



Key Terms

Lesson 2 – Philosophy and Ethics: Says Who?

Assumptive Language: Powerful and deceptive use of words in which a seemingly simple statement is made, hoping the hearer will buy the simple statement without recognizing the huge assumptions that come with it. When one buys the simple statement, you buy its assumptions without knowing it.

Biblical worldview: A formal worldview based ultimately upon that nature, character, and being of God as it is expressed in His infallible Word and His creation. It becomes the foundation for a life system that governs every area of existence.

Capricious: Impulsive, unpredictable, characterized or subject to whim. Not guided by steady judgment, intent or purpose.

Carl Sagan (1934-96): An American astronomer and proponent of scientific naturalism who promoted the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI). *Cosmos* was the most watched television show on PBS of all time (more than 600 million people have seen it since it first aired in 1980), and his novel *Contact* was made into a film of the same name in 1997 starring Jodie Foster.

Cosmic Cube: The philosophy that has consciously or subconsciously captured our culture which says the material world is all that is, was, or ever will be; nothing exists outside of the box. This philosophical position has severely damaging implications.

Epistemology: the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge, its foundations, its presuppositions, and its extent and validity. How we know what we know.

Ethics: The standard, the line, that which ought to be. The principles of conduct governing a person or group of people.

Formal worldview: A comprehensive set of truth claims that purports to paint a picture of reality.

Fundamental biblical presuppositions: God is and He has revealed Himself to us through His creation (general revelation) and through His Word (special revelation).

Hollow and deceptive philosophy: Philosophies that are based on human traditions and worldly principles that set themselves up against God's truth claims. See Colossians 2:8.

Immanent: Present in and involved in the created universe. God is at work, actively involved with His creation, but separate from it (see "Transcendent").

Metamorphoo: Greek for "transformation." Root of the word "metamorphosis." This is the primary goal of The Truth Project: for individuals to be transformed into the likeness of Christ by gazing on the face of God. This process is not easy and we often struggle with God's Truth claims in the "cocoon." Metamorphoo is used in Romans 12:2, where it is usually translated as "transformed."

Metaphysics: the branch of philosophy that examines the nature of reality, existence, and the relationship between mind and matter, time and space, fact and value.

Morality: The rightness or wrongness of conduct; that which is. Habits of life or the practices of an individual or culture.

Naturalism: Truth and reality are derived from nature and natural causes. Rejects all spiritual and supernatural explanations of the world and holds that science is the primary basis of what can be known.

Particulars: Individual truth claims; the small details that describe "particular" objects.

Personal worldview: The set of individual truth claims that you have embraced so deeply that you believe they reflect what is really real and therefore they drive what you think, how you act, and what you feel.

Philosophy: The love of wisdom. The systematic examination of basic concepts such as truth, existence, reality, freedom, etc. Webster's 1828 dictionary definition: "The objects of philosophy are to ascertain facts or truth, and the causes of things or their phenomena; to enlarge our views of God and his works..." True religion and true philosophy must ultimately arrive at the same principle.

Postmodernism: cluster of philosophies with the underlying assumption that no one worldview or belief system (metanarrative) can claim to be the truth, which often results in relativistic thinking and the use of language as a power play.

Pragmatic: more concerned with practical results than with principles or truth.

Primary doctrine: Theology and Anthropology. Who is God and who is man? These are the two basic foundations for a person's and a culture's worldview.

Spiritual Naturalism: Truth and reality are derived from nature and natural causes. Accepts a spiritual dimension to this world, but adds spirit inside the Cosmic Cube and, as a result, rejects a transcendent creator.

Transcendent: Existing outside, above and independent, of the material universe. God is transcendent, but also immanent (see "Immanent").

Universals: Broad "universal" truth claims that provide meaning to the smaller "particular" questions in life. "Universals" provide answers to the great philosophical questions we face.

Utilitarian: relating to or advocating the doctrine that value is measured in terms of usefulness, concerned with practicality.

William Provine: A professor of evolutionary biology at Cornell University who is an atheist and adamant opponent of intelligent design.