

Galileo and the Church: Dealing with Tensions

Series: Where Science and Religion Meet

1. When you look into the heavens, what do you see? Just Physical? More?
2. Up until the 1600s, both science & religion have worked together, but then the landscape changed
 - a. Ex. #1 - The Galileo Incident (1600s): Church denounced Galileo for heresy, tried him by Inquisition, and then forced him to renounce his belief that the planets revolved around the sun (Copernicus – start of scientific rev.)
 - b. The church made a critical mistake when they began talking about science rather than religion, because science simply is not the church's business.
 - c. Ex. #2 – Richard Dawkins (late 1900s) – zoologist, ethologist; "The big lie is that God or some omnipotent creator made and oversees the world."
 - d. (Scientist) Dawkins is making a critical mistake when talks about religion rather than science, because religion simply is not Dawkins' business
3. When the church starts making scientific claims, or when science starts making religious claims, in a sense, you might say they are both "out of bounds"
4. The Domain of Science - The physical realm; Experiments; Data collection; The formation and testing of hypotheses; Very specific; It explains the "how" of creation; It explains the mechanics of creation
5. The Domain of Religion - What is the purpose? What is the nature? Why does it exist? Why does life & the physical world exist? What are we supposed to be doing? What does it all mean?
6. Cross those boundaries and each side loses both credibility and the potential of discovering "real truth," because now they are speaking from prejudice about issues they are not qualified to discuss
7. HOWEVER, just because boundaries exist, it doesn't mean science and religion are mutually exclusive
8. Moving towards an answer: MUSIC
 - a. If you want to know where science & religion meet, look to how music picks up where the mechanism leaves off.
 - b. Music gives the mechanism purpose and meaning; but both work together
 - c. Science teaches us about the mechanics of the world we live in, however, religion is what gives our world purpose and meaning, and it is what makes our world truly beautiful.
 - d. Take away God and the human soul, and everything we know is futile and without meaning or purpose... we are a cosmic accident, dust that will be forever forgotten
 - e. Add God and the human soul, and all of existence finds purpose, meaning, and direction that is leading, not towards futility, but towards a future that is full of possibilities, both in this life and in the life to come.