

...The late Stephen Hawking...wrote in one of his books...that philosophy is dead, and it seems now as if scientists are holding the torch of truth and that's scientism. The irony of it is of course that he wrote it in the book where it's all about philosophy of science, and it's pretty clear that Hawking, brilliant as he was as a mathematical physicist, really is a classic exemplar of what Albert Einstein once said the scientist is a 'poor philosopher.' My response to it very much would be couched in the kind of attitude that Sir Peter Medawar, a Nobel Prize winner at Oxford here, once wrote 'it's so very easy to see that science, meaning the Natural Sciences, are limited in that they cannot answer the simple questions of a child: Where do I come from? Where am I going to? What is the meaning of life? And it seems to me immensely important that we recover that, and what Medawar went on to say is we need literature, we need philosophy, and we need theology as well in my view in order to answer the bigger questions. Now the late Lord Sacks, a brilliant philosopher who was the chief Rabbi in the UK and the Commonwealth and so on,...once wrote a pithy statement that I found very helpful. He said you know science takes things apart to understand how they work and I suppose to understand what they're made of. Religion puts them together to see what they mean, and I think that encapsulates the danger in which we're standing. Science has spawned technology. We've become addicted to technology, particularly the more advanced forms of it like AI...like virtual reality, the metaverse, all this kind of stuff. We've become addicted to it, but we've lost our sense of real meaning and in particular we've lost our moral compass. Einstein, again to quote him, made the point long ago. He said you can speak of the ethical foundations of science but you cannot speak of the scientific foundations of ethics. Science doesn't tell you what you ought to do...so we're left in a scientific moral vacuum, and therefore I feel very strongly that as a scientist of sorts, I need to challenge this. Science is marvelous, but it's limited to the questions that it can handle, and let's realize it does not deal with the most important questions of life....

- John Lennox