

Understanding, Appreciating and Applying the Christian Worldview

Text: Colossians 2:1-10

Several years ago the word “worldview” was not in my vocabulary. To tell you the truth, I still rarely use it. To use another word that has not been in my or anyone’s vocabulary for very long is the term “woke.” We know in our grammar, that literally “woke” is the past tense of “wake.” But in the modern usage, “woke” means being aware of the truth behind things that, as a rule, the authorities in our world would deny. When the youth of our country refer to “woke” or “wokeness,” immediately a set of values and beliefs is, thus, an “in your face” worldview is assumed. I have to admit, as a teen I was experimenting with the rock-in-roll culture of the 1960s. It did not take long, while yet in my teens, to understand that *The Long and Winding Road* (the last Beatle’s song before their breakup) was a road that led to nowhere, making one the epitome of a *Nowhere Man* (one of the Beatles’ earlier songs). Please notice some of the lines of which I suspect were autobiographical: “He’s a real nowhere man, sitting in his nowhere land, Making all his nowhere plans for nobody. Doesn’t have a point of view, Knows not where he’s going to; Isn’t he a bit like you and me?...He’s as blind as he can be, Just sees what he wants to see; Nowhere man, can you see me at all?”

The truth is we all have a point of view or worldview, if you please.

Philosopher H.P. Rickman writes, “there is in mankind a persistent tendency to achieve a comprehensive interpretation, a *Weltanschauung*, or philosophy, in which a picture of reality is combined with a sense of its meaning and value and with principles of action.” James W. Sire in *Discipleship of the Mind* defines worldview as “...a set of presuppositions...which we hold...about the makeup of our world.” Sigmund Freud describes *Weltanschauung* as “...an intellectual construction which solves all the problems of our existence uniformly on the basis of one overriding hypothesis, which, accordingly, leaves no question unanswered and in which everything that interests us finds its fixed place.”

The university campus can be one of the most dangerous places on earth to lose your faith. It is estimated that half will renounce their faith because they simply do not have a defense for what they believe. To be more specific, they have no Christian or biblical worldview. David Noebel, founder and former president of Summit Ministries, almost joined those statistics of faith renouncers, also now called “Leavers” while he was a philosophy student at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. Dr. Noebel founded Summit in 1962 to help ground Christians in their faith, thereby enabling them to face the barrage of challenges on college campuses. Here is his definition of worldview: “A worldview is the framework from which we view reality and make sense of life and the world. [It’s] any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world and man’s relations to God and the world.”

A recent nationwide survey completed by the Barna Research Group determined that only 4 percent of Americans had a “biblical” worldview. When George Barna, who has researched cultural trends and the Christian Church

since 1984, looked at the born again believers in America, the results were a dismal 9 percent.

A worldview has been likened to the glasses we see the world through. If we have rose colored, cracked or cloudy glasses, we will see the world from a distorted point of view. Perhaps a better analogy could be inspired by II Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The analogy would be that we who are in Christ and have surrendered to His ideals have something better than new glasses; we have new eyes. To follow the metaphor more fully, some who are reading these words need to be born again, developing a personal relationship with Jesus, giving you new eyes, because no man-made lenses will give you sight. For Christians who have not been growing in grace, it's time to throw away the humanistic worldview tinted glasses and see with the mind of Christ and with the eyes He gave you when you were saved.

There is no way that we may give you an exhaustive treatment of the Christian worldview, but allow me to hit two basic anchors.

I. THE BEGINNING – CREATION

How we understand creation is the starting point of belief system. If you believe we are products of chance and evolution, anything goes.

A. The Creator – Jesus. John 1:3: "All things were made by Him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Colossians 1:17: "And He is before all things, and by him all things consist."

B. The Cross – The one and only way to Heaven and the more abundant life. Our Creator God came to earth and took our place on the cross to redeem us. Philippians 2:6-11. I Peter 3:18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

C. The Created – Christ created all that is - including us. One reason abortion has become a way of life for many in America is because they do not see God as the author and giver of life. This will also lead to euthanasia. The statement "If there is no God, everything is permitted" is widely attributed to Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Although it is not an exact quote, the philosophy was definitely embraced by Dostoyevsky.

In 1934, during his second year as chancellor of the German Reich, Adolf Hitler invited the leaders of the evangelical churches of Germany to a meeting in Berlin. His goal was to silence mounting criticism from Christians of the Nazi regime and its anti-Semitic policies. Among those present at that meeting was a fiery young pastor named Martin Niemöller. Niemöller would later recall that encounter as the moment from which he knew that Germany was doomed. Hitler was amiable and deliberately reassuring as he sought support of these prominent churchmen. He promised pastors that the position of the church in Germany was safe and secure - that its tax exemptions and state support would remain unchanged under Nazi government. Niemöller pushed to the front of the group to confront the chancellor. Standing face to face with Germany's ruler, the brash young preacher asserted: "Our concern, Herr Hitler, is not for the

church. Jesus Christ will take care of His Church. Our concern is for the soul of our nation." An embarrassed silence followed and it was immediately evident that Niemöller spoke only for himself. His chagrined and embarrassed colleagues quickly shuffled him from the front of the room. Noting their timid reaction the dictator smiled as he replied, "The soul of Germany - you can leave that to me." And so they did. Christians looked the other way while innocent people were slaughtered and a nation was led down the path to destruction.

D. The Cannon – The Scriptures. I Thessalonians 2:13: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

II. THE ENDING - ESCHATON

In 1952, Eric Voegelin wrote *The New Science of Politics*. In this book he showed the similarities of the ancient cult, Gnosticism. This is basically the belief that the disorder of the world can be transcended by extraordinary insight, learning or knowledge. This surfaced in the doctrine of "Enlightenment" in the 18th century, which was set at variance against the influence of the Puritans in the times of America's founding. Voegelin showed striking similarities in Gnosticism and a number of modern political theories, particularly Communism and Nazism. The belief that man's best efforts will eventually bring peace and brotherhood is the delusion of many a youth educated by socialists and communist teachers right here in the United States and has now reaped the results of the chaos and destructive evidence in the streets of many of our major cities. One representative of the young anarchists said that we should not only do away with the police, we should do away with the jails. If we were living in the kingdom to come and Christ was on David's throne, we could do that. However, until Christ comes, we had better keep the Ten Commandments as our governing principle, because man without God has no governing principle. And to use the term from the book of Judges, "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 17:6). During the 1960s and 1970s William F. Buckley and the Young Americans for Freedom, being the antithesis of modern socialism, adopted Voeglin's phrase as their slogan: "Don't immanentize the eschaton!" Today it appears our world is on fire, in some cases quite literally. In other words, it is true, man's best efforts will never bring utopia. Christ must come and He alone as the Prince of Peace will bring peace on earth and goodwill toward man! Revelation 22:20: "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

-Pastor Pope-