

“Truth and Major Worldview Options”

Pine Haven Christian Assembly - 2021

Richard Knopp, M.A., M.Div., Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy & Christian Apologetics
Lincoln Christian University
Director, Room For Doubt and WorldView Eyes

rknopp@lincolnchristian.edu
www.roomfordoubt.com
www.worldvieweyes.org

Introduction

- A. Growing challenges to your Christian faith.
 1. _____ percent of youth group grads experienced “significant doubts.”
 2. _____ percent of GenZ: “Atheist.”
 3. Only _____ percent of Christian youth are “resilient disciples.”
- B. Key Scriptures:
 1. **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.
 2. **Colossians 2:8** “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.”
 3. **1 Peter 5:8** “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”
- C. **“WORLDVIEW”**: A lens through which we interpret the world.
- D. Different worldview lenses: Different answers to the BIG questions of life.
 1. God (e.g. Is there a God? If yes, what kind of God/god?)
 2. Universe (e.g. Where did it come from? How?)
 3. Life (e.g. Where did life come from? How?)
 4. Humans (e.g. Where did we come from? Why are we here? Is there real meaning?)
 5. Knowledge (e.g. What can we know? How? Is there any divine revelation? What kind?)
 6. Ethics (e.g. How should we live? What is right and wrong? How do we know?)
 7. Death (e.g. The end? Reincarnation? Divine judgment?)

I. Worldviews With NO God.

- A. **Optimistic Atheism (Secular Humanism).**
 1. Emphasis: _____ and _____
 2. Symbol: _____ face.
 3. Object illustration: _____
 4. Examples: Richard Dawkins; Alex Rosenberg; Neil deGrasse Tyson and the “Cosmos” TV series; Bill Nye the science guy; Bill Maher; *Criminal Minds*.
 5. Biblical Connections: Hosea 12:6; Mark 10:23-25; Acts 17 Epicureans; Luke 12:15-23; Luke 15:11-14; Matt 16:26; Phil 3:18-19; Isa 5:21.
- B. **Pessimistic Atheism (Nihilism)**
 1. Emphasis: _____ matters.
 2. Symbol: _____ face.
 3. Object illustration: _____.
 4. Examples: Friedrich Nietzsche; Kurt Cobain; Columbine shootings.
 5. Biblical Connections: Rom. 1:28-31; Eccl. 2:10-11; 3:18-20.

C. **Existentialism**

1. Emphasis: _____ and _____
2. Symbol: _____ and _____ face.
3. Object Illustration: _____
4. Examples: Jean-Paul Sartre; Albert Camus; many teenagers.
5. Biblical Connections: Phil 3:17-21; I Pet 4:1-5.

D. **Postmodernism.**

1. Emphasis: Truth totally depends on your _____.
2. Symbol: Two _____ looking at each other.
3. Object Illustration: _____.
4. Examples: Jean-Francois Lyotard; *Matrix* movies; *Inception*; *WandaVision*; Critical Theory.
5. Biblical Connections: Deut. 12:8; Isa. 5:20.

II. **Worldviews with Some Kind of God.**

A. **Deism.**

1. Emphasis: God creates but does nothing within nature.
2. Symbol: _____ around a circle.
3. Object Illustration: _____.
4. Examples: Thomas Jefferson; William Paine; American teens and their “moral therapeutic deism” (see Christian Smith, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*).
5. Biblical Connections: 2 Tim. 3:5; Matt. 22:29; I Cor. 2:4-5.

B. **Pantheism (& New Age).**

1. Emphasis: Achieve _____ with God (the universe).
2. Symbol: _____ within a triangle.
3. Object Illustration: _____.
4. Examples: Hinduism, Buddhism, Star Wars; Deepak Chopra; Oprah Winfrey; Wicca; *Lion King*.
5. Biblical Connections: Genesis 3 (the serpent and Adam/Eve); the Stoics in Acts 17:16-33).

C. **Christianity (Biblical Christianity).**

1. Emphasis: God creates, loves, becomes incarnate, and raised from the dead.
2. Symbol: _____ in a circle.
3. Object Illustration: _____.
4. Biblical Christianity: Historic teachings of “THE faith” (Jude 1:3; 2 Cor. 13:5; Col. 1:15-23; 2:7; I Tim. 1:18-20; 4:1-2; 6:12, 20-21).
5. **vs. “Progressive Christianity”**: Reinterpret Scripture to adapt to modern beliefs and values (Matt. 7:15; 24:11; 2 Peter 2:1-2; Jude 1:4).

III. **Five C’s to Protect & Develop Your Faith.**

- A. **C**onsciously think of worldview influences.
- B. **C**ommit to truth.
- C. **C**onnect with a good Christian community.
- D. **C**onsult good resources.
- E. **C**ompare the options (John 6:67-68).

Discussion and Reflection Questions Pinehaven 2021

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1. Try to construct a definition of “worldview.” A worldview is _____. Also, try to construct a definition of a *Christian* worldview. A Christian worldview is _____. (What is it that is distinctive or different about a *Christian* worldview?)
2. The session covered the following: Optimistic Atheism (Secular Humanism), Pessimistic Atheism (Nihilism), Existentialism, Postmodernism, Deism, Pantheism (& New Age), Biblical Christianity, and Progressive Christianity. (You may want to consult the handout for basic ideas.)
 - a. Which of these worldviews seems evident among those you know? Explain.
 - b. Which worldview sticks out as the most influential in your circle of friends or acquaintances? Explain.
 - c. Share some examples of these worldviews in music, movies, TV shows, celebrities, online characters, etc.
3. Since there are so many different worldviews, discuss how and why Christianity can rightly claim to be “the true” worldview. Does this mean that other worldviews do not have any truth? Jesus claimed to be “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). What do you think this means?
4. What did you learn from this session that seemed most interesting, valuable, or relevant?