ORBITS

The Importance of Recognizing & Refining Our Worldview

JAN 14, 2022 | PRAXIS CIRCLE

Why is it important to recognize and refine your worldview?

Reprinted in full below is an article published this past Wednesday (1-12-22, linked to the left) that our friends at the Institute for Faith, Work, & Economics asked us to submit that answers this question and explains the Praxis Circle mission. We submit it to you below.

"The Importance of Recognizing & Refining Our Worldview"

The Institute for Faith, Work, & Economics, 1/12/22

If 2020 and 2021 have taught us anything, it's that the lens in which we view the world matters. In the public square, panic, confusion, hatred, and fear not only increased but crept into the privacy of our own homes—a direct result of the raging worldview battle that continues to divide America.

Those who wish to make a difference on current issues by speaking and acting effectively often find themselves walking on eggshells around fellow Americans. No one seems to agree on anything, and most seem to have no incentive to do so.

If this includes you, maybe it's time to break some new eggs (smash them, really) and examine your own views and those of others in detail. Maybe it's time to select more effective pathways on which to proceed with others who can actually help—a process we call *praxis*.

What is Praxis?

"People function on the basis of their worldview more consistently than even they themselves may realize. The problem is not outward things. The problem is having, and then acting upon, the right worldview—the worldview which gives men and women the truth of what is." – Francis Schaeffer

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Simply put, praxis is the process of aligning your worldview with reality and then putting that worldview into practice. Worldview shapes reality, and reality shapes worldview in a never-ending feedback loop. Human beings build worldviews in community together.

This is what we do.

All human beings are born into family and cultural worldviews of many types around the globe. Determining your own worldview is arguably maturity's essential accomplishment, and individuals regularly adjust or change worldviews during their lives. Worldview often provides the foundation for success or failure in life.

According to Protestant theologian Francis Schaeffer we should shape our behavior around a "worldview which gives men and women the truth of what is." Among many others, Schaeffer is famous for articulating and following a Christian worldview, and he believed such a view is the best reflection of reality or truth available to mankind.

We recognize that the praxis process—conscious or subconscious— never ceases. We believe good worldviews require circles of dedicated, critical thinkers—but thinkers who are ordinary people just like us—to be willing to come together in the pursuit of truth, knowledge, and understanding to effect good change.

A New Way Forward

In *Centesimus Annus*, published May 1, 1991, soon after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of Soviet Communism, Pope John Paul II called for freedom through democratic capitalism over central government control and socialism. In doing so, he called for new, creative worldview thinking in the 21st century.

Inspired by his ecumenical worldview call, Praxis Circle recognizes we need revitalized thinking now more than ever to bridge divides, reach agreement, and move to a better place. Worldview analysis increases understanding and reduces animosity without trivializing key differences.

Worldview study, thinking, and dialogue is arguably the best way forward in a polarized and increasingly unfree society.

We at Praxis Circle believe that one of the best ways to pursue worldview examination and construction is to offer conversations with as many world-class thought leaders as possible who can help us think about bridging the gap between thought and reality, where lasting results are achieved.

What's Our Worldview?

While Praxis Circle's staff and board are primarily Christian, we are not by any means about one worldview. Indeed, it's impossible to understand any worldview, particularly one's own, without understanding most of the globe's basic varieties.

So far, our interviewed contributors represent Christian, Jewish, Muslim, human secularist, naturalist, New Age, Marxist, postmodernist, Hindu, and Buddhist worldviews. (Please note that Hugh Whelchel and Anne Bradley of IFWE are both contributors.) We welcome all persons of good faith, and we seek dialogue with all major worldviews across the globe.

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Our driving value is that every human being matters equally, and that, in worldview matters, each person should seek to understand before being understood. Our bottom line: We at Praxis Circle explore and build better worldviews.

We see Praxis Circle as a place where worldview questions are examined and targeted on the firing line of reality, with the hope of establishing and realizing personal and community goals that Americans and others will embrace with pride, producing satisfying results.

We think this starts, in part, with practical worldview analysis, with Praxis Circle, and with you. Will you join us?

Editor's Note: Praxis Circle is a nonprofit community committed to building worldviews in order to renew a free and good society. To learn more about Praxis Circle, click here.

Nancy Pearcey, one of our true heroes of all things worldview, says in her outstanding book, *Finding Truth* (2015):

Many Christians seem at a loss in constructing a biblical worldview suitable for the public arena. Typically they simply restate biblical theology . . . But a worldview is not the same thing as a theology. A worldview *applies* theological truths to fields such as philosophy, science, education, entertainment, and politics.

(To Ms. Pearcey, even atheists, agnostics, and secularists of every variety have "theologies" because all humans have idols in their lives. Therefore, philosophy applied to one's idol is theology. In other words, we all apply "theological" truths, as mentioned in the quote above, to our lives. Of course, as a veteran worldview person, Nancy recognizes all other, more conventional definitions of theology, as well. As an aside, what's your idol? Or do you have more than one?)

What's her solution to get Christianity back into the public square?

One of the best ways to craft biblical answers is to listen more closely to the questions. The Christian message will be most relevant when it is articulated at the specific points where people recognize the flaws and failures of their own worldviews. (both quotes on page 220)

While engaging all major worldviews, Praxis Circle is dedicated to finding creative ways to take Christian worldview back into the public square to renew a free and good society. That starts with listening to the most important questions about life others ask and the answers they give.

We believe every individual matters, has arrived at his or her worldview for reasonable reasons, and is fully capable of finding a satisfying way forward to all who matter in his or her life – and for the common good.

All human beings have worldviews and play the "worldview game." Ours is win-win.

Belief is everything to human beings, and beliefs are much better when they're the truth.

Again, we hope you will join us.

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