



July 1, 2014

Gleanings

Drawing Correct Conclusions



Gerald R. Chester, Ph.D.
President

Strategies@Work, LLC

Solutions That Transform

A recent article reported the results of an empirical study seeking to understand what worldview—atheist or Christian—best supports innovation and entrepreneurship. The conclusion of the study was that an atheistic worldview provides superior support for innovation and entrepreneurship (<http://www.psmag.com/navigation/health-and-behavior/atheism-linked-economic-innovation-productivity-75669/>). In essence, the writers contend that an atheistic work ethic trumps the proverbial protestant work ethic championed by Max Weber in his work *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. This begs the question: Did the researchers draw a correct or an incorrect conclusion?

Since the beginning of time, people have used logic to reason and draw conclusions about truth and reality. The ability to reason appears to be an attribute of God imparted to man at Creation. As with any divinely imparted characteristic, however, humans can use it either properly or improperly. Before sin entered into the human race, Adam and Eve properly used their reasoning ability to draw correct conclusions. At the fall of Adam and Eve (the Fall) recorded in Genesis 3, Adam and Eve used reasoning to draw an incorrect conclusion. One can readily see this in the account of the fall in Genesis 3:1–6 (NKJV):

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Services

Consulting
Planning
Training
Coaching

The events leading to the Fall began when the serpent (Satan) introduced doubt about the word of God. Though Eve responded correctly, the fact that she responded emboldened Satan to continue the conversation. Then the serpent went from raising doubt to asserting a lie—he questioned God's truthfulness. Eve was open to the conversation and began to reason based on the lie. This led her to draw an incorrect conclusion. She decided that God had withheld something good from Adam and herself. Consequently, Adam and Eve reasoned that they had the right to disobey God to achieve what they perceived was a more important goal—to gain the knowledge of good and evil and therefore be like God. Furthermore, they assumed that God would not, or could not, enforce the threatened death sentence for their disobedience (Genesis 2:16–17). Of course, they were wrong (1 Corinthians 15:22). The end result was spiritual death and ultimately physical death for them and their heirs. All this, because they drew an incorrect conclusion, which was based on a lie. Adam and Eve's reasoning pattern—believing a lie—is now the quintessential paradigm for drawing incorrect conclusions.

If the reasoning pattern seen in the Fall of man is a model for how incorrect conclusions are drawn, was the conclusion in the above referenced article (that an atheistic worldview better supports innovation and entrepreneurship than a Christian worldview) based on a lie?

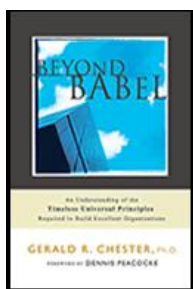
Affiliate Consultants

In the analysis of the data, the researchers failed to understand a very important aspect of Christianity as it is commonly practiced today, that is, the nearly ubiquitous dualistic nature of Christianity. By the term "dualistic nature," I am referring to the separation of church and work that is widely embraced. With this separation there is another common assumption, namely, that church activities have eternal significance but work activities do not. As a result, professing



Free PodCasts
Click here to subscribe.

View online
Print



For info click here
Order from Amazon
Order from Barnes & Noble

<http://StrategiesWork.com>
Gerald@StrategiesWork.com
972.931-8655 USA

Christians who are dualistic do not value work. Therefore, when comparing an atheistic worldview to a dualistic Christian worldview, the researchers' conclusion is not surprising—in fact, it is correct. I contend, however, that the researchers' conclusion would be different if they were to compare an atheistic worldview to a Christian worldview that is not dualistic.

My thesis is that the dualistic paradigm of Christianity is incorrect because it is based on a lie. Genesis 1 provides clues to the true paradigm of Christianity. The Scripture states that God created the material universe, he then created mankind to rule the material universe and finally declared the material universe very good. This means that God created man to rule over the physical creation by taking dominion over it and managing it. Since this was God's original intent for man, then surely man's rulership over creation is valuable to God. Work is therefore not an inferior activity, but rather it is the very activity that man should be doing in obedience to the will and ways of God. But because man (including many professing Christians) has misconstrued man's divinely ordained purpose in the universe, the pedestrian view among professing Christians is that "so called" spiritual work is important but physical work is not.

If my thesis is correct, then the conclusion of the aforementioned researchers, though understandable when interpreted against a dualistic paradigm of Christianity, is incorrect when compared to a truly biblical paradigm of Christianity. In other words, their conclusion is incorrect because the dualistic paradigm of Christianity is incorrect.

A truly biblical view of Christianity recognizes the call of man to the workplace and therefore honors work as a holy calling. True Christians seek to find and fulfill God's purpose for their lives and by so doing store up true wealth—wealth that God values (Luke 12:13–21). Consequently, Christians should be motivated to be innovative and entrepreneurial in their work assignments as a means of obedience to the call of God on their lives.

Atheists and agnostics, on the other hand, have no such motivation. In fact, their only motivation is to build temporal physical wealth—a far inferior motive when compared to the motive of building eternal wealth.

Concluding that an atheistic worldview is more supportive of innovation and entrepreneurship than a dualistic Christian worldview is probably true. But compared to Christians who correctly understand work, atheists can never be more motivated than a Christian truly walking out his or her calling.

The conclusion of the researchers was rooted in a lie—an incorrect biblical understanding of work and the true nature of Christianity. Therefore as with Adam and Eve in the garden, a lie is at the root of the researchers' incorrect conclusion.

To draw correct conclusions, one must reason based on truth. The ultimate truth is Christ (John 14:6), who not only incarnated truth but is also the repository of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:2–3). Any perceived truth that is not built on a correct understanding of Christ will be tantamount to building a house on sand, but building on the truth found in Christ is like building on a rock (Matthew 7:24–28). When the storm comes, only the house built on the rock will stand.

Drawing the right conclusions depends on starting with the right assumptions about truth and reality. The only correct way to truth is through Christ. May the Lord grant us grace to learn how to think biblically in every area of life so that we can draw correct conclusions and therefore live wisely in God's universe.

Training from a Biblical Worldview

Helping You Find and Fulfill Your Life Purpose

Your Need	Training Venue	Information (click below)
Find Your Life Purpose	<i>Seminar:</i> Strategic Life Alignment	Sept 8 - Dec 8, 2014
	Prior Strategic Life Alignment Presentations	Recordings Available
	<i>Seminar and Simulcast:</i> Strategic Life Alignment Alumni Event	TBA
	Prior Strategic Life Alignment Alumni Events	Recordings Available

Fulfill Your Life Purpose

Seminar: Business as Mission

August 2, 2014

Prior Business Transformation Series Seminars/Webinars

[Recordings Available](#)