

# STRAIGHTWAY

"AND STRAIGHTWAY THEY FORSOOK THEIR NETS, AND FOLLOWED HIM" (MARK 1:18).  
CHRISTIAN PURITIES FELLOWSHIP

## The Paradigm Shifts of Worldviews

Dr. H. T. Spence

In more recent months this periodical has presented the concept of paradigm shifts in both the politics and religion of America as well as the rest of the world. We must now consider how these paradigm shifts are affecting the worldview of humanity, especially professing Christians. To understand this worldview shift, we must carefully consider the changes taking place in the warp and woof of contemporary man's thinking.

First, we must distinguish between the terms *worldview* and *presupposition*. Often *presupposition* has been viewed synonymously with *worldview*. A *presupposition* is something that we presuppose in our approaches to and dealings with life, whether in conversing, in reading, in hearing the news, or even in listening to a sermon or lecture. During these actions we presuppose certain things to be true or false. We may enter a conversation presupposing a person is a Christian, but the ensuing conversation could

reveal that he may not be a Christian. As a Christian, we presuppose the Bible is the Word of God every time we read it; this presupposition will be in our mind as we converse with another individual. A presupposition is a vital part of the foundation of our worldview.

### Defining a Philosophy

The *worldview* of an individual is a product of his varied presuppositions. The combination of multiple presuppositions establishes and declares one's *worldview*. When we take this perspective back to the beginning of the biblical history of man, two presuppositions are established.

First, there is the presupposition of God. As a created being, Adam believed in the reality and existence of a true God. When Cain left his father's home along with other siblings, he introduced an alternative presupposition for mankind that embraced the natural world, not God.

Second, there is the presupposition of God's existence or non-existence in the light of man's thinking. This presupposition directly affects how man will view himself. Will he view himself in the light of God, or will he view himself in the light of the world without the concept of God? These two foundational stones were clearly defined at the beginning of history after the fall of man. Cain left the manifesting presence of the Lord that was established for the giving of offerings to Him at the gate of the Garden of Eden. Cain desired to leave the presence of God totally—both the providence of God and the very consciousness of God. Thus, he sought to establish his life without God in his thought and living. This brought about a civilization without the philosophical worldview of God.

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But as Genesis 4 unfolds this rejection of God by Cain, we also read of Adam's son Seth (Gen. 4:25, 26). It is revealed that this son of Adam believed in God, and that in his time men began "to call upon the name of the LORD." Because of this we witness another presuppositional philosophy coming to the forefront. Cain's presupposition led to a worldview of ungodliness, or an absence of thought for God; Seth's presupposition led to a worldview of godliness, or a consciousness of God in living.

These two perspectives created a philosophy of life that grew among the people of the earth. The word *philosophy* simply means "the love of wisdom." Everyone has his own definition of wisdom and what he comes to love, but is it true wisdom or false wisdom? Each person will conclude his own definition of wisdom. So, to sincerely say, "This man is a lover of wisdom" does not confirm that it is a wisdom of truth. He may be a lover of false wisdom that is based on a false knowledge. *Philosophy*, in and of itself, detached from everything else, is a most proper and noble word. But when the term is placed in the context of *fallen* humanity or *born-in-sin* humanity, it may not be a word of honor. Honorable philosophy depends upon the "worldview" of one's philosophy. In this context, philosophy finally became a word to declare a person's manner and way of living

life. One may ask another, "What is your philosophy of life?" The answer to this question will reveal the reality of that person's perspective of life. He personally may not be able to express his perspective in detail, but all people (whether they can express it or not) have a philosophy of life; what they have come to believe is their truth of life and the living of that life.

For many centuries, philosophy was viewed and interpreted through the natural world; such philosophers were called *naturalist philosophers*. They really were not contemplating God; they were not even contemplating themselves. As they observed the world and were coming into a consciousness of the world around them, they did not look within to self, and they did not look upward to God. They looked around themselves, and this is where philosophy began to be established, simply from the natural.

It was not until the days of the *metaphysical philosophers*, beginning with Socrates, that man began to look within. He was not so consumed with what was taking place around him; his thought life was drawn inward, into himself. And for several generations, philosophers gave their lives in the pursuit of "Where did I come from?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going?" and "Who is the real me?"

Who is the real me? This consideration is quite amazing since fallen

man is not naturally inclined to such a question. Sinners do not want to know about themselves; they have no desire to think about themselves or analyze their lives. They have no desire to analyze what they do; they simply desire to live life the way they want. But Socrates (470–399 B.C.), by no means a believer in a personal God, believed in the polytheistic world of his day, the Greek world. Yet his world prompted some troublings of heart and mind. Socrates came to realize that no man really wanted to face himself. It is interesting to note that of all the terms to identify himself and identify humanity, he chose the Greek word *hamartia*. Socrates called himself *ta hamartia*, "the sinner." In the New Testament this word is used by the apostle Paul and translated, "the sin," or the sin principle. This word literally means "the missing of the mark."

To Socrates, what was the mark that was being missed? It was the ideal that should control man's thought life and everyday living. Whatever the "mark" or the purpose of living was, man was failing; he was *ta hamartia*, the one missing the mark. Socrates believed he was a man "coming short of the mark" that should control the living of life. Again, he did not believe in the Supreme God, he did not believe in the written Word of God, and he certainly did not believe in the coming Messiah. But he was a metaphysical philosopher, believing that the real "self" is

found within and that the true life was not worth anything if it could not be tested for its genuineness. Although after Socrates there was a decline of the inquiry into the self, he opened the door for the metaphysical philosophers and philosophy to enter the quest for a worldview controlling the life.

To what degree was this worldview of the metaphysical philosophers? It only encompassed self and its environment. It was the individual's perspective of his world; it was the world in which he lived; it included others that he lived with; it was the self's thought life; and it included that which would affect and influence one's living and his pursuit of life. This perspective became the more important understanding of one's life.

When speaking about a worldview, particularly from the secular standpoint, we should also note the perspectives of the Epicureans and the Stoics. The Stoics declared, "Get in harmony with fate"; the Epicureans declared, "Get in harmony with pleasure; whatever brings pleasure and satisfaction to the life, that's what you pursue." These are the worldviews these two groups of men forged out in reaction to the metaphysical philosophers.

### **Coming to a Worldview of God-Consciousness**

A careful study of the Old Testament saints reveals they were never looking within to establish their worldview;

they looked upward. Though these did not use the word *worldview*, they lived the concept and context of a God-conscious worldview. And it did not come from within; it came from the revelation of God and His Word. The revelation of God was establishing the concept of a worldview to them. We see this clearly with Enoch (Gen. 5:22). Any time we read of a man "walking with God," the Hebraic context expresses "one who lives and dwells in full harmony with" someone else. Enoch walked in a spiritual sphere, and he never left the boundaries of that sphere. The Hebraic meaning suggests a person who is totally committed and dedicated to living what he believes is the life that is found in that sphere.

Thus, we read that Enoch "walked with God." Likewise, we read that Noah "walked with God" and that Abraham "walked with God." These descriptions reveal that God became the controlling principle of their lives. In a very simple definitive understanding of a worldview, these saints "walked with God." These men identified with a worldview of God, and that worldview controlled their daily living. Abraham, who came from a polytheistic worldview in Ur of the Chaldees, made a transition in his worldview from one identified with this earth and its religious system to a worldview of the one Supreme God Who totally controlled his life.

A worldview simply expresses that to which an individual has completely committed his life. It also is a fundamental orientation of the heart that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions that one holds about the basic constitution of reality. This set of presuppositions provides the foundation on which one lives and moves and has his being.

Let us carefully note the warp and woof of this simple definition. First, we have observed that a worldview is a *commitment* of heart and life. When does this consciousness come to an individual? We cannot say the consciousness of this worldview comes in elementary grades. At this time a child is coming to a simple consciousness of knowledge given by a parent or a teacher declaring what is true and what is false. A child could attend the public school or a private school where the presuppositions in each context are today radically different. Parents and teachers who have been taught from a modernistic, socialistic, atheistic, and evolutionary presupposition will, in turn, teach children their presuppositions. Whether what is being taught is true or not, the child is now beginning to form in the mind and heart what one day he is going to commit his life to. As the child gets older, his thinking will intensify (whether for good or bad), and he will begin to make decisions of what he will believe for life. Depending on his maturity, the teen-

ager will eventually begin to forge the direction of his worldview. Certainly, more input comes as he grows into his prime years of life; in his prime his worldview resolves in his heart.

The older the growing child becomes, the more secret choices he begins to make. He either will or will not pursue these decisions made within. In a secularistic context it is possible he may endure a lecture and record an answer on the test that he knows his teacher expects, while his heart has concluded, "I do not want to make this a part of my life." Amidst all the social pressures upon youth, it is also possible in our present contemporary hour that a youth could reach a supreme ruling choice *prematurely* in his life. Bold, dark philosophical powers pervading modern American education are forcing an anti-God worldview upon the youngest of children. Our government is quickly and aggressively shaping children's hearts and minds more than it ever has before. Girls are being forced toward a womanhood with a feminist mindset very early now. And young men are trying to grow up at twelve and thirteen, but at the same time being molded into feminine ways and subjective thinking. Both male and female youth also believe that "making my own choices" is part of my growing up.

Another term associated with worldview is *purpose*, that is, "resolve of

heart." Note Daniel 1:8:

*But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.*

According to the Jewish historian Josephus, Daniel was 17 years old when he was taken down into the Babylonian Captivity. It seems that Daniel came to a purpose or resolve for right things early in his life. A worldview was already part of his thinking; it became a commitment of heart, a commitment to a presupposition that he was going to live, and move, and have his being in that purpose. It seems he had entered a supreme ruling choice of life and was committed to a biblical worldview, thereby rejecting the kingly diet placed before him.

Sometimes worldviews must change. When a person comes to Christ, this is what must happen in his life. It is the time when old things must pass away, and all the things which are to establish this life are to be new. These new establishing things are to be of God. They are to be neither of the world nor self's subjective thinking. Although an individual may have resolved a worldview before he came to Christ, the power of redemption is such a great work of God that it should radically change the worldview of that person.

Regrettably, this paradigm shift

could occur in an opposite direction. A young person could be on the road to a worldview in Christ when suddenly something happens. It is usually some crisis involving something he saw, he heard, or someone he met of a contrary philosophy of life that began pulling him away from God. This crisis experience he may not have uttered to anyone, but in his mind and heart such thoughts started churning over and over. In a process of time the road upon which he was walking changed. What seemed to be the precious worldview of commitment to God, His Word, and His Will now is no longer important. At such a point, his worldview begins to slowly unravel; the warp and woof are untangled, and slowly but surely something else comes in to replace what he had committed his life to.

One of the reasons God gave humanity the gift of time was to reveal self. A person may not come to this changed worldview overnight, but how does a person leave God? It is over a process of time. How does a person come to God? Well, it too is over a process of time. At what point in time is this radical change made? There are changes in the presuppositions that become the foundational stones for the worldview, but when is that foundation set, established, and sealed? Time may be appointed for the process, but there must come a crisis to resolve the process of thought.

## Conclusion

This is a crucial hour when paradigm shifts are taking place in the hearts of people destructively shifting worldviews away from God and His Word. Again, the first principle of a worldview is erecting foundational stones, whether right or wrong. This process directs an individual toward a commitment of his life to what he sees and knows. The second principle of a worldview is the establishing of a fundamental orientation of the heart. From this point all teaching and knowledge begin taking control and directing the heart toward a desired end.

Whatever we observe as bad, there is always behind it something worse. Genesis 6:5 speaks of the violence and the powers of the flesh in Noah's contemporary. But what was the major sin that resolved God's heart to send the Flood?

*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

Yes, "God saw." This is the second time we read of God seeing something. The first time is noted in Genesis 1:31: "God saw every thing that he had made, . . . was very good." But the second time we read of God seeing something, He "saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." What does this reveal to us? It is the

initial building blocks of thoughts that work their way into forming enlarged imaginations. Noah's contemporary began to dwell upon their imaginations—a fuller understanding of their thoughts. When random thoughts begin to congeal into expanding and more permanent imaginations, the heart is now being revealed—not simply the mind. The heart will be the revelation of the individual. The "continually evil" thoughts of Noah's generation declared the worldview and supreme ruling choice it had made. A society dedicated to full evil was ripe for God's judgment.

Dear reader, we have come to such a global worldview in our own generation. This is the condition of America's heart in every compartment of human living, including the corrupt, violent, evil political leadership of our nation. A supreme ruling choice has now created a worldview that is taking over not only our nation but also the world. We are sealed in an atheistic worldview not only ripening for the judgment of God but also for the coming of the son of perdition, the Antichrist. We are witnessing the execution of the supreme ruling choice of these global leaders. Only the Bible truly reveals that man has given himself over to a covenant with the Devil. The controlling worldview today includes a collaboration of man and Satan in the End Time to overthrow God and His saints. People today live by the "Lie"



and the false posture of personality. The main worldview of today is based on pragmatism, relativism, positivism, and a growing presupposition of pluralism. Truly the worldview of man has been given over to reprobate thought and a diabolical will and heart.

But what is the heart according to Scripture? Proverbs 2:10 begins with the clause, "When wisdom entereth into thine heart." Although wisdom must first enter the mind, it is only when it reaches the heart that it is firmly resolved. The heart is where the notions of wisdom, or what the individual thinks is the wise thing, come from. The way men live will reveal the truth of what they are given to. This is why a child is known by his doings. Is a young child's honorable actions more appropriately the wisdom his parents have given to him? Is it evident in the responses to situations or circumstances taking place in his life? Is such wisdom becoming a part of the child's worldview? Is he choosing to do what his father and mother (or teacher, or pastor) have revealed? Or is he carving out his own way, his own world influenced by self to form a contrary worldview?

*Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain [empty] in their imaginations (Rom. 1:21).*

Anytime we see this word *imaginations*, it is always dealing with the

heart. When thoughts reach the heart from the mind, they have become the imaginations. Paul here speaks of the vain, empty heart of these reprobates.

Psalms 2 speaks of the people imagining a vain thing. This same emptiness is what their hearts are intent on. The heart is the central defining element of the human person. Proverbs 4:23 warns us to "keep thy heart." This phrase in the Hebrew reads "Keep the heart with all keeping"; our English reads "keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." All that we are becoming is truly flowing from these issues or tributaries of the heart.

We resolve this first article once again with the definition of a worldview. A worldview concerns an individual's coming to a commitment of a fundamental orientation of his heart that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions that are held to be the basic constitution of reality. It provides the foundation on which one lives and moves and has his being. In our next article we want to explore this definition further to see what presuppositions must be settled in the Christian's heart to establish a biblical worldview to face this age, the prelude generation of the coming of the Lord. The paradigms of right living and thinking are radically shifting, and we must prepare to face these shifts, purposing in our hearts we will not change our biblical worldview as a Christian.

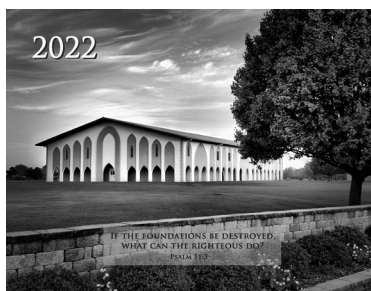


# 2022

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# The Warp and Woof of a Worldview

Dr. H. T. Spence

How does one respond to the question, "What do you believe in?" Today it is rare to meet individuals who can articulate their life's philosophy. Most do not know who they really are; they have never truly faced themselves. In light of our present society and its globalist ideological affront, perhaps this question is inadequate. Life has become increasingly complex and fragmented. We are a society that has scarcely invested time concerning a theology of life. The question, "What do you believe about God?" was pondered more in past decades than it is today. Apart from a sentence or two, rarely can a person elaborate about his view of God. No theological view has been formed in his life. Most people have never lived life *seriously*. They have merely busied themselves in an animated but thoughtless existence. Life has been somewhat like a ball in a pinball machine, randomly going here and there. Such a person has never taken the time to really establish in thought and principle what he believes about life, about the world, about society, about government, and ultimately about God.

## The Present Distress of Human Concern

The past nearly two years has prompted much compelled conversation concerning the overt encroach-

ment of government and the draconian mandates controlling our health and daily living. These actions have destroyed many of our liberties and have created overwhelming economic atrocities, including massive unemployment, depleted supplies, and escalating gas prices. Oppressive mandates have curtailed our comings and goings limiting travel and forcing public social distancing. Much is said about the many churches closed for nearly a year. More is said about enforcing a faceless, cloned society. This intelligently designed cause-and-effect has brought us to more radical paradigm shifts of uncharted territory. We have been caught in a time of imbecile political leadership, contributing to an out-of-control government cascading from one tragedy to another. Yet there is nothing the common man can do except hope for some semblance of sanity on the other side of this national train wreck approaching.

While much talk is invested in this present distress, nothing is being solved by mere talk. Nothing humanly can be done. Only a sovereign God is the hope for some measure of mercy and compassionate providence to accompany His saints riding out this Euroclydon storm. Truly, this is a most critical and urgent hour for humanity to face the question, "But what do you

believe about God?" Have you come to an extensive knowledge of God as you have of current affairs? We can talk so much about what is happening in our nation and world today that we rarely speak or include God in our conversation. Perhaps the reason for our silence is an abounding ignorance about Him. Such an ignorance will profoundly affect our worldview. Many will enter the futility of "whatever will be will be," believing life is only in the hands of fate. Such a worldview greatly affects the way they live.

### **The Controlling Principles of a Worldview?**

In the last article of this issue, we declared that a worldview is essentially some principle or collection of principles that I have committed my life to. A worldview is also a fundamental orientation of the heart. Its formation begins in childhood and matures in the thought life of our teenage years; by the time we enter the season of young adulthood, this worldview is further established. This worldview can be expressed in a set of presuppositions that have taken hold of the compartments of life, controlling the view of life one takes in this world. If one's presuppositions are right, then basically everything that flows out of them will be right; but if one's presuppositions are wrong, then everything that flows out of them will be wrong.

Let us note Mary Magdalene as she

came to the garden tomb after Christ's resurrection (John 20:14,15):

*And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.*

Mary supposed Jesus to be a gardener. Because this was her presupposition about Him, it influenced the way she spoke to Him. She did not know that the Lord was standing there talking to her until He called her name. A presupposition is a part of the foundation of our worldview. What do I presuppose when I see something or hear something? When the name of someone or a certain situation arises in my thinking, what is my automatic perspective? What is the presupposition that controls my thought about the person or the situation? In a worldview it will be a series or a set of presuppositions that collectively we assume are true. This becomes our reality, our worldview.

Nevertheless, as was acknowledged in the first article, worldviews could change in an individual's life. In Acts 9, Saul's worldview, on the road to Damascus, radically changed. He was a leader of the Jewish nation; he was deep in that worldview. And the radical

change that Christ brought to his life (including what transpired in the three days that followed and the three years in the Arabian Desert) transformed his worldview. This is what the New Birth is to bring us to. The very word *repentance* (Gr., *metanoia*) expresses a total transformation of the thinking creating a different perception of my past, of God, and even of life itself. I come to know the answers to the philosophical questions of the ages: "Where did I come from?" "Why am I here?" and, "Where am I going?" The answers to these questions radically change. And once that New Birth becomes a reality of our heart and life, we begin to dismantle former worldviews; we tear down the false presuppositions and begin rebuilding a new worldview found in Christ. We then must make a firm commitment of our life to this new worldview, no matter what happens!

### **I. My View of Reality: A Key Characteristic Defining My Worldview**

A first crucial characteristic that constitutes an integral part of my worldview is my answer to the question, "What is reality?" It is often believed that reality is a condition of everlasting plasticity, constantly changing at any given moment, on a whim, and in any given mood one finds himself. Thus, one can alter and reshape it to his liking.

This shifting view of reality began to infiltrate philosophy with the nineteenth-century rise of Existentialism. Now as a dominant practical philosophy of most people, Existentialism proclaims that humanity's reality is constantly fluctuating and evolving; it is a reality where nothing remains absolute or permanent. Initially popularized by the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, Existentialism powerfully redefined reality to make it the product of one's creativity. It permitted one to create a virtual reality, an artificial reality that in turn is embraced as one's personal assumed reality in which to live. This approach is so often observed throughout society today.

The popular 1960s rock star Janis Joplin had a very troubled upbringing and left home early in those difficult years. She was drawn to weird and flamboyant dress and became a prominent raunchy-voiced rock singer. Unable to live with the destructive demands of the rock 'n' roll lifestyle, she died at the age of twenty-seven. In the last few years of her life, she turned to the heavy use of drugs and alcohol to escape her reality. During these years she kept herself drunk and sedated nearly twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, trying to deny and reject the real world. Through the euphoria and synthetic emotions from her addictions, she had hoped to create another world in which to live. What she did create was an illusionary world

in which to escape. This kind of escape pursuit was popular in the 1960s; youth were encouraged to create their own reality.

This philosophy of hating the true reality of one's life demanded the necessity of creating one's own illusion of life. Denying reality and creating a fantasy world not only becomes an escape from true reality but also is eventually believed to be true reality. The sane man in society today may shake his head at such a dream and ask, "What are you thinking?!" But much of society has come to believe that everyone can make his own individual truth and that truth is only true to him.

For this very reason Washington politicians can be neurotic liars; they continually create their own truth, their own reality, and no one is allowed to question their constructed truth. Such a worldview of reality is also pervasive in the news media and in fake science and common core education. To them it is true, and no one has the right to question their perceived reality. For this very reason, we are being forced toward a pluralistic society where all opinions must be accepted equally as truth; anyone who questions or denounces these opinions will be "canceled." Even the statistics concerning COVID-19 and its vaccine therapies are manipulated to distorted conclusions; society is intimidated into accepting these.

In the absence of absolute truth, terminology is conveniently redefined, shifting to the pragmatic need of the moment. This contemporary presupposition of postmodernism does not even permit reason to exist in its reality. We have come to a global hour of belief where the governments of the world are forcing upon its people their created reality of political correctness. Even if acknowledging their reality is created completely from a lie, they care not. The question no longer can be asked what is real when reality is what we make it to be.

Dear reader, illusions of reality abound in our country and around the world. They abound and thrive amidst a multitude of contradictions. Confusion reigns as every context of human existence creates its own truth. What motivates what we do at this hour in history? Is it fear of the government or the panic of a "plandemic"? What is the motivational force of how we live? Are we given to believing something to be truth this week and then a different concept of truth next week? The question must be asked, "What is the controlling worldview of our lives?" Is it God, or the pressure of the world?

The dominant forces controlling the world today are also controlling what is perceived and promoted as reality. For this reason, it is imperative that the Christian define reality by the divine revelation of the Word of God. A

proper definition of reality profoundly affects the Christian's worldview. For this reason, it is important that Christian parents establish early biblical reality in their children, even amidst their early honorable enjoyment of childhood make-believe. The child must know the difference between imaginative make-believe and biblical reality. The child must learn to live his life in the light of that reality. How often youth respond to the shifting tides of life, not establishing a solidarity of mind and heart about their lives. According to Ephesians 4:17, one of the divine appointments of a pastor-teacher is to preach the unchanging Gospel. By doing so, spiritual stability comes to the life, and we are kept from being blown about by every wind of doctrine that comes along. Each Christian home must resolve for its members what is reality.

While existentialism has settled into the warp and woof of society's subconsciousness, postmodernism is raging in global societies. Reason has been denounced by political correctness and cancel culture. Amidst its limitations, it must be acknowledged that reason at least helped us; reason at least kept our feet on the ground. Yet political society has thrown away not only the revelation of God but also natural reason. In the absence of reason, humanity has become the creator of its own truth; man has become a partaker of the tree of the knowledge

of good (excellence—truth) and evil.

This approach is also seen in Neo-Christianity. The pseudo-gospel taught by men like Kenneth Copeland and Kenneth Hagan speaks of a creative faith where one simply says the word and faith is created. If a person is sick or dead, one can purportedly heal him or bring him back to life with just a "creative word" expressed from the heart. As a result, modern Christianity has equally come to creating its own reality. After a while the only reality is self; nothing else truly is real; it is what one personally thinks is real. Both Neo-Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement were founded upon existentialism, believing in additional revelations from God. Thus, the individual becomes a voice of truth within himself, without any basis upon the inerrant Word of God. Such ministries are built upon human subjectivity or (as the prophet Jeremiah declares) "their own heart" (Jer. 23:16).

The Christian's worldview must be a true worldview, not a subjectively created reality; the truth of the Word of God must be the thinking of the Christian's heart. Possibly in our teenage years the thought of God not existing may have crossed our minds. However, this passing thought never became the conclusive thinking of our heart. The Bible reveals that as a man thinketh in his heart (not his mind) is his true reality. Questioning God's existence as a passing thought

in the mind is not the same as that thought being a possession of the heart. The choices of life are based on what that heart thinks and believes. "I will do this or that because God does not exist," or "I'll do it believing God does not see me, for He does not exist." When the thoughts of my heart become the motivating force of my decisions, this then becomes my reality for living: my heart has come to believe "God does not exist."

The warning of Proverbs 4:23 is so important to heed: "Keep thy heart with all diligence." The heart is the fountain from which come the issues of life. Everything I do, even my conversations and decisions of life, comes out of that heart. The heart is the realm where one's worldview resides. This fountain includes one's wisdom, emotions, spirituality, desires, and will. Our living must come from the heart, just as God's living and everything about Him comes from His heart! This is why we can never question God or doubt Him. Everything He does, everything He says, everything He promises issues from His heart. He infinitely loves me from His heart; out of His heart are all the issues of His life. We are told that David was "a man after God's own heart." Yes, he failed at times; but what misery his conscience was in, what misery his heart suffered (as his psalms reveal) until he returned to God. It proves David did have a worldview, and it provoked his

conscience when he failed.

I must have as a foundational principle of my worldview what is reality, and more specifically, what is the *prime reality*, the superlative reality. The prime reality is truly real and addresses the most important principles first. Do you believe in God or many gods? Are you an agnostic? Are you an atheist? Additionally, within this prime reality is what I think about the universe. Was it created? Did it evolve?

There are many presuppositions that could take over one's worldview in answering these questions. One's prime reality sets boundaries in his thinking. If I believe in God, there are certain boundaries I cannot cross in my thinking, in my living, and in my decisions of life. The prime reality composes the boundaries of my life. This prime reality must be very clear in my thinking because it controls my life. What is my prime reality? Do I believe God is real or imaginary? Do I believe evolution is true or false? Do I believe that I am part of the universe or that I create my own universe? So, my prime reality is the foundational pillar that controls my worldview. For the Christian, God must be the prime reality of his worldview.

## **II. My View of External Reality: Another Key Characteristic Defining My Worldview**

In contrast to the prime reality of



God in the heart of the Christian, there is also a proper view of the *external reality* to the life I live. This reality is my environment and all that lies outside of the life I live. It includes the universe and the world in which I live. Several observations are imperatively needed: How am I related to my external world? How am I related to the universe? How am I related to the government? How am I related to my family? Am I part of the universe, or am I separate from the universe? Does my life have anything to do with the universe?

Existentialism proposes that the individual is not related to anything. He is like a rolling stone that never gathers moss. This presupposition declares that while reality is ever changing, mutating, evolving, the individual is separate from his external reality. He is not a product of the past or a product of the present; only self is what controls his external reality. But further questions need to be asked, "Am I autonomous to the universe?" "Is my universe chaotic?" "Is the universe in law, order, design, purpose, and beauty?" I must draw a conclusion about this. No matter what happens, the worldview must always be consistent. Why? Because this is what the individual has come to believe is true, and nothing in a worldview needs to be altered.

Am I only subjectively related to

my external world? In the early 1960s, rock musicians called upon the youth to embrace the world around themselves. But in the latter part of the 1960s, more and more were being drawn to the zodiac and into astrology. These steps opened the door to curiosities in Eastern religions that were founded on illusion, devoid of any absolutes, and given to a false reality of non-existence. Told they were one with the universe, the youth began to relate themselves with whales, plants, cows, stars, and planets. This new worldview was called the Age of Aquarius.

Such thinking returns us to the concept of prime reality. Youth were called to a new prime reality of pantheism and panentheism, that all the universe is god, and that we are one with it. Are we one with the universe, the planet Earth, the whales, the porpoises, the dolphins? Is this my reality? These questions must be answered for the completion of a worldview. It must be settled: "Am I distinct from the universe?" "And if so, what makes me different from all other creations?" Yes, I must settle this presupposition.

### **III. My View of a Human Being: Another Key Characteristic Defining My Worldview**

These characteristics provoke another important question regarding one's worldview: "What do I think of myself as a human being?" Before

answering this question, we must ask, "What is a human being?" "Does a human being have a soul?" "What is the accountability of that soul?" The contemporary declares that we do not have a soul or a creator, and therefore, we are not accountable to any higher power. Although the world speaks of the "psychic" reality, do they acknowledge the existence of a soul? Is that soul separated from the universe, or is it part of the universe? The secular answer says it is not so much that we have a personal soul but that our soul concept is part of the soul of the whole of the universe. Well, am I a complex machine? Am I nothing more than a computer? Is it possible for them to connect me with artificial intelligence? A lot of questions come up at this point. Am I a "sleeping god" that needs to be awakened; is the purpose of education to bring me to this godlikeness? The New Age movement declares that we can evolve into being the image and likeness of God. If this becomes a part of my worldview, then it will profoundly affect what I become and what I do. How I answer this question will become a presuppositional part of my worldview. Do I exist to be part of a communist or socialist government, to be controlled in every aspect of my human existence? What is a human being? Does the government define this, or do I look to the Bible for its answer?

#### **IV. My View of the Hereafter: Another Key Characteristic Defining My Worldview**

My established worldview must include the presupposition of another question: "What really happens to a person at the point of death?" The Christian Scientist cult mothered by Mary Baker Eddy responds that everything is just an illusion of the mind. She declared, "When you hear that I have died, don't believe it, and don't come to my funeral; even though there's a casket, don't believe it's a casket; my body may be in there, but don't believe that; it's just an illusion."

The reality after death is a sobering question whose answer must become a part of my worldview. What happens at death? Is death only a product of the mind? We live in a society in which much emphasis is placed on the mind. With concentration, we are told that one can bend a spoon; with concentration, one can influence people to think the way he wants them to think. Concentration and determination of the mind will help one through what seems to be impossible things. Nevertheless, the question remains: at death what happens? Is it the end (as the communists and socialists teach), or is there an afterlife? In this afterlife am I absorbed into the universe (as the New Age movement declares)? Am I reincarnated (as Hinduism and Buddhism declare)? The Mormons tell

us that the devout Mormon is taken to another planet, an unpopulated planet, where he will be given a wife (or the wives that he has known); he will become god of that planet, and he as god will populate that planet. This is the Mormon afterlife. A Muslim's afterlife is described as a very sensual paradise where man is given great pleasures.

First Corinthians 14:10 speaks of many voices in the world vying for our attention and control of our hearts. Knowledge has become more prolific at this time than at any other time in history. We live in a world abounding with moods, spirits, and ideologies that are clamoring in competition for the minds of humanity today, knocking on the doors of our hearts to claim our worldview, each voicing its distinctive. What do you believe happens when a person dies? Did he die? Does he come to the end of life to merely be annihilated? Do we know that one day all will stand before God and give an account of their lives? These are important questions for our worldview.

### **V. My View of Knowledge: Another Key Characteristic Defining My Worldview**

Is it possible to know anything at all? The answer to this question is another key characteristic defining one's worldview. One of the key philosophers that brought this question to the forefront was David Hume (1711–1776). He didn't believe one

could thoroughly know anything, not even himself. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) tried to give a response by reasoning that perhaps we can take the world of epistemology and divide it into two spheres called the *phenomena* and *noumena*. He claimed we cannot know the noumena world, referring to anything in an invisible realm like angels, heaven, hell, soul, or God. As a closed world system, the phenomena world could be known through science and reason. Sadly, postmodernism has called us to question if we can even know anything about this phenomena world.

We may think that we have found the answer. But with all this melee of knowledge out there, who really knows? Who knows if Joe Biden lies? Is a lie tied to motivation and intention? Can a person say something wrong and not know that he has done so? But if one does not believe it is a lie when he states it, then has that statement become true and can be called truth? Can you repeat a lie around the world so often that it becomes true? In your knowing, can you know God? Can you know the truth about the White House or Congress? And can you know the truth about the weather? With all our accumulation of knowledge and the technology of our present age, can we know anything? Can we create science that is not true science but masquerades as science when proclaimed? If we say that no

knowledge can be known, then it keeps us all in a nebulous context where we will never be able to come to conclusions about anything. Perhaps, in this confusion is where our contemporary leadership wants to keep us: trusting that only their word is true.

Yes, the Christian can absolutely know certain true things! We were made in the image and likeness of God! God is holy, and God is omniscient. Having never experienced it, He has more of the insight into the knowledge of sin than even the Devil has. Yes, He has all knowledge of everything. My worldview declares this to be a part of my thinking and presupposition. While it is impossible for anyone to know everything about everything, God knows everything about everything. And for the things that I don't know, I am trusting Him

with my life, because He knows; He knows!

## Conclusion

The powers that have risen in the past two years have proved to be powers to force the world into changes of worldviews. As a Christian we are confronting a force to receive and believe the worldview of the world's corrupt system. The woke movement and the cancel-culture movement are forcing society to change its worldview. We are being told what presuppositions we are to accept and those we must reject. Amidst innumerable presuppositions, one's worldview is the great crucial key.

We want to observe the final characteristics that must control our worldview in the concluding article.

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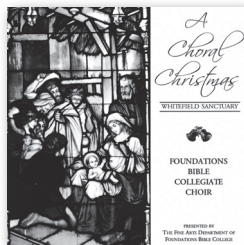
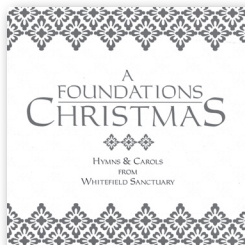
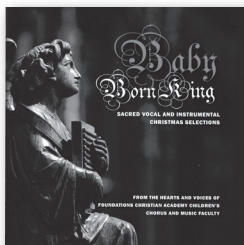
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# **The Controlling Principles of a Worldview**

Dr. H. T. Spence

Living in a philosophical schizophrenic hour, most people tend to embrace several worldviews and yet fail to be truly controlled by any. They live only according to the moment and what accommodates that moment. In one circumstance, they may step forward with what seems to be their worldview; and yet, the next day they find themselves in another circumstance, responding with words and actions of a different worldview. This indecisiveness proves they have never come to a controlling worldview. As a Christian, God must control my life; Christ must control my life; the Spirit of God and the Word of God must be controlling factors of my life. These precious presuppositions must be welded together collectively within the heart. And from this heart, a worldview will emerge as the singular controlling power of my life. This worldview is the controlling principle of how I view the world and myself in the light of the world.

Over the years the world has lived by many paradigms (the standards and patterns) that were the controlling thoughts and principles of living. But as the world deepened in manifested sin and apostasy, these paradigms that governed society boldly shifted. The evidence of such changes has become apparent in our present shift toward

governmental dictatorial rule. Who would have thought two years ago we would be where we are today in the United States? This society and governmental shift, in turn, has brought radical shifts in other areas of human existence. Science has shifted from rational proof of reason to a political and socialistic postmodern manipulation of statistics. Healthcare has radically shifted, becoming more and more based upon the existential mood of the current government in power; statistics and algorithms accommodate medical lies to control people through mandates. Our government rules through the weapons of fear and intimidation. Even the paradigm of economy founded in capitalism has now shifted into the cesspool of socialism. Another paradigm shift is seen in journalism and the reporting of the social media; what was once seen in the integrity of objective publications now has transitioned to propagandize journalism. The list of paradigm shifts now taking place is almost endless. Nearly every paradigm of society has shifted toward its antithesis, and in turn has forced other paradigms to shift.

## **When Worldviews Change**

At the beginning of the Foundations ministry in 1974, our Founder was given of the Lord a certain world-

view with clear presuppositions. The ministry's birth was at a time when the moral fiber (at least publicly) in America suggested a better spiritual climate. Yet, the 1970s also gave witness to the moral collapse profoundly influenced by the 1960s; eventually our country came to accept the "strange flesh" of legalized sodomy. As the nation changed in its moral and spiritual climate, more perspectives had to be included in our worldview. Even the worldview of several individuals and ministries that we once fellowshiped became compromised as they accommodated and even capitulated to Neo-Christianity. Therefore, our perspective of them was forced to change, not because our heart changed but because they changed from the truth.

And with candor we must acknowledge that the world today is constantly changing at accelerating speed for the worse. This is why, dear reader, we must ever keep our eye on God and His infallible Word as we witness the changes taking place in the world. As the End Time takes us deeper into the abyss of the apostasy in every compartment of humanity, it will necessitate a greater fine-tuning of our view of both the world and our own living within this world.

### **The Defining Characteristics of a Worldview Reviewed:**

In the previous article we introduced eight defining characteristics prompt-

ing questions that demand answers. In turn, these answers establish constant principles that govern our view of this world, and the view of our life in the light of this world's view of itself. It is important to see that our conclusions cannot be based on subjectivity. Individuals who are not Christians have a multitude of thoughts coming to them, whether good or bad. Such thoughts naturally and profoundly affect how they view things. There is a great segment of society today that would view us as extreme, as too dogmatic in our beliefs and living standards. We must realize that there will be many individuals who will not accept our worldview; in fact, they will publicly despise it. They may call us enemies of society, enemies of humanity, even to the degree that we are not worthy to live on this same planet with them.

I. The first defining characteristic addressed one's concept of *reality*. Inherent in this first principle is the need to resolve what one believes to be the *prime* or *superlative reality*. Does this refer to God? Is it a concept of gods or just this material world (*kosmos*)? Am I a creature that is part of the *kosmos*; did I merely come from Mother Earth to then be absorbed back into it? What is the prime reality that becomes the undertow of everything I do?

II. The second defining characteristic concerned one's view of his external reality. What one concludes about his

external reality is dependent upon his prime reality view. Was the world created? Is the world autonomous? Does it have its own sustaining power? Do I live in a law, order, and design creation, or do I live in a chaotic creation, or chaotic world *kosmos*? Did all this come into existence randomly and by chance? Is all matter the sum of reality? Or is it spirit? What is my personal relationship to my external reality?

III. The third defining characteristic concerned one's view of himself as a human being. I am not a dog or a cat or a cow or a tree. Is a human being a highly complex thing? Is it a machine? Was I made in the image and likeness of God? Were my very distant relatives apes, chimpanzees, or monkeys? What am I? What am I a product of? What is my purpose of even existing?

IV. A fourth defining characteristic that must be integral to one's worldview concerns his view of what happens to him after death? Am I annihilated? Do I cease to exist? Do I have a soul within me? Is there an afterlife? It is a marvel that natural philosophy (in contrast to metaphysical philosophy) believed in a soul. In fact, as Socrates was dying, having been sentenced to death through drinking hemlock poison, he believed that his soul would be released from the prison of his body. He believed in an afterlife—not the right afterlife, but he did believe in an afterlife. Atheistic

science rejects the afterlife but fantasizes of an artificial afterlife (artificial intelligence). Certain religions and cultures have promoted the hereafter to be reincarnation. Truly, mankind has gone the gamut in his conceptual thinking of the hereafter.

V. The fifth defining characteristic that must become a part of one's worldview concerns the question whether we can truly know knowledge. We have been convinced by the world system that a person cannot know final knowledge. Knowledge changes, and no one can know for sure what is true or false, right or wrong. Such confusion in society about truth makes it more susceptible to the propaganda of "the Lie." Do I believe the Bible has the knowledge needed to get home to Heaven? Do I believe the Bible is *infallible, impeccable, and inerrant* knowledge?

## **VI. My View of Absolute Knowledge: Another Key Characteristic Defining My Worldview**

The sixth defining characteristic concerns one's belief about *absolute* knowledge. Society vacillates in confusion and uncertainty when it proclaims man cannot know anything absolutely. They vainly try to settle the confusion by forcing everyone to accept each other's opinion without question. For example, politicians force a "science" that is not scientifically established; the simple declaration it is science to



them is sufficient. Believing nothing can be absolutely true, they mandate mere opinion or purposeful misinformation. Because truth in a postmodern age is different to each person, no one is absolutely wrong or absolutely right. Most worldviews are directly linked to the Tree in the Garden of Eden: "I have a right to make the decision of the knowledge, the knowledge of good and evil. Therefore, the power of what I believe in ethics resides in me." Upon what basis do I come to conclusions on right and wrong?

The Bible should be the worldview of a Christian. Liberal theologies have attempted to make the absoluteness of the Scriptures questionable. They bring up questionable manuscripts. They bring up varying ethics and moralities. Some of these theologians can preach classic sermons and yet, once they leave that stage, continue in their own morals (or immoralities). How do they live so schizophrenic without their conscience being affected? We have come to a postmodern world beyond reason that allows such confusion. They separate the way they live morally from what they believe religiously.

Politicians such as Nancy Pelosi and Joe Biden claim to be Christians. Even when many in the Roman Catholic Church disapprove of these politicians receiving Mass (because of strong beliefs in abortion and other frowned-upon lifestyles), these people have been able to separate their politics

and personal views from their religion. Postmodernism provides the ability for them to do so, and they can be at peace with this. Such living is the evidence of an apostate. This confusion is their worldview; this is their presupposition.

How do we know what is right and wrong? Is it determined by human choice alone? Is it determined by how I feel? In the film *The Sound of Music*, there is a scene where Maria is with Captain von Trapp. As they are falling in love, her dialog implies "How can this be wrong if it feels so right?" Lamenting her "wicked" and "miserable" past, she says, "I must have done something good." This nebulous morality is how people live now in existentialism and postmodernism. Although the world may tell us to let our hearts be the guide, the Bible warns, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Perhaps the world really means to follow one's conscience; but one must ask, "What has educated the conscience?" What is right, what is wrong?

## **VII. My View of Human History: Another Key Characteristic Defining My Worldview**

The seventh characteristic that must be part of a worldview concerns one's view of human history. Perspectives of history have radically changed in recent decades. German philosophers denote these distinguishing

perspectives with the words *Historie* and *Geschichte*. *Historie* is the story of traditional history books; it presents the facts, the personalities that were involved, the dates of events, and what historically took place. It is the reality of what and when something happened. However, Existentialists generally reject *Historie* in favor of *Geschichte* history. *Geschichte* history purports to explore or divine the feelings, thoughts, and reactions of people or societies amidst history's unfolding events. They want to explore the subjective feeling of mind and heart. Such abstract perspectives to them are genuine histories.

Today we witness the redefining of history as exemplified in the defacing and destruction of historic monuments. Existentialism and postmodernism hate anything of the past that is a historical witness against their irrationality. So, what does one do with a history that condemns? Its witness is obliterated and replaced with a subjective *Geschichte* feeling where no one has the right to declare the good or evil, the right or wrong. The *Geschichte* historian today will be replaced in a generation with a new subjective *Geschichte* historian. Truth is what the present generation believes and feels. For this reason, many believe it really does not matter whether Jesus existed.

With reports that the Roman Catholic Church is finally making public

its 36-mile vaulted library of historic writings, the media is suggesting there will be proof that Jesus never existed and that Christianity is built upon a myth. Such a thought had to come, for the Liberal Theologians, since the mid-1800s have been boldly declaring that the Bible is a myth, a saga, a legend. Thus, what will come from such a statement? Christianity is now viewed as a myth for the wealth and the promotion of the Church.

Human history is now attempting to make a paradise on earth, but without God and His Son. So, what is history? Well, to the Christian, it is the divine meticulous workings of God's providence. It is not so much that men have made history. History is God working through both good and bad mankind. As a Christian, I must come to a resolve about history as part of my worldview.

In the eighth grade, my atheist world history teacher made the statement that Christianity was subservient to world history. Coming from a preacher's home, she raised in my mind another question of what I had been taught. But as I grew older and entered the ministry, I found out that the statement is really the opposite. It has been Christianity that has affected world history, and world history is a servant to sacred history. Amid the many spokes of history, all history is centered upon the death and resurrec-

tion of the God-man, Jesus Christ.

### **VIII. My Personal Core Commitments: Another Key Characteristic Defining My Worldview**

The final characteristic that must be part of a worldview concerns one's ultimate core commitment. The core commitment gets to the root of my worldview, reflecting what truly I have committed my life to. When does a person come to a supreme ruling choice? Amidst a planet today dedicated to pluralism of worldviews, what do I believe is the singular purpose of my life? This core commitment must

be to love God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to fulfill His will for my life. The years of living life will prove whether we have resolved a biblical core commitment.

To what have you committed your life? Do you have a worldview? Does that worldview have God at the core? Does it control you? Does it consume you? Is every decision you make tied into that worldview? As the age enlarges its mandates of bitter authoritarian control, may we be committed to that which eternally matters, the mandates of God's infallible Word!



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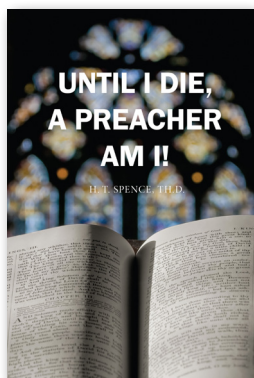
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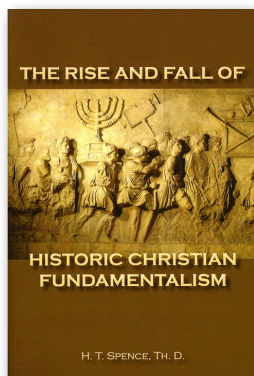
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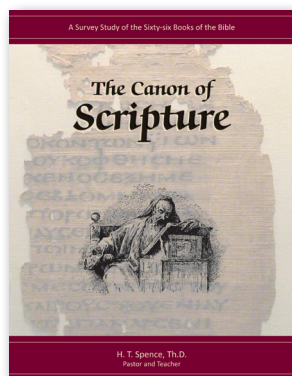
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