



# 1550 Evangelism II



## Section II The Need for Contextualization: World-views and Evangelism

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# The World Has Changed!



Sept. 2008



## There is Still Hope!





# **Peter's Audience and Worldview Vs. Paul's Audience and Worldview**



# What is a Worldview??

[www.thefreedictionary.com/](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/)

***n.*** In both senses also called ***Weltanschauung***.

- 1. The overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world.**
- 2. A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group.**





# What is a Worldview?



- An ontology, a descriptive model of the world
- An explanation of the world
- A futurology, answering the question "where are we heading?"
- Values, answers to ethical questions: "What should we do?"
- A praxeology, or methodology, or theory of action.: "How should we attain our goals?"
- An epistemology, or theory of knowledge. "What is true and false?"
- An etiology. A constructed world-view should contain an account of its own "building blocks," its origins and construction.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worldview>



# What is a worldview?



**Universes fashioned by words and concepts that work together for all thought and action**

- What is prime reality-the really real?
- What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?
- What is a human being?
- What happens to a person at death?
- Why is it possible to know anything at all?
- How do we know what is right and wrong?
- What is the meaning of history?

Sire, James W. 1997. *"The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog."* Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press.



## Peter's Audience Worldview

- **Story**
  - ◆ One God: who made the entire universe—eliminate evil and restore justice
- **Election:**
  - ◆ Covenant with Israel to be a light of the world: restore creation; suffers because of infidelity; but need to restore
- **Eschatology: Still in “exile” when and how will restoration (of nation) occur?**
- **Temple, Land, Torah, Symbols**

## Paul's Audience Worldview

- **Story**
  - ◆ Polytheistic, pantheistic
  - ◆ God's vengeful and wrathful (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*)
- **View of Man**
  - ◆ No individual Value; for state only
  - ◆ No moral base (Schmidt, A. 2004. “How Christianity Saved the World.” Zondervan)
- **Eschatology**
  - ◆ Reward or punishment Depending on warrior, good citizen, or bad.  
([http://www.novaroma.org/religio\\_romanana/afterlife.html](http://www.novaroma.org/religio_romanana/afterlife.html))

Wright, N.T. 1992 “The New Testament and God.”.  
Minneapolis: Fortress Press



## **Peter's Audience Worldview (Act 2)**

### **Existence:**

- Real, but created

### **Determination of Reality:**

- Revealed

### **Knowledge:**

- Revealed, inductive reasoning

### **Truth:**

- Absolute

### **Purpose:**

- To do the will of God

### **Ethics and Morals:**

- Defined by God

## **Paul's Audience Worldview**

### **Existence:**

- Real, but self centered

### **Determination of Reality:**

- Deductive Reasoning

### **Knowledge:**

- Reason

### **Truth:**

- Relative

### **Purpose:**

- Enhance “**Digitas**”;  
personal pleasure/pursuit

### **Ethics and Morals:**

- Self Determined





# Historical Development First Century to Today



# Historical Development: 349 C.E. to the Middle Ages



**St. Peters began 349**

- Scholars guided by the Roman Catholic Church
- People Followed the Church as authority



- God is an immediate cause of every natural effect
- God's causal activity in nature is not exhausted by His creating and conserving material substances
- Each material or corporeal substance possesses and exercises its own proper causal powers (including free choice)



# The Renaissance: “Rebirth”



**Gutenberg Bible: 1445**

## •Back to the Sources!!

- Christ Alone!
- The Bible Alone!
- (Faith Alone!)
- (Grace Alone!)

■ Knowledge largely consists of insight into or perception of the ideal (Plato)

■ Reality is fundamentally something ideal or abstract

■ Rational thinking and experimentation by man can discover this reality (humans exercise power over nature:

Bacon(Grenz)).

■ Rediscovery of the classics

■ God is still in the picture



# The Enlightenment 1650-1800

**Medieval/ Reformation  
Theology**

**God Working in  
History**



**Age of Reason  
Theology**

**The Human Story  
Fitting  
God  
In.**





# The Enlightenment Principles

**HUMAN PROGRESS RESULTS FROM APPLICATION**

**HARMONY RULES-ONE TRUTH**

**AUTONOMOUS BUT SUBJECT TO NATURAL LAW**

**NATURE AND NATURAL LAW WILL REVEAL GOD**

**REASON IS THE ARBITAR OF TRUTH, NOT REVELATION**

**FOUNDATION STATEMENTS**

Grenz, S. 1996. *"A Primer on Postmodernism."* Grand Rapids:Errmans



# RELIGION AND AGE OF REASON

- Natural Religion led to deism
  - ◆ There is a Creator, immortality, retribution for sin, ethics for living; nature reveals
- Others: Revealed religion is necessary to supplement natural religion
- All emphasized “Nature” and Nature’s God instead of the Bible as sole revealed truth
- Emphasis on the self: “I think therefore, I am”



# Influence on the Church

- **The Renaissance**
  - ◆ **Restore the teachings and true spirituality of ancient Christians**
  - ◆ **Scripture Alone**



# Influence on the Church

- **Age of Reason (The Enlightenment)**
  - ◆ **Scripture Alone**
  - ◆ **Restoring “Patterns and Forms”**
  - ◆ **Reduce “to practice that original form of Christianity” upon which all could agree**
  - ◆ **Essentials are commands “ in express terms or approved precedent”**
  - ◆ **Rational Inquiry into essentials to restore the church**
  - ◆ **Freedom of the individual**

Allen, C. and Hughes, R. 1988.

*“Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of the Churches of Christ.”* Abilene :ACU Press





# Influence on the Church

## ■ Enlightenment Results

- ◆ Restoration of “doctrine” and forms
- ◆ Neglect of relationships
  - ◆ Neglect of the “doctrine of grace”
  - ◆ Neglect of brotherly love and moral purity
  - ◆ Neglect of life in the Spirit



# The Rise of Modernism: Philosophical Basis

**Kant: Man has a universal moral nature**

**Kant: We can only “know” what we experience**

**Kant: Knowledge is not from Senses Alone—  
Add Formal Concepts present in the “mind”**

**Hume: Sensual impressions do not explain causality or substance**

**Locke: “The Passive Mind”—”Blank Slate’ /empiricist**

**Descartes: Knowing by reason alone: “I think therefore I am”**



# The Rise of Modernism: Philosophical Basis

- Own rational thinking self and culture reflects the universal ( rejected in Postmoderism)
- Rise to radical individualism: rational autonomous self can know the universal principals

**Kant: The Centrality of the Self—from this to all “selves”**



# The Modern Worldview



# Rise of Modernism

- Questioned “cause and effect” as reality
  - ◆ How can we know there is Creator as “First Cause”?
- Cannot define “substance” by impressions of senses
  - ◆ Therefore cannot know there is a soul
- Evil and Injustice Cannot Exist with a “Good Creator”



# Modernism

- In essential matters, everyone is the same
- “Sense experience” and universal “moral experience” exist
- Each of us by rational thinking should be able to determine (discover) correct actions and morality that are universal
- The individual is the center
- God is no more



**Starship Enterprise**

**“To boldly go  
where no man  
has gone  
before”**

- **To search for knowledge in the universe as the “final frontier”**
- **All “nations of humanity” join together**



- **Represents transcendent human ideal: all problems solved rationally**
- **Human emotion side held in check**



# Postmodern Worldview





## “Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as Incredulity Toward Metanarratives.”

Lyotard, Jean-Francois. Translation by Bennington and Massumi, Brian. 1984. *The Post-Modern Condition, A Report on Knowledge.* Minneapolis: University of Minn. Press. Also

<http://books.google.com/books?id=ajqdpRHpO->

[oC&dq=The+Postmodern+Condition,+a+Report+on+Knowledge&pg=PP1&ots=Upul3hwSLM&sig=075Xs-zSxF2pTxBWBhea-2AXogA&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&resnum=1&ct=result#PPP1,M1](http://books.google.com/books?id=ajqdpRHpO-oC&dq=The+Postmodern+Condition,+a+Report+on+Knowledge&pg=PP1&ots=Upul3hwSLM&sig=075Xs-zSxF2pTxBWBhea-2AXogA&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=1&ct=result#PPP1,M1)

- A metanarrative is a grand narrative that provides a universal world-view.

It “exercises a force apart from argumentation and proof and , in fact, it provides the principal means by which every community legitimates itself” (Grenz. Pp. 44)

**CHRISTIANITY:** creation, fall, redemption, restoration

**MODERNITY:** Rational thought & science = upward progress

**MARXISM:** Revolution = capitalism fall= proletariat



# **Postmodernism: Philosophical Basis**

**Rorty; Pragmatist. Truth is a convention of language. It is never beyond community in which one lives.**

**But result should be cultural pluralism/not relativism**

**Derrida: Denies that written language has a single meaning connected to a fixed reality. “Deconstruction” of text.**

**Foucault: “Knowledge is Power”; Practices and institutions Produce those claims to knowledge the system of power finds useful<sub>(Grenz)</sub>**

**Nietzsche: Rejects Enlightenment Idea of Objective Values or Truth One Can Discover: There is the “Will to Power”**

**Nietzsche: “truths are illusions” of the constructs of different things or occurrences**



# Postmodern Thought

- All attempts to construct an objective “real” world are doomed—fictional constructs of the mind.
- Reality is “read” differently by each individual.
- Therefore, there is no transcendent one meaning to the world or truth
- “Knowledge” is not inherently good



# What Are the Premises of Postmodernism

- No objective body of knowledge exists
- No human “self” can possess such knowledge.
- No transcendent objective truth or authority exists
- It is impossible to distinguish between what is real and the language we use (our linguistic interpretations)

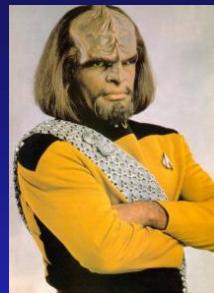


# What Are the Premises of Postmodernism

- “Knowledge” is not value free
- The “pursuit of knowledge” benefits specific classes
- Knowledge is linked to power
- “Everything one can say about truth or rationality is imbedded in the understanding and concepts unique to the society in which one lives”. Each “community” determines it’s own truth.



■ **Boldly go where no one has gone before**



■ A partnership with the universe  
■ The community of the universe



■ Data. A fully realized rational Machine. But desires to be Human..



■ Troi. Intuitive. Able to perceive hidden feelings of others



“Q”. God-like. All powerful. All seeing/everywhere. Morally ambiguous



# **Implications of Postmodernism vs. Modernism for Evangelism**



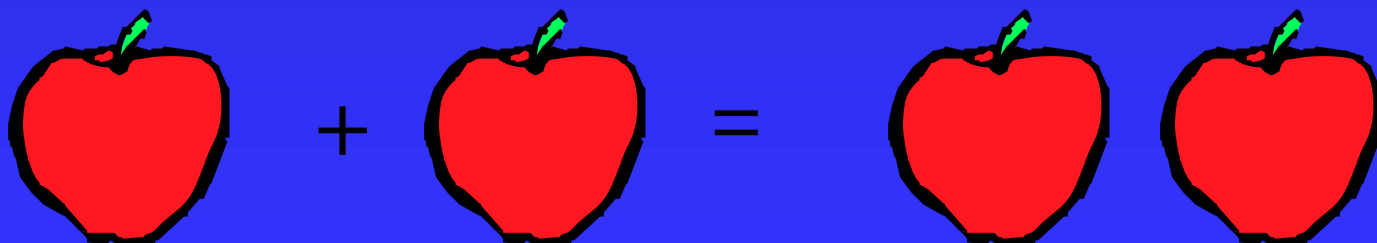
# What is Revealed Truth?



## ■ אמת (*emet*): Old Testament

- ◆ True, certain, sure, i.e., that which conforms to reality, and is so certain not to be false (e.g. Deut. 17:4)

$$1 + 1 = 2$$





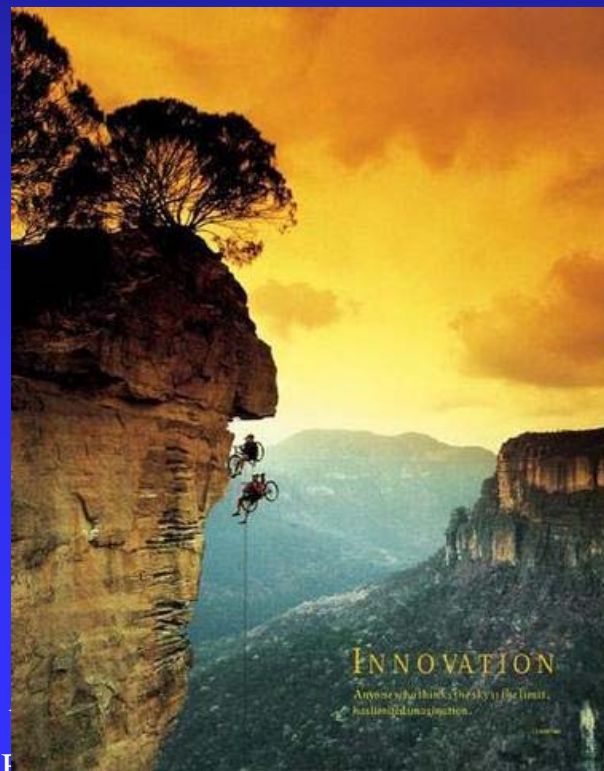


# What is Revealed Truth?



■ אֱמֶת  
(*emet*): Old Testament

■ Faithfulness,  
reliability,  
trustworthiness, i.e., a  
state or condition of  
being dependable and  
loyal to a person or  
standard (Ge 24:27);  
God in Ps 108:4



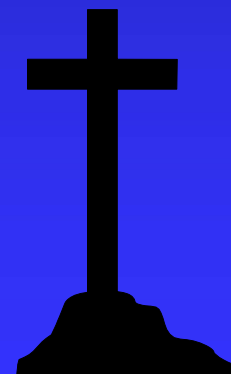


# What is Revealed Truth?



- ◆ Or a eternal reality not limited to historical fact (John 14:6)  
[also Platonic Greek]

**John 14:6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.**





# What is Revealed Truth?



- ἀλήθεια (*alētheia*) *New Testament*
  - ◆ That which is in accord with what really happens, facts that correspond to reality, i.e. Historical fact(in the time/space continuum) (Eph. 4:25)

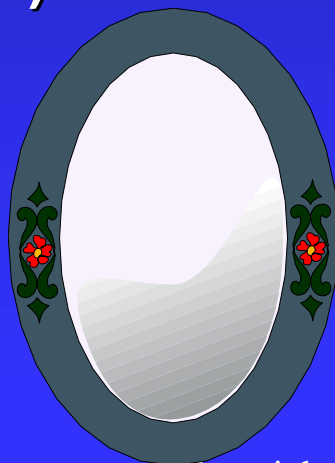
**<sup>25</sup> Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body**



# What is Revealed Truth?

- ἀληθινός [*alethinos* /al·ay·thee·nos/]
  - ◆ That which has not only the name and resemblance, but the real nature corresponding to the name, in every respect corresponding to the idea signified by the name, real, true genuine. (Jn . 6:32)

Not  
A Image



But  
The  
Real  
Thing





# What is Revealed Truth?

- “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.



Image

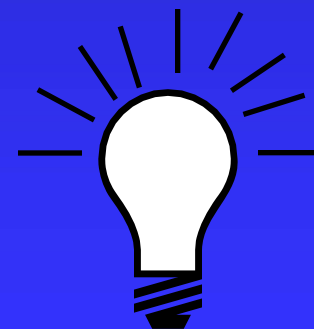
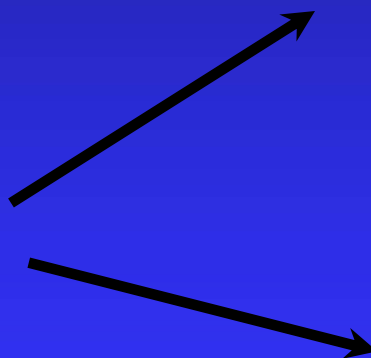


Thy word is truth



# What is Knowledge?

- Requires a knower (mind) and object to be known





# What is Revealed Knowledge?

- ◆ Intellectual, eternal, immaterial (I Jn 5:20)
  - ◆ <sup>20</sup> We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.



# What is Revealed Knowledge?

- ◆ Matters of fact, material (Matt. 25:13)
  - ◆ “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.
- ◆ Moral, ethical (Prov. 1:7)
  - ◆ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,
  - ◆ but fools despise wisdom and discipline.





# Truth for Postmoderns

- **Three Errors of Moderns**
  - ◆ **An objective body of knowledge exists and is waiting to be discovered**
  - ◆ **That they possess such knowledge and it is value free**
  - ◆ **The pursuit of knowledge benefits all mankind rather than a specific class**



# Describe this scene

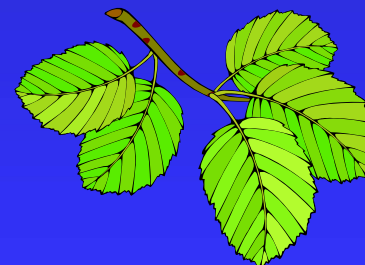
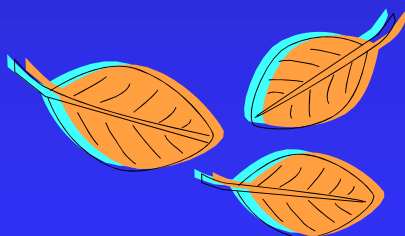
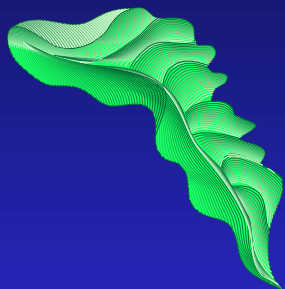


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# What Are These?





# The Effect of Language



- Correspondence Theory of Reality
  - ◆ “Snow is White”
- Non-realist
  - ◆ “Snow is White” because that is what we have chosen to call it.



# Implications for Revealed Truth

- It is impossible to distinguish between what is real and the language we use (our linguistic interpretations)
- Therefore, it is the “response” of the reader that determines the truth.
- All “truth” is thus a fabrication or myth
- “Truth” is the result of the power structures that make the language structure possible—religious or otherwise



# Implications for Revealed Truth

- **“Reader- Response” theory of interpretation of the bible**
- **Everything in the bible is by men – representing only the “truths” of the culture of the time they were written**
- **Evangelism is imposition of “power” over others**
- **Evangelism is bigotry and intolerance**



# What is truth?



John 14:6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

**BEHOLD THE MAN !**

**What Does This Mean?**



# TRUTH IS PERSONAL IN CHRIST

**John 1:14** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

**John 18:37** I came into the world, to testify to the truth.

If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

└ **Truth: “Fidelity to an original or standard” Webster**





# Therefore: Truth is RELATIONAL

- Relationship: “the state of being related or interrelated”
- Related: “to show or establish logical or causal connection between”
- Personal: “carried on between individuals directly”



**BEHOLD THE MAN !**

**To know truth is to have  
a personal relationship  
with Christ**



# The Implications

- The church of the Restoration Movement embraced rationality.
- Those in the postmodern generation cannot be reached initially by a reliance on the authority of God, Christ, and the Bible.
- They cannot be reached by using solely the Enlightenment rational approach.
- We must forge new paths that are paths they can understand.



# Initial Implications

## Restoration/ Modernism

### Rationality

- Forms
- Patterns
- Structure
- Doctrine
- Facts

## Postmodernism

### Community

- Relationships
- Connectedness
- Belonging
- Feelings