

## Re: Evolutionism the religion

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**From:** Termite of Tempation (*bokkibear\_at\_blueyonder.co.uk*)

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"Gactimus" <gactimus@xrs.net> wrote in message  
news:DcOsd.122658\$x.11815@okepread04...

> *I copied this from the talk.origins feed back (April 2000):*

>

> *"How so? It has no deity. No worship. No priests. No sabbath. No  
> commandments. No inerrant doctrine— it is constantly undergoing  
> revision. It has no reliance on the supernatural or miracles. It has  
> no penalties for unbelief. Belief in evolution carries no promises of  
> reward. It is acceptable for any deity, including Jehovah, to be  
> inserted in the forefront, taking credit for the progression of  
> evolution. How, then, is evolution a religion? Are other scientific  
> theories, such as the theory of relativity, also a religion? How does  
> one distinguish and determine this?"*

>

>

> *A religion is essentially an attitude to the world as a whole.*

That's not what the dictionary definition says. In fact, you posted the dictionary definition below.

> *Thus*

> *evolution, for example, may prove as powerful a principle to co-ordinate  
> men's beliefs and hopes as God was in the past. Such ideas underlie the  
> various forms of Rationalism, the Ethical movement and scientific  
> Humanism.*

Except the evolution as a "belief" is descriptive, not proscriptive – in other words, rather than telling us how we should behave, "believing in evolution" simply means that one believes that a certain series of events happened in a certain order. Thus belief in evolution can never be a true replacement for God, because its central tenets do not involve running around telling people how bad they are and that they'll go to hell if they don't stop.

> *Humanism: An outlook that places man and his concerns at the center of  
> interest. Modern Humanism, which does away with traditional Christianity,  
> is characterised by its faith in the power of human beings to create their*

- > *own future, collectively and personally.*
- >
- > *In other words, evolution = religion.*

You haven't demonstrated that at all.

- > *That is, people (not God) set*
- > *whatever rules they want. In practice, this usually becomes 'might makes*
- > *right', including the tyranny of the majority.*

Or "democracy", as it's sometimes known. Besides, if any belief system was guilty of the "might makes right" mindset, surely they are the ones that allow God to make the rules.

- > *Evolutionists have demonstrated that Evolution is not a "Hebrew" religion.*

Which "evolutionists", and how did they do this?

- > *Dictionary.com states the definition of 'religion' is :*
- >
- > *1. Belief in and reverence for a supernatural power or powers regarded as*
- > *creator and governor of the universe.*
- > *2. The life or condition of a person in a religious order.*
- > *3. A set of beliefs, values, and practices based on the teachings of a*
- > *spiritual leader.*
- > *4. A cause, principle, or activity pursued with zeal or conscientious*
- > *devotion.*
- >
- > *Let's measure Evolution to see if it fits any of those descriptions:*

Yes, let's.

- > *1. Belief in and reverence for a supernatural power or powers regarded as*
- > *creator and governor of the universe*
- >
- > *In evolution, the 'creator' is Nature and Natural Causes. Natrual process*
- > *'created and governs' the universe. Evolutionists definately have a*
- > *reverence for Nature.*

Exactly – ruling out reverence for 'supernatural' powers. So this definition doesn't apply to evolution.

- > *2. The life or condition of a person in a religious order.*
- >
- > *A religious order is a subdivision of a religious group. In the case of*
- > *Evolution, I would say the religous group is humanism.*

a) Evolution has no relation to humanism. One is a philosophy (or religion, if you insist) the other is a scientific hypothesis.

b) 2 is vaguely circular definition anyway, used to describe the sense of the word religion in the following context – "My religion tell me to kill

bad people."

- > 3. *A set of beliefs, values, and practices based on the teachings of a*
- > *spiritual leader.*
- >
- > *Darwin was a humanist. He is the 'father of evolution'. I would say this*
- > *description fits.*

Darwin was in no sense a spiritual leader, because he had no spiritual teachings and none of his evolutionary work had any spiritual component. If you wish to dispute this, you could start by quoting some of Darwin's spiritual guidance to his followers.

The fact that Darwin was a humanist (if he was) is incidental to his belief in evolution – the two are not related. It's like saying that gravity is a religion because Newton believed he was God.

- > 4. *A cause, principle, or activity pursued with zeal or conscientious*
- > *devotion.*
- >
- > *I would say that describes evolutionists (at least the ones I have*
- > *encountered here and elsewhere) very well.*

Yes, definition 4 makes almost anything a religion – stamp-collecting, fishing, picking your nose, posting inane screeds on USENET... the list is endless. But the definition is broad enough to be meaningless, as I hope I've just demonstrated.

- > *By the way – just fun the fun of it – lets analyze the quote:*

Let's not.

[snip]

- > *Are other scientific theories, such as the theory of relativity, also a*
- > *religion?*
- >
- > *Theory of relativity 1) is mathematically viable (evolution defies*
- > *mathematical probability)*

How? And don't start wibbling about 747s in a junkyard...

- >, 2) *can be tested and observed by*
- > *experimentation*

As evolution can.

- > 3) *requires no 'blind faith'*

Same as 2.

Duncan