



## *STEPPING INTO THE UNBELIEVERS' WORLDVIEWS*

**By Sherry Cumby**

The unregenerate man is the natural man who has not accepted the things God has revealed to him about Himself. He is using the unfathomable natural resources God has made available for life on earth - providing sustaining order and stability, thereby giving hope for this life and for generations to come. The man of normal intelligence is able to reason, make decisions for his livelihood, seek protection from the elements, and communicate with other creatures in nature with like similarities. By procreating with the opposite sex, he is able to reproduce after his own kind. He breathes the air provided by God. He walks on the earth hanging in space. He sees the sun, moon, and stars in the sky yet does not accept that God spoke them into existence, assigned them purpose, and called them by name.

Man observes that people age, that they have different philosophies, that they are as different as the fish of the sea, and that people die. He finds himself concerned with his emotions when he wants to cry for help in times of sadness, when he feels lonely, or when he feels someone near yet no one is there. He observes the rainbow in the sky, gentle rains on crops, and cool breezes on warm nights.

Rather than believing that the biblical God has created him in His own image and is revealing His faithfulness to him in order that they may have fellowship together, man attempts to rationalize his own philosophy and forms his own worldview contrary to the biblical worldview. Natural man builds an

antitheistic theory<sup>1</sup> in his own mind because of his enmity with God which could range from a desire just to remain neutral on spiritual issues to the hideous mind of the antichrist described in Daniel 11:36-45.

When an apologist offers a defense of the gospel, the unbeliever may see that his thinking is unreasonable and without merit; however, until he embraces the truth of Jesus Christ as the Son of God who died for his sins, was buried, and resurrected from the dead, the natural man will only resist believing the biblical worldview and follow yet another antitheistic theory of his interpretation of life. Lewis Sperry Chafer reminds the apologist, “*It should be remembered that argument does not create divine enlightenment.*”<sup>2</sup> It is not until an unregenerate mind comes to accept the things of God and becomes a new man by being born again of the Spirit by placing His faith in Jesus Christ that he can see the light of truth in the kingdom of God (John 3:3; John 14:6).

**Theism** is having a belief in the existence of a god or gods; Christian theism is embracing the truth personally of the biblical God as creator and ruler of this world.<sup>3</sup> The Sacred Scriptures reveal the One Holy Essence of God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Word of God is the ultimate authority. Chafer gleans from the Bible that:

*“The Scriptures are the legal instrument by which God obligates Himself to execute every detail of His eternal covenants and to fulfill every prediction His prophets have made. The legal instrument which secures this vast consummation must continue, and shall continue, until the last promise, for which it stands as surety, has been realized. Not one jot or tittle of the divine deposition can pass until all is fulfilled.”*<sup>4</sup>

No other written document on earth can make these claims. The Father gave His only begotten Son and by the power of the Holy Spirit all prophecies were fulfilled concerning His transcendence, purpose, virgin birth, earthly residence, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, the gift and the power of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 53: 7:14; 9:6; Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:22-23; John 1:1; Hebrews 1:1-3; 9:22; Joel 2:28-29; Acts 1:4,8,9; 2:4, 33). The prophecies yet to be fulfilled will absolutely come to pass.

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> *The American Heritage Dictionary*, pg. 1260.

<sup>4</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, pg. 125.

Throughout the ages, mankind has been cognizant of his environment leading to investigation of the magnificence of revelation in the universe and of its origin which has spawned different ideas forming philosophies. The advantage of the world-wide-web enables scholars to become familiar with the varied schools of thought throughout the ages and to be aware of new developments. Any view other than the biblical worldview of God as the creator and ruler reveal the groping of men walking in darkness looking for the light while rejecting “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Paul points out in Romans 1:18-32 how man suppresses the truth because of his enmity with God; and as a result, their wisdom is proven to be foolish.

**Atheism** is the theory that there is no God. The dogmatic atheist claims to have knowledge of Christianity yet openly denies that the God of the bible could be the creator and ruler of the universe; in fact, he denies the very existence of God. Chafer says, “*It is probable that a consistent atheist has never existed.*”<sup>5</sup> A true atheist would need to deny all gifts from God and be an entity unto himself. He would live as though he had no reasoning ability, no laws of logic, no morality, no cognizance of spiritual reality, no conscience, no will, no reason for his own existence, and no hope for this life nor the next.<sup>6</sup> In a sense, he becomes god of his own human existence. Dr. A. A. Hodge explains that any explanation of the origin of the universe which excludes the work of a Creator and Moral Governor of all that exists is atheism which includes the theories of Darwin and Spencer.<sup>7</sup>

**Agnosticism** in its simplest form means “not knowing”.<sup>8</sup> Unbelievers who claim there is not sufficient evidence to determine that there is a God who exists or there isn’t a God who exists fall into this antitheistic theory. They do not believe that any thing can be known with certainty as being first, nor do they believe in absolute truth. They think only perceptual phenomenon are objects of exact knowledge.<sup>9</sup> They are unwilling to accept the revelation God has provided for them to know Him nor do they observe and reason in their hearts that God absolutely exists.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pg. 163.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, pg. 164.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pg. 165.

<sup>9</sup> *The American Heritage Dictionary*, pg. 87.

Some of the most well-known agnostics were Sir W. Hamilton, Dean Mansel, Herbert Spencer, and Huxley who was credited with naming this school of thought about 1870.<sup>10</sup> Their idea is based on the assumption that there is knowledge of some subjects that can be absolutely known; others, such as metaphysics and theology which they feel are impossible to know for sure. This theory is an attack upon the natural mental processes of reasoning causing confusion over the most basic tenants of sound judgment for human existence. They reject scientific reasonable proofs which if followed to the end of reasoning would lead them to delete their own theory. Agnosticism can be summed up by a statement by Dr. George Park Fisher: "*It is plain that on this philosophy, all knowledge of realities, as distinct from transitory impressions, is a house built on the sand. All science is reduced to... mere semblance.*"<sup>11</sup>

**Evolution** is the antitheistic theory that claims "*the cosmos has been developed from crude, homogeneous material to its present heterogeneous and advanced status by means of resident forces (A System of Natural Theism, p. 106, by Dr. Leander Keyser)*".<sup>12</sup> Theistic evolution recognizes that God is the Creator who made the original material but used the method of evolution in order to bring about life on earth as we know it - which denies the creation account recorded in the Bible.

Atheistic evolution denies that there is a God, denies that a God had anything to do with creation, and believes matter self-developed and is eternal.<sup>13</sup> Evolution is the antithesis of the creation account of Genesis 1 and 2. Rather than accepting the supernatural power of God to speak things into existence, form man with His own hands into His own image, breathe life into his body, and initiate a personal relationship with him, the best explanation of all that exists man can concoct is evolution.

God gave man rule over all the earth (Genesis 1:28); evolution equates him with the animals. It is based on the ideas of man: an inference based on pure hypothesis and void of facts.<sup>14</sup> Julian Huxley claimed: "The matter of life is composed of ordinary matter, differing from it only in the manner in which its atoms are aggregated."<sup>15</sup> Simply put, life is matter in motion.

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<sup>10</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vols. 1 & 2, pg. 165.

<sup>11</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vols. 1&2, pg. 165.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 166.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 166.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 166.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 166.

Perhaps one of the reasons God chose to posit His Word revealing the creation account in Hebrew was so that man could make no mistake when the word *bara*, meaning created, *ex nihilo* 'out of nothing' was used (Romans 4:17; Hebrews 11:3).<sup>16</sup> God reveals to man through general and special revelation that *Bereshith* "in beginning", "head" He created the heavens and the earth...by saying, "Let there be..." and there was (Genesis 1). God established time by the evening and the morning and called it a day. God is the One who tells man by the authority of His absolute Word of truth that evolution is a theory from man, not of Him.

Paul Enns holds to the premise that any evolutionary theory whether theistic, atheistic, or threshold is a denial of the creation account.<sup>17</sup> If man is not made in the image of God, and he has developed into a human being from eternal matter, how could God hold him morally accountable to Himself? On the other hand, if man is created in the image of God the Creator, and God serves as the Moral Governor over His creation, man is directly accountable to the One who made Him for fellowship with Himself for His glory (Phil. 2:11).

Julian Huxley writes in his book *Religion without Revelation*, "I firmly believe that the scientific method, although slow and never claiming to lead to complete truth, is the only method which in the long run will give satisfactory foundations for beliefs...and we quite assuredly at present know nothing beyond this world and natural experience."<sup>18</sup> Greg Bahnsen explains that for Huxley, "Christian faith should not be grounded in revealed authority (since all metaphysical knowledge is precluded by decree) but in the authority of natural science."<sup>19</sup> However, the responsibility of Christians to hold to the ultimate authority of the Sacred Scriptures and offer an apologetic of the biblical worldview to unbelievers who favor words of evolution over the Word of the Creator is made evident by the fact that although Darwin is dead, his antitheistic theory is still very much alive. The movement is stronger today than ever before and grows in popularity with 'new' evidence by its promoters.

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**Materialism** is "the philosophical theory that physical matter in its movements and modifications is the only reality and that everything in the

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<sup>16</sup> Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, pg. 39.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, pg. 40.

<sup>18</sup> Greg L. Bahnsen, *Always Ready*, pg. 199.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>20</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vols. 1 & 2, pg. 169.

*universe, including thought, feeling, mind, and will can be explained in terms of physical laws.*"<sup>21</sup> Unbelievers holding to this antitheistic theory believe that man is a product of the organism and that the universe can be explained as physical elements and their motions. Materialism is actually needed by scientists to be an explanation of their natural-scientific inquiry. They exclude spiritual causes from their investigation in order to explain physical causes. Descartes' objective was to remove everything from science any ideas that could not be scientifically tested.<sup>22</sup>

The biblical worldview holds to the presupposition that man is created by God with a spirit, soul, and body (Hebrews 4:12; Romans 12:1-2; Ps. 103:1; Matt. 10:28) and is accountable unto God (Hebrews 13:17). Jesus Christ came into the world virgin born with a spirit, soul, and body (John 17:24; Isaiah 53; Luke 2) and gave up His Spirit while crucified on a cross (Matt. 27:50). His body was buried for three days and He resurrected from the dead with the presence of His Spirit and Soul (Luke 24:25,26, 30,31). Materialism chooses to deny the reality of the soul and denies God as Absolute Spirit.<sup>23</sup>

**Polytheism** is the antitheistic theory of unbelievers who believe in more than one God. They deny the first commandment God gave to Moses for the Law of the Hebrew people (Exodus 20:3). The idea is held that primitive man served many gods and that the Christian worldview of believing in the Essence of one God in three persons appeared on the scene much later. The study of historical works and of the Sacred Scriptures prove that man's earliest worship was of one God: the God of the Bible, and turning from that belief because of enmity with God, they began worshipping other gods.<sup>24</sup> The actual account was recorded by Paul in Romans 1:18-32.

The earliest records hold that polytheism began from man worshipping nature among the Hindus in Chaldea and Arabia, of the elements of the sun, moon, stars, fire, etc. Different cultures set up other gods and the ideas spread from one camp to another. The Greeks used polytheism as an expression of their "refined humanitarianism" of having hero worship rather than incarnate gods.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> The American Heritage Dictionary, pg. 772.

<sup>22</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vols. 1 & 2, pg. 171.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, pg. 172.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, pg. 172.

**Idealism** is the belief of interpreting and explaining the universe and all that it contains by a system of ideas toward the evolution of the ideal. They deny the possibility of a non-ideal reality.<sup>26</sup> Followers believe that nothing exists in the world around them except what they are consciously aware of at any given time and their minds can sustain. **Realism** follows closely to idealism in that the unbelievers of the biblical God believe that the ideal that man can imagine can exist independently of himself.<sup>27</sup> They believe that what can be perceived in their own minds actually exists.

**Pantheism** is the antitheistic theory that teaches “God is everything and that everything is God.”<sup>28</sup> This belief equates the Creator with His creation, says God is all, teaches reincarnation, and believes that all things eventually return to being absorbed into God. Chafer claims that every nation on the earth has been affected by followers of pantheism.<sup>29</sup> Followers of this deception fail to see a distinction between creation and the superiority or sovereignty of the Essence of God existing in three Persons: transcendent of creation and immanently at work as Moral Governor over all He has made. God is infinitely eternal yet they fail to accept the truth that reincarnation is a fabricated lie and reality is that “it is appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).

**Deism** is the theory that God was the Creator of the universe and made it complete with the forces at work so that it could self-sustain without His personal continuous sustaining power remaining at work. They believe that God is transcendent, holy, personal, and eternal yet believe He chose to abandon His creation purposely and therefore is not immanent. They deny the Sacred Scriptures that make any claims contrary to their belief system. They do not believe God can hear and answer prayer, that any fellowship or communion with God is possible, nor is He the Moral Governor. The only things the believers can know about God can only be deducted from nature.<sup>30</sup>

**Positivism** was promoted by Auguste Comte (1798-1857)<sup>31</sup>. Unbelievers of the biblical God who choose this theory claim that man’s knowledge is based on phenomena and nothing can be known in its fullness or

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid, pg. 173.

<sup>27</sup> The American Heritage Dictionary, pg. 1030.

<sup>28</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, Vols. 1&2, pg. 173.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

absolutely.<sup>32</sup> They deny metaphysics or any philosophy that speculates that something can be absolutely known; they refuse to believe First Cause and design and that human reasoning can make valid conclusions.

**Monism** is the theory of “*a metaphysical system in which reality is conceived as a unified whole.*”<sup>33</sup> Idealistic monism deals with the adherent’s personal life; materialistic monism deals with matter and physical mechanisms; and, pantheistic monism denies reality.<sup>34</sup>

**Dualism** is the antitheistic theory which believes in a twofold being or operation at work in the universe which include four main schools of thought.

1. *Theological Dualism* teaches that there are two divine eternal beings at work: one good; the other evil. This is rejected by Christianity and Mohammedanism.<sup>35</sup>
2. *Philosophical Dualism* teaches that the God of the universe is two-fold: “independent and irreducible as opposed to idealistic or materialistic monism.”<sup>36</sup>
3. *Psychological or Psychophysical Dualism* teaches that the body and mind exists separately.<sup>37</sup>
4. *Ethical Dualism* teaches morals for personal conduct within one group yet different expectations for another group.<sup>38</sup>

***In conclusion, the Word of God holds all knowledge on all subjects man can imagine. God has revealed Himself, His creation, and given man purpose through His special revelation. He desires a personal intimate relationship with the people of the world in order for His glory to be revealed through His unblemished righteousness. Stepping into the unbelievers’ antitheistic theories reveals the foolishness of men and the magnificent mercy and grace of a loving, faithful, longsuffering God. Christianity is the only worldview that is reasonable and can be put to the test because it is based upon the absolute, ultimate authority of God.***

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> The American Heritage Dictionary, pg. 810.

<sup>34</sup> Chafer, pg.173.

<sup>35</sup> Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*, p. 177.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.



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