
AN INTRODUCTION

The Grandeur of Christianity

Part II

World Views of the Western World



BASIC BIBLE STUDIES

Building a Biblical World View

These basic **Bible** studies are intended to give a broad understanding of the Biblical world view. Though not exhaustive, this study forms the basis of the gauge against which we measure all other thoughts and ideas. Though composed of 66 books, the **Bible** is one book. The parts, the individual books, should always be studied in the context of the whole. The parts never work in isolation from the whole. Because of this marvelous interrelationship, the **Bible** acts as a commentary on itself. As you read each passage, ask God to enlighten your mind so that you might know “the thoughts of God” (1 Corinthians 2:11-12).

7 Vital Questions

In our study of the predominant world views of Western civilization and their impact upon the various disciplines, we must understand the world view a person holds to be true. To use the Biblical world view as the standard to evaluate others thoughts and ideas, we must thoroughly know the Scriptural answers to seven vital questions. Then as we read an essay or novel, listen to a political speech, or observe a series of paintings, we can measure these works against the Biblical world view to determine if what is being said is true or false. To understand or appreciate is important, but to discern truth (to evaluate) is vital!

- Is there a God or gods? If so, what is He (they) like?
- What is the nature of the universe — it’s origin?
- What is the essential nature of man?
- What is the basis of morality and ethics?
- What is the cause of evil and suffering?
- What happens to man at death?
- What is the meaning of history?

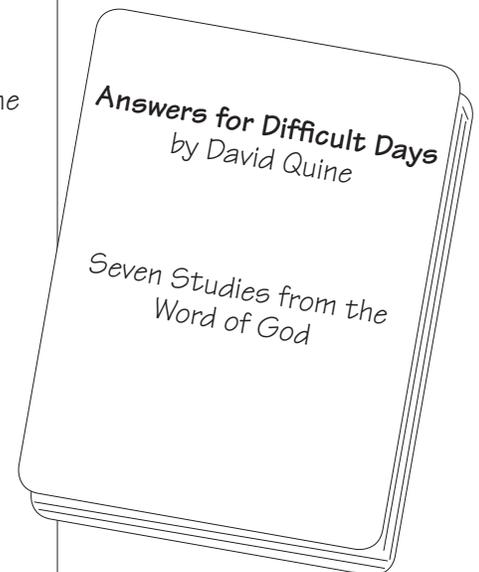
These are the important questions we answer as we build our own personal world view. The best way to use this study is to look up each passage, read the verses carefully, make several observations, and then write a statement that explains what it means.

“We are apt to forget that man is not only committed to Jesus Christ for salvation; he is committed to Jesus Christ’s view of God, of the world, of sin and of the devil, and this will mean that he must recognize the responsibility of being transformed by the renewing of his mind.”

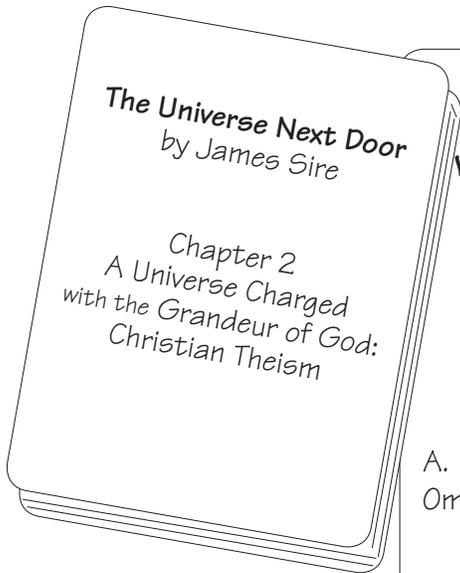
Oswald Chambers

My Utmost for His Highest

September 9



A UNIVERSE CHARGED WITH THE GRANDEUR OF GOD



CHAPTER 2 A UNIVERSE CHARGED WITH THE GRANDEUR OF GOD: CHRISTIAN THEISM

I. Introduction

II. Basic Christian Theism

A. *God is Infinite and Personal, Transcendent and Immanent, Omniscient, Sovereign, and Good.*

B. *God Created The Cosmos Ex Nihilo To Operate With A Uniformity Of Cause And Effect In An Open System.*

C. *Man Is Created In The Image Of God And Thus Possesses Personality, Self-transcendence, Intelligence, Morality, Gregariousness And Creativity.*

Why is it so important to understand the universe as "an open system"?

D. *God Can And Does Communicate With Man.*

1. *General Revelation*

2. *Special Revelation*

E. *Man was created good, but through the Fall the image of God became defaced, though not so ruined as not to be capable of restoration; through the work of Christ, God redeemed man and began the process of restoring man to goodness, though any given man may choose to reject that redemption.*

The Result of the Fall

1. *In Personality*

2. *In Self-Transcendence*

3. *In Intelligence*

4. *In Morality*

5. *Socially*

6. *In Creativity*

Redemption

F. For man, death is either the gate to life with God and his people, or the gate to eternal separation from the only thing that will ultimately fulfill man's aspirations.

G. Ethics is transcendent and is based on the character of God as good (Holy and loving).

H. History is linear, a meaningful sequence of events leading to the fulfillment of God's purposes for man.

III. The Grandeur of God

THE ROMAN AGE

A Review from *How Should We Then Live?*

THE ROMAN AGE

- I. Introduction
 - A. The Problem —

 - B. The Past —

 - C. The Starting Point —
- II. Rome: The Empire Triumphant
 - A. Size of Empire —

 - B. Military Strength of Empire —
- III. Rome: Cultural Analysis
 - A. *Greece and Rome: Cultural Influences and Parallels* —

 - B. Problems Arising for Roman Culture —

 - C. Results of Collapse of Ideals —

 - D. Characteristics of Empire Introduced by Augustus —

 - E. Christian Persecution & Christian Response —
- IV. Rome: Eventual Decline and Fall
 - A. Violence

 - B. Decadence

 - C. Economic Decline
- V. Conclusion — How Strong A Foundation

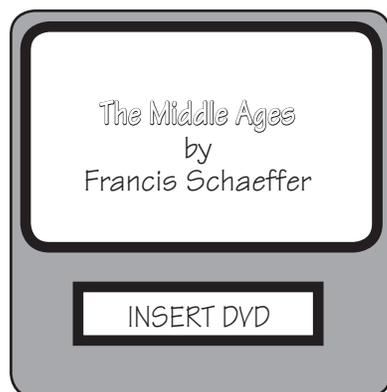
Watch Episodes One of **How Should We Then Live?** as a review of Year I of World Views of the Western World.



THE MIDDLE AGES

A Review from *How Should We Then Live?*

Watch Episode Two from **How Should We Then Live?** as a review of Year I of World Views of the Western World.



THE MIDDLE AGES

- I. Introduction: The Post-Roman World
 - A. Uncertainties —

 - B. Distortion of True Christianity —

 - C. Art and Music —

- II. The Church in the World
 - A. Economic —

 - B. Social —

 - C. Political —

- III. Artistic Achievements
 - A. The Reign of Charlemagne

 - B. Romanesque Architecture

 - C. Gothic Architecture —

- IV. Links Between Middle Ages and Early Renaissance
 - A. Aquinas

 - B. Deviation

 - C. Wycliffe and Hus

Ideas in Conflict

THE RENAISSANCE - REFORMATION

“While the men of the Renaissance wrestled with the problem of what could give unity to life and specifically what universal could give meaning to life and to morals, another great movement, the Reformation, was emerging in the north of Europe. This was the reaction we mentioned at the end of our study of the Middle Ages — the reaction against the distortions which had gradually appeared in both a religious and a secular form. The High Renaissance in the south and the Reformation in the north must always be considered side by side. They dealt with the same basic problems, but they gave completely opposite answers and brought forth completely opposite results.

Dr. Francis Schaeffer, **How Should We Then Live?**

According to Dr. Schaeffer the conflict concerned Grace and Nature.

He explains that Grace includes:

God, the Creator;
Heaven and heavenly things
Unity, or universals or absolutes
which give existence and morals meanings

He says that Nature includes:

The created;
Earth and earthly things;
The visible, what happens normally in the cause-and-effect universe;
What man as man does on the earth;
Diversity, or individual things,
the particulars, or the individual acts of man

Would Grace or Nature be emphasized, or would they be in balance? Which of the two viewpoints, Grace or Nature, does Plato take? Which of the two viewpoints, Grace or Nature, does Aristotle take?

	Grace	Nature
Plato		
Aristotle		

Add the following people to your Book of the Ages Time Line.

Men of the Renaissance:
Cimabue (1240-1302)
Giotto (1267-1337)
Dante (1264 - 1321)
Petrarch (1304 - 1374)
Boccaccio (1313 - 1375)
Massaccio (1401 - 1428)
Michelangelo (1475 - 1564)
Leonardo (1452-1519)
Raphael (1483-1520)

King Francis I of France
(1494 -1547)

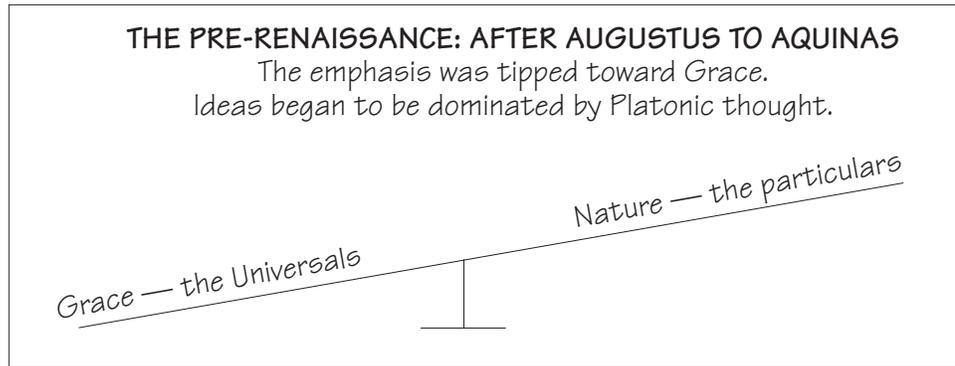
Men of the Reformation:
John Wycliffe (1320-1384)
John Hus (1369-1415)
Martin Luther (1483-1546)
Ninety-Five Theses (1517)
John Calvin (1509-1564)
Calvin's Institutes of
Christian Religion (1536)

Look at the School of Athens by Raphael. Refer to the **Adventures in Art** for insight regarding this work.



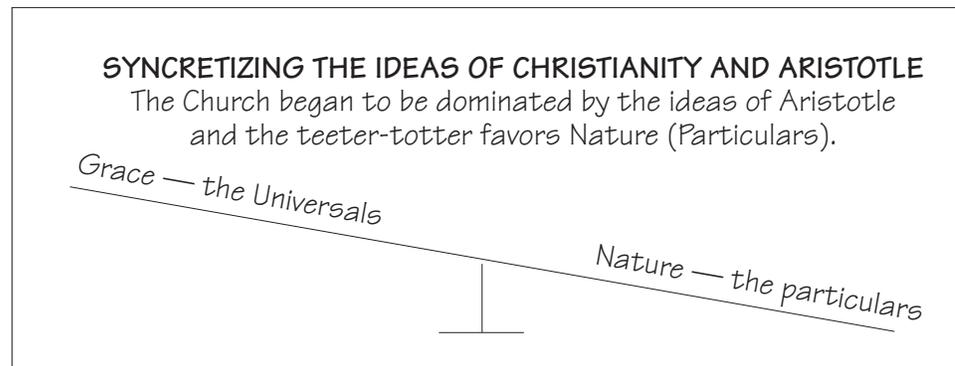
THE RENAISSANCE: A PHILOSOPHICAL TEETER-TOTTER OF IDEAS

The following diagrams illustrate the focus of the philosophical teeter-totter of ideas that were occurring prior to and during the Renaissance:

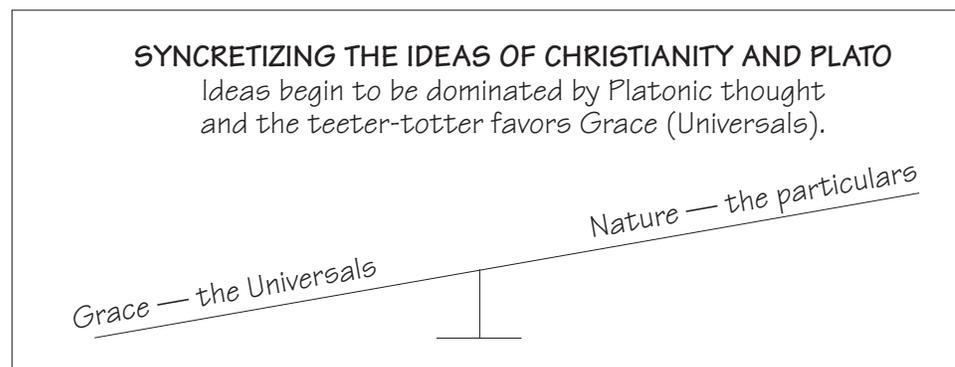


Remember, it was Thomas Aquinas who introduced the ideas of Aristotle into the Church. With Aquinas the teeter-totter began to shift. Would it stop at a balanced point -with a proper understanding of man and God or would it continue to search for a unity.

SYNCRETIZE — the attempt to combine or unite different and opposing ideas or principles.



“The early men of the Renaissance had tried to syncretize Christianity and Aristotelian thought, but had failed,” writes Dr. Schaeffer in **How Should We Then Live?**. He goes on to explain that later “the men of the Renaissance tried to syncretize Christianity and Platonism — and likewise failed.



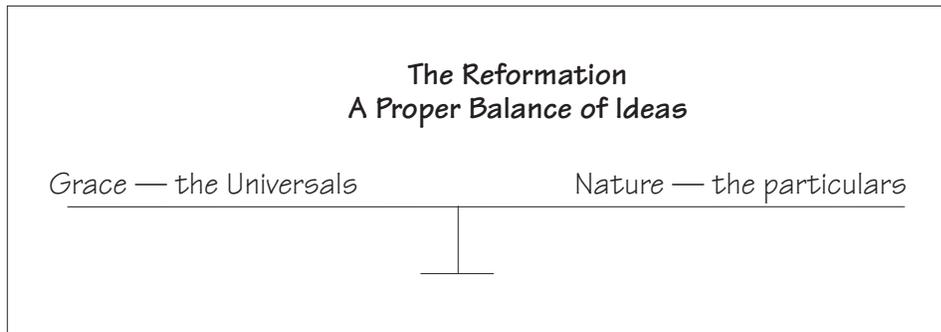
THE REFORMATION

“To this problem of unity of which we have been speaking, the Reformation gave an entirely opposite answer from that of the Renaissance. It repudiated both the Aristotelian and the Neoplatonic presentation. What was the Reformation answer?...When the Word of God, the **Bible**, was listened to, the Reformation had tremendous results, both in people individually becoming Christians, and in general culture.

What the Reformation tells us, therefore, is that God has spoken in the Scriptures concerning both [Grace] and [Nature]. He has spoken in a true revelation concerning nature - the cosmos and man. Therefore the reformers had a real unity of knowledge. They simply did not have the Renaissance problem of nature and grace! They had a real unity, not because they were clever, but because they had a unity on the basis of what God had revealed in both areas”

(Dr. Schaeffer, **Escape from Reason**).

The following diagram illustrates how the men and women of the Reformation addressed the Grace and Nature problem.



“The Biblical position, stressed at the Reformation, says that neither the Platonic view nor the humanist view will do. First, God made the whole man and He is interested in the whole man. Second, when the historic space-time Fall took place, it affected the whole man. Third, on the basis of Christ’s work as Savior, and having the knowledge that we possess in the revelation of the Scriptures, there is redemption for the whole man. In the future, the whole man will be raised from the dead and will be redeemed perfectly. And Paul says in Romans 6 that even in the present life we are to have a substantial reality of the redemption of the whole man. This is to be on the basis of the shed blood of Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit through faith, even though it will not be perfect in this life. There is the real Lordship of Christ over the whole man. This is what the reformers understood and what the **Bible** teaches. In Holland, for example, more than in Anglo-Saxon Christianity, they emphasized that this meant a Lordship of Christ in culture.

“So it means that Christ is equally Lord in both areas:

Grace and Nature.

“There is nothing autonomous - nothing independent from the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Scriptures. God made the whole man and is interested in the whole man, and the result is a unity. “Thus, at the same time as the birth of modern man in the Renaissance there was the Reformation’s answer to the humanistic Renaissance man’s dilemma. By contrast, the dualism in Renaissance man has brought forth the modern forms of humanism, with modern man’s sorrows.”

(Dr. Schaeffer, **Escape from Reason**)

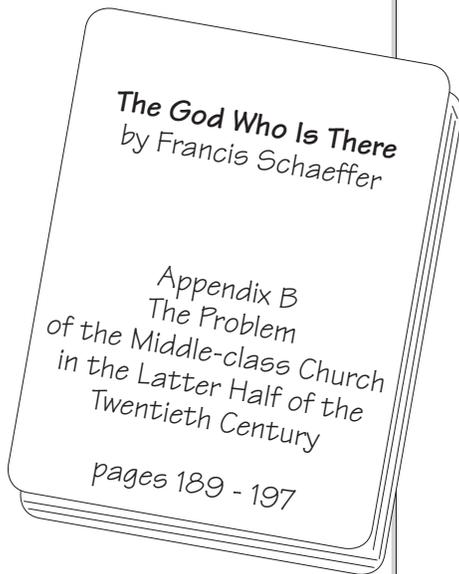
PLATO emphasized the importance of the soul to the exclusion of the body.

THOMAS AQUINAS did not include the mind in the Fall of man and therefore, reason was set free from the Fall. He introduced the thinking of **ARISTOTLE** into the Church.

SPEAKING TO OUR CULTURE

Thoughts by Dr. Schaeffer

Read from **The God Who Is There** Appendix B “The Problem of the Middle-class Church in the Latter Half of the Twentieth Century” (pages 189-193).



THE PROBLEM OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS CHURCH IN THE LATTER HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Three Principles

1 -

2 -

3 -

Two Sections of Society

1 -

2 -

Two Things We Must Avoid

1 -

2 -

Two Concepts To Keep In Mind As Young People Are Prepared

1 -

2 -

Read the Forward from **Escape from Reason** (pages 207 - 208).

Forward

Understanding the Language Understanding the Thought-Forms

For Students New To Our Program

Communicating Christianity with our Culture

It is hoped that this study will enable you to communicate with those in the 21st Century. There are good, adequate, and sufficient answers to man's basic questions. This is because there is a "God who is there" explains Dr. Schaeffer. There is, therefore, a sound basis for our Judeo-Christian faith. We are not talking about some "blind leap of faith" or some "hope in hope". He tells us that our conversation with those of our culture will touch on the reality of the universe —its existence and form; second, the reality of the uniqueness of man; and third, the openness of Christianity to historical verification.

- The Universe and its Form • The Uniqueness of Man • Historical Verification

These ideas touch all peoples lives. However, because all people are not coming from the same set of ideas, we must find the appropriate starting point for different people as we talk with them.

THE QUESTION OF APOLOGETICS

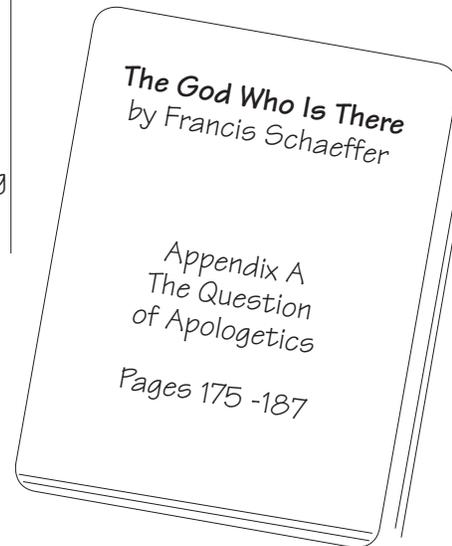
by Dr. Schaeffer

I. Apologetics

II. Rationalism

This last section of the introduction is for students who have never used World Views of the Western World ...

Read The Question of Apologetics from **The God Who Is There** by Dr. Schaeffer.



Definitions:

Metaphysics —
being or existence

Morals —
right and wrong

Epistemology —
how we know

A popular song says,
“I believe that I can fly...”
Suppose a person became convinced that he could fly, and he told you that he was going to jump off a building. What would you say to him? Does his view fit with reality? As you help him to see that what he believes does not fit with what is real, how could that help him to consider Christianity?

III. Evangelism and Life-Style

Describe the three groups of non-Christians.

What should be our response?

1 -

2 -

3 -

Dr. Schaeffer explains that God shuts us up to the reality of existence. What does he mean by this statement?

If a person does not believe there is right and wrong, if he does not believe there is a God, and if he does not believe there is an absolute, then he would probably not think of himself as a sinner. How, therefore, could you begin a conversation with this person about Christianity?

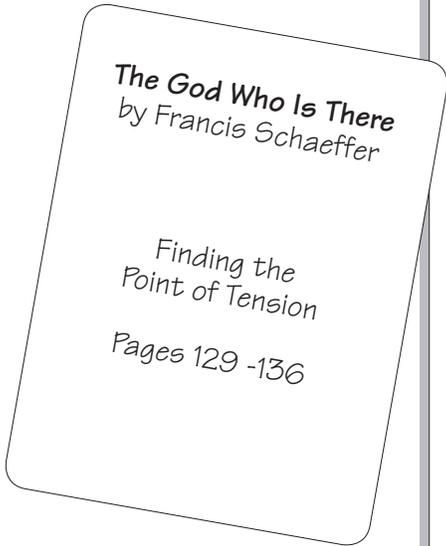
Describe the two different kinds of faith. Which represents true Christian faith?

Why does Dr. Schaeffer say that the Christian answers are both sufficient and necessary? Is the knowledge of these answers enough to become a Christian?

Describe the difference between rationalism and rationality. What is the Christian view of each?

What is meant by antithesis?

Read Finding the Point of Tension from **The God Who Is There** by Francis Schaeffer.



As you read the passage write down any questions you may have about what Dr. Schaeffer has said.

FINDING THE POINT OF TENSION

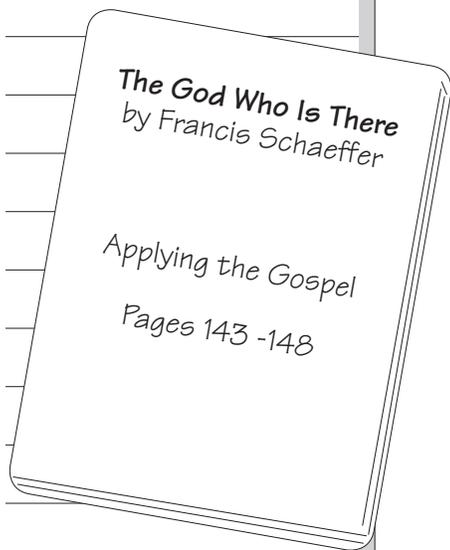
Make sketches of his drawings and give explanations.

I. Communicating To One of My Kind

II. Logical Conclusions

III. Torn by Two Consistencies

Read Applying the Gospel from **The God Who Is There** by Francis Schaeffer.



APPLYING THE GOSPEL

I. How Dare We Do It?

II. Faith in the Biblical Sense

If a person believes one thing about the world or about man that is not the way things really are, and if he begins to be uncomfortable about his beliefs, then what is he likely to do? Dr. Schaeffer refers to this as ...? Is this idea new to you? Draw Dr. Schaeffer's diagram illustrating this idea.

When does a non-Christian begin to experience this point of tension?

What should be your attitude toward a non-Christian as you talk?

List the names of several people that you would like to talk to about Christianity? What is to be the first thing you consider as you begin talking with a non-Christian?

Listen to the people around you. Can you discern their point of tension?

When should you stop talking about presuppositions?

Do you agree that “Knowledge precedes faith”? Why must truth come first? What evidence does Dr. Schaeffer give to support this idea? Do you agree or disagree with his idea?

What must a person understand before he is ready to become a Christian? What is the essential content that must be known or understood? Do you agree or disagree with Dr. Schaeffer?

Dr. Schaeffer explains evangelism in another way. He talks about taking off the roof. What does he mean by this statement? Explain this idea in your own words to someone who has not read these selections.

Is our goal in apologetics to win an intellectual discussion?
If not, then what is our goal?

