prayers believed to ensure good harvest, for example. The protestant reformation rejected the notion of the medieval Catholic interventionist god, introducing the transcendent non-interventionist god. Therefore events were viewed not as a result of supernatural beings, rather, a result of predictable forces that could be decoded through, and manipulated, by reason and science. Thus the religious explanation of the world became redundant, beginning the disenchantment of the world, thereby undermining religion. Contrariwise, Lyon criticises secularisation theory for assuming that religion is declining, referring to the past three decades as characterised by the expansion of unconventional religion.

Bruce avers that the growth of a technological worldview has largely replaced religious explanations of why events occur. An example is how scientific and technological explanations are sought after following a plane crash, as opposed to regarding it as a result of spiritual interference. In everyday life, religious explanations are typically utilised when technology is ineffective – for example, praying for help if suffering from an incurable illness. In light of this, Bruce concludes that whilst this worldview does not directly discredit religion, it reduces the scope for religious explanations.

Functionalist Parsons defines structural differentiation as a process of specialisation that occurs with the development of industrial society. Separate and specialised institutions develop to execute functions that were previously performed by a single institution. Parsons argues this has happened to religion - whilst it dominated pre-industrial society, it became disengaged from wider society as its functions become transferred to other institutions such as the state. This is evidenced by religion’s decreasing influence on education and where it does have influence, it must conform to the requirements of a secular state e.g. teachers in faith schools must hold qualifications recognised by the state. Bruce agrees with Parsons, noting that religion has become privatised; restricted to personal choice - a consequence is traditional symbology having lost meaning.

Furthermore, Wilson argues in pre-industrial communities, shared values were expressed through collective religious rituals that integrated individuals and regulated their behaviour. Contrariwise, when religion lost its foundation in stable local communities, its hold over individuals decreased. Analogously, Bruce regards industrialisation as attenuating the consensus of religious belief in close knit rural communities. Social and geographical mobility results in increased diversity. Bruce states that the plausibility of beliefs is underm