

*WitnessKit 2*  
*God And Creation Class 23*  
*Phillip Johnson's Answers to*  
*the Good Questions;*  
*The Relationship of Darwinism*  
*and Nihilism;*  
*Is God Unconstitutional?*  
*What is Religion?*

# Summation of the case from

*The Wedge of Truth*

Answering the good questions:

# We can maximize benefits from THE WEDGE OF TRUTH

## Phillip Johnson's Answers

By learning Philip Johnson's answers to the Good Questions.

1. How can we tell reason from rationalization?
2. Can Physical Law & Chance create Information?
3. Can science be defended by authoritarian methods?
4. Does theology provide any knowledge?
5. Is the thinking, choosing self an illusion?
6. What are the arguments against ID?
7. What if we start with the Word?

# How can we tell reason from rationalization?

Remember that reason is the use of the mind and logic to determine what is real and true.

Rationalization is the use of the mind to come to a pre-determined conclusion—to get to the expected answer.

# How can we tell reason from rationalization? Phillip Johnson's Answer:

*There exists a crack between two definitions of science. One definition means a practice of impartial investigation and testing—a search for truth about physical reality.*

*The other is a partisan adherence to a philosophy called naturalism, materialism, or physicalism.*

# How can we tell reason from rationalization? Phillip Johnson's Answer:

- The scientific naturalists are refusing to even see the problem.
- Refusing to recognize that there **could be a difference** between these two definitions of science is at the heart of the philosophy of scientific naturalism.
- Johnson's hypothesis is that the Darwinian theory and its accompanying definition of knowledge will collapse once the difference is recognized.

# Happily

- The Discovery Institute continues to collect helpful research into Intelligent Design. Books of great value are being published. The weight of the evidence continues to tilt toward Intelligent Design. Their website and newsletter are highly recommended for further pursuit of answers.
- <http://www.evolutionnews.org>
- For a young earth perspective, the following website is helpful, and it has useful items for younger readers. <http://www.icr.org/>

# How can we tell reason from rationalization? The Bible's Answer: God is the Source!

Colossians 2:2-4, 8. ...*attaining* to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, <sup>3</sup> in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. <sup>4</sup> Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words. ... <sup>8</sup> Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. <sup>9</sup> For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; (NKJV)



# How can we tell reason from rationalization? The Bible's Answer: God is the Source!

Psalm 119:130 “The unfolding of Your word gives light. It gives understanding to the simple.”

Verse 160 The sum of Your word is truth. And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.

If we ignore God, we lose His insights. If we seek Him, we find the beginning of wisdom and knowledge.

Proverbs 9:10 “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

# How can we tell reason from rationalization? The Bible's Answer: God is the Source!

Isaiah 55:8-11<sup>8</sup> "For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD. <sup>9</sup> "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. <sup>10</sup> "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, <sup>11</sup> So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it. (NKJV)

Doesn't it make sense, that if

We include God in our thinking, then the thoughts of the One who created our minds will provide insights we need?

# Because Assumptions set conclusions...

- The process of thinking is complicated. Logic proceeding from erroneous assumptions produces poor answers.
- God's wisdom works at the level of assumptions. Often we think of religion as just a set of rules and regulations, but the Biblical view is much more than that. Assumptions about reality from the Bible work well in the real world, and are more globally helpful than other worldviews.

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## Question 2: Can Physical Law & Chance create Information?

- According to Dawkins, that is a question **only a creationist** would ask.
- Johnson replies *that you cannot get much more unscientific than that, because in real science, a demand for evidence is ALWAYS in order. The question –“Can law and chance create information?”—is a demand for evidence.*

## Question 2: Can Physical Law & Chance create Information?

The Bible's answers:

Hebrews 3:4 For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God.

Psalms 33: 6 & 9 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their hosts. ...For He spoke, and it was done. He commanded, and it stood fast.

Ecclesiastes 11:5 Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones are formed in the womb of the pregnant woman, so you do not know the activity of God who makes all things. NASB

# The Bible's Answer

- Goes back to the foundational question, was the Ultimate Cause
- Impersonal?
- Or Personal?
- The Bible is emphatic that the answer is “Personal”—and that ample evidence is available to believe that fact.



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# Question 3: Can science be defended by authoritarian methods?

- Johnson's answer: *"The controversy in various states and regions is over the **public resistance to metaphysical naturalism** being insinuated into the curriculum under the guise of "the fact of evolution."*
- *The protesting public understand correctly that the science educators want to teach their children that naturalism is a fundamental truth for all purposes, not just a convention employed for limited purposes by professional scientists.*

# Can science be defended by authoritarian methods?

- My opinion: The efforts of scientific materialists to remove the “teaching of strengths and weaknesses of scientific theories” from the Texas science standards in spring of 2009 represents authoritarian suppression of scientific curiosity.
- The materialists are so dogmatic, they are willing to stifle all inquiry so long as their pet theory is taught as fact.

# Can science be defended by authoritarian methods?

- On a newscast about the topic, I heard one spokesperson for the materialist side misrepresent intelligent design as something untestable.
- That is either totally uninformed or totally dishonest and absurd. The entire topic of intelligent design was developed from statistical mathematics and is used to test for intelligent causation in many fields. The application of ID to biology is emphatically a matter of testing.

# Can science be defended by authoritarian methods?

If authoritarian means are used to prevent scientific questions from being pursued, science ceases to be science. It becomes an exercise in political censorship.

In Proverbs 2:2-9, the pursuit of knowledge is successful if it leads toward the wisdom of God. If science says the pursuit of knowledge cannot go there, and then science uses political force to prevent the trip, science is the opposite of wise.

# Can science be defended by authoritarian methods?

Proverbs 2:2-9, <sup>2</sup> So that you incline your ear to wisdom, *And* apply your heart to understanding; <sup>3</sup> Yes, if you cry out for discernment, *And* lift up your voice for understanding, <sup>4</sup> If you seek her as silver, *And* search for her as *for* hidden treasures; <sup>5</sup> Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, *And* find the knowledge of God. <sup>6</sup> For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding; <sup>7</sup> He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; *He is* a shield to those who walk uprightly; <sup>8</sup> He guards the paths of justice, *And* preserves the way of His saints. <sup>9</sup> Then you will understand righteousness and justice, Equity *and* every good path. (NKJV)

# Notice God's answer.

- Correct knowledge about this topic leads one to
- “understand righteousness and justice, Equity *and* every good path.”
- Equity means everyone is equal before God. It implies individual equality before the law. The Bible says there is a connection between God's wisdom and equality before the law.
- Phillip Johnson will show us that pathway in our next textbook, *Reason in the Balance*.

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## Question 4: Does theology provide any knowledge?

- Phillip Johnson's answer: *Naturalism is a religion in the sense that it holds its view of ultimate reality by a kind of faith, and it incorporates its own definitions of knowledge and reason.*
- *According to naturalism, knowledge can only be found by the senses and scientific investigation,*
- *from which "knowledge of the supernatural" is excluded. (This has more of the characteristics of a closed religion than of open inquiry.)*

# Does theology provide any knowledge?

- *Again, according to naturalism, statements about God are either non-rational, if merely subjective belief,*
- *or irrational if they make objective claims.*
- *This **system of categories** allows the naturalists to mollify religious people by claiming that science does not rule out religious belief (so long as it makes no claim to knowledge.)*

# Does theology provide any knowledge?

- *This allows a shaky reconciliation with certain (philosophically existentialist) forms of Christianity, so long as they keep the philosophical rules vague and foggy.*
- *More clarity would force the religious to give up claims to any authority for their belief, or would require the naturalists to let God's foot in the door.*
- ***By the vague approach, the middle ground is actually excluded.***

# Does theology provide any knowledge?

God's answer: Proverbs 2:6-12 <sup>6</sup> For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth *come* knowledge and understanding; <sup>7</sup> He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; *He is* a shield to those who walk uprightly; <sup>8</sup> He guards the paths of justice, And preserves the way of His saints. <sup>9</sup> Then you will understand righteousness and justice, Equity *and* every good path. <sup>10</sup> When wisdom enters your heart, And knowledge is pleasant to your soul, <sup>11</sup> Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you, <sup>12</sup> To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things, (NKJV)

# Does theology provide any knowledge?

Theology provides survival skills.

**Deuteronomy 6:24 So the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God for our good always and for our survival as it is today.**

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## Question 5: Is the thinking, choosing self an illusion?

Background Definitions: *Naturalism is ultimately incompatible with reason, because it supports physicalism, which defines the mind as illusion. If there is no real mind, there is no correct logic.*

*An alternative would be property dualism, but then all kinds of mysterious things could happen, like robots developing mind, or Mind emerging from the universe. These are not acceptable in a materialist universe.*

The Biblical view, called substance dualism in the language of philosophy, is excluded by the naturalist worldview.

# Is the thinking, choosing self an illusion?

- *If mind comes from matter and nothing else, then it must be possible to explain all mental processes in terms of physical processes. This reduces mind to those processes.*
- *If unthinking matter causes the thoughts the naturalists don't like, what causes the thoughts they do like? Their answer has to be unthinking matter.*
- ***Thus, in their worldview, the thinking, choosing self IS an illusion.***



# Is the thinking, choosing self an illusion?

- “Modern man thought that when he had gotten rid of God, he had freed himself from all that repressed and stifled him.
- Instead, he discovered that in killing God, he had also killed himself. For if there is no God, then man’s life becomes absurd.... William Lane Craig, REASONABLE FAITH, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. page 57, quoting from “Man is the Cosmic Orphan.” by Soren Eiseley.

# If we have no God, we have no soul.

- ...If God does not exist, then both man and the universe are inevitably doomed to death. ...
- "You are the accidental by-product of nature, a result of matter plus time plus chance. There is no reason for your existence. All you face is death." William Lane Craig, REASONABLE FAITH, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. page 57.

# God has written on our hearts

- The fact that we do have souls. Our lives do have meaning. It is possible to go from that certainty that our minds are not illusion, right back to the certainty that God exists.
- We also have a sense that our souls outlast our bodies, that at a funeral, the item in the casket is an empty house, but that the former inhabitant still lives. God gave us that sense of immortality, and it is a true sense.

# Ecclesiastes 3:11

- He has made everything appropriate in its time. God has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.

# Isaiah 41:4

- “Who has performed and accomplished it, calling forth the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD, am the first and I am WITH the last. I am He.”
- Who do you think are “the last,” the persons God is with? I believe “the last” are eternal human beings, from among the generations God called forth. “The last” are those who last with God forever!

# Psalm 33:13-15

- The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men; From His dwelling place He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth, He who fashions the hearts of them all, He who understands all their works.” NASB

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# Question 6: What are the arguments against Intelligent Design?

Johnson describes it this way. *Academic Darwinists present inadequate arguments,*

- *such as caricature,*

- *evasion of crucial points,*

- *and appeals to prejudice.*

*They appear uniformly unable to grasp the basic issues.*



# Question 6: What are the arguments against Intelligent Design?

*Logic enables us to show the discrepancies and the flaws in their arguments.*

Common arguments were discussed in detail in the last class:

1. **The Connotation Argument**
2. **Science Versus Miracle**
3. **The Working Embryonic Instruction Set**
4. **The Monkey at the Keyboard**

We can learn appropriate ways to refute each one.

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## Question 7: What if we start with the Word?

Phillip Johnson's answer: *Theology can explain why science is so reliable in some ways, and so inadequate in others, and why Darwinian science is a dead end.*

- *In the beginning was the Word—a Personal Being. A Personal Being with LOGIC. If Personal Being is the foundation for reality, then we have a way of discussing purpose as well as the means by which things work.*

# Question 7: What if we start with the Word?

The Bible's answers: In Proverbs, the MIND of God, His wisdom, is described as being present from eternity.

- Proverbs 8:22 says “God possessed wisdom at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. From everlasting, wisdom was established.”

# Question 7: What if we start with the Word?

The Bible's answers: In Proverbs, the MIND of God, His wisdom, is described as being present from eternity. Creation itself tells us about Him.

- Psalm 19:1-2 “The heavens are telling the glory of God. And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.”

# What if we start with the Word?

*Persons can communicate.*

*A Personal Being at the foundation of reality can communicate with people as well—*

- in languages of science such as mathematics and chemistry,*
- and in languages of humanity such as literature and history.*

*We can't avoid noticing His speech in the structure of His world.*

# What if we start with the Word?

- *That Person can explain why Dawkins is in error in his atheism but correct in his description of appearance when he says, “**biology is the study of complicated things that give the appearance of being designed.**”*
- *That Person is glimpsed in atheist Francis Crick’s statement “**Biologists must constantly keep in mind that what they see was not designed, but rather evolved.**”*

# What if we start with the Word?

- Johnson: *How can science test its most basic assumption—that matter plus time plus chance can produce everything, living and non-living, that we see around us?*
- *The bridge is testing for **information** in nature as step one. Can naturalism produce information, or is MIND required beforehand? Finding the answer to that question is step two.*
- *The God hypothesis has to be allowed in order to consider step two. It does not have to be allowed for step one.*



# What if we start with the Word?

- *Science has not always been synonymous with naturalism.*
- *Modern science developed in a Theistic world, with magnificent achievements.*
- *The existence of information in the natural world, in the RNA and DNA codes, practically roars the question, “Does information occur by chance plus time plus natural law alone, or is MIND required?”*

# What if we start with the Word?

*“Does information occur by chance plus time plus natural law alone, or is MIND required?”*

*The naturalistic definition of science stifles the question.*

*If there is any right or wrong to science, if science is not meaningless,*

- ▣ *then stifling a question has to be a serious error.*

# The True Answers to These Questions

Have an impact in the real world.

A sense of **being meaningless** is very bad for human decision-making.

Nihilism is the belief that morals have no basis, and that nothing can be known for sure or communicated.

# We can begin to realize the grip of Nihilism in the humanities, and its

Johnson's  
Data  
Revealing  
Nihilism in  
the  
Humanities

Connection with Darwinism, by understanding these data:

1. **Alvin Kernan's life experience.**
2. How Kernan analyzed Buckley.
3. The ideas that define the humanities.
4. The disconnect between tolerance and power struggles.
5. The limitations of logic.

# A synopsis of Alvin Kernan's life experience

(From his autobiography, *PLATO'S CAVE*.)

- Kernan was a WWII G. I. Bill college graduate
- who continued on to his PhD,
  - became Professor of English at Yale,
  - then Provost,
  - then dean of the graduate school at Princeton.

# A synopsis of Alvin Kernan's life experience

Kernan was one of the elite of his generation. He entered college optimistic about the search for truth, and his autobiography lists a series of **disillusionments**.

# Alvin Kernan's

## Disillusionments:

1. The best and brightest Humanities students turned into leftist radicals in the 1970s;
2. then later decades produced student hedonists with ruined lives.
3. The knowledge Kernan expected to find faded away, along with his hopes.
4. The humanities departments lost all sense of truth.

# Alvin Kernan's life experience

5. The English departments adopted *deconstruction of texts*, with defining quotes like “read only until you find the victim.”
6. Cynicism ruled.
7. By 1990, the humanities were not involved in a search for knowledge at all.
8. Relativism and political correctness replaced truth.



# Alvin Kernan's life experience

Kernan discovered that the basic factor accounting for the disillusionment and decline of reason in the humanities was the dominant conception of knowledge, with optimism in the technology fields, and a growing despair,  
□ eventually reaching nihilism in the humanities  
by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

# Alvin Kernan's life experience

Early in his life, varieties of either secular or religious humanism promised to fill the vacancy of traditional religious belief, but failed to keep that promise.

Relativism and politicization then filled the vacuum.

Postmodernism took over all but the technology fields in many universities, to such an extreme that the ideals of Western Civilization are at risk of being lost.

# All of this happened

During the short time of Kernan's career as a professor. Early in his career, Kernan sided against conservatives.

# We can begin to realize the grip of Nihilism in the humanities, and its

## Johnson's Data Revealing Nihilism in the Humanities

Connection with Darwinism, by understanding these data:

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# How Kernan analyzed Buckley

Kernan came to Yale to teach English just as William F. Buckley's GOD AND MAN AT YALE was creating a stir. Buckley was the new voice of conservatism in the 1950s.

Buckley claimed that Yale was systematically teaching atheism and socialism in the classrooms.

Kernan dismissed Buckley's concerns by the following rationalizations:

# How Kernan analyzed Buckley.

- *Buckley's complaints were part of the anti-communist movement of the time, and while his observations were true, they were not important.*
- *Classroom ridicule of religion was just harmless joking, and not a violation of the academic freedom of conservatives.*

The liberal “truths” were so dominant in Kernan’s own thinking that, at the time, it did not occur to him that Buckley had valid points to make.

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# What are the ideas that define the humanities?

- ❑ **Modernism, with all its technological optimism, denies any basis for knowledge in theology, and ALSO in the humanities.**
- ❑ The humanities, after the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, were built around a vacuum of knowledge, and deemed mere opinion. The universals that tied the humanities together were lost.
- ❑ The humanities turned to a form of technology in analyzing writing.
- ❑ The humanities decided that writing is the art of using words and symbols in a quest for power, by various groups.



# The ideas that define the humanities.

- Materialist science sees all of life as a quest for power by competing genes in life and death struggle. The humanities took political struggle as analogous.
- Materialist literary theory judges writing on the interests it serves and how well it serves those interests, **in political competition.**
- The postmodernists adopted relativism in morals, and adopted tolerance as their single guiding principle.

# The ideas that define the humanities.

- However, even that principle implodes in a sea of relativism.
- Without universals, the materialist has no basis for principle. Without principle, tolerance as an idea is floating on a sea of relativism, and has no meaning in and of itself.
- Without principles to anchor opinions, power struggles have no boundaries of right and wrong.

# The ideas that define the humanities.

- Ruthlessness can be the hallmark more easily than real tolerance.
- Tolerance can become a manipulative term to advance an agenda in a ruthless manner.
- POSTMODERN TIMES describes the situation in the humanities in more detail—a textbook for another course.

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# The disconnect between tolerance and power struggles.

While postmodernism in theory is tolerant, by seeing all of life in terms of cultural relativism, without universal principles...

Postmodernism's goal of tolerance and its goal of gaining power are often mutually exclusive.

Postmodernism creates favored and disfavored groups. It has no problem with vicious ridicule of people in disfavored groups, such as religious conservatives. Of course, that is NOT REALLY a tolerant approach.

# This brings us to a new worldview.

<b>Enlightenment Theism Biblical Principles</b>	<b>Modernism—based on Darwinism and naturalism</b>	<b>Postmodernism— based on cultural Marxism</b>
Unified field of knowlege under moral universals	Divided field of knowledge—logic only works in physical world	Fragmented field of knowledge—logic replaced by dialectic
Truth is findable in physical reality and in religion and in the abstract realm	Truth only findable in physical reality—religion is viewed as irrational	Truth cannot be found, so everything is power struggle

# Key idea in Postmodernism

- The MORAL HIGH GROUND is tolerance.
- Intolerance is the source of all evil.
- Intolerance must be silenced.
- There are no principles above this single idea.

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5. **The limitations of logic.**



# The limitations of logic.

All of this flows from **the division in the field of knowledge,**

- into rational physical reality, and into an irrational leap into meaningfulness in the realm of values.
- Thus, only the physical realm is accepted as a valid basis for knowledge. Everything else is considered baseless emotion (by modernism. Postmodernism values emotion for the cause of power struggle.)

# The limitations of logic.

- That division in the field of knowledge is strongly advocated by naturalistic Darwinists.
- Yet it is based upon a **sheer assumption—that philosophic naturalism is the correct basis for science,**
- **and all other possibilities must be excluded.**

# The limitations of logic.

Phillip Johnson says, *“This brings us to the ultimate point.*

***Human reason is a wonderful instrument if it is grounded in reality, but the instrument is JUST AS GOOD for rationalizing as it is for reasoning.***

*Reason cannot provide its own premises because its main tool is logic. Logic tells us HOW to get from premises to conclusions, but not how to know which premises we can rely on.*

# The limitations of logic.

*If we try to derive our ultimate premises by reasoning from other premises, as modernists have been taught to do, we only make ourselves captive to circular reasoning.*

*If reason is to be a reliable guide, it must be grounded on a foundation that is more fundamental than logic, and that provides a basis for reasoning to true conclusions about ends (purposes).*

# The limitations of logic.

*Instrumental reason is not enough.*

*That is why the fear of the LORD is not  
the beginning of superstition,  
but the beginning of wisdom.”*

That is true because God really is there.  
He really is Good,  
and the Source of all that is good,  
including human minds  
and human worth.

# We can clarify the issues in the

## More Good Questions

Legal controversy over evolution and creation by answering a few good questions.

- **Is God Unconstitutional?**
- What is Religion?
- What is the religion of American society used by the courts to establish the meaning of laws?

# Is God Unconstitutional?



First of all, conservatives and liberals do not use the word *Constitution* the same way.

This is my own observation of the use of the word over the past few years. Conservatives use it to mean the written document ratified by the states long ago, plus duly ratified amendments—which became additions to it through the complicated process described in the document.

Conservatives worry about matters such as “What do the words on the paper mean?”

# Is God Unconstitutional?

Liberals have borrowed from British usage, conveniently, since England has no single written document called the English Constitution.

Liberals use *Constitution* to mean the written document PLUS **case law decisions made by the courts.**

This means that the *Constitution* is much more fluid in their point of view, and always open to challenge in the courts, without the silly bother of going through the amendment process.



# Is God Unconstitutional?

Liberals think: if a court in San Francisco makes a ruling about gay rights, those rights are suddenly part of the Constitution, and conservatives all over the country have to just accept it.

Otherwise they are violating somebody's constitutional rights. (And people who do THAT are BAD PEOPLE.)

However, it is a **one way street** that only goes **left**, because conservative rulings don't count, and the liberals can always keep going to court to challenge conservative rulings.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

Two rulings of the courts show **the category problem—Dr. Johnson's term**. (He taught constitutional law.)

*Whether something is ruled constitutional or unconstitutional often depends upon the **legal category** used to describe it.*

# Is God Unconstitutional?

Example:

- New York public schools are allowed under state law to rent their classrooms for after school uses that satisfy “social, civic, or recreational” purposes.
- A minister from Lamb’s Chapel applied to rent a classroom to show a six part film series on principles for raising children.

# Is God Unconstitutional?



The school district refused to allow the rental.

However, US Supreme Court decisions ban “viewpoint discrimination.”

If the film series was categorized as “religious” it could be banned,

# the category problem

but if it was categorized “family relationships and values,” it could not be banned because that would constitute “viewpoint discrimination.”

- In that category, it would fit the social or civic purposes criterion.
- The government is not allowed to ban access to a forum simply for the purpose of suppressing a viewpoint.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

Thus a viewpoint can be marginalized if it is classed as “religious,” without any substantive debate of its merits.

If it can be described successfully as a religious viewpoint on a secular subject, it may be allowed.

(But not during the school-day.)

# Is God Unconstitutional?

Johnson analyzed it this way: *This effectively says that **religion does not belong in public institutions.***

*This may appear to be **neutral,** but it is **NOT neutral at all when employed to protect topics from criticism or debate.***

# Is God Unconstitutional?

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A specific example:

The state of New York accepts the idea that sexual morality is relative, that the sexual urge is dominant over behavior, that the only realistic course of action is to teach adolescents to have protected sex.



# Is God Unconstitutional?

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Many parents in the state of New York do not agree, often on religious grounds.

They prefer an approach that emphasizes saving sex for marriage and strategies to maintain sexual purity during adolescence.

The progressives see this viewpoint as extremist and intolerant.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

(I submit that the wish of parents for their children's best interest is not necessarily religious at all, and that **classifying it as religious** is a form of censorship used to stop good ideas.

The good ideas of commitment and marriage and the legal protections that go with marriage are left out of the public schools, even while they teach students “decision-making skills.”

Those skills are taught in a moral vacuum, and that does not work.)

# Is God Unconstitutional?



If the religious people are silenced, their insights are lost to the public.

If only the religious people are perceived to value marriage, and they are silenced, the students are influenced by the “educated” views they receive at school.

# Is God Unconstitutional?



Usually this means the students never understand the connection in reality between single parenting and poverty.

It follows that silencing the religious people results in promoting ideas in schools that act as enablers for poverty.

Defining religious ideas as *automatically intolerant* acts to inoculate students against those ideas.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

Another Example from Phillip Johnson:

*The second ruling is EDWARDS V. AGUILLARD, where the US Supreme Court threw out the Louisiana state law giving creation science a hearing in the public schools.*

*In this case, the state law was thrown out because the creation science viewpoint was a religious viewpoint on a secular subject, and any teaching mentioning the possibility of a creator was totally forbidden in science class.*

# Is God Unconstitutional?

*The ruling was much broader than throwing out young earth Biblical creationism.*

*It required any mention of a creator to be eliminated from the science curriculum, on the grounds that religion is not science, and that a religious possibility could NOT EVEN BE a viewpoint within science.*

*The court placed religion in an airtight category completely outside of science. This has the effect of saying that belief in a creator is irrational, not a reasonable belief to hold.*

# Is God Unconstitutional?

- *But the Supreme Court really does not have the authority to decide if a religious belief in a creator is irrational.*
- *It has the authority to decide if a belief is religious, and in this case that was used as a substitute word for irrational.*

# Is God Unconstitutional?

- Where excluding religious opinion has the effect of opening the public schools to atheist indoctrination in science class and advocating moral license in health class, the exclusion is **not** neutral.
- It represents eliminating traditional morals from discussion while subjecting captive audiences to amoral indoctrination.
- And by the way, the promoters of amoral education want to integrate it into all classes, K-12, so parents cannot opt their children out.



# Is God Unconstitutional?

- The Fact/Value distinction. Facts can be true or false. Values can be different from each other about a subject and still be correct.
- I can have a different opinion about the importance or beauty or utility of the National Parks from your opinion, and we can both still be correct, because these are subjective issues.
- If **Unguided Evolution From Molecules To Humankind** is a fact, then if I disbelieve it, I can be wrong.
- If God exists, then **U.E.F.M.T.H.** is wrong.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

If God created us male and female, and gave us guidelines for our fulfillment through commitment in marriage, that means that people who follow His guidelines are more fulfilled over the course of their lives.

Promiscuity leads to frustration and misery for adults, plus poverty for children born from it.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

If the materialists were correct, and they emphatically are NOT, we would be animals programmed for promiscuity along with the other apes.

In that case promiscuity should be more fulfilling—rather than a source for disease, soul deadness, and poverty. And we would expect the promiscuous to be more successful at parenting, too—which they are not. So the fact/value distinction depends upon what the real facts ARE. Values proceed from facts.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

When God is ruled out of discussion, in science class and in health class, that censorship twists the curriculum in very important ways.

It twists the thinking of students in ways that can prevent them from ever searching for God. If they search with all their hearts, He promises they will find Him. But if they never search how will they find?

# Is God Unconstitutional?

Proverbs 5:5-6 and 23:28 have a very important idea to add to this discussion.

*The promiscuous one is described as someone whose feet go down to death, and as someone who does not ponder the path of life, and as someone who increases the faithless among men.*

The path of youthful promiscuity is a **distraction from ever seeking God** and from ever seeking the path of life.

# Often the other side

Caricatures the Biblical perspective as a claim that “anyone who messes up in this area will go to hell.”

- Then they use that idea to say Christians are intolerant.
- The Biblical perspective is much more nuanced than that. We need to understand it well enough to explain it to others.
- Young people have very important decisions to make—especially whether to search for God’s will for their lives.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

- As the sapling is bent, so grows the tree.  
The decisions made early in life set the course of each life.

The viewpoint that excludes God has profound results in the course of students' lives.

Of course, we know that God intervenes to help students correct course. He is gracious. And yet, the probabilities of students' accepting His help go down with larger percentages abandoning the idea of virtue.

# Is God Unconstitutional?

- We know that the Constitution was written by people who did not want God's viewpoint excluded from public life. Religious liberty was a non-negotiable principle in the ratification of the document.
- Even though our courts give lip service to religious liberty, they often **implicitly censor religion out of public discussion by imposing categories and definitions that are not neutral.**
- Parents have a huge responsibility to fulfill their religious obligations to their children, and to do so in an intellectually defensible manner.



# Is God Unconstitutional?

- The underlying question for first amendment law is this. Is the Constitution genuinely **neutral** between scientific naturalism and theism, in which case **both positions should be admitted to public discussion?**
- Or, is naturalism the established Constitutional philosophy, **with a monopoly in the public arena?**

# What is the point of this discussion?

We need to be able to bring out the implications of censorship of God in the decision-making processes of students. We need to be able to discuss these things intelligently with those in our sphere of influence.

Because God is good, finding His good path is the most important search ANYONE can make.

# We can clarify the issues in the

## More Good Questions

Legal controversy over evolution and creation by answering a few good questions.

- Is God Unconstitutional?
- **What is Religion?**
- What is the religion of American society used by the courts to establish the meaning of laws?

# What is Religion?

- Is this statement, by paleontologist George Gaylord Simpson, a religious statement? **“Man is the result of a purposeless and natural process that did not have him in mind.”**
- How about this one, by college biology textbook author Douglas Futuyma? **“The human species was not designed, has no purpose, and is the product of mere mechanical mechanisms.”**

# What is Religion?

Phillip Johnson defines religion as “a way of thinking about ultimate questions,” such as

1. how and why we came into existence,
2. what is the purpose of life, and
3. how do we decide about our purpose, and
4. how can we know what is real and what is illusion?

# What is Religion?

- Johnson claims that *the nation has always had one or another established public philosophy on religious questions, in the sense that it provides a basis for lawmaking and public education. Something of the kind must exist for orderly government to be possible.*
- *In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the dominant religious philosophy was Protestant Christianity, with religious liberty included for other faiths.*

# What is Religion?

- *Today, things are different. Secularists think we have proceeded from a de facto establishment of religion, to a position of neutrality toward religion, but that is a superficial description.*
- *In reality **a new religious philosophy has replaced the old one.** The new religious philosophy is “scientific naturalism and liberal rationalism,” also called “modernism.”*
- ***Modernism believes in reality that God is dead and humankind is on its own.***

# What is Religion?

- *Naturalism is a metaphysical doctrine, stating a particular view of what is real and what is not real.*
- *In its view, nature or the physical universe is ultimately real, and ultimately all there is.*
- *Nature is a closed system of material causes and effects which cannot be influenced by anything outside itself.*



# What is Religion?

- *Naturalism views science as the primary source of knowledge, and anything that contradicts the consensus of scientists as incorrect.*
- *Naturalism thinks moral universals which come from God such as the Ten Commandments are really humanly constructed rules that are specific for certain groups—not universal—and certainly not binding for governments.*

# What is Religion?

- *The morality of naturalism is either socialistic or individualistically liberal.*
- *The former focuses on the needs of society, and the latter on individual autonomy.*
- *Both tend to be sexually permissive.*

# We can clarify the issues in the

More  
Good  
Questions

Legal controversy over evolution and creation by answering a few good questions.

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- **What is the religion of American society used by the courts to establish the meaning of laws?**

# What is the religion of American society

used by the courts to establish the meaning of laws?

*In the past that “publicly approved religion” was Protestant Christianity, with religious liberty for others.*

*At present, Phillip Johnson describes that publicly approved religion as “naturalism with liberal rationalism” or MODERNISM. Other viewpoints are marginalized.*

*But is there room for both viewpoints in the public square?*

# Is God Unconstitutional?

- *The underlying question for first amendment law is this. **Is the Constitution genuinely **neutral** between scientific naturalism and theism, in which case **both positions should be admitted to public discussion?*****
- *Or, is naturalism the established Constitutional philosophy, **with a monopoly in the public arena?***

# What alternative does

Phillip Johnson suggest for a publicly approved religion as a basis for law?

*Theistic realism.*

# *Since this dispute over “who rules”*

*Is played out in the public schools, and since most parents are theists, doesn't it make sense for the public schools to accept the moral realities important to parents, and allow the atheist parents to be more permissive at home if they wish?*

*Why should the schools give students permission to do things their parents forbid? Why should the schools help students evade parental oversight?*

# My Perspective

- Theistic Realism is too vague.
- We need a basis in law of moral universals—the concept that certain standards exist for **all people equally**, and for the governing authorities as well.
- That requires a concept of God who is **morally good**, and a table of law such as the Ten Commandments, to serve as the **universals**.



# Truth Matters to God.

Deuteronomy 32:3-4, and 46-47 <sup>3</sup> For I proclaim the name of the LORD: Ascribe greatness to our God. <sup>4</sup> *He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He. ...*

<sup>46</sup> and He said to them: "Set your hearts on all the words which I testify among you today, which you shall command your children to be careful to observe--all the words of this law. <sup>47</sup> For it *is* not a futile thing for you, because it *is* your life, and by this word you shall prolong your days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to possess." (NKJV)

# This is a simple idea

- Yet it has profound consequences in law and culture.
- The moral universals of a good God will be good for everybody.
- As Dr. Johnson reported, during the time when this concept was the basis for law, religious liberty was available to all, yet the law was firmly grounded in right and wrong.

# This is a simple idea

- The moral universals of a good God will be good for everybody. It is **IMPORTANT** that alternate concepts of God **NOT** be allowed as a basis for law.
- An idea of a God who is less than totally good would create laws that are less than good for all. We should not give up the Ten Commandments as moral universals behind the law.

# This is a simple idea

The Ten Commandments in principle would eliminate Islamist views of law, because “You shall not murder.” There would be no need to “promote peaceful Islam.” The universals would categorize which religions were approved. There would be no need to “accept Shari’a as a basis for law.” The idea would limit the basis for law to the Ten Commandments and stand firm on principle. That would preserve individual equality before the law, which Shari’a denies.

# Proverbs 30:5

Every word of God is tested. He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.

# Psalm 1

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful, But his delight is in the law of the LORD and in His law does he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season. Its leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he does will prosper.



# Homework

In 3 sets

# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- Read Matthew 7:13-14. What do these verses imply about “the way of life?”
- Read Proverbs 2:16-19 and Proverbs 3:13-18. How does hedonism impact the search for “the way of life?”
- Read the Introduction in REASON IN THE BALANCE. What is a theist?
- What is a naturalist?



# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- Fill in the table.

	If God is Creator	If God is Imaginary
A Rational Life		
Irrationality is		
Wisdom is		

# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- According to Harvard paleontologist (someone who studies fossils) George Gaylord Simpson, what is the meaning of evolution?
- What is the meaning of evolution according to Douglas Futuyma?
- This view of evolution excludes all the middle ground, where it might be possible that God guided some sort of evolutionary process to bring us into existence. That exclusion takes place for two reasons. First, the base of naturalism as science excludes any consideration of causes other than chance and physical law, so the possibility of God is excluded from the beginning. Second, the Darwinian mechanism is a chance mechanism, and the evolutionists believe that if God guided chance, that would be a contradiction in terms.

# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- This view, which excludes all the middle ground, is the view of the elites and of the courts, and of most of academia. The tiny minority of people advocating for criticism of Darwinism and a discussion of the possibility of Intelligent Design are INCLUDING the middle ground. They are being shut out by the elites.
- How do the courts, journalists, and academics view religious persons' attempts to influence public policy?
- Why do theists have little influence in the universities?
- What kind of discussion did Phillip Johnson want to open?

# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- Why did Philip Johnson want to open this discussion?
- What is the technique used by the cultural elites to prevent the discussion from getting started?
- Why is it important to look at the cultural consequences of the accepted origins story?
- Why did Johnson write DARWIN ON TRIAL first, before this book?

# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- At this point, Johnson brings in the term neo-Darwinism, without distinguishing it from Darwinism. Essentially, neo-Darwinism incorporates the science of genetics and its chemistry into evolutionary theory. That science was in its infancy when Darwin wrote his original theory. The only contemporary challenge to neo-Darwinism among the elites is Gould's punctuated equilibrium. It postulates step changes involving multiple gene mutations at once rather than incremental changes in evolutionary development. Gould does not recognize any activity beyond physical law and chance in his postulated changes, however.

# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- Here are some of the questions our nation is facing. Does the origins story of the elites have a right to carry more weight than the origins story of the common people? Do the elites have the right to exclude all middle ground in their origins story? Do the elites have the right to exclude all religious ground in their origins story? Do the elites have the right to impose their origins story on the children of other people?

# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- Is every origins story equal to every other origins story?
- How should a culture decide how to handle this issue in the public schools, since those schools have a huge influence on the beliefs of the next generation?
- How should it be handled in the public universities? How should it be handled by the accrediting agencies for private universities?

# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and its commissioner Raymund Paredes recently (April 2007) denied The Institute for Creation Research the right to seek accreditation as a private college in Texas, and has been denied the right to grant degrees in Texas, because their view of a recent, literal creation by God is viewed as educationally sub-standard. (Henry Morris III, “Where Has Academic Freedom Gone in Texas” ACTS AND FACTS, June 2008)



# Homework Class 23 Set 1

- How should the issue be handled in law regarding churches and religions institutions? The imposed atheism of the Soviet Union comes to mind. Why is the Constitution's First Amendment's free exercise clause given "the running board of the bus" when origins are mentioned?

# Homework Class 23 Set 2

- Read Proverbs 16:33 “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.” Also read Ecclesiastes 9:11 – Again I saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, and the battle is not to the warriors, and neither is bread to the wise, nor wealth to the discerning, nor favor to men of ability, but time and chance overtake them all.”
- How do you resolve these two verses?

# Homework Class 23 Set 2

- Read REASON IN THE BALANCE chapter one. What is the title of the chapter?
- How does the category used to describe a meeting affect its legal rights? (This reminds me of George Orwell's ANIMAL FARM. "All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others.")
- Define "marginalizing a viewpoint."
- Is marginalizing a subject by labeling it "religious" a neutral approach to the subject?
- What other labels does Johnson use to distinguish long held religious beliefs in application to cultural issues, versus beliefs that are rooted in naturalism?

# Homework Class 23 Set 2

- In the Lamb's Chapel example, was the New York state legal system tolerant of traditional beliefs about marriage and devotion to family?
- Given the long history of the benefits of marriage to family economics and effective care of children, does the attitude of the New York state legal system seem reasonable?
- What was the underlying similarity in the Lamb's Chapel case and the Edwards Case?

# Homework Class 23 Set 2

- In order for creation to be considered as an alternative to evolution, how do the courts have to see it?
- If God exists, is creation a rational alternative to Darwinism? Is the fact of His existence the deciding factor for opening science to Intelligent Design, OR should science be open to that pursuit even if God was not found to exist?
- Why is “the explanation of neutrality wearing thin” regarding viewpoint discrimination in the public schools?
- How does Johnson explain the difference between the courts’ explicitly and implicitly declaring that “a supernatural being did not create humankind?”

# Homework Class 23 Set 3

- Read Psalm 19. This Psalm is in two parts. What are they?
- REASON IN THE BALANCE will explain how very closely these two concepts are intertwined. What are some of the benefits to the individual, of the law of the LORD?
- We have looked at examples, especially in the first WitnessKit, where God expressed scientific concepts poetically. In this Psalm, we have a description of the sun which does not express its motion from the perspective of the universe, but from the perspective of earth. Is this automatically unscientific?

# Homework Class 23 Set 3

- Read REASON IN THE BALANCE, chapter two. How does Phillip Johnson define religion?
- What does Johnson mean by “established public philosophy on religion?”
- What was the established public philosophy on religion in the nineteenth century, and what is it now?
- Given Francis Schaeffer’s three options for the ultimate beginning, does this shift represent a shift in which option is assumed to be reality?
- Which is the more open option, and which is the more closed option? Why?