

Religion, science and philosophy are seemingly unrelated until one considers the core of each division. There are definite reasons as to why we flock to these three things and each can satisfy the maladies stemming from the human condition in its own way. I believe religion, science and philosophy are simply three different methods on how to understand the same broad subject; life and where we, as thinking/feeling beings, fit into it.

The core of religion promotes the belief of a higher power and the concept of being a compassionate, loving person towards all. Different religions simply have different ways of going about this and different structures or formats for worship and daily living. Religion is sought after to feel that needed comfort of having purpose and having answers about why we are here and what we're supposed to be doing. Religion gives us a format for **how to live**. Religion teaches us right vs. wrong, gives us motivation to be a good person, tells us how to deal with interpersonal relationships (how to treat others, when to get married, etc.), and tells us that we are **not alone**, that there is always a loving, almighty power greater than our mere human selves. Humans have a natural urge to feel meaningful. The phenomenon of religion is **meant to trigger** the feeling of sacred, pure connection. It is meant to instigate confidence in what we are doing as humans, that we are not meaningless beings passing through abstract societal "lives". No matter how much two religions may differ, the goal is to trigger this feeling in humans. For example, christianity and buddhism. The major difference is what these two different religions choose to call their higher power and the way they phrase the "rules" for living. Christianity believes in a God who has been very personalized. He is loving and all powerful. In order to maintain your relationship with him and eventually go to heaven, you must live life in an honest, loving way. Buddhism focuses less on the personality of their higher power and more on connecting with

**Comment [01]:** Right. This is a central feature of religions and some philosophy that is not present or at least not at the core of the identity of science.

**Comment [02]:** This much is present in such philosophies as Stoicism, Aristotle, Plato, Kant, and many other philosophies.

**Comment [03]:** Not present in most philosophy and not present in some religions.

**Comment [04]:** Phenomenon of religion is first and foremost a response, an experience, but then becomes a tradition that does attempt to preserve and "trigger" a re-connection to the sacred.

oneself. Opposed to the laws laid down in the Bible, the buddhists title their **“rules for living”** **The Eightfold Path** and the Four Noble Truths. At the end of the day, followers of these two religions are striving for the same thing- love, purpose, and serenity.

**Science has a factual basis opposed to the faith-based ways of religion**. Science involves careful experimental testing and produces (what is believed to be) concrete results through studying cause and effect. **Science is about logic opposed to emotion**. Scientists focus on finding **answers that can be explained in a clear, tangible way**. **The specific method for answering scientific questions, the experimental design, consists of an independent variable and a dependent variable. Other variables must be ruled out in order to adequately test the problem at hand and is often approached in a cause and affect formula. For example, “If students do their homework they will get better grades”**. The cause [which is being tested] is students doing their homework and the effect is that they will get better grades. As of right now, this is simply a hypotheses. A scientist would then carefully test this phenomenon to prove or disprove the original hypothesis.

Philosophy is **a theoretical division of the sciences**. **It tests our ideas on reality, our role on earth, and what we’re meant to do here. It discusses the same issues that come up in religion- Who are we? Why are we here? What is our purpose? Philosophy theorizes that by self-understanding, or realizing that we are vulnerable beings that crave connection and comfort, we will be able to solve the human issue of feeling empty, alone, and meaningless. We will be able to find our own meaning**. Unlike science, which strives to supply knowledge, philosophy strives to supply wisdom and understanding. Thus, it is not meant to teach as much as **draw out what is already inside of us**. **Philosophy is about analysis opposed to problem solving**.

**Comment [05]:** How similar are these? Why are these powerful guidelines in Buddhism but “commandments” in Christianity? What difference does this make in “emancipation.”

**Comment [06]:** Religions are fundamentally about the fact of suffering or error or need. Those are facts. What kind of facts is science concerned with?

**Comment [07]:** This is basically right but need clarification. Scientists do science because they are motivated to do so, which is emotion. How does emotion play a different role in religion and science?

**Comment [08]:** Buddhism does this, but what distinguishes it from science and philosophy, especially phenomenological philosophy since Buddhism is a form of phenomenology. Why is Christianity not phenomenological with regard to its beliefs and doctrines but it is phenomenological with regard to the core experience it responds to? How is Buddhism not at all metaphysical like this, but stays strictly within the scope of phenomenology (at least core Buddhism).

**Comment [09]:** This gives greater detail of the scientific method, which is good. However, the example you give is not scientific, though it does demonstrate a little what you are attempting to show. In your example, there could be serious intervening variables that would need to be screened out by an experimental design with operational definitions, use of control groups, etc. Intervening variables could be bringing an apple to the teacher, the competency level of the teacher, etc.. Furthermore, it could certainly be possible that a student would do their homework without the effect of better grades because it is a cluster of causes that leads to better grades, not a one on one cause between homework and grades.

**Comment [10]:** This is way too narrow. Need to try something else or at least indicate that this is one of many things philosophy can do, but is not its identity as you say here with the word “is.” Philosophy is not merely theoretical, sometimes not at all.

**Comment [11]:** This much is OK with some further clarity for example on how this testing is done. I do not know of a philosophy that deals specifically with “our role on earth” as a central philosophical question. That would be something SOME religions deal with, and only possibly tangential for some philosophies such as Stoicism with regard to Nature understood as a the context for understanding things in order live better. That would be matter of LOGIC and PHYSICS for the stoics that then can provide a basis for how to live in harmony with the nature of things.

**Comment [12]:** Some, but not most of philosophy attempts to do this.

**Comment [13]:** “inside” should be in quotes, since there is no inside or outside to experience. We use those terms to abstract certain features of our experience.

**Comment [14]:** Do some philosophers using analysis to solve philosophical problems is exactly what they do.

Science, religion and philosophy, as three ~~separate institutions~~, can easily divide people

If one becomes too wrapped up with the answers they find in *just* religion, *just* science, or *just* philosophy, they are losing the opportunity to simply see many sides of the same issue. Many people choose only one of these subjects to immerse themselves with even though each individual approach can help us find the answers we're looking for.

**Grade: 4/5**

**Comment [O15]:** Overlapping but distinguishable human activities

**Comment [O16]:** Right. A central issue in this essay. Show just how big an issues this is, why it is so critical to understand the difference between these, what the value and limits of each are. "Same issue" refers to meaningful experience of beings to whom things matter? Is that what these three have in common?