

What is Philosophy?

Philosophy is the study of fundamental questions about life, knowledge, reality, values, reason, and existence. The word "Philosophy" comes from two Greek words: Philo = love and Sophia = wisdom. So philosophy literally means "love of wisdom". Philosophy does not accept answers blindly. It asks "why" and "how". A philosopher tries to think critically and logically about things that we usually take for granted.

Branches of Philosophy:

- Metaphysics: What is reality? What is substance, mind, body, God?
- Epistemology: What is knowledge? How do we know something is true?
- Ethics: What is right and wrong? How should we live?
- Logic: What is correct reasoning?
- Aesthetics: What is beauty and art?

Philosophy tries to find the reason behind facts. In short, philosophy is a systematic and rational attempt to understand the deepest questions of human life.

Similarity between Science, General Knowledge, and Philosophy

Science, General Knowledge and Philosophy have some common points:

- All three want to know the truth. Science finds truth through experiments. General Knowledge collects true facts. Philosophy finds truth through reasoning.

- Human curiosity is the root of all three. We ask questions, and then try to get answers. That is why a child who asks "why is the sky blue" is doing both science and philosophy.
- All three reject blind faith. They expect evidence, logic, and clear thinking. Even General Knowledge is useful only when it is based on correct facts.
- Science gives us technology and medicine. General Knowledge makes us aware of the world. Philosophy gives us values and purpose. All three together help human beings to live better.

So we can say: Science gives us facts, General Knowledge gives us information, and Philosophy gives us meaning.

Distinction between Science, General Knowledge and Philosophy

- General Knowledge is Ununified Knowledge.

It is a collection of scattered facts from different fields. There is no internal connection between the facts. Example: The capital of India is Delhi and Water is H₂O. These two facts have no relation. It satisfies our curiosity but does not give us understanding.

- Science is Partially Unified Knowledge.

Science studies particular areas of reality like physics, chemistry, biology.

Within one branch, facts are connected by laws and theories. Example: All motion is explained by Newton's Laws in Physics. But Physics and Biology are not fully unified with each other. So science gives us unity, but only within a limited field. That is why it is called "Partially Unified".

- Philosophy is Unified Knowledge.

Philosophy tries to understand the whole of reality as one. It asks the most fundamental questions and seeks universal principles. Example: Empiricism says "All knowledge comes from experience". Rationalism says "All knowledge comes from reason". It connects metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and logic into one system. Philosophy does not remain in parts. It seeks the unity of all knowledge.

General Knowledge depends on collection and memory. Science depends on observation, experiment and proof. Philosophy depends on reason, logic and critical reflection. The goal of General Knowledge is to be informed. The goal of Science is to control and predict nature. The goal of Philosophy is to understand the meaning and purpose of existence.
