

THE MATRIX AND OUR CAPTIVITY

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Abstract

It is modern Western science that tells us humans arose from and are immersed within the matrix of the universe; we are the stuff of the cosmos. This serves to define our limitations and set our boundaries. Senses and human reason represent filters and restrictions; not open ended conduits to *reality*. Transcendent knowledge gives meaning to the matrix and is the only way to see it from the outside. Knowledge obtained from within, no matter its sophistication, begins and ends there. The attempt to subsume all knowledge into the realm of the matrix is a knowledge imperialism that falsely equates information with understanding. The Orthodox emphasis on apothatic theology is a reminder that human knowing is limited in regards to ultimate things, and is a necessary balance with cataphatic theology. In order for there to be dialogue between religion and science, and in particular with Orthodoxy, science should derive a form of apothatic science to help restrain the penchant towards absolutism that British philosopher Mary Midgley calls the modern myth that science is “Omnicompetent in all areas”. The abuse of science beyond its limitations transforms a powerful method of knowledge into a pseudo-religion. We cannot engage with a form of science that makes metaphysical assumptions so universal and dogmatic that they become a religion unto themselves, because then we have an interfaith conflict.

Introduction:

Western science has become the primary tool of inquiry for modern societies having replaced other avenues of approaching knowledge.¹ However, the use of science and human reason in regards to awareness of God, and of anything that might be transcendent, is restricted to finding evidence concomitant with its methodology. The word matrix in this paper refers to the entirety of what can be known by the human as an animal without being open to or having recourse to anything beyond the matter of the world (however materiality is defined). The only channel of knowledge available to it is human science and human reason. It assumes there is nothing but the matrix. The material world is the arena in which science and human reason operate. It is shared by all of us in so far as we are human but the matrix is something different from the material world, for it is absent the Spirit of God and is therefore a self made prison. It is a state of mind the way hell is a state of mind in the Eastern Orthodox Church (...). The holy elders and saints are people who reside in the material world but do not live in the matrix.

If we take the model of the cosmos as presented to us by the contemporary age, and make of it total Reality rather than a scientific description of nature, it strips science of its nobility and reveals instead its limitations and even its failures. Those who make of science more than it is create idolatry, distort reality, and impose a dictatorship in the area of knowledge.

Nature and Humanity From Within the Matrix

Naturalistic science informs us that humans are composed of, and indeed arose from the stuff of the cosmos. Naturalism tells us our corporeality is from nature, and that we have not one shred of substantive uniqueness (in the fullest sense of the word) compared to any other creature. The human brain is a mammalian one, with species-specific changes typical of other mammals. Comparative neurobiology demonstrates that the differences between the neocortex of humans and anthropoid apes are subtle, not dramatic. They are relatively small things that result in significant differences in function. Certain animals such as rodents and lagomorphs have highly specialized

¹This use of the word science refers to modern western science whose lineage can be traced from Francis Bacon to Descartes, Galileo, Newton, and many others. A broader use of the term encompasses historical forms found in many ancient civilizations, the systematic methods applied towards nature as used by many First Nations people (Suzuki and Knudsen), Goethean science, (...), and even a science of the soul. Therefore, to be critical of current modern science does not mean one is anti-science, it can mean that one is against or critical of *this* kind of science. More commonly, what is inferred is a criticism of scientism.

structures in a part of their brain that are arguably more distinctive than anything that can be found between a human and chimpanzee cortex. We can study the physiology of pyramidal and basket cells in rat brains and apply them to other mammals including the human. There are limitations of course, but this holds true at all levels of comparative studies. Even human behavior is not singularly unique, but can be studied as something along a continuum, and even when it transcends animal categories, it must always be considered in light of the neurobiology that reduces it down to the tissue of a recognizable primate brain.

It has been suggested that because we emerged from and are interwoven in the fabric of the universe, empirical science reflects reality *as it is*, which is to say that what we know about the natural world is an accurate reflection of what is there. The first implication of this model is that it serves to demonstrate our captivity, not our freedom. At best it says we are capable of knowing the matrix of materiality but it offers no way beyond it. The argument that we derive *solely* from the matter of the world is an assumption that cannot be proven objectively by going outside the model because, according to the first rule of the matrix, there is no 'outside' to go too (Goldman). This raises the problem of ever attaining 'non-local' objectivity since it is the brain studying the brain, nature studying nature, the same studying the same. Within the model of the matrix, objectivity is only objective within the system, so what objective empirical knowledge really refers to are the shared sense experiences of things out there by virtue of the design of a common nervous system.²

This means we don't share the exact same world (perceptually) with bats, whales or mice, given their different sensory capabilities and filters, and variations in the way information is processed. If our brains were constructed differently, our perceptions and knowledge of the things 'out there' would be different as well.³

² Much of modern science has already exceeded sense knowledge and is hard pressed to be called empirical anymore, describing things that are not visible to anyone or capable of being experienced. Hence, because something is not visible to the human eye, or capable of being experienced, is no longer a valid reason to deny its reality. Nonetheless, all of this is an extension of human reason and sense knowledge from within the matrix.

³ The possibility that the matrix itself may not be as limited as accepted by mainstream Western culture would make the cosmos more complex than science currently allows for and arguably more interesting. In this regard physics is ahead of biology but still unable to break through a certain wall of assumptions about the natural world. A serious argument can be made that the human (and other animals?) are less hardware limited than we have conceded and that the matrix as described above is too narrow. Humans have testified to the existence of a broader matrix for millennia, in all ages, geographic areas, and cultures, be they indigenous, civilized, or modern technological societies. The overt and *a priori* dismissal of all of these accounts on the basis that they do not meet scientific criteria amounts to a broad denial of the human condition and in this case, the elevation of theory over experience. Moderate science considers such things to be extra-scientific and outside their purview, however, even here a case can be made that this is not true for selected phenomena, for which solid statistical evidence may abound (...).

If we accept this model solely and without reference to anything outside itself, then it follows that all human endeavors: culture, society, religion, logic, and science itself, are singularly *human* and arose out of and remain embedded within the matrix. *We literally made it up* in the areas of philosophy, ethics, politics, values, language, and meaning. There is no way around this and it implies a human fiction with all the depth and characters of a great novel. This is what the paradigm tells us if we take it at its word, and whereas proponents do not like to phrase it in this manner, attempts to alter it nonetheless will always begin and end... with humans. This model of existence means that reason, the esteemed pillar of humanism, is the outcome of a species-specific wiring of the mammalian neocortex, not something greater than this. Likewise, science is also a human invention (I am not referring to the world which it studies, only the method and the decisions imbedded within). When we speak of 'science' or 'reason', we should rightly say *human* science and *human* reason because when this is overlooked we ascribe to human knowledge a universal and absolute quality. It may be argued that reason can take us beyond our materiality, but this is true only to the extent that there is something out there to go to. Naturalistic Western science was never designed to go beyond the matrix. It was created within the matrix and for the matrix, and there it remains.

Those in the matrix draw a line at the borders of scientific knowledge and their own philosophical arguments and claim this is all that can be known, or even worse, that this all that there is. This omits by fiat, and makes impossible by definition, the paranormal and all substantive religious and spiritual experiences which are in supposed violation of universal 'laws'. The laws of nature are an interpretation of phenomena within a given context of human understanding. They are a product of the human within the matrix and did not come to us as 'laws' from above. Of course there are regularities to nature or it would be chaos and it is precisely because of such predictable 'laws' that events like those described in the New Testament stand out. The word miracle or supernatural implies a recognition that something out of the ordinary has occurred. However, if we make these 'laws' in volatile we stand to replicate the events of the Church and Galileo, but in this case in reverse. It is the materialist that is the great denier, the one who must on the basis of their greatest presupposition, deny the experiential claims of vast numbers of their fellow humans⁴. If those in the matrix presume to pretend to speak for

On the other hand, militant atheism and scientism does not even allow for the possibility of such things and there is total denial as well as a militant attempt to silence the claims and those who make them (...).

⁴ The attitude of those within the matrix is captured by Gai Eaton who remarked that an agnostic is someone who says "...what I do not know cannot be known". They are, he says, like a frog at the bottom of a well denying the existence of mountains. There is a logic to that but logic contained within itself does not also equate with truth.

the human condition they must take account of the human condition. This is a question that the culture has every right to be part of, and to contribute to. There is no reason to hand over the ultimate questions of existence to this one group who are limited by method of inquiry, especially when there is so a large body of testimony and evidence to the contrary. Scientism kills the spirit of inquiry, it does not foster it. Open inquiry into the questions of life requires a society that is ready to consider (that is all that is being asked, not belief or acceptance) the wholeness of the human condition as it is lived and experienced, and if we can't do that because it is not scientific, then modern culture may rightly be called a scientocracy.

On the other hand, in so far as academics and scientists are people too, there are those among them that have also had experiences of an inexplicable kind that defy the materialistic worldview. They too have seen things in diverse places as part of their research, or have encountered what can be called a spiritual or religious experience. However, there is a very real fear that if this is publically acknowledged among their peers, there will be serious consequences to their careers and standing in the academic community. They do not want this to become known. The fact that there is this internal censorship within the academy is outrageous for this is an institution held up publically as the place where all questions can be addressed openly. The result is that this form of knowledge becomes part of an unspoken subculture, hidden away somewhere not to be discussed in polite company.

The children of the Enlightenment are a people conditioned to despise so called anecdotal evidence and human testimony for which I have little time in this essay to discuss. However, consider then what do we make of the Gospels? Why listen to the testimony of the Apostles? Where is the reproducible and testable evidence of St. Paul's testimony about his encounter on the road to Damascus?⁵ All of what I know about saint Seraphim is anecdotal. If I disregard human testimony I would not believe most of what anyone tells me absent tangible proof. If we recognize only as true that which is obtainable by the scientific method then we make of all other things junk knowledge. What do we make of all the events that occur in our lives day in and day out, cumulated over a life time, for which there is no testable evidence, no proof? Are they one iota less valid, less real, than those which are testable? Absolutely not. Our lives are constituted of all manner of things that escape scientific investigation but are no less true than those events which can be substantiated by the scientific method. It is outside scientific scrutiny yes, but it is not false. Our culture pays lip service to this

⁵ There is general consensus that science requires testability, naturalistic explanations, reproducibility, and must be falsifiable, among other things, which implies a degree of control over the object of study (which by definition we lack in regards to the transcendent). When these requirements are imposed onto all spheres of life, it subordinates other forms of experience.

notion but we seem not to be able to put it into practice. The hardest issue to deal with in dialogue between religion and science will have to be what to do with human testimony. It is problematic but it is also the most powerful evidence many of us have that the materialistic paradigm falls short.

If we rule out human testimony as always unreliable and false, we also lose the ability to discern human testimony, to see the difference between a pure heart and a deceptive one. We choose to trust no one and in our cynicism we close the door ever so much until one day it will lock us inside our little rooms and we wake up in the matrix.

Science can only offer us a specific view of 'reality', one that is filtered through the instrument of human reason and the limitations of sense knowledge. Our senses represent hardware limitations of the brain, not open ended conduits onto Reality. Within the matrix we can be certain of having access to a lot of information, perhaps even exhaustive knowledge, but we can never transcend the matrix by ourselves, it goes where we do. Nature *appears* capable of taking seemingly radical steps as evidenced by the rise of the organic from the inorganic and the derivation of consciousness from non-consciousness. Nonetheless natural science requires and philosophical science demands, that consciousness be understood as an emergent property that belongs to and is localized solely within the tissue, and so it remains safely imprisoned within the matrix. We continue to be a collection of subatomic particles and compilation of genetic material.

Accepting the validity of the above statements about the matrix, how then can we claim knowledge beyond our limitations? Empirical science and human reason cannot know qualities which they lack by nature. To paraphrase the British philosopher Mary Midgley in regards to the misuse of science in our culture, "can a child invent an adult, or the thief an honest person?" The materialist sees within evolution the hope for attaining that which is greater than the present self, but biological evolution is a blind mechanism, it is not even a thing as such, and by very definition lacks intent, purpose, and perfection. So to postulate this form of evolution as the way beyond ourselves is an illusion even as it is a form of hope (to those who within the matrix require something more). Evolution can only perform this feat if it has guidance from outside, something totally anathema to the theory. Human attempts to direct evolution so as to create utopia is the child inventing an adult. It mistakes the human as an outside agent, as if the human engineer were not still immersed physically and consciously within the world, and as if the end product will not also be part of the matrix.

Western science works inside a closed system of natural causes by intention, not by revelation. The requirements of reproducibility and testability (among others) in science are specific to the method and aims of science as a form of knowledge. Science is designed by and for humans because we are fallible and do not obtain information

perfectly. Our senses can cause distortions and fail to detect what is out there. We perceive in three dimensions and we live in time. Emotional states can affect the way we see things and alter our judgment. Science is a way to reduce this error. It is conservative and rigid as it seeks to eliminate as much error as it can and retain that which is correct or at least most correct. One way to be certain that our knowledge is reliable is to have it reproduced not just by us but by others. This works to eliminate illusions, fantasies, and sampling mistakes, and this is a wonderful thing. That is why we tend to trust statements of science about the natural world, given the caveats discussed in this paper.

Science tries to avoid delusion and fantasy, and seeks what is true, and this it shares with Orthodox Christianity. Whereas the methods and aims are different this concern is reiterated throughout Church history. St. Silouan reflects this when he remarks that “The Saints speak of that which they have actually seen, of that which they know. They do not speak of something they have not seen. They do not tell us for instance, that they have seen a horse a mile long, or a steamer ten miles long, which do not exist.”

The teachings of the elders and saints from earliest times warn us about spiritual and psychological delusions, something known to anyone with a cursory knowledge of Church history. The difference is that Orthodoxy seeks to be free of spiritual delusion and fantasy concerning the things of God, whereas science is bent on reducing delusions about things of the world. It is important to note that the methodological controls in science are meant to reduce error even at the cost of eliminating things which may be true but which cannot be included in the method. This limitation needs to be recognized so that it is not used as a way to eliminate information obtained in other ways. That is not only imperialistic (in the realm of knowledge), it is silly in regards to how we live, experience the world, and engage in personal relations.

Science can give us true information but this is not to be confused with exhaustive knowledge and especially not with understanding. God will never be disproven in a laboratory experiment and will never be a hypothesis within science. Particle accelerators, brain imaging studies, or an assemblage of fossils, do not test knowledge of the transcendent, they never leave the matrix.

When True Information Distorts

Scientific knowledge used in isolation has proven limited in regards to presenting a holistic, humanistic, and meaningful view of life. Reductionism and dissection of the object of study, are not ideal tools for deriving meaning and purpose, they are for extracting information about things *from* things. They are excellent at clarification of mechanistic processes, but reductive science alone cannot provide an understanding of life. Even the materialist must derive meaning from things that are not inherent within

the facts of the science. Those who live in the matrix transform these observations into answers about ultimate questions, even if it means denying the very same. In the end, the descriptions suffice for 'answers'.

If God is love as the apostle John and so many elders and saints testify too, then knowledge of God is made known through direct experience of this love. Love is a form of knowing, it is the form of knowing God. Love requires the experiencing of it and is not something that can be understood objectively from a distance. If we embrace the idea of relational knowledge, an analogy can be made in the form of the love between an infant and a mother. The love represents the end for which the means, in the form of the animal bodies, exist. The being as animal is secondary. May this not be microcosm of the New Testament? The bodily organs and their physiology are true things but they are not what the child means to the mother. The mother is not in love with a body part but neither does she deny them⁶.

The matrix uses evolution to reverse this so that the love exists for the purpose of the body, for the continuity of the genetic material. Love (altruism and virtually all other behaviors) becomes an adaptation whose main purpose is the perpetuation of the organism. The energy required to maintain biological existence lacks an overriding purpose, there is no teleology except to propagate more biological existence. The process that gives life has no more meaning attached to it than a robotic arm in an assembly line. Life is only 'conscious' of its function to pursue more life with no overt reason why it should do so. Humans became conscious of being conscious only to conclude that there is no purpose to our consciousness. Nature awakes only to desire sleep again.

True facts of science can become distortions when they are not assimilated in a greater context. It is analogous to someone who sees a painting as a material object within the confines of chemistry and physics while remaining oblivious to art, and who therefore claims that the painting *is* the chemistry. How do you argue against such a stance when all the hard and reproducible evidence supports the chemical and physical description? What you don't do is argue the scientific data (unless it is wrong). A scientific analysis of a great painting will yield an abundance of information, facts about its chemical and molecular composition, all of which are 'hard data' and indisputable. Yet, a chemist from the planet 'Z' with no sense or understanding whatsoever of art, does not *know* the painting like the artist and does not see it for what it is. Van Gogh or Monet did not know of science, they were creating art to be understood through the eyes and heart of another artist. To describe the painting only as the collection of

⁶ The Eastern Church has always insisted on the goodness and the reality of the created world, which is why they have not forgotten the bodily senses in their worship. We are not disembodied spirits and creation is not an illusion or evil as it was to the Gnostics.

physical facts is to distort reality using true information. It would require obtaining the soul of an artist.

Materialists armed with a seemingly endless list of reproducible facts declare life to be these facts. If the artist makes the mistake of arguing against what the scientist says concerning the chemistry, he or she will look foolish. This is one problem of Creation Science (among others), they attack the science but the issue is not the data of the science, it is the understanding. A painting has a component of it that requires materiality, a part that is quantifiable and lives in the domain of the art as object-thing, but the painting as Art only uses the component materials as a conduit. The information that science provides has the quality of concreteness but the price paid for accepting this level of information as holistic rather than particular, is that the most inspiring qualities of the human condition cease to have any substantive basis. In the case of the art and of the bonds of love, the material aspects are substrates, a means and not an end. Reductive materialism takes the data of science and makes them the means as well as the ends. One result is that the 'noblest' aspects of human existence tend to be trivialized while the most basic (e.g. acquisition of food and shelter) are elevated. In order to see art and understand it, we must acquire the soul of an artist.

The material is real, we live in and through it, we use it, and we are aware of it's presence. Both the material and the transcendent are real and what the paint and canvas is to art, matter is to life. It is the medium of expression in which we live and breathe and have our being.

Meaning and Behavior within the Matrix

Scientific materialism is something apart from science; it is a philosophy and a response to the question of existence posed solely from within the matrix. One could say it pushes science beyond itself, forcing it into something it was not meant to be and answer questions it is not competent to answer. One does not say the universe is as the materialist claims it to be and discuss human behavior in any concrete and meaningful terms. This is the equivalent of insisting that the King is wearing no clothes, and then begin discussions about the color and quality of the fabric. They make it appear that one flows seamlessly from the other, but it certainly does not. Materialists have argued that atheists can be good and moral people and of course they can. But this is a subterfuge because we have already gone way too far. We have already accepted an understanding of behavior that does not derive from that science because it is something added to it by the observer, us. That any animal can act in some way rather than another is not even the question. The point is what does behavior 'x' or 'y' mean, and most importantly, why should I as a person conscious of the matrix as currently defined, give credence to any of it?

To say as Dostoevsky did that if there is no God then everything is permitted, is not to say we must be rapists and pillagers, it is not to say we must be anything, because that infers some kind of absolute and real basis for ascribing moral tones to behavior. It is to forget that it is we that label raping and pillaging as a certain kind of behavior beyond the mere facts of the actions. Taking the matrix as the end of reality means we can no longer merely continue with the assumptions about behavior and society that were handed down when a totally different set of presumptions existed. When we conclude that nature is a blind and indifferent mother, and that our presence is a fleeting and unplanned chance event, we are no longer obliged to submit to genetically or socially determined rules of behavior. To do so is to act more like an ant than a conscious being.

Of course this does not mean we are unaffected by the reality of daily life. We are amenable to peer pressure, we have genetically wired brains that tend to lead us in one direction over another, and we are raised in a certain culture. Baboons and wild dogs have societies too, and the norms and expectations of those societies are real and powerful enforcers that influence their behavior. But, when you step out of being a baboon you are not controlled by that society any longer. The human alone can step into and out of many societal realities including those of our own making. We are both observer and the observed and so we recognize how relative such things are, and how animals and humans permit themselves to be controlled. We alone have this knowledge and we can decide what to do with it whereas baboons and butterflies cannot. Most materialists are content to climb back into a protective slumber and pretend that our human societal norms, our interpretations of how to be or not to be, are not just real on a certain relative level, but are actually and truly so. Yet we are taught over and over again throughout our secular educational system, in myriad different ways, that they are relative and fleeting things that serve a function that is either for the continuation of the society or the propagation of biological organisms, nothing more noble than this.

The individual who has been apprised of this 'reality' must ask: "why then is it imperative, let alone mandatory, that I conform to these rules or the concerns of this or that society"? In prison one is forced to behave according to a set of rules, construed on the basis of practical and functional criteria, but we don't take them to be absolute, they are for the prison only, and we may try to break them whenever we can if in doing so we gain some advantage or some comfort. The matrix of the materialist is such a prison.

Human life as defined within the matrix is a moment of consciousness sandwiched between eternal oblivion, it is time expended within a non-thinking universe that nonetheless made itself and which has no explanation for its presence, no reason for its actions, and where life and consciousness evolved only by mere chance (referring to the overall plan and not the particulars like selection pressures which behind them have

no direction or guidance). It is not even a 'good' thing that consciousness arose, it is just another event. Were the dice rolled again the outcome might be very different. The statement that the universe did not have us in mind has already gone too far; *there is no mind*.

Oblivion means exactly that. It cannot be defeated by notions that we live on in the memory of other humans, or in our offspring, or because our bodies return to the molecules of the earth. There is no awareness in oblivion. If the human species becomes extinct in some distant future, all of this effort, our civilizations, cities, wars, art, politics, religions, and science, will have been so much blah, blah, blah. We are background noise to be swallowed up in the vastness of a senseless universe. Yet, those within the matrix become indignant about the whims of the sea and volcanoes, and they cry out about notions of justice and evil against a backdrop of deaf rocks, indifferent molecules, and black holes. Let no one say that materialistic atheism is not absurd.

It is not a surprise that the materialist talks about the color and fabric of the universe for it is necessary to foster the illusion of clothes for the propagation of society and culture. So they pretend that certain human actions *really* are good and others *really* are bad, rather than just actions that we place a label on according to the time periods in which we find ourselves, our culture, and the worldview of a prevailing political system. Such are the consequences of taking the data of science and declaring them to *be Everything*.

Dialogue

The role of science is limited concerning questions of ultimate knowledge and our culture needs to hear this more often. If we are to live with science and appreciate it as the essentially good thing it is, we have to go after, not science per se, but those who apply it inappropriately and use it as a philosophical or ideological weapon rather than a helper of humankind. We do this not by attacking the data of the science (assuming it is done properly) but the attempt to apply to all areas of human life, we go after it when it assumes to be the authority on the human condition while ignoring the extra-scientific testimony of the very same humans it claims to be explaining. We go after it when it people make it an idol rather than a tool. Because science is unable go to the mountain top the materialist wants to reduce the mountain to rubble. We cannot engage with a form of science that makes its metaphysical assumptions so universal and absolute that they become a religion unto themselves, and hence we no longer have a discussion between religion and science, but an interfaith conflict.

On the other side, religion must avoid a pretense to knowledge beyond their capabilities, which usually begins with literalism and fundamentalism though it is not

restricted to this only. Religion must come to the table with honest claims concerning what they actually know and what they do not, and with a willingness to consider what science has to offer in areas where it is clearly more competent. The ideal dialogue would be between a liberal science which is defined as one that is open minded to other ways of knowing and willing to admit limits, and a Christianity of the same spirit born of the love of Christ and creation. Both would bring a sense of the wonder and recognition that life is probably greater and more unimaginable than we think it is. Neither one would be blind to its limitations and neither one afraid to look at what the other has discovered.

Religion has to be held accountable as well when it becomes rigid and encloses itself in a prison of its own making. Religion too has been guilty of reductionism, one which replaces the indescribable and immutable with something small, rational, and even petty. Scientific reductionism reduces the stuff of the world to nothing but matter, but those responsible for Christian reductionism managed to bring the infinite and awesomeness of God down to the level of the essentially knowable and the trite. Which is worse? Science has acquired these undesirable qualities when it moved into scientism, and has become or threatens to become infused with a dour and narrow conservatism, static and afraid to give up any territory to other points of view but its own.

There is within the Orthodox Church something that may be applicable in this respect to both science and Christianity at large. It is what the Church refers to as apothatic theology which stands as a counter to cataphatic theology. The latter concerns what we do know about God and the former what we do not know. Apothatic theology is a recognition that human knowing is limited, that if God is something totally other, immutable, infinite, beyond understanding, and if we recognize that language fails to depict even those elements of God made know to us by experience, then we must be careful not to pretend we know God in an exhaustive manner. It makes it clear that we cannot place God in yet another humanly constructed box. This does not mean there cannot be knowledge of God that is true, but it is never exhaustive.

There would be no scientism if there were a counterpart to apothatic theology in the secular world. A sense of apothatic science means allowing for the possibility that there may be something to be learned from religious experiences and that they do in fact occur. It means a willingness to give more credence to our fellow humans, so that we do not insist that *all* human experiences must be products of neurobiology, madness, deceit, or delusion. It means a willingness to at *least consider* that the matrix may be different, more dynamic and less mechanical than the dominant paradigm says it is. It means a re-examination of the metaphysics of science as it pertains to the matrix and a willingness to consider that the fullness of knowledge may not be achieved by one

approach only. It means letting science become a means to knowledge and not an end in itself.

It requires on the part of theology that we concede the limitations we have by virtue of simply being human, that we are finite and to be *very careful* when we propose to speak for God. We are creatures with a lot yet to understand and learn and that the foremost laws given to us by Christ concern love of God and neighbor from which the rest follow and not the other way around.

The sacredness in nature that exposes the wonders of God to us is not present in the particulars or in the measurement of their physical properties. This does not make science 'bad', science qua science cannot be bad in its essence. Rather it is simply to call for perspective in a culture that has let scientism run amok. There needs to be a fresh look at ultimate questions which are too important to be left to one vision only. The materialist that acquires the soul of an artist will not just learn to see a single painting, nor even many paintings, but will see all of nature anew. Music will emerge from what was before only vibrations of sound, sculpture arises from mere rock, and Starry Night from a canvas that was once covered with different hues of oil based material. In no instance do the facts concerning the material world need to be changed. The science of the matrix can remain intact but the understanding and the vision changes immeasurably. Great works of art have always been worth far more than the materials from which they are made. The matrix too is worth infinitely more than the particles from which it is derived, but the value of it will never be realized from a study of its chemicals, quarks, and bones.

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