

Dr. Brad Strait, Cherry Creek Presbyterian Church



February 4th-5th, 2023

Major Sources: Jeff Miller, Harold Lindsell, Carl Truman, Phillip Graham, J.F. Baldwin, Paul Chappell, Phillip Ryken, R.C. Sproul, C.S. Lewis

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.

Psalm 40:2

worldview (noun)
the way a person
makes sense of life
and the world

In Review

Week 1: Where does Meaning come from?

Week 2: What determines Truth?

Week 3: Where are our Origins?

Now: What is our Purpose?

I. Outward Source

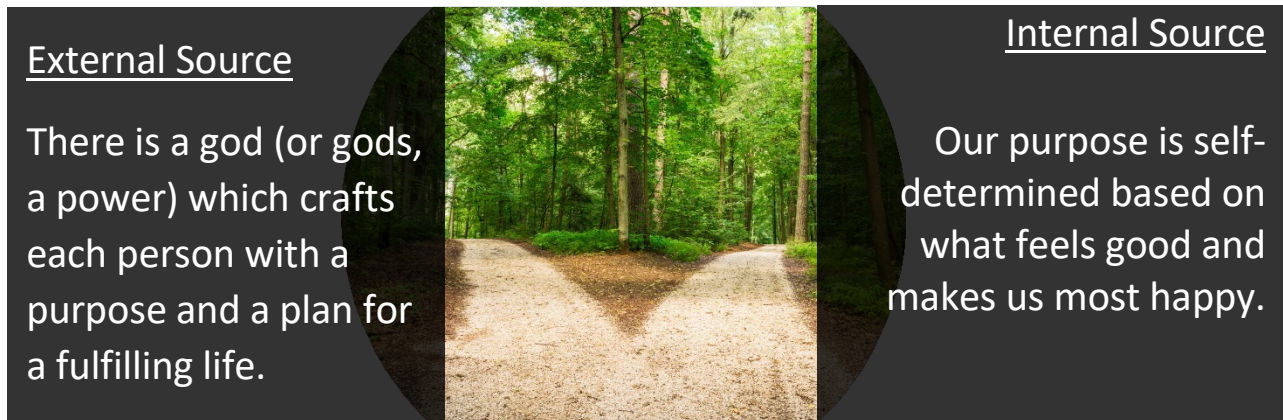
- There is a Source of meaning and order in the world, and we discover it and align with its purpose. (Aristotle, Aquinas, Einstein, Plato, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, science)
- There is a source of Truth in the world, and we seek to align our lives with this reality.
- There is a God who created the universe, including the Earth, with all its intricacies and order.

II. Inward Source

- The world is raw material out of which we each create our own meaning and purpose. (Nietzsche, Marx, atheism, post-modernism, individualism, communism)
- There is no objective truth in the world, and so each person must create our own truth and reality.
- The universe, its physical laws, and all life on Earth came into being accidentally.

Key question for Week 4: What is the chief purpose of humanity?

What (or Whom) determines our purpose?



III. Life's Purpose with External Source (Major Religions):

Islam

“To surrender completely to Allah, as revealed in the Qur’an by the Prophet Mohamed.”

Buddhism

“To attain enlightenment by disconnecting from all the earth, as modeled by the Buddha.”

Hinduism

“To attain a better reincarnation in *samsara* (the continuous cycle) by fulfilling the Four Aims.”

Judaism

“To fulfill the Covenant purposes of G-D revealed in Torah.”

Christianity

“To glorify God and enjoy him forever—as revealed in Jesus the Son and the Bible.”

IV. Life's Purpose with an Internal Source:

Humanism

“To seek, without theism, successful human ability and responsibility to lead ethical lives of personal fulfillment that aspire to the greater good.”

Postmodernism

“To feel good, be happy, and find internal peace, as revealed by each person for themselves.”

In Postmodernism seeks happiness in...

- +Intense Experiences**
- +Perfect Soul Mate**
- +Romanticized Future**

Characteristics of Postmodernism

Identity Consumerism

“Linked to the concept of a consumerist society, we can 'pick and mix' different pieces of our lives. Each piece, or fragment, may not necessarily be linked to the other, but as a whole, they make up our lives and choices...Our true identities can be made up of many fragments which we alone choose.”

- NYU/Studysmarter.com “Postmodernism”



Capitalism and Power Dynamics

Post-modernism embraces material things, a sensual world, and seeks personal/relational power for self-fulfillment. But it sees all organizations as motivated only by gaining power over others.

“For today's financial backers of research, the only credible goal is power. Scientists, technicians, and instruments are purchased not to find truth, but to augment power.”

- Jean François Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition

Fragmentation

“In Postmodernism, fragmentation and disorientation is no longer tragic. Postmodernism on the other hand celebrates fragmentation. It considers fragmentation and decentredness as the only possible way of existence and does not try to escape from these conditions.” - Nasrullah Mambrol, Oxford University

Decreasing Metanarratives (like law, religion, government, ethics, nationhood)

“Of course, a few modernists also questioned such traditional concepts as law, religion, subjectivity, and nationhood; what appears to distinguish postmodernity is that such questioning is no longer particularly associated with an avant-garde intelligentsia...Everyone should do it.”

- Dino Felluga, Purdue, "General Introduction to Postmodernism.”

An Oral/Visual/Now Culture, instead of a Written/Historic/Wisdom Culture

What is true on Facebook or TicTok or TV is more true than older sources of wisdom. Truth is experienced, not accumulated.

Personal Hyperreality

What I experience is more significant than other realities which others may believe in. I am the center of my reality.

“While there is, perhaps, a reality “out there,” what we see, desire, and experience in personal events are defining. To a certain extent, representation replaces reality and becomes more important than reality itself.” -NYU/Studysmarter.com “Postmodernism”

V. A Christian World View

An External Source

There is a biblical, personal God who knows us and loves us, and so creates each person with a purpose inside an ordained plan for a fulfilling life.

“To glorify God and enjoy him forever—as revealed in Jesus the Son and the Bible.”

“What is the chief end of mankind?”

“To glorify God and enjoy him forever!”

From the Westminster Confession of Faith

“God ... has purposes and performs particular actions, ...He does one thing and not another, [is] a concrete, choosing, commanding, prohibiting God with a determinate character...He has a plan for each person.” - C.S. Lewis

2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Romans 8:18-19

¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed.

“Since we are made in His image, we bring the Lord the most glory when we reflect His character — when we truly image His goodness, love, and holiness. Our ability to do this is hampered by sin, but our Savior, by His Spirit, restores our ability to reflect God’s image truly over the course of our lives.”

- R.C. Sproul

Romans 8:29-30

²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

Romans 8:26,28

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness...

²⁸ And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Empowered by Jesus,
I believe that a Christian's
purpose is to allow
God's glory and love to
shine in their life.

Colossians 1:27

To them [God's people] God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Illustration:

Is there a right way to load the dishwasher?

Yes. Look at the manual.



There are engineers who designed the dishwasher so that—if loaded properly—the dishes will all fit and get clean. There is a pattern to each shelf, and to each section. Plates go in one way, cups and bowls another. Far more dishes can be cleaned if the dishwasher is loaded based on their design.

Honestly, we all want to load the dishwasher our own way sometimes. And often, any wildly asymmetrical, random loading might get by. But the designers know the best way to load the dishwasher, and we can do better (and get cleaner) if we learn and conform to their pattern and plan.

But it isn't the loading that is most important—it is the clean dishes. Some pattern must wash them. So it is with our purpose; God has a plan and a purpose for us. When we conform to the Designer, he can best wash us clean.

And each day, we load and wash the dishes. Each day, we get a new chance to align our purposes with the Designer and get clean. Maybe we should look at the manual.