

Crucible of Worldview

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I am increasingly convinced that there is a "crucible idea" within which nearly all other issues can be refined to their essence, a single "continental divide" issue from which all other issues of worldview descend. Just as a small drop of water beginning high in the mountains as glacial melt, may flow down one way to gather with other drops and become a rushing torrent on its way to the Atlantic Ocean, and another drop, falling the other way reaches the Pacific Ocean, so there is one elemental issue out of which all the rushing torrents of opposite worldviews are derived. With an understanding of how a man thinks on this one issue, it is possible to predict a great deal of his other sentiments.

This issue may be described as a question of the essence of Man:

- a) Is mankind perfectible (in this lifetime)?
- b) Or is mankind "fallen" and sinful?

"Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (NASB, Gen 6:5)

"There is no one who does good, not even one." (NASB, Ps 53:3)

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned ..." (NASB, Rom 5:12)

If one believes in the "perfectibility" of man then there are a whole host of ideas which make perfect sense to you, which ideas are antithetical to one who believes that man cannot in this lifetime be perfected, or even improved very consistently.

The secular humanist leftist view is that man can be perfected, we can create "heaven on earth" if only the right people are in charge, the "enlightened elite," and these elite have enough power and control to establish the correct social order. Out of this worldview then comes all of these resulting beliefs:

- 1) If man is bad, q.e.d.:the societal structure has failed the man, rather than the man has failed himself and the society. Man has little or no ultimate responsibility for his actions.
- 2) Society should strive to build utopia; "The Brave New World" (Huxley, identifying with the savage in his story, hated it for himself, but concluded it was inevitably necessary for

society). The "enlightened elite" typically see themselves as beyond the need for social control, but see "others" as very much in need of social control.

- 3) Darwinian "natural selection" is the operating plan for social progress. Just as Mankind is perceived as having "evolved" from lower beings, "progressivism" is seen as merely the extension of that perfecting process.
- 4) Eugenics makes sense, it is merely the "enlightened elite" helping "natural selection" along, leading to the roots of Margaret Sanger, and planned parenthood. Explaining why abortion has become a "sacrament" of the left that is beyond challenge. Abortion's roots in eugenics are lost to most in the left.
- 5) Command economies are to be preferred, at least Keynesian control of markets, but preferably more proactive state or universal socialism. The greater the control the more rapid can be the progress toward perfection.
- 6) Behaviorism is a principle tool for perfecting mankind. "Social Science" [sic] management theory is employed throughout the society.
- 7) "Social justice," as defined by the "enlightened elite" is to be strived for at all cost. If outcomes between individuals in society differ, then q.e.d.: society is not yet properly "just" in its organizing principles.
- 8) Education is to teach "what to think" as defined by the "enlightened elite" not "how to think for oneself."
- 9) Education tends not to revere the past, but should be ever forward-looking toward the supposed "utopia" being built, because evolution says the past is necessarily worse than the future. The view of history is not fixed but fluidly re-invented in the light of "enlightened" understanding. Older books are not held in particularly high esteem. Our understanding of the past is always better than those who lived in it.

In stark contrast to these views, a Christian worldview states that man will always be sinful in this life and cannot be perfected in this lifetime. Social structures are designed to prevent the over-concentration and abuse of power by a few, maximized personal liberty, and responsibility for the consequences of one's actions and choices.

- 1) Evil does not come from the structure of society, but from the heart of man. Man can choose to be better or worse, in spite of the best or worst influences of the larger society.
- 2) Neither the mob rule of pure democracy, nor the consolidated power of a ruling elite is desirable. A constitutional republic is desirable to break apart various consolidations of power, and winds of mob influence.
- 3) Classical Liberalism is to be strived for, the rights of the individual are preeminent.
- 4) Governments are formed among men to protect the freedoms of the individual both from government abuse, and from the abuse of other individuals to the greatest extent practicable given the competing interests among individuals.

- 5) Government can serve some limited legitimate common interests for the defense of the nation, defense of private contracts, punishment for crime and protection of society from the criminal, equitable but limited support for certain common resources (ports, roads, airwaves, etc.).
- 6) Our Constitutional separation of power between three separate but equal parts of government, with complementary and interdependent duties, principally for the purpose of creating obstacles to the consolidation of power, recognizing that man can never be trusted to be good, any man may abuse power if he can consolidate too much of it.
- 7) The two party system is useful for the prevention of excess concentration of power (3 parties means power can be controlled by just more than 1/3 of voters, 10 parties means power can be controlled by 1/10th of the voters, but 2 parties requires that no fewer than 50% of the voters must approve.) Recognizing that all men are evil, the two party system forces a selection quite literally "between the lesser of two evils."
- 8) Devolution of most powers to local levels (10th amendment, which has been violated for years), would insure that the law of reaping and sowing is most functional, the consequence of choices is most immediately felt.
- 9) Free market economics are greatly preferred, the "invisible hand" operating locally where each individual man has some sense of what constitutes virtuous actions, and where they get more immediate consequences for their choices. The society benefiting from the aggregate of all of these individual actions with the greater wisdom of the mass of society acting not as a mob, but toward their own individual good, receiving their own individual consequences. Not all choices will be virtuous, but the effects whether good or ill will most immediately be felt by the individual directly; the principle of reaping what you sow.
- 10) Society is viewed as an aggregate organism operating at a level of control beyond the view or mastery of any individual, but society and every individual benefits from the greater wisdom of this aggregated control.
- 11) Community schools should teach "how to think" drawing from the best of mankind's history, never deluded that the future will necessarily be morally any better than the past. Recognizing that the best of the past is likely to be as good, or better, than the best of the future. Men are not getting better, and are likely to get worse, only in new and different aspects. (Not to confuse technological advances with moral and philosophical advances.)

The general revelation of all of the history of creation, as well as the special revelation of Scripture demonstrates the error of the former, and the truth of the latter.

There are some who attempt to have one foot in both camps, as it were, building a bridge between these worldviews, but these may be properly seen not as "moderates," but rather as "confused people."