

*Worldviews*  
*Seminar*

**By**

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## *Introduction*

Every human being in the world has a “Worldview” – that is, they have a grid through which they make decisions for every aspect of their life. This grid may be made up from a variety of different sources – e.g., man’s basic, narcissistic sin nature; cultural mores that are the establishment of family life and family relationships; religious and philosophical belief systems; political belief systems; historical concepts of a society’s origins that are handed down by previous generations and ultimately become the foundational direction and basis of that society’s self-evaluation, laws, family structures, business practices, educational models, etc. Thus, when you do a comparative analysis of different “Worldviews,” it is important to understand why other people believe as they do, versus simply just accepting or rejecting Worldviews because they are different from your own – that is, there must be a higher and far more solid basis to to either approve or disapprove of a Worldview than merely the fact that it’s beliefs and practices are contrary to and opposite from what you are accustomed to. It is this higher basis of decision making, therefore, that we are going to pursue in both our analysis of and determination as to which Worldviews are based on truth, versus those that are not. And that in turn leads us to the most important question of all, and that is, ‘What is truth?’

Each worldview that we will look at, including the Biblical/Christian Worldview, has a source that it appeals to for what it considers to be **THE SOURCE** of truth, and what we will discover is that with **EVERY** religious and philosophical belief system in the world, apart from the Biblical/Christian Worldview, their ultimate source of truth is their own reason, their own supposed righteousness, and their own effort, to one degree or another, at achieving self-deification. This pursuit of self-deification is based on the premise that man is basically good, or even that man is semi-divine, and he just needs to come to a point of realizing his deified state. The Bible, on the other hand, takes just the opposite view, and that is a **KEY and FOUNDATIONAL** factor in understanding the Biblical/Christian Worldview over against all of the rest.

In this brief overview, we are going to be utilizing material from the textbook, *Understanding the Times*, and below is a sketch of our approach (Printed Handout):

	Christianity	Islam	Sec. Hum.	Marx.-Len.	Cos. Hum	Postmod.
	<u>Bible</u>	<u>Qur/Had</u>	<u>H. M.</u>	<u>Marx, Eng Len, Mao</u>	<u>Mac, Span, et al</u>	<u>Niet, Derr, et al</u>
Theology -	Theism	Theism	Atheism	Atheism	Pantheism	Atheism
Philosophy-	Supernatural	Supernatural	Naturalism	Dial. Mate	Non-Natural	Anti-Realism
Ethics -	Moral Absolutes	Moral Absolutes	Moral Relativism	Prolet. Mor.	Mortal Rel. (Karma)	Cult. Rel.
Biology -	Creationism	Creationism	Dar Evol	Puncutated Evol	Cosmic Evol	Punctuated Evol
Psychology-	Dualism	Dualism	Monism	Monism	Higher Con	Soc-Constr Selves
	(fallen nature)	(non-fallen nature)	(self-actualization)	(behaviorism)		
Sociology -	Traditional	Sharia	Non-Traditional	Classless Society	Non-Traditional	Sexual Egalit
	Family, Church, State	Polygamy, Mosque, Islamic State	Family, Church, State		Family, Church, State	
Law -	Divine/Natural Law	Sharia Law	Positive Law	Proletariat Law	Self-Law	Critical Legal Studies
Politics -	Justice, Freedom, Order	Islamic Theocracy (Global Islam)	Liberalism (Secular World Government)	Statism (Communist World Government)	Self-Gov (New World Order)	Lib/Marx/Soc/Sec/Hum
Economics-	Stewardship of Property	Stewardship of Property	Interventionism	Scientific Soc	Universal Enlightened Production	Interventionism
History -	Creation, Fall, Redemption	Historical Determinism (Jihad) <sup>1</sup>	Historical Evolution	Historical Materialism	Evolutionary Godhead	Historicism

As you can see, these ten areas incorporate every area of our human lives to varying extents, and what is even more interesting is that we may, at times, be embracing Worldviews enmeshed into our culture that are absolutely contrary to our fundamental belief system, but we are unaware of that because we are uninformed. Sadly, if we do not come to a point and recognize the disinformation we are ingesting into our mental and emotional makeup, we can and will make decisions that can and will be quite self-destructive in our lives. Therefore, it is imperative that we pursue and seek God's foundational truth in His Word that our lives may indeed be victorious.

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<sup>1</sup> David Noebel, *Understanding the Times, Revised 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* (Manitou Springs, CO: Summit Press, 2006), Introduction.

# ***Chapter One:***

## ***Theology***

### ***Christianity***

When we speak of “theism,” we are in essence saying that Christianity believes in a supernatural God, who transcends the physical limitations of the natural universe as we know and understand it – that is, He absolutely transcends our finite ability to fully grasp all of His mysteries of life, but everything that He does give us to know all points to Him as the source of our very life and existence. For the Christian, therefore, Christian theism may be said to rest on two basic principles: special revelation that comes from the Bible, and general revelation that comes from our created order (Ibid., 43).

A biblical, foundational principle of general revelation is found in Romans 1:18-23:

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,<sup>19</sup> because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.<sup>20</sup> For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.<sup>21</sup> For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.<sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools,<sup>23</sup> and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. (Romans 1:18-23)

In addition, John 1:9 states that Jesus “was the true light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.” Another way to read this verse is as follows: “That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.” From a Greek grammatical perspective, either of the above translations is correct – the first one stating that Jesus, who is coming into the world, enlightens every man, while the second is stating that Jesus gives light to every man coming into the world. Thus, as both are grammatically correct, so too are both correct theologically – that is, Jesus, who came into the world, is the Light that “enlightens every man,” and Jesus “was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.” This is not a support for universalism – that is, the belief that all human beings will be saved by God through His mercy, regardless of personal belief and acceptance of Jesus overtly as their Lord

and Savior – but rather, it is stating that “every man coming into the world” is born with an innate consciousness of God and his need for a Savior.

Special revelation, on the other hand, is seen by Christians as coming solely through the Bible, which is considered to be the living Word of God, made alive by the power of His Holy Spirit. Probably the one passage that most clearly states and presents the Christian belief of divine inspiration of the Bible is II Timothy 3:16-17: “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” The key word in the above passage is “inspired,” and in Greek it is **θεόπνευστος** (*theopneustos*), and it is made up to three Greek forms: **θεός** (*theos*), which means “God”; **πνευ** (*pneu*), which comes from the Greek verb **πνέω** (*pneō*), which means “to breathe out”; and the ending, **στος** (*stos*), which transforms this combined form into an adjective, thus making it, “God breathed.” Now here is an important point to make with reference to “God breathed” inspiration, and that is that it is not robotic – in other words, it does not turn the writer into some sort of a zombie state when he is writing, but rather the Holy Spirit works in and through the author’s personality, intellect, emotional makeup, etc., as He is “breathing” into his mind what to write. Thus, you might say this is a gentle and very natural “breathing” process, but yet one that is profound and specific in its nature.

There are three other very important points to make with reference to the theistic, foundational beliefs of Christianity as revealed in special revelation:

- 1) **God is Eternal and He is Spirit** – When God revealed Himself to Moses at the burning bush, He told Moses who He was: “And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM’; and He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you’” (Exodus 3:14). The phrase, I AM WHO I AM, is a statement of God’s eternal being. Now regardless of whether or not one accepts the Bible as God’s living Word, the above phrase, within biblical, special revelation, identifies the God of the Bible as an eternal being, without beginning or end. In Hebrew, the phrase is **אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה** (*'ehyeh 'ă-er 'ehyeh*), which means, “I will continually be who I will continually be.” That is, God is always who He is and has been forever, and He will always be the same. The word **אֶהְיֶה** (*'ehyeh*) means “I will continually be,” and it comes from the Hebrew verb **הָיָא** (*hāyā*), which is the verb meaning “to exist, or to be,” thus, God is the eternal, existent being, and there is none besides Him.

In conjunction with His absolute, eternal state is the truth that He is The Eternal Spirit. When Jesus was in conversation with the Samaritan woman, He told her, “God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24). From a Greek syntactical point of view, this passage is equal in theological and doctrinal importance to John 1:1: “. . . and the Word was God.” Both have the same grammatical constructions in which “God” in John 1:1 and “Spirit” in John 4:24 are what is called a predicate nominative. That means, that “God” in John 1:1 and “Spirit” in John 4:24 are making categorical statements about the essence and nature of “Word” and “God” in John 1:1 and 4:24 respectively. Thus, “the Word,” or Jesus, is fully divine in His attributes and nature, and “God” is fully Spirit in His nature and essence. That is why in the Ten Commandments the Second Commandment (Exodus 20:4-6) contains a very strong prohibition against any idol built to represent the Lord:

You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 5 "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, 6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. (Exodus 20:4-6)

You can see, therefore, that the Second Commandment is quite emphatic about not having any physical representation made of the Lord, and the reason is because He is Eternal Spirit, and the only way to worship Him is “in spirit and truth.”

- 2) **God is Triune** – When we say that God is Triune, we do not, in any way, suggest that there are three, different gods, but rather the One, True God, with three distinct personalities that are interwoven and one. They are separate, however, as far as the focus of their specific roles in the Godhead, yet operating as the One, True God in ALL AREAS OF HIS ETERNAL PLAN, PURPOSE, AND MINISTRY. Probably one of the most significant passages that clearly presents this union and diversity is John 14:15-23:

If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. 16 "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 *that is* the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, *but* you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you. 18 ¶ "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. 19 "After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you *will* behold Me; because I live, you shall live also. 20 "In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. 21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he

who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him." 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world?" 23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him. (John 14:15-23)

As you can see in this passage, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all ministering as the One, True God, and yet each is carrying out their specific, but unified ministry, for one specific purpose: "Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him'" (John 14:23). Thus, based on this passage, God's overarching purpose in His plan of redemption is to have a living, intimate, personal, and saving relationship with us, through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, by the indwelling power and presence of the Holy Spirit, whereby the Father and the Son will make their abode within us by the Holy Spirit.

- 3) **Man's Fallen and Utterly Corrupt Nature** – This is one of the key and significant differences between Christianity and every other religious and philosophical belief system in the world – man is basically evil and corrupt, not basically good. There are numerous biblical passages that affirm this truth, and we will look at three:
- a) Genesis 6:5: "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that **every intent** of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." The underlined phrase, "every intent," may also be translated, "every form," which in the Hebrew is expressing the concept of the actual formation of a thought before one has even fully become cognizant of the thought – that means that before one is fully cognizant of a thought, its very preconception is evil! And not only is its preconception evil, but it is "only evil" 24-7, that is, all day, every day, and that is what "continually" means in Hebrew (כָּל־הַיּוֹם) – *kol-hayyôm* - "all the day").
  - b) Psalms 14:1-3: "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; there is no one who does good. 2 The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. 3 They have all turned aside, They have together become corrupt; *There is none* who does good, No, not one." In the Hebrew, the word used in this passage for

“no” and “none” is the most emphatic in the Hebrew language – ׀׀׀ (‘ayin), which means “denying existence absolutely.”<sup>2</sup> Thus, as you can read, the “fool” denies God’s “absolute existence,” and God in turn denies the “absolute existence” of any one “who does good.”

c) Isaiah 64:6: “For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.” The phrase, “filthy garment,” in Hebrew is ׀׀׀⊗⊗⊗⊗⊗ (be<sup>g</sup>ed ‘iddîm), and literally, it is saying, “a garment of menstrual periods.” When a woman was in her menstruation, she was considered next to a leper as far as uncleanness was concerned. Thus, before God, our “righteous deeds” are like used menstrual cloths – the apex of uncleanness and vileness. To help you understand this a bit better, imagine sitting down to a dinner, and the napkin provided for you, on which your silver ware is laying, is a used menstrual cloth – that is the picture of our “righteous deeds” before God.

- 4) **Salvation by Grace Through Faith** – In every religious and philosophical belief system in the world, apart from biblical Christianity, their means for attaining whatever they deem to be ‘eternal life’ is through their works of righteousness and good deeds. However, as we just saw with biblical truth, human righteousness through human good deeds is non-existent. Thus, from a biblical perspective, the only means of salvation is by God’s grace through faith, and the reason for that is that as human beings, WE HAVE NO RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHIN OURSELVES! Thus, Ephesians 2:8-10 says it concretely and conclusively: “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” The “good works” mentioned in verse 10 are not our doing, but rather the “good works” God has “created in Christ Jesus” that are in fact a manifestation of Jesus’ life within us, versus a manifestation of our corrupt and vile works stemming from our corrupt and vile nature.
- 5) **Eternal Judgment** – Except for Islam, no other religious or philosophical belief system actually believes that people will be separated from God for all eternity in a burning,

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<sup>2</sup> Francis Brown, *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon With An Appendix Containing Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1979), 34-35.

unquenchable fire called Hell. Islam, on the other hand, does believe that, and that all people will be judged by their works, which will enable them to enter into what they consider to be heaven. However, Islam also believes that somehow, all Muslims will probably make it, at least each individual Muslim when considering their own life hope they will make it. From the biblical perspective, Hell is for any and all whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life: "And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one *of them* according to their deeds. 14 And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:11-15). Consequently, there is no middle ground at all with reference to the biblical view of Eternal Judgment.

- 6) **The Resurrection of Jesus Christ and Eternal Life** – The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ arose from the dead, and through that resurrection, He purchased eternal life for all who believe in Him as their personal Lord and Savior (I Corinthians 15:12-57).

## **Islam**

Islam's theism is cast in a monotheistic belief in one God, but they resolutely deny the Trinity and the deity of Jesus Christ. In addition, they too believe that God created the universe and all that is in it, and that the universe testifies to His power and greatness (Surah 2:29; 3:191; 6:1, 73; et al). With reference to special revelation, Muslims believe that Muhammad is the ultimate and final prophet of God, superseding Jesus (a mere man), and they see the Quran as "the ultimate authority in all matters legal and religious . . . infallible in all respects."<sup>3</sup> The following is in fact the first pillar of faith for a Muslim, called the confession or Shahada (شهادة), and it contains

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<sup>3</sup> Mushin S. Mahdi, "Muhammad and the Religion of Islam," in *The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 15<sup>th</sup> ed.*, vol. 22, 6.

the following affirmation: لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله (*la ilaha ila Allah Muḥammad rasulu Allah*) – “No god except for *the one true* God, Muhammad *is the messenger of the one true* God.”<sup>4</sup> This, therefore, is the first step to becoming a Muslim – this confession and affirmation.

Salvation for the Muslim is completely and totally by his or her works. Muslims do believe in Adam’s sin, however, they do not believe his sin resulted in the fallen nature of man and a ‘sin nature’ that has been genetically passed on to every human being. Thus, when a Muslim sins, if he repents of his sin, he will be forgiven and be as his initial, sinless state.<sup>5</sup> In addition, Islam does not believe in, nor advocate intercession on behalf of someone’s sin. Thus, one’s own efforts at pleasing God by his or her works are sufficient:

On the whole, despite the sad accounts of the human record in the Quran, its attitude is quite optimistic with regard to the sequel of human endeavor. It also advocates a healthy moral sense rather than the attitude of self-torment and moral frenzy represented, for example, by the teachings of Paul and many Sufis, which require some sort of *savior ex machina*. Given a merciful and just God and the solidarity of character called *taqwā*, human well-being is provided for: “If you avoid the major evils that have been prohibited to you, We shall obliterate [the effects of] occasional and minor lapses” (4:31); “And those [are believers] who avoid major evils and obscenities and when they are under the influence of anger, they exercise forgiveness” (42:37); “Those who avoid major evils and obscenities – except [occasionally] coming to their brink” (53:32); “A work that is really good earns its reward ten times over, while an evil deed draws out an equivalent response” (6:160).<sup>6</sup>

First of all, the word *taqwā* comes from the Arabic verb تقى (*taqā*), which means “to fear (esp. with reference to God),”<sup>7</sup> and the noun تقوى (*taqwā*), therefore carries the meaning of “godliness, devoutness, and piety.”<sup>8</sup> Thus, as we read the above quote from this Muslim author and teacher, you can see immediately that Islamic belief in the ability of man to attain to righteousness and goodness is something inherent within himself, without any outside help. And this latter point is supported even further by his reference to “Paul” in needing a *savior mechanica*, or a ‘fabricated savior (i.e., someone he created in his own thinking)’ to assist and enable him to live a godly life. We could spend a great deal of more time illustrating the

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>6</sup> Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Quran*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1994), 30,

<sup>7</sup> J. Milton Cowan, ed., *Arabic-English Dictionary: The Hans Wehr Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Urbana, IL: Spoken Languages Services, Inc., 1994), 115.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

‘salvation by works and human goodness’ theology of the Muslims, which in turn exalts legalism and a false, but unequivocally insecure, sense of human righteousness, but this is sufficient.

## **Secular Humanism**

Secular Humanism rejects all forms of supernaturalism and in essence, seeks man’s fulfillment in the “here and now of this world.”<sup>9</sup> Corliss Lamont, an avowed and well-known leader and spokesman for the Secular Humanists, believes that the outstanding characteristic of Secular Humanism, therefore, is that it “considers all forms of the supernatural as myth. . . . Humanism in its most accurate philosophical sense, implies a worldview in which Nature is everything, in which there is no supernatural.”<sup>10</sup>

Another outspoken Secular Humanist is Paul Kurtz, editor of the magazine, *Free Inquiry*, and he states: “Humanism cannot in any fair sense of the word apply to one who still believes in God as the source and creator of the universe. Christian Humanism would be possible only for those who are willing to admit that they are atheistic Humanists. It surely does not apply to God-intoxicated believers. . . . God himself is man deified.”<sup>11</sup>

Thus, Secular Humanism has as its foundational principle “man setting himself up in place of God,”<sup>12</sup> and it offers no hope beyond this life for anything – consequently, it may be said to be nihilistic in its overall view.

## **Marxism-Leninism**

Marxists-Leninists are also committed atheists as are Secular Humanists. The following sums up quite well the Marxist-Leninist view of belief in God:

God is considered an impediment, even an enemy, to a scientific, materialistic, socialistic outlook. The idea of God, insists Lenin, encourages the working class (the proletariat) to

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<sup>9</sup> Noebel, 60.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 63.

drown its terrible economic plight in the “spiritual booze” of some mythical heaven (“pie in the sky by and by”). Even a single sip of this intoxicant decreases the revolutionary fervor necessary to exterminate the oppressing class (the bourgeois), causing the working class to forfeit its only chance of creating a truly human heaven on earth: global communism.<sup>13</sup>

Karl Marx (May 5, 1818 – March 13, 1883) is obviously the founder of the Marxist/Communist/Socialist world view. Marx teamed up with Friederich Engels, whom he first met while he was studying at the University of Berlin in 1836, and together, they wrote and ultimately published the *Communist Manifesto* on February 21, 1848. This is the foundational work and grid for the Communist/Socialist world view.

Vladimir Lenin (April 22, 1870 – January 21, 1924) was born in Russia, and he became an ardent Marxist, and he is considered to be the leader of the Communist Revolution in Russia in 1917 that overthrew Czar Nicholas II, which overthrow in turn led to the execution of Czar Nicholas’ entire family, as well as attendants, on July 17, 1918. Lenin then began to implement the communist ideology in Russia that lasted until the collapse of the former Soviet Union in December of 1991.

The following states quite clearly Marx’s view of the belief in a transcendent God:

For Marx, then, humanity is God. We created God in our own image. We created religion in order to worship ourselves. The notion that God is merely our projection is contained in Marx’s assertion that man “looked for a superhuman being in the fantastic reality of heaven and found nothing there but the reflection of himself.”<sup>14</sup>

Lenin’s view was equally anti-God in his approach to actually applying the Marxist/Communist world view to all aspects of life:

Lenin made it clear that any idea of God was taboo, claiming, “Every religious idea, every idea of God, even flirting with the idea of God, is unutterable vileness . . . vileness of the most dangerous kind, ‘contagion’ of the most abominable kind. Millions of sins, filthy deeds, acts of violence and physical contagions . . . are far less dangerous than the subtle, spiritual idea of a God decked out in the smartest ‘ideological’ costumes. . . .

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 66.

Every defense or justification of the idea of God, even the most refined, the best intentioned, is a justification of reaction.”<sup>15</sup>

Thus, if someone embraces Marxism/Leninism as a worldview, then atheism is both basic and fundamental to every aspect of thinking, belief, and practice:

In theory and practice, Marxism reflects its atheistic base. To be a Marxist demands adherence to atheism. To be a good Marxist entails being a propagator of atheism. To be the *best* Marxist is to see atheism as part of the scientific, materialistic, socialistic outlook and to strive to eradicate all religious sentiment.<sup>16</sup>

With regard to the eradication of “all religious sentiment,” one thing that naturally follows when Marxism is the government policy is the persecution of **all religious belief and practice**, which is not just limited to Christianity, although the persecution of Christians can be a major focus in these countries:

This Marxist hatred of anything supernatural – and especially anything Christian – is most often vented on religious peoples and institutions in Marxist countries.

Although the July 10, 1918 Constitution of the former U.S.S.R. recognized freedom of both “religious and anti-religious propaganda” as the right of every citizen, the Soviet state constantly worked to suppress theistic religion. Article 65 of the 1918 Constitution declared priests and clerics to be “servants of the bourgeoisie” and had them disenfranchised. This meant, among other things, that priests were denied ration cards and their children were barred from attending school above the elementary grades. . . . “All church property was nationalized, and it is estimated that tens of thousands of bishops, clerics, and laymen were killed or imprisoned.”

Even though the 1936 Soviet Constitution again guaranteed “freedom of religion,” Marxist attacks on religious peoples continued unabated. In the days following the new Constitution, some Christians attempted to conform to laws by registering with the government. The Soviet government required these believers to collect fifty signatures. When the Christians presented the signatures to the government officials, all fifty “conspirators” would be deemed “members of a secret counter-revolutionary organization” and arrested.

Such persecution will continue as long as the Marxist worldview rules any country. Modern times have not made Marxists more tolerant of religion. In 1993 in the People’s Republic of China, Marxist leaders tore down an Islamic mosque, ostensibly because it was not “government sanctioned.” The Marxist government can sanction only one religion: the religion of atheism – the “ABC of Marxism.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 68-69.

## *Cosmic Humanism*

The Cosmic Humanist believes everyone is God and God is everyone. In addition, they do not subscribe to any specific religious book as better or more authoritative than any other – that is not the source of their inspiration. Their source of insight and inspiration in their realization of their “Godness” is unity of consciousness, as the following quote describes:

It is important to understand that the belief that every individual is God and God is every individual is tied inextricably to the concept of consciousness. Because Cosmic Humanists have this “all is one” mentality, they necessarily believe that humanity can become attuned to all the powers of its godhood by achieving unity of consciousness. “Once we begin to see that we are all God,” says Beverly Galyean, “that we all have the attributes of God, then I think the whole purpose of human life is to reown the Godlikeness within us; the perfect love, the perfect wisdom, and perfect understanding, the perfect intelligence, and when we do that, we create back to that old, that essential oneness which is consciousness.”<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the belief that we are all God and God is actually all of us, there is also the belief that we are continually being recycled through reincarnation in order to discover our true “Godness” in other personages and forms:

The concept of humanity’s unity, the idea that all is one, tends to support the theological concept of reincarnation. Virtually every “orthodox” adherent of the New Age movement believes that each individual’s soul was present in other material forms earlier in history and that it will manifest itself in still other forms after its present body dies. The body may pass away, but the soul will continue its quest for godhood in other bodies. . . .

In order to understand oneself (and one’s path to godhood), a person must be cognizant of at least some of his or her past lives. Gary Zukav explains: “If your soul was a Roman centurion, an Indian beggar, a Mexican mother, a nomad boy, and a medieval nun, among other incarnations, for example, . . . You will not be able to understand your proclivities, or interests, or ways of responding to different situations without an awareness of the experiences of those lifetimes.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 73-74.

In addition to believing that everyone is God and God is everyone, as well as that we are all recycled souls, returning time after time in order to discover our true “godhood,” there is also the belief that everything is God:

And so it is. Stars are God, water is God, plants are God, trees are God, the earth is God, whales and dolphins are God, everything is God. Cosmic Humanists worship the creation and the creator at the same time. For them, there is no difference.<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, what we see in Cosmic Humanism is the exact same type of worship that was carried on in ancient Sumer and Babylon – that is, a form of self-deified, pantheistic, and animistic worship and devotion. Consequently, this is not some “new revelation and understanding,” but rather it is the exact same lie, but in a different package (Genesis 3:1-7):

Unlike the Marxist and the Secular Humanist, the Cosmic Humanist believes in a supernatural realm consisting of spiritual relationships. However, the New Age version of God differs infinitely from the Christian concept of God. While the Christian believes that God created us and all that exists and that we can know His will only through the general revelation of nature and conscience and the special revelation of the Bible, the Cosmic Humanist believes that every person and all reality is God, and therefore that any “truth” our inner self discovers is God’s truth. If we fail to realize our godhood in this lifetime, never fear! We’ll soon have another incarnation and another chance to achieve Christ consciousness.<sup>21</sup>

## **Postmodernism**

Atheism may be said to be the predominant view of Postmodernism, but not necessarily as dogmatic a view as that portrayed in Marxism and Secular Humanism. Postmodernists reject any form of absolute truth, including an absolute statement that there is no God, although probably the vast majority of those who claim to be a part of Postmodern persuasion would affirm that they do not believe that God exists.

Friedrich Nietzsche (October 15, 1844 – August 25, 1900), a 19<sup>th</sup> century German philosopher, coined the phrase and the philosophic belief that “God is dead.” By this he meant that “belief in God was no longer necessary.”<sup>22</sup> In other words, Nietzsche rejected all forms of ecclesiasticism as being totally irrelevant to modern man, believing that modern man has

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 78.

replaced faith in God with faith in science, but this replacement has tragic consequences, which include the ultimate death and end of mankind's society as we know it:

Michael Foucault (October 15, 1926 – June 25, 1984, at one time a member of the French Communist Party and later considered to be a forerunner of Postmodernism) later checked the signs of modernity and discovered a corpse as cold as Nietzsche's God. He discovered that the modernist era had given way to another – Postmodernism. Whith this coming new era both Nietzsche and Foucault predicted a period of violence, death, destruction, and ultimately the end of humanity itself. . . .

Both Nietzsche and Foucault agree that after humanity kills God, they sign their own death certificate. A worldview perspective reveals how theological beliefs have implications for other areas of life. Nietzsche and Foucault understand the connection.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, both Marxism and Nietzsche have influenced the theological and philosophic foundational beliefs of Postmodernism with an overall atheistic perspective. But as was said earlier, it is not an aggressive atheism, but rather an intolerance of insisting that theism is the only way, as well as assuming that atheism must in turn be the dogmatic alternative.

Beginning in the 1960's and carrying on into the 1970's, neo-orthodoxy came to the forefront among liberal churches and seminaries. One of its major emphases was what is called "deconstructionism," which meant that the writings of another person only find meaning in the reader's mind as he or she applies what is written to their life, based on how they read the material through the eyes of their own, personal background. In other words, the context of the writer is superfluous as compared to me and how I interpret the writing through my own perspective. Thus, with regard to Scripture, it is not what Paul was wanting to convey to his readers out of the context from which he was writing, but rather it is how I interpret what he is saying based on my own, personal life-time experiences and worldview. What in turn followed with this "deconstructionist" approach toward biblical interpretation, was the "death of God" theology – a theology that took its underpinnings from Nietzsche's writing, but attempted to apply it in a 20<sup>th</sup> century mindset. This in turn became a foundation plank of belief for Postmodernist theologians, and the following is a description of their application:

If God is dead, the belief that there is no ultimate reality or eternal truth becomes a philosophical necessity. A firm believer in this, Derrida (July 15, 1930 – October 8,

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 78-79.

2004, a French philosopher who is considered a major contributor to postmodern philosophy) concluded further that words and sentences have no inherent meaning. He insisted that human beings construct reality through their use of language. In other words, as you read this page, you will construct your own meaning shaped by your culture and life experiences. The author's meaning is thus "deconstructed" or altered by the reader. In other words, the author's meaning becomes captive to the reader. As Ward says, "Deconstruction is a [literary] method of reading which effectively turns texts against themselves."

For example, according to Derrida's theory of deconstruction, the Bible is merely a book written by men who were locked in their own culture, experiences, and language. Thus, the Biblical authors were writing about their own subjective experiences, not communicating objective or eternal truths about God and humanity. Therefore, when someone reads the Bible today, he or she brings a personal interpretive grid to the text. The theory of deconstruction can thus be used to explain how some cultures can read the Bible and proceed to slaughter another race, while other cultures reading the same Bible build hospitals, schools, orphanages, and homeless shelters. . . .

The "death of God" theologians fastened onto Derrida's idea that words refer only to other words in a textual setting and cannot be used to describe external realities such as God. They therefore claimed that God is not the Supreme Being who is literally "up there" in heaven somewhere, but instead we should think of God as being "out there" in a spiritual sense. God is "there" when we love another person, and this becomes the main Christian message. In this sense, the traditional concept of God ruling over His Creation is lifeless.

Alister McGrath (January 23, 1953, a conservative, Bible believing and Christ-centered scientist, theologian, and biblical apologist) in *The Twilight of Atheism* speaks of the relationship between Postmodernism, atheism, and deconstruction. He says, "Many Postmodern writers are, after all, atheist (at least in the sense of not actively believing in God). The very idea of deconstruction seems to suggest that the idea of God ought to be eliminated from Western culture as a power play on the part of churches and others with vested interests in its survival."<sup>24</sup>

What follows from this overall perspective with regard to religion in the belief that one cannot really know the truth because there is no absolute truth is an emphasis on religious pluralism:

Religious pluralism is the belief that one must be tolerant of all religious beliefs because no one religion can be true. This notion agrees with the defining tenets of the Postmodern mood – skepticism of absolute truth, skepticism of a discernable foundation for knowledge, and, in the end, skepticism of all metanarratives (any overarching story that defines reality).<sup>25</sup>

The reality of Postmodernism is that it too is nothing new, but rather it is a repeat of the false piety associated with an incorrect approach toward "tolerance." Biblical tolerance is respect for

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 80-81.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 81-82.

others beliefs and backgrounds, but includes a commitment to share the truth of Jesus Christ with them in the best possible circumstances. Jesus categorically stated about Himself, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me” (John 14:6). Thus, based on this Eternal Truth, as well as all of the other things we have already gone over in our analysis of Christian Theology, we, as believers in Jesus Christ, do not have a choice if we believe the Bible to be the Eternal Word of God, and indeed it is. On the other hand, we also have a very clear directive through Paul, as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit, on just how to witness to others who are from different religious and philosophical cultures than ours:

For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. 20 And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, though not being myself under the Law, that I might win those who are under the Law; 21 to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, that I might win those who are without law. 22 To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. 23 And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it. (I Corinthians 9:19-23)

Thus, there is no compromise with the Gospel in presenting it as one of many alternatives to be saved and have an eternal relationship with God, but rather it must be presented as the only way, but it must be done in love, truth, and patience.

## ***Chapter Two:***

### ***Philosophy***

### ***Christianity***

The word philosophy comes from two Greek words: **φιλέω** (*phileō*), which means “to like or have a special affection for someone or something; and **σοφία** (*sophia*), which means “wisdom.” Thus, the word philosophy actually means “the love and affection for wisdom.” It is absolutely imperative that you know and understand that there is unequivocally and absolutely NOTHING SPIRITUAL, NOR BENEFICIAL ABOUT BEING IGNORANT AND UNIFORMED! There are three passages that I would like to point out that deal with sound reason and judgment, which is EXACTLY WHAT WE RECEIVE WITH THE MIND OF CHRIST!:

- 1) Isaiah 1:18: “And come, **let us reason** together, saith the Lord: and though your sins be as purple, I will make them white as snow; and though they be as scarlet, I will make *them* white as wool.” The phrase “let us reason” comes from the Hebrew verb **יָכַח** (*yākaḥ*), which means “to decide, adjudge, and prove through discussion.” Consequently, for someone to receive from the Lord His truth, there is a process by which the Holy Spirit “will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment” (John 16:8). The word for “convict” in Greek is **εὐεγchw** (*elegchō*), which means “to expose, convict, reprove, bring to light, and set forth.”<sup>26</sup> Thus, this is what the Holy Spirit does in bringing anyone to Christ – that is, He works upon their thinking and reasoning process in bringing them to a place where they see their sin; they see that Jesus is the only way for salvation; and they see the judgment that awaits them if they refuse to receive Christ as their Lord and Savior. Therefore, when we share Christ with someone, it is not us bringing them to Christ, but it is the Holy Spirit working in and through us, but it is important that we KNOW what we are talking about and HOW best to present it. Prayer is the foundation of it all, and upon that foundation comes the “knowledge” we have gained from the Word, as well as other sources.
- 2) Acts 17:16-34 – This passage of Scripture is about Paul when he was in Athens, sharing the gospel with the Athenian philosophers. In order for Paul to be able to share with these Greek philosophers, he had to know where they were coming from, in the same way if you are going to share with a Muslim – you need to at least know the rudiments of their beliefs. Thus, Paul had at some time in his life read and studied Greek philosophy, and by doing so,

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<sup>26</sup> William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 7<sup>th</sup> Impression, 1963), 248.

he was enabled, by the Holy Spirit, to share with those men in a way that related to what they knew and were discussing. But it wasn't carnal wisdom in an argumentative way, but it was godly wisdom, whereby the Holy Spirit would draw those whom He had convicted and convinced about Christ to a saving faith in Him.

- 3) Acts 26:25: “But he said, ‘I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason.’” Paul was sharing with Festus, the procurator of Judea, about the Gospel, and Festus, upon hearing Paul’s testimony, told Paul that he thought Paul was “mad.” At that point, Paul then responds in verse 26. The word that I want to focus on is “reason,” which in the Greek is **σωφροσύνη** (*sæphrosunē*), and it means “soundness of mind, reasonableness, and rationality.” Thus, Paul, depending upon the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit, not a carnal approach in arguing with Festus, desires to share the Gospel with Festus, employing and depending on the “mind of Christ” ministering in and through him.

Therefore, the philosophy of Christianity may be summed up in one word – Supernaturalism. That is, we as believers, employing the “mind of Christ” within us, use all forms of knowledge and training that is available in the world around us to simply, yet thoroughly, correctly, and accurately share the Gospel of Christ with others. The following is a great summation of the application of Christian philosophy in ministering the Gospel:

The Christian philosophy embraces the meaningful, purposeful life, a life in which you shape your beliefs according to a coherent, reasonable, truthful worldview. As a Christian with such a worldview, you will not be tossed to and fro by every secularist doctrine. “In the same way,” says Dr. Young (Professor of Philosophy at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary), “it can be said that the Christian philosopher and theologian must be acquainted with the contending world-views of his age. Philosophy after all is a way of life, and the Christian believes that he has the true way – the true pattern for living. It is the task of the Christian leader to understand the ideologies of his day so that he may be able to meet their challenge. The task is a never-ending one, for, although the Christian’s worldview does not change, the world about him does. Thus, the task of showing the relevance of the Christian realistic philosophy to a world in process is one which requires eternal vigilance. To such a task, to such an ideal, the Christian leader must dedicate himself.”<sup>27</sup>

## *Islam*

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<sup>27</sup> Noebel, 92.

While on the one hand, Islamic philosophy affirms supernaturalism along with reason in its philosophical approach to its belief system in ways that are similar to Christianity, on the other hand there are some significant differences. For one, Muhammad never performed any miracles according to the Quran, whereas Jesus performed many. Secondly, even though the Quran denies the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, the Bible affirms this as foundational to the redemption of mankind from our dead works, whereas Islam, as we saw earlier, totally supports a works-based righteousness whereby one will hopefully procure his or her salvation. And it is in this very venue of what it means to have a relationship with God that the differences of philosophical belief between Christianity and Islam come to the forefront.

As we have discussed, as believers, that we have the “mind of Christ,” and that means that something supernatural has happened within us for that to occur, Islam, on the other hand, does not have any type of supernatural work such as that occurring in a Muslim’s life. The reason for that is due to the fact that the Holy Spirit has no part in their lives – everything in their relationship with God is based on their own, natural works of righteousness. Thus, their reasoning too is based on their own natural reasoning and logic, versus any supernatural infusion by the Holy Spirit of spiritual insight. This is based on the fact that for Islam, Muhammad is the promised “Helper/Comforter/Counselor” in John 14:16, 15:26, and 16:7:

You (people of the Book) are bound by your own oaths, sworn solemnly in the presence of your own Prophets. In the Old Testament as it now exists, Muhammad is foretold in Deut 18:18 (that is, they believe that the future prophet being foretold by Moses who will come after him is Muhammad, not Jesus – *my notation*); and the rise of the Arab nation is Isaiah 42:11 (this is talking about the descendants of Ishmael coming to a place of worshipping the promised Messiah of 42:6, Jesus Christ, not the rise of the Arab nation – *my notation*), for Kedar was a son of Ismail and the name is used for the Arab nation. Also, in the New Testament as it now exists, Muhammad is foretold in the Gospel of St. John, 14:16, 15:26, and 16:7; the *future* Comforter cannot be the “Holy Spirit” as understood by Christians, because the Holy Spirit already was present, helping and guiding Jesus. The Greek word translated “Comforter” is “Paracletos”, which is an easy corruption from “Periclytos”, which is almost a literal translation of Muhammad” or “Ahmad”; see 7:157 and 61:6 (I will deal with this below). Further, there were other Gospels that have perished (quite likely he may be referring to the Gnostic texts, which were and are all heretical texts that present Jesus as a mere man who had an affair with Mary Magdalene, and from that affair was born a child – *my notation*), but of which traces still remain, which were even more specific in their reference to Muhammad; e.g., the Gospel of St. Barnabas, of which an Italian translation is extant in the State Library at Vienna. It was edited in 1907 with an English translation by Mr. Lonsdale and Laura Ragg (without being able to go into great detail concerning the Gospel of St. Barnabas, let me just say that without any hesitation, after reading it, it is not only clear to me, but

to a vast number of other scholars, that this is a forged document at worst, or at best a profusely redacted, Gnostic gospel, and thus, it is without any serious claims of any validity whatsoever – another tragically, pathetic attempt by Muslims to replace the truth of the Bible, culminating with Jesus, the Son of God, with Muhammad).<sup>28</sup>

Ali follows the traditional Muslim teaching that Muhammad is actually the “comforter” spoken of by Jesus in John’s Gospel. In addition, he also attempts to alter the Greek word, **παράκλητος** (*paraklētos*), which is translated “Comforter/Helper/Counselor,” with a completely different Greek word, **περικλῦτος** (*periklytos*), which he claims “is almost a literal translation of Muhammad or Ahmad.” However, no such word exists in the Greek New Testament, but he attempts to make a comparison with a Classical Greek term. The basic meaning of the Greek preposition *para* is “to be along side,” whereas the basic meaning of the Greek preposition *peri* is “concerning or about.” The Greek word **κλητος** (*klētos*) is an adjective and it means “to be invited or called,” and it comes from the Greek verb **καλέω** (*kaleō*), which means “to call or invite” – thus, combined, **παράκλητος** (*paraklētos*) means “called alongside” as a “Helper, Counselor, or Comforter.” On the other hand, the word **κλῦτός** (*klytos*) is also an adjective and it means “famous”<sup>29</sup> – thus, combined, **περικλῦτός** (*periklytos*) means “concerning fame,” and then idiomatically it would be “famous, renowned, glorious.”<sup>30</sup> Therefore, as you look at this Muslim alternative for the Greek word for “Comforter/Helper/Counselor,” which would be “famous, renowned, glorious one,” who they say refers to Muhammad, you begin to see the tragic essence of this cultic, Satanic, and very tragic pseudo-spiritualized approach toward Scriptural interpretation – pandemic narcissism. In everything they attempt to do, it is to focus on the person of Muhammad, a mere mortal, who is placed on an equal par with Jesus, and here in John, he actually replaces the person of the Holy Spirit. But how does he replace him? He does so, not by being a “Comforter/Helper/Counselor,” but rather by being the “focus of attention” for the sake of himself alone, and not for any ministry help to others. As has already been stated, Islam does not believe in any intercessory help from God because we are able within ourselves alone to emulate the life of Muhammad and attain to the righteousness that he exhibited (e.g., having a revelation from God that his stepson was to divorce his wife so Muhammad could

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<sup>28</sup> Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Meaning of the Holy Quran*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1999; reprint, 2001), 148, note 416.

<sup>29</sup> H. G. Liddell, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon: Founded Upon The Seventh Edition of Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, First Edition, 1889), 438.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 628.

marry her [Surah 33:36-38]; Muhammad's consummated marriage at 54 to a 9 year old little girl [Shahi Bukhari, Book 58, Numbers 234-235; Ibid., vol. 7, Book 62, Numbers 64-65, 88]; etc.).

The point to be made by the above quote is that the Muslims are relying on their own natural, carnal, and unregenerate reasoning. The result, therefore, is that even though their suppositions at times contain some elements of truth, which can be said of all serious, thinking philosophers, both ancient and modern, their ultimate conclusions are warped, skewed, and laced with the darkness of corrupt and depraved thinking that is seen in the justification of Muhammad's actions, not to mention justification of such groups as Hamas and Sharia Law. The obvious and unavoidable reason for all of this is that they are utilizing the reasoning abilities of a natural man, which is minus the wisdom of God, and this too can be said of all philosophers who have not been born again with regard to their ultimate conclusions. Paul presents this quite well in the following passages from I Corinthians:

For the word of the cross is to those who are perishing foolishness, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And the cleverness of the clever I will set aside." 20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 ¶ For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; 27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28 and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are, 29 that no man should boast before God. 30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, 31 that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord. . . . Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away; 7 but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom*, which God predestined before the ages to our glory; 8 *the wisdom* which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory; 9 but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And *which* have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 For to us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 For who among men knows the *thoughts* of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the *thoughts* of God no one knows except the Spirit of

God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*. 14 ¶ But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. 15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man. 16 For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ. (I Corinthians 1:18-31; 2:6-16)

## *Secular Humanism*

The philosophy of Secular Humanism is naturalistic at its foundation level – that is, it completely denies any supernatural elements whatsoever and affirms “the material world is all that exists” (Ibid., 101). The following clearly summarizes Secular Humanism’s position:

This dogmatic position is summarized in *Humanist Manifesto II*: “Nature may indeed be broader and deeper than we now know; any new discoveries, however, will but enlarge our knowledge of the natural.” The essence of naturalism, then, is this – whatever exists can be explained by natural causes. Thus, in a Humanist’s mind, the supernatural cannot exist. While some Humanists prefer to call themselves organicists or materialists (for “scientific” materialists), the name makes little difference. . . .

The key tenet of naturalism is its denial of the supernatural. . . . By “supernatural,” philosophers generally mean things that are not material, such as the soul, personality, or God. Naturalists deny everything that is not made up of matter or that does not exist in nature. . . .

Humanists believe that the mind (also referred to as consciousness, personality, or soul) is simply a manifestation of the brain. The mind is an extension of the natural world, explainable in purely physical terms. . . . Since matter is all that exists, the mind is a strictly physical phenomenon. The belief that the mind is no more than a conglomeration of matter is called *monism*. The opposing view, that the mind supersedes mere matter, is called *dualism*. . . .

“If . . . The monistic theory of psychology is true, as Naturalism, Materialism, and Humanism claim, then there is no possibility that the human consciousness, with its memory and awareness of self-identity intact, can survive the shock and disintegration of death. . . .

. . . the mind arose through evolutionary processes. If this is so, the mind is still evolving, and a better mutation is not unlikely. Some Humanists believe that this more efficient mind is arising today in the form of computer technology. Victor J. Stenger, author of *Not by Design*, . . . says, “If the computer is ‘just a machine,’ so is the human brain.” Stenger also foresees the possibility

of computers becoming the next step in the evolutionary chain – the new higher consciousness. He concludes, “Perhaps, as part of this new consciousness, we will become God.”<sup>31</sup>

Therefore, philosophy for the Secular Humanist is merely a naturalistic explanation for every human emotion and thought, without any separation from the physical – thus, we are little more than robotic entities, with no purpose or hope beyond this life.

## *Marxism-Leninism*

The philosophy of Marxism-Leninism is summed up in the term dialectical materialism:

The notion of *dialectical process* was modified and polished into a broad-based philosophy by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, who died when Marx was thirteen years old. The dialectical process is not a creation of Marxist philosophy. Instead, Marxists combine the theory with materialism, creating a hybrid philosophy – **dialectical materialism**. . . .

The dialectic says that in everything there is a thesis (the way things are) and an antithesis (an opposition to the way things are), which must inevitably clash. The result of the struggle and merging that comes from the clash is the synthesis, which becomes the new thesis. This new thesis will eventually attract another antithesis, and produce a new synthesis.<sup>32</sup>

In essence, Hegel viewed God as the prime mover of all of life, and it was the Spirit of God that was and is behind all of this movement. In addition, Jesus is viewed by Hegel as the fulcrum of man’s existence. Thus, the dialectic is man’s movement toward the ultimate climax in history as we know it, and that would be the Kingdom of God arising. Now Hegel would be termed a Post-Millennialist in our day, but for him, he viewed this dialectic moving in the direction of God’s ultimate victory as man would become one with God in His reason and rule in life. On the other hand, Hegel also viewed the evil in this world as a result of man’s choices in opposition to God’s directive – thus, man himself was responsible for the “syntheses” that occurred in his life for either the good or bad choices he makes. However, God’s Spirit is leading those who are believers and followers of Christ to God’s ultimate conclusion of humanity – our oneness with God.

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<sup>31</sup> Noebel, 101-102, 104-105.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 109.

Marx and Engels, on the other hand, eviscerated Hegel's dialectic and attributed to lifeless matter all of the attributes of God in the spiritual arena – thus, matter becomes God, and that means that mankind becomes God. In addition, this process in the Marxist mindset presumes that their materialistic dialectic is always moving upward in the direction toward human perfection, unaided of course by God, because He doesn't exist, and man himself is now God. Thus, this unaided, materialistic dialectic will culminate in the perfection of a communist society where pure egalitarianism will exist for all people:

Marxist philosophy as a worldview must be understood by anyone who claims to support the Marxist cause. "One cannot become a fully conscious, convinced Communist without studying Marxist philosophy. This is what Lenin taught." Why? Because, according to Marxism, the dialectic can explain every process and change that occurs. Marxist philosophy is process philosophy (the belief that all of reality is constantly in change, so that an ultimate, changeless end is never reached). This process is written not only within the metaphysical make-up of our matter, but also in the evolution of humanity and the evolving social and historical context of our existence. This materialist belief affects the Marxist view of history, causing Marxists to view the bourgeoisie and the proletariat as thesis and antithesis, clashing to form a synthesis. This clash is in essence an evolutionary struggle. While evolutionists believe that animals evolved certain physical characteristics to aid in their survival, Marxists believe their philosophy of dialectical materialism evolved to meet the needs of the proletariat.

. . . Dialectical materialism is a worldview and a philosophy of evolution and revolution – the call to action is implicit in its makeup. Every good Marxist understands his philosophy and is prepared to act upon it, because Marx himself requires it: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."<sup>33</sup>

The communist dialectic, however, is never ending, and once the "dictatorship of the proletariat" is achieved, then the materialistic dialectic will continue into other forms of ongoing and upward change toward the perfection of human society, where, once again, true egalitarianism will rule, and human and societal utopia will be forever extended. Indeed, this is the ultimate Kingdom of God, minus God, brought on by unaided matter, transformed into humanity, which will reach this utopian sphere through the perfection of humanity by means of the unaided, materialistic dialectic, as a result of the ultimate goodness of matter, seen in the unbridled deity of man! My response is – Cuba, North Korea, the U.S.S.R, China, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, etc.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 112.

## *Cosmic Humanism*

The philosophy of Cosmic Humanism is consistent with its theological perspective, and that is, everything is God, and God is everything, therefore, one must come into union with all of creation in order to discover the true meaning of life, and in turn, live a life of ultimate meaning and purpose. If one does not take this approach, he or she will be in a timeless transition of reincarnation of lower forms, until they realize this truth:

If the spiritual aspects of life lead to higher consciousness and inner truth, we should view all reality from a supernatural perspective. This perspective leads Cosmic Humanists to a philosophy of **non-naturalism** – nothing is natural, everything is supernatural. The philosophical stance of Cosmic Humanism is that ultimate reality is in the spiritual dimension.<sup>34</sup>

This leads to the next step of determining just what is philosophical truth for the Cosmic Humanist – that is, how does one discover truth in practical terms based on the non-naturalism philosophy of Cosmic Humanism:

Each of us creates our own truth according to the principle *if it feels like truth to you, it is*. All knowledge exists in the God-force within us, and if we connect with that power, we tap into knowledge. Jack Underhill explains what would happen if everyone in the world were to connect with his or her godhood, “They can turn off the sun and turn it back on. They can freeze oceans into ice, turn air into gold, talk as one with no movement or sound. They can fly without wings and love without pain, cure with no more than a thought or a smile. They can make the earth go backwards or bounce up and down, crack it half or shift it around. . . . There is nothing they cannot do.”<sup>35</sup>

In Cosmic Humanist philosophy, all is one, so only one type of ultimate reality can exist. This ultimate reality must be spiritual because God, which is everything, is ultimately spiritual. Spirit is the only substance that exists, and matter is only a manifestation of spirit.<sup>36</sup>

Thus, Cosmic Humanist philosophy consists of me realizing I am the ultimate source of philosophical truth, because I am God!

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 115.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 117.

## *Postmodernism*

Postmodern philosophy cannot be pinned down to one particular approach toward life, but rather a diversified approach in the following ways:

- 1) There is no universal, objective truth, and hence, there is no God, resulting in the fact that there can be no statements of morality and supposed truth that can be applied to the whole of the world.
- 2) Deconstructionism is the accepted way to read and interpret literature – that is, what the author may have intended to communicate is secondary to what I, the reader, interpret it to mean to me, as well as what I believe the author is conveying, regardless of what he may have indeed been expressing, and all of this is based on my subjective, life experiences.
- 3) Following on the heels of literary deconstruction, is the ‘world around me’ deconstruction – that is, I will interpret reality around me as I choose, based on my subjective perception of what I perceive is happening, and that too is based on my life experiences:

The primary idea behind this “word play” is the Postmodern insistence that all human beings are conditioned by their culture and language – their situation in life – and that no one is able to break through his or her situation to engage a universe with objectively true statements of facts. ‘Water wets’ is true for only a small community of individuals locked in their own language and culture. In addition, it is true only as long as this community agrees upon this particular usage. In fact, the community determines what is truth through the words it chooses to use.<sup>37</sup>

However, there are consistent problems with such an idealistic, subjective view of reality, and primarily it is this – whose reality is going to dominate in a political world? That is, if there is no objective truth, and truth is merely a subjective approach to life, and each person’s reality is justifiable and appropriate for him or herself, then when a decision is needed to be made in real life situations involving actions that will either adversely or positively affect other people, who will be the final arbiter of which of those actions are correct or incorrect for a ‘group at large’. For example, I may see the speed limit as not being a necessary reality for me, and, therefore, my reality is that I believe I need to drive through a busy town doing 60 miles per hour, when the

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 122.

speed limit is 30. Why, therefore, should I be punished for my driving, when my reality is that 60 is better for me than 30? The following, therefore, is a good admonition and exposure to what is actually real in the world around us:

Christian students need to understand that according to the Christian worldview “Truth” exists. Nearly everything about Christianity is *universal* in scope and application. God created the whole universe, including men and women. Sin is a *universal* condition affecting every human being. God loved the *whole world*, including every human being. Christ died for the sins of the *whole world*, not just one or two particular communities. Christians are to love God with all their heart and mind and their fellow human beings around the *world*.

. . . God’s words do not depend upon a reader’s interpretation. Instead, the reader is to interpret the Bible according to God’s intention. The Apostle Peter is clear when he writes, “Above all, you must understand that no prophesy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:19-21).<sup>38</sup>

## *Chapter Three:*

### *Ethics*

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 125.

## *Christianity*

In incredible simple terms, the foundation of Christian ethics is God and His revelation of Himself through His written Word, the Bible, and His Living Word, the person of Jesus Christ – this, therefore, is an absolute moral ethic, based on the absolute truth. This ethic is in turn lived out in lives where and when we incorporate the following passage as a daily and real part of our lives: “And He was saying to *them* all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it’” (Luke 9:23-24). Dietrich Bonhoeffer also stated it quite clearly:

Bonhoeffer asks, “Who stands fast? Only the man whose final standard is not his reason, his principles, his conscience, his freedom, or his virtue, but who is ready to sacrifice all this when he is called to obedient and responsible action in faith and in exclusive allegiance to God – the responsible man, who tries to make his whole life an answer to the question and call of God. Where are these responsible people?”<sup>39</sup>

## *Islam*

Islam also believes in a absolute, moral ethic, but their source is quite different from the Christian ethic, and it is not based on the grace of God imparted into a person’s life by the Holy Spirit, who lives out the life of Christ within us by His indwelling and supernatural power. Rather, it is based on the supposed ability of us as human beings to live a righteous life, based on Allah’s commands in the Quran and the example of Muhammad as recorded in both the Quran and the Hadith:

Historically, Muslims derive their ethics from the Quran and the Hadith. The Quran contains several commands Muhammad’s followers must obey. The Hadith presents Muhammad as the exemplary human whom Muslims must imitate in all respects. “Muhammad was only a mortal being commissioned by God to teach the word of God and lead an exemplary life,” writes Hammuda Abdalati. “He stands in history as the best model of man in piety and perfection. He is a living proof of what man can be and of what he can accomplish in the realm of excellence and virtue.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 132.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 133.

In addition to the life of Muhammad as being the standard for righteousness for the Muslims, there are also the five pillars of Islam, which are the practical, moral compass for Muslims: Confession, Daily Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving, and Pilgrimage.

Thus, once again, we see that Islamic ethics is based on the life of a mortal man, who is portrayed as the highest example of virtue and moral perfection among men. On the other hand, as one does a careful study of Muhammad's life in both the Quran and the Hadith, you will find a man, who being mortal, was also incredibly corrupt as any man would be apart from the infusion of God's saving grace and mercy, and this is especially true in the sexual arena. For example, at age 54, he consummated a marriage with a nine-year old little girl – that is gross paedophilia in anybody's book! The ethics of Islam, therefore, are based on a corrupt man's concepts that have been adjusted to sanctify the base desires of our human nature, and this is evident throughout Islamic history.

## *Secular Humanism*

The ethics of Secular Humanism can be summed up in two words: Moral Relativism. That is, because Secular Humanists reject all moral codes, then out of necessity they can only resort to themselves and what they think, in any given situation, is right for them – in other words, this approach toward a personal morality is the apex of moral narcissism, where the individual's personal wants and desires are the grid for all decisions:

. . . Humanists reject the unchanging moral codes posited by the Christian religion. In fact, Paul Kurtz, author of *Humanist Manifesto II* states, "The traditional supernaturalistic moral commandments are especially repressive of our human needs. They are immoral insofar as they foster illusions about human destiny [heaven] and suppress vital inclinations." Humanists find religious ethical codes such as the Ten Commandments too restrictive in that such codes do not allow us to fulfill our conception of the good life.<sup>41</sup>

What is really being said above is that Secular Humanists reject any and all restrictions on their sexual "inclinations" and desires, which restrictions they consider to be immoral, based on

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 137.

their view of morality, which is the free, unbridled pursuit of whatever sexual and sensual pleasures one may find fulfilling. Moral relativism, therefore, is the basis of their ethical standard, and this is especially and primarily true in the sexual venue:

By rejecting the existence of purpose behind the evolutionary basis for a code of ethics, we necessarily reject any code that exists outside ourselves. This done, all ethics are relative to our interpretation of right and wrong in any given situation. **Moral relativism** consists of little more than experimenting with ethics in every new scenario. . . .

. . . “The morality or immorality of any behavior,” says Dr. Arthur E. Gravatt, “including sexual behavior, has been put in the context of ‘situation ethics.’ In this approach moral behavior may differ from situation to situation. Behavior might be moral for one person and not another or moral at one time and not another.”<sup>42</sup>

On the other hand, Secular Humanists, as Paul Kurtz explains, do believe that keeping the ‘Golden Rule’ is a positive thing to do:

. . . Kurtz likewise insists that Secular Humanists “ought to tell the truth, keep promises, be honest, sincere, beneficent, reliable, dependable, show fidelity, appreciation, gratitude, be fair-minded, just, tolerant, should not steal, injure, maim or harm other persons.”<sup>43</sup>

The problem of course with what Kurtz says here is that it is totally contradictory with their standard of moral relativism as their ethical grid for morality, unless, of course, one’s definition of morality is that even being hypocritical and contradictory is also moral when it suits one’s purpose to do so. However, the focus on what Kurtz is saying above has far more to do with the proverbial “me” being on the receiving action of the morally relativistic decisions of others. Thus, when I am on the receiving end of things that hurt me emotionally or physically from other’s morally, relativistic actions and decisions, then the above characteristics come into play for how others ought to behave toward me. In addition, all of a sudden “absolute moral guidelines” spring into existence when I am being hurt by someone else’s “morally relativistic” choice, but when I am making “morally relativistic” choices that make me feel good, regardless of how they may hurt someone else, then “moral absolutes” are non-existent. This is the conundrum of moral relativism.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 143.

## *Marxism-Leninism*

As one might expect, Marxist-Leninist ethics is tied to its dialectical materialism – thus, it is in a constant state of change in what might also be described as a form of moral relativism that permeates the Secular Humanist ethic. The following quote gives us a perspective of the Marxist ethic:

According to the Marxist dialectic, everything in the universe – including society – is in a state of constant change. These changes are moving society upward toward the elimination of all social and economic class distinctions. The next social advance in history will be the move from capitalism to socialism, which will inevitably result in society's moral ideals.<sup>44</sup>

Consequently, man and his personal, relativistic, and narcissistic proclivities are the source of determining one's ethical grid in decision making in all areas, and in addition, the pseudo socio-economic altruism that is supposed to be the guiding principle of Marxist/Leninist thought, whereby all economic class distinctions are dissolved, actually becomes a cover for the greed and abject hypocrisy of Marxist leaders who live in an opulence and freedom utterly denied to their subjects. Morality, therefore, is in no way an absolute truth that guides mankind throughout the ages, but rather it is in complete subjection to whatever the current need is at the time to advance what is determined by the Marxist leader to be what he deems as best for his own, personalized, Marxist/Leninist agenda. The following is a quote from Lenin's *Collected Works*, Volume 31, in which he is addressing The Third All-Russia Congress of The Russian Young Communist League, on October 2, 1920:

You must train yourselves to be Communists. It is the task of the Youth League to organize its practical activities in such a way that, by learning, organising, uniting and fighting, its members shall train both themselves and all those who look to it for leadership; it should train Communists. The entire purpose of training, educating, and teaching the youth of today should be to imbue them with communist ethics.

But is there such a thing as communist ethics? Is there such a thing as communist morality? Of course, there is. It is often suggested that we have no ethics of our own;

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 145.

very often the bourgeoisie accuse us Communists of rejecting all morality. This is a method of confusing the issue, of throwing dust in the eyes of the workers and peasants.

In what sense do we reject ethics, reject morality? In the sense given to it by the bourgeoisie, who based ethics on God's commandments. On this point we, of course, say that we do not believe in God, and that we know perfectly well that the clergy, the landowners and the bourgeoisie invoked the name of God so as to further their own interests as exploiters. Or, instead of basing ethics on the commandments of morality, on the commandments of God, they based it on idealist or semi-idealist phrases, which always amounted to something very similar to God's commandments. We reject any morality based on extra-human and extra-class concepts. We say that this is deception, dupery, stultification of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners and capitalists. We say that our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle. Our morality stems from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. The old society was based on the oppression of all the workers and peasants by the landowners and capitalists. We had to destroy all that, and overthrow them but to do that we had to create unity. That is something that God cannot create. . . . That is why we say that to us there is no such thing as a morality that stands outside human society; that is a fraud. To us morality is subordinated to the interests of the proletariat's class struggle.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, you can see from Lenin's own words that the guiding principle in his and every other Marxist's life is not an absolute morality that transcends time, cultures, ethnicity, etc., but rather that which advances the "proletariat struggle," and that in turn means that ANYTHING GOES as far as their definition of moral justification – they are indeed THEIR OWN GOD!

Morality, therefore, for the Marxist, is that which complements the flow of history to what they consider is a classless society – e.g., the Soviet Union, Cuba, China, and North Korea, are Marxist states, but there is an unequivocal class distinction within these societies. For example, do all of the Cuban people live as do the Castro brothers, and do the Castro brothers live as the rest of the Cubans? Does Kim Jong Ill live as his North Korea subjects, and do they live as he does? The answer to both of these questions is an UNEQUIVOCAL NO! Thus, what we see in the Marxist ethic is an incredibly huge, hypocritical, double standard, but the Marxist leaders turn a blind eye to it because their main focus is their own power, wealth, lustful fulfillment, and narcissistic greed.

Nikita Krushchev (1894-1971), former Premier of the Soviet Union from 1958-1964, made the following comment: "So long as classes exist on the earth, there will be no such thing in life as something good in the absolute sense. What is good for the bourgeoisie, for the imperialists,

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<sup>45</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/oct/02.htm>

is disastrous for the working class, and, on the contrary, what is good for the working people is not admitted by the imperialists, by the bourgeoisie.”<sup>46</sup> In other words, there can be no one, central ethic for all people because the “class structure,” by its very own nature abrogates any such concept along a universal line. Thus, according to Marxist ethicists, “Christian ethics is the means by which the rich control the working-class poor.”<sup>47</sup> Indeed, what is clearly being presented here is the promotion of class hatred and division, in which, the “proletariat” class becomes the superior class, but in reality, in Communist practice, they remain a lower class, over which the Marxist leaders rule and dominate with an iron hand – in other words, they are manipulated by their leaders to do their leaders’ bidding.

Consequently, a hatred for the bourgeoisie, or middle class who owns anything, is central to the Marxist ethic, because this hatred is generated by a jealous self-pity, which is the core of Marxist manipulation and control of the lower, uneducated, working class of people. And even if they become educated, there is a constant subordination of the non-leaders to the leaders by the leaders:

Hatred thus becomes a necessary ingredient in the clash between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It follows, then, that society’s generally accepted moral principles (which Marxists claim are bourgeois tools) are in direct opposition to the moral principles of the proletariat. If this is true, no one in the bourgeoisie can do right or act morally. Unless members of the propertied class became proletarian, anything they do, no matter how moral by their standards, will be contemptible to Marxists.<sup>48</sup> (Ibid., 148)

Therefore, that which is called “utilitarianism” is the foundational principle of the Marxist ethic, which is what we have already alluded to, and it simply means that their ultimate goal, the dictatorship of the proletariat, substantiates and justifies ANY and ALL ends that are necessary to achieve that goal! This in turn brings into the light their support and encouragement of unmitigated violence and brutality against those who resist this Marxist revolution in any form – their way is the right way, and if you resist it, then you will be demolished. Marx makes it real clear how they view any opposition in the following quote:

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<sup>46</sup> James Bales, *Communism and the Reality of Moral Law* (Nutley, NJ: The Craig Press, 1969), 5.

<sup>47</sup> Noebel, 147.

<sup>48</sup> Noebel, 148.

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.<sup>49</sup>

As you can see, once again, their ethic is whatever it takes to achieve their end of the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, including the killing of whoever and how many it may take to achieve that end, regardless of whether or not one is a military combatant. Krushchev states it clearly:

Our cause is sacred. He whose hand will tremble, who will stop midway, whose knees will shake before he destroys tens and hundreds of enemies, he will lead the revolution into danger. Whoever will spare a few lives of enemies, will pay for it with hundreds and thousands of lives of the better sons and fathers.<sup>50</sup>

Joseph Stalin (1879-1953), who was the Soviet Premier from 1941-1953, also stated quite candidly the Marxist ethic: “the dictatorship of the proletariat is the rule – unrestricted by law and based on force – of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, a rule enjoying the sympathy and support of the labouring and exploited masses.”<sup>51</sup>

The incredible tragedy of Marxism/Leninism is the tremendous, spiritual oppression and darkness that has resulted from its implementation over billions of people, as well as the enslaving mental, intellectual, and emotional destructiveness that engulfs all who are under its domination and control. In summation, therefore, the following quote succinctly represents the Marxist ethic: “Any course of action then, no matter how immoral it appears to a world that believes in an absolute or universal moral standard, is morally good within the Marxist-Leninist worldview.”<sup>52</sup>

## *Cosmic Humanism*

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<sup>49</sup> Marx & Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, 34:

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>

<sup>50</sup> Bales, 121.

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Stalin, *J. Stalin Works*, vol. 6 (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1953), 118.

<sup>52</sup> Noebel, 150.

Cosmic Humanism's ethic has as its source the same source that Marxism-Leninism has – MAN! The following quote aptly states its ethic:

Cosmic Humanism's ethical perspective is based on its theological pantheism and philosophical monism. If each of us is God, then final authority resides in us, and we must seek the freedom to act in harmony with our inner truth. "Free will," says Shirley MacLaine, "is simply the enactment of the realization you are God, a realization that you are divine; free will is making everything accessible to you."<sup>53</sup>

This is, without any equivocation, the quintessential representation of a narcissistic ethic that could be imagined. We as human beings are the source of what is determined to be good and evil by our own proclivities, regardless of what they might be, but that is also where the problem arises – I, as my God, may indeed differ with you, who are your own God, and, therefore, only one of our divine wills is going to prevail when conflict and confrontation arises. Thus, we are confronted with the ugly, but quite accurate picture of humanity as given in the Bible, and that is that man at his very core is not basically good, but rather evil. On the other hand, when someone has embraced this cosmic, humanistic view of mankind, and more particular, of himself or herself, they NEVER see themselves as being evil or bad – IT IS ALWAYS THE OTHER PERSON!

However, what is critically important, and that which transcends such frank honesty in evaluating one's own, true nature, is the ethical concept that drives this belief system, and that is, moral relativism. In her book entitled, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, Marilyn Ferguson espouses this ethical concept as the highest development of human consciousness, whereby we come to the full realization and awareness of our personal divinity through personal autonomy: "Most importantly, when people become autonomous, their values become internal."<sup>54</sup> Thus, everything is about ME, because I am my own God, which is exactly what Satan, through the Serpent, was offering to Eve in the Garden:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden '?" And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden,

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 151.

<sup>54</sup> Marilyn Ferguson, *The Aquarian Conspiracy* (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1980), 327.

God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'" And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:1-5)

The phrase, "you will be like God," may also be read in the Hebrew, "you will be like Gods," which is what the KJV does by translating the plural form of אֱלֹהִים ( *'elōhîm*) as "Gods," versus the singular "God." In this case, I do believe the KJV translators were correct because that which the Serpent was presenting to Eve was the legitimacy of multiple "Gods," all having the same authority and power and each being able to determine what was "good and evil" because they all "know" what is "good and evil," and that in essence is what cosmic humanists believe and maintain.

That which is of great significance, however, in the moral relativism that is practiced by cosmic humanists is that its primary focus is the arena of sexual activity. One of the leading proponents of Cosmic Humanism and moral relativism is a woman named Shakti Gawain, and she sets forth her perspective on sexual freedom and our identity through that freedom: "If you're setting limits on your sexual energy, it becomes distorted. If you believe it is something to be hidden, ignored, and controlled, then you learn to hold back completely or act sexually only at certain safe moments."<sup>55</sup> Thus, if I place any limitations on my "sexual energy," then I am actually living a "distorted" life, versus living a non-distorted life by giving license to all of my sexual proclivities, whatever they may be.

It is interesting to note that many of the outspoken proponents of the sexual freedom espoused by Cosmic Humanism are women, including Shirley MacLaine, and that should give us pause as we evaluate our own culture and what we see happening with young, middle-aged, and older women in that regard. The question that needs to be posed to women in our culture today with regard to their sexuality is, "Wherein do you find your identity?" This same question is equally valid for men and all that they face with regard to sexual temptation, but there is a difference in men's and women's identity in the sexual arena, and I would maintain that the encounter Jesus had with the two women recorded in John's Gospel support that contention.

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<sup>55</sup> Shakti Gawain, *Living in the Light* (San Rafael, CA: New World Library, 1986), 128.

As we look in John 4:15-26, Jesus encounters a woman from Samaria, and the conversation goes from Jesus pointing out the reality of her spiritual, mental, and emotional state, to the woman attempting to turn the conversation to an external aspect of religious teaching that has absolutely nothing to do with her real relationship with God and the personal struggles in her life:

The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty, nor come all the way here to draw.” 16 He said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” 17 The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have well said, ‘I have no husband’; 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.” 19 The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. 20 Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you *people* say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.” 21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father. 22 You worship that which you do not know; we worship that which we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” 25 The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.” 26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am *He*.” (John 4:15-26)

This woman was apparently desperately looking for her primary sense of identity, security, and belonging through her sexual relationship with men, but she had never found it! When Jesus exposes her life to her, she attempts to shift the conversation to a religious and cultural debate between the Jews and the Samaritans regarding where “true worship” of God should be conducted, but Jesus is not thrown off track by her defensive distraction, and He continues with what is the true issue at stake with this woman, and that is what it means to have a true means of identification, security, and sense of belonging in a real and vital relationship with God, versus a carnal and self-deluded form of religious “talk” that is meaningless regarding the issues of “real life,” which issues Jesus was laying out quite clearly: “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The other passage is the disputed passage in John 8:1-11 concerning the woman taken in adultery. I say disputed because it is not found in some of the oldest and best manuscripts of the

Gospel of John, but on the other hand, it does appear to bear historic authenticity as a result of it being included in other later manuscripts. The question before us, therefore, is, did this event actually happen as described? I believe it did because of the historic inclusion of it in later manuscripts, and I see it as a story of an actual event that was sovereignly saved by the Holy Spirit as a separate entity in and of itself, and it was subsequently inserted into the Gospel of John at this particular point by a scribe who, being led and inspired by the Holy Spirit, saw this event fitting both historically and chronologically. Having said all of that, let's now look at the passage itself in relation to what we are discussing concerning sexual, moral relativism:

But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2 And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and *began* to teach them. 3 And the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the midst, 4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act. 5 "Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?" 6 And they were saying this, testing Him, in order that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground. 7 But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him *be the* first to throw a stone at her." 8 And again He stooped down, and wrote on the ground. 9 And when they heard it, they *began* to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst. 10 And straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" 11 And she said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more." (John 8:1-11)

Two things are being presented in this passage: the first is the woman caught in adultery, but the second, which is equally important, is the fact that according to the Law, the man who was committing adultery with her should have also been brought before Jesus, BUT HE WASN'T (Leviticus 20:10-16)! Thus, what we have here is a representation of the corruption of the man who was the other half of this adulterous relationship, as well as the corrupt distortion of the "religious" men who apparently had set this whole situation up to diminish Jesus' authority in the eyes of the people. Thus, when Jesus "stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground," I personally believe that He was perhaps writing the passage in Leviticus 20:10-16, or at least a portion of it concerning the man who was also involved. At any rate, we see here in this passage the two people who are involved, but we do not know any of the details of their involvement at all (i.e., how this happened and what led up to it – if it began out of an emotional

bonding between the two because of problems in each of their marriages, etc. – but it appears, from the wording of the passage, that the man involved in the adultery was simply using and exploiting this woman’s emotional weakness for the purpose of setting Jesus up, and thus, that is the reason he was not brought forth by the Pharisees because he was a friend of theirs).

It is at this point, however, that we see Jesus addressing both the religious and cultural hypocrisy of His day, as well as the very real sin of both the woman and the religiously deceived and spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and intellectually darkened Pharisees and their adulterous, male accomplice: “He straightened up, and said to them, ‘He who is without sin among you, let him *be the* first to throw a stone at her.’” When Jesus did this, I believe He looked straight into each of their eyes, and they all knew that He knew EXACTLY WHAT WAS IN THEIR LIVES! And then I believe He may have continued to perhaps write that portion of Scripture out of Leviticus. At any rate, they all left as they knew that He could see their sin and deception, and perhaps they also knew that their own sin would be exposed to all if they continued this scurrilous and wickedly conceived entrapment. Then we read these incredibly merciful, but also ominous words of warning: “And straightening up, Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?’ And she said, ‘No one, Lord.’ And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go your way. From now on sin no more.’”

What we see in all of this are three things: Jesus, who is “the truth,” exposing the insidious religious lies and deception of the Pharisees; Jesus, who is the “life,” bringing forgiveness and spiritual, mental, and emotional healing and wholeness to the woman involved in the adultery; and lastly, Jesus, who is the “way,” pointing out to the woman the destruction of sin and “the way, the truth, and the life” found in repentance and following God, versus her carnal, self-destructive inclinations.

On the other hand, as has already been indicated, moral relativism in the sexual arena is in no way uniquely focused on women. A man named Randall Baer, who was himself at one time a proponent of Cosmic Humanism as his grid for life, but then he committed his life to Christ, explains just what the foundational, core belief of Cosmic Humanism is:

. . . create your own reality according to what feels right for you.” Whether you choose to be homosexual, bisexual, monogamous, polygamous, etc. – any choice you make is acceptable as long as “It’s right for me” or “It’s done with love, and no one’s hurt.” This

is a kind of relativistic, human-founded ethics (or design-your-own ethics). In effect, New Age followers pick and choose from the multitudes of options in each area of life according to personal preferences.<sup>56</sup>

Adolf Hitler prevailed in Germany. Thus, according to Cosmic Humanism's ethic, what Hitler did cannot be called evil, since he was doing what was right for him, and the whole idea and definition of "hurt someone" is totally relative to the person who is dominating through his or her view of right and wrong:

Moral relativism leads Cosmic Humanists to a point where the distinction between good and evil becomes hopelessly blurred. No absolute right or wrong exists, only what is right or wrong according to each individual's truth. If everything is one, it is difficult to distinguish between good and evil. What may appear evil in this life could be the reverse in a reincarnated life.<sup>57</sup>

Shirley MacLaine attempts to explain this convoluted view that contradicts itself, and even in her explanation of what she describes as the ultimate form of "accountability," that in and of itself would indicate that there is some form of an absolute right and wrong that we as human beings are judged by in order to be made "accountable," but that absolute is the very thing Cosmic Humanists deny:

Whatever action one takes will ultimately return to that person – good and bad – maybe not in this life embodiment, but sometime in the future. And no one is exempt. . . . For every act, for every indifference, for every misuse of life, we are finally held accountable. And it is up to us to understand what those accounts might be.<sup>58</sup>

In conclusion, therefore, we can see that the Cosmic Humanist ethic is convoluted at best, and at worst, it is the apex of hypocrisy, exposing its narcissistic foundation for the lie that it is, and such narcissism can only lead to the exploitation and subjugation of those whose "divine state" is not as strong and dominate as another, and thus, the weaker will have to submit out of necessity in order to survive the implementation of the "right" of the stronger "divine state," and this is called **TOTALETARIANISM!**

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<sup>56</sup> Randell N. Baer, *Inside the New Age Nightmare* (Lafayette, LA: Huntington House, 1989), 88.

<sup>57</sup> Noebel, 153.

<sup>58</sup> Shirley MacLaine, *Out On a Limb* (Toronto: Bantam, 1984), 96, 111.

## *Postmodernism*

Postmodernism, from the secular perspective, encourages the rejection of a divine being to whom we as human beings are accountable. What they do encourage, however, is a type of human accountability to one another, but it is at this point of what might be termed as the “ethical development” of postmodern thinking that its supporters have their quandary.

A man named Richard Rorty, who is a postmodern thinker and one of its ardent proponents, has written a book entitled, *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America*, and in this book, he lays out, in no unmistakable terms, what he sees as the proper perspective of the ethic that should be the driving force and foundation of our country. In doing so, he makes reference to two men, Walt Whitman (1819-1892) and John Dewey (1859-1952), whose writing and thinking he puts forth as what he deems should be the “grid and pattern” for all Americans. Whitman was a poet and journalist, and Dewey was a philosopher, psychologist, but his greatest impact was in the field of education, where his influence is still being felt today in what may accurately be termed as the humanistic demise of public education. Both of these men were quite humanistic in their thinking and writing, but it is with reference to their view of God and moral accountability that Rorty focuses on:

Both Dewey and Whitman viewed the United States as an opportunity to see ultimate significance in a finite, human, historical project, rather than in something eternal and nonhuman. They both hoped that America would be the place where a religion of love would finally replace a religion of fear. They dreamed that Americans would break the traditional link between the religious impulse, the impulse to stand in awe of something greater than oneself, and the infantile need for security, the childish hope of escaping from time and chance. They wanted to preserve the former and discard the latter [i.e., to preserve a narcissistic, humanistic focus, versus a God-centered, selfless focus]. They wanted to put hope for a casteless and classless America in the place traditionally occupied by knowledge of the will of God. They wanted that utopian America to replace God as the unconditional object of desire. They wanted the struggle for social justice to be the country’s animating principle, the nation’s soul.

. . . For both Whitman and Dewey, the terms “America” and “democracy” are shorthand for a new conception of what it is to be human – a conception which has no room for obedience to a nonhuman authority, and in which nothing save freely achieved consensus among human beings has any authority at all. . . . But the sort of integration Dewey hoped for is not a matter of blending the worship of an eternal Being with hope for the temporal realization, in America, of this Being’s will. It is a matter of forgetting about eternity. More generally, it is a matter of replacing shared knowledge of what is already real with social hope for what might become real. . . .

Dewey's philosophy is an attempt to temporalize everything, to leave nothing fixed. This means abandoning the attempt to find a theoretical frame of reference within which to evaluate proposals for the human future. Dewey's romantic hope was that future events would make every proposed frame obsolete.<sup>59</sup>

The reason for using Rorty's book as a reference is that as I initially said, Dewey's influence in our public educational system has been enormous with regard to his postmodern philosophical, psychological, and educational emphases, and those emphases became the foundation of what we see in our leftist, moral relativistic, and anti-God emphases this very day in our public-school system in America. Whitman also has had a major influence in his poetry, and especially with his *Leaves of Grass*, which was a collection of poems that he wrote and worked on up through the week of his death. Many of the poems overall were quite sensual, and, either overtly or inadvertently, tended to advocate a new morality, which was and is considered by many from a biblical standard to be immorality, as the grid and standard for true freedom, and in this advocacy, he sees himself as the ultimate source of divinity, and whatever he desires as moral truth:

Through me forbidden voices, Voices of sexes and lusts, voices veil'd and I remove the veil, Voices indecent by me clarified and transfigur'd. I do not press my fingers across my mouth, I keep as delicate around the bowels as around the head and heart, Copulation is no more rank to me than death is. I believe in the flesh and the appetites, Seeing, hearing, feeling, are miracles, and each part and tag of me is a miracle. Divine am I inside and out, and I make holy whatever I touch or am touch'd from, The scent of these arm-pits aroma finer than prayer, This head more than churches, bibles, and all the creeds.<sup>60</sup>

Thus, whereas Dewey's influence was primarily in the intellectual, academic, and "white collar" arena, permeating our public education system to this very day, Whitman's influence was centered more in the "blue collar" arena with the working man and woman, but an influence nonetheless that has helped to erode our moral perimeters and deify man, which two things contribute to the erosion and dismantling of any people and society. Both of these men, therefore, are excluding any and all forms of external, moral authority of a nonhuman, divine perspective in favor of letting the people within a community define their own ethic and morality.

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<sup>59</sup> Richard Rorty, *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 17-18, 20.

<sup>60</sup> Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass; Book III, Section 24* (<http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1322/pg1332.text>)

In another book by Richard Rorty, entitled, *Philosophy and Social Hope*, he lays out rather clearly the thesis of a community established ethic and morality based on constant change within a community, which in turn is based on human imagination and creativity, versus an absolute truth that transcends time, cultures (including the various religious and political persuasions in such cultures), and ethnicity:

More specifically, we see both intellectual and moral progress not as a matter of getting closer to the True or the Good or the Right, but as an increase in imaginative power. We see imagination as the cutting edge of cultural evolution, the power which – given peace and prosperity – constantly operates so as to make the human future richer than the human past. Imagination is the source both of new scientific pictures of the physical universe and of new conceptions of possible communities.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, once again, according to Rorty's perspective, there is no absolute truth or moral goodness to which man should aim, but rather man should let his imagination create constant, social change, which is the only real standard man can or should have. Therefore, the standard should be no standard, and the following demonstrates his perspective in very practical terms:

To debate the utility of the set of social constructs we call 'human rights' is to debate the question of whether inclusivist societies are better than exclusivist ones. That is to debate the question of whether communities which encourage tolerance of harmless deviance should be preferred to those communities whose social cohesion depends on conformity, on keeping outsiders at a distance and on eliminating people who try to corrupt the youth. The best single mark of our progress toward a fully fledged human rights culture may be the extent to which we stop interfering with our children's marriage plans because of the national origin, religion, race, or wealth of the intended partner, or because the marriage will be homosexual rather than heterosexual.<sup>62</sup>

The consequence of this type of cultural ethic of constant change being the standard, which in truth is no standard, will be the ultimate collapse of a society:

In the end, morality and society operate like an unconscious negotiation – everyone in a community is presenting the beliefs he or she prefers; these ideas are considered, debated, and adapted; and in the end, consensus emerges – although the consensus is in a constant state of arbitration.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and Social Hope* (New York: Penguin Books, 1999), 87.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>63</sup> Noebel, 158.

In one of the most striking pictures of the reality of such a world where constant change is the standard, based on the changing moral and ethical proclivities of the population, Theodore Dalrymple describes the consequences of such a society in an incredibly, clear, unvarnished, and absolutely honest appraisal of what he saw and experienced as a physician and psychiatrist in the slums of London among the extreme poor. Thus, Dalrymple's observations are not based on theory, nor are they based on his simply going and visiting an area for a few days and then writing a paper on his superficial observations, but they are based on his having lived and worked with these people who live by their sheer, emotional appetites that are exacerbated by a government, media, and educational system that encourages and legitimizes such behavior:

If anyone wants to see what sexual relations are like, freed of contractual and social obligations, let him look at the chaos of the personal lives of members of the underclass. Here are abortions procured by abdominal kung fu; children who have children, in numbers unknown before the advent of chemical contraception and sex education; women abandoned by the father of their child a month before or a month after delivery; insensate jealousy, the reverse of the coin of general promiscuity, that results in the most hideous oppression and violence; serial stepfatherhood that leads to sexual and physical abuse of children on a mass scale; and every kind of loosening of the distinction between the sexually permissible and the impermissible.<sup>64</sup>

The Truth gives us life, but the lie destroys!

## ***Chapter Four:***

### ***Biology***

### ***Christianity***

Among truly, committed believers in Christ, there is a legitimate debate over what is called the “Young Earth” and the “Old Earth” time of creation, but that which is not a debate is the fact

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<sup>64</sup> Theodore Dalrymple, *Life at the Bottom: The Worldview That Makes the Underclass* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), xi.

that God created the universe, and all this is within it, in a “catastrophic” manner (e.g., “Let there be, and there was” – thus, from non-existence to existence, not evolutionary development from one species into another species, such as a frog, to a man, to a giraffe, etc., which is macroevolution). Thus, in this discussion, what we are going to look at is the biblical belief of God creating all matter as we know it, and His creation of individual species, separate and distinct from each other, with man being the highest and in the “image” of God.

One of the attempts to blend science with biblical truth is the view of **Theistic Evolution**, which states that “God created the first speck of life on earth and then directed its evolution to generate man.”<sup>65</sup> However, the primary problem with this belief is that it is in essence, no real difference from atheistic evolution, or macroevolution, and in fact, it can be said to be the same as Marxist dialectical materialism, which believes that the innate dialectic (thesis, antithesis, & synthesis) is the force that brought creation into existence and is moving it toward a “utopian” end. As has been stated, this is called macroevolution – from one life form, all forms came forth – but from a biblical perspective, these two perspectives are completely antithetical to each other and can in no way be compatible. What is true, however, is the development within separate and distinct species of those species (e.g., different types of dogs, horses, birds, etc.), and this is called microevolution, which is certainly in line with biblical truth.

The following, therefore, are creation truths that point unequivocally to a Creator:

- 1) Design – Although atheistic scientists who support evolution try to avoid and discount “design,” it cannot be discounted, nor can it be supported that the intricacies of our created order happened merely by chance. From William Paley’s argument in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, up to and through the discovery of our genetic code, a Designer cannot be explained away in a reasonable, true, and factually logical manner. Michael Denton who is a molecular biologist makes the following observation:

Although the tiniest bacterial cells are incredibly small, weighing less than 10(-12) gms, each is in effect a veritable microminiaturized factory containing thousands of exquisitely designed pieces of intricate molecular machinery, made up altogether of

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<sup>65</sup> Noebel, 162.

one hundred thousand million atoms, far more complicated than any machine built by man and absolutely without parallel in the non-living world.<sup>66</sup>

With regard to our genetic code, commonly referred to as our DNA, Charles Thaxton and Walter Brown make the following observations:

Is there any basis in experience for an intelligent cause for the origin of life? Yes! It is the analogy between the base sequences of DNA and alphabetical letter sequences in a book . . . there is a structural identity between the DNA code and a written language.<sup>67</sup>

DNA can only be produced with the help of at least 20 different types of proteins. But these proteins can only be produced at the direction of DNA. Since each requires the other, a satisfactory explanation for the origin of one must also explain the origin of the other. Apparently, this entire manufacturing system came into existence simultaneously. This implies Creation.<sup>68</sup>

- 2) Limits to Change – Here too is an undeniable, scientific proof of a non-evolutionary truth that completely contradicts the evolutionary theory – “mutations do not produce unlimited changes in a species.”<sup>69</sup> Evolutionists, on the other hand, believe that there are no limits whatsoever to the changes that can occur within species, to the extent that even the human form can change from what it currently is. An evolutionist, but one that recognizes the innate limitations of change within species development, Edward Deevey, Jr., writes:

Some remarkable things have been done by crossbreeding and selection inside the species barrier, or within a larger circle of closely related species, such as wheats. But wheat is still wheat, and not, for instance, grapefruit; and we can no more grow wings on pigs than hens can make cylindrical eggs.<sup>70</sup>

- 3) The Impossibility of Spontaneous Generation – This is not something that even evolutionists deny, but it is something that, in the face of clear, unbiased, and

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<sup>66</sup> Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (Bethesda, MD: Adler and Adler, 1986), 250.

<sup>67</sup> Charles Thaxton, “In Pursuit of Intelligent Causes: Some Historical Background,” and unpublished essay presented at an Interdisciplinary Conference in Tacoma, WA, June 23-26, 1988; 13.

<sup>68</sup> Walter T. Brown, *In the Beginning* (Phoenix: Center for Scientific Creation, 1986), 6.

<sup>69</sup> Noebel, 167.

<sup>70</sup> Edward S. Deevey, Jr., “The Reply: Letter from Birnham Wood,” in *Yale Review*, vol. 61, 1971-72: 636.

unequivocal scientific evidence, many evolutionists still cling to as a matter of their very misguided and distorted “religious faith” in seeing themselves as their own god, versus coming to the point of acknowledging the One True God, who is our Creator, and through this acknowledgement, also seeing their need for a Savior to cleanse them of their sin. This is, in truth, the core of the struggle with this particular issue. The following quote really helps to put this issue in perspective with regard to the refusal of learned and scientific evolutionists to renounce the ludicrous belief of life coming out of non-life:

In fact, the further science progresses, the more unlikely spontaneous generation seems. Dean Kenyon, a biochemist and a former chemical evolutionist, now concedes, “When all relevant lines of evidence are taken into account, and all the problems squarely faced, I think we must conclude that life owes its inception to a source outside of nature.” Kenyon based this conclusion of four premises: (1) the impossibility of the spontaneous origin of genetic information; (2) the fact that most attempts to duplicate the conditions necessary for chemical evolution yield non-biological material; (3) the unfounded nature of the belief (necessary for the chemical evolutionists) that prebiotic conditions encourage a trend toward the formation of L amino acids; and (4) the geochemical evidence that O<sub>2</sub> or oxygen existed in significant amounts in the Earth’s early atmosphere (organic compounds decompose when oxygen is present).<sup>71</sup>

With regard to the fourth argument above concerning the presence of oxygen in the earth’s early atmosphere, Walter Brown makes the following observation:

If the earth, in its alleged evolution, had oxygen in its atmosphere, the chemicals needed for life to begin would have been removed by oxidation. But if there had been no oxygen, then there would have been no ozone in the upper atmosphere. Without this ozone life would be quickly destroyed by the sun’s ultraviolet radiation.<sup>72</sup>

- 4) The Second Law of Thermodynamics – “Although the total energy in the cosmos remains constant, the amount of energy available to do useful work is always getting

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<sup>71</sup> Noebel, 168.

<sup>72</sup> Brown, 5.

smaller.”<sup>73</sup> A somewhat more expanded explanation of this Law with regard to the universe as we know it follows:

According to the second law of thermodynamics, processes taking place in a closed system always tend toward a state of equilibrium. Now our interest in the law concerns what happens when it is applied to the universe as a whole. The universe is, on a naturalistic view, a gigantic closed system, since it is everything there is and there is nothing outside it. This seems to imply that given enough time, the universe and all its processes will run down, and the entire universe will come to equilibrium. This is known as the heat death of the universe.<sup>74</sup>

Not only does this Law demonstrate that the universe is wearing down, but it also demonstrates the universe had a beginning:

If the universe is an isolated system, then, according to the Second Law of Thermodynamics, the energy in the universe that is available for useful work has always been decreasing. However, as one goes back in time, the amount of energy available for useful work would eventually exceed the total energy in the universe that, according to the First Law of Thermodynamics, remains constant. This is an impossible condition. Therefore, it implies that the universe had a beginning.<sup>75</sup>

In addition, not only does the 2<sup>nd</sup> Law support the degeneration of the universe, as well as the fact that it had a specific beginning, both truths contradicting evolutionary theory, but it also supports the belief that in its beginning stages, it had a very systematic structure in its moment by moment existence in all of its components, which also contradicts evolutionary theory:

The Second Law of Thermodynamics seems thus to describe the whole situation of our present material world perfectly and the Bible very clearly confirms this description. For example, Romans 8:22-23 teaches us that the whole creation is subjected to ‘vanity’ or to destruction. Everything tends to go downhill to chaos and destruction as things stand today.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> A. E. Wildersmith, *Man's Origin, Man's Destiny* (Wheaton: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1968), 55.

<sup>74</sup> J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2003), 478.

<sup>75</sup> Brown, 9.

<sup>76</sup> Wildersmith, 72.

- 5) Gaps in Fossil Sources and Transitional Forms – In his book, *The Origin of the Species*, Darwin wrote:

Geological research, though it has added numerous species to existing and extinct genera, and has made the intervals between some few groups less wide than they otherwise would have been, yet has done scarcely anything in breaking down the distinction between species, by connecting them together by numerous, fine, intermediate varieties; and this not having been effected, is probably the gravest and most obvious of all the many objections which may be urged against my views. . .

I have attempted to show that the geological record is extremely imperfect; that only a small portion of the globe has been geologically explored with care; that only certain classes of organic beings have been largely preserved in a fossil state; that the number both of specimens and of species, preserved in our museums, is absolutely as nothing compared with the incalculable number of generations which must have passed away even during a single formation; that, owing to subsidence being necessary for the accumulation of fossiliferous deposits thick enough to resist future degradation, enormous intervals of time have elapsed between the successive formations; that there has probably been more extinction during the periods of subsidence, and more variation during the periods of elevation, and during the latter the record will have been least perfectly kept; that each single formation has not been continuously deposited; that the duration of each formation is, perhaps, short compared with the average duration of specific forms; that migration has played an important part in the first appearance of new forms in any one area and formation; that widely ranging species are those which have varied most, and have oftenest given rise to new species; and that varieties have at first often been local. All these causes taken conjointly, must have tended to make the geological record extremely imperfect, and will to a large extent explain why we do not find interminable varieties, connecting together all the extinct and existing forms of life by the finest graduated steps. He who rejects these views on the nature of the geological record, will rightly reject my whole theory. For he may ask in vain where are the numberless transitional links which must formerly have connected the closely allied or representative species, found in the several stages of the same great formation. He may disbelieve in the enormous intervals of time which have elapsed between our consecutive formations; he may overlook how important a part migration must have played, when the formations of any one great region alone, as that of Europe, are considered; he may urge the apparent, but often falsely apparent, sudden coming in of whole groups of species. He may ask where are the remains of those infinitely numerous organisms which must have existed long before the first bed of the Silurian system was deposited? I can answer this latter question only hypothetically, by saying that as far as we can see, where our oceans now extend they have for an enormous period extended, and where our oscillating continents now stand they have stood ever since the Silurian epoch; but that long before that period, the world may have presented a wholly different aspect; and that the older continents, formed of formations older than any known to us, may now all be in a metamorphosed condition, or may lie buried under the ocean.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection Or The Preservation Of Favoured Races In The Struggle For Life* (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1859), 299, 343.

To Darwin's credit, he is quite honest about the credibility of his research lacking the transitional forms to substantiate his position, but then he tries to support it at any rate through hypothetical suppositions that are based on theoretical concepts, versus scientific fact. The following statement, however, helps to explain why Darwin's theory is just that, a theory and not fact:

One reason the fossil record does not support evolutionary theory is that many complex life forms appear in the very earliest rocks without any indication of forms from which they could have evolved. Creatures without ancestor cannot help but imply special creation. . . .

When Scientists discover trilobites (marine animals that have a three-segmented form) in lower Cambrian strata (*this is a geological term given to rock strata based on the discovery in 1835 of the earliest time period of abundant life forms in rock formations, by English geologist, Adam Sedgwick, in the region of Wales named Cambria by the Romans*) with magnificent body and eye structure without any ancestors leading up to them – there are no monobites (*i.e., a one-segmented form*) – they know that evolutionary theory is hurting. No wonder Richard Dawkins said it was as though they “were just planted there, without any evolutionary history.” The problem at the present time is that “paleontologists lack clear ancestral precursors for the representatives of not just one new phylum (*basic subdivision to divide living things*) but virtually all the phyla represented in Cambrian explosion.” . . .

. . . An evolutionary tree with no trunk (no life forms earlier than the already very complex ones in Cambrian rocks) and no branches (no transitional forms) can hardly be called a tree at all. . . .

The belief that God created all things, including men and women, in His own image requires faith. But evolutionary theory requires more faith because evolution runs contrary to science (e.g., spontaneous generation) and history (e.g., the fossil record). Still many evolutionists hold desperately to their theory, simply because it is the only explanation of origins that begins with nature, not God. Scientists who believe that everything can be explained in natural terms cannot tolerate the concept of a supernatural Being. In fact, one scientist said, “Science must be provisionally atheistic or cease to be itself.” For Christian biologists, however, the world is comprehensible only in light of God's existence. As a piece of art suggests an artist, the orderly universe and every living thing suggests a Designer.<sup>78</sup>

## Islam

The position of Islam is basically the same as the biblical view, with some of the following exceptions and variations:

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<sup>78</sup> Noebel, 169-171.

- 1) The Quran states that God created the world in six days (Surah 7:54), but it also describes His creation in eight days (Surah 41:9-12).
- 2) In the same way there is a legitimate debate among Christians as to whether the “six days” of creation were “24 hour,” six-day, periods of time, so too do Muslims share that same debate, and one passage in the Quran tends to represent the “days” as possible periods of time, versus 24 hour days: “We created the heavens and the earth and all between them in Six **Days**, nor did any sense of weariness touch Us” (Surah 50:38). The word for “day” in Arabic is the same as in Hebrew (Hebrew is יום – *yôm*; Arabic is يوم - *yaum*), and in both, the word may also be translated as “age, era, or time in general.”<sup>79</sup> Thus, with both Christians and Muslims, the “six days” are seen as six, 24 hour days, as well as six “time periods.”
- 3) As to Design, Muslims also believe in God’s created order, and that He, not evolution, brought everything into being that is: “It is He Who hath created for you all things that are on earth; Moreover His design comprehended the heavens, for He gave order and perfection to the seven firmaments; and of all things He hath perfect knowledge” (2:29).
- 4) As to evolution, there are Muslims who have tried to blend evolutionary concepts with their belief that God is also the Creator of the universe. However, on the whole, Muslims reject evolutionary concepts, and it appears that those who have embraced it have done so as a result of their coming to Western countries for higher education. Thus, those Muslims who believe that God is the Creator of the universe also take a strong position against evolution, and in some instances, Muslim scientists have come along side of Christian scientists in support of ID:

ID presents a new perspective on science, one that is based solely in scientific evidence yet is fully compatible with faith in God. That's why William Dembski, one of its leading theorists, defines ID as a bridge between science and theology. As the history of the cultural conflict between the modern West and Islam shows, ID can also be a bridge between these two civilizations. The first bricks of that bridge are now being laid in the Islamic world. In Turkey, the current debate over ID has attracted much attention in the Islamic media. Islamic newspapers are publishing translations of pieces by the leading figures of the ID movement, such as Michael J. Behe and Phillip E. Johnson. The Discovery Institute is praised in their news stories and depicted as the vanguard in the case for God, and President Bush's support for ID is gaining sympathy. For many decades

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<sup>79</sup> Francis Brown, 398-400; Cowan, 1300-1301; Sandviken M. Saebø, “יום *yôm*,” in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament, Volume VI*, eds. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 7-32.

the cultural debate in Turkey has been between secularists who quote modern Western sources and Muslims who quote traditional Islamic sources. Now, for the first time, Muslims are discovering that they share a common cause with the believers in the West. For the first time, the West appears to be the antidote to, not the source of, the materialist plague.<sup>80</sup>

Thus, here, there is some agreement with Muslims.

## *Secular Humanism*

The following quote sums up in total the Secular Humanist view of evolution and its importance and place in Secular Humanist biological precepts:

Belief in evolution is as crucial to Humanism's worldview as are its atheistic theology and naturalistic philosophy. In fact, the Humanist's ideas about the origin of life can be considered a special dimension of these disciplines. Without the theory of evolution, the Humanist would have to rely on God as the explanation for life, which would necessarily destroy his atheism. Therefore, every Secular Humanist embraces the theory of evolution.<sup>81</sup>

In 1933, the first *Humanist Manifesto* was written and published, and it stated with regard to creation and man the following:

**FIRST:** Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.

**SECOND:** Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as a result of a continuous process.

**THIRD:** Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.<sup>82</sup>

In 1973, *Humanist Manifesto II* emerged, and it stated the following concerning man and creation:

Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful. They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, and from

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<sup>80</sup> <http://old.nationalreview.com/comment/akyol200512020813.asp>

<sup>81</sup> Noebel, 179.

<sup>82</sup> [http://www.americanhumanist.org/Who\\_We\\_Are/About\\_Humanism/Humanist\\_Manifesto\\_I](http://www.americanhumanist.org/Who_We_Are/About_Humanism/Humanist_Manifesto_I)

rectifying social injustices. Modern science discredits such historic concepts as the "ghost in the machine" and the "separable soul." Rather, **science affirms that the human species is an emergence from natural evolutionary forces.** As far as we know, the total personality is a function of the biological organism transacting in a social and cultural context. There is no credible evidence that life survives the death of the body. We continue to exist in our progeny and in the way that our lives have influenced others in our culture.<sup>83</sup>

And finally, Humanist Manifesto III of 2003 states the following concerning evolution:

**Humans are an integral part of nature, the result of unguided evolutionary change.** Humanists recognize nature as self-existing. We accept our life as all and enough, distinguishing things as they are from things as we might wish or imagine them to be. We welcome the challenges of the future, and are drawn to and undaunted by the yet to be known.<sup>84</sup>

Therefore, Secular Humanists categorically believe that: (1) Evolution is a fact, resulting in both microevolution (developmental changes within a species) and macroevolution (the change from one species to another species); (2) Spontaneous Generation is also necessary, even though scientific research has never proven that life can come from non-life, and the reason they believe this is that to not do so would completely undermine their naturalistic philosophy and perhaps be an admittance of ID, which in turn would lead to a conclusion of a Divine force behind all of creation; (3) Secular Humanists believe in the mindless, random, and mechanical process of Natural Selection, wherein the strongest species survive, without any real purpose or plan behind their survival:

Natural selection, the blind, unconscious, automatic process which Darwin discovered, and which we now know is the explanation for the existence and apparently purposeful form of all life, has no purpose in mind. It has no mind and no mind's eye. It does not plan for the future. It has no vision, no foresight, no sight at all. If it can be said to play the role of watchmaker in nature, it is the *blind watchmaker*.<sup>85</sup>

**FOURTH:** Through Natural Selection, mutations and adaptations have occurred, and it is these adaptations that enable us to survive in specific situations. But what about those adaptations that have no special meaning or purpose in the survival of any or all species? In one of the most

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<sup>83</sup> [http://www.americanhumanist.org/Who\\_We\\_Are/About\\_Humanism/Humanist\\_Manifesto\\_II](http://www.americanhumanist.org/Who_We_Are/About_Humanism/Humanist_Manifesto_II)

<sup>84</sup> [http://www.americanhumanist.org/Who\\_We\\_Are/About\\_Humanism/Humanist\\_Manifesto\\_III](http://www.americanhumanist.org/Who_We_Are/About_Humanism/Humanist_Manifesto_III)

<sup>85</sup> Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), 5.

tragic attempts to support this adaptation theory as a positive, beneficial, and always useful aspect of evolutionary development in the survival of the fittest through Natural Selection, Julian Huxley stated what he viewed as the positive contribution of schizophrenia:

. . . genetic theory makes it plain that a clearly disadvantageous genetic character like this cannot persist in this frequency in a population unless it is balanced by some compensating advantage. In this case it appears that the advantage is that schizophrenic individuals are considerably less sensitive than normal persons to histamine, are much less prone to suffer from operative and wound shock, and do not suffer nearly so much from various allergies.<sup>86</sup>

**FIFTH:** In order to support their evolutionary theory in the face of a lack of transitional, fossil forms, the Secular Humanists have resorted to an explanation called Punctuated Equilibrium. Punctuated Equilibrium basically says that new life forms and species emerge at intervals in a short period of time, completely separated from previous and earlier life forms and species, thus explaining the reason we do not see any transitional forms from one species (e.g., apes) into another (e.g., man). One very interesting quote by a gentleman who is an avowed evolutionist and Secular Humanist is the following, wherein after acknowledging that there are no transitional forms, follows with what is pictured in Genesis 1 as a “catastrophic creation,” that is, where God said “Let there be,” and there was. In other words, not a creative act over millions of years, during which time “macroevolution” occurred, but rather in an instant (i.e., in a very small amount of time regarding the act of and the development of a particular form or species of creation). However, even in his embracing of “punctuated equilibrium,” he still attempts to include his view of developmental evolution regarding the emergence of new species and life forms into his perspective: “New species probably evolve only when a segment of the population becomes isolated from the rest. Speciation occurs relatively rapidly, probably in a matter of only **a few thousand years and possibly less.**”<sup>87</sup> What we see McGowan admitting is that first of all, according to the theory of evolution, there should be transitional forms from the development of the various species from one form into another (e.g., from ape into man, etc.), but there are not! Secondly, the only explanation is that new species just simply emerged for no real evolutionary reason, but it just happened, and they did so suddenly – this, in essence, is an admission to the “catastrophic” description of creation presented in Genesis 1 as clearly as any scientific position

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<sup>86</sup> Julian Huxley, *Essays of a Humanist* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 67.

<sup>87</sup> Chris McGowan, *In the Beginning* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1984), 29.

could be presented, with the one difference that the creative act did not take “a few thousand years,” but indeed much “less,” let’s say in an instant of time. On the other hand, the development of each individual species over time is both biblically and scientifically substantiated in what we call microevolution. Interestingly, Darwin himself admitted to the fact that if transitional forms could not be found, then his whole theory would be in jeopardy: “If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed, which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down.”<sup>88</sup>

The following, therefore, is an excellent summary of the current state of Darwinian thought in the light of modern, scientific discoveries and insight:

The reason there is no neo-Darwinian (natural selection plus mutations or genetic mistakes) is because Darwinism (natural selection by itself) could not carry the evolutionary theory. The reason there is punctuated equilibrium is because neo-Darwinism can’t either. Now, the entire edifice is beginning to crumble under the latest scientific investigations. It appears this major category of the Secular Humanist worldview is beginning to disintegrate before their eyes.<sup>89</sup>

## ***Marxism-Leninism***

The basis of Marxist-Leninist evolutionary thought is basically identical to that of Secular Humanism:

- 1) Atheism is foundational to Marxist, biological theory. Their biological worldview, therefore, “is coherent and consistent only if God and the supernatural do not exist. Therefore, Marx and his followers eagerly embraced a theory of biology (i.e., Darwinianism – *my insertion*) that makes God unnecessary for life.”<sup>90</sup>
- 2) With regard to Spontaneous Generation, “The aspect of evolutionary that is most important to Marxists is spontaneous generation. A fervent belief in the doctrine that life arose from non-life allows Marxists to abandon God completely.”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Darwin, 189.

<sup>89</sup> Noebel, 185.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 188.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 189.

- 3) With regard to the Marxist Dialectic, the Darwinian view of progressive development of nature fit in exactly with Marx's eviscerated application of Hegel's Dialectic – that is, mankind is moving toward a “utopian” society, and nature is too in the Marxist, dialectical, biological model, based on Darwinism.
- 4) With regard to Punctuated Equilibrium, the Marxist Dialectic does not support a gradual change, as espoused by Secular Humanist evolutionists, but rather an instant change (once again, synonymous with biblical creation, which is “catastrophism”). Therefore, Marxism espouses Punctuated Evolution, which “allows for jumps, rapid change, and chance. It speaks the language of dialectical materialism. It speaks the language of revolution within evolution.”<sup>92</sup> Thus, in order for Marxism to substantiate itself scientifically, as well as incorporate its dialectical, materialistic view of the development of all of life, then punctuated evolution is essential in order to both coincide with their “utopian” development of society and mankind, as well as offer a “buffered” explanation of why there are no transitional, fossil forms of species change – thus, punctuated evolution – a “made-up,” scientific theory!

## *Cosmic Humanism*

The Cosmic Humanist biological perspective is different from everything we have looked at up to this point. The following description gives a very good overall analysis of their position on developmental evolution:

Cosmic Humanist biology is based on a belief in positive evolutionary change over time. This approach does not focus on biological change as much as it emphasizes humanity moving upward toward an age of higher consciousness. Cosmic Humanists believe that everything is ultimately energy that will allow people to achieve unity with others in a kind of *collective consciousness*. Collective consciousness means that the “ultimate end of the individual is to expand into the universal oneness, which really means that the individual disappears as a separate person.” Cosmic Humanism postulates an evolutionary theory that allows for not only individual but also collective development.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 191.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 195.

What you actually have, therefore, is another far more metaphysical and distorted application of the dialectic of Hegel, as is Marxism, with the difference here that the language of this dialectic is more of an apocalyptic nature in that at some point in the future, we will become one, giant mind, and our thinking, feeling, desires, etc., will all be the same as we think as one person. In addition to this form of dialectic, Cosmic Humanism also embraces a type of “universal salvation” for all humanity into this single state of consciousness. That is, for those who do not embrace this understanding of the “cosmic oneness” humanity is moving toward, those who do, by their “cosmic oneness” with the universe, will simply provide an entry way for the others to be ultimately absorbed into this oneness:

Not everyone will evolve at an even rate toward higher consciousness; rather, when enough people achieve higher consciousness, others will be absorbed (or evolved) into the enlightened consciousness. Thus, all people need not embrace the New Age movement before it can become a reality – dedicated, Cosmic Humanists can simply act as the catalyst for an evolutionary leap into utopia. We label this approach “Cosmic Evolution.”<sup>94</sup>

Cosmic Humanists now view science as having taken a very positive approach toward its study and understanding of the universe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the inclusion of quantum physics and in particular Einstein’s theory of relativity, which says that all motion is relative in its perception, and that time can no longer be viewed in a fixed and unchangeable status. When these two elements of scientific investigation of the universe entered the equation, the Cosmic Humanists now assert that these “latest scientific investigations support pantheistic theology and non-naturalistic philosophy.”<sup>95</sup> The reason for this acceptance and encouragement by Cosmic Humanists for what they see as new breakthroughs in science is that they see these breakthroughs supporting their view in the following manner:

Spangler uses evolution as a change in the flow of cosmic energy, resulting not in a higher form of life, but in a higher consciousness among humanity.

Cosmic Humanists believe an elite, enlightened portion of the human race will jump into this New Age as an evolutionary leap, taking the rest of humanity with it. . . .

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 197.

Instead of further human physical evolution determined by geography, environment, and natural selection, Cosmic Humanists believe evolution is psychological. This psychological evolution guides humanity to a higher social order – . . . .

What will we be like after the evolutionary leap into the New Age occurs? Armand Biteaux explains, “Every man is an individual Christ; this is the teaching for the New Age. . . . Everyone will receive the benefit of this step in human evolution.”

In the New Age, Cosmic Humanists believe, we will all achieve higher consciousness or godhood. “The final appearance of Christ will not be a man in the air before whom all must kneel,” says John White. “The final appearance of the Christ will be an evolutionary event. It will be the disappearance of egocentric, subhuman man and the ascension of God-centered Man. A new race, a new species, will inhabit the Earth – people who collectively have the stature of consciousness that Jesus had.” Once collective higher consciousness is achieved, humanity will be at one with itself in collective godhood.<sup>96</sup>

Another very important aspect of Cosmic Humanistic, biological belief is the Gaia Hypothesis. This hypothesis was developed in 1979 by a man named James E. Lovelock in his book, *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth*. In this book, Lovelock presents a very interesting perspective on the earth and the universe than the Darwinian model:

The idea that all living things and planetary systems comprise a symbiotic global network is a radical departure from orthodox evolutionary thought since it undermines the central Darwinian tenet of survival of the fittest. Instead of competition and struggle for survival, the Gaia Hypothesis emphasizes the cooperative spirit of the entire biosphere. Lovelock suggests that the earth is not a “dead” habitat that happens to support life, but is itself a living, integrated system of soil, oceans, wind, and living things working together in harmony for the good of the whole.

The Gaia Hypothesis visualizes the planet as a self regulating system, implying a purpose behind it all. This, too, runs counter to Darwinian evolution’s insistence that life is a result of chance rather than purpose.

. . . . The idea that the planet is a living system fits hand in glove with New Age theological pantheism and philosophical non-naturalism.<sup>97</sup>

Thus, what we see is a sophisticated form of Gnosticism in an evolutionary theory called Cosmic Humanism.

## **Postmodernism**

Of the six Worldviews we are looking at with regard to biology and origins, Postmodernism has “a tendency to shy away from overtly endorsing any particular theory of origins” (Ibid., 202).

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 198.

The reason for this is that Postmodernism is not at its essence a scientific approach toward life, but rather a philosophical approach that asks the philosophical questions of “being” and “existence,” versus the scientific questions. However, there is also another and far more important reason for this approach by Postmodernism to the scientific study of origins, and that is that they actually see evolution as a *metanarrative* – that is, an overall attempt to support one’s world view and approach toward life from particular, pre-conceived positions that are considered to be “the truth,” and around which one attempts to assert the dominance of his view over others by providing various types of supporting evidence in supposed authoritative fields of endeavor (e.g., historical, philosophical, economic, educational, religious, and any other area whereby one attempts to use such sources as validation of his position and its superiority over other positions). The following account gives a good example of just how Postmodernists apply their *metanarrative* approach toward life:

I witnessed a fascinating altercation at a conference at Boston University on science and postmodernism several years ago. Postmodernist philosophers led off by arguing that ‘there are no metanarratives,’ meaning no overarching, universal truths. Responding on behalf of the scientists was Nobel Prize-winning physicist Steven Weinberg, who replied: But of course there are metanarratives. After all, there’s evolution – a vast metanarrative from the Big Bang to the origin of the solar system to origin of human life. And since evolution is true, that proves there is a least *one* metanarrative. . . . To which the postmodernist philosophers responded, ever so politely: That’s just *your* metanarrative. Evolution is merely a social construct, they said, like every other intellectual schema – a construction of the human mind.<sup>98</sup>

Thus, it may be said that Postmodernism is actually “anti-science” as far as embracing it as the ultimate answer for issues of origin, etc. A gentleman named Paul Feyerabend, a former philosophy professor at U C Berkeley, wrote an article in which he correctly critiqued science for its changeableness over time, and he concluded, however, incorrectly, that there really is no ultimate truth to which we can rely on:

In his article “Anything Goes,” Feyerabend further explains how science works. In the history of science many theories have arisen, been accepted as established, promoted as *the truth*, and then eventually discarded. When a scientist promotes scientific data in

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<sup>98</sup> Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 114.

support of a theory, that bit of data is anything but neutral because the scientist has an agenda. In all fields of science questions remain open as scientific theories are regularly tweaked. And to top it off, the scientific establishment is very much politicized.<sup>99</sup>

The result, therefore, in Feyerabend's opinion, is that "scientists regularly work with unproven assumptions and filter all data through their preconceived ideas."<sup>100</sup> However, one thing that is constant, even in the face of the skepticism Postmodernism has regarding science, when it comes to an explanation of the origin of the universe, and everything therein, they will resolutely and unequivocally deny any form of creationism. Consequently, Postmodernists as a whole end up embracing some form of evolutionary formation of life.

With regard to evolution, Postmodernists ". . . deny that humans are the necessary aim of evolution and . . . they believe chance is the primary catalyst of evolution."<sup>101</sup> The belief that humans are the "aim of evolution" is called anthropocentric, and this view, as was stated above, is completely opposed by Postmodernists. They look on humanity as a species less important than bacteria, and as Stephen Gould indicated, who is one of their most ardent proponents, "we are arrogant in thinking that we are a special species or that evolution somehow had humanity in mind, since there are so few of 'Us' and so many of 'them (*the them referring to bacteria* – my explanation)."<sup>102</sup>

In addition to Postmodernists maintaining that everything in existence is "by chance," there are also those who reject the slow, gradual macroevolution of one species changing into another, and thus, they hold to a punctuated equilibrium or punctuated evolutionary species formation because they do see that "The actual fossil record does not confirm one species gradually turning into another species. On the contrary, species seem to appear in the fossil record suddenly, with little evidence of gradual transitions from one to another."<sup>103</sup>

Therefore, as Postmodernists see that science can change its opinions as new scientific truths emerge, they are correct in seeing that science is a tool of man, and, consequently, may not always be correct. However, Postmodernists are entirely incorrect in assuming there are no

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<sup>99</sup> Noebel, 203.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 203-204

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

absolute, scientific truths, which mankind can affirm. There are such truths, and they are found in what they adamantly reject – the Bible and God’s revelation through Jesus Christ:

In contrast with Postmodernism’s failed approach to science, history confirms the reality and progressive reliability of the scientific method. In fact, modern science came about because of a biblical view of reality. Campbell writes, “The rise of modern science would have been impossible without Christian presuppositions that the universe is rational because it was created by a rational God.”

In his book *For the Glory of God*, Rodney Stark details why Christianity . . . is the worldview most responsible for modern science. Indeed, the father of modern science, Sir Francis Bacon, was a Christian, as were many of the leading scientists who founded the disciplines of chemistry, paleontology, bacteriology, antiseptic surgery, genetics, thermodynamics, computer science, and many other fields.<sup>104</sup>

## ***Chapter Five:***

### ***Sociology***

### ***Christianity***

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 207.

The very word, sociology, comes from a Latin word and a Greek word: *socius*, which is a Latin adjective meaning “sharing, accompanying, acting together, allied, and common”; and *λόγιον* (*logion*), which in essence means “the results of study and analysis.” Thus, sociology means the “study and analysis of people sharing, and acting together,” and what comes of that “sharing and acting together.” The Christian approach to sociology begins with what is called the nuclear family – that is, the father, mother, and children that have resulted from the father and mother’s union as husband and wife. From this union and multiplication of life comes a home, and from a home comes a community; from a community comes a village; from a village comes a city; from a city comes a county; from a county comes a state; from a state comes a country; from a country comes a region; from a region comes a hemisphere; and from a hemisphere comes a world. Indeed, how all of these various aspects of society, with all of the people who live within them, relate to each other is dependent upon the worldview that is the grid for their living, which clearly includes a religious view of life that oftentimes overshadows even the political standard that governs their lives. Thus, for the Christian, and for our western culture, and in particular for the foundational, Judeo-Christian culture of the United States, our spiritual, biblical roots run very deep in all aspects of our society, and especially so with the family. However, in our current day and time, these foundational roots are being challenged from every side, and this is especially true in the sociological arena with regards to the family.

Probably the most significant aspect about Christian sociology is the fact that man is viewed as a fallen individual from the initial state of perfection that God created him in – that is, in common parlance, man is utterly corrupt because of his sin nature that enveloped him as a result of his disobedience to God in Genesis 3. This sin nature, therefore, has corrupted all of his thinking and actions, and, therefore, the Christian sociologist sees that the only hope for man is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as one’s Lord and Savior (John 3:16). The opposite position of this perspective is that we are indeed our “own god,” fully self-deified, and we can make up our own, deified rules for conduct that comport with our own personal inclinations, desires, and lusts of all types. The Christian sociological view sees the above lifestyle as the source and reason for the depraved, unconscionable, and self-destructive lifestyles of individuals, that in turn affect families, who in turn affect the communities, counties, states, and nation we live in.

Thus, the Christian sociological paradigm sees man as a fallen and corrupt sinner who is fully responsible for his actions and choices, and even though events, culture, and value systems may have affected one's life as he or she grew up, the appeal to "victimization" will never bring about spiritual, mental, and emotional wholeness to an individual, and in turn to a community, etc., but rather "victimization" will only prolong, intensify, and ingrain one's self-destructive lifestyle into a habitual identity. That identity will in turn feed off of a narcissistic self-pity, which in turn will be aimed at pleasing oneself at the expense of others, and that will spread to others who will also be focused on pursuing a self-deifying and self-destructive lifestyle. The Christian sociological approach, on the other hand, focuses on man's need to see the sin in his own life, which is aimed at destroying him, and repent and turn from that sin to having a saving, liberating, and vital relationship with Jesus.

In Christian sociology, therefore, the individual is the primary focus, who in turn becomes a part of and makes the community. Thus, if the individual is not changed, then the community will not be changed, because individuals make up a community! In addition, that is why we see the all importance of fellowship with other believers so that we can be encouraged from each other in a very fallen world:

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; <sup>24</sup> and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:23-25).

Therefore, it is not an 'either or' type of situation – either individualism or community – but rather a 'both and' – both the individual and the community, which is God's priority and plan as can be seen throughout both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament we see God calling both individuals and a group to faith and obedience to Him:

Now it came about after the death of Moses the servant of the LORD that the LORD spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' servant, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Moses My servant is dead; now therefore (*you sg.*) arise, (*you sg.*) cross this Jordan, (*you sg.*) you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel. <sup>3</sup> "Every place on which the sole of (*you pl.*) your foot treads, I have given it to (*you pl.*) you, just as I spoke to Moses. <sup>4</sup> "From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even as far as the great river, the river

Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and as far as the Great Sea toward the setting of the sun, will be **(you pl)** your territory. <sup>5</sup> "No man will *be able to* stand before **(you sg)** you all the days of **(you sg)** your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with **(you sg)** you; I will not fail **(you sg)** you or forsake **(you sg)** you. <sup>6</sup> "Be strong and courageous, for **(you sg)** you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. <sup>7</sup> "Only be **(you sg)** strong and very **(you sg)** courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded **(you sg)** you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, so that **(you sg)** you may have success wherever **(you sg)** you go. <sup>8</sup> "This book of the law shall not depart from **(you sg)** your mouth, but **(you sg)** you shall meditate on it day and night, so that **(you sg)** you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then **(you sg)** you will make your way prosperous, and then **(you sg)** you will have success. <sup>9</sup> "Have I not commanded **(you sg)** you? **(you sg)** Be strong and **(you sg)** courageous! **(you sg)** Do not tremble or **(you sg)** be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with **(you sg)** you wherever you go." <sup>10</sup> Then Joshua commanded the officers of the people, saying, <sup>11</sup> "**(you pl)** Pass through the midst of the camp and command the people, saying, '**(you pl)** Prepare provisions for **(you pl)** yourselves, for within three days **(you pl)** you are to cross this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD **(you pl)** your God is giving **(you pl)** you, to possess it.'" (Joshua 1:1-11)

In the above passage in Joshua, you can see how both the singular and plural commands are used even within the same sentence structure, wherein God commands Joshua individually, as well as the people, and when God commands Joshua singularly, that command is in turn carried over to the people as well. Thus, we see in this picture above the reality of God's focus on Joshua as an individual to lead the people, but also God's plan and purpose for the people as well and His desire to bless every individual in the entire group! The following quote helps to put all of this in a balanced perspective:

The sociological concept that the individual is more important than the institutions is society and that society is important because God created us as social beings is called *pluralism*. In this view, neither society nor the individual is the only true reality; both must be valued in order to correctly understand reality. This perspective ensures that we "can never be reduced to either a mere atomistic individual or a mere integer in some social whole." Pluralism holds that both the individual and societal groups are accountable to God (2 Kings 17:7-23 and Acts 17:31). If each member of society acts responsibly, then each societal institution can focus on governing its realm of interest properly and allow other institutions the same freedom.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Noebel, 249.

Consequently, as both the individual and the group are essential parts of God's plan and purpose, and as we look at the reality of our lives throughout recorded history, we also see that who and what we are is a part of all our lives – not only our personal relationship with Christ, both individually and in our families as well, but also as believers in our extended families, our church and evangelistic outreach, our work, schooling, recreation, politics, etc. In other words, our Christian worldview should govern EVERY ASPECT OF OUR LIVES:

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty *again*? It is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. <sup>14</sup> "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> "Nor do *men* light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)

One of the most significant Christian pastors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German, Lutheran pastor, who was killed in a Nazi prison camp during WWII. Bonhoeffer was committed to following and obeying Christ to the death, AND HE DID! Therefore, Bonhoeffer made no distinction between the 'sacred and secular' with regard to our involvement as Christians in all aspects of life – He saw ALL OF LIFE as sacred, and our responsibility is to be "salt and light" in every venue of life:

Bonhoeffer explains, "It is God's will that there shall be labor, marriage, government, and church in the world; and it is His will that all these, each in its own way, shall be through Christ, directed towards Christ, and in Christ. . . . This means that there can be no retreating from a 'secular' into a 'spiritual' sphere." Bonhoeffer makes it clear that no aspect of society lies outside the realm of Christianity. All society, indeed all of life, is bound inextricably with God and His plan for the world. In Bonhoeffer's view, "the world is relative to Christ."<sup>106</sup> (Ibid., 250)

Thus, from our personal relationship with Jesus, to our family, and to the rest of the world beyond our family in all venues, we are called upon to be the "salt and light" that a decaying and darkened world is desperately needing, but it is precisely in the first two vitally important areas

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 250.

of our lives – our relationship with Jesus first, and our families second – that we see the attacks of the ‘god of this world’ aimed. Therefore, as an individual goes in his relationship with the Lord, then so too will go the family, and as the family goes, so too goes a community, a city, a county, and a country:

George Gilder and many other Christian sociologists believe that the condition of marriage and family in any given society describes the condition of the entire society. If the family is troubled, then society is troubled. Encouraging and building up the God-ordained institution of marriage and family is, therefore, advantageous to society.

Unfortunately, society today does more to discourage marriage and family than to build it up. The many forces working against marriage and family are primarily a result of the Secular Humanist-inspired sexual revolution. For example, children in public schools are taught that homosexuality is a normal lifestyle; students are given condoms and encouraged to use them instead of practicing abstinence until marriage; teenage girls are taught about abortion and how to obtain one without parents’ consent or knowledge. . .

Attacks on the traditional family come largely from proponents of relativistic, materialistic Worldviews. Humanists, Marxists, and many Postmodernists deny the existence of the soul, thereby devaluing the importance of the family. The Christian worldview recognizes marriage and family as the institution that nurtures the whole person. In this view, the family provides an environment that encourages mental, spiritual, social, and physical growth.<sup>107</sup>

As we evaluate all of the above, we see that the Christian, sociological worldview has God at the center, through Jesus Christ, and obedience to His Word as the grid for our lives in our individual cultures and the world as a whole. The concept that we as believers should not become involved in the world around us, therefore, is pseudo-spirituality at best, and at worst it is unequivocal cowardice and disobedience to God’s Word. Thus, by inaction to events surrounding us that are clearly unbiblical and exalt and proclaim evil as good, and good as evil, or where our voice and involvement is needed as “salt and light” concerning issues in our community, state, and nation, we are in essence, as believers, unequivocally negating Acts 1:8 (“but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth”) and Matthew 5:13-16 above:

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 250-251

As humans, we will face the consequences for choices we make in creating our society. God gives us the responsibility to protect and direct the societal institutions He ordains, including family, state, and church. Families are charged with reproductive responsibilities as well as training and nurturing. The state is charged with carrying out justice, primarily involving law and order. The church is charged with demonstrating Christian love within itself and in society at large.

We are answerable to God for the direction these institutions lead society. . . .<sup>108</sup>

## *Islam*

Although Islam, like Christianity, also emphasizes the importance of a relationship with God, the family, and the state as foundational to any society and culture, their views of what it means to have a relationship with God, their view of family, and their view of the state are radically different from the biblical, Judeo-Christian perspective.

As with any group, you have inconsistencies with what is taught and preached, versus what is actually lived, this is unequivocally true with Islam. Thus, on the one hand, the Quran declares that men and women have equal blessing from their god if they truly seek him:

For Muslim men and women,- for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in Charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise,- for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward. (Surah 33:35)

On the other hand, there is within Islam a very clear and undisputed view of women as being less intelligent and more wicked than men, as is witnessed in the Hadith Sahih Bukhari:

Narrated Abu Said Al-Khudri: Once Allah's Apostle went out to the Musalla (to offer the prayer) o 'Id-al-Adha or Al-Fitr prayer. Then he passed by the women and said, "O women! Give alms, as I have seen that the majority of the dwellers of Hell-fire were you

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 251-252.

(women)." They asked, "Why is it so, O Allah's Apostle ?" He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you." The women asked, "O Allah's Apostle! What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?" He said, "Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man?" They replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses?" The women replied in the affirmative. He said, "This is the deficiency in her religion." (Sahih Bukhari – Vol. 1, Book 6, # 301)

Narrated 'Imran bin Husain: The Prophet said, "I looked at Paradise and found poor people forming the majority of its inhabitants; and I looked at Hell and saw that the majority of its inhabitants were women." (Sahih Bukhari – Vol. 4, Book 54, # 464)

Thus, as you can see, there is, even within the writings of Islam, a contradictory view and appraisal of women and their part in Muslim culture.

In addition to the above overall view of women, marriage in Muslim culture is equally distorted and quite dissimilar to the biblical view expressed in Ephesians 5:22-33:

### **Biblical View**

Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. <sup>24</sup> But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. <sup>28</sup> So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; <sup>29</sup> for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church, <sup>30</sup> because we are members of His body. <sup>31</sup> For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. <sup>32</sup> This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. <sup>33</sup> Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and *let* the wife *see to it* that she respect her husband. (Ephesians 5:22-33)

I believe in the above passage, the most strikingly different aspect about the biblical view of the husband and wife relationship and the Muslim is found in verse 25-26: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; <sup>26</sup> that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, <sup>27</sup> that He might present to

Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.” The very fact that husbands are called on to “love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her” is the absolute antithesis of Islamic teaching on marriage and the husband and wife relationship. However, it is important that you see the biblical view in order that you can accurately compare it with the Islamic view.

### Islamic View

Below is the Islamic view of marriage, with the substantiating and corroborating passages from the Quran:

- 1) A Muslim man may be married up to four wives collectively at a time, but he is required to treat and provide for them equally: “If ye fear that ye shall not Be able to deal justly with the orphans, marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess. That will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice” (Surah 4:3).
- 2) A Muslim man was allowed to have concubines, who were actually women taken as the spoils of war, and they became their slaves, with whom they could have sexual relations, but these women did not have the same rights as wives. However, the Quran fully absolves the man from any wrong doing if he chooses to have sex with his slave girl, and he may have as many as he wishes (Surah 4:24; 23:1-6; 33:50; 70:28-32). However, only in some Islamic, African countries (e.g., The Sudan) is slave concubinage still practiced today.
- 3) One of the most interesting aspects about Islamic marriage practices is what is called نكاح متعة (*nikaḥ mut‘a*), which in simple terms means, “temporary marriage.” As in Hebrew, so too in Arabic and all Semitic languages, all nouns come from a verb form. Thus, the word for “to marry” in Arabic is زكح (*nakaḥa*), from which the noun زكاح (*nikaḥ*) is derived. However, it is the next word that is the most intriguing, which is the word متعة (*mut‘a*), and it means “enjoyment, pleasure, delight, gratification; compensation paid to a divorced woman, temporary marriage, usufruct (“the right of using and enjoying all the advantages

and profits of the property of another without altering or damaging the substance”<sup>109</sup>) marriage contracted for a specified time and exclusively for the purpose of sexual pleasure.”<sup>110</sup> It comes from Arabic verb *متع* (*mata‘a*), which means “to make someone enjoy something; to give as compensation to a divorced woman something; to gratify the eye and to make someone enjoy something; to have the usufruct of something; and enjoy, savor, and relish something.”<sup>111</sup> However, the Suni on the whole reject this form of temporary marriage, but the Shia accept it as valid. In fact, in Surah 4:24 we see the verb *متع* (*mata‘a*) being used to describe this very situation of a woman without a husband: “Also (prohibited are) women already married, except those whom your right hands possess: thus hath God ordained (prohibitions) against you: except for these, all others are lawful, provided ye seek (them in marriage) with gifts from your property,— desiring chastity, not lust. Seeing that **ye derive benefit** *اسْتَمْتَعْتُمْ* – *istamta‘tum*) from them, give them their dowers (at least) as prescribed; but if, after a dower is prescribed, ye agree mutually (to vary it), there is no blame on you, and God is All-knowing all-wise.” What is also interesting about *نكاح متعة* (*nikaḥ mut‘a*) is that it doesn’t count toward the maximum of four wives at any given time for the marriage – thus, a man can *nikaḥ mut‘a* as often as he wishes, with as many women as he wishes, and he is still living within the framework of “good Islamic marital regulations.” When I was doing the Islam Seminar in Virginia several years ago, a business man told the congregation during a break, that he had witnessed this very thing with some Muslim business men from here in America who went to the Middle East with him for business. Before they went, they called ahead and arranged a *nikaḥ mut‘a* marriage for the few weeks they were going to be there, and when they left, they divorced the woman before they returned to the United States – so much for “holy Islam.”

- 4) Women who are considered to be rebellious toward their husbands may be physically struck and slapped by their husbands according to the Quran:

<sup>109</sup> David B. Guralink, ed., *Webster’s New World Dictionary of the American Language, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1984), 1564.

<sup>110</sup> Cowan, 1045.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what Allah would have them guard. As to those women on whose part ye fear disloyalty and ill-conduct, admonish them (first), (Next), refuse to share their beds, (And last) beat them (lightly); but if they return to obedience, seek not against them Means (of annoyance): For Allah is Most High, great (above you all). (Surah 4:34)

- 3) The Quran allows for men to divorce their wives, but the Quran does not allow women to divorce their husbands: 2:227-232, 240-241; 33:49; & 66:5. However, there are some Muslim countries that do allow women to pursue divorce.

As we have seen above, according to the Quran, Muslim men are allowed up to four wives at any one time. However, Muhammad had up to nine wives at one point, but he was able to because of the revelations he received that permitted him to do so:

O Prophet! We have made lawful to thee thy wives to whom thou hast paid their dowers; and those whom thy right hand possesses out of the prisoners of war whom God has assigned to thee; and daughters of thy paternal uncles and aunts, and daughters of thy maternal uncles and aunts, who migrated (from Mecca) with thee; and any believing woman who dedicates her soul to the Prophet if the Prophet wishes to wed her;—this only for thee, and not for the Believers (at large); we know what We have appointed for them as to their wives and the captives whom their right hands possess;—in order that there should be no difficulty for thee. And God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (Surah 33:50)

Anas bin Malik said, "The Prophet used to visit all his wives in a round, during the day and night and they were eleven in number." I asked Anas, "Had the Prophet the strength for it?" Anas replied, "We used to say that the Prophet was given the strength of thirty (men)." And Sa'id said on the authority of Qatada that Anas had told him about nine wives only (not eleven). (Hadith Sahih Bukhari: Book 1, vol. 5, verse 268)

In addition to the above practices of Muhammad with regard to the number of wives he had, as we already discussed the concept of concubines, we have another bit of insight with regard to Muhammad's view concerning concubines:

Narrated Ibn Muhairiz: I entered the Mosque and saw Abu Said Al-Khudri and sat beside him and asked him about Al-Azl (i.e. coitus interruptus). Abu Said said, "We went out with Allah's Apostle for the Ghazwa of Banu Al-Mustaliq and we received captives from among the Arab captives and we desired women and celibacy became hard on us and we

loved to do coitus interruptus. So when we intended to do coitus interruptus, we said, 'How can we do coitus interruptus before asking Allah's Apostle who is present among us?' We asked (him) about it and he said, 'It is better for you not to do so, for if any soul (till the Day of Resurrection) is predestined to exist, it will exist.' (Hadith Shaih Bukhari: Book 5, volume 59, verse 459)

The “coitus interruptus” is the act of non-consummation in sexual intercourse. Thus, according to the Hadith, Muhammad gave full approval to his men to have and use the concubines they acquired through military conquest, or other means.

Thus, apart from Christianity, which exhorts its leaders to be the “husband of one wife” (I Timothy 3:2, 12), with regard to marriage and family, we can see there is a huge difference between the Muslim, marriage paradigm and the biblical, Christian view. However, this is true of all aspects of the Muslim family life, as the man is the undisputed “dictator” of the family, and he has the right in Muslim countries to treat his wife as though she were a mere, piece of property. I stress the right of a man in a Muslim country, because in such countries where Sharia Law is the law of the land, the government and the religion are in essence one – that is, the “State and the Church” are one, much like in the Middle Ages with the dominant influence of the Roman Catholic Church among the various nation-states.

Consequently, from a sociological perspective, you have Muslims who live in Western, style democracies, and who obey the law of those particular lands. On the other hand, you have Muslims who live in Muslim nations under the oppressive rule of Sharia Law, and some of those have joined the radical element of Islam that wants to turn the world as a whole into a sociological, Islamic caliphate.

## **Secular Humanism**

In the arena of sociology, the Secular Humanist here too denies all forms of supernaturalism as being both mythical and part of mankind’s superstitious background. Their aim, therefore, is to help society to grow and develop into its full, humanistic capacities that are revealed and opened up through the means of the natural sciences and the scientific method. However, there

is also another important aspect of their approach to the social sciences, and that is the infusion of political activism of all types to help attain and achieve their stated goals of a better society. The following, therefore, are just some of the precepts of Secular Humanistic Sociology:

- 1) Human beings are innately good, but the evil that exists in the world around us has been caused by society as a whole and the social structures that have emerged over the millennia. Thus, the aim of Secular Humanistic Sociology is to restructure the various societal forms of our lives, from family, to education, to religious concepts, to economics, etc., in order to remove the restrictions that inhibit the development of the innate goodness of man to flourish and enrich our lives socially.
- 2) The traditional family is seen as a leading contributor to the demise of society in every way because of its narrowly defined roles of men and women, and especially the way women are viewed in a subordinate way as being the producer and caretaker of children and the home, and as a result of that view, the woman has not been able to reach the maximum of her potential socially in the competitive, economic market with her innate talents and abilities. Thus, many in the Secular Humanistic community suggest alternatives to the traditional family that sound identical in many ways to the Marxist view of open and extended marriages (i.e., multiple partners without any long-lasting, marital commitments); cooperatives and collective communes for child-rearing and beginning education of children. In addition to these changes, there is the full inclusion of alternative, family lifestyles, such as homosexual and bisexual couples who either have children naturally, or adopt them, but then the rearing of those children would be in a public commune as described above.
- 3) With regard to the education of the children, the Secular Humanists see the classroom as the foundation of the dissemination of Secular Humanistic Sociological concepts, and they encourage teachers in all subjects to purvey the Secular Humanistic message as it applies to their particular course of instruction.
- 4) One of the most fascinating aspects of Secular Humanistic Sociology is the focus on discovering the greatest needs of man individually and socially. When I read their aim, and I see their conclusion, it is indeed about their own, self-deification, which they call self-actualization – that is, coming to the point where we as human beings in essence realize that we are our own god and can make up the rules for our lives as to what we determine is good

and evil for us individually, and this is all in order that we as human beings may reach our full potential. Indeed, this is what we see being presented to Eve in the Garden by Satan through the serpent (Genesis 3:5), and it has continually been presented to mankind from the biblical fall until now, and it will continue to be presented until Jesus returns.

- 5) From the economic perspective, Secular Humanistic Sociology is socialistic and Marxist in its approach. As was stated in point number 1, Secular Humanistic Sociology stresses the point that mankind is basically good, but it is the structures of society that have brought about the evil in the world, and this would be especially true in the economic field. Thus, for the Secular Humanist Sociologist, capitalism is a result of the Judeo-Christian influence in Western culture, and it needs to be replaced with a socialist/Marxist approach where the individual may reach his own, individualized, economic potential without being used as an instrument for someone else's personal gain and enrichment in the capitalistic system of the employer/employee, economic framework, in which the employer is enriched by the employee's work. Thus, they are looking for a system that provides equality for all, but also allows the individual to reach his full, economic potential, but not at the expense of using others to do so, and those others never reach their full potential. However, just how such a system would work in the real world where everyone is encouraged to reach their full, economic potential without using others as a means of coming to that position (e.g., employer/employee & business/customer) is never fully explained in a concrete, workable, and actualized system. What is seen is that IN ANY ECONOMIC SYSTEM, there will be those who employ and those who are employees, and this is absolutely in every socialistic system that has ever been attempted – it is in fact a system where some are simply “more equal” than others (e.g., in every socialistic and Marxist government in this world, the leaders live quite sumptuously, and the people who haven't risen to that position of political and economic control live very meagerly).
- 6) Social activism is THE MEANS by which Secular Humanist Sociologists seek to infuse these changes into the American culture:

Humanists also seek to use the institution of the state, especially the judiciary, to establish their agenda, including such non-traditional ideas as establishing state-run childcare centers, following a narrow interpretation of separation of church (meaning the Christian church) and state, and passing legislation for gay rights, same-sex marriage, abortion on demand, and animal rights. To this end, Humanists in the United States, with

the assistance of the American Civil Liberties Union, call for the eradication of all Christian influence, traditions, and symbols in the public square and complete overhaul of society. Only then will America be prepared to merge with other like-minded Humanist states to forge a new world order.<sup>112</sup>

## **Marxism-Leninism**

The Marxist-Leninist approach to Sociology is not much different from the Secular Humanist approach. The primary difference between the two, however, would be the infusion of Dialectical Materialism as a foundational principle of societal evolution in the Marxist-Leninist Sociological belief system. That is, that according to the Darwinian, evolutionary model, as well as the eviscerated application of Hegel's Dialectic (i.e., the Thesis, Antithesis, and Synthesis Dialectic that Hegel espoused in order to explain mankind's development, but with a belief the Spirit of God was the motivating factor in this development), Marxist-Leninist Sociology is a belief in a scientific model of societal development that will eventually result in a utopian society that will be the ultimate, continuous state of humanity's existence.

Another important difference between the Secular Humanist and the Marxist-Leninist sociological approaches is that with the Marxist-Leninist Sociology, economics is the primary source of change that will bring about the utopian, communist state:

According to Marx, "The production of material life conditions the general process of social, political, and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines consciousness." The economic system determines society, which determines our very consciousness. Economic forces thus supplant our free will.

The individual is insignificant in the face of powerful societal forces. Stalin believed that in order to understand history, we must rely "on the concrete conditions of the material life of society, as the determining force of social development; not on the good wishes of great men." The evolution of society is too powerful a force to be affected by the actions of even the best individuals. (Ibid., 266)

Thus, according to the Marxist-Leninist Sociology, external, economic factors determine a society, totally apart from the actions of individuals, moved by moral implications and values

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<sup>112</sup> Noebel, 264.

that may govern their lives. The economic change that will come about through the ever developing, dialectically driven, communist state, therefore, is the ONLY THING CHANGE that will end the corrupt class divisions throughout societies around the world, and this will in turn usher in a society that will no longer need a structured government for order because everyone will be of the same economic status and free from external, economic oppression. Lenin in his book entitled, *The State and Revolution*, maintained that when this perfect state of communism arises through the process of dialectical materialism (i.e., the eviscerated form of Hegel's dialectic, where, according to Marxists, society will, because of the internal dialectic, move to a utopian state of a classless society), then such a society of no government will exist:

Only in communist society, when the resistance of the capitalists have disappeared, when there are no classes (i.e., when there is no distinction between the members of society as regards their relation to the social means of production), only then "the state... ceases to exist", and "it becomes possible to speak of freedom". Only then will a truly complete democracy become possible and be realized, a democracy without any exceptions whatever. And only then will democracy begin to wither away, owing to the simple fact that, freed from capitalist slavery, from the untold horrors, savagery, absurdities, and infamies of capitalist exploitation, people will gradually become accustomed to observing the elementary rules of social intercourse that have been known for centuries and repeated for thousands of years in all copy-book maxims. They will become accustomed to observing them without force, without coercion, without subordination, without the special apparatus for coercion called the state.<sup>113</sup>

This perspective is unequivocally based on the premise that man is basically good, not evil, and, therefore, man can, on his own, without the assistance from any supposed "divine assistance," achieve this utopian society, and this is because of the internal dialectic working in and through society, which in turn is based on the above stated premise – man is basically good. Therefore, with regard to the church and a belief in God, the Marxist-Leninist Sociology has no room for either:

Marxists have little patience with religion or any notion of God. They see religion as a stumbling block that slows the development of the classless society: "The influence of the church promotes the schism of the workers movement. Reactionary churchmen everywhere try to isolate religious workers from their class brothers by attracting them into separate organizations of a clerical nature. . . . and thus diverting them from the struggle against capitalism."<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/staterev/index.htm> - *The State and Revolution* – Chapter V – "The Transition from Capitalism to Communism"

<sup>114</sup> Noebel, 267-268.

In the area of education, Marxist-Leninist Sociology is identical to Secular Humanist Sociology in seeing the education of children as the primary tool and source of indoctrination whereby change will occur in a social context. Here too, however, is the ever diligent effort by Marxist-Leninist sociologists to completely expunge any form of Christian influence from the students' minds, which influence they see as a total impediment to the advance of the utopian society through communist dialectic:

Education's role is delineated in *People's Education*: "The basic task of communist education and overcoming the survivals of religiousness in our present condition is to prove to the pupils the complete contrast and complete irreconcilability between science, the real and correct reflection of the objectively existing world in the consciousness of people – and religion as a fantastic, distorted and consequently, harmful reflection of the world in the consciousness of the people."<sup>115</sup>

In the area of the family, Marxist-Leninist Sociology is intrinsically linked to the Secular Humanistic ultimate view of family – in fact, it was from these Marxist-Leninist concepts that the Secular Humanists' view of family life and sexual licence have emerged in large part, although these views in their nascent form began to be elucidated in Western culture during and since the enlightenment of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The following is taken from Frederick Engels' book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, and it is an important revelation into the heart of Marxist-Leninist Sociology, which I might add, is at the heart of every godless, self-deified approach to life, and that is no limits to sexual fulfillment and promiscuity, but rather lifting up such so called freedom as the apex of one reaching his or her full, human potential:

With the passage of the means of production into common property, the individual family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public matter. Society takes care of all children equally, irrespective of whether they are born in wedlock or not. Thus, the anxiety about the "consequences", which is today the most important social factor — both moral and economic — that hinders a girl from giving herself freely to the man she loves, disappears. Will this not be cause enough for a gradual rise of more unrestrained sexual intercourse, and along with it, a more lenient public opinion regarding virginal honour and feminine shame? And finally, have we not seen that monogamy and prostitution in the modern world, although opposites, are nevertheless inseparable opposites, poles of the same social conditions? Can prostitution disappear without dragging monogamy with it into the abyss?<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 268.

<sup>116</sup> <http://readingfromtheleft.com/PDF/EngelsOrigin.pdf> – *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*: 81-82.

Thus, in this ideal, utopian, communist state, sex becomes as free as water with whomever you choose, and babies born from such a union are in turn cared for by the state, and consequently, there is NO SOCIAL OR MORAL STIGMA attached to promiscuous, sexual intercourse, NOR IS THERE ANY SOCIAL OR MORAL ACCOUNTABILITY OR RESPONSIBILITY placed upon those responsible for bringing these babies into the world – they become the property of the state to rear and indoctrinate as it chooses to in order to perpetuate this unrestrained, sexually promiscuous, utopian society.

Therefore, in Marxist-Leninist Sociology, the natural process of the economic dialectic is the supreme truth (i.e., the upward climb of humanity to total social, economic equality), and nothing less than that will be tolerated, as is seen in Lenin’s statement below:

Just as Darwin put an end to the view of animal and plant species being unconnected, fortuitous, “created by God” and immutable, and was the first to put biology on an absolutely scientific basis by establishing the mutability and the succession of species, so Marx put an end to the view of society being a mechanical aggregation of individuals which allows of all sorts of modification at the will of the authorities (or, if you like, at the will of society and the government) and which emerges and changes casually, and was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis by establishing the concept of the economic formation of society as the sum-total of given production relations, by establishing the fact that the development of such formations is a process of natural history.<sup>117</sup>

## *Cosmic Humanism*

The Cosmic Humanist Sociology is the most esoteric of all, in that it is based upon reaching his ultimate deification, at which time, we will all be united with the one mind of God, meaning that we have all realized our deified state. Now what is interesting with this perspective, is that it too, along with the Marxist-Leninist Sociology, sees a utopian society coming within the framework of man alone. The Cosmic Humanist sociological approach toward life and the word is the absolute antithesis of the biblical model of redemption given us in Romans 8:18-25 below:

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<sup>117</sup> <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1894/friends/01.htm> – Collected Works of Lenin: Part I – “What the ‘Friends of the People’ Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats”

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. <sup>23</sup> And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for *our* adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. <sup>24</sup> For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. (Rom 8:18-25)

As you can see, the creation is in the throes of agony due to the sin that corrupts mankind and creation as a whole. However, the Cosmic Humanists have a different sociological view of mankind and creation:

All social institutions should encourage us to seek inner truth from our perfectible human nature. Society must adopt a pantheistic perspective. David Spangler thus explains the New Age approach as looking at the objects, people, and events in our lives and saying, “You are sacred. In you and with you I find the sacramental passages the reconnect me to the wholeness of creation.” It is then to ask ourselves what kind of culture, what kind of institutions – be they political, economic, artistic, educational, or scientific – we need that can honor that universal sacredness.<sup>118</sup>

With regard to the family, Cosmic Humanists also see the traditional family of a father, mother, and children as being an outdated institution and one that need to be set aside for more fulfilling relationships that aid us in realizing and reaching our godhood:

Thus, attempting to maintain traditional versions of marriage and family is counter-evolutionary. Gawain continues, “Relationships and families as we’ve known them seem to be falling apart at a rapid rate. Many people are panicky about this; some try to re-establish the old traditions and value systems in order to cling to a feeling of order and stability in their lives. It’s useless to try to go backward, however, because our consciousness has already evolved beyond the level where we were willing to make the sacrifices necessary to live that way.”

Sexual freedom, including homosexuality, is a part of going forward. In order to allow all humanity to achieve higher consciousness, society should not limit our options. According to Kevin Ryerson, “Sexuality, whether homosexual or heterosexual, is the exploring of the personalities of yourselves as incarnate beings, or as a spirit inhabiting the flesh. An individual’s sexual preference should be viewed as neither good nor evil – such preferences are but the functioning of the body’s dialogue to and with another.”<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Noebel, 271-272.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 272.

Education with the Cosmic Humanists is also a paramount concern, and what is quite interesting is that, “According to Ferguson (Marilyn Ferguson, a leader of Cosmic Humanists – my note), of all the New Age professionals she surveyed for *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, “more were involved in education than in any other single category of work.”<sup>120</sup> Thus from the Cosmic Humanism’s sociological perspective, “By teaching children the proper attitudes toward themselves and their consciousnesses, New Age educators believe they can create a generation capable of ushering in the New Age.”<sup>121</sup>

Therefore, Cosmic Humanistic Sociology views our current institutions of marriage, family, church, education, and government as entities that are hindering our development into the fullness of our individual godhood and self-deification. Thus, according to Cosmic Humanists, “Societal institutions must refrain . . . from inhibiting our individual evolution to higher consciousness.”<sup>122</sup>

## *Postmodernism*

The Postmodern Sociology also relegates our current traditional institutions of family, education, church, economics, education, and government as part of our culture that defines and determines who we are, versus us as individuals defining and determining who we are outside of these boundaries, and this is especially true regarding the organized church. The following is a very clear view of how postmodernists view the organized church, as well as any believers who speak out from a biblical perspective on current issues that impact our nation, and this is especially of any elected officials, or of individual, committed believers who want to run for office:

In *The Future of Religion*, Rorty (Richard Rorty – my note) replaces his atheism with “anticlericalism,” contending that “congregations of the faithful” are socially unobjectionable, but “ecclesiastical institutions” are dangerous to the health of democratic societies. To Rorty, “religion is unobjectionable as long as it is privatized.”

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 273.

In other words, private religious views are acceptable, but the organized church is not.<sup>123</sup>  
(Ibid., 276)

Thus, postmodernists do not want committed believers to express their views from a biblical, moral perspective on any issues that affect the political direction of our country – a form of political tyranny and a clear denial of the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment. Muslims, on the other hand may do so because they appear at this time to be in the vast minority, but believers in Jesus have a great influence on radical, godless legislation that is heading our country in a self-destructive direction, **AND THE POSTMODERNISTS WANT US TO KEEP QUIET!**

With regard to marriage, the family, and our sexual lives, Postmodern Sociology is the complete antithesis of the biblical view in all of these areas:

Many Postmodern socialists consider marriage the greatest of evils. Rorty is particularly harsh on Christian parents who teach their children about God, referring to them as “frightening, vicious, and dangerous.”

Other Postmodernists show their contempt for Christian concepts of love, sex, and marriage, preferring various forms of “free love” (hooking up, shacking up, living together, cohabitation, etc.). Postmodernist psychiatrist Adam Phillips precludes the possibility of contractual marriage and describes any relationship in harsh terms: “The only save foregone conclusion about any relationship is that it is an experiment; and that exactly what it is an experiment in will never be clear to the participants. For the sane, so-called relationships could never be subject to contract.

Acknowledging the traditional heterosexual family as the norm in Western society, Postmodernists decry that this “heterosexist norm” enables society “marginalize some sexual practices as ‘against nature’, and thereby [attempt] to prove the naturalness of the heterosexual monogamy and family values upon which mainstream society bases itself.<sup>124</sup>

In the education sector, Postmodern Sociology has a very radical agenda in that it wants to dispel any notions of absolute truth in any venue and in turn teach students that they are their own source of truth. The following demonstrates this agenda in terms that we can see today, and for those of us who live in CA, we are seeing it before our very eyes:

Anderson outlines major shifts in focus in the Postmodern classroom in contrast to the modern classroom: “Education should emphasize works not in the canon, it should focus on the achievements of non-whites, females, and the poor; it should highlight the

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 276.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

historical crimes of whites, males, and the rich; and it should teach children that science's method has no better claim to yielding truth than any other method and, accordingly, that students should be equally receptive to alternative ways of knowing."

Postmodern education teaches that all truth is relative, all cultures are equally deserving of respect (although Western culture comes under severe criticism), and all values are subjective (although racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia are universally evil).

Course offerings at colleges and universities in the Postmodern age are also nontraditional, focusing on themes of race, sex, and gender. For example, Stanford University's Feminist Studies Department offers "Lesbian Communities and Identities." . . . Stanford's History Department offers a course entitled "Homosexuals, Heretics, Witches, and Werewolves: Deviants of Medieval Society." . . .

Not only has the subject matter of courses and departments shifted dramatically away from traditional fare, Christianity is often viewed with contempt and ridicule. Richard Rorty, Professor of Comparative Literature at Stanford, writes, "When we American college teachers encounter religious fundamentalists . . . we do our best to convince these students of the benefits of secularization . . . I think these students are lucky to find themselves under . . . people like me, and to have escaped the grip of their frightening, vicious, dangerous parents."

Not all new courses are met with enthusiasm. Richard Zeller, a sociology professor at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, attempted to introduce a new course that would examine the effects of political correctness in response to students' claims that they felt pressured to assume politically correct views in order to pass courses. BGSU's Director of Women's Studies, Kathleen Dixon, protested vehemently, saying, "We forbid any course that says we restrict free speech." The course was voted down, and Zeller resigned in protest after twenty-five years of teaching at Bowling Green.<sup>125</sup>

Due to the seriousness of the last example I quoted concerning Professor Richard Zeller at Bowling Green University, I want to present in this paper most of the article about him from the web site, [www.frontpagemagazine.com](http://www.frontpagemagazine.com), October 2, 2000, written by Larry Elder, and entitled, "Campus Gulag":

IS POLITICAL correctness a "hate crime"? The federal government defines hate crimes as "crimes that manifest evidence of prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity, including where appropriate the crimes of murder, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, aggravated assault, simple assault, intimidation, arson, and destruction, damage or vandalism of property."

Consider the case of Dr. Richard Zeller, formerly a professor of sociology at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. After 25 years of teaching at the school, Dr. Zeller retired in protest. Why? He wanted to teach a course on political correctness.

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 277-278.

From talking to students, Zeller learned that many felt pressured to adopt politically correct views in order to get a passing grade. One student told Zeller that, in order to get a good grade, a professor virtually forced the student to agree that all whites are racist. Another student said that he felt pressured to adopt a "pro-choice" position on abortion, even though he considered himself staunchly pro-life.

Professor Zeller got an idea. What about a course on political correctness, on the tyranny within academia that forces students to conform to a prescribed set of views?

Zeller put together a proposed course curriculum. He included books like *Illiberal Education* by Dinesh D'Souza; *The Bell Curve* by R. Herrnstein and C. Murray; *Two Steps Ahead of the Thought Police* by J. Leo; *Inside American Education* by Thomas Sowell; *A Nation of Victims* by C. Sykes; and *Civil Wrongs: What Went Wrong With Affirmative Action* by S. Yates.

But Zeller's sociology colleagues said "no" to the course. Zeller protested, and ultimately the sociology department voted on whether or not he could teach the course. Zeller lost 9-5.

Zeller then attempted to teach the course in other departments, but no other department granted approval for the course. So much for academic freedom, for diversity of thought. Not only that, Zeller found friends few and far between.

For example, one newspaper quoted BGSU's Dr. Kathleen Dixon, the Director of Women's Studies, who said of Zeller's attempted course, "We forbid any course that says we restrict free speech!" We forbid any course that says we restrict free speech?!

A BGSU ethnic studies professor said that Zeller's attitude would help students " ... feel good about the ruling paradigm, which since the inception of the United States, has said that genocide is good, racism is better, and exploitation of the women and poor is the best way to go." Gee, poor Zeller thought he was simply teaching a course on political correctness.

How about professor Gary Lee, the BGSU Sociology Department Chairman, who said, "Unfortunately, tenure protects the incompetent and malicious; Rich has tenure, so he cannot be fired without cause." Fired? For wanting to teach a course in political correctness? For good measure, Zeller also received death threats, and someone wrote "Zeller you die" on sanitary napkins left on the professor's front porch at home.

Weary of the battle, Dr. Zeller offered his resignation. In a letter to the school, Zeller expressed his frustration and anger. He directs his concern, said the professor, not at himself, but at the students deprived of an education that challenges assumptions and questions the status quo.

Zeller said, "But don't cry for me. I'm doing just fine, thank you. Cry out, instead, for the students who regularly get intellectually mugged on the BGSU campus"; "the traditionalist who believes that marriage is between a man and a woman, but can't say so for fear of failing"; "the conservative who believes in minimizing government interference in our lives and says so in a sociology class"; "the woman who believes that abortion is murder, but must write a pro-choice essay to pass English 111"; and "all of

those who have 'adjusted' and 'self-censored' their ideas so that they can pass their classes."

Zeller also said, "BGSU has sold its soul to the thought police of political correctness. There was a time that ... honorable people could disagree honorably; now, any challenge to the campus sacred cows (feminism, affirmative action, and multiculturalism) is denounced as evil."

About Zeller's travails, the *Christian Science Monitor's* Sanford Pinsker said, "Amid all the self-congratulatory talk about diversity one hears on American campuses, it is not at all clear that intellectual diversity is alive and well. If the result of Zeller's pressing for a course that might expose students to controversial thinkers and books had been an honest debate -- rather than an exercise in character assassination -- all of us might well have benefited. As it stands, however, everyone at BGSU has lost."

Or, as BGSU's Women's Studies Director might have put it, BGSU prevents any discussion about any topic that suggests we prevent any discussion about any topic. Got that?<sup>126</sup>

Thus, what we see in the above is a mirror of what is happening across our country in secondary education, colleges, universities, the national media of newspapers and Television, and sadly to say, in the current Obama administration as well, both before and after he was elected President, is an overt attempt to shut down the opposition and not allow anything said that is contrary to the current 'politically correct' language for whatever venue is being discussed. The apex of hypocrisy in the above article concerns the response to Zeller's proposal to teach a course exposing the bias and unsubstantiated claims and assertions of certain courses by the woman heading up the Women's Studies Program saying, "We forbid any course that says we restrict free speech!" The tragedy is that this woman CANNOT SEE HER OWN TYRANNICAL AND OPPRESSIVE attitude toward that which she doesn't want to be said that would disagree with her position, and that is the very thing she is asserting that others have done to her! She cannot even see her hypocrisy because her own, narcissistic, self-deification of herself and her position won't allow any disagreement because it would expose the falsity of her claims. In other words, Postmodernists cannot handle disagreement because their goal is not the pursuit of truth, but rather of an agenda that excises any moral or divine truth from the conversation because it overtly confronts their stated agenda and exposes its deception. Consequently, Postmodernism, like Marxism, Nazism, Islam, and any other tyrannical, political

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<sup>126</sup> <http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=22925>

or religious belief system, will not allow criticism of its tenets because of their own, innate insecurity with regard to what they believe and are propagating.

Even in the arts we are seeing very perverted and destructive art forms of a Postmodern, sociological bent coming on the scene in several venues. In what has been termed ‘modern art’ by some, a nihilistic movement called Dada has presented some Postmodern themes “about meaninglessness, but its works and manifestos are meaningful philosophical statements in the context in which they are presented. ‘Art is -----’ was, fittingly, the motto of the Dada movement. Duchamp’s (Marcel Duchamp, a so-called Dada artist) urinal was the fitting symbol. Everything is waste to be flushed away.”<sup>127</sup> In addition to art, there is also the music venue in which the British band called Ian Dury and the Blockheads wrote in a 1977 song, “Sex and drugs and rock ‘n’ roll are all my brain and body needs,”<sup>128</sup> and in 2003, the song writer, John Mayer released an album entitled, *Any Given Thursday*, and he “expresses the meaninglessness of life in the lyrics, ‘I just found out there’s no such thing as the real world. Just a lie you’ve got to rise above. I am invincible as long as I’m alive’.”<sup>129</sup> What an incredible tragedy, but it doesn’t have to end there because we who are believers, followers, and disciples of Jesus Christ have the true answers these people are desperately looking for!

Jesus said that we who are believers are the “salt and light” in a decaying and darkened world (Matthew 5:13-16), and, therefore, if we do not take a stand against such lies, distortions, tyranny, and darkness, NO ONE ELSE WILL! Indeed, we may be the only Bible that some of these people will ever see being lived out before them, and if we do not speak the truth to them, then who will? Indeed, the “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few” (Luke 10:2), therefore, let us determine to be that disciple who is willing to “lose his life for Jesus’ sake, that we may indeed save it” (Luke 9:24) as we reach out and share the Gospel with a lost and dying world in every venue of our lives:

Christians should be involved in every area of society: in education as teachers, administrators, board members, and textbook selection committee members; in government as leaders at the local, state, and federal levels; as artists, developing the best art, recording the most inspiring music, and writing books and producing cutting edge

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<sup>127</sup> Noebel, 279.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

movies with compelling storylines that capture the imagination of every reader or viewer; in families, as loving parents and role models; in communities, as business leaders and civic club members; in the media, as reporters and writers who are seen and read by millions. In the midst of these endeavors, we should share God's wonderful love story with those who will listen. When we participate in the Great Commission conjoined with the Cultural Commission, we are fulfilling God's purpose for us during our earthly sojourn.<sup>130</sup>

## *Conclusion*

As we have gone through these five aspects of human culture, we can see that apart from biblical Christianity, and that would also include biblical Judaism, there are some striking similarities between the other five in distinction to biblical Christianity. I include biblical Judaism with biblical Christianity because of the fact that even though Judaism is founded upon the Old Testament, apart from a spiritual rebirth encounter with Jesus through the infusion of the Holy Spirit coming into a Jew's life, they, like Nicodemus, who himself was a Pharisaical Jew,

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 281.

WILL NEVER come into a saving relationship with the Lord because they are basing their salvation on their “good works”:

Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; <sup>2</sup> this man came to Him by night, and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God *as* a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "**Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**" <sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" <sup>5</sup> **Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'** <sup>8</sup> "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit." <sup>9</sup> Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?" <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not understand these things?" <sup>11</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and you do not receive our witness. <sup>12</sup> "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things?" <sup>13</sup> "And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, *even* the Son of Man. <sup>14</sup> "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> "**For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.** <sup>17</sup> "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup> "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. <sup>19</sup> "**And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup> "For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. <sup>21</sup> "But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." (John 3:1-21)**

In addition to the above encounter with Nicodemus, Jesus also responded to Thomas' question about just exactly where Jesus was going and how were they, His disciples, going to get there, along with Philip's request that Jesus would show them the Father:

"Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. <sup>4</sup> "And you know the way where I am going." <sup>5</sup> Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?" <sup>6</sup> **Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.** <sup>7</sup> "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." <sup>8</sup> Philip

said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and *yet* you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'?"<sup>10</sup> "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works."<sup>11</sup> "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves."<sup>12</sup> "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go to the Father."<sup>13</sup> "And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."<sup>14</sup> "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*."<sup>15</sup> "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."<sup>16</sup> **And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you.**<sup>18</sup> "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."<sup>19</sup> "After a little while the world will behold Me no more; but you *will* behold Me; because I live, you shall live also."<sup>20</sup> **In that day you shall know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.**<sup>21</sup> **He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him.**<sup>22</sup> Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us, and not to the world?"<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, **If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him.**<sup>24</sup> "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me."<sup>25</sup> "These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you."<sup>26</sup> "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:1-26)

And lastly, with reference to the above passages, Jesus made it very clear that apart from God's intervening hand in "drawing us to Jesus," NO MAN WOULD COME ON HIS OWN:

The Jews therefore were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven."<sup>42</sup> And they were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?"<sup>43</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves."<sup>44</sup> **No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.** (John 6:41-44)

In the passage just above, the Greek word for "draw" is ἔλκω (*helkō*), and it means "to drag and draw."<sup>131</sup> In addition, in an amplified translation, the following phrase, "No man can come to me," would be, "At no time does any man or woman have within themselves the ability to come to Me." The reason for that is because of the depth of our corruption permeates even the formation of our thoughts before we even recognize them as thoughts, which has already been

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<sup>131</sup> Arndt and Gingrich, 251.

pointed out on pages 9-11 above, and that means that our sole focus of worship, apart from divine intervention, IS OURSELVES!

The question, therefore, is, “Why is our nature so diametrically opposed to coming to God, apart from His supernatural ‘dragging’ us to Him?” And again, as has already been alluded to on page 17 above, the genetically, inherited perversion we have received as human beings from our fallen parents, Adam and Eve, of thinking that we can be our own “god” is the central and uppermost lie that governs, motivates, and guides our thinking as fallen and corrupted human beings:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden '?"<sup>2</sup> And the woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat;<sup>3</sup> but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'"<sup>4</sup> And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die!"<sup>5</sup> **For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**<sup>6</sup>

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make *one* wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.<sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. (Genesis 3:1-7)

This genetically, inherited lie in all human beings in turn leads us to creating “God” in “our own image,” which involves making up our own moral and ethical codes, including the legitimization and “religious sanctification” of certain, sexual habits and actions, just as we have already seen above in particular with Islam, but also now within the “Christian rubric” with regard to homosexual marriage, etc. However, what is critically important to understand is that this is not something new with our age, but rather, this has been with us from the Fall of Man forward, and the following quote gives a picture of the ancient Sumerian civilization that existed from ca. 2850 – 2360 BC<sup>132</sup>:

The Sumerian gods, as illustrated graphically by the Sumerian myths, were entirely anthropomorphic; even the most powerful and most knowing among them were conceived as human in form, thought, and deed. Like man, they plan, act, eat and drink,

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<sup>132</sup> John Bright, *A History of Israel, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.*, Intro. and Appen. William Brown (Louisville & London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 33-35.

marry and raise families, support large households, and are addicted to human passions and weaknesses.<sup>133</sup>

In essence, therefore, the Sumerian gods were no more than superhuman men without any restraints on their desires or ambitions. Thus, the gods' lifestyles became the pattern for the people of Sumer, and these lifestyles were based on the people's own carnal imaginations, which substantiated, supported, and gave religious sanction to their own prurient desires and lusts. Consequently, from the Sumerian culture we see the immersion of human culture into the wholehearted acceptance of idolatry, the deification of man, and unrestrained, sexual license. These beliefs received religious sanction through the founders of ancient Sumer, who in turn were the descendants of Ham, and Ham's son, Canaan, founded the area of Ancient Palestine where Sodom and Gomorrah were. This idolatry, and its accompanying sins, spread throughout the Ancient Near East, and that spread encompassed Ishmael and his descendants, which included the Arab peoples, and it is from the Arab peoples that Muhammad and the Islamic religion emerged.

The reason I emphasize this idolatrous, sexual perversion that encompassed the peoples of the Ancient Near East is that we, as human beings today, share the very same perversion as they did some 5000 years ago. Thus, our sexual sins – be they heterosexual, homosexual, bestiality, incest, etc. – are as egregious today as back then. However, our God is a God of mercy and forgiveness, who forgives the most egregious of sins, both before coming to Christ and after, as King David is an incredible example of the latter. I say that because as born-again believers in Jesus Christ, even though we are secure in the imputed righteousness of Jesus given us by the Lord (II Corinthians 5:20-21), we are not only capable of committing sins of the past, but we indeed already have, and are perhaps engaged in the same now.

There are four major, natural drives in our lives, and they are our desire for air, water, food, and sex, and we also have a strong desire to minimize pain in our life, be that spiritual, mental, emotional, or physical pain. Consequently, as God made us as human beings with these natural drives, the last four are manipulated by the “god of this world” to bring about harmful and debilitatingly bad consequences in our lives through the choices and alternatives he provides for human beings. His focus involves the manipulation of our emotions in all venues of our lives, whereby he offers alternatives to our emotional hurts, pains, conflicts, confusion, identity, self-

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<sup>133</sup> Samuel Noah Kramer, *The Sumerians: Their History, Culture And Character* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), 117.

worth, rejection, aloneness, and other desires that promise comfort and fulfillment for our emotional hungers. Thus, as born-again believers in Jesus Christ, we are fully susceptible to his “flaming missiles” (Ephesians 6:16) aimed at the heart and core of our inner man in order to alleviate our various and very real pains delineated above.

It would be wonderful if, as born-again believers in Jesus Christ, from the moment of our conversion and forward that we fully comprehended and applied God’s Word to our lives; fully appropriating His indwelling power received from the Holy Spirit; and fully obeying His Eternal Word and Truth in all venues of our lives. However, that has never been, nor is it now the case for ANY, TRUE, BORN-AGAIN BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST! That is why Ephesians 2:8-10, which we have already made reference to on page 10, and Hebrews 12:4-11 are so critically important for us:

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;<sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, that no one should boast.<sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;<sup>5</sup> and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him;<sup>6</sup> For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives."<sup>7</sup> It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline?<sup>8</sup> But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?<sup>10</sup> For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He *disciplines us* for *our* good, that we may share His holiness.<sup>11</sup> All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. (Hebrews 12:4-11)

Therefore, in the Ephesians passage above, the phrase, “For by grace you have been saved,” is a Greek, syntactical, emphatic construction, called a Periphrastic Perfect Participle,<sup>134</sup> and an amplified translation would be, “**FOR BY GRACE YOU ARE HAVING BEEN AND ARE CONTINUING TO BE SAVED THROUGH FAITH; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD; <sup>9</sup> NOT AS A RESULT OF WORKS, THAT NO ONE SHOULD BOAST!!!!**” In other words, due to our totally, corrupted, fallen human natures, the best we can ever produce as “righteous

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<sup>134</sup> Justin T. Alfred, *Simplified Greek Grammar*, 68-70.

works” out of our sinful beings is a “bloody, used, menstrual cloth” (Isaiah 64:6). Then we come to Ephesians 2:10, which gives the counter balance to Who is doing the work in and through us: “For we are **His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand**, that we should walk in them.” But how do we “walk in them” when we constantly see our failures and inconsistencies in attempting to do so?

As I have looked through the Scriptures and at my life for the past fifty-two years plus of being a born-again believer in Jesus Christ, I continually get a deeper understanding of Ephesians 2:8-10, as well as Hebrews 12:4-11. These two passages also need to be read in conjunction with Romans 7:14-8:11 below, which is going to be given in an amplified translation based on the New Testament Greek:

For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. <sup>15</sup> For that which I am *continually* doing, I do not understand; for I am not *continually* practicing what I *would* like to *do*, but I am *continually* doing the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> But if I do the very thing I do not wish *to do*, I agree with the Law, *confessing* that it is good. <sup>17</sup> So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which *continually* indwells me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that nothing good *continually* dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the wishing is present in me, but the doing of the good *is* not. <sup>19</sup> For the good that I *continually* wish, I *continually* do not do; but I *continually* practice the very evil that I *continually* do not wish. <sup>20</sup> But if I am doing the very thing I do not wish, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which *continually* dwells in me. <sup>21</sup> I find then the principle that evil is *continually* present in me, the one who *continually* wishes to do good. <sup>22</sup> For I joyfully *continually* concur with the law of God in the inner man, <sup>23</sup> but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind, and *continually through deception and misleading*, making me a *captive* prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. <sup>24</sup> Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? <sup>25</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am *continually* serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh *continually* the law of sin.

**8:1** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup> For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God *did*: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and *as an offering* for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh (i.e., “as an unregenerate person who has not been born-again and following Jesus” – *my note*), but according to the Spirit (i.e., as a born-again believer, indwelt by the imputed righteousness of Jesus, continually being saved and kept by His grace through faith” – *my note*). <sup>5</sup> For those who are according to the flesh (i.e., the unregenerate – *my note*) set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit (i.e., born-again), the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> For the mind set on the flesh (i.e., unregenerate person – *my note*) is death, but the mind set on the Spirit (i.e., born-again believer – *my note*) is life and peace, <sup>7</sup> because the mind set on the flesh (i.e., unregenerate – *my note*) is hostile toward God; for it *continually* does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is *continually* not even able *to do so* (i.e., because “subjection” to

the law of God is an inward work carried out by the indwelling Holy Spirit in a born-again believer's life [Ephesians 2:10] – *my note*); <sup>8</sup> and those who are *continually* in the flesh (i.e., unregenerate, never having been born-again – *my note*) *continually* cannot please God. <sup>9</sup> However, you are *continually* not in the flesh (i.e., not unregenerate – *my note*) but in the Spirit (i.e., *continually* being born-again – *my note*), if indeed the Spirit of God *continually* dwells in you. But if anyone *continually* does not have the Spirit of Christ, he *continually* does not belong to Him. <sup>10</sup> And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead *continually* dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you. (Romans 7:14-8:11)

The above, amplified passage presents the “real world life” of born-again, Spirit-filled believers, which is who and what Paul was when he penned the above passage under the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Spirit. And it is here, as born-again believers in Jesus Christ, in our struggles and failures as we seek to follow and surrender to the Lordship of Jesus in our lives, that Hebrews 12:4-11 comes into play, and the question is not, “Will God discipline us as His children,” but rather, “When, where, how, and what will be the intensity of His loving discipline?”

When I came to Christ, I was playing football at Mississippi State, and when I went to Mississippi State, I thought it was all about playing football, but God was simply using football to teach me what it meant to follow Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. Thus, I never participated in a practice or a game that I did not make mistakes, and sometimes the same mistakes over again, not to mention some very big mistakes. One such big mistake resulted in me being pulled out of the game by my coach and sitting out the rest of the game. That following week, he put me through what seemed “Hell” in practice, continually working with me to correct my mistake (which I had periodically made before in other games, but not with the resulting exploitation by the last opponent). At one point during that week in my dorm room, I was filled with self-pity. However, God sovereignly had me read Hebrews 12:4-11 that week, and when I did, I saw that my being on the football field was not about Justin Alfred being seen, but rather, it was about Jesus being seen in and through me as I played, giving a 150% effort to do my best in the Lord's strength, NOT MY OWN! As a result of that week, I was tempted in other games to be drawn into the same trap I was before, but I remembered the PAIN of the discipline for my failure, AND I NEVER DID IT AGAIN! In the same way, as believers in Jesus Christ, we may have areas of struggle in our lives that are perhaps ongoing, but it is not a

question of, “Will God will correct me,” but rather “when, how, where, and the intensity of the correction” in order that we “may share His holiness” (Hebrews 12:10), and experience the “peaceful fruit of *His* righteousness” (Hebrews 12:11) in our lives .

Throughout the Bible, we see God working in and through the lives of men and women whom He called to His ministry. However, there are five men in particular – Abraham, Moses, Samson, David, and Peter – who, apart from Peter, are in the “Roll Call of Faith” in Hebrews 11, and they have made an impression upon me. The above, stated men all lived in a world much like ours today, with the perverted, ungodly, and manifold areas of deceptive alternatives to following the Lord we are facing. Therefore, the five, analyzed Worldviews we looked at are nothing new, but have always been with us in varying forms of manifestation and enablement. In addition, as we are facing various forms of temptation through the Worldviews we discussed, the men stated above faced various forms of the same temptations we do. In addition, they all experienced various forms of failure in their lives, and that failure in turn resulted in brokenness, which in turn led to their surrendering to the leadership of God in their lives, versus being led by their own narcissistic self-centeredness and self-deification.

Abraham was called out of a godless, pagan society in “Ur of the Chaldees,” which is considered by many archaeologists and Old Testament and Semitic scholars to be the land of ancient Sumer where Kuwait is today. As Abraham passed through Palestine into Egypt because of the famine, he passed his wife off as his sister to Pharaoh to avoid what he thought might be his murder so Pharaoh could take Sarai for his own wife. This was before Abraham was born-again from our perspective, but God delivered Sarai from that horrible situation, and she and Abraham left and went “from Egypt to the Negev, he and his wife and all that belonged to him; and Lot with him” (Genesis 13:1). However, Abraham was quite depressed and discouraged because Sarai had not become pregnant, but when the Lord promised him a son from his own loins (Genesis 15:4), “Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). Thus, it was at this point that Abraham became what we would call a “born-again believer” as Paul describes below:

Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.<sup>8</sup> And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, “All the nations shall be blessed in you.”<sup>9</sup> So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. (Galatians 3:6-9)

Then, in Genesis 16, Sarai becomes impatient, and she and Abraham resort to a current Worldview of their time with regard to having a child – Abraham has intercourse with Hagar, Sarai’s maid, and the child born would be considered to be Sarai’s based on this ancient, Sumerian practice. However, Sarai rejects both the child and Hagar, and the child, Ishmael, ultimately becomes the father of the Arabs, through whom Mohammed is born. After the Lord appeared to Abraham through angelic messengers and told Sarai she would become pregnant within a year, Abraham and Sarah (her name now been changed by the Lord – Genesis 17:15-16) go down to Gerar. And once again, Abraham passes Sarah off as his sister, fearing King Abimelech would kill him and take Sarah for his own wife. Thus, Abraham, after being saved, repeats again an onerous practice of his culture by passing Sarah off as his sister, but God delivers them both. Then we come to Genesis 22 where God tells Abraham to take Isaac (who now is perhaps fifteen years or older) and offer him up as a sacrifice. What we see is that through the brokenness that has occurred in Abraham’s life over his previous failures of being ruled by fear and doubt, God brought him to a place spiritually, mentally, and emotionally where Abraham now totally trusts in the Lord. Thus, Abraham will do whatever God tells him to do, including offering his son up as a sacrifice to God: “He considered that God is able to raise men even from the dead; from which he also received him back as a type” (Hebrews 11:19). Thus, through Abraham’s failures and God’s gracious discipline and breaking of Abraham through those failures, Abraham came to a point of trusting God to the death.

With Moses, God took him from being a future Vice President of Egypt to be a shepherd in the Midian Desert. Then, after of forty years of brokenness, God calls him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, and initially he resists, but he ultimately surrenders, and God powerfully works in and through him. Then we come to the accounts of Exodus 17:1-7 and Numbers 20:2-13. Without getting into an in depth, exegetical, and interpretive analysis of these two passages, I want us to look at these two, different accounts as being accounts about two, different incidents, versus alternative accounts about the same event, as there are exegetical analyses that argue for both positions.<sup>135</sup> However, from my exegetical perspective, taking into consideration the whole

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<sup>135</sup> George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Numbers*, The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, eds. S. R. Driver, A Plummer, and C. A. Briggs (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1903; latest impression, 1986), 260-264; Gordon J. Wenham, *Numbers: An*

of the Exodus account, beginning in Exodus – Deuteronomy, I see this as two, different accounts, with the latter in Numbers revealing the humanness of Moses as a skewed, flawed man like all of us. And like all of us who are God’s children, Moses received God’s loving discipline, which was painful, but necessary for Moses and the Israelites in order to understand God’s holiness and the blessing for obeying, versus, the consequences for disobeying His Word.

Samson is, without any question, one of the most tragic examples of a man whom God greatly blessed and poured out upon him His bountiful grace, but who would consistently follow after his own narcissistic, self-deified, and self-centered pursuits. Samson’s birth was foretold to his mother and his father by an “angel of the Lord” (Judges 13:1-23), and after his birth, “the child grew up and the Lord blessed him” (Judges 13:24). However, as Samson grew into manhood, his sexual lust and desire was apparently very strong in his life, and so much so that when he saw an attractive, young, Philistine woman, he wanted her for his wife (Judges 14:1-3):

However, “Then his father and his mother said to him, “Is there no woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?” But Samson said to his father, “Get her for me, for she looks good to me.”<sup>4</sup> However, his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD, for He was seeking an occasion against the Philistines. Now at that time the Philistines were ruling over Israel. (Judges 14:3-4)

As we read the above passage, we see that totally unbeknownst to Samson, his father, and his mother, God was working in and through Samson’s carnal desire for the young, Philistine woman – in spite of Samson, not because of him – to accomplish His divine purpose. This is a truth that we need to be keenly aware of as we see God working in and around us to accomplish His will as we face worldly temptations and succumb to them at times. Thus, IT IS NOT BECAUSE OF US, BUT IN SPITE OF US that God is doing His work and ministry in and through us. We then read about Samson killing the lion and presenting a riddle to the young, Philistine men of Timnah who had been invited to the wedding celebration. They in turn pressed Samson’s wife to get him to tell them the riddle, and she did, and after Samson told her, she told the young men, who in turn revealed the answer to Samson (Judges 14:5-18). Upon losing the bet with the Philistine young men, Samson in turn goes to the Philistine city, Ashkelon, about 25

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*Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, Volume 4, ed. Donald J. Wiseman (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, England; Downers Grove, IL, 1981), 166-170.

miles southwest of Timnah on the Mediterranean coast<sup>136</sup>: “Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of them and took their spoil, and gave the changes *of clothes* to those who told the riddle. And his anger burned, and he went up to his father's house” (Judges 14:19). Thus, once again, we see God working in and through Samson’s carnality to accomplish His will, NOT BECAUSE OF SAMSON, BUT IN SPITE OF HIM, and this is paramount to understand as we read through the life of Samson.

We then read about Samson returning to his wife, not knowing that her father had given her to Samson’s friend for his wife. That in turn brings on Samson’s act of vengeance of burning the Philistine’s crops with foxes, and that precipitated the Philistines to burn his wife and his father-in-law with fire. Samson then kills many Philistines, and the Philistines come looking for him in Judah. The Judeans confront Samson, and he tells them to tie him up and give him over to the Philistines, and the Judeans follow his instructions. This is followed by his killing 1000 Philistines with the “jawbone of a donkey,” and after this fight, God opened a rock and provided water for him to drink (Judges 15:1-19). At that point, we are told that Samson “judged Israel twenty years in the day of the Philistines” (Judges 15:20).

We then come to the tragic fall of Samson, but also, his spiritual restoration through that fall. We are told that “Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there and went in to her” (Judges 16:1). Subsequent to this, we are then told that “he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah” (Judges 16:4), and both of these women were Philistines, which gives us a picture of Samson’s carnal nature, even though he had a saving relationship with the Lord. As believers, we are fully susceptible, capable of, and in fact do engage in sexual sin with other believers. When that occurs, God’s conviction of the sin in our lives as believers, along with His loving discipline and brokenness for that sin occurs, in order that “we may share His holiness” (Hebrews 12:10). His discipline for our overt, sinful behavior is never pleasant, but it is absolutely necessary because of our flawed, carnal, and narcissistically driven natures as born-again believers in Jesus Christ: “All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness” (Hebrews 12:11). What is even more painful, however, is when a born-again believer becomes involved in a sinful, sexual relationship with a non-believer, which at times can

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<sup>136</sup> Barry G. Webb, *The Book of Judges*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, eds. R. K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 374.

end in very tragic, but redeemable consequences, as the following passages testifies to: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). However, I want to strongly encourage every man, woman, young man, and young woman who reads this to NOT BE DECEIVED BY THE LUST OF YOUR FLESH and the motivating, emotional factors that draw you into a sinful, sexual relationship. But if you are in a sinful, sexual relationship, my prayer for you is that God will open your eyes to what is happening by exposing the emotional lie that led you into it, and in turn, empower you to exit from it.

As we read about Samson’s relationship with Delilah, although nothing is said about it, he was obviously also emotionally hungering for a communal relationship with a woman, which for him, as a man at that point in his life, included the sexual fulfillment of that emotional relationship. Sadly, as with many of us, he did not recognize the emotional lie and deception of his own, carnal, narcissistic nature, but rather his carnally motivated, emotional hunger for a sexual relationship covered over the godly wisdom in his life, as minimal as that wisdom might have been. In the midst of this is the worldly, ungodly, unregenerate, self-deified, and narcissistic standard of living that governed the Philistines, and tragically was infused into Samson’s moral grid of thinking and reasoning, which, without any equivocation, CAN BE THE VERY SAME FOR US TODAY! Delilah was able to manipulate Samson, apparently through her sexual enticement, to give her the secret of his strength. Three times she tried, and each time he deceived her. Finally, the fourth time, Samson “told her all that was in his heart and said to her, ‘A razor has never come on my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaved, then my strength will leave me and I shall become weak and be like any *other* man’” (Judges 16:17). As we read this, it is obvious that Samson was “starved” for the emotional support he thought he was receiving from Delilah, which included their sexual relationship, as it is stated that “he loved” Delilah (Judges 16:4). He obviously saw her exploitation with her wanting to know the secret of his strength, and three times he told her, but each time his strength was never diminished when she said, “The Philistines are upon you Samson” (Judges 16:9, 12, 14)! He may have thought she was just teasing him because no mention is made of the Philistines assaulting him, but rather, it appears they remained hidden to see if his strength was really abated.

As we view the fourth and final attempt by Delilah to gain the knowledge of Samson's incredible, physical strength and fighting skills, we also see the incredible depth of Samson's emotional desire to be accepted, approved, esteemed, and loved by Delilah, as he was challenged by her manipulative question if he really loved her: "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have deceived me these three times and have not told me where your great strength is" (Judges 16:15). At this point, Samson caves in, and we see Delilah's primary, fallacious, and exploitive motive of her relationship with Samson, as she is paid off by the Philistines with money for deceiving Samson:

When Delilah saw that he had told her all *that was* in his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all *that is* in his heart." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought the money in their hands. <sup>19</sup> And she made him sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his hair. Then she began to afflict him, and his strength left him. <sup>20</sup> And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as at other times and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him. <sup>21</sup> Then the Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes; and they brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze chains, and he was a grinder in the prison. <sup>22</sup> However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it was shaved off. (Judges 16:18-22)

In verse 20 above, we are told that "the LORD had departed from him," but what does that actually mean? Does it mean that the Lord no longer had anything to do with Samson and was no more a part of his life in any way? Or does it mean that God allowed Samson to reap the consequences of his failure, but God's grace, mercy, forgiveness, and restoration were always present and fully ready to embrace him and work in and through him, even in his final hour? I believe the following passage helps answer these questions:

Then Samson called to the LORD and said, "O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time, O God, that I may at once be avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes." <sup>29</sup> And Samson grasped the two middle pillars on which the house rested, and braced himself against them, the one with his right hand and the other with his left. <sup>30</sup> And Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" And he bent with all his might so that the house fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed in his life. <sup>31</sup> Then his brothers and all his father's household came down, took him, brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. Thus he had judged Israel twenty years. (Judges 16:28-32)

As we read the above, what we see is that in Samson's final moments, he cried out to the Lord and the Lord answered him, "So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those whom he killed in his life" (Judges 16:30).

What is the lesson we can draw from Samson's life as the basis of his being included in the "Roll Call of Faith"? The following passage gives insight into the incredible depth of God's grace, mercy, love, forgiveness, and restoration for his fallen children, as with Samson, when we call out in brokenness, repentance, and faith, trusting Him to do what we cannot do:

And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets, <sup>33</sup> who by faith conquered kingdoms, performed *acts of righteousness*, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, **from weakness were made strong**, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. (Hebrews 11:32-34)

The point to be made is that regardless of where your life has been as a believer with respect to your failures in following and serving God, as you come broken before the Lord in repentance for your sins and failures, He will take you and work in and through you as He did with Samson. He does this so that others will see the Light of His Eternal Truth in Jesus, come to a saving faith in Jesus, and be delivered from eternal separation from God in Hell, in order to be with the Lord in heaven for all eternity, as was the thief on the cross who was next to Jesus:

And one of the criminals who were hanged *there* was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" <sup>40</sup> But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?" <sup>41</sup> "And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong." <sup>42</sup> And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" <sup>43</sup> And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise. (Luke 23:39-43)

Now indeed, God's judgment was against the utter ungodliness of the Philistines, as we see His judgment will also be against the ungodly who ultimately reject Jesus as being their only Lord and Savior:

For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains *will do so* until he is taken out of the way. <sup>8</sup> And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; <sup>9</sup> *that is*, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, <sup>10</sup> and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. <sup>11</sup> And for this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what

is false,<sup>12</sup> in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness. (II Thessalonians 2:7-12)

However, we also see that “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (II Peter 3:9).

Therefore, in summing up Samson’s life as a “man of faith” (Hebrews 11:32-34) who was constantly confronted with the godless world view of the perverted, self-deified, and sin embracing Philistine culture, he became a compromised believer. However, God worked through him, but it was **TOTALLY IN SPITE OF HIM, NOT BECAUSE OF HIM**, and God did so up through the final hours of his life. Thus, as compromised a believer as Samson was, God honored his brokenness, repentance, and faith, and through Samson, God brought great judgment upon the Philistines. Thus, if any of you who are believers find your walk to be compromised in our perverted generation as was Samson’s, then the Lord calls upon you now to come broken before the Him in repentance and turning from your sin to Him. And He, by the indwelling power of His Holy Spirit, will accomplish a work of restoration in you, through which you will come to realize the abundant life Jesus came to give you as you walk in the following path: “And He was saying to *them* all, ‘If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.’<sup>24</sup> For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it” (Luke 9:23-24).

The next man I want to look at is David. The Lord chose David as the youngest of his brothers to be the future king of Israel (I Samuel 16:1-13). David in turn became an attendant for Saul, soothing him with his harp and “the evil spirit would depart” from Saul (I Samuel 16:14-23). Then Goliath challenges the Israelites, and David kills Goliath (I Samuel 17:1-58), and David and Jonathan, Saul’s son, become close friends. However, Saul begins to turn against David because of his popularity with the people (I Samuel 18:1-19). David ultimately marries Saul’s daughter, and through that process, Saul becomes even more fearful of David becoming king (I Samuel 18:20-30). Through many more intrigues, David becomes the enemy of Saul, but David continually honors Saul as king, even when David has a chance to kill Saul twice, but he spares Saul each time (I Samuel 24 & 26). Ultimately, Saul and his sons are killed by the Philistines (I Samuel 31), and after this, there was a civil war “between the house of Saul and the house of David” over who would be the king (II Samuel 3:1-4:12). David prevails and becomes

king over all of Israel (II Samuel 5:1-5), “And David became greater and greater, for the LORD God of hosts was with him” (II Samuel 5:10).

However, as God is blessing David as the new king over all of Israel, we read the following:

Then Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David with cedar trees and carpenters and stonemasons; and they built a house for David. <sup>12</sup> And David realized that the LORD had established him as king over Israel, and that He had exalted his kingdom for the sake of His people Israel. <sup>13</sup> Meanwhile David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he came from Hebron; and more sons and daughters were born to David. (II Samuel 5:11-13)

In all of the conflict in David’s life, from his conflict with Saul and with those after Saul’s death who wanted to establish “the house of Saul” as preeminent and ruling over Israel, to his final position as King over all of Israel, David was in the thick of spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical conflict from all sides. Thus, where you are as an individual and we are as Christian believers, we are all facing personal, state wide, and national conflicts of a “world view capacity” that would be comparable to what David faced. I say this because we have the tendency to think that times and people are completely different, but in truth, from the Fall of Man forward, things remain the same with regard to the conflicts we all face. That being the case, what must also be uppermost in our minds is the fact that as born-again believers in Jesus Christ, we are all **FLAWED, SKEWED, AND NARCISSISTICALLY CARNAL** human beings in whom the Spirit of God dwells, and this was **UNEQUIVOCALLY THE SAME** with David! In the above quote, therefore, we read that David “took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem after he came from Hebron,” which was indeed a common practice in the whole of the Ancient Near East, and we see that throughout the Old Testament, from Abraham forward, multiple wives and concubines was a common practice. On the other hand, from a purely, human perspective, this gives a picture of men’s lust and desire for multiple, sexual relationships, which in Old Testament times (and today in Islam), men were allowed to have multiple wives and concubines (women who were sexual servants) as they chose.

Now we come to David’s failure. As flawed, skewed men and women, our narcissistic, self-centered, lustful pride can be and is one of the greatest pitfalls in our lives, and so too with David. In II Samuel 12, David had won a major victory over the Aramaeans, which could be comparable to God giving us a victory over the perverted, godless, and atheistic forces in our

nation as we, by the power of His indwelling Spirit, engage in conflict against their lies with the truth of God's Living and Eternal Word, and then we read the following:

Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out *to battle*, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed at Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> Now when evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance. <sup>3</sup> So David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" <sup>4</sup> And David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house. <sup>5</sup> And the woman conceived; and she sent and told David, and said, "I am pregnant." (II Samuel 11:1-5)

Subsequent to Bathsheba telling David about her being pregnant, David then does the following in order to attempt to cover his sin and failure, with the following results:

Then David sent to Joab, *saying*, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." So Joab sent Uriah to David. <sup>7</sup> When Uriah came to him, David asked concerning the welfare of Joab and the people and the state of the war. <sup>8</sup> Then David said to Uriah, "Go down to your house, and wash your feet." And Uriah went out of the king's house, and a present from the king was sent out after him. <sup>9</sup> But Uriah slept at the door of the king's house with all the servants of his lord, and did not go down to his house. <sup>10</sup> Now when they told David, saying, "Uriah did not go down to his house," David said to Uriah, "Have you not come from a journey? Why did you not go down to your house?" <sup>11</sup> And Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah are staying in temporary shelters, and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field. Shall I then go to my house to eat and to drink and to lie with my wife? By your life and the life of your soul, I will not do this thing." <sup>12</sup> Then David said to Uriah, "Stay here today also, and tomorrow I will let you go." So Uriah remained in Jerusalem that day and the next. <sup>13</sup> Now David called him, and he ate and drank before him, and he made him drunk; and in the evening he went out to lie on his bed with his lord's servants, but he did not go down to his house. <sup>14</sup> Now it came about in the morning that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent *it* by the hand of Uriah. <sup>15</sup> And he had written in the letter, saying, "Place Uriah in the front line of the fiercest battle and withdraw from him, so that he may be struck down and die." <sup>16</sup> So it was as Joab kept watch on the city, that he put Uriah at the place where he knew there *were* valiant men. <sup>17</sup> And the men of the city went out and fought against Joab, and some of the people among David's servants fell; and Uriah the Hittite also died. <sup>18</sup> Then Joab sent and reported to David all the events of the war. <sup>19</sup> And he charged the messenger, saying, "When you have finished telling all the events of the war to the king, <sup>20</sup> and if it happens that the king's wrath rises and he says to you, 'Why did you go so near to the city to fight? Did you not know that they would shoot from the wall?' <sup>21</sup> 'Who struck down Abimelech the son of Jerubbesheth? Did not a woman throw an upper millstone on him from the wall so that he died at Thebez? Why did you go so near the wall?'-- then you shall say, 'Your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead also.'" <sup>22</sup> So the messenger departed and came and reported to David all that Joab had sent him *to tell*. <sup>23</sup> And the messenger said to David, "The men prevailed against us and came out against us in the field, but we pressed them as far as the entrance of the gate. <sup>24</sup> "Moreover, the archers shot at your servants from the

wall; so some of the king's servants are dead, and your servant Uriah the Hittite is also dead." <sup>25</sup> Then David said to the messenger, "Thus you shall say to Joab, 'Do not let this thing displease you, for the sword devours one as well as another; make your battle against the city stronger and overthrow it'; and *so* encourage him." <sup>26</sup> Now when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. <sup>27</sup> When the *time of* mourning was over, David sent and brought her to his house and she became his wife; then she bore him a son. But the thing that David had done was evil in the sight of the LORD. (II Samuel 11:6-27)

From David's perspective, he thought he had covered his sin, and indeed he had with regard to "human beings." However, if you are a child of God, you must understand that it is not a question of if God will deal with your sin and my sin through His loving discipline, but only when, how, and the intensity with which He will do it, as has already been quoted above on pages 95-96 with Hebrews 12:4-11. However, after all of this, "Then the Lord sent Nathan to David" (II Samuel 12:1), and he confronted David with his sin. Nathan gave him a story of a man who was very rich and had many lambs, but instead of using one of his own lambs to feed a friend, he took the one lamb a poor man had. At this, David became furious, and Nathan in turn followed up with the real story about David:

Then David's anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, "As the LORD lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. <sup>6</sup> "And he must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion." <sup>7</sup> Nathan then said to David, "You are the man! Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. <sup>8</sup> 'I also gave you your master's house and your master's wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if *that had been* too little, I would have added to you many more things like these! <sup>9</sup> 'Why have you despised the word of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon. <sup>10</sup> 'Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' <sup>11</sup> "Thus says the LORD, 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes, and give *them* to your companion, and he shall lie with your wives in broad daylight. <sup>12</sup> 'Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.'" <sup>13</sup> Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD." And Nathan said to David, "The LORD also has taken away your sin; you shall not die. <sup>14</sup> "However, because by this deed you have given occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born to you shall surely die." <sup>15</sup> So Nathan went to his house. Then the LORD struck the child that Uriah's widow bore to David, so that he was *very* sick. (II Samuel 12:5-15)

The baby ultimately died, and that was indeed part of the consequences of David's sin and failure. However, there are five things that I want to point out concerning the above passage:

- 1) As all of us do from time to time, David became very self-righteous concerning the “rich man’s sin,” so much so that he thought he ought “to die,” but then Nathan revealed to David that David was the man! Therefore, as we go out to address the pagan, perverted atrocities we see in our nation by narcissistic, lost, unbelieving men and women (including teenagers and younger), let us not forget that but for the grace of God, we would be doing the same. In fact, perhaps we already have, but God, by His loving grace and mercy, has delivered us from a Hell aimed lifestyle of eternal and temporal self-destruction through the Blood of Jesus Christ, WHICH NONE OF US DESERVE ONE SPECK OF!
- 2) David owned his sin when confronted by Nathan, but Saul never did – he always blamed someone or something else for his actions, versus owning his sin and taking full responsibility (I Samuel 13:11-14; 15:1-23). However, even when Saul did outwardly confess his sin, Samuel knew it was a show before the people in order to gain their support, and Samuel told Saul that the Lord was going to give his kingdom “to your neighbor who is better than you,” and that neighbor was David (I Samuel 15:24-35).
- 3) God forgave David his egregious sin, just as He will and does forgive you and me for our egregious sins as His children, but with that forgiveness, depending on what our sin and failure is or was, there will be attending consequences (II Samuel 12:10-12), as with David’s baby dying and Absalom’s rebellion and death. This is all part of God’s loving discipline in our lives, whereby we “share His holiness” and experience “the peaceful fruit of His righteousness” (Hebrews 12:4-11).
- 4) The fourth point is that for us who are children of God and have truly come broken and repentant before the Lord for our sins and failures, God will indeed continue to minister in and through us for the glory of Jesus, and in order for Jesus to be seen, not for us to be seen: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30). Thus, God did not have David stoned for his sin, nor did He remove him from his position as King, but God did a work in David in which, as stated in John 3:30, the focus in David’s life became on serving God as His servant more than ever before in his life, so that His truth would become proclaimed to others, versus David’s narcissistic, self-centered, and egotistical plans. However, as with all of us, so too with David, our “dying to self” is an all day, every day walk, which if not consistently walked in, we too, like David, can fail the Lord again in a major way. This happened with David when he had a census taken based on his own, carnal, narcissistic plan, versus what

God was directing, and consequences followed. But here too, David repented and owned his sin, and God's mercy also followed (I Chronicles 21). However, after looking at the above man who was indeed a child of God and chosen by God for the ministry God placed him in, through a heart of deep brokenness over his sins and failures, the following Psalm was penned by David:

Be gracious to me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Thy compassion blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. <sup>4</sup> Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, And done what is evil in Thy sight, So that Thou art justified when Thou dost speak, And blameless when Thou dost judge. <sup>5</sup> Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. <sup>6</sup> Behold, Thou dost desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part Thou wilt make me know wisdom. <sup>7</sup> Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. <sup>8</sup> Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which Thou hast broken rejoice. <sup>9</sup> Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. <sup>10</sup> **Create** (◇)□α□ - *bārā*) **in me a clean heart**, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. <sup>11</sup> Do not cast me away from Thy presence, and do not take Thy Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup> **Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit.** <sup>13</sup> **Then I will teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners will be converted to Thee.** <sup>14</sup> Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; *Then* my tongue will joyfully sing of Thy righteousness. <sup>15</sup> O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Thy praise. <sup>16</sup> **For Thou dost not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; Thou art not pleased with burnt offering.** <sup>17</sup> **The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.** (Psalm 51:1-17)

- 5) The fifth and final point is that when God sees us through the Jesus' shed blood for our sins, He no longer sees our sins and failures, but rather, He sees the imputed righteousness of Jesus who was sacrificed for us: "He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (II Corinthians 5:21). This you can see as you read through the "Roll Call of Faith" in Hebrews 11, where no mention is made of Noah's, Abraham's, Moses', Samson's, or David's sins and failures, but only their obedient faith, which is itself a gift from God: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and **that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;** <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, that **no one should boast.** <sup>10</sup> **For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,** which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8-10). Therefore, the following passage about David is important for us because it is based on the above stated truths found in II Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:8-10, and Hebrews 11:

Now in the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, Abijam became king over Judah. <sup>2</sup> He reigned three years in Jerusalem (913-911/10 – *my note*); and his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom. <sup>3</sup> And he walked in all the sins of his father (Rehoboam, 931-913 – *my note*) which he had committed before him; and his heart was not wholly devoted to the LORD his God, like the heart of his father (i.e., his great-grandfather – *my note*) David. <sup>4</sup> But for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, to raise up his son after him and to establish Jerusalem; <sup>5</sup> **because David did what was right in the sight of the LORD, and had not turned aside from anything that He commanded him all the days of his life, except in the case of Uriah the Hittite.** (I Kings 15:1-5)

As we read the above passage, the chronicler of I Kings (whoever he may have been) had a view of David that certainly included his sin and failure regarding Uriah, although no mention was made of the census he took (I Chronicles 21). However, he is giving a picture of David that transcends his real and genuine sins and failures in the light of David's overall faith and obedience to God. On the one hand, David paid dearly with the consequences of his sins and failures in his earthly life, but through the promised, Messianic covering of his sin (for him it was future, but for us, it is completed), God sees David as righteous through the blood of Jesus in the same way He sees us. And again, that is the one and only thing that any of us as children of God can appeal to, **BUT IN THAT TRUTH WE STAND THROUGH THE BLOOD OF JESUS ALONE AND HIS GIFT OF FAITH:**

But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, <sup>22</sup> even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; <sup>25</sup> whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. *This was* to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; <sup>26</sup> for the demonstration, *I say*, of His righteousness at the present time, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. <sup>27</sup> Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No, but by a law of faith. <sup>28</sup> For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law. <sup>29</sup> Or is God *the God* of Jews only? Is He not *the God* of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, <sup>30</sup> since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one. (Romans 3:21-30)

The last person we will discuss is Simon Peter, and that which we will focus on is just before Jesus was taken prisoner by the “chief priests and officers of the temple and elders who had come against him” (Luke 22:52):

Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat; <sup>32</sup> but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers." <sup>33</sup> And he said to Him, "Lord, with You I am ready to go both to prison and to death!" <sup>34</sup> And He said, "I say to you, Peter, the cock will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me." (Luke 22:31-34)

Peter was a very proud man, but also a man of intense commitment and confrontation. He was the first one to confess, through the insight given him by the Holy Spirit, that Jesus was the Messiah (Matthew 16:13-20), and he was the one disciple who defended Jesus against the Jewish leaders who were wanting to take Him prisoner (Matthew 26:51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:50; John 18:10). What is so remarkable in the above passage about Jesus telling Peter what Peter was going to do is that Peter, in his own carnal, skewed, and flawed opinion of himself, couldn't even begin to see himself as such a coward (Matthew 26:31-35; Mark 14:27-31; Luke 22:31-34). However, Jesus knowing Peter "before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:3-14), also knew what sins and failures Peter would commit. Now please understand, this in no way excuses Peter for what he did, nor for what we do, as we are each responsible for our choices and actions, but it does say that as God's children, if He knows something as insignificant to us as "the hairs on our head" (Matthew 10:29-30; Luke 12:6-7), how much more is He intimately aware of the sins we have committed, we are committing, and we will commit!

As we look at Peter's three denials, what is important for us to see and know is that just as Jesus told him he would deny Him, Peter did, and with the third denial, Jesus and he looked at each other, and Peter wept bitterly in the face of his failure (Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-18, 25-27). But what is so very important for us to see is that Jesus not only told Peter he would fail, but He also said, "but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers" (Luke 22:32). In other words, before Peter began his ministry under the anointing and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, Peter had to be broken in the area he was the most confident and proud of himself, and that was that he would stand up to anybody attacking Jesus, even to the point of death, and he would not back down. Thus, what had to happen in Peter's life was that he had to be broken in the area of his carnal, narcissistic pride concerning his own strength, power, commitment, and faithfulness in comparison to others, as he said, "*Even* though all may fall away because of You, I will never fall away," and, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You" (Matthew 26:33, 35). Jesus knew this had to happen in Peter's life, AS WELL AS IN

THE LIVES OF ALL OF US! Consequently, what we see happen in men and women of God whom God has chosen to demonstrate His power, love, and grace through to a lost and dying world, and to struggling believers in their growth in Christ, is to allow failure to occur in that area of their lives where they pridefully think they are the strongest, and this was so with all of the men we have looked at. Therefore, as we look at Luke 22:32 a bit more deeply, we will see some powerful truths contained in that brief statement by Jesus: “but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers”:

- 1) The first thing to note is the verse before, where Jesus said, “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat” (Lk. 22:31). The first thing to take note of is that this is exactly what we find with Job as Satan wants to do the same thing to Job. God at first allowed Satan to attack Job’s family, but not Job, and then He allowed Satan to attack Job’s physical body, but He wouldn’t allow him to take his life, and in all of this, Job continued to praise the Lord (Job 1:6-2:11). In the New Testament Greek, the word “demanded” in Greek comes from the verb ἐξαίτεω (*exaiteō*), which means “to ask for and demand.”<sup>137</sup> However, what is important here are the tense and voice being used, which indicate that at some specific point, Satan, from within his very being and the essence of his nature, was beginning to make this demand to God.<sup>138</sup> The next thing is the phrase, “to sift,” and that comes from the Greek verb σινιάζω (*siniazō*), which means “to shake in a sieve and sift.”<sup>139</sup> Thus, Satan was wanting to turn Peter upside down spiritually and emotionally so as to cause him to turn away from God, but Jesus saw this from a different perspective.
- 2) Notice that Jesus, like God with Job, didn’t deny Satan’s request, but what He did say was, “but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.” Now getting back to the focus of our study, which is Worldviews and how we can be a witness of God’s truth to those caught up on the lies of Satan, we too are going to face Satan’s attempt “to sift us like wheat” as we stand for God’s Eternal Truth in the lying darkness permeating our culture by “the god of this world” (II Corinthians 4:1-4). But just as Jesus was praying for Peter, we also have the assurance that

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<sup>137</sup> Arndt and Gingrich, 271.

<sup>138</sup> Alfred, *Simplified Greek Grammar* - The verb is an aorist, middle indicative, which in this instance within this particular contextual setting, it would be an ingressive aorist, emphasizing the beginning of an action; the middle voice would be the reflexive middle, indicating this was coming from within the very being of Satan; and the indicative mood, indicating an actual happening in which Satan is confronting God concerning Peter specifically – pages 54, 61-62.

<sup>139</sup> Arndt and Gingrich, 759.

He is interceding for us constantly before God our Father, and we will overwhelmingly conquer in Christ just as Peter did (Romans 8:31-39).

- a) The phrase “I have prayed for you” in the Greek is an emphatic statement, “but I Myself have personally prayed for you concerning the totality of this encounter you are going to have.”<sup>140</sup>
- b) “that your faith, throughout this whole ordeal, will not come to an end, give out, and be eclipsed by Satan’s lies” is the amplification the phrase, “that your faith may not fail.”<sup>141</sup>
- c) “when once you have turned again” is a powerful statement, and it may also be amplified, “after you have turned around in your arrogant, prideful narcissism, and you see that it is not your power, but the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit in you that makes the difference.”<sup>142</sup>
- d) “strengthen your brothers” is focused on a broken, humbled Peter, through failure, who can now minister to others who have failed, are broken, and humbled by their failures. The word “strengthen” comes from the Greek verb **στηρίζω** (*stēridzō*), and it means “to set up, establish, support, confirm, and strengthen,”<sup>143</sup> and the idea is to do “firmly” accomplish those things in someone’s life.<sup>144</sup>

However, this failure was just the beginning of Peter’s breaking, and this is true for all of us. After Jesus had risen from the dead, he went to the Sea of Tiberius where His disciples were fishing. They had been out all night and caught nothing, but in the early morning, Jesus was standing on the beach, and the following took place:

But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>5</sup> Jesus therefore said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." <sup>6</sup> And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you will find *a catch*." They cast therefore, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. <sup>7</sup> That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord." And so when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped *for work*), and threw

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<sup>140</sup> Ibid., The Greek verb “prayed” is an aorist passive indicative, and in this instance, it is a constative aorist, covering the beginning and the ending of the action – page 54.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid, The Greek verb “fail” is an aorist, active subjunctive, implying that at no time, during the totality of the spiritual, mental, and emotional battle Peter will encounter, his faith will not be overshadowed by Satan’s lies.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid., The Greek verb “turned” is an aorist, active participle, emphasizing the fact that before he can even begin to minister to any others, there must first of all be a “turning around” from his former attitude, which for him will involve great failure before others, so that he will know is it not Peter doing anything, but rather, the Lord in and through him.

<sup>143</sup> Arndt and Gingrich, 775.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

himself into the sea. <sup>8</sup> But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net *full* of fish. <sup>9</sup> And so when they got out upon the land, they saw a charcoal fire *already* laid, and fish placed on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have now caught." <sup>11</sup> Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn. <sup>12</sup> Jesus said to them, "Come *and* have breakfast." None of the disciples ventured to question Him, "Who are You?" knowing that it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Jesus came and took the bread, and gave them, and the fish likewise. <sup>14</sup> This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead. (John 21:4-14)

This now begins the conversation Jesus had with Peter that even more so brought Peter to the end of himself. Jesus asks him, "do you *continually*<sup>145</sup> love (ἀγαπάω – *agapaō*) me more than these? He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I *continually* (φιλέω – *phileō*) love you.' He said to Him, 'Tend my lambs'" (John 21:15). Jesus is gently, lovingly, but firmly confronting Peter in his narcissistic, prideful arrogance, as he portrayed himself to Jesus as being far better than the other disciples regarding his faithfulness to Jesus, but he was indeed exposed as being the very same as they. This is crucial for all of us, as our natural tendency is to elevate ourselves above others to mentally and emotionally establish our superiority over them, but if this our attitude of spiritual superiority when speaking and sharing with non-believers who are embracing sick and perverted world views, then we are finished before we even begin. Thus, Jesus asks if Peter "*continually*<sup>146</sup> loves (ἀγαπάω – *agapaō*)<sup>147</sup> Him," which is the highest form of love that Peter was proclaiming earlier (Matthew 26:33, 35), and Jesus is exposing his prideful, narcissistic arrogance. Peter of course responds with φιλέω – *phileō*,<sup>148</sup> which simply means a strong attachment, but not a "love to the death" he had originally proclaimed. Then again Jesus asks Peter, "Simon, *son* of John of John, do you *continually* love (ἀγαπάω – *agapaō*) Me? He said to Him, 'Yes Lord; you know that I *continually* love (φιλέω – *phileō*) You.' He said to him, 'Shepherd My sheep'" (John 21:16). Jesus goes from "tending the lambs" to "shepherding the sheep," which is an inclusive role of responsibility in caring for the baby lambs, to the adult sheep. However, as Jesus presents the question the third time, Peter is broken to his core: "He said to him the third time, 'Simon, *son* of John, do you *continually* love (φιλέω – *phileō*) Me? Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, 'Do you *continually* love (φιλέω –

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<sup>145</sup> Alfred, In Greek, the present tense carries the meaning of continuous action – 48.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Arndt and Gingrich, 4-5.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid., 866-867.

*phileō*) Me? And he said to Him, ‘Lord, you know all things; You know that I *continually* love (φιλέω – *phileō*) You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Tend my sheep’” (John 21:17). After this last statement by Jesus to Peter, Jesus then went on and described what kind of death Peter would die (John 21:18-19). Peter then turned around and saw John, and he said to Jesus, “Lord, and what about this man? Jesus said to him, ‘If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me’” (John 21:21-22).

As we look at this last encounter Jesus had with Peter, Jesus is also saying the same to each of us. That is, we need to be focused on what Jesus is calling us to do, versus what He is calling someone else to do. We are all to be a witness of His saving power to those who do not know Him as their Lord and Savior, and to believers, we are to be an encouragement, a help, a support, and when needed, a vessel through which the Lord can give proper, and at times, corrective guidance (Hebrews 10:23-25). However, with regard to the latter, we need to always keep in mind that regardless of the misdirection a believer might be in, but for the grace of God, we could possibly be in the same place : “Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted” (Galatians 6:1). And this is especially true concerning false or misdirected teaching that a believer might slip into through the subtly perverted and misguided teaching of the various Worldviews we have looked at.

I want to finish this study and teaching with the following admonition for all of us, regardless of how long we have been a believer, or how much we have studied God’s Word and related studies: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15). God’s Word, not the word of any man or woman about His Word, needs to be our standard, and may we, like the Bereans, be men and women who make that our “grid for truth”:

And the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea; and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. <sup>11</sup> Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, **examining the Scriptures daily**, to see whether these things were so. <sup>12</sup> Many of them therefore believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men. (Acts 17:10-12)