

WitnessKit 3
God and Religions
Class 9

Contradictions in the Divided Field
of Knowledge, How the
Existentialist Theologians Dealt
with Them, and Some Questions
True Christianity Answers.

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Is There*

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A Verse to Read Together:

Romans 12:2 “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

(We renew our minds through reading God’s word regularly.)

Amos 8:11

“Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, “when I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, but rather for hearing the words of the LORD. And people will stagger from sea to sea and from the north even to the east; they will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, but they will not find it.”

There can be a famine for God's word

When people have **believed ideas that prevent them from considering it.** Our modern world is in that situation now.

- The idea that miracles cannot happen prevents people from considering God's word.
- The idea that educated people believe in evolution prevents them from considering God's word.

The Divided Field of Knowledge

- Belief in the divided field of knowledge prevents them from considering god's word.

Today we want to look at contradictions in that underlying idea—contradictions within the divided field of knowledge.

When people are in famine for God's word, they wander from one possibility to another for soul satisfaction, and they cannot find it.

We can understand that the divided field of knowledge

The self-contradiction of the divided field of knowledge

Is a self-contradiction by looking at these examples.

1. Mushroom reality contradicts the theory. There were two ways to go from there—back to an undivided field of knowledge, Enlightenment Theism, or on to Postmodernism.
2. The leap into mysticism opens the door to pantheistic Eastern thought, and such thought is a contradiction to Western technological progress.

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

John Cage wrote “chance music” because he believed in the divided field of knowledge. He believed that all of physical reality is chance-driven, and meaningless, and that meaning can only be found in irrational emotional experience. He believed that conventions about how music should sound are mere arbitrary rules, and he decided to create music without them. His NEW YORKER MAGAZINE Profile described his aims this way...

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

- "The power of art to communicate ideas and emotions, to organize life into meaningful patterns, and to realize universal truths through the self-expressed individuality of the artist are only three of the assumptions Cage challenges. In place of a self-expressive art created by the imagination, tastes, and desires of the artist, Cage proposes art born of chance and indeterminacy."

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

Schaeffer remarked on the process of Cage's thinking. "If God exists and we are made in His image, we can have real meaning, and we can have real knowledge through what He has communicated to us. If this is taken away, we are left only with man and his finite self-expression. At this point, all one has is the expression of the individual man. But Cage quite logically sees that this will not do, and so he carries man's dilemma further, smashes self-expression, and leaves chance speaking. This is the basis of his music."

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

Cage's music was performed, not because it sounded good, but because the culture was beginning to believe the same ideas. Some of his "music" sounded so bad, even the musicians hissed at it.

Cage dealt with the contradiction in his thinking at that point by seeking a "voice" from nature as a mystical way of finding meaning in his chance music. He used chance methods from Eastern Mysticism, from the *I CHING*, to compose. He hoped music composed that way would become meaningful music.

Remember the possibilities for the ultimate beginning?

There are only three possibilities for the ultimate beginning:

1. Absolute nothingness
2. An impersonal beginning
3. A Personal Beginning

Modernism and Postmodernism assume the beginning was impersonal—that evolutionary theory implies an impersonal beginning.

Eastern religions also assume an impersonal beginning—and often an impersonal ending for the human life, either by annihilation or by becoming submerged in the impersonal ultimate reality.

Expecting a voice from nature

Is an irrational expectation if the ultimate reality is impersonal. Expecting chance to produce a voice from nature is also unreasonable—because communication implies MIND. Chance implies NO mind.

- Historically, Enlightenment Theism has considered those kinds of expectations a form of superstition.
- To expect communication from God implies believing God that has Mind. To expect a religious voice from an entity without mind is superstition.
- Eastern religions also sometimes believe in the existence of multiple spirits in an unseen world.

Expecting a voice from nature

- ❑ Modernism has condemned all expectations of a voice from “beyond” as superstition, whether a person thinks that voice is from One God, or from impersonal nature, or from multiple spirits.
- ❑ Enlightenment Theism generally assumes “voices” from “beyond” could be from various possibilities, and assumes research can confirm or deny the reality of the phenomenon: Superstition is certainly one likely possibility.
- ❑ This understanding has, for centuries, caused the West to disregard Eastern Mysticism.
- ❑ But the divided field of knowledge changed that, in the middle of the 20th century.

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

- Cage's hope of a voice from nature—heard by chance methods—was a futile hope—it failed to make his music more meaningful. Real music that follows universal ideas of structure and harmony speaks to the soul without words. Chance music does not. **His thinking about the divided field of knowledge contradicted reality. Beauty in nature and beauty in music imply MIND and purposefulness and meaningful structure.**

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

- **Beauty in nature and music imply MIND and purposefulness and meaningful structure.**
- John Cage demonstrated that point even further when he took up wild mushroom hunting for his hobby. He ate the ones he found that he was able to identify as safe, through a complicated process of classification.

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

- He had to admit that if he applied the beliefs he used in his music to mushroom hunting, he would not be able to stay alive.
- His beliefs contradict reality. The divided field of knowledge is a contradiction in the real world.

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

At this point, when thinkers realize that the divided field of knowledge contradicts reality, they have a choice of directions to take. The choices are

1. Ignore the contradiction
2. Embrace the contradiction
3. Admit what the contradiction shows, and correct course by departing from the divided field of knowledge.

Mushroom reality contradicts the theory.

- The Modernists tend to ignore the contradiction and proceed as though nothing has happened.
- The Postmodernists embrace the contradiction and leave logic behind entirely, and often embrace mysticism of some sort.
- The Biblical realist or Enlightenment Theist has the right answer—to go back to the Bible and begin to understand the reality of God explained therein.

A Side Issue

- Eastern Religions often hold to an impersonal beginning but also add personifications of that impersonal ultimate reality, in the form of spirits or gods, or even treating ancestors long dead as gods.
- Does the logic about the ultimate beginning give us a reason to think this is not the correct answer?
- Yes.

The philosophical proof goes like this.

- Logic works in the real world. We know that it represents a real connection between our minds and physical reality.
- We also know that logic requires universals in order to work. The trend toward Postmodernism occurred in part because Universals, to be real, require a Mind of God to exist—and Postmodernism rejects that idea.

The philosophical proof goes like this.

- In order for a Mind of God to be the Source for universals, that Mind must be infinite. Multiple finite gods can only produce diverse particulars, not universals. The ancient Greeks grappled with this problem when they codified logic. They could not decide if their multiple finite gods were “further back” or if the Fates were “further back.” They needed, but did not have, an infinite God with Mind to be the Source for universals.

The philosophical proof goes like this.

- A religious view that assumes the infinite is impersonal cannot produce Universals—because there is no Mind.
- So logic implies the existence of a God who is both Infinite and Personal—having Mind.
- Francis Schaeffer had studied the Greek classics before studying the Bible, and he was amazed that the Bible answered these questions—the God of the Bible fit the requirements of logic.

Logic in the Real World

- Only 3 religions in the modern day claim that kind of God: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
- Islam claims God's mind cannot be known and that only His will can be known through what happens—so there is no communication of universals in Islam. Instead, Islam relies on many detailed laws based on Mohammed's life as the example—and that is called “Shari'a.”
- That means the understanding of God in Islam cannot supply the universals required for logic to work. But everyone uses logic.

Logic in the Real World

- So only Christianity and Judaism meet the religious basis for logic in the real world. Both those faiths claim that God is both Infinite and has Mind—the requirements to be the Source for universals.
- Both those faiths believe God is totally Good—so that He is the Source not only of universals for logic's sake, but also for morality's sake.
- So it is possible to use our real world experience of logic, and to think with extreme care, and to conclude that the God of the Bible is a match for the reality of logic's workability.

We can understand that the divided field of knowledge

The self-contradiction of the divided field of knowledge

Is a self-contradiction within Modernism -- which opens the door to pantheism and to Postmodernism—by looking at these examples.

1. Mushroom reality contradicts the theory. There were two ways to go from there—back to an undivided field of knowledge, or on to postmodernism.
2. The leap into mysticism opens the door to pantheistic Eastern thought, and such thought is a contradiction to Western technological progress.

Francis Schaeffer's life covered



Much of the 20th century. During that century, the West had already experienced the industrial revolution and was prosperous. The West attributed its success to the Enlightenment, to Science, to Technology, to Modernism. Postmodernism was just entering the scene, and was not dominant, even in academia.

The Eastern world had not developed technology at the time of his writing, and has achieved great economic progress in the last 50 years by following the same Western path of Science and Technology.

The Enlightenment

- The Enlightenment was built upon the expectation of an understandable universe, whose scientific principles could be discovered by the human mind. The early scientists who developed basic scientific laws and theories often believed that the universe had understandable laws because the Mind of the Lawgiver had established those laws. That is a Biblical idea—finding expression in Job chapter 38 and other places in Scripture.
- Eastern religions held a different view, and a much more mystical view of reality.

The leap into mysticism opens the door to pantheistic Eastern thought.

and such thought is a contradiction to Western technological progress.

- The description of the *I Ching* methods is an example of that contradiction. The *I CHING* uses charts and diagrams and a complicated way of tossing coins or yarrow sticks that ensures chance outcomes, in the hope that divine influences or spirits will speak through the process.
- *But Modernism contends that such methods are mere superstition, and that no spirits are there to speak. Modernism insists chance is ONLY chance, nothing more.*

Modernism claims credit for the advances of

Modern civilization, and rejects superstition.

- The culmination of Modernism into Postmodernism, including the search for meaning without God, brings the advances of Modernism back to what Modernism says is superstition.

Admittedly

- The Modernists and Postmodernists and Enlightenment Theists are all in disagreement about how to define superstition.
- But the assurance of the modern world has been shattered in this exact arena. Modernism was absolutely certain about the spirit world's vacancy.
- Enlightenment Theism had criteria for deciding whether a matter was realistic or superstitious.
- Postmodernism cannot make such distinctions, so envelopes a blanket tolerance, and says people create their own reality—and that includes the spirit world.

So how do you define progress?

- Progress is discovering the real world and using its gifts appropriately, for good purposes.
- John Cage was trying to match the real world in his chance music, but the world of mushrooms contradicted his assumptions, and his music contradicted them as well. Beauty exists in the real world. Real world music has potential for beauty. Chance music fails the beauty test.
- The chance methods did not produce beauty, but creating music by use of the mind certainly can.
- Nature has beauty, and we have receptivity to it.

We appreciate beauty in nature.

- Our minds are involved in the appreciation of beauty, just as they are involved in the creation of beautiful music. This is another indicator that the real world includes a Mind behind its existence.
- John Cage's experiments with the *I Ching* show that chance is not the way to access that Mind.
- Thus, chance methods to try to reach God's Mind fall outside the category of progress.
- Statistics can reveal some things we know about chance. That science can help us identify evidence of God's mind at work in the real world also—in the methods of Intelligent Design.

Enlightenment Theism

Enlightenment Theism has more areas of interest and more categories of knowledge than either Modernism or Postmodernism. Enlightenment Theism has good ways of identifying God's imprint in nature, and of identifying communication from God. These methods are not irrational. In fact, they require very careful thought.

Because God has chosen to communicate through the Bible, we can know more than either a Modernist or Postmodernist can know. Their assumptions block certain kinds of knowledge.

The blocking of knowledge

By erroneous assumptions is not new.

The Bible talks about it, even in regard to its own words. Because the ancient survivors of Babylonian captivity took these matters most seriously, as did the early Christian scribes, we can be confident of the words of scripture. Just before the Babylonian captivity, there was a problem.

This passage was written as the nation faced God's judgment in Babylonian captivity.

- Jeremiah 8:8-9-- **“How can you say, ‘We are wise and the law of the LORD is with us?’ But behold, the lying pen of the scribes has made it into a lie. The wise men are put to shame, they are dismayed and caught; Behold, they have rejected the word of the LORD, and what kind of wisdom do they have?”**
- Modernist & Postmodernist Christian theology abandons the Bible all over again. They interpret it existentially, robbing it of true meaning. What kind of wisdom do they have?

Everyone makes mistakes.

- That is not what we are talking about here. We are discussing a systematic method of interpreting Scripture simply as an emotional crutch, rather than searching for its real meaning.
- 2Peter 1:20-21 “But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of man’s will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

We can understand how theologians who abandon the Bible

Two
Groups of
“Christians”
who
abandoned
the Bible

Deal with the divided field of knowledge by looking at two groups from Schaeffer’s time and their influence:

1. The “Christian” atheists.
2. The “Christian” mystics.
3. Their impact on mainstream Christian understanding of good and evil.
4. Their acceptability with “educated modernists and postmodernists,” so that the media lets their followers speak for all Christians when they do not represent us.

The “Christian” atheists.

The divided field of knowledge says only the physical is real and rational, and that it holds no inherent meaning for life. Meaning is found through an irrational leap into some form of mysticism, which is without intellectual content, but which is meaningful on an emotional level. Miracles are considered impossible. The physical universe with law and time and chance are considered all that is real. These beliefs describe a Modernist worldview.

The “Christian” atheists.

- The “Christian” atheists focused on the physical world of science and history to try to find a unified sense of wholeness. They advocated the “God is dead” theology—the idea that God never existed but was a figment of human imagination. They used the word Jesus, not to mean the real Person of the Trinity, but as an example of human goodness.

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The “Christian” mystics.

- The “Christian” mystics of the divided field of knowledge focused on the “upper story” of existential experience in religion. Their idea of God and Christ was similar to the “Christian” atheists’ idea, but they were much less open about that. They tended to use god-words as manipulative tools to aid in existential or emotional experience. They tended to take the experiences seriously, but not to give them intellectual content—often meaning a vague pantheism. They moved toward Postmodernism.

The “Christian” mystics— Schaeffer’s Diagram.

Nonrational,
Nonlogical =
Faith

No categories for God, all knowledge concerning God is dead. The personal God never existed. No faith categories for humans or for meaning.

All rationality is here, where humans encounter science and history, but where God is dead and humans are machines.

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Their impact on mainstream Christian understanding of good and evil.

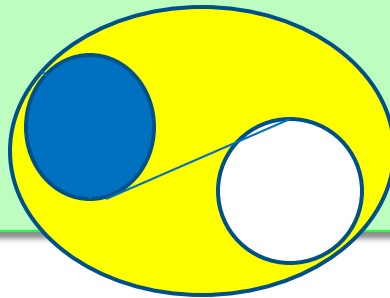
The existentialist theologians would say things like “God’s saving acts in history.” They did not mean that they believed Jesus Christ came into human history and died to save humans from their sins.

Instead, they meant things like, “God is in some way redeeming all of history, including the most horrifying evils.”

The categories for good and evil are very hard to define without universals.

The Philosophically Existentialist Theologians

Have the same difficulty in not being able to define good and evil as do the secular atheists. In their view, since God does not exist, moral universals do not exist either. So how can good and evil be defined? The pantheist answer is that they are no different from each other—yin and yang.



This means the existentialist theologians have no knowledge, but only opinion, on moral issues.

- They leave all knowledge and authority in the hands of “science,” because science is considered the real world, and religion is considered a fantasy world.
- This works often to produce a “moral consensus” view of right and wrong—where trendy ideas take center stage.
- But that sort of view is not much help when sorting through ideas in the complicated world we live in. Moral consensus shifts around a lot.

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Why the media lets them speak for us

In the last part of the 20th century, it was bewildering to listen to religious people interviewed by the news media. They always seemed to say exactly what the news media had been saying, instead of the kinds of things we heard in church.

After I found Schaeffer's books, I suddenly began to understand those interviews. It was the existentialist theologians who did the talking.

Why the media lets them speak for us

The beliefs of Modernism and Postmodernism have become the foundation for all academia. An educated person is “supposed to” think that way. So the existentialist theologians are “supposed to” speak for Christianity, because they represent the “educated branch,” as opposed to those uneducated Bible-thumping fundamentalists. However, in the twentieth century the individuals in congregations voted with their feet to go to Bible-believing churches—because God is NOT dead. His word still speaks to human hearts.

In the 21st century

- The new approach in the mainstream media is most often to ignore Christian influence altogether, by considering it a source of intolerance, and therefore taboo. This reflects the shift from Modernism to Postmodernism in the media, such that right and wrong are almost entirely referenced to group rights rather than moral standards.
- Because homosexuals are demanding rights that contradict historic moral standards, those who reference moral standards are being silenced.

In the present

If Postmodernism insists that no moral standards exist, and that oppression is defined as denying a group its rights, and that the only right thing to do is to eliminate oppression by political actions,

- ▣ **then** it follows that God and His opinions are irrelevant. Religion is irrelevant.

- ▣ The Bill of Rights is also irrelevant. The Bill of Rights is like a set of standards!

This is the direction the divided field of knowledge has brought us. Can our individual rights be retained under this system of thought?

We must understand how true Christianity differs

Questions answered by True Christianity as a System of Thought

from the existentialist form by considering true Christianity as a system, and some questions it answers.

1. The reality of human personality
2. The integral nature of human experience
3. The way out of nihilism

The reality of human personality

True Christianity is not just a Bible verse here and a Bible verse there.

It is not a “flexible emotion field” that accepts just any set of words because they produce an emotional impact.

- Example: From WORLD MAGAZINE April 11, 2009, “EXIT Strategies” by Jamie Dean.
- In 2006 the PCUSA General Assembly commended a study paper on the Trinity that suggested new language to possibly replace Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. “Among the report’s suggestions: ‘Rainbow, Ark, and Dove,’ ‘Sun, Light, and Burning Ray,’ and ‘Compassionate Mother, Beloved Child, and Life-Giving Womb.’”

The reality of human personality

- True Christianity is a system of thought, a rational way of looking at the world, INCLUDING the world of the mind and soul.
- True Christianity has an integrated field of knowledge, not a divided field of knowledge.
- That systematic, integrated nature makes it far more rational than the divided field of knowledge of the other worldviews. True Christianity makes sense in the real world. It does not have the contradiction born out by John Cage's mushroom hunting.

Human Personality

True Christianity explains a basis for human personality. In John Cage's world and in the existentialist Christians' world, humans are machines made by a chance universe. Personality is illusion, and the longing for meaning is irrational.

In the True Christian world, human beings are eternal souls with personality as a gift from a Personal Creator, and with meaningful lives as a byproduct of finding Him.

In True Christianity, Human Souls Are Real, Not Illusion.

- The world of the mind, of thought and emotions and will and creativity, is a REAL world. It is not illusion.
- We are not machines; we are humans **and we matter forever.**
- God has demonstrated that we matter to Him. The gulf between us and God is not unbridgeable. He bridged it for us by becoming one of us and laying down His life for us. The gulf between us is **moral**, and that is the problem God had to solve.

This matches the reality we experience
in the real world.

- We experience life from the inside out. The real “US” is something we know about. We know that our being/ consciousness is NOT illusion.
- We don't NEED existentialist experience to tell us our souls are real, and that we are not merely chemically-controlled body machines, because we already KNOW that. Every time one of us says the word “I,” he or she admits knowing it.

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2. The integral nature of human experience
3. The way out of nihilism

The integral nature of human experience

- Human experience is really not divided like the theoretical divided field of knowledge.
- We have all kinds of meaningful experiences that are perfectly rational. Balancing the checkbook is a very meaningful experience. Especially when it balances on the first try and lands in the black.
- The idea of “irrational meaning” is absurd.

The integral nature of human experience

- The problem is two-fold. The things that give life meaning are intangible, but they are REAL. It is hard to believe they are real if you have been taught that only the physical world is real, and that all educated people believe that.
- The Bible explains how those intangibles can be real—God is Spirit, and He is real. The minds we have are gifts from Him. The things that give life meaning—such as love, and goodness, and beauty and creative accomplishment—are real and are part of His good character. He is the Source.

The integral nature of human experience

- “Every good thing bestowed, and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.”—James 1:17.

The things we know about ourselves

Tell us that the academic existentialists are confusing themselves and their students.

The way out of that confusion is back to the Bible, to the principles that work in the real world:

- Right and wrong, a good God, a Source for morals, a trustworthy heavenly Father.

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The way out of nihilism

- The idea of “irrational meaning” lives right next door to nihilism—where nothing has meaning. That is a scary neighborhood.
- To find the way back to meaningful lives, people have to face the real world, with all its meaningful reality. The real world **INCLUDES GOD**. He is omnipresent in our world, and we can communicate with Him. He is Spirit and He is real and He is **GOOD**.
- He has given us a database full of helpful information in His Good Book.

The way out of nihilism

- To find the way out of nihilism, you can read the instruction manual. You can access the database.
- Come to the database with God's existence in mind, so that MIRACLES are believed possible as markers of God's communication.
- The universe itself coming into being is a huge miracle—something only God could do. He can also do the lesser miracle of communicating with us in words, in a book, with tests for authenticity.

Reality has a certain beauty.

- Even with all the difficulties of the world that obscure its beauty, the real world is a beautiful place.
- The real religion is also beautiful. There are a great many things that get in the way and obscure its beauty, including attitudes people sometimes have.
- If you are inclined toward mathematics and poetry, sometimes you see beauty where others do not.

Reality has a certain beauty.

- One of the beautiful things about the true faith: integration across the whole of life is possible, like the beauty of a perfect mathematical proof. Life is messy, and mathematical beauty is a rare find in real life. Supporting structures that bear great weight need it.
- Worldviews need it,

Promises From the Good Shepherd, Ezekiel 34:11-31

Thus says the LORD God,
“I Myself
Will search for My sheep.
I will deliver them
From all the places
Where they were scattered
On a cloudy, gloomy day.

Promises From the Good Shepherd, Ezekiel 34:11-31

I will bring them out.
I will gather them.
I will bring them home.
I will feed them--
in good pasture
by streams of water.
I will lead them to rest....

Promises From the Good Shepherd, Ezekiel 34:11-31

I will seek the lost.

I will bring back the scattered.

I will bandage the broken.

I will strengthen the sick.

I will feed the wicked--with judgment.

I will remove the trampers who cause harm.

My flock will no longer be in danger.

My Son will be their Shepherd.

I will make them a blessing.

I am with them and they are Mine.



Homework

In 3 sets

Homework Class 9 Set 1

- Read Isaiah 56: 6-8. What was the purpose of Sabbath keeping? Does it apply to Gentiles as well as Jews?
- Read Chapter Four in Section Two of THE GOD WHO IS THERE --"Modern Mysticism in Action: Music and Literature."
- This section actually demonstrates the opposite of what the existentialists in music were trying to demonstrate. They were using music as a means of finding meaning in a universe that they thought was mechanical and meaningless.

Homework Class 9 Set 1

- However, when John Cage composed by chance, even the musicians hissed at the noisy, unmusical result. What does that tell you about their view of the universe as meaningless, impersonal, mechanical?
- Music -- real music -- reaches our hearts because the Personal God who gave us the potential to enjoy it really exists. It is a form of communication given by the One who is there, on an emotional rather than rational level, because humans reflect His creative image in creating real music.

Homework Class 9 Set 1

- Schaeffer talks for the most part about intellectuals' music. Pop culture and music could also be discussed in this chapter. Rock music events of the sixties and seventies were a form of “music as irrational experience.” They were a vehicle for carrying this “meaning as irrational experience” and “abandonment to emotion” to the masses of students.

Homework Class 9 Set 1

- The words of the music were not important, though they were often counterproductive to wise decision-making. The feelings the music engendered were the goal.
- Given that music is actually a gift from the Creator and carries great communicative power, people have a responsibility to use their gift coherently with who they are. This means not immersing oneself in a false use of music, but keeping true communication of what is right and good in the experience.

Homework Class 9 Set 1

- Music has a great potential to express worship to and about God. It has great potential to communicate truth in small doses in a memorable way, and in a way that integrates the truth and appropriate emotional responses.
- The chapter demonstrates the use of religious connotation words to mean something very different from what they actually mean. Such a deception is very unfair to the audience who thinks the words are written in the true faith.
- Do you think worship music can be used the same way?

Homework Class 9 Set 1

- How would you define fair use of language and unfair use of language in this context?
- How would you define fair and unfair use of music?
- How would you define fair and unfair listening?
- What do you think should be done in response to that sort of problem?

Homework Class 9 Set 1

- How does this relate to Bible study? Read Acts 17:10-12. How do you think God feels about the issue?
- The Bible should be read in the ordinary way, not assuming some kind of religious irrationality is what is meant. When miracles are reported, the reader should assume the writers are describing what they saw or experienced. Their integrity should be respected.
- The Bible has some difficult passages, and the Holy Spirit is ready to help you with those if you persevere in trying to understand.

Homework Class 9 Set 1

In depth Bible study is a lifelong project. The book is amazing in that it stays fresh and helpful for a lifetime. The minimum time to be set aside according to the Ten Commandments is one day per week to focus and rest in God's goodness.

The WitnessKit Bible Study is a framework study that is a good launching point for a life of personal Bible study. It gives an outline of ideas that will help you fit the Bible passages together as a whole.

Homework Class 9 Set 1

- Daily Bible study is a great idea. One chapter per day in the New Testament and two or three in the Old Testament will allow the whole book to be read every year. Many Bibles have a daily reading plan in their helps for the reader. A link to one is posted on the WitnessKit homepage.
- The more the society around us abandons the Bible, the more we need to persevere in studying it. Study it as though your life depends on it. It does. (John 6:63, Isaiah 8:19-22)

Homework Class 9 Set 2

- Read Psalm 22.
- Jesus quoted this Psalm from the cross. List predictions in this Psalm that came true in Jesus' life, remembering that the Psalm was written centuries before Christ.
- The resurrection really matters. Psalm 22: 26-31 lists four groups of people for whom it really matters. Who are they? Are you mentioned in any of those groups?

Homework Class 9 Set 2

- Read Chapter Five in Section Two of THE GOD WHO IS THERE --"The Next Phase of Modern Theology."
- This chapter explains some of the thinking of people who claim to be "Christian atheists" and people whose thinking is on their same path. It is useful to know who some of these writers are, because they often use the connotation words that make themselves sound like believers. They are leaders to avoid, not leaders to follow.

Homework Class 9 Set 2

- The irrational leap and linguistic mysticism approach to Christianity make religious statements very malleable.
- The approach has been used in Central America to promote communism under the title “Liberation Theology,” treating Jesus as a liberating revolutionary,
- It has been used to promote a merging of spiritism and Catholicism in Brazil, where Christian words are used to mean pagan gods and goddesses by a cultic movement that chooses to worship among Catholics.

Homework Class 9 Set 2

- Those examples may seem far away, but even in the US, we need to be aware of what people mean by what they say. The philosophically existentialist approach often promotes a watered-down Christianity of tolerance, where people who actually believe the Bible are criticized, but people who practice a politicized “niceness” in the name of Christianity are acceptable.
- The truth is not malleable. The truth is the truth. Truth can be stated in more diplomatic ways than blunt ways, but truth remains truth. We have a mandate to search for it, and not to allow manipulative words, or harsh words, to interfere.

Homework Class 9 Set 2

- We should choose to be people who try to please God, rather than trying to please other people beyond what is really for their good.
- Governments worldwide have a tendency to try to tame religion for their own purposes.
- They sometimes set up their own churches – such as the informant-led churches of the Soviet Union – with very tight boundaries over what can and cannot be said there.

Homework Class 9 Set 2

- Often governments attempt to wean children away from faith altogether, to make their primary loyalty to government.
- Even without that problem, Modernism and Postmodernism have much more access to mold children's minds:
 - ▣ The time of the school-day
 - ▣ Plus media time,
 - ▣ Equaling much more time than Sunday School.

Homework Class 9 Set 2

- Unfortunately, using Christian words to mean whatever someone's theory says, allows leeway for other worldviews' interference inside churches, because discerning *who the real believers are* becomes very difficult.
- Thus each individual has urgency in studying for himself and in arranging to teach his children well in the home.
- Read Deuteronomy chapter 6. Is this optional?

Homework Class 9 Set 3

- Read John Chapter 17, Jesus' prayer for His followers, continuing into the present. Do you see yourself in this prayer? Which verses?
- He prayed for unity among His followers several times in this prayer, but it was not a content-less unity. What does He ask for His followers in verse 17?
- How is the concept repeated in verse 19?
- Sanctification is a process of setting people apart in purity for God's work. That purity must be based on truth. Clearly, sanctification in truth is one of Jesus' goals for each of us. Clearly, He was praying according to God's will. When we reach for this goal, we are doing what is good in His sight.

Homework Class 9 Set 3

- Read Section Three, Chapter One in THE GOD WHO IS THERE -- “Personality or a Devilish Din.”
- What did Schaeffer contrast between Christianity as a system and the new theology? What is the first basic need that the irrational leap theology cannot meet?
- How does Christianity as a system answer that basic need?
- If people function better by believing that God exists, that fact is a good indication that He does exist. Things work better when they match the real world.

Homework Class 9 Set 3

- ❑ One of the bitter ironies of government promotion of content-less Christianity is that they unwittingly promote nihilism as a corollary.
- ❑ Terrorism is a philosophical offshoot of nihilism in some instances. The same Soviet Union that tried so hard to tame Christianity was also responsible for training terrorists worldwide.
- ❑ The faith that is true to spiritual reality—the Biblical worldview—is a faith that acts as “salt and light in the world” to paraphrase Jesus’ words. Its ideas act as purifying influences in society. When governments try to tame it, their societies lose that good influence.

Homework Class 9 Set 3

- Persecution is a possible outcome when the virtues of a Biblical worldview are lost to society. It is a good idea to develop your own Bible study and your own understanding so that you will be able to hold firm in a persecution situation.
- It is of value to understand the Bible's perspective about persecution. That is a question to consider as you develop the habits of daily or weekly study.
- Prayer for those who are persecuted for their faith is also important. It is an ongoing problem in many places of the world right now. Organizations exist that provide financial help, worthy of support.

Homework Class 9 Set 3

- Persecution is temporary and life is short, even without persecution.
- Eternal life is forever.
- Fear of persecution is not a good reason to turn away from Biblical Christianity.
- God wants us to choose life and to choose eternal life even more. He is not on the side of persecution. He is on the side of people and their right to choose to follow Him.