

Does Science Require Faith?

According to many intellectuals, “*Science deals with facts, while religion deals with faith.*” These persons often endorse scientism—the idea that “*science is the only source of truth.*” According to them, if something is not empirically (scientifically) verifiable, it is a matter of faith and should not be trusted. How can Bible-believing Christians respond?

One way to answer is to expose the self-refuting nature of scientism and the philosophical presumptions of science. For instance, when encountering scientism (the belief that *science is the only source of truth*) we should explain that scientism is not science—it is philosophy. But, if the proposition “*science is the only source of truth*” is not science, and if “*science is the only source of truth,*” then the statement “*science is the only source of truth*” is self-refuting and necessarily false.

In addition to refuting scientism, we can also show that science requires faith. Since most advocates of scientism are unaware that science requires faith, this process requires “gentleness and respect.” The faith-based presumptions of science include logic, reliability of senses, causality, and objective morality—all of which entail faith in some aspect of a theistic worldview.

Logic. Although science requires logic, science cannot prove logic. Since all attempts to prove logic require logic, one cannot prove logic without circular reasoning. Likewise, one cannot disprove logic—for all attempts to do so demand logic. Disproving logic using logic is like refuting the truthfulness of mathematics using mathematics. It cannot be done—for doing so requires the truthfulness of mathematics. In short, scientists must have faith in logic. Since logic is grounded in the nature of God, all scientist—albeit unknowingly—have a degree of faith in God.

The reliability of sense perception. Although science requires our senses (such as sight, taste, touch, hearing, and smell) to make empirical observations, science cannot prove that these senses are reliable. Attempts to show that our senses are reliable require the very thing in question—the reliability of our senses. For instance, although we can have our eyes checked by an optometrist, this exam requires our senses to know that we are really in a doctor’s office and not home in bed. In short, since science cannot prove the reliability of our senses without begging-the-question, scientists must presume, by faith, that our senses are generally reliable. Once again, we see that science requires faith.

Causality. According to the law of causality, nothing happens without a sufficient cause. For instance, if a ball is rolling across a field, this law presumes that something caused it to do so. Since science cannot prove this law, scientists must accept causality by faith. If scientists abandon this law, science itself—the search for causes—will cease to exist. Here again, science requires faith.

Objective morality. Although scientists cannot prove that objective morality exists, science requires objective morality. For instance, science requires scientists to present their research objectively and accurately with honesty and integrity. If scientists embraced the subjective

moral relativism endorsed by postmodern academia, science could not function. Since the moral argument for the existence of God demonstrates that objective morality requires God, scientists must believe in God for science to work. Once more, science requires faith.

Although science requires faith, not any faith will do. Science requires presumptions that stem from the nature of God—namely objective morality and logic. Thus, atheistic scientists betray their faith in atheism when they borrow these concepts from the theistic worldview. If they did not, they could not practice good science—for good science requires good philosophy. Good philosophy, however, is grounded in the nature of God. Hence, intellectuals claiming “*Science deals with facts, while religion deals with faith*” are mistaken. Good science requires good faith.