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## Prize for physicist who urges ethics in science

By STEVE CONNOR  
Science Editor

A BRITISH-BORN physicist has won a prestigious £600,000 prize for furthering the understanding of science and religion.

Freeman Dyson, 77, was yesterday awarded the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion as a result of his books on the subject of science, ethics and the future of humankind.

The emeritus professor at Princeton University's Institute for Advanced Study was cited for being a pre-eminent physicist "whose futurist views consistently challenge humankind to reconcile technology and social justice". He has been a leading proponent of the idea that scientists should eliminate the wedges that technology drives between the haves and the have nots.

"Science and religion are two windows that people look through, trying to understand the big universe outside, trying to understand why we are here. The two windows give different views, but both look out at the same universe," Professor Dyson said yesterday in his acceptance speech in New York.

Born in Crowthorne, Berkshire, Professor Dyson joined the Royal Air Force during the Second World War and in 1958 became a citizen of the United States, where he worked with Edward Teller, the "father" of the hydrogen bomb.

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## Science and religion can co-exist peacefully

MY MESSAGE is simple: "God forbid that we should give out a dream of our own imagination for a pattern of the world." Those words were spoken by Francis Bacon, one of the founding fathers of modern science, nearly 400 years ago.

Bacon was the smartest man of his time, with the possible exception of William Shakespeare. Bacon saw clearly what science could do and what science could not do. He was saying to the philosophers and theologians of his time: look for God in the facts of nature, not in the theories of Plato and Aristotle. I am saying to modern scientists and theologians: do not imagine that our latest ideas about the big bang or the human genome have solved the mysteries of the universe or the mysteries of life.

Here are Bacon's words again: "The subtlety of nature is greater many times over than the subtlety of the senses and understanding."

In the last 400 years, science has fulfilled many of Bacon's dreams, but it

still does not come close to capturing the full subtlety of nature.

After sketching his programme for the scientific revolution that he foresaw, Bacon ended his account with a prayer: "Humbly we pray that this mind may be steadfast in us, and that through these our hands, and the hands of others to whom thou shalt give the same spirit, thou wilt vouchsafe to endow the human family with new mercies." That is still a good prayer for all of us as we begin the 21st century.

Science and religion are two windows that people look through, trying to understand the big universe outside, trying to understand why we are here. The two windows give different views, but they look out at precisely the same universe. Both views are one-sided, and neither is complete. Both leave out some essential features of the real world. And both views are just as worthy of respect.

As the old Swiss nurse who helped to take care of our babies used to say,

### PODIUM

FREEMAN J DYSON



*From a speech by the Princeton professor and physicist on his acceptance of the Templeton prize for progress in religion*

"Some people like to go to church, and some people like cherries."  
Trouble arises when either science or religion claims universal jurisdiction, when either religious dogma or scientific dogma claims to

be infallible. Religious creationists and scientific materialists are equally dogmatic and insensitive. By their arrogance they bring both science and religion into disrepute.

The media exaggerate their numbers and importance. You people in the media should tell the general public that the great majority of religious people belong to moderate denominations that treat science with respect, and the great majority of scientists treat religion with respect, so long as religion does not claim jurisdiction over scientific questions.

In the little town of Princeton, New Jersey, where I live, we have more than 20 churches and at least one synagogue, providing different forms of worship and belief for different kinds of people. They do more than any other organisation in the town to hold the community together. Within this community of people, held together by religious traditions of human brotherhood and the sharing of burdens, a smaller community of

professional scientists also flourishes. The great question for our time is how to make sure that the continuing scientific revolution brings benefits to everybody, rather than widening the gap between rich and poor. To lift up poor countries, and poor people in rich countries, from poverty, to give them a chance of a decent life, technology is not enough. Technology must be guided and driven by ethics if it is to do more than simply provide new toys for the rich.

Scientists and business leaders who care about social justice should join forces with environmentalists and religious organisations to give political clout to ethics. Science and religion should work together to abolish the gross inequalities that prevail in the modern world. That is my vision, and it is the same vision that inspired those words of Francis Bacon four centuries ago, when he prayed that, through science, God would "endow the human family with new mercies."