

What's Your Personal Worldview?

Lesson # 6 Faithfulness of the Evangelical Church re. Worldview

I. Introduction

There is an authentic, integrated, widespread, Theistic (Christian) worldview that is derived from Scripture. This worldview was closely adhered to by Evangelical (Fundamentalist) Christians for a number of centuries.

Man in his sinful state (unredeemed in particular and redeemed within our churches) is susceptible to depending largely on his own wisdom which is largely derived from the wisdom of the world.

In this lesson, we will focus on errors in understanding (integrating) the essentials of the faith (phrase by phrase) into our personal worldviews. (See our earlier use of "What is Christian Orthodoxy?" Rev. 6)

I will suggest a number of cultural errors that have become widespread wisdom within our evangelical churches that are not faithful to a legitimate Christian worldview.

My list is not entirely comprehensive, but hopefully will lead you to begin to question and analyze common truth claims within our churches that deny the essentials of our faith. The existence of these false truth claims does not necessarily reflect on error within the church, but does reflect on the church's effectiveness at edifying saints in the essentials of the faith.

My hope is this exercise will prompt and encourage you to be always discerning about truth claims that are not grounded in, or consistent with the "essentials of the faith" based on our 11 points of orthodoxy.

II. Phrase by Phrase Analysis of the Essentials of the Faith: (as per "What is Christian Orthodoxy?")

Essentials Reference	Essentials Statement Phrases	Examples of Corrupting Cultural Ideas (Arguments against the faith that you are likely to hear.)
Essential #1; Phrase #1	God has revealed Himself to man;	1. Men have done the writing about God. 2. God's too busy to reveal Himself to man.
Essential #1; Phrase #2	Through General Revelation (cosmos & conscience);	1. General revelation is too general to be of significant importance to man. 2. General revelation is contrary to Scripture.
Essential #1; Phrase #3	Through Scripture (written word);	1. Scripture was written by fallible men. 2. Scribes and translators have messed up the original meaning through error or purposely to promote an agenda.
Essential #1; Phrase #4	Both of which are without error.	1. Man's best attempt at interpretation is fallible. 2. Scientific evidence is almost entirely contrary to the claims of Scripture.
Essential #2; Phrase #1	There is one personal God;	1. God is a force or principle, not a person. 2. Because of sin in the world, God must be a monster, not a lover of people.
Essential #2; Phrase #2	Who is all sovereign;	1. How can God be sovereign over the vast reaches of the universe or the vast forces of our own solar system or over the earth itself?
Essential #2; Phrase #3	Who is all powerful (omnipotent);	1. No person, no God could possibly have power beyond the total power of this universe with all of its energy working continually on matter. 2. If God is all powerful and all loving, why doesn't he prevent evil?
Essential #2; Phrase #4	Who is all knowing (omniscient);	1. How can God know the future that has not yet occurred? 2. If God knows all things, then he must be complicit in all the tragedies that he set in motion when he created the universe!

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Essential #2; Phrase #5	Who is Immanent within His creation;	1. In my personal experience, God does not respond when I need Him. 2. Why would He care about the small things in life? He's got a universe to run.
Essential #2; Phrase #6	Who is Transcendent over His creation;	1. What does transcendence even mean? 2. How can God be beyond the material universe?
Essential #3; Phrase #1	This one God exists eternally;	1. How can anything have existed in its current state throughout an ever changing world and universe? 2. Since the universe is not eternal, how could anything in it be eternal?
Essential #3; Phrase #2	This one God exists in three person, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit;	1. The idea of 3 separate persons in one god is mathematical nonsense. 2. The one god just functions in different ways at different times. We all do that in our lives. We wear different hats for different functions.
Essential #3; Phrase #3	These three persons are absolutely one in essence and being.	1. Anytime there is more than one person, there are bound to be disagreements about many things between them. 2. Doesn't this make Christianity not a monotheistic religion like Judaism and Islam?
Essential #4; Phrase #1	The man Jesus is the Christ of Scripture;	1. Jesus was a great teacher or prophet, not Messiah. 2. Many Jewish characters claimed to be the Messiah during the silent years after the writing of Malachi.
Essential #4; Phrase #2	Christ is the 2 nd person of the God-head;	1. This sounds like polytheism. Is there one God or are there more. 2. The idea of the trinity is mathematical nonsense.
Essential #4; Phrase #3	Christ is & was fully eternal in His existence;	1. The Bible says that Jesus was begotten. He was born to Mary. 2. The Christ in the OT was not clearly identified as God, but rather a future King and prophet.
Essential #4; Phrase #4	Christ is fully God with all the attributes of the Godhead;	1. Jesus never claimed to be God. 2. Jesus was meek and mild and loving and merciful, not wrathful and just.
Essential #4; Phrase #5	Jesus as the Christ is fully man;	1. Jesus by nature was beyond temptation and the possibility of sinning. 2. How can he be man and God. This makes no sense!
Essential #4; Phrase #6	Jesus the man lived without any sin whatsoever;	1. Jesus as a human did not live a sinless life. 2. His anger in turning over the money tables in the Temple was sinful.
Essential #5; Phrase #1	The man the Christ is eternally existent;	1. The Christ is defined in the Old Testament as a man who is anointed under God's authority to be the Messiah. It has nothing to do with being God or being eternally existent.
Essential #5; Phrase #2	The man Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit;	1. Man is material, how can a spirit cause pregnancy? 2. The holy spirit is spirit, not flesh and blood and thus cannot produce sperm to cause a pregnancy.
Essential #5; Phrase #3	The man Jesus was born of the virgin Mary;	1. Virgin births are no physically possible. 2. This story displays man's improper attitude about sexuality.
Essential #5; Phrase #4	The man Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate;	1. Pontius Pilate was not an historical person. It's just a story. 2. Jesus was given a fair trial by the law of man at the time.
Essential #5; Phrase #5	The man Jesus died on a cross;	1. Jesus was justly convicted of insurrection, he was not sinless. 2. The soldiers did not break his legs so that he was able to continue breathing on the cross by pushing himself up letting his lungs operate.
Essential #5; Phrase #6	The man Jesus, upon death, was buried in a tomb;	1. Jesus didn't actually die on the cross, he went into a coma and appeared dead.

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Essential #5; Phrase #7	The man Jesus was resurrected on the 3 rd day;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesus body had almost certainly been stolen to make it appear that he had been resurrected. 2. Jesus' resurrection was spiritual in nature, the body remained in the grave.
Essential #5; Phrase #8	The man Jesus was ascended to heaven in a glorified body;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no physical evidence of any such ascension to heaven. 2. He was only a man. What is a glorified body?
Essential #5; Phrase #9	The man Jesus sits at the right hand of the Father;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's so important about where he sits? This is just fantasy! 2. What's the point of this, why is it important where he sits?
Essential #5; Phrase #10	The man Jesus the Christ will judge all men;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On what basis does a man judge other men and send them to hell? 2. Jesus was the suffering servant, not a judging God. That's OT stuff!
Essential #6; Phrase #1	All naturally born men are born into sin by their natural will;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All men have some good within them, after all we were made in the image of God. 2. God hates the sin, but loves the sinner.
Essential #6; Phrase #2	All naturally born men are out of fellowship with God;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. God is the Father of all men. He doesn't choose favorites. 2. God desires the fellowship of all men.
Essential #6; Phrase #3	All naturally born men are incapable of knowing or serving God by their own nature.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. God is the Father of all men. 2. Certainly "good" men that do good deeds are serving God. 3. Most men know and acknowledge that there is a God.
Essential #7; Phrase #1	Man is only brought back into fellowship with God entirely through the <u>substitutionary blood atonement</u> of Jesus Christ on the cross;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moral influence theory of the atonement. Christ is only a moral model for us to live by works which will gain us favor with God! 2. The Bible is so violent throughout with its blood sacrifices of animals and of the man Jesus. How does that save anyone??
Essential #7; Phrase #2	This provision is wholly a work of God's grace and mercy towards the believer;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Man must acquire and have sufficient faith in Jesus the Christ in order to be saved. 2. Logically, to be in fellowship with God, man must earn merit from God in order to deserve God's grace and mercy.
Essential #7; Phrase #3	This redemption is not of works nor man's merit in any way.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is not just of God to give redemption to men who don't deserve it and to withhold grace and mercy from good men much more deserving than those who are called Christians.
Essential #8; Phrase #1	The Holy Spirit regenerates the lost man's heart;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I don't even know what that means. How do I make that happen to me if I chose to? 2. This sounds like all mystical stuff. Is this a cult?
Essential #8; Phrase #2	The Holy Spirit comforts, teaches, and empower the believer to glorify God;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This sounds way too narrow to be just a simple religious belief. Too exclusive for my taste. 2. This again sounds like all mystical stuff. I'm pretty sure this is a cult.
Essential #8; Phrase #3	The Holy Spirit enables the believer to conformity with the image of Christ.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I don't need any Holy Spirit to act ethically like Christ. 2. How can I earn merit before God if the Holy Spirit does all the hard work?
Essential #9; Phrase #1	All men are accountable to God and will be judged by God.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. But we know from your Bible that God is primarily love and mercy. He loves to save sinners. I'm sure I'm OK. I don't believe God is angry at me of all people. 2. There are a lot of people much worse regarding ethics than I am. I'm really OK in this area.

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Essential #9; Phrase #2	The lost will be judged to everlasting damnation to hell;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I can't believe that a loving God would send men and women who live good lives to an eternal hell for just being human. 2. Your God is most certainly not my God.
Essential #9; Phrase #3	The redeemed are saved unto eternal life in communion with the God-Head based on the effectual atoning work of Christ on the cross.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On what basis did God choose to save some sinners and ignore other better good men? 2. If God is just, he must take into consideration men's merit for salvation based on their good works and sincerity.
Essential #10; Phrase #1	The "church" is God's immediate agency on the earth until Christ's return;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The church has been historically one of the most wicked institutions that man has ever devised. The killing committed by the church is cause for repentance and invalidates its function and purpose. 2. The church has historically deceived its people and impoverished them in order to enrich themselves.
Essential #10; Phrase #2	The "church" represents the very Body of Christ to the world with the gospel call;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesus the man, perhaps a great teacher is long gone into oblivion of death. He has no remaining body. 2. The church certainly has not acted like Jesus, nor represented him effectively to the world.
Essential #11; Phrase #1	Christians are to live their lives in conformity to the clear teachings of Scripture;	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This might be a proper ethical pattern of life, but it is not the only set of ethics available for good men to live. 2. The ethics of animal sacrifice is sadly, not ethics at all.
Essential #11; Phrase #2	Christians are to live their lives in holiness, set aside for service to God in order to glorify Him.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ethical way for humans to live is to live in fulfillment of their own humanness in full enjoyment and accomplishment of human destiny. 2. Since Scripture, written by mere men, is not in any way the certain will of any proposed god, therefore, serving him in accordance with the details of Scripture is at best a crap shoot. We should live to fulfill ourselves and our families in this life.

III. Status of the Western Evangelical Church Worldview

I believe that elements of western Evangelicalism have lost their way in that they no longer seek to edify the members of the Body of Christ.

I believe that the church's primary role is to teach and exhort the saints in their responsibility:

- 1st To worship God in spirit and in truth;
- 2nd To serve God in service to others, always reflecting the severe love of God; and
- 3rd To edify the saints in the truth of God as reflected in His revelation to man.

I believe there are few churches today that do this well. They have largely allowed the cultural wisdom of the world to sneak into their churches without hindrance or correction. They often have lots of programs (Sunday School, weekly classes, etc.), but they have not faithfully taught and qualified their congregations to be discerning about the wicked teachings that are counter to this world's false wisdom!

VI. Concluding Remarks

I hope this series has warned all of us of the dangers of the wisdom of this world to an authentic witness of Christ by the Evangelical Churches. Our churches must produce faithful Christians who have been thoroughly edified throughout their lives in order that they may serve Christ in faithfulness and represent the truths of God to a lost and dying world deeply deceived about the things of God. Without such truthful proclamation of God's message, the world is without hope and the church becomes unfaithful to its call as Christ's representatives.