*Thinking Like a Christian*

Essay composed by Annalise Bryant in Requirement of Schaeffer Scholarship

July 22, 2021

World view has one definition yet such a broad variety of perspectives. As human beings, since the beginning of time, we have endlessly searched for the meaning of life. In another sense, we seek a world view and our place within its realm. Unfortunately, the enemy has not made this endless voyage any easier, by planting confusion and infiltrating the minds of mankind with baffling questions…Who is God? Is there more than one true God? Is there any God at all?

This leaves society grappling. *Thinking Like a Christian* has made me more aware of the God I serve and how He gives us what we need to find our identity in Him. We must trust and have faith for Him to mold us into being like Jesus in everything we do. I will be diving into the insights I have learned and been reminded of during this study over the last month.

Oftentimes, we only think about ourselves, which corresponds with relying on our minds and what feels right as the basis of our decision making. This leaves us vulnerable by allowing the enemy to take captive our thoughts and steering us in the wrong direction. These decisions could be financial commitments, relationships, or job openings; thus, we must pray and be patient, rather than being impulsive just because something sounds appealing. We strive for this as Christians not only to follow our path God has arranged for us, but to demonstrate our obedience to Him. I have been reminded of this through the “blinders phenomenon” metaphor in week 1 of *Thinking Like a Christian*. I must dwell in prayer because, as a human, I only can see the “right now” and the things I want in front of me, but God sees my future and the things I need. Relying on His set of lenses is the only way I am not entirely blinded.

It is important to know someone before you trust them, which is why it is necessary to know who God is so that we can trust and let Him guide us through life. This brings us to Theology. Theology is the study of God and in week 2 of *Thinking Like a Christian,* we discussed the importance of why we need it. Theology is key when it comes to evangelism. In week two of *Thinking Like a Christian,* a scenario was given to put you on the spot to see how well you would respond to a non-Christian asking questions about God, and I honestly hesitated for a while on how I was going to respond. The truth is, I was baffled. In that moment, God revealed to me just how vital theology is in our defending of our faith. We must study how God works and who He is so that we can fulfill our purpose of serving Him faithfully.

Fulfilling our purpose comes with difficulty. As humans, we seek proof, but God tells Thomas, “Then Jesus told him, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed’ (John 20:29). Week 3, day 2 of *Thinking Like a Christian* shows the difference of nature and Naturalism. Nature refers to the physical world, while Naturalism refuses the idea of the supernatural world, which is prevalent in the world in which we live today. This refers to people who only believe in what they can see… the physical world, and this is where Philosophy steps in. Philosophy is the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence. Philosophy coincides with biology. Biology is science, while philosophy explores the assumption of science, its methods and meaning. The world puts a strain on our minds by leaving doubt in what we believe and who we are according to our faith.

The big question is… who are we in Christ? Week 5, day 2, we talked about the difference of God’s image, and our image. I know that, sometimes, I define myself by the things I do and the things I have done, whether that’s being involved in music, who I surround myself with, etc. *Thinking Like a Christian* reminded me of the verse Genesis 1:27, “So God created mankind in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female.” God does not define us by the things we do but who we are in Him, His children, His offspring. Often, I am ashamed of my sins, but to know Jesus has already forgiven and forgotten them is astounding and it really gives us a glimpse of his eternal love. God not only wipes away our sins, but He knows our heart, and He sees perfection and potential.

God is omniscient. The Bible is God’s love letter and demonstration of that omniscience. For example, in every single story in the Bible, God provides instruction. Think about it; when we were first born, our parents gave us instructions on how to act: how to share, how to be kind, how to forgive, etc. They showed us what was wrong and what was right. That is what God does through His word. Week 6’s key verse is, “And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Later in week 6, day 5, I learned the “ABC’s” when walking with God; Agree (to your sin), Believe (God’s promise), and Control (letting God take control). The Bible is a true representation of the moral standards we should adhere to and where we find instruction to carry out His promises to us.

Following instructions and promises is great in theory to humans, but the world is filled with experiences which can either build us up or break us down. The people with which you surround yourself are a vital component when walking with God, whether that is family, friends, school peers, or work associates. Week 7, day 5 talks about the role of the church and how it does not determine your salvation, but it’s a path to fellowship with people that are like-minded and hold the same intentions as we navigate our life on this earth. God calls us to gather in Colossians 3:16, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” As children of Christ, I like to think that we are also his soldiers fighting off the darkness so that others can see the His light in us. “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).