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Mind Games Survival Course Manual



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World Views: What is True?

Building a Foundation

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The purpose of this presentation is to give some guidelines that will enable us to think through our world view and to attempt to bring that world view into harmony with the way things are. It is foundational to all that follows.

I. What is a world view?

A world view is a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of our world. { 1 } Everyone has a world view, whether he can explain it or not. It can be likened to a pair of glasses through which one views the world. It is important to have the right prescription, or reality will be distorted. Modern man is faced with a supermarket of world views; all of them claim to represent reality

2. Reality is made of certain inescapable truths, regardless of one's world view.

- A. ***Something exists.*** This is a given. Solipsism, the belief that the only reality is what is in the individual's mind, is a dead-end street.
2. ***All people have absolutes.*** The finite seeks an infinite reference point. For some it is God (theism); for others it is the state (communism), love (Joseph Fletcher), power (Friedrich Nietzsche), and for some this reference point is themselves or man (atheism and humanism).
3. ***No statement can be both true and false at the same time.*** This is a primary law of logic known as the *law of non-contradiction*. Only one world view can correctly mirror reality. For example, communism and Christianity make divergent claims concerning the nature of reality. One or

the other may be correct, or neither is correct; but they both cannot be correct at the same time or the universe is absurd. Either God is sovereign, or man is sovereign. One of the two must be untrue (Karl Marx).

4. ***All people exercise faith.*** All of us presuppose certain things to be true without absolute proof. These are presuppositions, inferences or assumptions upon which a belief is based. Some common assumptions are: a personal God exists; man evolved from inorganic material; man is essentially good; the Bible is true; and reality is material.

III. Six major questions (and possible answers to the questions) can help us understand the importance of world views. The answers that are given reflect a person's world view.

A. *Why is there something rather than nothing (Ontology)?*

1. Everything that now is came from nothing.
2. Everything that now is had an impersonal beginning. There may be two varieties of this: impersonal spirit and energy.
3. Matter is eternal.
4. Everything that now is had a personal beginning.

B. *How do you know that you know (Epistemology)?*

1. Rationalism. The mind is the center of our source of knowledge. Some things are known deductively.
2. Empiricism. The source of our knowledge is found in the senses. We know only what is perceived.
3. Revelation. We know some things only because we are told. A transcendent source is necessary. (This does not mean that Rationalism and Empiricism have no value, but it does mean that we cannot depend upon those systems entirely.)

3. *How do you explain human nature (Anthropology)?*

1. *Tabula Rasa.* We are born as blank slates, neither good nor evil.
2. Inherent Goodness. We are born good, but society causes us to behave otherwise.
3. Evolved Social Animal. We have instinctive traits that cause internal conflict.
4. Created Image-Bearer. Man was created good, but the sin of the first man infected all of us.

D. *How do you determine what is right and wrong (Ethics)?*

1. Ethical Relativism. Ethics are cultural or situational.
2. Ethical Determinism. There is no free choice (for example, Sociobiology).
3. Scientific Ethics. Moral values are derived from facts in the natural realm; "oughts" are derived from an "is."

4. Arbitrary Ethics. Might makes right. A totalitarian society sets the standard of conduct.
5. Revealed Absolutes. Conduct is revealed from a transcendent source.



E. *What is the meaning of history?*

1. History is determined as part of a mechanistic universe.
2. History is a linear stream of events linked by cause and effect but without purpose.
3. History is meaningless because life is absurd.
4. History is cyclical.
5. History is a linear and meaningful sequence of events leading to the fulfillment of God's purposes for man.


F. *What happens to a person at death?*

1. Death brings extinction of personality and individuality. It is simply the disorganization of matter.
2. Death brings reincarnation or realization of oneness with the cosmos.
3. Death is either the gate to life with God or to eternal separation from Him

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