

Cosmic Chemistry

Make a search on the subject of science and religion, and it will take only a few clicks to convince you that you have stepped into a war zone.

In comment threads on almost every conceivable subject in science—from bioethics and psychology to geology and cosmology—you will find hostile exchanges and name calling from two sides which you are convinced would never meet across a negotiating table—even if the United Nations called a ceasefire.

There is what we might call, for convenience, the “science side”. They view themselves as the voice of reason. They believe they are working to roll back the tide of ignorance and superstition that has enslaved mankind since we crawled out of the primeval slime. If I can summarise their position, it is this:

Science is an unstoppable force for human development that will deliver answers to our many questions about the universe, and solve many, if not all, of our human problems: disease, energy, pollution, poverty. At some stage in the future, science will be able to explain everything, and answer all our needs.

They may also be assuming that, at some stage in the future, science will provide the answers to at least some of our big questions in life: Where do we come from? What are we here for? What is the meaning of our existence?

At the other extreme, there is what we might for convenience call the “God side”. They hold that a divine intelligence is behind everything there is and everything we are. They are looking for, and even claim to have found, the answers to the same big questions that scientists ask, but in a very different place. They look to the complexity and wonder of the universe and our astonishingly rich and diverse blue planet, and find it to be self-evident that there is a wonderful mind behind our beautiful and amazing world. They seem surprised that there could be people who do not see things this way.

Sometimes the result is fighting and name-calling in intemperate encounters that generate more heat than light.

It is therefore not surprising that many people conclude that *God and science do not mix*; like when you drop metallic sodium or potassium onto water, there is a lot of fizzing and fire and heat ending with a loud bang.

But what if there were another way of looking at this whole business? What if we have been fooled into a pointless war based on misinformation and wrong thinking? It would not be the first time. What if there were a different kind of cosmic chemistry to the one that ends with an explosion?

(Can Science Explain Everything? by John C. Lennox, The Good Book Company in partnership with The Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics, and The Zacharias Institute, Kindle, 2019, Page 3 of 113)