

Christ in the Psalms

**The Righteousness of God vs.
The Righteousness of Man**

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What does God want of the Just Man?

Mankind's *Righteousness* versus God's *Righteousness*

- *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.* (Hosea 6:6)
- Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; *But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me*, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD. (Jeremiah 9:23-24)
- "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, *to obey is better than sacrifice*, And to heed than the fat of rams. (1 Samuel 15:22)
- He has shown you, O man, what is good; *And what does the LORD require of you* but to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

Mankind's 'Righteousness' as a Worldview

Origins → Meaning → Morality → Destiny

What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet... (Psa 8:4-6)

For I bear them witness that they [Israel] have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. (Rom 10:2-4)

- **Materialism** – Matter is all that there is; the ultimate reality.
- **Rationalism** – Human Reason is the standard of all truth.
- **Empiricism** – Claims that the ultimate foundation of knowledge is sensation or experience.
- *How do these “roots of human philosophies” view mankind?*
- *How do these “roots of human philosophies” view God?*

How to Evaluate a Worldview Ideology (1)

Self-deception and futility of idolatry

Isaiah 44:9-20 Provides a vivid description of the foolishness of idol worship. In this passage, a person cuts down a tree, uses part of the wood for practical purposes like heating and cooking, and then crafts an idol from the same material to worship.

1. **Identify the Idol** - *And the rest of it he makes into a god, His carved image. He falls down before it and worships it, Prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!" (Isa. 44:17)*
2. **Identify the Idol's Reductionism** - *And no one considers in his heart, Nor is there knowledge nor understanding to say, "I have burned half of it in the fire, Yes, I have also baked bread on its coals; I have roasted meat and eaten it; And shall I make the rest of it an abomination? Shall I fall down before a block of wood?" (Isa. 44:19)*
3. **Test the Idol. Does it contradict what we know about reality?** - *They do not know nor understand; For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, And their hearts, so that they cannot understand. (Isa. 44:18)*

How to Evaluate a Worldview Ideology (2)

Self-deception and futility of idolatry

1. **Identify the Idol**
2. **Identify the Idol's Reductionism**
3. **Test the Idol. Does it contradict what we know about reality?**
4. **Test the Idol. Does it contradict itself?** - He burns half of it in the fire; With this half he eats meat; He roasts a roast, and is satisfied. He even warms himself and says, "Ah! I am warm, I have seen the fire." And the rest of it he makes into a god, His carved image. He falls down before it and worships it, Prays to it and says, "Deliver me, for you are my god!" (Isa 44:16-17)
5. **Replace the Idol. Make the Case for the True God** - Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God. And who can proclaim as I do? Then let him declare it and set it in order for Me, Since I appointed the ancient people. And the things that are coming and shall come, Let them show these to them. Do not fear, nor be afraid; Have I not told you from that time, and declared it? You are My witnesses. Is there a God besides Me? Indeed there is no other Rock; I know not one.' (Isa 44:6-8)

Isaiah 44 Summary : Evaluating a Worldview

We see that the idol worshipper's worldview is deeply flawed

Idol : A crafted image representing divine power.

Reductionism : Reduces divine reality to a finite, man-made object.

Contradicts Reality : A lifeless idol cannot see, act, or save.

Contradicts Itself : The object of worship is both used for mundane tasks and exalted as a god.

Solution : The worshipper is called to recognize the true God, who alone is worthy of worship and trust.

Worldview Discernment in the Psalms

Identify the Idol

The Psalms repeatedly expose the futility of idolatry, where people substitute false gods or human constructs for the true God.

"But their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see... Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them." (Psa. 115:4-8)

This psalm identifies the emptiness of idols, whether physical or ideological, showing how misplaced trust in anything other than God leads to ruin.

"For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens." (Psa. 96:5)

This psalm contrasts false idols with the true Creator, highlighting the need to evaluate and reject false objects of worship.

Worldview Discernment in the Psalms

Identify the Idol's Reductionism

Psalms critiques any worldview that reduces life to material or finite realities, emphasizing God's sovereign role as the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

“The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.” (Psa. 14:1)

This critiques atheistic or materialistic worldviews, showing that denying God leads to moral and intellectual corruption.

“For all can see that the wise die, that the foolish and the senseless also perish, leaving their wealth to others... People, despite their wealth, do not endure; they are like the beasts that perish.” (Psa. 49:10-12)

This psalm critiques the reduction of human life to wealth or status, exposing the limits of materialistic views.

Worldview Discernment in the Psalms

Test the Idol – Does it Contradict Reality?

The Psalms frequently reflect on the reliability of God's truth as opposed to human falsehood.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.” (Psa. 19:1-4)

This psalm appeals to natural revelation, affirming that creation itself testifies to God's existence and challenges any worldview that denies this.

“The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples. But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.” (Psa. 33:10-11)

This psalm critiques worldviews that place ultimate trust in human schemes or philosophies, showing how they fail when tested against God's eternal purposes.

Worldview Discernment in the Psalms

Test the Idol – Does it Contradict Itself?

The Psalms point out the inherent contradictions in trusting anything other than God.

“Take notice, you senseless ones among the people; you fools, when will you become wise? Does he who fashioned the ear not hear? Does he who formed the eye not see? Does he who disciplines nations not punish? Does he who teaches mankind lack knowledge?” (Psa. 94:8-11)

This passage critiques those who believe they can act without accountability, pointing out the self-contradiction in denying God’s omniscience while relying on their own limited understanding.

“Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save. When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.” (Psa. 146:3-4)

This psalm highlights the inconsistency of relying on human leaders or systems, which ultimately fail and perish.

Worldview Discernment in the Psalms

Replace the Idol: Make the Case for the True God

Many psalms point believers back to God as the ultimate source of truth, guidance, and salvation.

“Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night.” (Psa. 1:1-2)

This psalm presents God’s Word as the foundation for evaluating all other beliefs and finding true wisdom and flourishing.

“As for God, his way is perfect: The LORD’s word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him. For who is God besides the LORD? And who is the Rock except our God?” (Psa. 18:30-31)

This psalm declares God’s supremacy and perfection, inviting people to reject false idols and build their lives on the firm foundation of God’s truth.

Resources

- The Truth Project – Focus on the Family
(<https://tinyurl.com/57ua3m5f>)
- How then should we live? – Francis Shaefer
(<https://tinyurl.com/3fc6uzbx>)
- World View Academy – Bill Jack
(<https://tinyurl.com/29ctus8n>)
- Finding Truth – Nancy Pearcey (<https://a.co/d/6ajy38l>)
- The First Apology of Justin Martyr
(<https://tinyurl.com/3t979suz>)
- Seven men who rule the world from the grave – David Breese (<https://a.co/d/aEv4vZV>)