

# WITNESS-KIT CLASS 1

## Introduction to the Course and to Worldviews

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# What is a Worldview?

A worldview is a set of

- working assumptions
- and thinking patterns

that people use to make sense of their world.

- Worldviews include answers to big questions like “How do I know something is real?”
- “What am I supposed to do about a certain issue?”
- “What makes an action good or evil?”
- “How can I live with integrity?”

# A True Worldview helps us find truth.

- A true worldview helps us communicate truth.
- As long as the people around us hold our same worldview, communication is straightforward. When worldviews differ, misunderstandings are very likely—in fact, almost impossible to avoid.

# The Art World Shows the Difference in Worldviews.

The Dutch Masters and Renaissance artists reflected the **Enlightenment Theism** Worldview. Their work developed almost photographic perfection, and painted real life as they saw it during their time.

The abstract Modern Artists like Pablo Picasso reflected the **Modernist Worldview**—and the despairing idea that no universal standards or ideals could be found.

(Use a search engine to view some of his work online.)

# Renaissance Influence

## Carravaggio: Christ on the Road To Emmaus

MICHEL-ANGE-DE CARRAVAGE 1604.



# The Art World Shows the Difference in Worldviews.

- The Impressionists were a transition between those two worldviews—trying to find meaning in emotion, trying to paint emotionally, revealing light and its effects upon the viewer. (Search for Monet online to see examples.)
- But emotion is changeable. Can something as changeable as feelings provide lasting meaning?
- The Modernist artists asked whether universal constant ideas could be found as anchors for meaning.

# The Art World Shows the Difference in Worldviews.

- Each school of art had similarities based upon worldview—things they emphasized in their work.
- Most Modernist art looked rather similar—with each artist searching for universal ideas by *abstracting* them—distilling the picture to the ideas. Picasso carried the abstraction idea further, still looking for universals, but to the point where the meaning of the picture as a representation of reality was lost.

# The Art World Shows the Difference in Worldviews.

This failure to produce universals through abstract art showed that the observer was involved in the meaning of the artwork. This led to **Postmodern** art.

- Who are the Postmodernist artists? They are a diverse group.
- The artists that tweak the noses of taxpayers by spending tax dollars on outrageous insults reflect the **Postmodern Worldview**.



# Postmodern Art includes Pop Art.

- Such as paintings of soup cans.
- Postmodern art includes political art, with works created to emphasize a political theme.
- Postmodern art includes event art, where art is constructed in a public location, then dismantled.

# Who are the Postmodernist artists?

Postmodern artists are producing most of the art in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and they are still searching for meaning, but in many different ways.

# Postmodern Art is Diverse.

The Postmodern view says that art is TOTALLY in the response of the beholder,

- and that ***extremes of emotion in the beholder*** represent greatness in the artwork.
- Revulsion is as good as awe—because there are no universal standards, according to Postmodernism.
- With no standards, art diverges. So Postmodern art is NOT all alike.

# Postmodern Art is Diverse.

- Artists that tell a story are **Postmodern Artists**. Norman Rockwell was dismissed by the Modernists as an “illustrator—not an artist.” The Postmodernists embrace Norman Rockwell as a great artist because his work tells a story. (Use a search engine to view his work online.)
- Architects that create quirky buildings are Postmodernists, like the one who designed a store with a giant grand piano for an entryway. It provokes an observer’s response.

Even though Norman Rockwell  
Paintings are reassuring,

The Postmodernist worldview is not.  
The same worldview that embraces  
Norman Rockwell also embraces  
artwork too degrading to mention.  
Major problem: Having no standards  
can lead to degradation.

# Why should we care about understanding worldviews?

If we want to persuade someone to make a change in any area of life,

- from religion
- to politics
- to selling widgets,

we need to understand something about worldviews.

How we think makes a huge difference in what we find persuasive.

# Matthew 5:9 (ESV)

- <sup>9</sup> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Matthew 5:9
- Our world needs peacemakers ***of the right kind***—people who can resolve conflict for the good of society—and people who can prevent erroneous ideas from sending the economy or the defense budget or the moral climate over a cliff.
- Peacemakers ***have to*** understand different points of view.
- They have to understand how to persuade others who have varying worldviews.

Peacemakers need to use

Both REASON and FAITH.



Of course the most important

Form of peacemaking is helping others (and ourselves) find peace with God.

# Real Peacemakers

- Cannot accomplish anything based upon what they ASSUME is going on. They have to work based upon what is REALLY going on.
- ❑ Unfortunately, understanding a different worldview from one's own is VERY DIFFICULT.
  - ❑ There are 3 major worldviews operative in America, with lots of minor variations among them, and other worldviews elsewhere in the world. Learning about **the big three** is a start toward more effective communication.

# Helpful Sources (for the slides and) for Future Reference:

- Gene Edward Veith's POSTMODERN TIMES, and
- THE FRANCIS SCHAEFFER TRILOGY, containing *The God Who Is There*, *He Is There And He Is Not Silent*, and *Escape From Reason*.

# The Big Three Worldviews are

**Enlightenment Theism**

**Modernism**

**Postmodernism**

(Traditional Islam is a different worldview from these, and requires separate study to understand. It is often misunderstood *by assuming* it is in one of the above categories. Traditional Islam would benefit by reforming into an Enlightenment Theist worldview.)

# People who hold different worldviews

Often characterize other worldviews in derogatory or misleading terms.

- Try to avoid that. It does not help communication.
- To be clear about each belief system requires mentioning some matters we take for granted.
- For example, Modernists often describe Enlightenment Theists as ignorant, superstitious people who cling to outmoded ideas, and who do not understand cause and effect in the real world. This is a **misunderstanding** of the Enlightenment Theist worldview.

# Sample Variations within each Worldview:

Enlightenment Theism	Modernism	Postmodernism
<p><b>Traditional Christians and Jews</b></p> <p><b>Biblical/ Evangelical Christians and Jews</b></p> <p>Scientists or social scientists who <b>integrate</b> faith and career</p> <p>Social Conservatives</p> <p>Compassionate Conservatives</p> <p>Some Progressives</p> <p>Principled Libertarians</p> <p>“Walmart Republicans”</p> <p>“Martin Luther King Democrats,” “Reagan Democrats”</p>	<p>Deists</p> <p>Atheists &amp; Materialists</p> <p>Modernist <b>Social-Gospel Christians</b></p> <p>Some forms of Judaism</p> <p><b>Economic Marxists</b></p> <p>Laissez-Faire Capitalists</p> <p>Rugged Individualists</p> <p>Freudians</p> <p>Behaviorists</p> <p>Darwinists and Punctuated Equilibrium advocates</p> <p><b>Physical &amp; Bio Sciences</b></p> <p>Abstract art</p> <p>Hedonists within the law</p> <p>“Great Works” proponents in literary studies</p>	<p><b>Existentialist Christians</b></p> <p>19<sup>th</sup> Century Romantics</p> <p>Wiccans</p> <p>New Agers</p> <p>Nazis and Neo-Nazis</p> <p><b>Cultural-Group- Marxists</b></p> <p>Eastern mysticism’s followers</p> <p>Feminists</p> <p>Multiculturalists of a certain type</p> <p>Political Leftists, Marxists</p> <p>Some Social workers &amp; <b>The Social sciences</b></p> <p>Some forms of journalism and literary studies</p> <p>Some Lawyers</p> <p>Story-telling artists, nose-tweaking artists</p>

# We can see

That each worldview has MANY diverse views within it. In each category, certain ideas will be foundational, and certain techniques will be used to reach conclusions.

Within each worldview, people use those ideas and techniques to reach differing conclusions, but they generally understand each other when they try to communicate.

# Each worldview has been dominant at times.

- Enlightenment Theism was dominant in America from the 1600s to 1963 or so.
- Modernism was dominant from 1963 to the present, but has been under challenge from Postmodernism since the 1980s—and even earlier in academia.
- Postmodernism is gaining authority in the general culture as people graduate who were immersed in it during their university years.



# Labels vs. Worldviews



Note that someone identifying himself as Christian does not really tell what his worldview is. An existentialist Christian does not think the same way as an evangelical Christian.

Words like conservative, liberal, progressive, libertarian are also inadequate to let us know how people think and how to reach them.

People can be liberal in one area and conservative in another.

Often when we use a traditional label, we miscommunicate or create communication barriers.

# We can better understand how to persuade others

## Current Worldviews

By understanding three major worldviews:

1. **Enlightenment Theism**
2. Modernism
3. Postmodernism

# Within each worldview, we need to understand how they think,

## Questions to answer

by answering these questions.

1. How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?
2. What role does reason or logic or cause-and-effect play?
3. What role does faith play?
4. How do they define right and wrong?
5. What are their goals for society?
6. What is persuasive to them?

# Enlightenment Theism Question 1:

## How do Enlightenment Theists define reality and truth?

This worldview is broader than any denomination. It includes all the Biblical and Traditional portions of Christianity and Judaism that believe in the existence of a good God with MIND who is willing and able to communicate with humans.

**Reality includes physical reality and the world of the mind and the world of the spirit and an open universe.** God exists outside of the universe and prior to the universe, and is able to interact with physical reality.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 1: What is reality? What is truth?

Events can occur from four basic causes:

**One Cause=Physical Law:** The universe operates by means of physical law because the Creator organized it that way with His MIND. Job 38:33, 36 “Do you know the ordinances of the heavens, or fix their rule over the earth?” “Who has put wisdom in the innermost being, or has given understanding to the mind?”

**Second Cause=Chance:** Ecclesiastes 9:11 “Again I saw under the sun...time and chance overtake them all.”

# Enlightenment Theism Question 1:

**Third Cause=Human decisions.** In Genesis 1:28 God delegated dominion over the earth to humans. That means human decisions cause things to change. Human decisions are real.

**Fourth Cause=God's intervention** from outside the universe. Detectable Miracles are rare but possible. They include things like “Man throws the dice, but God controls the outcome”—where God's intervention is **veiled** by chance. They include miracles like the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to let us know that eternity is real for us.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 1:

God allows physical law + chance + human decisions on earth to be controlling. This includes the statistical laws of distributions of chance outcomes,

--That fact does not mean He is distant or unaware of our situations. In fact, He knows how many hairs are on each of our heads. He knows and cares about everything about us.

(See *World Magazine's* article, dated February 11, 2012, by Andréé Seu, "The Cross in the Stone.")

# Enlightenment Theism Question 1:

The Bible attributes to God Many NORMAL principles—“He gives to all life, breath, and all things.” Acts 17:25 (NKJV)

<sup>17</sup> He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. Colossians 1:17 (NLT)

We do not notice these things as miracle, because they are hidden behind the normal operation of the world. Yet they are miracle, because only God can do them. He is the ultimate cause of all other physical existence.



# Enlightenment Theism Question 1b

## What is truth?

- **Truth is that which matches reality.**
- Reality exists objectively. Facts exist.
- People can search for truth. People can search for God.
- God can communicate with human beings, through the Bible or some other way of His choice.
- God gave us minds with logical capabilities for finding truth. God wants us to search for truth.
- Our minds have a source in His Mind as our Creator.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 1c

## Are People's Choices Real?

- YES!
- People make real choices that have impact upon reality.
- People are responsible for their choices.
- People can make good choices or bad choices, and consequences will follow.
- People have an inclination to make bad choices, which they must fight against—an internal conflict within human nature. God **always** wants them to win that fight.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 2:

What role does reason or logic or cause-and-effect play?

- The world follows somewhat predictable cause-and-effect rules. Physical laws are real and can be discovered through experiment. Both chance and physical law are valid causes for events. People can influence events by their REAL choices.
- This belief system works very well in the real world.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 2:

What role does reason or logic or cause-and-effect play?

Logic reflects the way reality works. It is a useful tool for connecting with reality—with truth.

Reason is a gift from God's Mind to ours. He expects us to use reason honestly and with integrity. Truth matters to Him.

We live in a world formed by His good Mind, so it is not a capricious or absurd world. Life and reality have meaning.

# Cause and Effect

- Cause and effect extend into the spiritual realm. We can interact with God through prayer and Bible study and church or synagogue activities.
- God can interact with the physical world if He so chooses, for instance, by causing rare events to occur seemingly by chance. He can inspire a doctor toward a proper choice of treatment. Reality includes God.
- Because God is a good God, forays into the spiritual realm follow somewhat predictable cause-and-effect paths.

## Enlightenment Theism Question 3: What role does faith play?

Faith is a decision to trust a good God. Because God is good, faith is a wise decision.

Because God is good, His rules are good and fair.

They are the same for everyone equally.

Following His rules is beneficial for humans.

His rules are real. We know them two different ways: through His Book, the Bible, and through our consciences. Honesty demands that we face times when we fail to follow His rules, and that we seek His forgiveness.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

God's good character and rules, from His good character, teach us right from wrong. We know His law written on our consciences as well.

Right and wrong exist objectively. They are not just a matter of opinion.

The Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule and the *Shema*—the command to love God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength—define moral universal principles humans are required to follow in order to be good.

Many issues can be decided based upon these principles, and such decisions will be good for all.

Law should follow or support these principles.

# Luke 10:25-30 (NKJV)

- **25** And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"
- **26** He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading *of it?*"
- **27** So he answered and said, " '*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,* ' and '*your neighbor as yourself.* ' "



# Luke 10:25-29 (NKJV)

- 28 And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."
- 29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"
- 30 Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, ...

# Enlightenment Theism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

Goodness within humans goes beyond obedience to God's law—because PERFECT OBEDIENCE is beyond our reach.

We face a human inadequacy problem that God wants to solve for us, by paying for our sins, taking our sins away, and extending His Holy Spirit into our lives to give us power to do what is right.

This reflects something REAL, not just illusion or emotion. Because it is REAL, we need to find this for ourselves.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 5: What are their goals for society?

**Freedom within principled boundaries.** Liberty, not license.

Life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, with people taking responsibility for their lives, for their choices, and for their families.

Peaceful problem-solving structures and playing by the rules. The rule of law, and peaceful means of improving the laws.

Representative government, the Bill of Rights, freedom to succeed financially, reward for work. Help for neighbors in need, freely given rather than coerced.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 5: What are their goals for society?

A strong goal is maintaining representative government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Certain matters are non-negotiable. Peaceful verbal dissent and religious liberty are necessary and should be free.

Violent dissent is totally forbidden. There is a strong line between freedom of speech and violent protest.

The rule of law is a necessary certainty for freedom to survive. Vigilante justice of all kinds is forbidden.

# Enlightenment Theism Question 6: What is persuasive to them?

- Persuasion must be within principled boundaries. The ends do not justify the means.
- Facts must be established—no jumping to conclusions or “vigilante justice.”
- No “mob rule.” No riots.
- Persuasion must include workability—well-intentioned disasters are not acceptable.
- Persuasion must take unintended consequences into account.
- Freedoms must be maintained and defended.

# If we are trying to win someone who is an Enlightenment Theist to Christ,

- We generally can start with reasons to believe the Bible is God's message to us.
- Once they accept that premise, the truth of salvation by grace through faith is a great relief.
- It is an easy step from belief in the Bible to salvation.

# We can better understand how to persuade others

## Current Worldviews

By understanding three major worldviews:

1. Enlightenment Theism
2. **Modernism**
3. Postmodernism

# Within each worldview, we need to understand how they think,

## Questions to answer

by answering these (same) questions.

1. How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?
2. What role does reason or logic or cause-and-effect play?
3. What role does faith play?
4. How do they define right and wrong?
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# Modernism Question 1: How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?

- Modernists accept physical reality and physical laws as brute facts. They do not ascribe physical law to the MIND of a Creator. They do not have a good explanation for why our minds should reflect reality correctly.
- Modernists deny that objective truth can be found in the spiritual world. Rather, they believe that world is ONLY opinion or self-delusion or subjectivity.

# Modernism Question 1: How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?

- To a Modernist, truth and facts are restricted to matching the physical universe—to science.
- People's choices are also illusion. They are pre-set by their genes, their brain chemistry, their upbringing.

# Modernism Question 1: How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?

- They believe some degree of re-programming can be accomplished by “operant conditioning” or the use of rewards and punishments to create a new automatic response in the brain.
- They view humans as the most complicated member of the animal kingdom.
- They view spiritual dimensions of life as irrational.

## Modernism Question 2: What role does reason or logic or cause-and-effect play?

- Modernists believe reason and logic apply to physical reality but not to spiritual matters. This belief has a shaky foundation, since reason is ultimately reduced to chemical reactions in the brain. Why should a chemical reaction in the brain correctly describe the world outside the brain?
- Modernists believe cause and effect are restricted to the inside of the universe and that the universe is all there is. If they believe in God, it is a Deistic God who is outside the universe and never interferes.

## Modernism Question 3: What role does faith play?

Faith is seen as an irrational attempt to find comfort over issues such as death.

It is seen as sometimes helpful for society in the form of a “helpful lie” that enables people to act for the good of the group.

Often it is seen as an enemy of science—a reversion to primitive superstitions.

Sometimes it is viewed as a kind of comforting hobby, like knitting—and a reversion to primitive human nature, when science was not understood. (Watch the video *Expelled, No Intelligence Allowed* for examples.)

## Modernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

- Generally, Modernists define right and wrong as what benefits the group, with the group defined rather vaguely.
- They have a utilitarian view of right and wrong, and may accept horrendous evil in the name of helping the group—such as justifying abortion on the grounds that fewer criminals are born—or justifying experiments on live fetuses destined for abortion because some medical breakthrough may be found.

# Modernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

- Because they have no source of moral universals, their view of right and wrong shifts over time. What is viewed as a terrible evil in one generation becomes acceptable in another.
- They are likely to view adherence to spiritual principle as being unrealistic or inefficient unless one can prove that the principle is beneficial in the physical world.
- They view communication from God as an impossibility because they reject miracle.

# Modernism Question 5: What are their goals for society?

Modernists generally view science as the means of improving society. They tend to view those pesky Enlightenment Theists as harmful to progress.

Their feedback mechanisms may be lacking, however.

Economic Marxism is an example. Because its proponents failed to face reality rather than their “scientific economic theory,” the Soviet Empire had to implode before change came.



# Modernism Question 5: What are their goals for society?

Because moral standards are assumed to be merely opinion, Modernism tends to act as an enabler for hedonism.

Each individual does what is right in his own eyes. Society's laws are designed to preserve order, so hedonism is restrained by arbitrary law and its costs vs. benefits.

A modernist is more likely to misuse alcohol than drugs, for instance, because of the relative costs.

# Modernism Question 6: What is persuasive to them?

- ❑ Facts and figures.
- ❑ No emotion: just logic and carefully researched facts.
- ❑ No anecdotal evidence.
- ❑ No evidence from authority unless accompanied by statistics or scientific principle.
- ❑ These guys tend to view emotion with suspicion because it is subjective. They LIKE OBJECTIVITY.
- ❑ They do NOT like feeling manipulated.

# Modernism Question 6: What is persuasive to them?

- If you are an Enlightenment Theist and want to reach them with the value of a principle, BACK IT UP with statistics. Lead with the stats.
- Generally, the universal principles of Enlightenment Theism work VERY WELL in the real world, so use real world data to convince the Modernists.
- Generally the amoral decisions of Modernism have strong negative results—again use the statistics to demonstrate WHY a decision needs to be made differently.

# Modernism Question 6: What is persuasive to them?

- Often, if we approach Modernists with substantial data to back up our position
- And if we start from the data rather than from moral principle
- They are willing to listen and be persuaded to a good course of action.
- This approach may NOT work well for a Postmodernist.

To win a Modernist to Christ, we must convince him of God's existence **and goodness** first.

- If he has accepted Modernism out of a desire to be intellectually honest, he should be open to discussion of reasons to believe God exists.
- It may be a slow process. It requires careful logic.
- Pre-evangelism may take much longer than evangelism, but without pre-evangelism, these guys will not find God.
- We have to open their eyes in the power of the Holy Spirit, **using the minds that God gave us and that Jesus redeemed.**

# A step-wise process

- The question of meaning in life and the value of human beings can provide a starting point toward God. Once they accept the idea of the existence of God, who is GOOD,
- Then you are at the Enlightenment Theist starting point, where the next step is reasons to believe the Bible is God's message to us.
- When that point is accepted, it is time to discuss grace and repentance and faith.
- So this course will spend some time searching for reasons to believe God is GOOD.

# Occasionally, a radically different approach may work.

- Luis Palau, in witnessing to communist sympathizers in Latin America in the 1970s, started with God's promise -- "Their sins and rebellious deeds I will remember no more." His idea was that people were attracted to atheism because they had despaired of finding God's forgiveness for their sins.
- I believe this depends on their motivation for their belief system, and only God knows that.

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# Postmodernism Question 1: How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?

Postmodernism faced up to the question “Why should our logic match reality?” and came to a startling answer. They decided no reason exists to believe that it does.

They decided **EVERYTHING** is subjective.

They decided our individual identity is subjective and fluid—that we are defined by the groups to which we belong.

Truth does not exist in an **OBJECTIVE** way.  
Facts are illusion.

# Postmodernism Question 1: How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?

Truth is defined as an explanation that is self-consistent. It does not have to match objective reality--

- because they think that no way exists to prove objective reality can be matched.

People construct reality inside their minds, and by their words.

Truth is a story.

Therefore, people can have different truths.

# Postmodernism Question 1: How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?

Caveat: A sizeable number of people have bought into Modernism for science, and Postmodernism for everything else. They hold a composite worldview, where they treat physical reality like a Modernist, and emotional, religious, and social realities like a Postmodernist.

What that means for us—we have to show them that the rest of reality is objectively real and knowable—not just opinion. They are in a better position to realize this than a consistent Postmodernist. They are partway home.

# Postmodernism Question 1: How do they define reality and truth? Are people's choices real?

Because Postmodernists see individual identity as fluid and defined by the groups to which one belongs, they see human choices as pre-programmed to a large extent.

Their view of pre-programming includes the language learned by the individual: Language is a closed system of thought which pre-sets conclusions.

People's choices are seen as constrained by group identity rather than as being free.

## Postmodernism Question 2: What role does reason or logic or cause-and-effect play?

- Postmodernists view reason and logic as human constructs that may not be valid. They view cause and effect as “storytelling.” They embrace contradiction.
- They view EMOTION as valid, not logic. They see presentation of facts as a form of power play.
- Their motto may sometimes be “Don’t bore me with the facts, because they aren’t real.”

# Postmodernism Question 3: What role does faith play?

- Faith is seen as a leap in the dark which may be comforting in some way. **All leaps are seen as equal**, so the content of a person's belief system is seen as **irrelevant**.
- The existentialist tries to validate his identity by a leap of faith, for example.
- Postmodernists tend to see faith as emotionally positive, unless it makes a truth claim. Then it is seen as a negative, exclusivist matter. So faith is compartmentalized rather than integrated with reason.

# Postmodernism Question 3: What role does faith play?

Postmodernists tend to only see faith superficially, because they equate all faiths as equal, and assume they are all similar.

They will tend to view faith as a threat based upon how strongly it is held rather than based upon what the beliefs actually are.

This leads to ignoring real threats, and erroneously identifying non-threats.



## Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

Right is defined as helping oppressed groups.  
Wrong is defined as hindering oppressed groups.

Right and wrong are defined by the group to which one belongs. No—ABSOLUTELY NO—over-arching moral universals are accepted.

This becomes a problem if someone is a member of two groups with different standards. How does a Pro-life Feminist define right and wrong, if her morals are defined by each group.

## Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

Without over-arching standards, Right and Wrong deteriorate in practice to a form of “might makes right.” The group has the right to marginalize non-conformists by whatever method it chooses, and no one has the moral authority to say “That is WRONG!”

Equality is relegated in this scheme to group equality rather than equality of individuals under the law—which makes reform difficult within closed groups.

## Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

In addition, when two or more groups experience conflict, without overarching standards and without any kind of umpire, the conflict can become a **fierce** power struggle.

In fact, Postmodernism expects everything to be struggles for power. Without moral universals, no restraints limit the intensity of the power struggle. No standards tell when the tactics for gaining power are out of bounds—no bounds are recognized that apply to all groups.

## Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

If no standards exist, then all power structures are seen as oppressive—  
so the only way to correct prior oppression is to give power to those groups who have experienced oppression, and to take power from those formerly in favor.

The newly empowered are expected to hold power **oppressively**.

This is a fluid system, with no fixed target for defining a fair society.

## Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

Where Modernism acted as an enabler for hedonism, Postmodernism accepts hedonism and treats it as a group right.

By having no boundaries around power struggle, Postmodernism acts as an enabler for terrorism—the group with the loudest voice “deserves” to win or to be mollified—and terrorism is a loud voice.

By rejecting the moral universal “You shall not murder,” Postmodernism lost the moral boundary around terrorism.

# Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

So having NO MORAL BOUNDARIES can deteriorate into becoming a victim of violence.

So POSTMODERNISM can produce oppression when it intends to produce freedom from oppression.

POSTMODERNISM's lack of universal principle can lead to tyranny instead of freedom. No boundaries only SOUNDS like freedom. It isn't freedom.

# Another Note of Caution:

- The Ten Commandments really are God's law! "THOU SHALT NOT MURDER," is a standard that God will apply to each individual when each person meets God at the judgment. The Holy Spirit acts now to convince each person of that standard, and of the reality of future judgment.
- So looking at various worldviews does not mean God and His Law go away! God is there and He will judge.

## Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

Postmodernism acts as an enabler for oppression of disfavored individuals within groups, because it has no standards to negate group claims about right and wrong.

Postmodernism **NEEDS** moral universals, but has no way to search for them. By rejecting all over-arching ideals, it fails to define oppression inside groups.



## Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

It is not a good idea to call Postmodernism “Multiculturalism” because that feeds into the sense of being against bigotry and makes Postmodernists fight more intensely—instead of trying to understand what we are saying.

Good multiculturalism celebrates differences of tradition and opinion, but *clings tenaciously to equal rights for individuals under the law, and equal worth of individuals before God.*

## Postmodernism Question 4: How do they define right and wrong?

(Equal rights for individuals under the law SHOULD be seen as the goal for a fair society, because that goal is fair to everyone alike. Moral universals are reciprocal.)

**Equal rights for groups in terms of making their own rules** sounds fair—but it can make the first goal unreachable.

So defining right and wrong without universal standards is a serious problem.

# Postmodernism Question 5: What are their goals for society?

The best goal for society in Postmodernism is an end to oppression of formerly oppressed groups. But the new bosses are expected to set up power structures which are also oppressive.

Another goal is an end to laws based upon moral universals. Liberty is seen as liberty for groups to make their own rules.

The idea of moral standards that apply to all is seen as a kind of totalitarianism. Making moral judgments is seen as a kind of tyranny.

# Postmodernism Question 6: What is persuasive to them?

Emotion is persuasive—not logic. Persuasion comes via story-telling, and the most persuasive story is the one that has the most intense emotional impact. Anecdotal evidence may be the answer to persuasion, if the anecdote reaches the heart.

Style matters more than content.

Since the worldview denies objective truth, the Postmodernist is open to manipulation and to the use of manipulation. Evidence is dismissed.

# Postmodernism Question 6: What is persuasive to them?

ANYTHING that reminds them of any kind of bigotry is an immediate door-slam to further conversation. It makes you the ENEMY of all that is good. They can't hear you any more. They will feel righteous when they silence you.

Style matters more than content.

Great care must be taken in addressing many topics with postmodernists. A peacemaker cannot sound like a bigot. Postmodernists are quick to misunderstand in that direction.

# So what can we do?

Remember that **truth matters**. The real world arranges feedback. Well-intentioned economic decisions that don't account for reality will eventually implode. **Be in this for the long term.**

## **Standing up for truth matters.**

- For the Enlightenment Theist, **principle** is a necessary part of that.
- For the Modernist, real world **data** is a necessary part of that.
- For the Postmodernist, **emotional impact** is required.

# One starting point

- For talking to Postmodernists is a presentation of the FAIRNESS of moral universals.
- When they see that they are inherently fair, their source in the Goodness of God can be mentioned.
- God has written a sense of FAIRNESS on human consciences, according to the first 3 chapters of Romans. His moral universals are connected to that sense of FAIRNESS.

# Tests for Moral Universals:

1. If everyone did it, would it be a good thing?
2. Is it reciprocal? If you do this to me, is it fine for me to do this to you?
3. Does it treat every individual by the same rule? Is the rule clear and easy to understand and remember?
4. Does it work in the real world?



# Postmodernists

- Need to go back through Modernism to get to Objective Spiritual Reality. They need to realize objective truth exists before they can find the truth of God's identity and existence.
- A direct “leap of faith” approach is often misunderstood by them as a form of existential leap—just something that happens in the mind.
- (If God was not real, they would be right. So it is REALLY important to find out how to know HE IS REAL!)

# Because Postmodernism itself

- Is full of diversity, various different starting points are worth trying.
- None of this is easy, yet it is all very important.
- People matter forever.
- **Everyone matters.**

# Obviously

- These three worldviews are so different from each other, they CANNOT all be right! One is going to match reality better than the others! Each one may have some strong points that are helpful, but as foundations for thinking, they are not going to be EQUALLY helpful.
- So how does someone figure out which is the best? How does a person find REAL truth? How does a person find what REALLY works? And how does a person find what works for eternity if the human soul is real?

# A Starting Point

Real spiritual truth will have certain characteristics:

1. It will fit and work in the many facets of life—not just one or two. It will be helpful.
2. It will have a good explanation for right and wrong, good and evil.
3. It will explain why we exist, and will have good ideas about purpose and fulfillment.
4. It will explain the order and complexity of the world around us.

# If we are dealing with ideas

From **all three worldviews**, we need a tool to help us sift through the ideas and find truth.

# *He Is There and He Is Not Silent* by Dr. Francis Schaeffer

- Our first textbook teaches us a very helpful tool for sifting through ideas to find truth.
- It is an ***iterative process*** that starts from general ideas to find the direction toward truth.
- All of us learned an iterative process in third or fourth grade, when we learned long division.
- In long division, we go through a series of steps over and over again, until we reach a correct conclusion.
- In Dr. Schaeffer's process, we do something similar, but with **ideas** rather than numbers.

# How well did you enjoy

Learning long division?

- It was work, wasn't it!
- Schaeffer's process is work, too!
  - ▣ BUT IT IS WORTH THE EFFORT!

# Our first item in our witness-kit

- Was understanding three worldviews in general terms.
- Our second helpful item is **a search engine for truth**. We will call it Francis Schaeffer's method for *reasoning to the best explanation*.



# ITEM #2: Schaeffer's Search Engine for Reasoning to the best explanation

1. **Look at all the options.** Define the options in a manner that covers all the territory possible.
  2. **Evaluate the options.** See what each option implies about a known matter.
  3. **Refine the search within the best option.**
  4. Repeat the entire process within that option.
- If you follow this process several times, you will “home in” on an area of truth.

# Let's use this **search engine for truth**

To review what we learned about worldviews.

- Which of the three worldviews common in our culture is most likely to lead us toward **spiritual** truth?
- First we have to “set up the search engine” by defining the options to cover all the bases.

# First look at all the options

- Option 1: No spiritual truth exists, but only physical truth exists (= modernism)
- Option 2: No spiritual OR physical truth exists, because all is subjective opinion (= postmodernism)
- Option 3: Spiritual truth exists and we can search for it (= enlightenment Theism most commonly in our culture, with other possibilities as well)

# Next Evaluate the Options, one at a time

Option One: **Modernism**, or “**Only the physical is real.**”

- This option categorically denies the existence of spiritual truth. It is very unlikely to develop the techniques to find it. In fact, any spiritual truth encountered by this worldview will be “explained away” by physical principles. What cannot be explained away will be called “an anomaly,” and ignored.

# Next Evaluate the Options, one at a time

- That means that any study within modernism regarding the existence of spiritual truth will have very limited results. Such a study is likely only to find anomalies it cannot explain if it encounters actual spiritual truth.
- So option one is **not a good place to search for spiritual truth.**
- Modernist rejections of spiritual truth are **not good reasons to stop the search**, either.

# Option One: Modernism

- If modernism assumes spiritual truth does not exist, that assumption biases its results when it looks at spiritual truth or the lack thereof. It is a closed-minded system on this issue.
- So if a person really wants to find spiritual truth, he or she should carefully consider the source, and **avoid modernist sources**. Even if those sources are highly educated, they are biased against the possibility of finding such truth.

Option Two: Postmodernism, or all truth is subjectivity and need not correspond to reality.

This option will talk about spiritual truth as mere opinion, and will treat all opinions equally, unless someone claims to be talking about correspondence with reality. Postmodernism views correspondence-to-reality claims as power-plays to be rejected.

- Because this option ALSO denies the existence of OBJECTIVE spiritual truth, it lacks the techniques to study it.
- This option is tricky to identify. Often it will SOUND spiritual—so identify the source CAREFULLY.

Option 3: **Spiritual truth exists and we can search for it .**

(= **Enlightenment Theism** most commonly in our culture, with other possibilities)

Since this option covers the rest of the bases, it gives us **the best place of the three to begin a search** for spiritual truth. We may need to compare some other possibilities from outside our culture as well, in order to be thorough, but this is the best place to look within our culture.



# Because

1. The freedoms we enjoy in the US developed from an Enlightenment Theist worldview, and
2. Such freedoms were RARE in the world before an Enlightenment Theist worldview
3. And freedom is a valuable thing,

The workability of an Enlightenment Theist worldview in the real world tells us it is a GOOD place to search for spiritual truth. (Certainly likely to be the BEST place to search.)

# Practical Step

- Go back and review the beliefs of Enlightenment Theism from the first part of the presentation. Do these beliefs resonate with a belief in the existence of spiritual truth?
- Do these beliefs fall into the category of GOOD beliefs? Do they resonate with your own sense of what is right and good and fair? Do you think they are worth further pursuit as to their validity?

Jesus Christ said,

*“If you abide (**STAY**) in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”--John 8:31b-32*

# Homework Questions:

## Class 1 Set 1

- Obtain a copy of Francis Schaeffer's book, *He Is There and He Is Not Silent* or his *TRILOGY*, which has it.
- Sometimes major bookstore chains have the book, but usually it must be ordered.
- When you obtain the book, read the introduction and chapter one. Homework will begin from this book in a few days. Our first homework will be from the Bible.

# Homework Questions:

## Class 1 Set 1

- Read Matthew 9:6, and then Matthew 9:1-8. What did Jesus want the scribes to know?
- This concept is intangible. They could not see the spiritual action that was involved. However, if Jesus made the claim they considered out of bounds, and then did a miracle that only God could do immediately afterward, this would demonstrate that He was right with God. That, in turn, would validate His verbal claim. In addition, Jesus brought up the subject to them that they were privately discussing, showing that He could discern their thinking.
- Did Jesus expect the scribes to have blind faith?

# Homework Questions:

## Class 1 Set 1

- Was He reasonable in expecting them to believe His claim?
- How could they have checked out the miracle He did to make sure it was not a hoax?
- Do you think Jesus would have been upset if they checked out the miracle to make sure it was real?
- Do you think faith and the search for truth are related?

Now let's look at a case study of

Nebuchadnezzar: Read Daniel chapters 1 through 4. In these chapters we see King Nebuchadnezzar making a journey of faith that imperils the people around him. The people who wanted to witness to him about God had three big problems.

First, they could not safely contradict the king if he believed something that was not correct.

Second, their lives were constantly on the line, through no fault of their own.

Third, Nebuchadnezzar was a confused skeptic (of the true God) who not only worshipped idols, but who thought he could create his own god.

Nebuchadnezzar had three things on his side, eternally.

First, the people around him who knew the truth about God were determined to live consistently with their faith, and to tell the truth, even if it cost them.

Second, Nebuchadnezzar did not like to be lied to, and he was clever enough to test for truth.

Third (and most important), God was determined to reach him.



# Homework Questions:

## Class 1 Set 1

- What test did Nebuchadnezzar devise to make sure his wise men did not lie to him?
- How did God reveal His concern for Daniel and his friends and for Nebuchadnezzar and for the people he ruled during this test?
- What truths did God communicate to Nebuchadnezzar in the fiery furnace incident?
- What obstacle to fellowship with God did God work to remove from Nebuchadnezzar's life in the insanity incident?

# Homework Questions:

## Class 1 Set 2

At one time the Bible reports that God motivated the Philistines to search for truth, and then He validated their search. Read I Samuel chapters 4 through 7.

Ordinarily, a cow with a new calf will be fiercely protective of the calf and will not leave it.

Ordinarily a cow that has never been trained to pull a cart will kick the cart, and will certainly not be able to pull a cart along with another cow that has never been trained.

The Philistines devised this test with the cows and calves and cart to make certain that a “spiritual cause and effect” was going on, rather than chance.

# Homework Questions:

## Class 1 Set 2

- One thing we learn from this test: Spiritual truth requires designing careful tests that rule out chance or physical law as causes.
- What attitudes did the Philistines exhibit while performing this test?
- What criteria did they use to determine truth?

# Homework

## Class1 Set 2:

- Jeremiah 31:11-14 promises that those who search for God with their whole heart will surely find Him. How does searching for God with one's whole heart relate to the idea of testing for truth?
- Read the case of the man born blind in John chapter 9: 1-41. Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath, and some of the onlookers questioned His goodness because they viewed that as working on the Sabbath.

# Homework

## Class 1 Set 2:

- Read the case of the man with the withered hand in Mark 3:1-5 and Matthew 12: 9-13.
- How did Jesus answer the objection to Sabbath healing as work?
- How did the man born blind explain his belief that Jesus was right with God?

# Homework

## Class 1 Set 2:

- In these passages, we see a division in the perception of truth among the people at the scene. What do you think accounts for this division? Were the skeptics correct in saying that healing was work? Was it reasonable to believe healing was allowable work in God's sight, given Jesus' explanation? Given the visible miracles?
- Does truth-seeking require evaluating explanations for validity? How does that compare to the advice in Proverbs 2:1-7 and 3:1-8?

# Homework

## Class 1 Set 3:

- Read Numbers 33:4. The ancient Egyptians worshipped an array of nature gods, including the sun and the river Nile, plus some represented by various insects and animals, and also their Pharaoh. The firstborn son of Pharaoh was considered a god as well. Read Exodus chapters 7 through 11 and 14: 1-3.
- What did God want the Egyptians to know? How did He let them know it?
- Why would God want them to know this?

# Homework

## Class 1 Set 3:

- Read Joshua 2:1-14. Who else knew this?
- How were they able to know it?

Read Deuteronomy 4:4-8.

- What did God want surrounding nations to know? How did He expect them to know that?
- If God's law is realized to be a fitting set of boundaries for human behavior and decisions, what does that indicate about truth?



# Homework Questions

## Class One Set 4:

- Read Judges 6:11-32. Notice particularly verse 31.
- What did Gideon's father believe was necessary for a god to be real? Did the idol Gideon tore down meet this test?
- Read John 17:24. What characteristics of God do you see in this verse?
- Read HE IS THERE AND HE IS NOT SILENT, the Introduction and Chapter 1. This chapter is difficult to comprehend at first reading. You may wish to read it twice, or to highlight important sentences or even to outline it before attempting to answer the questions.

# Homework Questions

## Class One Set 4:

- From the chapter, what are the three basic arenas of philosophy?
- Chapter 1 focuses on the problem of existence. What are two very different classes of answers to the problem of existence?
- What are the three possibilities for the origin of existence?
- What is the problem with possibility 1?
- What is the problem with possibility 2?
- What is the problem with possibility 3:

# Homework Questions

## Class One Set 4:

- What are the satisfactory conclusions with possibility 3?
- What is the philosophical problem with multiple limited gods rather than One God?
- Note that in Judaism, Messiah is more than just a man. See Isaiah 11: 1-10. Messiah has the Spirit of the LORD, and He will be a righteous judge who will protect the afflicted and slay the wicked with the breath of His mouth. Only God can speak and accomplish such a reality. Then He will restore creation to its beginning goodness, again something only God can do.

# I Peter 3: 14b – 16a

“...Sanctify Jesus as Lord in your hearts,  
**Always** being ready to make a defense  
To everyone who asks you  
To give an account for the hope that is in you,  
Yet with gentleness and reverence;  
And keep a good conscience....”