

How Can I Evaluate Non-Christian Worldviews?

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All worldviews provide answers to life's fundamental questions. If one knows biblical answers to such questions—as he should—he can take those and compare them to answers from other worldviews. The differences become clear. Below are just seven of those basic questions followed by biblical answers.

1. *What explains and is the cause of everything (that is, what is the prime reality, the unmoved mover, the uncaused cause)?* The one and only transcendent God who is triune, uncreated, infinite, loving, just, rational, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent. His reality explains and is the cause of everything else.

2. *What is the source of knowledge and truth?* Absolute truth, real right and wrong, and real knowledge about God and the world are discoverable and knowable because God has chosen to make them discoverable and knowable. There are two sources. First, there is natural knowledge where the transcendent God communicates naturally (through the conscience, observing creation, and the use of reason). But since man is finite, his knowledge will be limited. And since man is fallen (see #5), his understanding of knowledge and truth are often corrupted. Second, there is special revelation (the Bible) which is inspired and inerrant. This source alone supplies knowledge and truths that natural knowledge does not when it comes to salvation.

3. *How is the universe explained?* God created and preserves the universe. He is the “Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.” (Nicene Creed) God is separate from and above His creation, though He always has been and will be personally involved with it. He continues to preserve it, either directly (supernaturally) or indirectly (through the laws of nature and the vocations of people in the world).

4. *What is man? What is his relationship to God and the rest of creation?* Man, as the pinnacle of God's creative work, was made in God's image. In a narrow sense, this means man originally had a perfect righteousness and holiness. In a wide sense, the image of God means that man is personal, self-aware, creative, rational; he realizes there is transcendent truth, morality, justice, purpose, destiny, beauty, and goodness; he is to rule wisely over God's creation. This image of God gives man a sacred value that other creatures do not have and connects man to the

Creator in a way that other creatures are not. At the same time, man remains connected to other creatures in that he is created—he is not God.

5. *Is there real evil and, if so, where did it come from?* Evil was brought into the world in the historical event of the Fall when Satan succeeded in tempting Adam and Eve to reject God as God, resulting in total sinfulness (loss of God's image in the narrow sense), spiritual death, physical death, and eternal death in hell. Man's relationship with other human beings is also corrupted as evidenced by hatred, murder, jealousy, perversion, war, family breakdown, tyrannical leaders, corrupt laws, and false religious teachings that leave man without hope.

6. *What is the solution for evil?* The only solution for man's sinfulness and God's punishment of eternal death is Justification: total and free forgiveness by faith alone in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, true God and true man, and His real substitutionary work of atonement for all sin for all men accomplished in time and space on the cross. Christ proved this accomplished work by bodily rising from the dead, followed by His ascension to the right of His Father. This faith in Jesus that saves is worked and preserved within man solely by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel in Word and Sacraments. Through these means the believer also comes to love God and his neighbor, rejects evil, perseveres in trials, and looks forward to the return of Jesus Christ and the certain hope of eternal life.

7. *Will this world continue? Will there be some sort of “end game”?* The end will come with the final return of Christ in all His glory, at which point the dead will be physically resurrected, all will be judged, the present universe will come to an end, and each person will enter eternity in either hell or the perfect and amazing heaven that Christ himself has prepared for those who have trusted in Him.

Rev. David Thompson is pastor of St. Timothy Lutheran Church, Lombard, Illinois, and author of *What in the World Is Going On? Identifying Hollow and Deceptive Worldviews*.

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