to the Bible because your heart can deceive you, and the voice of God you hear could be the deceiver" or to say "If you are really seeking God sincerely, then you will definitely be led to Jesus."

. . . Like I said, I know what it is to sincerely seek God. This is something I know instinctually, the way I know how to walk and breathe. I have sought God sincerely and consistently for short spans of time, usually last no longer than a few hours sometimes days at best. I find that it takes an extremely supply of focus and energy to do so, I often become weary and lose heart.

. . .Is the answer then only to DO? To take action? To seek until I find, Knock until it's opened? Ought I to give up speculating altogether about who will meet me at the door until I have met him face to face? The hardest thing for me about Christianity is that it seems to say that I must decide to accept and follow Christ before God reveals himself to me, and then as a reward for accepting Jesus by the testimony of others God will eventually reveal himself. Shouldn't it be the other way around? Shouldn't I be perfectly content and justified in the eyes of God and all Christians to seek with all sincerity and earnestness, waiting patiently for God to open the door and reveal himself to me? I believe the promise of God that he answers those who knock. I want to knock until God answers…. I feel like in the past I have knocked until I became impatient and went to the neighbors house to ask them about God. Perhaps that's what I'm doing right now for writing all of this. Anyway, thank you for reading my question, I know that I must pray.

Dear _____,

I've been thinking about your question much of yesterday and today.

I'm curious what is the obstacle to putting your trust in Christ alone. There has to be something other than logic and reason. I sense you have pursued truth and have enough information to know, but you just don't want to. I mean, I guess you already know Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father except by Me," and

then He promised to rise from the dead and delivered on the promise.

If He's not the only way, why did He come? Why did He die? What's the point of the resurrection?

And if He's not the only way, how would you know?

But I don't think that's the issue. I think there may be a heart issue that is keeping you from putting all your eggs in the "Jesus basket." Want to tell me what it is?

And if I'm wrong, let me ask you this. Have you ever simply asked, "God, if you're there and You want to have a relationship with me, would You please let me know in some way that I'll know it's You?" And then taking your hands off the timing issue? Is it possible that you have been spoiled by this microwave, instant culture we live in, and you gave up waaaaay too soon?

The God you want (I know you do!! That is AWESOME!!) is the same God who said, "Be still and know that I am God." It doesn't say, for a few hours till you give up and decide I don't want to talk to you. This is the same God who said, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." He wants a relationship with you, _____. But He wants your full attention and He wants you to wait expectantly for him.

Sue Bohlin

Dear Sue,

Thank you so much for your reply.

Those are very good questions that you asked me. You are right about there being something other than logic and reason keeping me from putting my trust in Christ alone and also about there being issues in my heart preventing me.

A couple of my more surface issues are these; I have so much

trouble separating Christ from Christian doctrine. There is so much conflicting Christian doctrine and Rhetoric, and so much man-made bologna being taught in the church that it's hard for me to see Christ himself, apart from all of that. Many times when I read his words, I am blown away by how absolutely contrary his doctrine is to that which I hear in the churches. Sometimes when I read his words I really do fall in love with him and believe in him, but then at other times I become confused.

Another problem I have is an intensely deep fear of being deceived. I look at our world today and see how utterly deceived the whole world is. I even see good upstanding, moral Christians that believe many, many lies that have been told to them by the government and the media. . . . I know that I have done more evil in my life than I could ever understand and I am terrified of the judgment. I know that I am far from where I ought to be in my spiritual progress. I know that I need to be born again!!!

I think that the problem in my heart is fear. I am so afraid of being wrong. I know that if I truly make a leap of faith, there are many people who will be hurt and offended by it. I also know that I will be despised, and I am afraid of that. I know that walking the fence is much worse than making any decision. I know I need to make a decision. I've already decided many times to dedicate my life to Jesus Alone. But every time I've come to places of enormous doubt. Part of my reason I feel it's difficult to accept Christ alone, is I wonder how he could possibly take me seriously… I can't take myself seriously because I made such sincere promises and commitments to Christ in the past, only to doubt and lose faith months later…

I'm glad to be writing about all of this and forcing myself to really think about and intensely question these issues. This has been a great help to me, to closely consider my real reasons for my lack of faith… I'm sure the deeper I

investigate, the more I'll find my reasons aren't really what I thought they were.

Thank you again for your time.

_____, you are SO CLOSE!!!

Please let me encourage you: forget about the doctrine (though it is important). Forget about the disconnect between church systems and the Savior. Forget about your fears. For right now, focus on Jesus alone. He IS Christianity. He IS life! Please hear me: just focus on Jesus alone for right now and ask Him to show you Himself as truth.

I understand your fear of deception. The enemy wants to deceive you. But deception can only flourish when people discard the truth. I can sense you PASSIONATELY want to know truth, to embrace it, to be transformed by it.

So embrace Jesus, who said He IS the truth.

Allow me to pray for you:

Oh Lord Jesus, I come before Your throne on behalf of this precious man who is so very dear to You. Thank You for dying for his sins and coming back to life so _____ could know real, abundant life in every molecule of his being! He is confused and muddled but You offer him the peace he longs for. Allow him to hear Your voice calling him. Allow Him to sense Your call to trust You completely. Clear away the mists that keep him from falling at Your feet and calling You Lord and God. I know his heart wants to, Lord Jesus. He wants so much to be wooed and captured by Your love that will make him the man he longs to be, a man after Your own heart who will be strong and courageous because he not only knows WHO he is, he knows WHOSE he is. Give _____ grace to relent from his strong-arming, keeping You at bay, and surrender to the joy and peace and RELIEF that awaits him. I do pray for him, Lord, that You would give him what he needs to turn the corner. Let

him hear You whispering how much You love him and want him today.

Blessings to you, dear one.

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