

**APOLOGETICS - DEFENDING OUR FAITH AGAINST ALL OPPOSITION**

**LESSON7 : WORLDVIEWS V - 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! **SOLA SCRIPTURA!**
- +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*)?
- +4 popular worldview-schemes impact our society today:
  1. Hinduism / 2. Behaviorism / 3. Marxism / 4. Existentialism

**DIGGING FURTHER DOWN TO THE MORE BASIC *WORLDVIEW CORES*:**

- I. **MONISM**
- II. **DUALISM**
- III. **ATOMISM**
- IV. **PRAGMATISM**
- V. **SKEPTICISM**

These 5 constitute the major presupposition used in human thinking (*worldview cores*):

**1-3: metaphysical (problem of “The one and the many”)**

**4-5: ethical**

**I. MONISM** (Greek *mono* = single)

- A metaphysical system asserting only one ultimate substance/principle in the universe
  - Thales the Miletian (636 - 643 B.C.) WATER
  - Anaximenes (585 - 525 B.C.) AIR
  - Heraclitus (535 - 475 B.C.) FIRE
- Denies the multiplicity of things
- Those many things we deem real are phases of a *one* and are just somehow illusions
- Great fascination in the West through:
  - Hinduism
  - New Age movement
  - Christian Science
  - Hare Krishna

**II. DUALISM**

- Contrary to Monism
- there are two ultimate realities - mind/form and matter
- idealist Plato (428 - 348 B.C.) divided reality into:

- +the ideal world of “**Forms**” (perfection as unchanging realities) and
- +the perceptual world of **temporal sense experience** (imperfect copies of those forms)
  - Example: Flower or Butterfly only beautiful because of the *form of beauty* out there.
  - Dualist epistemology: Intuition - we can only know intuitively (also intuitive ethics)
  - Had a tremendous influence on theology: spirit good - matter evil
    - clergy holy - laymen ordinary
    - Sunday faith - Mon - Sat world
    - etc.

### III. ATOMISM

- Materialists saying that material universe is composed of indestructible particles
- “atom” = greek *a* (“no”) *temnein* (“cut”) - smallest material particle
- Necessarily denies Monism
- *atoms* is all there exists - no ideals, forms, or gods.
- **2 Kinds:**
  - **Deterministic atomism:**
    - Denies free will (Behaviorism and Marxism [hist. Determinism])
  - **Non-deterministic atomism:**
    - Endorses free will (some materialists held to this e.g.Epicurus)
      - Egoism:** self-interest is proper motive for human conduct
      - Utilitarianism:** must seek greatest happiness for greatest number of people (→**socialism**)
      - Existentialism:** Man defines what he will be.

### IV. PRAGMATISM

- Meaning of an idea or proposition lies in its observable practical consequences
- We live to solve our problems - do not need to theoretically account
- “*If it works it’s good!*” (devastating effects in today’s evangelical theology)
- Shuns the traditional problems of philosophy: “*Whatever works for you!*”

### V. SKEPTICISM

- Says we do not know anything for certain at all
- All human knowledge is so deficient that at best it can only be *probably* true
- Therefore knowledge is simply opinion

**As a Christian desiring to defend the faith, you must remember that the presuppositional apologetic is a worldview approach. The basic worldviews summarized above, and the general core features, should be mastered in order to get at the heart of the issue and avoid extraneous rabbit trails. Our worldview presuppositions should be able to account for the structure of reality (since it is God’s creation). They should also be aware of and able to challenge the core presuppositions that lie beneath other worldviews. (Bahnsen)**

**In short: Every unchristian worldview more or less uses some of these *core presuppositions* - therefore we shall know them.  
*There is nothing new under the sun...*(Eccl. 1:10)**