

The Truth Project
Lesson 2—Part 2: Philosophy and Ethics
10/16/08

Review: God has created us so there is an inseparable and dynamic connection between our ideas about the nature of the world philosophy and our understanding of right and wrong behavior ethics. Last week-- philosophy, this week-- ethics.

Biblical basis Col.2:8: It's a warning to Christians.

I. Post modernism

There are all sorts of sizes and subtleties of postmodernism but for our purposes, postmodernism is saying There is no absolute truth. There is nothing outside the box.

Problem: We can't live that way. This is an ethics problem and a philosophy problem.

Passage: Psalm 14:1 The fool says in his heart there is no God.

"Postmodernists claim we can have no 'grand metanarrative' that makes sense of reality. Since there's no such thing as truth, all principles are merely personal preferences. As professor Ed Veith explains, the postmodernist claims that all you can do is try to impose your preferences on others before they impose theirs on you."

Chuck Colson, Christianity Today, December, 2003

II. Ethical Implications of "pomo" thought: there is no ultimate basis/standard for ethical or moral behavior.

A. Who makes the rules? might makes right

B. Assertion: "Every person has to define right and wrong for themselves"

"The 20th century gave rise to one of the greatest and most distressing paradoxes of human history: that the greatest intolerance and violence of that century were practiced by those who believed that religion caused intolerance and violence."

Alister McGrath

The Twilight of Atheism: The Rise and Fall of Disbelief in the Modern World

Rebuttal: "Is there anyone in the world right now Doing things you believe they should stop doing no matter what they personally believe about the correctness of their behavior?"

Answer: Yes, of course!

Response: "Doesn't that mean that you do believe there is some kind of moral reality that is 'there' that is not defined by us, that must be abided by regardless of what a person feels or thinks."

Dr. Provine: Ethics can be robust because of proximate meaning.

C. Today it's either through consensus/survey data.

“...secular grounds for moral positions are no less controversial than religious grounds, and a very strong case can be made that all moral positions are at least implicitly religious. Ironically, insisting that religious reasoning be excluded from the public square is itself a controversial ‘sectarian’ point of view. When you come out into the public square it is impossible to leave your convictions about ultimate values **behind.**”

Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God*

III. How do we respond as Christ followers?

1. Recommit-- to align your world view with God's word

2. Renew-- your mind Romans 12:2

Questions:

1. Where have you bumped into postmodern thought?
2. How can we apply the Col 2:8 warning?
3. How can we renew our minds per Romans 12:2?