

# WTSU. Class Notes

## Lesson 6 10/15/13

I. Today we want to talk about that third relationship worldviews address - our relationship to God.

II. So, in terms of our relationship to God, when it comes to those who believe that ultimate reality is some aspect of nature, a natural question is "What about Atheists? Their worldview doesn't believe in God so how can you say every worldview address our relationship to God?"

A. Don't let the fact a worldview addresses our relationship to God throw you off because some folks don't believe in God. It is a belief about or relative to God and therefore, our relation, if any, to God. Every worldview has to deal with the question of God.

B. Naturalism simply deals with the issue of God by denying God's existence.

C. Quotes about the affirmation or denial of God:

1. Abraham Kuyper, a man who lived in the late 1800's and was the Dutch Prime Ministers, founded a couple of newspapers, founded the Free College of Amsterdam, and wrote about 90 books said of the atheist and worldviews: "If you exclude from your conception all reckoning with the Living God just as is implied in the cry, "no God no master," you certainly bring to the front a sharply defined interpretation of your own for our relation to God."

2. Mortimer Adler said "More consequences for thought and action flow the affirmation or denial of God than from answering any other basic question." (p. 10)

3. In our textbook, the authors say (p. 10): "A belief about God is really a belief about everything else." In other words, our view of man and our view of nature - the other two key relations in our human experience - are determined by our affirmation or denial of God.

III. Denying the existence of God doesn't solve all of life's problems

A. Life isn't made less difficult to explain by denying God's existence. The atheist just has another different set of questions. Here are 3 of them:

B. Why is there anything and how did it come into existence?

1. This is where evolution comes in, by which I mean naturalistic evolution. Carl Sagan's famous statement: "The Cosmos is all that is or was or ever will be." Subtle, but his point was that there is no theistic God.

2. Evolution becomes critical for naturalism. "Evolution made it possible to be an intellectually satisfied atheist." Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*. NOTICE: Evolution essentially fulfills the place of God in Christianity, Judaism, and Christianity. Seeing this helps explain the almost religious fervor that evolutionist have in defending evolution in the science classroom.

a) Evolution becomes the organizing principle around which all other aspects of life are viewed. In other words, today in college, you'll see an evolutionary view of psychology, history, law, sociology, ethics. Evolution has become the basis for shaping an understanding those subjects.

(1) Christian Gullibility: Many Christians don't even realize that they have accepted an understanding of many of these subjects based on a atheistic evolutionary way of thinking in much the way we said the other day that some Christians embrace communism when it based on atheism.

(2) For instance we've seen this evolutionary approach take root in law. In 1958, in *Trop v Dulles* - case of depriving citizenship for a military deserter during a time of war. The court took up the issue of the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment and whether taking away citizenship was 'cruel and unusual.'

(a) The court began with an interesting statement, "The basic concept underlying the Eighth Amendment is nothing less than the dignity of man."

(b) Query: if man is nothing more than a product of some primordial slime and is only a random mutation or two away from having turned out a slug or an ape, then where that dignity comes from or what it's grounded in?

(c) Those who want to deny God want to borrow concepts that pertain to theism, and Christianity in particular, but they deny the foundation for that concept. Don't let atheist get away with that!

(d) When in a conversation and someone says something about the dignity of man, ask them upon what basis do they think man has any dignity that the state must respect and see what they say (are they pro-abortion?)

(3) But then the court said, "The Amendment must draw its meaning from the evolving standards of decency that mark the progress of a maturing society."

(4) And there you have it. The "standards" themselves are evolving, not just the application of the standards to different situations.

C. Religion: The atheist must explain the universal and continuous belief in the existence of a god. Why do we even have an idea of God if no god exists?

1. This isn't to say they don't have an explanation, but it is something they have to explain.

2. Their explanation ties into their understanding of evolution.

3. Read article from LA Times how man created god and the idea of god is the result of evolutionary processes.

a) Notice how they try to make folks think that science proves god is the product of evolutionary processes!

b) Not true - science can map the brain but it is worldview that determines how one evaluates what is mapped. Science doesn't tell you what to make of the facts - your worldview does!

4. Notice article bleeds into ethics - according to writer, our understanding of morality is a product of evolution too.

D. Why is there a sense of right and wrong that cuts across time and cultures?

1. Note: some say that is not true, that there are no values - ideas of right and wrong - that cut across time and culture. Christians, in particular, should not let folks get away with saying that.

2. Saying there are no transcendent - time and culture-crossing - values is part of what post-modernism would say, but it's not true.

a) An excellent, short book on the subject is CS Lewis' Abolition of Man. In the appendix he lists the basic principles of right and wrong that multiple cultures in different time periods have held in common. It's worth reading.

b) An example. Everyone knows that it is wrong to murder an innocent human being. But what some people do, that makes it appear that we don't all know that, is that different cultures/people define differently what it means to be innocent and what it means to be human. But they all know you don't just kill an innocent human being.

IV. Previously noted every worldview starts with some understanding of ultimate reality, but every worldview has to explain a couple of other things:

A. What is wrong with the world, and

B. How do we fix it?

V. Note that LA commentary has a creation story (evolution), a reason for why things are messed up (religion), and how to fix things (get past religion to rely on reason)

VI. From a Christian perspective, we would place these issues into certain categories, and this is why we call Christianity or the Bible is a worldview every bit as much as any other worldview someone might try to articulate. The scriptural categories responsive to these issues of ultimate reality, what is wrong with the world, and how do we fix it are:

- A. Creation
- B. Fall, and
- C. Redemption.

VII. In other words,

- A. Christianity has an explanation for ultimate reality, and we call it "creation."
- B. Christianity has an explanation for what it wrong, and we call it the Fall.
- C. Christianity has an explanation for how to fix it, and we call it the story of redemption - the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God.