

The Dangerous Ideology of Transgenderism

Transgenderism has been the topic in the news for more than a decade; therefore, Christians need to know what to think about the various claims being made. We also need to know how to respond to an aggressive push by trans activists to normalize this behavior and criticize anyone who does not accept it.

Transgenderism is the belief that people have a “gender identity” that is distinct from their biological sex. If they feel there is a conflict between their gender and their sex, gender identity should take precedence. Although a very small fraction of the population may experience gender dysphoria (where a person experiences discomfort or distress from a mismatch between their biological sex and the gender they want to be), the current percentage of Americans identifying as transgender or nonbinary (not identifying as either male or female, masculine or feminine) has exploded.



Sexuality, Gender, and Medical Studies

Dr. Paul McHugh has served as the Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Johns Hopkins Medical School. He has concluded that “gender reassignment surgery” doesn’t work. He, along with Dr. Lawrence Mayer, surveyed over 200 peer-reviewed studies done in various disciplines.[\[1\]](#) Here are four of the most important conclusions from their paper:

First, the “belief that sexual orientation is an innate, biologically fixed human property” is not supported. In other words, people are not “born that way.”

Second, the “belief that gender identity is an innate, fixed human property independent of biological sex—so that a person

might be a man trapped in a woman's body or a woman trapped in a man's body—is not supported by scientific evidence.”

Third, “only a minority of children who express gender-atypical thoughts or behavior will continue to do so into adolescence or adulthood.” It goes on to say that children should not be encouraged to become transgender. They also should not be subjected to hormone treatments or surgery.

Fourth, people who are homosexual or transgender “have higher rates of mental problems (anxiety, depression, suicide), as well as behavioral and social problems (substance abuse, intimate partner violence), than the general population.”

While the paper only focuses on the scientific research, it obviously has implications for public policy. Incorrect scientific claims have been used to justify court rulings, government policies, and medical practices concerning sexual orientation and gender identity. They have not been based upon sound science.

American College of Pediatricians

Above, we talked about some of the scientific research into homosexuality and transgenderism. Dr. Paul McHugh and Dr. Lawrence Mayer surveyed over 200 peer-reviewed studies and came to conclusions that are contrary to much of the current statements being made by trans activists.

Dr. Paul McHugh was also one of the authors of a statement by the American College of Pediatricians. The title of their statement was: “Gender Ideology Harms Children.”[{2}](#) Here is a summary sentence or two of the eight points they make in their statement.

1. “Human sexuality is an objective biological binary trait: XY and XX are genetic markers of health, not genetic markers of a disorder.”

2. "No one is born with a gender: Everyone is born with a biological sex. Gender (an awareness and sense of oneself as male or female) is a sociological and psychological concept; not an objective biological one."

3. "A person's belief that he or she is something they are not is, at best, a sign of confused thinking."

4. "Puberty is not a disease and puberty-blocking hormones can be dangerous."

5. "According to the DSM-V [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition], as many as 98% of gender-confused boys and 88% of gender-confused girls eventually accept their biological sex after naturally passing through puberty."

6. "Pre-pubertal children diagnosed with gender dysphoria may be given puberty blockers as young as eleven, and will require cross-sex hormones in later adolescence to continue impersonating the opposite sex. These children will never be able to conceive any genetically related children even via artificial reproductive technology. In addition, cross-sex hormones (testosterone and estrogen) are associated with dangerous health risks including but not limited to cardiac disease, high blood pressure, blood clots, stroke, diabetes, and cancer."

7. "Rates of suicide are nearly twenty times greater among adults who use cross-sex hormones and undergo sex reassignment surgery, even in Sweden which is among the most LGBTQ-affirming countries."

8. "Conditioning children into believing that a lifetime of chemical and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex is normal and healthful is child abuse."

Gender Dysphoria Research

Abigail Shrier wrote about the transgender craze in her book *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*.^{3} In [my radio interview with her](#), she explained that “gender dysphoria” was characterized by severe and persistent discomfort in one’s biological sex. It typically begins in early childhood. In previous generations, it afflicted a sliver of the population (roughly .01 percent) and occurred mostly in boys.

Prior to 2012, there was no scientific literature on girls (11-21) ever having developed gender dysphoria at all. Then the Western world experienced a sudden surge of adolescents claiming to have gender dysphoria and self-identifying as “transgender.”

In 2016, Lisa Littman (an ob-gyn, public health researcher) was scrolling through social media when she noticed a statistical peculiarity. Several adolescents (most of them girls) from a small town in Rhode Island had come out as transgender. In fact, they were all from the same friend group.

She admitted that she knew very little about gender dysphoria, but this statistical anomaly was interesting to her. And she then noticed there had been a sudden spike in the Western World of girls experiencing gender dysphoria. She immersed herself in the scientific literature on gender dysphoria to try to understand what was happening. Perhaps it was due to increased social acceptance of LGBTQ people, but she suggested in a peer-reviewed paper that the girls might be rushing toward “transition” because of peer contagion. As you might imagine, her suggestion was roundly criticized. She was also accused of anti-trans bigotry.

In a subsequent research project, she collected data anonymously from 256 parents whose kids had not met the

criteria of gender dysphoria in childhood, but suddenly identified as transgender in adolescence. She identified 16 traits in common. Here are a few.

1. The vast majority have zero indicators of childhood gender dysphoria.
2. Almost a third of them did not seem at all gender dysphoric.
3. A majority had one or more psychiatric diagnosis and almost half were engaged in self-harm prior to the onset of dysphoria.
4. Nearly 70 percent of the teenagers belonged to a peer group in which at least one friend had also come out as transgender.
5. Among parents who knew their children's social status, over 60 percent said the announcement brought a popularity boost.
6. Over 88 percent of the parents surveyed reported being supportive of transgender rights.

There is growing evidence that social contagion is a much better explanation for the notable increase in the number of young people (especially young women) who now claim to be transgender.

Promotion of Transgenderism

Transgenderism has been promoted through social media, through the schools, and even through the medical establishment. Abigail Shrier began to look at the influence of social media on this transgender craze. In her chapter on "The Influencers" she talks about trans promoters who have become a YouTube sensation. We are seeing similar promoters on TikTok and other social media platforms. Here are a few of the ideas she

discovered.

1. If you think you might be trans, you are.
2. Testosterone is amazing. It may just solve all your problems.
3. If your parents love you, they will support your trans identity.
4. Deceiving parents and doctors is justified, if it helps transition.
5. You don't have to identify as the opposite sex to be trans.

She also found that transgenderism was being promoted through the schools. One program coordinator she talked to acknowledged that the "role of schools has changed." Now "schools have expanded to be the hub for a lot more social services and looking more holistically, emotionally, at what's going on with children." In other words, they have become a "source of social justice."

You might wonder how schools teach about transgenderism to young children. Teachers begin by talking about gender identity. A book intended for kindergarten teachers to read to their students reinforces the idea that gender is a social construct. It begins with a familiar origin story: "Babies can't talk, so grown-ups make a guess by looking at their bodies. This is the sex assigned to you at birth, male or female." It then provides a list of gender options: trans, genderqueer, non-binary, gender fluid, transgender, gender neutral, agender, bigender, etc.

Transgender charts and diagrams are being used in many schools. There is a "Genderbread Person" that is supposed to help children sort through how their gender identity and their gender expression relates to their biological sex. And there

is a “Gender Unicorn” that is supposed to help them understand who they may be physically attracted to and emotionally attracted to.

The American Psychological Association has even put together guidelines for the Care of Transgender and Gender Nonconforming (TGNC) patients. Doctors must provide “gender affirming care” which is defined as being “respectful, aware, and supportive of the identities and life experiences of TGNC people.”

How to Respond to the Transgender Moment

Ryan Anderson is the author of the book, *When Harry Became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Moment*.^{4} When [I interviewed him](#) on his book, he explained how transgender ideology promotes the opportunity for children to change their gender with surgery and drugs. And parents “are told that puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones may be the only way to prevent their children from committing suicide.”

Ryan Anderson countered that the best studies of gender dysphoria have found “that between 80 and 95 percent of children who express a discordant gender identity will come to identify with their bodily sex if natural development is allowed to proceed.” He also documented that even children going through “transitioning” treatment still have an extraordinarily high rate of suicide attempts compared to the general population.

He reminded us that we should be tolerant and loving toward children (and adults) who struggle with their gender identity. But we should also be aware of the potential harm when transgender identity is normalized.

Unfortunately, we are living in a world where transgender activists want more than tolerance and kindness. They demand affirmation. We aren’t allowed to question whether using

medical treatments to aid in transgender transformation is positive for children. In his book, Ryan Anderson shows that the best biology, psychology, and philosophy support an understanding of sex as a bodily reality. As he puts it: "Biology isn't bigotry."

Abigail Shrier also offers several suggestions. First, don't get your kid a smartphone. She explains that nearly every problem teenagers face traces itself back to the introduction of the smartphone years ago.

Second, don't relinquish your authority as a parent. You don't have to go along with every idea your teenager has, nor do you have to go along with every educational or psychological fad being promoted in society.

Third, don't support gender ideology in your child's education. She provides an example of what happens when schools do a seminar on anorexia or suicide. Often the prevalence increases. A small number of students may have gender confusion or gender dysphoria. But talking about it will spread confusion.

Finally, don't be afraid to admit, that it's wonderful to be a girl.

While she talks about the benefits and opportunities of being a girl, Christians can go even further. We believe God is responsible for who we are and what we are. Each one of us is created in God's image (Genesis 1:26). We can celebrate girls and boys and encourage them to use their gender and their gifts to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 1:31).

Notes

1. Dr. Lawrence S. Mayer and Dr. Paul R. McHugh, "Sexuality and Gender," *The New Atlantis*, Fall 2016, www.thenewatlantis.com/collections/sexuality-and-gender.
2. "Gender Ideology Harms Children," September 2017, [https://acped.org/assets/imported/9.14.17- Gender-Ideology-](https://acped.org/assets/imported/9.14.17-Gender-Ideology-)

Harms-Children_updated-MC. pdf.

3. Abigail Shrier, *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters*, Regnery Publishing, 2021.

4. Ryan Anderson, *When Harry Became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Moment*, Encounter Books, 2019.

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Historical Cycles

Kerby Anderson provides an overview of four world-changing cycles: a political/cultural cycle, a generational cycle, a technological cycle, and a financial cycle.

Are there cycles in history? Yes, even though there is a linear trajectory in history, there are generational cycles we can observe. No doubt you have heard the phrase: “Hard times create strong men, strong men create good times, good times create weak men, weak men create hard times.” Or you may have heard: “History doesn’t repeat itself, but it often rhymes.” And you may have heard the phrase “the fourth turning” that predicts a crisis at the end of a four-fold cycle.

We are going to look at four of the most often quoted cycles: a political/cultural cycle, a generational cycle, a technological cycle, and a financial cycle. Today we take for granted democracy, capitalism, and the industrial revolution. These political, economic, and technological realities were not always in our world but came about because of revolutions.



One of the most significant revolutions took place 250 years ago. Andrew Wilson talks about this in his book, *Remaking the*

World. He describes 1776 as “a year that witnessed seven transformations taking place—globalization, the Enlightenment, the Industrial Revolution, the Great Enrichment, the American Revolution, the rise of post-Christianity, and the dawn of Romanticism.”

Some of the events in 1776 we know. That was the year the Declaration of Independence was ratified. It was the year when Adam Smith published the *Wealth of Nations* in 1776. It was also the year of James Watt’s invention of the steam engine that spawned the industrial revolution. Both capitalism and the industrial revolution led to a significant increase in life expectancy and the rise of social development.

In this article as we discuss each of these four cycles, we should remember this interesting fact: all these cycles seem to be converging today. The last time these cycles converged in 1776, the world changed.

We are fortunate to live in such a time as this (Esther 4:14). We should be like the sons of Issachar (1 Chronicles 12:32) who were “men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do.”

What does the future hold? Only God knows. As the song goes, “He’s got the whole world in His hands.” We may not know the future, but we can trust in the One who knows the future.

I think we are likely headed for a massive change in the future. But it is difficult to predict what political event or economic spark might inflame our world. Therefore, we should all be in prayer for our leaders and prepare ourselves for possible turmoil ahead.

Political/Cultural Cycle

Let us look at what appears to be an eighty-year political/cultural cycle. (It actually seems to average out to

about 84 years). Go back to 1848 and you have Karl Marx publishing the *Communist Manifesto* and other works. The political and social impact of his Marxist perspective swept through Europe, changed the political structure of many countries, and is still an influence today. This idea not only introduced a new way of viewing the world but was also responsible for removing the monarchy from most nation states.

Another important political change happened 84 years later in the 1930s. In Europe, you have the rise of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. In this country, you had the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt who signed into law a significant number of New Deal programs that vastly expanded the scope of government and are influential in our lives today. It is worth remembering that the federal government wasn't as large as it is today. Roosevelt was responsible for the creation of so many of the alphabet soup of programs and federal agencies. The following decades were the era of big government.

If you add another 84 years, you come to 2016. In Europe, you have the political battle known as Brexit and the beginning of some populist uprisings. In this country, you also had the rise of populism and a reaction to the size and scope of big government. That was best illustrated by the election of Donald Trump.

It was also a time of turmoil. In Europe, we had the farmer protests in the Netherlands and the yellow jacket protests in France. In the U.S., we had BLM protests and Antifa protests.

There is also a longer cycle that describes the rise and fall of empires. General John Glubb notices that most empires last about 250 years. If you apply that to the U.S., you find that we are entering the end of that cycle. One key date is 1776. That not only marks the beginning of the nation (Declaration of Independence) but the promotion of capitalism (Adam Smith and the publication of *The Wealth of Nations*). By the way, if you go back about 250 years before that you come to the

Protestant Reformation that began when Martin Luther nailed the 95 theses to the Wittenberg Door.

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Generational Cycle

We now turn to looking at a generational cycle.

More than a quarter century ago, William Strauss and Neil Howe wrote their bestselling book, *The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy*. In it, they argued that history could be understood as coming in turnings, which have cycles of four. Each cycle spans a length longer than human life, roughly 80 to 100 years. That unit of time was what the ancients called the saeculum. These four turnings of the saeculum comprise the historical rhythm of growth, maturation, entropy, and destruction.

The first turning is a High – an upbeat era of strengthening institutions and weakening individualism. That is when a new civic order develops and the old values decay. The second turning is an Awakening – which is a passionate era of spiritual upheaval. This is when the civic order comes under attack from new values. The third turning is an Unraveling – which is a downcast era of strengthening individualism and weakening institutions. This is when the old civil order decays and new values develop. The fourth turning is a Crisis – which is a decisive era of secular upheaval. The values regime propels the replacement of the old civil order with a new one.

The authors predicted that political, economic, and social

upheavals would rattle the United States in and around the 2020s. The 2008 economic crisis and the changes just described from 2016 seemed to support the predictions made in the book.

Last year, Neil Howe wrote *The Fourth Turning Is Here*. The title tells it all. We are in crisis as illustrated by a government that does not seem to function, low public trust in just about any institution, political polarization, moral and legal chaos, and a collapse of families. He reminds us of the Abraham Lincoln quote that “a house divided against itself cannot stand” and that the government “will become all one thing, or all the other.” He also reminds us of other fourth turning crises in America: World War II, the Civil War, and the American Revolution.

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Technological Cycle

Let's look at a technological cycle.

There appears to be about a fifty-year technological cycle, in which we see important technological revolutions. In the late 18th century, we saw the beginnings of what today we refer to as the industrial revolution. Most people lived on farms. This revolution brought people out of the farms into the cities and factories.

Fifty years later was the age of steam and railways that changed the world significantly. Up until that time, we had manpower and horsepower. Trains that run on steam and steam ships changed the world in significant ways. Now people could move faster and carry heavier loads over a longer distance.

Fifty years after that we had steel and electricity. Steel was important in buildings. Brick buildings could only be a few stories high. Steel allowed designers to create skyscrapers and to build bridges over larger sections of water. Electricity literally lit up the dark night and provided numerous conveniences that we take for granted today.

Fifty years after that we had oil, automobiles, and a revolution in mass production. Automobiles provided people with the ability to go wherever they wanted without having to walk, ride a horse, or catch a train. Advances in mass production enhanced the industrial revolution and made possible the vast array of products available to us today.

By the 1970s, we came into the age of information and telecommunications. This came about with the development of the transistor and then the microchip. Our digital world developed because of these inventions.

Today, we find ourselves in a world of fast computers, [artificial intelligence](#), and [genetic engineering](#). We have social media, but we also have social media censorship. We have creative graphics, but we also have deep fakes and growing questions about [what is real and what is fake](#). We can genetically treat and cure diseases, but we can also [genetically engineer humans](#). How much of this will be driven by politics or economics? It is worth noting this latest technological cycle raises significant questions and also coincides with the political cycles and the generational cycle.

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Financial Cycle

In this article we have looked at four important historical cycles. Now we conclude by covering a financial cycle. You will notice that some of the financial cycles parallel the technological revolutions.

America moved from an agricultural society to an industrial economy to an information society.

If you look at the wealth cycles of nations, you notice something interesting about which currency was dominant. The financial superpower changes over time, on average about 100 years. Perhaps you have seen a chart that shows these changes:

Portugal – Portuguese Real (15th century)

Spain – Spanish Real (16th century)

Netherlands – Dutch Guilder (17th century)

France – Franc (18th century)

Britain – Pound sterling (19th century)

U.S. – U.S. dollar (20th century)

Where are we today? The U.S. and other countries around the world are experiencing a debt crisis. One significant reason for this is the fact that the dollar is no longer “good as gold.” For 5,000 years, money was gold. But protecting it and transporting it was difficult. Banks and nations held the gold and created paper certificates that represented the value. Sometimes, the amount of paper currency was not always backed by gold.

The greatest problem came in the 20th century. In 1944, the Bretton Woods conference fixed gold at \$35 per ounce. But by 1971, President Nixon closed the gold window and we have seen over the last fifty-plus years that the value of the dollar has continually declined. Also, the possibility of the U.S. dollar remaining the reserve currency in the world is questionable.

At the same time, this country and other countries are facing a significant debt crisis. It is easy to spend more when all you need to do is print more money. That leads to inflation and a devaluation of your currency.

When faced with a debt crisis, you only have a few options. You can default on the debt, which some nations have done. You can tax the citizens, but there isn't enough wealth in any nation to cover the size of those national debts. You could cut spending, but few politicians would ever consider that option. Instead, most countries (including the U.S.) print more money. Unfortunately, that can only last for so long. Just look at Weimar Germany or Zimbabwe or Venezuela.

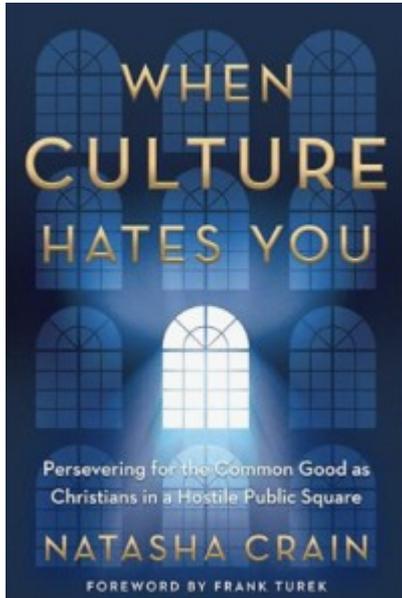
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Impose Values

Natasha Crain warns Christians in her new book, *When Culture Hates You: Persevering for the Common Good as Christians in a Hostile Public Square*. She begins by talking about the hostility Christians often face when they articulate a biblical perspective on cultural issues. We shouldn't be surprised since Jesus warned us, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you" (John 15:18).



One of the significant criticisms from non-Christians, and even from Christians, is the claim that Christians should not impose their views on others. We also hear that Christians should not seek power. We are told that getting involved in politics harms our witness and can disrupt unity in the church. And we are told that Christians should not be partisans.

To evaluate those objections, she proposes slavery as a test case. Here are her five key statements using those objections: (1) Christians shouldn't have worked to end slavery because we shouldn't have imposed our views on others. (2) Christians shouldn't have worked to end slavery because that involved seeking power to do it. (3) Christians shouldn't have worked to end slavery because getting involved with a political issue harmed our witness. (4) Christians shouldn't have worked to end slavery because it disrupted unity in the church. (5) Christians shouldn't have worked to end slavery because Christians shouldn't have been partisans.

Would we accept those objections today? We would reject such reasoning and can see how we shouldn't have applied such arguments two centuries ago. We were called to speak truth then and are called to speak truth today.

This blog post originally appeared at pointofview.net/viewpoints/impose-values/ on March 13, 2025.

Coddling of the American Mind

Drawing on the book The Coddling of the American Mind, Kerby Anderson examines the insanity on college campuses where students cannot handle ideas and people they disagree with.

In this article we will talk about what is happening on college campuses, and even focus on why it is happening. Much of the material is taken from the book, *The Coddling of the American Mind*. [\[1\]](#)



Greg Lukianoff was trying to solve a puzzle and sat down with Jonathan Haidt. Greg was a first amendment lawyer working with the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). He was trying to figure out why students (who used to support free speech on campus) were now working to prevent speakers from coming on campus and triggered by words or phrases used by professors.

Greg also noticed something else. He has suffered from bouts of depression and noticed some striking similarities with some of the comments by students. He found in his treatment that sometimes he and others would engage in “catastrophizing” and assuming the worst outcome. He was seeing these distorted and irrational thought patterns in students.

After a lengthy discussion they decided to write an article about it for *The Atlantic* with the title, “Arguing Towards Misery: How Campuses Teach Cognitive Distortions.” The editor suggested the more provocative title, “The Coddling of the American Mind.” The piece from *The Atlantic* was one of the most viewed articles of all time and was then expanded to this book.

That book used the same title: *The Coddling of the American Mind*. Jonathan was on [Point of View](#) last year to talk about the book. The authors believe that these significant

psychological changes that have taken place in the minds of students explain much of the campus insanity we see on campus today.

They point out that two terms rose from obscurity into common campus parlance. Microaggressions are small actions or word choices that are now thought as a kind of violence. Trigger warnings are an alert the professors now must use if they may be discussing a topic that might generate a strong emotional response.

Before we talk about some of the insight in the book, it is worth mentioning that though there is a psychological component to all of this insanity, there is also an ideological component. When the original article appeared, Heather MacDonald asked if “risk-adverse child-rearing is merely the source of the problem. For example, why aren’t heterosexual white males demanding safe spaces?”^{2} They all had the same sort of parents who probably coddled many of them.

It would probably be best to say that the mixture of psychological deficits also with the liberal, progressive ideological ideas promoted on campus have given us the insanity we see today. We have had liberal teaching on campuses for a century, but the problem has become worse in the last decade because of the psychological issues described in the book, *The Coddling of the American Mind*.

Three Untruths (Part 1)

The book can easily be summarized in three untruths that make up the first three chapters of the book. The first is the “Untruth of Fragility: What Doesn’t Kill You Makes You Weaker.” Nietzsche’s original aphorism was, “What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.” The younger generation has turned this idea on its head.

It is true that some things are fragile (like china teacups), while other things are resilient (and can withstand shocks). But they also note that some things are *antifragile*. In other words, they actually require stressors and challenges to grow. Our muscles are like that. Our immune system is like that. And university education is supposed to be like that. Students are supposed to be challenged by new ideas, not locked away in “safe spaces.”

Unfortunately, most young people have been protected by a culture that promotes what they refer to as “safetyism.” It has become a cult of safety that is obsessed with eliminating threats (whether real or imagined) to the point where fragility becomes expected and routine. And while this is true for the millennial generation (also called Generation Y), it is even truer for the iGen generation (also called Generation Z) who are even more obsessed with safety.

Part of the problem in these untruths is what they call “concept creep.” Safety used to mean to be safe from physical threats. But that has expanded to the idea that safety must also include emotional comfort. In order to provide that comfort, professors and students a few years ago introduced the idea of creating “safe spaces” for students. And in order to keep those students emotionally safe in the classroom, professors must issue “trigger warnings” so these students don’t experience trauma during a classroom lecture or discussion.

The second untruth is the “Untruth of Emotional Reasoning: Always Trust Your Feelings.” You can get yourself in some difficult circumstances quickly if you always trust your emotions. It is easy in this world to get frustrated, discouraged, and even depressed. Psychologists have found that certain patients can get themselves caught in a feedback loop in which irrational negative beliefs cause powerful negative feelings. We are seeing that on college campuses today.

Psychologists describe “the cognitive triad” of depression. These are: “I’m no good” and “My world is bleak” and “My future is hopeless.” Psychologists have effective ways of helping someone break the disempowering feedback cycle between negative beliefs and negative emotions. But very few adults (parents, professors, administrators) are working to correct mistaken ideas.

Three Untruths (Part 2)

In a college classroom, students are apt to make some sweeping generalization and engage in simplistic labeling of the lecture or reading material. In that case, we would hope that a professor would move the discussion by asking questions or even challenging the assertion.

Instead, many professors and colleges go along with the student comments. In fact, many even argue that any perceived slight adds up to what today are called “microaggressions.” In many cases, slights may be unintentional and actually wholly formed from the listener’s interpretation.

Here is how it develops. First, you prevent certain topics from being discussed in class. Next, you prevent certain speakers from coming to campus because they might present a perspective that aggrieved students believe should not be discussed. In the book is a chart illustrating how many speakers have been disinvited from universities. Five years ago, the line jumps up significantly.

The third untruth follows from that assumption. It is the “Untruth of Us Versus Them: Life is a Battle Between Good People and Evil People.” The authors argue that “the human mind is prepared for tribalism.” They even provide psychological research demonstrating that. But that doesn’t mean we have to live that way. In fact, conditions in society can turn tribalism up, down, or off. Certain conflicts can

turn tribalism up and make them more attentive to signs about which team a person may be on. Peace and prosperity usually turn tribalism down.

Unfortunately, in the university community, distinctions between groups are not downplayed but emphasized. Distinctions defined by race, gender, and sexual preference are given prominence. Mix that with the identity politics we see in society, and you generate the conflict we see almost every day in America.

The authors make an important distinction between two kinds of identity politics. Martin Luther King, Jr. epitomized what could be called “common-humanity identity politics.” He addressed the evil of racism by appealing to the shared morals of Americans using the unifying language of religion.

That is different from what we find on college campuses today that could be called “common-enemy identity politics.” It attempts to identify a common enemy as a way to enlarge and motivate your tribe. Their slogan sounds like this: Our battle for identity and survival is a battle between good people and bad people. We’re the good guys and need to defeat the bad guys.

An Example: Evergreen State College

One good example of how these untruths play out can be found at what happened on a college campus in Olympia, Washington. The entire story is described in chapter five but also is featured prominently in the opening chapter of the book *No Safe Spaces* and in the movie with the same title.

Just a few years ago, Evergreen State College was probably best known as the alma mater for rapper Macklemore and Matt Groening, the creator of *The Simpsons*. That all changed with an email biology professor Bret Weinstein sent.

In the past, the school had a tradition known as the “National Day of Absence.” Usually, minority faculty and students leave the campus for a day to make a statement. But in 2017, the college wanted to change things and wanted white students and faculty to stay away from campus.

Professor Weinstein argued in an email that there is a difference between letting people be absent and telling people “to go away.” And he added that he would show up for work. When he did, he was confronted by a mob of students. When the administration tried to appease the demonstrators, things got worse.

Weinstein has described himself as a political progressive and left-leaning libertarian. But his liberal commitments did not protect him from the student mob. The campus police warned him about a potential danger. The next morning, as he rode his bike into town, he saw protesters poised along his route tapping into their phones. He rode to the campus police department and was abruptly told: “You’re not safe on campus, and you’re not safe anywhere in town on your bicycle.” Weinstein and his wife eventually resigned and finally received a financial settlement from the university.

The Evergreen students and faculty displayed each of the three great untruths. The Untruth of Fragility (What doesn’t kill you makes you weaker) came from a faculty member who supported the protesters and addressed some of her faculty colleagues in an angry monologue. She warned, “I am too tired. This [blank] is literally going to kill me.” A student at a large town hall meeting verbalized her anxiety and illustrated the Untruth of Emotional Reasoning (Always trust your feelings). She expressed, “I want to cry. I can’t tell you how fast my heart is beating. I am shaking in my boots.”

And the whole episode illustrates the Untruth of Us Versus Them (Life is a battle between good people and evil people).

The students and faculty engaged in common-enemy identity politics by labeling a politically progressive college and liberal professors as examples of white supremacy. One student (who refused to join the protest) later testified to the college trustees, "If you offer any kind of alternative viewpoint, you're the enemy."

What Can We Do?

The book, *The Coddling of the American Mind*, identifies many disturbing trends on college campuses that are beginning to spill over into society. What can we do to stem the tide?

Obviously, the long-term solution to the insanity on campus and in society is to pray for revival in the church and spiritual awakening in America. But there are some practical things that must be done immediately.

First, college administrators must get control of their campus. The riots at some of these universities resulted in violence and property destruction. Often the campus police and even the local police failed to take action. Sadly, the university administration rarely took action afterwards.

Some form of deterrence would have prevented future actions on the University of California, Berkeley campus. Instead, the inaction established a precedent that likely allowed the conflict at Middlebury College. Students not only shut down the lecture, but they assaulted one of the campus professors. Once again, no significant action was taken against the students and outside agitators. The problem will get worse if there is no deterrence.

Second, professors must get control of their classrooms. Students cannot be allowed to determine what subjects cannot be taught and what topics cannot be discussed. The authors of this book are concerned about the tendency to encourage students to develop extra-thin skins just before they enter

into the real world. Employers aren't going to care too much about their feelings. Students don't have the right not to be offended.

Third, we need to educate this generation about free speech. One poll done by the Brookings Institute discovered that nearly half (44%) of all college students believe that hate speech is NOT protected by the First Amendment. And since many students label just about anything they don't like as hate speech, you can see why we have this behavior on college campuses. More than half (51%) of college students think they have a right to shout down a speaker with whom they disagree. A smaller percentage (19%) of college students think it is acceptable to use violence to prevent a speaker from speaking on campus.

Finally, the adults need to make their voice heard. We pay for public universities through our tax dollars. Parents send their kids off to some of these schools. We should not tolerate the insanity taking place on many college campuses today.

The authors have identified certain concerns that colleges and universities need to address. They remind us how hostile the academic world has become, not only to traditional Christian values, but also to mere common sense. We need to pray for what is taking place in the college environment.

Notes

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The Great Reset

The Great Reset means different things to different people. Kerby Anderson provides an overview and a biblical perspective.

Is the idea of “The Great Reset” merely a conspiracy theory? That seems unlikely, given the fact that if you type in those three words in a search engine you will find more than 900 million hits. But the phrase “great reset” apparently means different things to different people, so getting a clear definition is important.

In 2020, the founder of the World Economic Forum co-authored and published a book called *COVID-19: The Great Reset*.[{1}](#) This organization is composed of political, economic, and cultural elites who meet regularly in Davos, Switzerland. The two authors of this book see the current situation in the world as a means of dealing with the “weaknesses of capitalism” supposedly exposed during the pandemic.



But to understand the history of “The Great Reset” you need to go back to the beginning of the World Economic Forum. Klaus Schwab introduced the idea of “stakeholder capitalism.”[{2}](#) This is a term sometimes used by progressives to reset the management goals in corporations from shareholders to stakeholders.

The actual term “Great Reset” can be found in a book by that title written by urban studies scholar Richard Florida.[{3}](#) He argued that the 2008 economic crash was the latest in a series of great resets that included the Great Depression of the 1930s. A few years later, the book and its ideas became the

basis for wanting to “push the reset button” on the world economies.

As you might expect, the pandemic and lockdowns have provided a context in which a reset could take place. The goal would be to make the world greener, more digital, and fairer. Given what the world has been through these last few years, the proponents hope to change the economies of nations, so that they benefit not only shareholders but employees, consumers, communities, and the environment.

Some of the comments proponents have made about “The Great Reset” have become fodder for various conspiracy theories. But it is probably fair to say that the phrase “The Great Reset” means different things to different people. Environmental groups want to reset how we use resources and focus on sustainability. Business leaders want banks and corporations to use an ESG index (environmental, social, and governance index). Globalists want to reset the economy and move us toward a different view of [capitalism](#).

Critics talk about some of the other factors associated with “The Great Reset.” That would include such things as the promotion of uncontrolled immigration along with significant money printing that results in such problems as open borders and uncontrolled inflation.

In this article we look at this important issue from an economic, political, and biblical perspective. As you will see, Christians need to pay attention to this issue in the news.

The Great Reset of Capitalism

The primary focus from the World Economic Forum has been on the attempt to move our current economic system into “stakeholder capitalism.” Some critics have renamed it “corporate [socialism](#)” or even “communist capitalism.”

The plan is to change the behavior of corporations to no longer benefit shareholders but to focus on stakeholders. This would be done by requiring businesses and corporations to take a more central role when a crisis, like the recent pandemic, adversely affects society.

[Climate change](#) is another “crisis” that corporations need to address. Put simply, corporations need to be involved in social justice issues. That is why we are seeing major corporations getting more involved in political issues and expressing their opinions on issues ranging from transgenderism to voter integrity laws. One effective tactic being used is to rate businesses and corporations with an ESG index (environmental, social, and governance index).

The ESG index can be used to force businesses to comply with a [woke](#) agenda or else be squeezed out of the market. Some have suggested that the ESG index is essentially a social credit score being applied to businesses and corporations.

Andy Kessler, writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, argues that ESG is a loser and that you pay higher expenses for a fund with similar stocks but worse performance.[{4}](#) In fact, he encourages [investors](#) to buy stocks of companies with great prospects over the next decade at reasonable prices.

Aren't the companies and countries with a high ESG score better investments? A professor at the University of Colorado evaluated the system in the *Harvard Business Review* and made four key points about ESG.[{5}](#)

First, ESG funds have underperformed. Second, companies that tout their ESG credentials have worse compliance records for labor and environmental rules. Third, ESG scores of companies that signed the UN Principles of Investment, didn't improve after they signed, and their financial returns were lower for those who signed. His final point was even more significant. He concluded that often companies publicly embrace ESG as a

cover for poor business performance. In other words, when earnings are bad, the company cites its ESG score.

Klaus Schwab believes that companies should try and optimize for more than short-term profits and focus on achieving the goals set forth by the UN for sustainable development. That may sound like a good idea until you look at the economic data behind it.

Why Now?

Why has there been such a push for significant changes in this decade? Activists wanting to make changes in society and our economy see the pandemic and governmental response as a political opportunity. It is the familiar phrase, "Never let a crisis go to waste."

Most social and political change occurs gradually. The crisis of the pandemic forced big government and big pharma to move at a much faster rate. Public acceptance of larger governmental control became a paradigm shift that allowed political leaders and even corporate leaders to move faster than the incremental pace of the past. The pandemic threw open the window for change. The only question is how much of "The Great Reset" will be put in place before it closes.

The pandemic is the external reason for pushing "The Great Reset" but there is also an internal reason. An entire generation of college students learning woke ideology in the universities are now filling positions in various companies. Many commentators naively suggested that once coddled college students enter the "real world," they will drop their woke ideas and face the reality of making a living in the business world and the free market.

Instead, those woke students brought their ideas into corporate boardrooms and embraced attempts to reset capitalism and corporations. Their professors taught them that capitalism

is evil, and that America is riven with racism, sexism, homophobia, and xenophobia. It is time, they believe, to join arms with activists and reformers and bring about “The Great Reset.” We might add that the American consumer hasn’t been so accepting of these ideas, which is why we sometimes hear the phrase “go woke, go broke.”

The push for a “Great Reset” is also taking place during what many commentators refer to as the fourth industrial revolution. The first industrial revolution was a mechanical revolution. The second and third revolutions were electrical and digital revolutions. This fourth industrial revolution brings together diverse technologies like artificial intelligence, robotics, nanotechnology, and biotechnology. It also includes philosophical ideas like [transhumanism](#).

In previous programs, I have discussed the impact of surveillance on our [privacy](#). We warned about the influence of [Big Tech](#) and [Big Data](#). And we have also talked about [the merging of humans and machines](#). Each new technological development brings progress and benefits, but they also bring legitimate concerns about how these technologies can be abused in the wrong hands.

How then will this be accomplished?

Administrative State

It may be difficult to imagine how the great reset programs could be implemented in the US. Only a few members of Congress would support these ideas. As we have discussed above, many of these ideas have been implemented in woke corporations. But these programs could also be implemented by the administrative state or what some have called “the deep state.”

Two books document the deep state. Michael Glennon (Tufts University law professor) wrote about *National Security and Double Government*.[\[6\]](#) This dual-state system, he explained,

began under President Bush but was continued under President Obama.

Mike Lofgren (former congressional aide) wrote about *The Deep State: The Fall of the Constitution and the Rise of a Shadow Government*.^[7] He argued that there is “the visible government situated around the Mall in Washington, and then there is another, more shadowy, more indefinable government that is not explained in Civics 101 or observable to tourists at the White House or the Capitol.” He explained that it wasn’t a “secret, conspiratorial cabal” but rather “the state within a state is hiding mostly in plain sight.”

The reason we have an executive bureaucracy is to benefit from the research and experience of public servants who have devoted their lives to understanding the social and political implications of federal policies. This has always been a necessary function, but especially with the last few presidents. The experts in the bureaucracy can provide context and prevent presidents and their cabinets from making huge mistakes.

But there is another side to the federal bureaucracy. We may suppose that bureaucrats are there to implement the policies of the President and administration. Political appointees to the cabinet always say that they “serve at the pleasure of the president.”

That may be true for them. But a career civil servant has a different perspective and expects to be in government much longer than the four or eight years a president holds office. We may think of the bureaucracy as like a military unit (where every order is routinely obeyed). But the bureaucracy is often more like a university faculty (where you are part of a team but also have many of your own ideas about what should be done). Often the federal bureaucracy slows down the implementation of the president’s policies or even chooses to ignore them.

As I discussed in a previous program on [The Liberal Mind](#), even with the best of bureaucrats, the “[road to serfdom](#)” can be paved with good intentions. Fredrick Hayek wrote his book with that title because he was concerned that most government officials and bureaucrats write laws, rules, and regulations with good intention. They desire to make the world a better place and may believe that the best way to achieve that is to implement many of the great reset policies. That is why we need to pay attention to the “deep state” and administration policies.

Biblical Perspective

What is a biblical perspective on the great reset? It would be easy to merely link all these ideas to end-time prophecy. It is easy to see how these emerging technologies and the concept of the “great reset” could be used by the Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2, Revelation 13). Computer technology and enhanced surveillance would allow this future leader to control the world. But it is important to consider how we should respond in our current world to these proposals.

We are seeing many examples of leftist authoritarianism today and need to be alert and involved. James 4:7 says we have a responsibility to resist evil, and Paul tells us to fight the good fight (2 Timothy 4:7). Jesus teaches that we are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16).

Christians can agree with the goals of addressing economic inequality and the need to care for the environment. We are to defend the poor and oppressed (Psalm 82:3) and to be good stewards of God’s creation (Genesis 1:27-28). But we should also be concerned about the authoritarian impulses we see not only in government but in major corporations.

First, we should separate the message from the messenger. The

World Economic Forum and its participants are sometimes naïve and they even propose disturbing solutions to very real problems in our society. We can agree with their attempts to deal with poverty and economic inequality, but we must reject some of the ways in which they want to reset the world and bring about change.

Second, we should apply the Bible and a biblical worldview to each issue. For example, a biblical view of justice usually differs from many of the secular, progressive ways of working for justice that also includes such things as the promotion of sexual and gender identities.

Third, we should apply a biblical perspective to technology. The Bible does not condemn technology but often reminds us that tools and technology can be used for both good and evil. The technology that built the ark (Genesis 6) also was later used to construct the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11). A wise and discerning Christian should evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of each technology.

Christians will need discernment (Proverbs 18:15) in judging the ideas associated with the “great reset.” The phrase can mean different things to different people. Many of the ideas associated with it are bad for our country and us. But we can join hands with those who desire to make a better world and want to do it in ways that don’t contradict the Bible.

Additional Resources

Kerby Anderson, *A Biblical View on The Great Reset*, Point of View booklet, 2022.

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2. Klaus Schwab, *Stakeholder Capitalism: A Global Economy that Works for Progress, People and Planet*, NY: Wiley, 2021.
3. Richard Florida, *The Great Reset: How the Post-Crash Economy Will Change the Way We Live and Work*, NY: Harper Business, 2011.
4. www.wsj.com/articles/esg-loser-funds-costs-basis-points-blackrock-500-environment-green-sec-11657461127
5. hbr.org/2022/03/an-inconvenient-truth-about-esg-investing
6. Michael Glennon, *National Security and Double Government*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
7. Mike Lofgren, *The Deep State: The Fall of the Constitution and the Rise of a Shadow Government*, NY: Penguin Books, 2016.

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1. Klaus Schwab and Thierry Malleret, *COVID-19: The Great Reset*, Agentur Schweiz, 2020.
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The Importance of Voting

Kerby Anderson provides reasons why it's so important for people of faith to exercise our stewardship of voting in what is probably the most consequential election in our lifetime.

This election season is like no other in recent memory. This was the first time in more than a century that two presidential candidates, who have served in that office, were running against each other. Now we have a previous president and vice-president running. This is similar to 1984 when President Reagan ran against the previous Vice-President in Jimmy Carter's administration (Walter Mondale).

Voters can compare four years of a Trump administration with three-and-half years of a Biden/ Harris administration. Of course, they can also compare a Republican-controlled Senate with a Democratic-controlled Senate. And they can do the same for the House of Representatives.

You can also compare the National Democratic Platform with the National Republican Platform. Here are links to both:

[Democratic](#)

[Republican](#)

The differences are stark and illustrate why so many people say this is the most consequential election in our lifetimes. Who we elect to office will determine our laws and our taxes. Judges that are appointed and confirmed will affect life, liberty, and property.

As Christians we need to consider what role we will play in the next election. We have a civic responsibility because we are both citizens of heaven and citizens of earth. To assess our involvement, let's look at a few issues.

Close Elections

We have had many close elections for federal office. For example, we have had close presidential elections in 1960, 1976, 2000, 2004, 2016, and 2020. The last two presidential elections illustrate this when we examine the vote totals in the six swing states (Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin).

In 2016, Donald Trump won three of those swing states (Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) by a mere 77,744 votes. In 2020, Joe Biden won three swing states (Arizona, Georgia, and Michigan) by 42,844 votes.

While we can have a debate about whether Joe Biden really won those states fairly, my point is to illustrate how close even the presidential elections have been. Change 42,844 votes in three states and we would have had a 269-269 electoral college tie.

We can also point to very close elections for federal, state, and local offices. The key point is we have close elections, and that's why all Christians should be registered to vote and then go out and cast their ballot.

Importance of the Christian Vote

Various polls suggest that religious voters could sway the race between Vice President Harris and former President Donald Trump. One CBN report documented that "President Biden is trailing Donald Trump among voters who regularly attend religious services, a phenomenon extending beyond the traditional support base of evangelical Christians." Senator Josh Hawley put it this way: "There's no majority for the Republican party without voters of faith. And they're going to decide this election. So we need to them to turn out."

Former member of Congress and former presidential candidate,

Tulsi Gabbard explains that the Democratic Party “is trying to erase God from every facet of our public life.” She also added that “Now more than ever, people of faith, people of spirituality, need to stand up, to defend this fundamental, God-given right and stop those who are trying to take it away from us.”

Stewardship of the Vote

Have Christians been a good steward of the vote? Over the years, I have provided statistics about how born-again Christians have done in previous elections. The percentages are relatively consistent. Approximately 85 percent of Christians of voting age are registered to vote. That means about 15 percent are not even registered to vote. Of those Christians registered to vote, about 65 percent actually vote.

In the New Testament, Jesus says that believers are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16). We have a stewardship responsibility when it comes to using our gifts, talents, and opportunities. Jesus also described the importance of this stewardship in His parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30). He was critical of the one servant who buried his talent (Matthew 25:26). We as voters should not “bury our talent” but use the opportunity God has given us to vote responsibly.

Educating Voters

Having accurate information is vital and can change an election. Unfortunately, [media bias](#) often prevents voters from knowing important information. A month after the 2020 election, the Media Research Center asked The Polling Company to survey 1,750 Biden voters in seven swing states (Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin). They tested the voters’ knowledge of eight news stories that liberal news media failed to report properly.

They concluded that this lack of information proved crucial. They discovered that one in every six Biden voters surveyed (17%) said they would have abandoned the Democratic candidate if they had known the facts in one or more of these news stories.

The eight news stories surveyed included three stories that reflected poorly on Joe Biden or Kamala Harris and five stories about Trump administration successes. For example, they found that more than a third (35.4%) didn't know of the Biden sex assault allegations. Nearly half (45.1%) did not know about the scandals involving Hunter Biden. And a quarter (25.3%) of them did not know that Senator Kamala Harris had the most left-wing record of any Senator in 2019.

When they surveyed the Trump successes, they found that anywhere from four in ten to five in ten did not know about economic growth, the creation of 11 million jobs, the Middle East peace deals, energy independence, and Operation Warp Speed.

A total of 17 percent said they would have changed their vote if they had been aware of these issues. This would have moved every one of the swing states into Trump's column and given him 311 electoral votes. This study is illustrative of the impact the mainstream media had on the 2020 election.

Churches and Pastors

Another place where voters can be educated is in church. But pastors often want to know how IRS regulations affect what churches might want to do to educate the congregation. Fortunately, Kelly Shackelford and First Liberty Institute have put together a legal summary of what pastors can and cannot do during an election.

Because the church is a 501(c) (3) organization, there are two actions pastors cannot take during an election. First, a

pastor or a church may not use the organization to endorse one candidate over another. Second, a pastor or a church may not give its money to one candidate over another.

On the other side, pastors are free to do many things during an election. First, pastors can speak about political issues. “It is a misconception that pastors cannot address political issues—even ‘hot button’ issues like abortion, same-sex marriage, and gun control—from the pulpit.”

Second, pastors can educate their congregation about politics. “Pastors are fully protected when it comes to issues like educating members of their church about the political process, handing out non-partisan voter guides and flyers so members can read about each candidate’s platform, and even providing the opportunity for members to register to vote.”

Third, pastors can invite political candidates to speak at their church. “Contrary to popular belief, pastors and churches can invite political candidates to address their congregation from the pulpit, as long as all the candidates in a race are included in the invitation.”

This is a crucial election. It is time for Christians to get involved.

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Worldviews Through History – Compared to a Christian View

Kerby Anderson provides a summary of how mankind has viewed the world from the Romans until today. This summary provides us a perspective against which to compare and contrast a

Christian, biblical worldview based on New Testament principles.

Roman Worldview

On the Probe Web site we often talk about [worldviews](#). I want to explain how the worldviews we talk about developed through history. We will be using as our foundation an excellent book written by Professor Glenn Sunshine whom I have met and also had the privilege of interviewing. His book is *Why You Think the Way You Do: The Story of Western Worldviews from Rome to Home*. {1}

Glenn Sunshine is a member of the church that Jonathan Edwards attended when he was at Yale. Professor Sunshine gave a lecture about Jonathan Edward's worldview at a conference they held, and Chuck Colson invited him to teach with the Centurions program. He gave a talk about "How We Got Here" and then later turned it into *Why You Think the Way You Do*.



Since we will be talking about worldview, it would be good to begin with Glenn Sunshine's definition. "A worldview is the framework you use to interpret the world and your place in it." {2} You do not need to be a philosopher to have a worldview. All of us have a worldview.

Although Glenn Sunshine begins with the worldview of the Roman world, he quickly takes us back to neo-Platonism. It was the religion and philosophy based upon Plato's ideas. Neo-Platonism was the belief that the fundamental ground of reality is non-physical. Instead it is found in the world of ideas (and is known as *idealism*). These ideas cast shadows that cast other shadows until they arrive at the physical world.

According to this worldview, the whole universe exists as a hierarchy. The spiritual is superior to the physical. This

provides a scale of values for the world, but also provides a scale for humanity. In other words, those who are superior should rule over those who are inferior because they have demonstrated their ability to rule or conquer.

This view of hierarchy led to the idea of the father having superiority over all members of the family. It led to the idea that men are superior to women. It led to the idea that the emperor should rule and be worshipped. And it led to the idea that slaves are inferior to free people and nothing more than "living tools."[{3}](#)

This explains not only the success of Rome but also its ugly underside. Essentially there are two pictures of Rome: "the glittering empire and the rotten core."[{4}](#)

In Rome, human life did not have much value. While it is true that Romans abandoned human sacrifice, they engaged in other practices equally abhorrent. "They picked up the Etruscan practice of having people fight to the death in games in honor of the dead."[{5}](#)

Slavery provided the economic foundation for the empire. Abortion and infanticide were regularly practiced. "Roman families would usually keep as many healthy sons as they had and only one daughter; the rest were simply discarded."[{6}](#) And Roman law required that a father kill any visibly deformed child.

Transformation of the Pagan World

How did Christianity transform the pagan world? In AD 303, the Roman emperor Diocletian began a severe persecution of Christians. But because Christians were faithful and even willing to go to their deaths for their beliefs, their credibility increased. Eventually they were accepted and allowed to exercise their faith. Constantine even legalized the Christian faith by AD 313.

Once that took place, Christian ideas were allowed to percolate through society. One of the most important ideas was that human beings are created in the image of God. This idea has a profound impact. First, it meant that people are fundamentally equal to each other. No longer were there grounds for saying that some people are superior to others. In fact, "Christians were the first people in history to oppose slavery systematically." {7}

Christians (who believed that all are created in the image of God) treated the sick differently. They believed that even those who were deathly ill still deserved care. Dionysius of Alexandria reported that Christians (often at great risk to their own lives) "visited the sick fearlessly and ministered to them continually." {8} They would rescue babies abandoned in an act of infanticide. They would oppose abortion.

In economics, we can also see the influence of Christianity. The idea that God created the universe and then rested showed that God worked. That would mean that human beings (made in the image of God) are expected to work as well. God gave Adam and Eve intellectual work (in naming the animals) and physical work (in tending the Garden). Contrast this with the Roman world where physical work was seen as something that only slaves would do. Christians saw labor as something that was intrinsically valuable.

Labor is good; drudgery is bad. Drudgery is a result of the Fall (Genesis 3). So Christians were the first to develop technology to remove drudgery from work. Other civilizations had technology, but the West uniquely applied such things as water power to make work more valuable and worthwhile by eliminating the drudgery and repetitive nature of certain tasks.

Property rights were also well-developed during this period. "The medieval world under the influence of Christianity has a much stronger emphasis on property rights than other cultures

had.”{9}

These ideas come from a biblical worldview and began to be developed during the Middle Ages. This led to a complete transformation of western society and set it on a trajectory to our modern world.

Christianity and Politics

Glenn Sunshine points out that in the West, the dynamic between church and state is unique. Christianity was originally a persecuted minority religion. Even when Christianity was declared a legal religion, the church did not depend upon the state. So the question of the relationship between church and state has been an open question.

During the Middle Ages, two men helped shape political thinking. The first was Augustine, who described two realms: the City of God and the City of Man. He argued that human government is the result of sin. He believed that it is based upon selfishness. Government itself is corruption. In the absence of government, anarchy reigns. So government is a necessary evil.

The City of God is different in that it is not based upon force or coercion. It is based upon love, charity, and repentance. That doesn't mean that the City of Man and the City of God cannot work together. But overall, Augustine had a more pessimistic view of government.

Aristotle had a different view of government. As people in the Middle Ages began to rediscover Aristotle, they began to develop a different view of government. They saw government as a necessary institution that God has placed in the world. It had positive and legitimate functions.

Aristotle believed that government had a more positive role in society. But the Christian theologians had to also deal with

the problem of original sin. They wanted to find a way to prevent original sin from corrupting the government. The tension between these two views is what drives the discussion of western political theory.

Sunshine notes that “another check on civil government involved the idea of rights.”^{10} We normally associate the idea of rights, especially inalienable rights, with eighteenth century political theorists. However, John Locke’s idea that we have inalienable right to life, liberty, and property is already found in the writings of medieval theologians. The basis for this is a belief that all are created in the image of God. Therefore, all of us have a number of natural rights that the state cannot remove. Natural law was the idea that God wove moral laws into the fabric of the universe.

There also was the belief that there should be limitations on the jurisdiction of civil government and church government. One example is the Magna Carta, that stated that the English church was to be free and its liberties unimpaired by the crown.

The Renaissance and Enlightenment

What about the transformation into the modern world? In the early modern period, starting with the Renaissance in the fifteenth century to the seventeenth century, there are a whole series of events that shook the worldview consensus that developed in the Middle Ages.

Previously there were certain beliefs about truth: (1) that truth was absolute, (2) that truth is knowable to the human mind, and (3) that truth is necessary for society (a society could not be based upon a lie). The best good guide for truth would be the great civilizations of the past that lasted for so long and thus must have been based upon truth.

The idea was to go to the past to find truth. During the

Renaissance scholars were very successful in collecting manuscripts and finding ancient sources. Unfortunately, they found so many sources that they discovered there was not a coherent perspective. The ancient writers disagreed with each other. In a sense, the Renaissance was a victim of its own success. There was too much information. The more ancient sources they found, the less likely they would find agreement in the perspectives. Once it became obvious that this grand synthesis was not possible, the entire purpose of intellectual activity was thrown into question.

Then there were the wars of the Reformation in which various factions fought over who was the true follower of the prince of peace. The devastation of the religious wars left many people wondering if there really was religious certainty. No longer was the question "is Christianity true" but rather "which Christianity is true?" Now you had a multiplicity of options that left people confused. This also generated questions about the role of religion in society.

Then you also had the discovery of the New World and whole people groups that had never heard the gospel. Some began to ask questions like: Is it fair of God to send them all to hell because they had never heard of Christianity? Or, in light of biblical history, where did they come from? How do these people fit with the story of Noah? These discoveries called into question biblical morality and biblical history.

Also, people started using a new way of looking at knowledge. They began to use the scientific method to evaluate everything. This begins a significant shift in how we understand the world. There is a movement away from certainty toward probability. There is also a movement away from studying ancient authors toward scientific experimentation.

In the modern world, therefore, truth is not found in the past but in the present and future. With this is also questioning of biblical authority.

The Modern World and Christianity

Let me conclude by talking about our modern world and how Christians should respond. Sunshine concludes his book with chapters on “Modernity and Its Discontents” and “The Decay of Modernity.” Essentially the modern world has left humans with a loss of truth, certainty, and meaning in life. “Materialism provides a ready answer to the question of the meaning and purpose of life: there is none.”[\[11\]](#) From a Darwinian perspective, our only purpose is to pass our genes on to the next generation.

This rejection of spirituality and meaning has ushered in various other worldviews as alternatives. These would be such worldviews as postmodernism, neo-paganism, and the New Age Movement. Sunshine argues that in many ways we have been catapulted back to Rome.

Like Rome we value toleration as the supreme virtue. Rome believed that toleration was important because it kept the empire together. If you go beyond the lines of toleration, you are persecuted. This is similar to the mindset today. The highest value in a postmodern world is toleration. Toleration so defined means that we will embrace any and all lifestyles people may choose.

The Romans lived in an oversexed society.[\[12\]](#) So do we. Rome practiced abortion. So does our society. Rome was antinatal and made a deliberate attempt to prevent pregnancy. They focused on sexual enjoyment and did not want to bother with kids. In our modern world, birthrates in most of the western democracies are plummeting.

Western civilization is a product of ancient Roman civilization plus Christianity. Sunshine argues that once you removed Christianity, modern society reverted back to Roman society and a recovery of the ancient pagan worldview.

So how should Christians live in this world? Of course, we should live out a biblical worldview. Every generation is called to live faithfully to the gospel, and our generation is no exception.

This is especially important today since we are facing a society that is not willing to accept biblical ideas. In many ways, we face a challenge similar to the early church, though not as daunting. From history we can see that the early church did live faithfully and transformed the Roman world. Christians produced a totally new civilization: western culture. By living faithfully before the watching world, we will increase our credibility and earn the respect from those who are around us by living in accordance with biblical principles.

Notes

1. Glenn Sunshine, *Why You Think the Way You Do: The Story of Western Worldviews from Rome to Home* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).
2. Ibid., 13.
3. Ibid., 31
4. Ibid., 20
5. Ibid., 30
6. Ibid., 33-34
7. Ibid., 43
8. Ibid., 44
9. Ibid., 76
10. Ibid., 91
11. Ibid., 177
12. Ibid., 33

Nuclear War

Kerby Anderson provides an overview of nuclear war from Annie Jacobsen's book Nuclear War: A Scenario with a biblical response.

Hell on Earth

Annie Jacobsen begins her book with a scenario: [{1}](#) a one-megaton thermonuclear bomb strikes the Pentagon and vaporizes the building and the 27,000 employees within it. A mile away the marble columns of the Lincoln and Jefferson memorials burst apart and disintegrate. Two and a half miles west at National Park, the clothes of a majority of the 35,000 people watching the ballgame catch on fire.

Her book, *Nuclear War: A Scenario*, takes you through, in a minute-by-minute description, what would happen if a “bolt out of the blue” nuclear attack took place on U.S. soil. This 370-page book isn't for the faint-hearted, but it is an in-depth investigation in how we got to this place in world history and what would happen if the unthinkable became reality. And the book provides a sequel to the 2023 biographical film, *Oppenheimer*.



Why are we discussing this difficult topic of nuclear war now? First, there is a need to educate a new generation. Although Americans talked about the danger of nuclear war during the Cold War years, much less has been said in recent years. Second, the threat of nuclear war is even greater today because of countries like North Korea that have nuclear weapons and other countries like Iran that are attempting to develop nuclear weapons. Third, this discussion is relevant because so many documents about nuclear war have been declassified. We know so much more about nuclear war than we knew just a few years ago.

It is impossible for our minds to comprehend what happens in a nuclear blast. The air heats to one hundred and eighty million degrees Fahrenheit. This is nearly five times hotter than the temperature in the center of the sun. The blast levels any structure within miles, but also creates winds travelling at several hundred miles per hour.

The nuclear fireball then rises like a hot-air balloon forming the iconic mushroom cloud with cap and stem. Then the inferno begins. Gas lines explode and look like giant blowtorches. Washington, D.C. has now become a mega-inferno. Asphalt streets turn to liquid from the intense heat. More than a million people are dead or dying within two minutes after the detonation.

Outside of the blast area, the electromagnetic pulse obliterates all radio, television, and the Internet. Cars with electric ignition systems cannot start. Water stations cannot pump water. And deadly radiation spreads to those who survived the initial blast.

Nuclear war may be unthinkable, but that is why we are thinking and talking about it.

Happens Too Fast

Nuclear war could develop unthinkably fast and devastate our world.

An intercontinental ballistic missile is a long-range missile that delivers nuclear weapons to political and military targets on the other side of the world. These ICBMs exist to do one thing: kill millions of people in another country.

Back when the ICBM was invented, Herb York, the Pentagon's chief scientist, wanted to calculate how many minutes it would take for it to reach the Soviet Union. [{2}](#) A group of defense scientists estimated that it would take 26 minutes and 40

seconds. From launch to annihilation takes just 1,600 seconds. Nuclear war happens too fast.

Today that estimate varies because we have nine countries that possess nuclear weapons: Russia, France, China, Pakistan, India, Israel, North Korea, the UK, and the US. Given North Korea's geographical location, the launch-to-target time frame from the Korean peninsula to the East Coast of the US would be about 33 minutes.

But a nuclear blast can come even sooner from nuclear-armed, nuclear-powered submarines. These submarines are called "boomers" or even have been called the "handmaidens of the apocalypse." They are undetectable under the sea and can sneak up very close to a nation's coast and launch a first-strike attack. This is why the president actually has only a six-minute window to decide on a nuclear counterattack.

Launch on Warning

America has a policy known as "launch on warning."^[3] What that means is that America will launch its nuclear weapons once its early-warning electronic sensor system warns of an impending nuclear attack. Put another way, the US won't wait to check if a warning is accurate, it will not wait and physically absorb a nuclear blow before launching its own nuclear weapons at whoever sent a missile to them.

This policy has been in place since the height of the cold war and represented an incredibly high risk. As one advisor explains, launch on warning during at time of intense crisis is a recipe for catastrophe.

Presidential candidates have promised to change this policy, but nothing has happened so far. George W. Bush in 2000 vowed to address this policy: "Keeping so many weapons on high alert may create an unacceptable risk for accidental or unauthorized launch." Barack Obama argued that "keeping nuclear weapons ready to launch on a moment's notice is a dangerous relic of

the Cold War.” President Biden has also encouraged to eliminate this perilous policy. No change has been made.

President’s Football

The decision to launch a nuclear strike comes from the president. How did the government decide to give the president the nuclear football? The story begins with Harold Agnew back in 1959.^{4} He visited a NATO base and noticed there were four F-84F aircraft at the end of the runway; each was carrying two nuclear gravity bombs. This meant that these nuclear bombs were in the custody of one U.S. Army private armed with a M1 rifle with eight rounds of ammunition. The only safeguard against unauthorized use of an atomic bomb was this single GI surrounded by numbers of foreign troops on foreign territory with thousands of Soviet troops just miles away.

When he got back to the U.S., Agnew contacted a project engineer at Sandia Laboratories and asked if they could put an electronic “lock” on the bomb’s firing circuits that would prevent others from arming the nuclear bomb. They produced a lock and coded switch that would be activated with a three-digit code.

They presented the idea and the device to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and then to President Kennedy who ordered it to be done. But the military objected. A general asked how a pilot somewhere in the world could get a code from the President of the United States to arm a nuclear weapon before being overrun by a massively superior number of Soviet troops? And why not have other nuclear bombs also coded?

The answer came in the creation of the President’s Football, which is an emergency satchel. This gave the president, not the military, control of America’s nuclear arsenal. The Football must always be near the president.

There is a story of how important it is for the president to have access to the Football.[{5}](#) When President Clinton was visiting Syria, President Hafez al-Assad's handlers tried to prevent Clinton's military aide from riding in an elevator with him. The Secret Service would not let that happen, and they did not let that happen.

Inside is a set of documents known as the Black Book. Robert "Buzz" Patterson served as a military aide to President Clinton, and I was able to interview him one time on [my radio program](#). He likened the Black Book to a "Denny's breakfast menu" because of how it looked. The president must choose retaliatory targets from a predetermined nuclear strike list on the menu.

Let me end with this question: Do you believe the current president has a mental capacity to make a rational decision of about launching nuclear weapons?

War Games

One question that was asked more than forty years ago was whether anyone could win a nuclear war. Spoiler alert: no one can. President Reagan ordered a simulated war game with the name Proud Prophet to explore the outcome and long-term effects of a nuclear war.[{6}](#)

The research used mathematical models to predict outcomes and was conducted at the National War College. Participants were cloistered away inside a secure location to prevent leaks. The results were only declassified in 2012, but much of the material was blacked out. Fortunately, this declassification allowed participants to discuss it without violating the Espionage Act of 1917.

Over the two weeks, every simulated scenario ended the same way. Sometimes they began with a tactical nuclear strike and a so-called limited nuclear war. Other times they simulated

exercises with NATO and then with other exercises without NATO. There were scenarios where the U.S. launched nuclear war preemptively. Sometimes that was when the Pentagon was supposedly in focused calm and other when in a crisis mode.

Sadly, the result was the same. Once a nuclear war starts, there is no way to win it or even end it. No matter how a nuclear war begins, it ends with complete Armageddon-like destruction. As one participant put it, this destruction "made all the wars of the past five hundred years pale in comparison." At least a half billion (and probably more like a billion) people die in the war's opening salvo. Then billions more die of radiation poisoning and starvation.

Nuclear Winter

When the bombs cease striking targets, the world turns cold and dark. Everything is on fire. Smoke produces noxious smog of pyrotoxins. Fires in the cities ignite other fires. Even in the less-populated areas, forest fires rage.

The density of soot reduces global temperatures by 20-40 degrees depending on the location. Earth plunges into the horror known as a "nuclear winter." This might be a familiar term for those of us who lived in the 1980s. Astronomer Carl Sagan wrote about it and warned us of the dangers of nuclear war.

A nuclear war would change the troposphere and thus the amount of sunlight reaching the earth. Once the radioactive fog and haze diminish, the ozone layer disappears, and the sun's warming rays are now killer UV rays.

Earth is no longer as hospitable for humans as it once was. After millennia of planting and harvesting, the few humans to survive return to a hunter-gatherer existence.

Biblical Perspective

We will conclude this discussion of nuclear war with a biblical perspective. Let's begin with the realization that God is sovereign and in control. But that doesn't mean that He would never allow a nuclear war to take place. Throughout history, we have had tyrants and armies destroy people groups and civilizations. God used pagan nations to judge the nation of Israel.

How should we respond? Since the first atomic bombings at the end of World War II, there has been a condition known as "nuclear anxiety." Jesus instructs us not to "be anxious about tomorrow" (Matthew 6:34), and Paul also tells us not to "be anxious about anything" (Philippians 4:6). Jesus even says that "if those days had not been cut short, no human being would be saved" (Matthew 24:22).

In the book of Daniel, we have another reminder of God's sovereignty that came in the second dream of Nebuchadnezzar. It reminded him of the fact that God "rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men" (Daniel 4:17). Nebuchadnezzar knew more about human sovereignty than anyone and proclaimed God's sovereignty over the earth at the end of his days (4:34).

Some Christians have suggested that the Bible may be describing a nuclear war. In the book of Revelation, there is a description of the poisoning of the waters (8:11), death of the earth's vegetation (8:17), the end of ocean life (16:3), and the inability to block the sun's rays resulting in severe burns (16:8).

There is a description of stars of heaven falling to earth (6:13) that some have suggested might be describing nuclear missiles raining down on earth during a nuclear war. These would be visible as they enter the atmosphere and begin striking the cities on earth.

Even passages in the Old Testament might point to the effects of a nuclear war. For example, in Zechariah 14:12 we read that “the Lord will strike all the peoples that wage war against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.”

One prophecy yet to be fulfilled can be found in Ezekiel 38 that describes nations that will come against Israel. But critics point to the fact that it says they are riding horses, wearing helmets and armor, and wielding swords (38:4-5). That doesn't look like a modern army. But I remember a famous quote from Albert Einstein: “I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.” The world might look very different after a nuclear war.

In this article we have been discussing the unthinkable: a nuclear war. We should remember the words of Jesus: “In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

Notes

1. Annie Jacobsen, *Nuclear War: A Scenario*, NY: Dutton, 2024, xvii.
2. Ibid., 53-55.
3. Ibid., 59-60.
4. Ibid., 86-87.
5. Ibid., 84-85.
6. Ibid., 173-178.

Worldview Deficiency

Kerby Anderson addresses the very sad and dire lack of a biblical worldview in the majority of people claiming to be Christians.

Over the last few months, I have been doing some interviews on books that document (in one way or another) a lack of moral behavior among evangelicals. If you read articles in *Christianity Today*, *Ministry Watch*, or *World* magazine, you see other examples.

As the authors document what is happening in the evangelical world, I always like to bring us back to why. The “why” question is probably more important than the “what” question. Why aren’t Christians acting like Christians? Of course, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Christians are supposed to be different than the world, but there is abundant evidence that they are very much like the world around them.

Each year, George Barna posts [The American Worldview Inventory](#). His most recent report shows that very few Americans (including evangelicals) have a biblical worldview. About four percent have a biblical worldview with four percent more with a variety of different worldviews. The dominant worldview (encompassing 92 percent) is the worldview of syncretism.

The classic definition of syncretism is that it is an amalgamation of different religions, cultures, or schools of thought. In the Christian context, it is an acceptance and even affirmation of a diverse set of beliefs that aren’t biblical. That is best illustrated by the fact that a majority (58%) of American adults don’t believe in absolute truth and instead believe that moral truth is up to the individual to decide.

You would hope pastors might be able to correct some of this

theological confusion. But George Barna found that less than a majority (41%) of senior pastors have a biblical worldview. And the problem is worse with youth pastors. Only 12 percent of them have a biblical worldview.

We shouldn't be surprised at what is happening in the evangelical world when we understand the why behind it.

“Is Race a Social Construct?”

How do you respond to the assertion that race is a social construct?

Thank you for your question. It may surprise you, but this is one area where I think Christians can agree with some of the statements being made by woke progressives. Although they might want to say that many other issues (class, gender, etc.) are examples of social constructs, we could agree that race is an example.

In [my booklet on “A Biblical Point of View on Racism,”](#) I give many examples of why the term “race” is imprecise. First, the Bible only talks of one race: the human race. Superficial differences in skin color, hair color, hair texture, or eye shape may provide physiological differences between people groups, but the Bible does not provide any justification for treating people differently simply because of these physical differences.

The Bible teaches that God has made “from one blood every nation of men” (Acts 17:26). Here, Paul taught the Athenians that they came from the same source in the creation as everyone else. If you have ever watched people at an international airport, you can conclude that human beings come

in so many shapes, sizes, and colors. Yet all these differences go back to the parents of the human race (Genesis 1-3, 1 Corinthians 15).

Science has also shown us that “race” is not a precise term. Research on the human genome project shows us that such racial characteristics (such as skin color) are insignificant genetically. People of every race can interbreed and produce fertile offspring.

One study of human genetic material of different races concluded that the DNA of any two people in the world would differ by just 2/10ths of one percent. And of this variation, only six percent can be linked to racial categories. These “racial differences” are trivial when you consider there are 3 billion base pairs of human DNA.

Another reason the term “race” also lacks precision is because of interracial marriage, which is blurring distinctions even more. Consider one well-known athlete: Tiger Woods. His heritage is Thai, black, white, Chinese, and Native American.

As you can see, the term “race” is not very precise and thus I think qualifies as a social construct.

Kerby Anderson

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