

APOLOGETICS - DEFENDING OUR FAITH AGAINST ALL OPPOSITION

LESSON 6: WORLDVIEWS IV - ALTERNATIVE WORLDVIEWS

REVIEW

- +We have to “always be prepared” to defend our faith (1 Pet 3:14b-16 Acts 22:1 etc.)
- + The unbeliever is not neutral and (Rom 1:18) we must not be (Prov.26:4).
- +Everybody has a worldview = elementary presuppositions **NO NEUTRALITY!**
- +Our worldview must be Christian in all we say, think and do!! (Mk 12:30 etc.)
- +Our standard for all this is Scripture and **NOTHING** else!
- +First key issue of a worldview: Metaphysics-what accounts for the physical world?
- +Second key issue: Epistemology - how and what do we know?
- +Third key issue: Ethics - what is right and wrong (*moral philosophy*)?

Beauty of Presuppositional Apologetics: You don't have to be an expert on the entirety of human knowledge to be ready to respond to unbelief. you just have to dig down to other worldview's basic assumptions, showing that they cannot support the particular worldview.

4 POPULAR WORLDVIEW-SCHEMES IMPACTING OUR SOCIETY TODAY:

I. HINDUISM:

- Arose in India between 2500-2000 B.C. (Abraham lived ~2000 B.C.)
- 900 Million devotees (#3 after Christianity [2.1 billion] and Islam [1.3 billion])
- Family of merged religions out of a pagan backdrop / *Christianity - exclusivistic*
- Developed its worldview from forces of nature and ancient heroes serving as Gods / *Christianity claims one God who controls the forces of nature*
- The Hindu worships his own chosen deity among millions / *we have one God*
- Brahman is the sum of all reality - all else is illusion (*maya*)
- Man is but the spark of the divine Brahman who is imprisoned in the body and who undergoes several reincarnations (*samsara*) until absorbed into Brahman.
- Comports well with contemporary Western ideas (New Age etc.)
- Speaks of man's basic divinity
- Today's relativity of all truth fits perfectly with the Hindu view of illusion - god being part of everything
- **It's hyper-spirituality** (elevating the spiritual to the exclusion of the material) **is alluring to many who are disenchanting with the materialism in Western culture (e.g. 68 movement out of Berkely)**

II. BEHAVIORISM:

- Harvard psychology professor B. F. Skinner
- People behave as they do because of “operant conditioning”.
- Behavior is just a response to certain environmental factors-especially consequences experienced in the past
- Experience influences behavior - if they were pleasant =conditioned

- Material world is the ultimate reality
 - o Man's feelings and thoughts don't determine his actions
 - o We are biological machines simply to react to stimuli
 - o = removes all responsibility from the individual

III. MARXISM:

- Philosophy of the Jewish-German social critic Karl Marx (1818-1883)
- Inherently atheistic, socio-political scheme holding that the material world is the ultimate reality and that religion is an illusion (other than Hinduism).
- **Dialectical materialism:** social conflicts between opposing forces and ideas merge into a new synthesis (Dialectic: finding the truth by exchange of opposing worldviews - Hegel)
- History is the struggle between theses against antitheses until all merge into the great synthesis.
- It's the struggle between men, classes, societies, and nations moving from **revolution to revolution.**
- This happens by uprisings of the oppressed to overthrow the ruling class ("dictatorship of the **proletariat**") - ultimately arriving at the stage of scientific socialism-the state will no longer be needed and it will be a classless society of harmony and peace.
- Marxism is fundamentally **utopian** (ideal rather than reality) - rooting out religion as the "opiate of the masses"
- Marxist's view of man: "*Man is a product of society...it is society that makes him what he is.*" (Adam Schaff)

IV. Existentialism (Heidegger, Sartre):

- Is concerned above all else with freedom and self-expression.
 - It exalts personal experience over against knowing, willing over thinking, action over contemplation, "love" over law, personality over principle, the individual over society.
 - Seeks the "personal encounter" with God over "propositional understanding" of God.
 - The secular existentialist seeks to eliminate God:
- "*To kill God is to become God oneself: it is to realize on this earth the eternal life of which the gospel speaks.*" (Albert Camus)
 - "*If God exists man cannot be free. But man is free, therefore God cannot exist. Since God does not exist all things are morally permissible.*" (Jean Paul Sartre)

Next week: -the five underlying principles supporting these worldviews in their various forms.

Book recommendation: *Thinking Straight in a Crooked World* by Gary DeMar (excellent resource for Presuppositional Apologetics!) www.americanvision.org (store)