

HOW YOUR WORLDVIEW AFFECTS YOUR FAITH

Apologetics

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OUTLINE

0. INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE WE ACTUALLY TALKING ABOUT?

- 0.1. WHAT IS "WORLDVIEW"?
- 0.2. WHAT IS "FAITH"?

1. "TWO-WORLDS" CONFLICT

- 1.1. THE SEEN AND THE UNSEEN
- 1.2. MONISTIC WORLDVIEWS AGAINST FAITH

2. WORLDVIEW AND THE MIND

- 2.1. WE INHABIT THE WORLD OF OUR MIND
- 2.2. SECULARISM, SECULARIZATION & SECULARITY

3. THE WORLDVIEW OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

- 3.1. HABITS AND LIES
- 3.2. THE AIM/GOAL OF CREATION
- 3.3. EVIL AND THE FALL
- 3.4. DETERMINISM AND FREEDOM

4. TO REMEMBER

0. INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE WE ACTUALLY TALKING ABOUT?

- simple faith vs. complex worldview?
- being practical, down-to-earth vs. being abstruse, unrealistic?

[Dorothy SAYERS] p. s. Official Christianity, of late years, has been having what is known as 'a bad press.' We are constantly assured that the churches are empty because preachers insist too much upon doctrine-'dull dogma,' as people call it. The fact is the precise opposite. It is the neglect of dogma that makes for dullness. The Christian faith is the most exciting drama that ever staggered the imagination of man-and the dogma is the drama....Now we may call that doctrine exhilarating or we may call it devastating; we may call it revelation or we may call it rubbish; but if we call it dull, then words have no meaning at all. That God should play the tyrant over man is a dismal story of unrelieved oppression; that man should play the tyrant over man is the usual dreary record of human futility; but that man should play the tyrant over God and find Him a better man than himself is an astonishing drama indeed.¹

0.1. WHAT IS "WORLDVIEW"?

- "Unter Weltanschauung versteht man eine in versch. inhaltl. Ausrichtung auftretende **Gesamtauffassung** der Welt und der **Stellung** des Menschen in ihr, die sich in der Moderne nach dem Verlust eines allgemeinverbindl. Denk- u. Handlungsrahmens herausbildet."²
- "Die universale Betrachtung ist noch keine Weltanschauung, dazu müssen die Impulse kommen, die den Menschen in seiner Totalität treffen und von seiner Totalität ausgehen."³

¹ SAYERS, D. *The Greatest Drama Ever Staged*.

² *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*,

³ JASPERS, K. *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen*, Berlin : Springer, 1960, p. 2.

0.2. WHAT IS “FAITH”?

That there is a world beyond my own consciousness is a faith, animal faith, as George SANTAYANA calls it. Only in consciousness do we find the world; never in itself. This fact makes idealism always possible, and even probable in those cultures which give great value to the individual person. Faith, as I use the word, merely gives assent to a proposition for which there is no unambiguous experimental evidence.⁴

- FAITH: a living *relationship* with God (communicating) through *Jesus’ sacrifice* on the cross *in the power of the Holy Spirit* as described in the Bible...

1. “TWO-WORLDS” CONFLICT

- “monism” ↔ “pluralism”

‘Monism’ is a very broad term, applicable to any doctrine which maintains either that there is ultimately only one thing, or only one kind of thing; it has also been used of the view that there is only one set of true beliefs. In these senses it is opposed to the equally broad term ‘pluralism’. But it is also often contrasted with ‘dualism’, since so much philosophical debate has focused on the question whether there are two different kinds of thing, mind and matter, or only one.⁵

- Christian dualism → the necessity and the dangers (**TWO** kinds of reality under **ONE** sovereignty of God) ⇒ not separate, mutually exclusive and insulated realms!!

Science must always isolate its material before getting to work, and religion accordingly has been detached for scientific purposes from the general mass of human interests and made into a subject of special investigation by experts... Even, sermons, which used to be chiefly occupied in calling sinners to repentance, are now largely devoted to expounding the nature of religion, its origin, its conditions, its probable future, its relations to morality, to science, to art and to politics, and the general importance of cultivating it in all these connexions.⁶

1.1. THE SEEN AND THE UNSEEN

- **Heb 11:1** Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
- **2Cor 4:18** ...as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.
- **God is spirit** → **John 4:24** **God is spirit**, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.
- **Isa 31:3** The **Egyptians** are man, and not God, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit.

1.2. MONISTIC WORLDVIEWS AGAINST FAITH

- monism → there is only *one* kind of reality accessible through our senses and our mind...

If the methods of science are reliable, (and they have been justified by their brilliant success,) we have indeed a criterion for the interpretation of facts; and this criterion for the interpretation of facts, no less than the criterion of single observations is based upon monism.⁷

- pantheism ≈ atheism (FEUERBACH)
- “God” – as the mystery of *this* world (Brunner)
- “There is no God” ⇒ therefore “I am my own god”

2. WORLDVIEW AND THE MIND

2.1. WE INHABIT THE WORLD OF OUR MIND

- the world *as it is* ↔ the world *as we see it* (KANT)
- C. S. LEWIS: I am certain that in passing from the scientific point of view to the theological, I have

⁴ WEIGEL, G. *The Modern God*, New York : Macmillan, 1963, p. 5.

⁵ *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, London: Routledge

⁶ JACKS, L. P. *The Inner Sentinel*, London : Hodder & Stoughton, 1930, p. 9-10.

⁷ CARUS, P. In: *The Monist I*, Chicago : The Open Court Publishing, 1890-91, p. 239.

passed from dream to waking. Christian theology can fit in science, art, morality, and the sub-Christian religions. The scientific point of view cannot fit in any of these things, not even science itself. I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen not only because I see it but because by it I see everything else.⁸

His discovery of evolution came as a thrilling revelation. Carnegie would remember "that light came as in a flood and all was clear. Not only had I got rid of theology and the supernatural, but I had found the truth of evolution. 'All is well since all grows better' became my motto, my true source of comfort. Man was not created with an instinct for his own degradation, but from the lower he had risen to the higher forms. Nor is there any conceivable end to his march to perfection. His face is turned to the light, he stands in the sun and looks upward." Armed like a Christian missionary in the righteousness of his new faith, Carnegie departed for the Orient in 1878, determined to see the world as an operating laboratory for Herbert Spencer's First Principles. "Seek and ye shall find", an injunction given in quite a different context, now became an appropriate motto for Carnegie's tour. Everywhere he went, he was delighted to find evidence of the truth of Herbert Spencer's faith in progress through evolution toward perfection.⁹

- Ps 16

2.2. SECULARISM, SECULARIZATION & SECULARITY

- **secularism** → there is no supernatural – only this world (naturalism; materialism...)
- **secularization** → there is no future for religion
- **secularity** → behaviour that gives no place to supernatural perspectives or values¹⁰

- ⇒ The principles of the temporary over the eternal
- misunderstanding God... through natural theology! (Owen BARFIELD "In the Old Testament the relation of man to God is the only thing that is of any importance at all, but it has nothing to do with detailed knowledge – unless by that we mean a knowledge of the moral law."¹¹)
- misunderstanding history... – the problem of determinism – secular *or* spiritual
- misunderstanding the Bible... – Bible criticism
- Christopher Ryan: (animal) human sexuality (Jared Diamond) → explaining through evolution

[C. S. LEWIS] We are really faced with a cruel dilemma. When the humans disbelieve in our existence we lose all the pleasing results of direct terrorism and we make no magicians. On the other hand, when they believe in us, we cannot make them materialists and sceptics. At least, not yet. I have great hopes that we shall learn in due time how to emotionalise and mythologise their science to such an extent that what is, in effect, a belief in us (though not under that name) will creep in while the human mind remains closed to belief in the Enemy. The 'Life Force', the worship of sex, and some aspects of Psychoanalysis, may here prove useful. If once we can produce our perfect work—the Materialist Magician, the man, not using, but veritably worshipping, what he vaguely calls 'Forces' while denying the existence of 'spirits'—then the end of the war will be in sight.¹²

Je to těžké dilema. Pokud lidé v naši existenci nevěří, přicházíme o všechno potěšení Z přímého teroru a neuděláme z nich čarodějníky. A naopak: pokud v nás věří, nevychováme z nich materialisty a skeptiky. Alespoň prozatím. Já pevně věřím, že jednou dokážeme jejich vědu natolik citově zabarvit a mytologizovat, že do ní fakticky pronikne víra v nás (i když pod jiným jménem), a zároveň lidská mysl zůstane uzavřena před vírou v Nepřítele. „Životní síla“, uctívání sexu a některé rysy psychoanalýzy zde mohou vykonat mnoho užitečného. Náš zápas se přiblíží ke konci, jakmile vytvoříme své dokonalé dílo – čarodějníka materialistu: člověka, který neužívá, ale uctívá to, co neurčitě nazývá „silami“ – a zároveň nevěří v existenci „duchů“.

2.2.1. CONTROL ↔ SUBMISSION

- Francis Bacon: "Knowledge is itself power"¹³
- "...the road to human knowledge and the road to human power are very close and almost the

⁸ LEWIS, C. S. *They Asked for a Paper*, London : Geoffrey Bless, 1962, p. 165.

⁹ WALL, J. F. *Andrew Carnegie*, New York : Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 365

¹⁰ GUINNESS, O. *The American Hour*, New York : The Free Press, 1994, p. 337.

¹¹ BARFIELD, O. *Saving the Appearances*, Middletown : Wesleyan University Press, 1988, p. 108.

¹² LEWIS, C. S. *The Screwtape Letters*, London : HarperCollins, 2009, p. 31-32

¹³ BACON, F. *Sacred Meditations*, Edinburgh : Waugh and Innes, 1823, p. 191.

same...¹⁴

- “scientific” outlook → control; manipulation
- faith → trust; submission; obedience;

2.2.2. SENSES ↔ INTUITION

- empiricism and “proofs” → HUME on metaphysics (but see BERGSON → philosophical intuition)
- metaphysics = idealism?? (foggy theories)
- [Benjamin FRANKLIN] “The great uncertainty I found in metaphysical reasonings disgusted me, and I quitted that kind of reading and study for others more satisfactory.”¹⁵

2.2.3. ARGUMENTS ↔ THE HOLY SPIRIT

- certainty by arguments → assurance impossible
- the power of *majority* → “Zeitgeist”

3. THE WORLDVIEW OF CHRISTIAN FAITH

3.1. HABITS AND LIES

- different kinds of lies → (1) false statements; (2) covering up; (3) caricatures...]
- habits of mind

• Tony CAMPOLO tells the story of a group who broke into a department store ... but didn't STEAL anything. Instead, they switched the price tags. So, when customers came in the next day, they found that radios were selling for a quarter and bobby pins were priced at five dollars each!¹⁶

- “the theology of existence” – explanation of this world
- Chesterton(?) “If the natural will not submit to the supernatural it will become unnatural.” (STANLEY JONES in *The Way*)

3.2. THE AIM/GOAL OF CREATION

- transformation of man (the mount of transfiguration) → resurrection
- **Phil 3:20-21** ...our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

3.3. EVIL AND THE FALL

- Gn 3 → evil & death
- **1John 5:19** ...the whole **world** lies in the power of the **evil** one.
- **2Cor 4:4** ...the **god** of **this world** has blinded the minds of the unbelievers...

3.4. DETERMINISM AND FREEDOM

- (1) God is sovereign over all existence, (2) Man is responsible free agent, (3) Nature behaves according to regular “laws”

4. TO REMEMBER

- Faith, in its centre has the personal relationship with God, but includes all your ideas about reality.
- All information is interpreted by the worldview of its source and may militate against your faith.
- Be sure to submit all your knowledge and attitude toward the world to your faith – to your Living God.

¹⁴ BACON, F. *The New Organon*, Book II,4.

¹⁵ FRANKLIN, B. *Autobiography*, Philadelphia : Lippincott's Press, 1868, p. 165.

¹⁶ CAMPOLO, T. *Who Switched the Price Tags?*, Milton Keynes : Word, 1987, p. 14.