

What is philosophy? What do philosophers do? What's the value of their activity?

1. As the word itself indicates, philosophy is love of, and, therefore, the search for, wisdom. Philosophers seek wisdom, which includes knowledge, but is more than knowledge, because it implies both knowledge and a right sense of values.

2. In this philosophy is different from science; for while scientists do indeed seek more than facts, in that they also seek for general ideas giving sense and importance to the facts, they abstract from values. Philosophers, on the other hand, deal with values as well as facts, ideals as well as ideas.

3. There is another difference between science and philosophy: of the logically possible worlds, science studies this actual world, while philosophy studies the character or characters that any possible world would have as necessarily as any other. Science logically cannot answer the question, What would be true in any conceivable world? because it follows the procedure of observational testing of hypotheses, which only shows what goes on in the actual world, with its particular regularities or natural laws. Therefore, since science cannot show what must go on in, or what principles would apply to, any truly possible world, either this question is left unexplored or some other, logically different kind of thinking has the task of exploring it.

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