

Worldview

Paradigm shift

We see by what we are
We are by what we choose
We choose by what we know
We know by what we see

We see what we already have seen
Unless
We believe what we haven't seen yet

WORLDVIEW

- A world view is a model that attempts to explain all of reality.
- It provides an overall picture of reality into which one can fit all pieces of life.
- It involves our wisdom, intellect and mind, emotion, desire, will, and spirit.
- It is a set of presuppositions, assumptions, and the very foundation on which we live.
- A paradigm is a totality of knowledge we have about anything around us filtered and interpreted with our internal capacity of discernment, associations and logical deductions.
- We look at any new reality through our glasses which is our personal grid shaped by our cultural background.
- This set of world view could be learned throughout life and any changes to it, is called a paradigm shift or religious conversion.

The worldview is composed from the answers to these questions:

- What is prime reality? Eternal
- Who is in charge of this world? Theology
- What is the nature of the world around us? The Universe
- What is human being? Anthropology
- What happens to a person at death and after? Eschatology
- Why is it possible to know anything at all? Epistemology
- How do we know what is right and wrong? Ethics, Morals
- What is the meaning of human civilization? History

Theism - A world + an Infinite God

- The main concern is with the nature and attributes of a personal God
- God is infinite and personal (Triune), transcendent, immanent, omniscient, omnipresent, sovereign, good
- God created the cosmos ex nihilo to operate with uniformity of cause and effect in an open system to his intervention and sustaining.
- Human beings are created in the image of God can know something of God and cosmos and can act significantly.
- God does communicate with us.
- We were created good but now are fallen and need to be restored by God through Christ.
- Death is either the gate to life with God or life forever separated from God.
- Ethics is transcendent and based on God's character.

All attributes of God follow from the Aseity (I AM) YHWH

- 1. Eternality. Being the eternal IS He cannot change
- 2. Immutability. He has no becoming, no change.
- 3. Omniscience / omnipresence. Sees all from the eternal now
- 4. God is necessary not contingent. He must be. He Is.
- 5. Unlimited. Limited space implies a start and an end point
- 6. Infinite. Has no time (time describe change only)
- 7. God is pure act, while the creation is act plus potency.

We have attributes, God is every attribute.

Jesus says: I am the way, the truth and the life.

Theism - A world + an Infinite God

- The universe is opened, God is involved in its operations
- We are personal and we make conscious decisions, not merely reacting to environment.
- There are 4 characteristics for a living organism:
 - DNA, metabolism, react to environment, to reproduce
 - Man has also self-conscious, and self determination.
- People have personality and are capable of transcending the cosmos.
- Ethics and morals are transcendent, immanent not inherent to the universe (from outside the internal dynamic of universe) and based on God's character.
- There is an absolute standard for these moral judgments
- History is linear, having a beginning and a direction.

Deism – A world on its own made by God

- 1. A shift from the special revelation of God to a scientific inquiry of the ordered universe.
- 2. Knowledge becomes the power to manipulate and bring creation under human dominion. Applying the scientific methods to knowledge about God.
- 3. God *can be known only by human reason*, not by revelation.
- 4. God created the world and left it on its own. The universe is closed in a cause – effect relationship.
- 5. God is impersonal, an IT not a Thou. The Force is IT.
- 6. Human beings have no relationship with God, and cannot transcend the universe.
- 7. We can know God only by studying the world around us, through empiricism and science.
- 8 Ethics makes the assumption that whatever is, is right.
- 9. Man live by reason, pursuing happiness and freedom
- 10. Moral rules are relative to different cultures. Man has afterlife, in an immaterial nature, and God is not concerned with history.

Finite Godism – A world with a finite God

- 1. God is finite in power and love.
- 2. The world which God did not create places external limits on his ability to do all that he wants.
- 3. Creation operates by natural laws subject to entropy.
- 4. Miracles do not occur as they would be a violation of natural laws.
- 5. Man is created, but God uses evolution to produce man.
- 6. Man survive death in their souls.
- 7. Human destiny is uncertain, and God himself is struggling with evil, without assurance of a final solution.

Naturalism – A world without God

- Rene Descartes set the stage by proposing that the universe is a gigantic mechanism of matter which people comprehend by mind.
- He splits reality in two kinds of being:
 - mechanistic matter and mind.
- John Locke removed the “God given” concept and made “reason” the sole criterion in finding the truth.

Naturalism – A world without God

- 1. Matter exists eternally and is all there is. God does not exist.
- 2. The matter created itself. Exists in space and time, held together from within.
- 3. The universe exist as a uniformity of cause and effect in a closed system, not opened to reordering from outside.
- 4. Human beings are “machines”, personality is a chemical and physical interrelation.
- 5. Death is extinction of personality and individuality as they are biological functions.
- 6. History doesn't have a purpose. It is only what we make it to be.
- 7. Evolution has no goal but still has an unexplained progress, and life worked without any goal against the universal entropy or general decay.
- 8. There a re no transcendent morality, only autonomous and situational as fitted to the human need and interest for general happiness.
- 9. Values are specific to a culture and are relative, there are no absolutes.
- 10. The good consists of general disinterest – a way of alleviating the disorder and frustration.

Secular Humanism and Marxism

- Human beings are of special value and their aspirations, thoughts and yearnings are significant.
- Marx combined Hegel's philosophy that God is a being not distinct from the world but a reality progressively realizing itself (dialectical in nature)
 - with
- Feuerbach's materialism asserting that human beings "are what they eat".
- He introduced historical and dialectical materialism, which sees the history of mankind as an economical struggle.
- Human beings are self creating, inventive in finding ways to manipulate any system for their selfish benefits.

Nihilism – A desperate world

- Nihilism is more a feeling than philosophy. It is a search for significance.
- It is the natural child of Naturalism. It is its consequence.
- Naturalists are happy with their self-conscious, self-determined beings in universe because they don't go too much in philosophy.
- Nihilists see the loss of purpose in a closed system. A nihilist ask questions.
- Naturalists define transcendent attributes of man but Nihilists say that there could be no "transcendence" in a closed system.
- We don't know what "caused" us to decide. Something did, but we feel it was our free choice.
- We are not responsible as we are determined by some external course of events. We are machines, toys of impersonal cosmic forces
- Our will is the will of the cosmos. We do not act on the world, but the world acts on us. We only react.
- As conscious machines incapable to change our destiny we are valuable but dead and with no significance. We care about universe but with no input.
- Chance is causeless, purposeless, directionless, absurd and opened to caprice. We are self-conscious but with no value in this closed system.

Nihilism – A desperate world

- Naturalists places us in a “box”, and cannot explain why we have knowledge
- For us to know that the “box” is true, we need to stay outside the box or to have some other being outside it to tell the truth.
- Epistemological nihilism: -we cannot know for sure anything about ourselves, as we don't transcend and there is no revelation from outside.
- They conclude that nothing is real:
 - neither existence, nor knowledge, ethics, beauty, reality.
- For Naturalists, the world is merely there, with no becoming or change, it is closed to oughtness. This is an internal inconsistency as something with a before and an after has to have a start point “in time” initiated from outside.
- Cultural relativism is a self defeating assumption as is relative for relativists
- An absolute standard is always an absolute assumption for absolutists.
- An absolutist can judge a confused relativist which has no standard, just his relative affirmations valid only to him.




Atheistic Existentialism – A heroic world -Overman

- Nihilism points out life's loss of meaning. Life is absurd. *Daa!*
- If we alone make values, by our own standard, there is no way to arbitrate between two free value makers.
- Existentialism is an answer to Nihilism, wants to transcend it.
- Looks for man's significance in an insignificant world. Inconsist.
- The Objective world (matter, energy, laws, unconscious, just is)
- The Subjective world (mind, will, awareness, freedom)
- The brain secrets thoughts, the existence precedes essence. We make ourselves what we are. We are what we do and act.
- We dream against a universe that is impervious to our wishes.
- In this absurd objective world, the person must create value for self and community and live heroic for his temporary happiness




Theistic Existentialism—A world that needs to believe

- Does not start with God but with man’s self awareness.
- Look around, check your desires against the reality, look for a meaning to your existence and choose to believe. It’s helpful.
- The person is the valuable. The person needs to relate to reality by I-It relation but also needs I-Thou relation.
- Historical facts of the Bible are not important; what is important is to believe and practice the morals taught in it for a good life.
- Christ didn’t atone for us but is an example of ‘new life’ to follow
- Each person reenacts the fall of Adam which is symbolic.
- Miracles are impossible, the Bible is a myth and a symbol practical for humanity in bringing a good life.



Theistic - Deistic

	Personalized (I – Thou)	Depersonalized (I – It)
SIN	Betraying a relationship	Breaking a rule
REPENTANCE	Sorrowing over a personal betrayal	Admitting guilt
FORGIVNESS	Renewing fellowship	Canceling a penalty
FAITH	Committing oneself to a person	Believing a set of propositions
CHRISTIAN	Pleasing the Lord	Obeying rules



Eastern Pantheistic Monism – A world that is God

- Hinduism, Buddhism, Greek philosophers, Transcendental Meditation, and New Age.
- The world is God and God is the world. Differ as how God and the world are to be identified.
- Absolute pantheism (Only one Being in the world - God) Parmenides 5-th century B.C.
- Emanational (everything flows from God) Plotinus 3-rd A.D.
- Developmental (absolute spirit) Hegel, 1800
- Modal (all things are modes of the substance) Spinoza, 1650
- Multilevel (highest level being God) Hinduism
- Zen Buddhism, where Zen teaches nothing, he just points the way
- Permeational (the Force penetrates all) Star War
- Cyclical history, evil that is good, knowledge that is ignorance, time that is eternal, reality that is unreal, rejecting reason and logic as a category.
- Because of these, the West has a communication problem with the East.

Hinduism - Zen Buddhism

- The soul of each human being is the Soul of cosmos. Atman is Brahman
- Nothing exist that is not God (impersonal infinite reality)
- All that appears to exists that is not in God is illusion (maya)
- To “know” reality is to pass beyond distinction, is to “realize” oneness of all by being one with all. To “realize” is to abandon personhood and knowledge
- To be is not to do nor to know. Meditation empties the mind
- The principle of noncontradiction doesn’t apply to ultimate reality. Any statement separates A from non A and is only half of the truth.
- Karma is “to reap what you sow”. There is no forgiveness, and a sin must be worked out by multiple reincarnations. Personal suffering will benefit you.
- At death one goes from personal to impersonal and back through incarnation
- History is cyclical. Death is no big deal, nothing of value perishes.
- For Buddhism, the final reality is the Void. Nothing that can be grasped.
- The Void is nothing, a nonbeing, a no-mind, but is the Origin of all

Panentheism- A world in God

- Process theology (God is changing)
- Bipolar theism (God has two poles):
 - one actual pole, the world, temporal, finite, relative, dependant, and
 - an abstract potential pole where God is unchanging and eternal.
- The universe is in process of changing, or becoming, is eternal, is God's body, but miracles do not occur
- Man is finite, free, moral being, co-creator with God and of God.
- There are no absolute values, man has no personal immortality, he will live only in God's cosmic memory
- History is an ongoing evolutionary process of divine achievement

New Age – Man is God- Man is the universe

- New consciousness – emphasis on epistemology - life is about seeing, experiencing, perceiving, "believing is being" and one can make himself believe anything.
- Related to animism and occultism (pagan religion), witches, sorcerers, offerings, incantations, crystal balls, tarot cards, training to control spirits, consulting "the other side" - all accepted as description of reality – there is no critique of anyone's idea
- Cosmos is a continuum of spirit and matter.
- The self, (the soul) is the prime reality. Man manipulate the universe which is visible, perceived by five senses, and invisible (mind at large) –perceived by altered states of consciousness. Man doesn't need ethics as he is the king and can do no wrong
- Cosmic consciousness in which space, time, morality (good and evil) disappear
- Death is a transition to another form of life
- Conceptual relativism –difference between objective and perceived reality - argues that " to have a new world, one needs to have a new symbol system"
- Our system is of literary correspondence to reality, their mediums operate in a world of metaphysical system (no time, no good-evil, other mystical senses)
- This "new system" frees a person to believe anything that will bring the desired result
- But this doesn't free a person from the pessimism of a closed universe and nihilism
- Closed system spirituality enslaves, Christian, transcendental spirituality liberates
- Epistemological nihilism – We can never know what really is, we can know only what we experience or like to accept in our "new consciousness" fabricating our own realm

Postmodernism

- When God dies, both the substance and the value of everything else die too.
- Their concern is not what is, or how we know what is, but how language functions to construct meaning.
- There is no connection between what we think and say with what is actually there. Nothing we think we know can be checked against reality as such.
 - Apart from our linguistic system we can know nothing, language is a human construct,
 - we can't determine the truthfulness of the language, only the usefulness
 - Truth is whatever we can get others to agree to by our language, we create truth by our language that serve our purpose
 - there is no truth of correspondence, the meaning is not in the text but in what the reader take them to mean.
 - we understand the text for what we want it to be. (we understand by our presuppositions formed in a closed system)
- All narratives are used to gain power. Language and knowledge is power
- Human beings make themselves who they are by the languages they construct about themselves. We are only what we describe ourselves to be
- Ethics, as knowledge is a linguistic construct. Good is whatever society takes it to be
- There is nothing inside us except what we alone have put there. (*Or be born again?*)
- Their wonder is about what is really real, how we can know anything, why do we think we know at all, why do we think we should be good. (*Or what is good and bad?*)

Conclusion

- A formula for anarchy is found in the movement from:
- Premodern concern for a just society based on revelation from God, to
- Modern attempt (Descartes) to use the Reason as the guide to justice, to
- Postmodern despair (Nietzsche) of any universal standard for truth and justice
- Theism puts Being before Knowing. God Is and reveals to us who know Him
- Descartes was interested in how one knows rather than what he knows. He doubted and wanted to be certain of his thoughts. "I think therefore I am"
- When Human reason became autonomous, knowledge gave man power over nature, and science made huge progress, but philosophy moved from the revelation of God to self, that reasons on its own, which was fatal.
- Major issues - knowing how one knew, or what we think we know we really do know
 - No confidence in human reason because the thinking doesn't need an object but can produce illusion of an object.
- In a closed system, where transcendence is not accepted, the truth about reality itself is forever hidden from us. We can never know ourselves from inside this closed system. All we can do is to tell stories. That's why we talk nonsense and not basics
- A world without God is trapped and confused in the shifting of life's focus; from being (Premodern), to knowing (Modern), to constructing meaning (Postmodern)
- *"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things..." Rom. 1:28*
-became futile in their thoughts.. (21) -professing to be wise they became fools..(22)