

A Compatible Coexistence between Christian Faith & Science

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I. Introduction:

Polkinghorne, a former prominent physicist, who is now an Anglican Priest, and has been knighted by Queen Elizabeth. In his own words: "... to someone like myself both a scientist and a Christian, it seems to be a natural and harmonious combination. The basic reason is simply science and theology are both concerned with the search for truth. ... They both share a common conviction there is truth to be sought.

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Freeman Dyson, another prominent physicist and the 2000 Templeton Prize recipient, suggested that in the human mind of there are two windows:

The world of science

The world of religion

They can harmoniously coexist and can compliment to each other, so long as they respect each other's autonomy.

Conflict occurs when one claims a monopoly on the truth.

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Two types of human knowledge:

1 . Science concerns our physical world. The *scientific knowledge* enables us to understand nature, the physical world.

2 . Religion concerns man's relationship with God beyond science. E.g. in the Bible, Abraham, is referred to as the "father of faith" a close friend of God. The personal relationships between King David and God can be found in Psalms. We will refer to the collective wisdoms of various religions in the world as the *spiritual knowledge*.

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II. Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. New Testament: John 8:32, KJV

- To Christians, the Bible is the authority of their spiritual knowledge. But Bible contains stories, metaphors and symbolisms ... which are beyond the realm of science. How should we analyze the content of the Bible?
- John 5:39, 40, NIV: Jesus told the Jews: You diligently study the Scriptures, because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to **come to me to have life**. So it is not sufficient to simply study the Bible.

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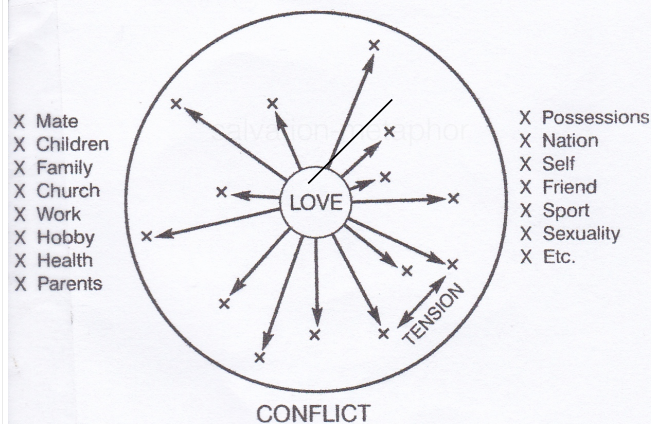
What is "come to me to have life"? — The Gospel

- John 3:16. For God so love the world that He sent His only Son, Jesus to the world. Whoever believes in Him should not be perished and have the eternal life.
- Key words:
 - ♣ **Love:** God loved the world He revealed Himself through, Jesus to the world.
 - ♣ **Believe in Him:** Jesus carried out the salvation plan — the cross, and the resurrection
 - ♣ **Eternal life:**
 - Starting point:** Holy spirit enters believer's heart (born again)
 - Ongoing process:** From believer's heart there is the outflow of the living water (fruits of holy spirit)

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A Contemporary Salvation Metaphor

Goerge Ricker's diagram
SELF



Elements of Ricker Diagram:

- Circle** represents human life
- Center** "Meaning giving focus" of life
- Partial list** of important aspects of life
- x:** Values in relationship to the center

If the self knows itself to be loved, absolutely and eternally, the center is occupied. Each value can be related to. Tension occurs only peripherally.

Example on variation of values with time: x=parent
During childhood, the x is close to the center
During mid-age: x moves away
Near retirement age: x could be close to center

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