

## The Need For A World and life View

### Introduction

- A. One of man's greatest needs, surpassed only by the spiritual, is for an understanding of life through which he may discern value and meaning.
- B. To a large degree this is the goal of every intellectual endeavor. We may, however, approach this from the perspective of philosophy, or psychology, science, anthropology, or any of the major disciplines.

### I. The Definition of a World and Life View.

A world and life view is an intellectual perspective or pattern whereby life, man, history, reality, etc., are meaningfully explained and evaluated. This involves some type of ultimate (God, Man, Nature), some type of rationale for living (God's glory, Humanity, Hedonism), some kind of method which determines success (Faith-Righteousness, Wisdom, Utilitarianism), and some kind of defense for this way of life (Coherence, Tradition, Success).

### II. The Explanation Related to a World and life View.

- A. All select and group - whether unconsciously or consciously.
- B. All think according to certain presuppositions\*
- C. All engage in the universals - particulars issue.
- D. All search for value and meaning.

### III. Illustrations of Various World and Life Views.

- A. In philosophy: Empiricism, Rationalism, Phenomenalism, Hegelianism, Positivism, Existentialism.
- B. In psychology: Structuralists (Wilhelm Wundt), Functionalists (John Dewey), Psychoanalysts (Sigmund Freud), Behaviorists (E. L. Thorndike), Gestaltists (Max Wertheimer). (F.L. Ruch, Psy. and life.)
- C. In educations: Naturalism, Idealism, Realism, Pragmatism. (J.D. Butler, Four Philosophies and Their Practice in Education . . .)
- D. In theology: Liberalism, Neo-Orthodoxy, Neo-Evangelicalism, Fundamentalism, Pantheism, Deism, Ecumenism.

Each man's judgment of the nature of the moral claim (ethics) is at one and the same time an evaluation of himself and of the universe of reality in which he lives . . . The values which men give priority, and equally those they repudiate, imply a definite, however inarticulate, concept of God, of man, and of the moral order. . . To judge the moral order spurious, or, conversely, valid, is at the same time to pass a verdict upon the whole of reality and, unavoidably, to define the nature of man himself. (Carl F.H. Henry, Christian Personal Ethics, p. 22)

### IV. General Background.

- A. Man was created in God's image and likeness.

It is extremely important to realize that we were created as a person, a spiritual, moral, rational, emotional, volitional, physical person - with profound ability - particularly regarding love, righteousness, holiness, knowledge, etc. (Matt. 22:37-40; Eph. **4:24**; Col. 3:10).

B. Man is now a fallen person - subject to all forms of alienation.

In regard to our theme we have lost the knowledge and largely the knowing-perspective given in creation.

This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk (live) not as other Gentiles (non-Christians) walk (live), in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart. Who being past feeling (ceased to care) have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. (Eph. 4:17-19)

C. God has revealed Himself - and truth - to us.

1. General revelation. (Romans 1:20; 2:15,15)

2. Special revelation. (John 1:14,16-18; Hebrews 1:1-3)

Observation: Because man is a sinner he has a built-in tendency to reject the Biblical concept of God, truth, righteousness, and salvation (Romans 1:18; I Cor. 1:18; 2:14). While tremendously able to work in general revelation (science, etc.) his work results in "islands of truth" and not a coherent world and life view.

d. Areas of basic issue.

1. There has always been a tendency for man to gravitate toward making himself (Man) central. This means that his reason and/or experience are made authoritative, and all motivation and goal, value and meaning revolve around what it means to be "Man".

2. In this search for value and meaning in himself, there are certain areas of profound difficulty which constantly plague him.

a. The problem of evil.

b. The problem of right and wrong.

c. The problem of truth and error.

d. The problem of guilt and forgiveness.

e. The problem of value and meaning.

f. The problem of absolutes and relatives.

g. The problem of infinite and finite.

h. The problem of universals and particulars.

Conclusion: It is helpful for the Christian to realize how the Bible gives us answers in all of these areas.

Victor M. Matthews