

WORLD-SHAKING WORLDVIEW

Part Two

By John Gagliardi



In Part One we looked at some of the issues facing Christians today in an increasingly hostile world, and the importance of using the mind God gave us to understand and interpret what is going on around us.

We will now look in more depth at what a worldview means, and why it is crucial that Christians should understand the full implications of living out a genuine and authentic Christian worldview. We need to know what God expects of us, and how we implement strategies to counteract the “new tolerance” and to stop and even reverse the headlong slide down the “slippery slope” of moral relativism and situational ethics.

The prophet Hosea issues a stark and very sobering warning, a warning that is as relevant today as when he wrote it to the Northern Kingdom of Israel around 722 B.C. In Hosea 4: 6, he says: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge”.

Israel’s Northern Kingdom at that time was affluent and full of luxury, yet morally and spiritually bankrupt. There is a disturbing parallel to our times. Chuck Missler, in a recent web article in “*Koinonia House Online*”, says: “They enjoyed material prosperity unequalled since the time of Solomon ... However, they had also sunk to their lowest ebb of immorality and idol worship.

“In addition to idolatry, other sins denounced by Hosea included social injustice, violent crime, religious hypocrisy, political rebellion, dependence upon foreign alliances, selfish arrogance and spiritual ingratitude.

“And we (also) have sunk to moral depths lower than could have been imagined only a generation ago. We are so ‘sophisticated’ that we condone homosexuality as an ‘alternative lifestyle’. We murder babies that are socially inconvenient. We change marriage partners like

a fashion statement. We have abandoned the sanctity of commitment in our marriages and in our business enterprises. Our entertainment industry celebrates adultery, fornication, violence, aberrant sex practices and every imaginable form of evil.

“There is nothing new in the ‘new morality’ – they practised it in 700 B.C., and were ultimately destroyed as a result. And so may we be.”

Today, Christians try to ignore what is going on around them, and to try to “fit in” so we don’t cause any trouble. But God doesn’t tell us to “fit in” – He calls us aliens in an ungodly culture, He tells us we are in the world but not of it, and we are to be the “salt” and the “light” to our culture.

We must understand what is going on in the world around us, or like the Israelites in Hosea’s time, we too will be destroyed for “lack of knowledge”. Isaiah says much the same thing as Hosea in Isaiah 5: 13 – “My people have gone into captivity because they lack knowledge”.

We started out this three-part series by saying that God had given us a mind, and expected us to use it. God clearly enjoins us to understand what is going on around us, and to rise up and oppose it. We are in a battle, and there is no neutral ground in this battle.

There is a telling verse in the Book of 1 Chronicles, that should encourage us even if we feel we are just a small minority in an overwhelming culture of humanism and new-age neo-paganism. In Verse 32 of Chapter 12, where it talks of the men armed for battle who came to David at Hebron, we read this: “The men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do – 22 chiefs, with all their relatives under their command”.

The key phrase here is “understood the times”. Just 200 leaders, who understood and knew what was going on around them, provided leadership for the whole nation and changed their world in their time. They used their God-given minds and intellects to understand the times, allowing them to take action and become “world shakers and history makers”.

They understood the times – and had a very definite view of their world and their role in it. In other words, they had a “worldview”.

David A. Noebel, in his book *The Battle for Truth*, says: “Too many Christians are ill-prepared to lead. The vast majority have no concept of the components of their worldview ... Christ’s teachings impart ... a noon-bright faith to all Christians who master their worldview, who understand the times ... We believe that a comprehensive knowledge of the Christian worldview and its rivals will provide today’s believers with the understanding necessary to become Christian leaders.”

A “worldview” is simply the underlying assumptions and presuppositions that affect how we view the world around us and its ideas and ideologies. It is often described as the “lens” through which we view the world. David Noebel defines “worldview” as “any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man’s relations to God and the world. Specifically, a worldview should contain a particular perspective regarding each of the following 10 disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics and history.

“If Biblical Christianity contains a specific attitude toward all 10 disciplines, it is, by our definition, a worldview. And since it contains a theology, it is by implication a religious worldview.”

According to Noebel, the Christian worldview – based on the Bible and the embodiment of Christ’s claim to be the “way, the truth and the life” (John 14: 6) – is “the only worldview that provides a consistent explanation of all the facts of reality ... the one worldview based on truth.”

The other three main worldviews that saturate the modern mind are:

- Secular Humanism – an atheistic and materialistic worldview that basically avers that “man is the measure of all things” – man is his own “god”, with all truth and morality relative and personal, and with a strong foundation on evolution and spontaneous generation;
- Cosmic Humanism (New Age Movement) – A worldview that is a modernized form of pantheism – God is not separate from His creation, but in everyone and everything; all truth resides in the individual, a belief in reincarnation and witchcraft, psychic channeling, pyramid power etc – and behind the extreme forms of the animal rights and feminist movements; and
- Marxism/Leninism – Not dead with the fall of the Soviet Union, but alive and well in the upper echelons of universities and colleges; atheistic and materialistic, it is based on a belief that man is basically good, but corrupted by bad economic systems, and that when the “state” withers away after a violent class struggle (dialectical materialism), mankind will emerge triumphant and good, freed from the opium of the masses (religion) and the economic bondage of capitalism and private property.

David Noebel says: “Marxism and Secular Humanism are similar in a number of ways ... The two are family. Secular Humanism is the mother ... and Marxism is the daughter. Secular Humanism is the root; Marxism is the branch. At the heart of both worldviews are atheism, materialism, spontaneous generation, evolution and moral relativism.

“Further, Cosmic Humanism and Secular Humanism are close kin. The New Age Movement is little more than spiritualized Secular Humanism. Take the Secular Humanist’s exaltation of self and hatred for Christ, sprinkle in some meditation, reincarnation and anti-rationalism, and Presto! You’ve created another worldview...There is little difference between claiming no god exists, and claiming everything is god.”

Whether we are in business, full-time pulpit ministry, or any other form of Christian endeavor, it is crucial that we understand our worldview, and that it clashes with other competing worldviews. Ultimately, Jesus is the dominant figure of history – the “hinge on which the door of history swings”.

In the next and final article in this series, we will look at some of the practical steps Kingdom business professionals, and Christians generally, can take to impact their culture for Christ by living out a consistent Christian worldview.