

**The Christian Worldview
Compared With
Other Worldviews**

FCBC Bible Institute

Week 4 – September 30, 2008

Deism [Sire, pp. 45 – 58]

A. Western thought changes radically: The Enlightenment

1. The Rise of Reason: Investigation of the universe.

2. The Primacy of Reason – Rene Descartes: *Cogito, ergo sum.*

3. The Place of God in the New World of Reason

B. How Deism answers the elemental worldview questions:

1. What is the prime reality – the really real? *A transcendent God, as a First Cause, created the universe but then left it to run on its own. God is thus not immanent, not fully personal, not sovereign over human affairs, not providential.*

2. What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us? *The cosmos God created is determined, because it is created as a uniformity of cause and effect in a closed system; no miracle is possible.*

3. What is a human being? *Human beings, though personal, are a part of the clockwork of the universe.*

4. What happens to a person at death? *No generally accepted view. Most deists believe that the soul is immortal, but agree on not much else on this subject.*

5. Why is it possible to know anything at all? *The cosmos, this world, is understood to be in its normal state; it is not fallen or abnormal. We can know the universe, and we can determine what God is like by studying it.*

6. How do we know what is right and wrong? *Ethics is limited to general revelation; because the universe is normal, it reveals what is right and wrong.*

7. What is the meaning of human history? *History is linear, for the course of the cosmos was determined at creation.*

C. Deism's problems – why its popularity has faded.

D. Deism's impact on the United States.