

Syllabus

September 9, 2008

Class: The Christian Worldview Compared With Other Worldviews
Teacher: Mark Keller
Location: Fenton Crossing Bible Chapel
Dates: September 9 – November 25, 2008
Time: 7:00 – 8:00 pm

Texts

Primary Text

Sire, James W. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog, 4th Ed.* InterVarsity Press, 2004.

Secondary Text

Eckman, James P. *The Truth About Worldviews: A Biblical Understanding of Worldview Alternatives.* Crossway Books, 2004.

Class Schedule

Class #1 (9/9/08): Introduction. What is a worldview? What are the basic elements of a worldview? How does a worldview differ from theological doctrine? [Sire: ch.1.]

Class #2 (9/16/08): Christian Theism. How does this Christian Theism answer the basic worldview questions? What is the difference between having a Christian Theistic worldview and having saving faith in Jesus Christ? [Sire: ch.2.]

Class #3 (9/23/08): Christian Theism. (continued)

Class #4 (9/30/08): Deism. How does Deism answer the basic worldview questions? How does Deism differ from Christian Theism? How has Deism affected the culture of the United States? [Sire: ch.3.]

Class #5 (10/7/08): Naturalism. (Also known as Modernism or Secular Humanism). How does Naturalism answer the basic worldview questions? Contrast Naturalism with Christian Theism. Note the pervasiveness of Naturalism in modern western culture. Note its inconsistencies, especially as to ethics. [Sire: ch.4; Eckman: ch.2.]

Class #6 (10/14/08): Naturalism. (continued)

Class #7 (10/21/08): Nihilism and Existentialism. Nihilism is the logical conclusion to Naturalism. Existentialism is a worldview developed in response to nihilism. How does Existentialism answer the basic worldview questions? [Sire: chs.5-6.]

- Class #8 (10/28/08): Postmodernism. How does Postmodernism answer the basic worldview questions? What is truth? Examine the inherent contradictions of Postmodernism. Note the pervasiveness of Postmodernism in 21st Century culture. [Sire: ch.9]
- Class #9 (11/4/08): Eastern Worldviews. Hinduism, Buddhism, and pantheistic monism. How do Eastern worldviews answer the basic worldview questions? Examine the fundamentally different ways of eastern thinking relative to western worldviews. Growing influence of these worldviews as Asian importance grows. [Sire: ch.7; Eckman: chs.3-4]
- Class #10 (11/11/08): New Age. Not so much a worldview as an amalgam of worldviews (eastern and western). Note its pervasiveness in western pop culture, creeping into mainstream culture. [Sire: ch.8; Eckman: ch.9]
- Class #11 (11/18/08): Islam. How does Islam answer the basic worldview questions? Not just a different type of Christian Theism, it is a fundamentally different form of theism. Examine why this worldview is both fear-driven and has a history of violent proselytization. Note differences between Sunni and Shia sects. [Eckman: ch.8; Handouts]
- Class #12 (11/25/08): Reprise of Christian Theism. Compare and contrast the worldviews prevalent within the major sectors of Christendom: Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, Mainline Protestantism, and Evangelical Protestantism. [Eckman: ch.11]