

What Is A Religion?

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Part One

Introduction

What Is The Definition of Religion?

A religion is defined as a philosophy that includes a belief in the existence of gods or a belief in the existence of proof of the existence of gods.

To define religion to be a set of beliefs causes the concept of a religion to become applicable to any set of beliefs and thereby become so indefinite and unspecified that when the term religion is used in discussions then discussants too often must ask anyone using the term religion to define and thereby specify what they mean/intend when they use the term religion.

A philosophy is a set of concepts, principles and techniques for conceptualizing reality and solving problems.

What Is Reality?

Reality consists of the universe.

What Is The Universe?

The universe is comprised of space, time and matter-energy (m-e).

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Part Two

What Is Physics?

Physics is the discipline whose practitioners—physicists—intend to study the space, time and matter-energy that comprise the universe for the purpose of conceptualizing the universe and solving problems inre understanding the universe.

Finite = Having spatial, temporal, physical, or/and mathematical limitations and boundaries.

Infinite = Having no spatial, temporal, physical, or mathematical limitations or boundaries.

Space is the infinite volume; the single volume whose radii (rays) have startpoints (origins) but no endpoints

and therefore no boundaries; the place within which exist time and matter-energy and the people, objects and events who/which are comprised of matter-energy.

By its infinite size space eliminates any possibility of the existence of any space, time, matter-energy, people, objects, or events external to, prior to, beyond or outside or in addition to itself.

Because space is infinite in size and eliminates any possibility of the existence of anything beyond or outside or in addition to itself, space is infinite in duration over time.

Anything that exists that is not time or matter-energy exists within space, endures over time and is comprised of matter-energy.

Measurements in space are either coincidental measurements of distance by the use of chosen distances (space-intervals) or measurements of matter-energy density.

Time is (A) the measurement of duration; (B) the use of a chosen duration (physical cycle, recurring motion) for the measurement of other durations; (C) the use of a chosen duration for a time-interval for the measurement of the durations between the occurrences of multiple events, the durations of single events, and the durations (ages) of people and objects, for the generation in timepieces (clocks, watches, sundials, hourglasses, etc.) of their timerates (rates of ticking, tickrates), timepoints (timemarks on timelines), timelines (histories of timepoints, continuums of time), and timecounts (analog or digital accumulations by addition of timepoints on timelines from the past through the present into the future), and for the determination of the sequences of events, the simultaneities of events, the causalities and coincidentalities in events, and the changerates of events at all scalar levels in single and multiple reference frames and bodies.

When timepieces are distortable because their time-intervals and resulting timerates and time counts are distorted by accelerations and decelerations, the type of time they measure is distortable time, Einstein's time, relativity time, local time (the time measured within reference frames or upon reference bodies) but when time is measured by non-distortable timepieces that are adjusted to compensate for distorting effects caused by accelerations and decelerations the type of time they measure is Galileo-Newton time, universal time, absolute time.

Because the measurement of durations occurs within space and involve people, objects and events who/which exist in space and are comprised of matter-energy, and matter-energy has been proven to be indestructible and therefore infinite in duration over time (see the definition/specification of matter-energy), time, the measurement of duration, is infinite – the continuum of universal time is infinite in duration.

Matter-energy is the set of elementary and subatomic particles, atoms and molecules that comprise organic and inorganic entities (people, things, objects, events).

Matter-energy has been proven to be indestructible and therefore infinite in duration over time by experiments in chemistry (under glass jars) by Antoine and Marie Lavoisier circa 1777, in thermodynamics (heat transfer in steam engines) by Sadi Carnot circa 1826, and in the transformability of matter into energy ($E = mc^2$) and energy into matter ($m = E/c^2$) by Albert Einstein and others 1905 onward.

The indestructibility and infinite duration of matter-energy is physical evidence that is conclusive proof that the universe is infinite in duration over time.

The infinite size of space that eliminates any possibility of the existence of anything including gods external to, prior to, beyond, outside, or in addition to itself, the infinite duration of the universal continuum of time and the finite duration of matter-energy are spatial, temporal and physical evidence that is conclusive proof that the

universe has always existed and therefore was never caused nor created by gods.

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Part Three

What Is Philosophy?

Philosophy is the discipline (organized study) whose practitioners—philosophers—intend to discover or create and study the master set of concepts, principles and techniques that are the philosophers’ tools that can be used to conceptualize reality and to solve problems.

A philosopher is an individual who intends to discover or create and study the master set of concepts, principles and techniques that are the philosophers’ tools that can be used to conceptualize reality and to solve problems.

A philosophy is a set of concepts, principles and techniques that can be used to conceptualize reality and solve problems.

To conceptualize reality is to observe reality and to develop concepts and principles in the space, time, matter-energy that comprise the universe and in the people, objects and events (1) who/which exist in space, endure over time and are comprised of matter-energy and (2) who/which as causes cause as effects (A) changes of the physical states of pre-existing people, objects and/or events or (B) new people, objects and/or events from pre-existing matter-energy.

A concept is a mental representation (idea, intuition) of reality, the universe, space, time, matter-energy, a god, a person, an object, or an event.

A principle is a mental representation of a causal or coincidental relationship between or among gods (if they exist), people, objects, or events.

Causality is (1) causes causing effects; (2) gods, people, objects, or/and events as causes causing as effects (A) changes of the physical states of pre-existing gods, people, objects, and/or events or (B) new gods, people, objects, and/events from pre-existing matter-energy.

Coincidentiality is the non-causal co-location in space and time of gods (if they exist), people, objects, and events.

A technique is an application of a principle for the purpose of conceptualizing reality or solving a problem.

A problem is (1) learning how to achieve a desire or avoid a fear in accord with priorities or (2) not knowing how to achieve a desire or avoid a fear in accord with priorities.

Knowledge is the set of accurate concepts and principles and effective techniques.

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Part Four

What Is Psychology?

Psychology is the discipline whose practitioners—psychologists—intend to study the mind as a being's or person's or individual's set of desires fears and priorities.

A being is an entity (1) who is a person—an individual—who exists in space, endures over time and is comprised of matter-energy, (2) who has a body consisting of its physiology including its biology, chemistry, and physics, and (3) who has a mind consisting of its psychology which is its set of desires, fears and priorities which causes—motivates—(A) its behavior as its proactions and reactions, (B) its feelings as its reactions to its realizations of its desires and fears in accord with its priorities, (C) its personality as its consistent proactions and reactions in similar situations, (D) its mental problems (disorders) as its unachievable and inappropriate desires, and (E) its mental solutions (mental health) as its achievable, and appropriate desires.

A proaction is the action a person takes to achieve a desire or avoid a fear in accord with its priorities.

A reaction is a response a person makes to a realization of a desire or fear in accord with its priorities.

A realization is the achievement or non-achievement of a desire or the avoidance or non-avoidance of a fear.

A desire is the physiological or psychological state of wanting a person, an object or an event.

The proof a person has a desire is the observation of its approach behavior towards desirable people, objects and/or events.

A fear is the physiological or psychological state of not-wanting a person, object or event.

The proof a person has a fear is the observation of its avoidance behavior way from feared people, objects and/or events.

A priority is the importance or value of a desire or fear relative to the importance/value of all other desires and fears.

The proof a person has a priority is the observation of the effort it makes to achieve a desire or avoid a fear relative to the effort it makes to achieve other desires and avoid other fears.

The importance or value that is the priority of a desire or a fear is generated by (1) physiological (unlearned) desires/fears/priorities inre (A) survival, (B) water, (C) food, (D) shelter, (E) companionship, (F) sex, and (G) reproduction that cause physiological feelings that are sensational reactions and impulsive reactions to realizations of physiological (unlearned) desires, fears and priorities and (2) psychological (learned) desires/fears/priorities that ultimately achieve physiological (unlearned) desires, fears and priorities and that cause psychological feelings as emotional reactions and impulsive reactions to realizations of psychological (unlearned) desires/fears/priorities.

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Part Five

What Is A God?

A god is a being (I) who/which has greater knowledge than mankind of causality and coincidentalness and (II) who/which has greater capabilities than mankind for causing effects mankind currently cannot cause.

A fundamental problem in gods is learning if/not they exist.

Proof is (I) physical evidence – gods, people, objects, and/or events who/which can be perceived by the perceptual senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste; (II) credible eyewitness reports of physical evidence by eyewitnesses not known to lie or deceive for personal or organizational benefit; (III) the conclusions of sound logical arguments whose premises are verifiable, falsifiable and verified by physical evidence or/and credible eyewitness reports of physical evidence and are relevant to the conclusions which are true if relevant to the premises and the premises are verified to be true.

For any logical argument to be sound, its premises must be verifiable and falsifiable and relevant to (related to, linked to, logically connected to) its conclusion which is true if it is relevant to the premises and the premises are verified to be true.

For an If P, Then Q logical argument to be sound, its premises (Ps, conditions, causes) must be physical evidence, credible eyewitness reports, or conclusions of sound logical arguments and they must be relevant to its conclusion (Q, consequence, effect) which is true if it is relevant to the premises and the premises are verified to be true by physical evidence or the conclusion of a single sound logical argument or the conclusions of two or more sound logical arguments.

Premise #1: If P, Then Q.

Premise #1: P.

Conclusion: Q.

If a Not-Q is discovered, then researchers know the precise P(s) for a specific Q is/are not known and one of these conditions has occurred/is occurring:

- (1) a P was/is missing;
- (2) an additional P was/is present;
- (3) several Ps were/are missing;
- (4) several additional Ps were/are present;
- (5) a P was/is missing and an additional P was/is present;
- (6) several Ps were/are missing and an additional P was/is present;
- (7) several Ps were/are missing and several additional Ps were/are present;
- (8) a P was/is missing and several additional Ps were/are present.

Researchers then know that when an unexpected specific Not-Q is discovered, then to cause a desired specific Q

the precise P(s) must be discovered.

Q1: Do we have physical evidence, credible eyewitness reports of physical evidence, or conclusions of sound logical arguments that prove gods exist?

A1: Yes: ___ (?); No: ___ (?)

Q2: If A1 = Yes, what is that proof?

A2: _____ (?)

Q3: If A1 = No, why?/why not?

A3: _____ (?)

We have the conceptualization of the universe wherein space, time and matter-energy are infinite in duration that is justification for accepting as true the infinite duration of the universe. The infinite size of space and therefore the universe eliminates any possibility of the existence of anything external to, prior to, beyond, outside, or in addition to space/the universe that could have created or caused space/the universe.

The infinite duration/existence in time means the universe was never created nor caused.

The non-creation/non-causation of the universe means the great creator-gods/causer-gods (G-Gods/Great-Gods) of holy books including the Bible and the Koran never existed in the past, do not exist now in the present, and will never exist in the future.

Lesser-gods (L-Gods/Lesser-Gods) might exist as beings (I) who/which exist in space, endure over time and are comprised of matter-energy, (II) who/which have greater knowledge than mankind of causality and coincidental-ity and (III) who/which have greater capabilities than mankind for causing effects mankind currently cannot cause.

Lesser-gods could be humans who have greater knowledge and capabilities than other humans, space aliens or beings of infinite durations.

They might be benevolent or malevolent inre mankind.

They might be cultivating humans for food. [See the Twilight Zone episode entitled The Cookbook.]

Thus, G-Gods never existed and L-Gods might exist, but until we have physical evidence of their existence by (1) direct observation or (2) indirect observation by direct observation of the effects they cause as (A) changes of the physical states of observable pre-existing people, objects and/or events or (B) new people, objects and/or events from pre-existing matter-energy then we are not obligated to believe in their existence and therefore we are not obligated to act as if they exist by praying to them or enacting legislation honoring their existence or requiring people to believe in their existence.

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Part Six

What Is a Theist/Theism, an Atheist/Atheism, and an Agnostic/Agnosticism?

When a child is born, it has no conceptualization of gods.

When an individual is exposed to the concept of a god, particularly as an explanation of the causality or creation of physical phenomena, then he makes a judgment inre whether/not the evidence presented for/against the existence of gods is justified and by that judgment he becomes a theist, an atheist or an agnostic.

A theist is an individual (A) who believes in the existence of gods or (B) who believes in the existence of physical evidence that is co elusive proof of the existence of gods or (C) who believes in the existence of conclusions of sound logical arguments that are conclusive proof of the existence of gods.

Theism is a philosophy that includes (A) a belief in the existence of gods or (B) a belief in the existence of physical evidence or (C) a belief in the existence of conclusions of sound logical arguments that are conclusive proof of the existence of gods.

An atheist is an individual (A) who has no belief in the existence of gods or (B) who believes in the existence of physical evidence or the non-existence of gods or (C) who believes in the existence of the conclusion of a sound logical argument that is conclusive proof of the non-existence of gods.

Atheism is a philosophy that has either (A) no belief in gods, (B) a belief in the non-existence of gods, or (C) a belief in the existence of physical evidence or the conclusion of a sound logical argument that is conclusive proof of the non-existence of gods.

An agnostic is an individual (A) who has no belief in the existence of gods and (B) who has no belief in the non-existence of gods because he has reviewed theists' claims of the existence of physical evidence or conclusion of a logical argument that is conclusive proof of the existence of gods and atheists' claims of the existence of physical evidence or a conclusion of a logical argument that is conclusive proof of the non-existence of gods and has judged and thereby concluded that neither the theists' nor the atheists' claims are conclusive and therefore additional physical evidence or a conclusion of a truly sound logical argument is needed before he can judge if/not gods exist and thereby assert he is a theist or an atheist.

Various philosophers and theorists have tried to claim that agnosticism means it is not possible for mankind to know some truth including the truth inre whether/not gods exist. There is a logical problem justifying that claim which is, simply, that for an individual to know that claim to be true (1) the individual must know what cannot be known by mankind, (2) the individual must know that it cannot be known by mankind, and (3) the individual must not be an human being.

Thomas Huxley, who invented the terms agnostic and agnosticism, simply stated that agnosticism means no individual should make a claim of fact or truth without having physical evidence (or, to be assumed, conclusions of sound logical arguments) that is conclusive proof that proves real/true the claim of fact/truth. Thus, agnosticism is not a claim inre whether/not knowledge can be obtained inre a subject (the existence of gods, answering the question inre whether/not gods exist/are real) but instead is a philosophical insistence that anyone making a claim of fact/truth or otherwise issuing an opinion be ready, willing and able to prove its assertion.

Agnosticism Mantra: He who asserts must prove.

Some theorists argued that inre theism an individual is either a weak theist or a strong theist and inre atheism an individual is either a weak atheist or a strong atheist but inre agnosticism an individual is actually a cowardly

atheist who is not willing to admit his philosophy fits the atheist conceptualization of atheism because, in the least, he has no belief in the existence of gods and is therefore he is a weak atheist.

A weak theist is an individual whose philosophy includes a belief not no proof of the existence of gods (Type A Theist); a strong theist is an individual whose philosophy includes a belief in the existence of physical evidence that is conclusive proof of the existence of gods (Type B Theist) or in the existence of conclusions of sound logical arguments that are conclusive proof of the non-existence of gods (Type C Theist).

A weak atheist is an individual whose philosophy includes no belief in the existence of gods (Type A Atheist); a strong atheist is an individual whose philosophy includes a belief in the existence of proof of the non-existence of gods (Type B Atheist) or in the existence of conclusions of sound logical arguments that are conclusive proof of the non-existence of gods (Type C Atheist).

Normal people, people humorously defined to be non-philosophers, are often heard to speak as if they regard a theist to be an individual who has a belief in the existence of proof of the existence of gods, an atheist to be an individual who has a belief in the existence of proof of the non-existence of gods, and an agnostic to be an individual who has judged and thereby concluded that the claims of both theists and atheists have not been proven to be true and therefore a decision inre whether/not gods exist must be set aside/delayed until conclusive proof is discovered.

Problem: When theists claim they are weak or strong and atheists claim that are weak or strong then normal people have to ask what is meant by weak theism or strong theism and by weak or strong atheism, and that takes up discussion time and creates the possibility of confusions and arguments that could be eliminated by accepting as valid the reasoning that anyone stating a claim of fact or a belief ought to have some if not complete physical evidence or conclusions of sound logical arguments as justification for his/her/its claim or belief and therefore the conceptualization of 'existence of proof' ought to be applied to definitions of theist/theism and atheist/atheism as well as definitions of agnostic/agnosticism.

Thus, and therefore, when the conceptualization of the phrase 'existence of proof' is applied to the definitions of theist/theism, atheist/atheism, and agnostic/agnosticism, then ...

... a theist is an individual whose philosophy includes a belief in the existence of proof of the existence of gods and therefore theism is a philosophy that includes a belief in the existence of proof of the existence of gods, ...

... an atheist is an individual whose philosophy includes a belief in the existence of proof of the non-existence of gods and therefore atheism is a philosophy that includes a belief in the existence of proof of the non-existence of gods, ...

... and ...

... an agnostic is an individual whose philosophy rejects claims of the existence of proof of the existence or non-existence of gods as inconclusive and requiring additional proof and therefore agnosticism is a philosophy that includes a rejection of claims of the existence of proof of the existence or non-existence of gods as being inconclusive and requiring additional proof ...

... and

... we get rid of confusion/confusing phrases including weak theist/theism, strong theist/theism, weak atheist/atheism, and strong atheist/atheism and we get rid of rejections of agnostic/agnosticism.

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Part Seven

What Is A Religion?

A religion is defined as a philosophy that includes a belief in the existence of gods or a belief in the existence of proof of the existence of gods.