

ISLAM

We need to discover religion

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) was born into a Christian family. A regular church-goer, he can be said to have been a religious man in every sense of the word. But he is known to the world as a 'scientist' and not as a man of religion.

The same is true of most scientists. Most of them have, in their personal lives, been religious men.

But the thing that these scientists presented to the world was science, not their ancestral religion. They spent their whole lives delving into the mysteries of science and devoted their energies to handing the results of their endeavors on to the world.

Why is it that these people became famous as scientists, rather than as men of religion? The reason is that religion was something that they had inherited from their ancestors, whereas science came to them as a discovery.

One can never develop ardent enthusiasm for one's ancestral inheritance. Something one discovers, on the other hand, becomes one's greatest treasure. One feels one cannot survive without presenting it to the world.

Today there are millions of people in the world who regard themselves as religious. In spite of this, we find that religion does not play an active part in their lives.

The reason for this can be traced to the fact that religion came to them as an inheritance, not as a discovery. If they themselves had discovered the religion they adhered to, they could not but have proclaimed it to the rest of the world. But those who receive religion as a legacy, and do not make it a conscious finding of their own, will not be moved by their faith in this manner. They will be like so many other "Newtons" who believe in one religion or the other, while their energies and enthusiasm are directed towards other fields besides religion.