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Francis A. Schaeffer Scholarship Paper

While reading *Thinking Like a Christian* by David Noebel, my world view and testimony were both strengthened greatly. The book focuses on twelve of the most important aspects in life that are equally important to Christians and Atheists, though each party faces these parts of life differently. Noebel compares the views of Christianity to Marxists and Humanists to teach readers the differences in beliefs and outcomes in every situation faced by the individual man and by the whole of society. Working through this course has helped teach me how to properly argue for a Christian worldview and has guided the reinforcement of my beliefs by using the Bible, science, and history.

The order in which this book is read is important. Noebel instructs his readers to read chapter one, then twelve, then each chapter’s summary before reading the rest of the book in numerical order. At first, I thought this was strange. However, I now understand that this layout is important. When reading in this order, I was provided with a general understanding of what Noebel’s reason for writing was. I then gained a deeper understanding of the importance of a Christian worldview as I read through each chapter. Focusing on a single topic at a time helped narrow down the reasons that a Christian worldview is important in every setting of life. For instance, I never realized that there was such importance in ensuring that I seek guidance only from Christians. I understood that a Christian would advise me to pray about each situation whereas an Atheist would never suggest this, but I have learned that the reason for seeking out Christian guidance runs deeper. As a Christian, it is important for me to be guided by other Christians with a similar worldview because they can lead me using the ethical beliefs endowed on mankind by God. A Christian will not only suggest prayer but will also advise me of God’s teachings for my situation and realign my morals. An atheist, however, will base their advice on the present beliefs of right and wrong. While an atheistic view on the world may seem easier at the time, it will create more obstacles as life continues. The best way to face the problems thrown at me by life is to use my Christian beliefs to work through the problem.

As someone who has always been passionate about the study of science, I have often found myself wavering between different proposed ideas of how the universe came to be. I had never realized that I had adopted, what Noebel refers to as, a theistic worldview. After reading through this book, I have seen enough evidence to permanently ground my beliefs in Christianity. The science and history topics both reinforced my renewed worldview. Science cannot disprove the beliefs of creation without also dispelling the laws of nature which have zero exceptions. Noebel explained that for there to be laws in nature, there must also be a legislator. This seems so obvious, but it had never occurred to me. I studied the laws of nature without ever considering the fact that they were purposefully made. Noebel pointing this out was eye-opening for me. Combining this evidence alone with the fact that no historical discoveries can disprove creation, makes for a strong argument in the favor of Christianity. The deeper a person looks into the idea of evolution, the less it makes sense. Christianity is the opposite. The more a person studies the Bible as accounts of historical and scientific evidence, the more a creationist belief makes sense.

One of my favorite claims made by Noebel in this book was the discussion of supposed neutrality in schools. In chapter one, Noebel argues that removing Christianity from lectures in school only makes room for another belief to explain the universe. There is no way to implement neutrality when discussing the beginning of life. A person either believes God created life (Christianity), or life began as an accidental combination of cells in a soup of genes (evolution) or any other explanation of the beginning of life, but no belief can possibly be considered neutral. When discussing the beginning of life, the lecturer takes a stance and imprints that stance on the minds of the lectured. There is no way to discuss the beginning of the universe without first deciding to believe in something. This can hardly be considered neutral. Noebel’s sense of grace and certainty makes argument seem impossible from any worldview. Whether a person believes in evolution or creation, it can be agreed that the teachings of the beginning are not neutral.

Noebel explains the importance of a Christian influence on law in the eighth chapter. He states that no man-made law is above the ruling of God, but that it is God’s will that we follow the earthly laws so long as they follow God’s moral and ethical teachings. This can seem confusing, but Noebel explains what he means through biblical reference. Noebel acknowledges that there are times when man must disobey earthly laws to abide by God’s laws. In the eighth chapter, a reference to the story of Daniel and the Lion’s Den is made. Noebel explains that we must be like Daniel and have faith that God will give final judgments. We must not blindly follow man’s ruling to avoid a temporary death. This will result in eternal damnation when we are judged by the true Judge in heaven. We must use our Christian worldview to focus on the ethically correct decisions in life. An example of this can be found in recent legislation. Through cultural pressure, abortion has been deemed legal in most states. God uses his disciples to teach us that abortions are wrong. As Christians, we know that, according to man, abortion is okay but that does not mean it is something that is ethical to practice because it is not God’s will.

The Biblical references throughout this book only add strength to Noebel’s teachings. Each statement made in this piece of literature can be backed by a verse in the Bible. I believe this was purposefully done. Noebel wrote this book to educate and to remind students about the importance of a Christian worldview. What better way to do that than to reference the Bible while discussing every aspect of life? The reader can even use a chart located in the back of the book to connect each chapter topic to chapters within the Bible. Knowing this book has been based on the Bible means I can take it as truth and strengthen my testimony and the testimonies of others using it.