

Disciples Church

A Firm Foundation

Non-Christian Worldview and the Christian Worldview

Week of June 27, 2018

Handout Notes

**For audio of previous lessons, please visit:**

[**http://discipleschurch.com/summer-apologetics-series/**](http://discipleschurch.com/summer-apologetics-series/)

*This audio/link is intended for Disciples Church Midweek participants only.*

**To submit questions for consideration for our upcoming Q&A night, please email to:** [questions@discipleschurch.com](mailto:questions@discipleschurch.com)

Philosophy- The study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, especially when considered as an academic discipline.

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

1. **The Non-Christian Worldview**
2. **The Structure**

The specifics of the non-Christian’s philosophy come about because of his/her character.

Ephesians 4:17-19

Unbelievers live in futility because their character is enslaved to sin, and they remain in denial of the Creator-creature distinction.

Philosophy that is based on an allegiance to independence (from God) claims to have truth, but it cannot.

All non-Christians reject Christ every time they assert to be independent; therefore, they cannot be fundamentally right, for they have rejected the only source of truth.

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

What Jesus says is truth; therefore, to deny Him is to hold to falsehood at the root of your beliefs.

1. **The Dilemma**

The atheist claims to be certain about God not existing; however, if God does not exist, the unbeliever cannot know anything for certain.

The fact that the unbeliever is made in God’s image is an inescapable truth.

For the unbeliever to claim truth of any sort, to hold any solid view, he must do so in total disregard for his limited knowledge and rebellion against God. On the other hand, if the unbeliever is honest with his view and says he can’t truly know anything, then he reveals his conundrum. By making this claim, the unbeliever is making a truth statement--the very thing he said is not possible according to his world view.

This view cannot exist logically; it presents too many fallacies. But this is the pickle I’m referring to.

1. **Regarding God**

Atheists would hold that they are absolutely certain there is no God. They must either hold with certainty that they have exhaustive knowledge of all things or give up their certainty that God does not exist. Or the third answer which is where they remain is that they will stay inconsistent.

1. **Regarding the External World**

When unbelievers claim that uniformity in nature is their foundation for certainty about a belief they claim to have, they commit a fallacy called “begging the question.”

1. **Regarding Man**

Since unbelievers will not acknowledge God as the Creator of man, they must explain man some other way. Unbelievers will either be absolutely certain about their views on man, while ignoring the fact that their limited knowledge does not allow for this; or they will be absolutely uncertain about man, ignoring the fact that this claim is self-contradicting and cannot be true.

This conundrum exists because man cannot escape the truth that God exists and has revealed truth to us. We are made in His image, and since He is truth, we are truth-bearers, and so we will and must have truth.

Ephesians 4:17-19

“Just because someone says they don’t believe in my sword doesn’t mean I put it down and fight with my hands. I say stab them with your sword with the word and they will either acknowledge its existence or bleed out in their futile thinking.” – Voddie Baucham

We never lay down our ultimate standard and place the unbeliever on God’s throne to judge God. That is not the way a Christian should do apologetics.

Colossians 2:6-8

1. **The Christian Worldview**
2. **The Structure**

1 Corinthians 2:1-16

Christians are ***made able*** to know and follow the truth of God’s revelation; therefore, our philosophy is not according to independent human perspectives. Paul spoke about the unbeliever’s mind in Colossians 2:8, but he goes on to talk also about the believer’s:

Colossians 2:9

You see, the Christian acknowledges Christ’s preeminence and rule/authority over all things. In doing this, we acknowledge our total dependence upon Him for truth, knowledge, and life itself.

1. He alone can teach man truth. Since Christ is God, then we must be committed to Him for truth.

2. Apart from a commitment to Him which only comes through His redeeming grace, we are unable to have a true philosophy.

3. Whatever Jesus declares, we accept without question.

Isaiah 28:23-26

Christians acknowledge this dependency because of God’s grace upon them and His saving work.

Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

What God’s revelation does tell us is to apply to our lives all that the word has revealed, and if things do not go the way we planned, it is because He has a different plan.

Ultimately, the circular argument the Christian makes has a self-authenticating God as the foundation of it.

The circular reasoning of unbelievers relies on themselves as the ultimate standard, and therefore it is a “vicious circle” that cannot account for the reality in which they live.

The Christian foundation cannot be more ultimate, and God (being that foundation) possesses exhaustive knowledge; therefore, Christians have truth and know things certainly. Christians have a moral standard that is ultimate and objective (not based subjectively upon our feelings or limited knowledge).

To the unbeliever, it would seem that the Christian used his own reason to decide that Christianity was the best option, and therefore the Christian would be as faulty as the ground we claim the unbeliever is standing on.

Since faith (belief in God) did not originate in the mind of the Christian, it is therefore not based upon his observations making him the ultimate standard. Salvation was and is something God did and does!

Romans 9:16 So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.

John 1:13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Ephesians 2:8

This truth should remove all boasting or arrogance toward the unbeliever, and it should cause us to be humbly heartbroken toward those whom God has not yet saved.

It would be inconsistent to live as though we were the deciding factor and, out of the same mouth, claim that it was God who did it. So, this truth should humble us completely.

Christians do not stand upon their observations as the ultimate standard; rather, we claim as the Scriptures do that God had to give us eyes to see and ears to hear, and therefore this was revealed to us by God. He is our ultimate standard; therefore, we have a circular argument based upon the rock-solid foundation of God, and that is not a vicious circle. That’s a circle of supreme confidence!

Hebrews 6:13 For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself

Genesis 22:16 and said, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son”

We have a clear example in Scripture that God is ultimate; therefore, even when He swore by something, He had to swear by Himself, for there was nothing greater to swear by.

We only believe in and understand God by the grace of God, gifting us saving faith in His Son.

1. **The Answer**

Christian philosophy is totally dependent upon God to have true knowledge or certainty in knowledge. Since this is the case, it is clear that we do not have the conundrum of the unbeliever. We are not certain and uncertain simultaneously. Our foundation is the all-knowing God, so we can be certain of truths, as long as those truths are revealed by Him.

The Christian can be certain of man’s knowledge, as long as it depends on God’s revelation. The Christian’s certainty is not destroyed by what he doesn’t know. God can provide for man in the face of his finiteness, because God is infinite and has infinite knowledge.

Depending on God is trusting Him in those areas in which we cannot have ultimate understanding. In this sense, Christians may be said to have “dependent uncertainty.”

1. **Regarding God**

Christians have dependent certainty about God, because He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures and caused the Christian to believe in Him. Christians also have dependent uncertainty in regards to God, for we cannot have exhaustive knowledge of God. This in no way diminishes our trust in what He has revealed and rather heightens our eternal future of knowing Him more and more as the true treasure of our hearts!

1. **Regarding the World**

God has created an orderly world and has promised to uphold it. This means that the Christian can count on the future being like the past according to His design. We can count on uniformity of nature because God causes it.

1. **Regarding Man**

The Christian can know about himself (dependent certainty) because God has declared us to be made in His image and has revealed truths about our depravity and our hope in His salvation.

1. **THE MYTH OF NEUTRALITY**
2. The believer in the one true God
3. The unbeliever

You are either dependent upon the one true God for knowledge, or you are seeking independence and therefore unable to be certain of anything. There is no middle ground.

There’s no neutral ground; you are dependent or independent.

Matthew 12:30 Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

Ultimately, we must be clear that there is no neutrality between beliefs.

The unbeliever says, “I need evidence.” God said:

Romans 1:18-20 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

One of the many arguments that people have tried to make in order to prove that God is real is the resurrection. So they will say, “Yeah, I’ll set aside my Bible, and we can just look historically at this guy they called Jesus Christ, and if I can prove He rose from the dead, surely you will believe.”

Luke 16:19-31 “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man’s table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried, in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ And he said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house— for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

You see, if they won’t accept the word of God, Jesus Himself said they won’t believe even if someone rises from the dead.

People may be convinced that Jesus rose from the dead, but that doesn’t mean they must believe He is God.

This so-called practice of neutrality will get us nowhere; we must address the root of the unbelievers’ issues based upon the solid rock of God and His word. We always do this in hopes of showing them their inconsistency and sharing the gospel with them!