

Pursuit of Truth
Sorting Claims of Exclusivism vs. Inclusivism vs. Pluralism
The Edge of Evolution
Overview of Intelligent Design
Quantifying the limits of Darwinism
Not out of this world: the sewers of Paris

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The Metanarrative



The circle cannot be drawn.

The Metanarrative

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- Pursuit of Truth – Key questions
- Sorting Claims of Exclusivism vs. Inclusivism vs. Pluralism
- Infinitely Large, Infinitely Small, Infinitely Complex
- The Edge of Evolution - Quantifying the limits of Darwinism
- Overview of Intelligent Design
- Not out of this world: the sewers of Paris
- Discovering order in chaos

Is there a grand story able to command obedience?

The post-modern or post-post-modern world claims there is not.

How can Special & General revelation be more explicitly connected?

Who pegs the meter?

What have you? What are you learning about Truth?

Definition and redefinition – ready?

- 1st & 3rd Tuesdays
- 8-10:30 pm
- Location: Starr home
- East Liverpool OH

*Starting
January 2023*

Meeting



- Structured & guided discussion
- Reference charts will be used.
- Theology as Queen of the Sciences
- Technical background is not required
- Outside materials can be introduced
- Not a Bible study but scriptural insight is sought.
- Not for the uninitiated in the Faith once delivered.

Format



- Your body, mind & spirit
- Local participants are strongly encouraged to be physically present.
- A live connection via Teams is being pursued but real-time discussions may prove difficult for those attending at a distance.

Bring



- Send email to design@openspc.com
- An invitation to MS Teams will be sent.
- Respond to become a member.
- Some slides and review topics will be made available.
- Live interaction will be attempted but may be at a different time.

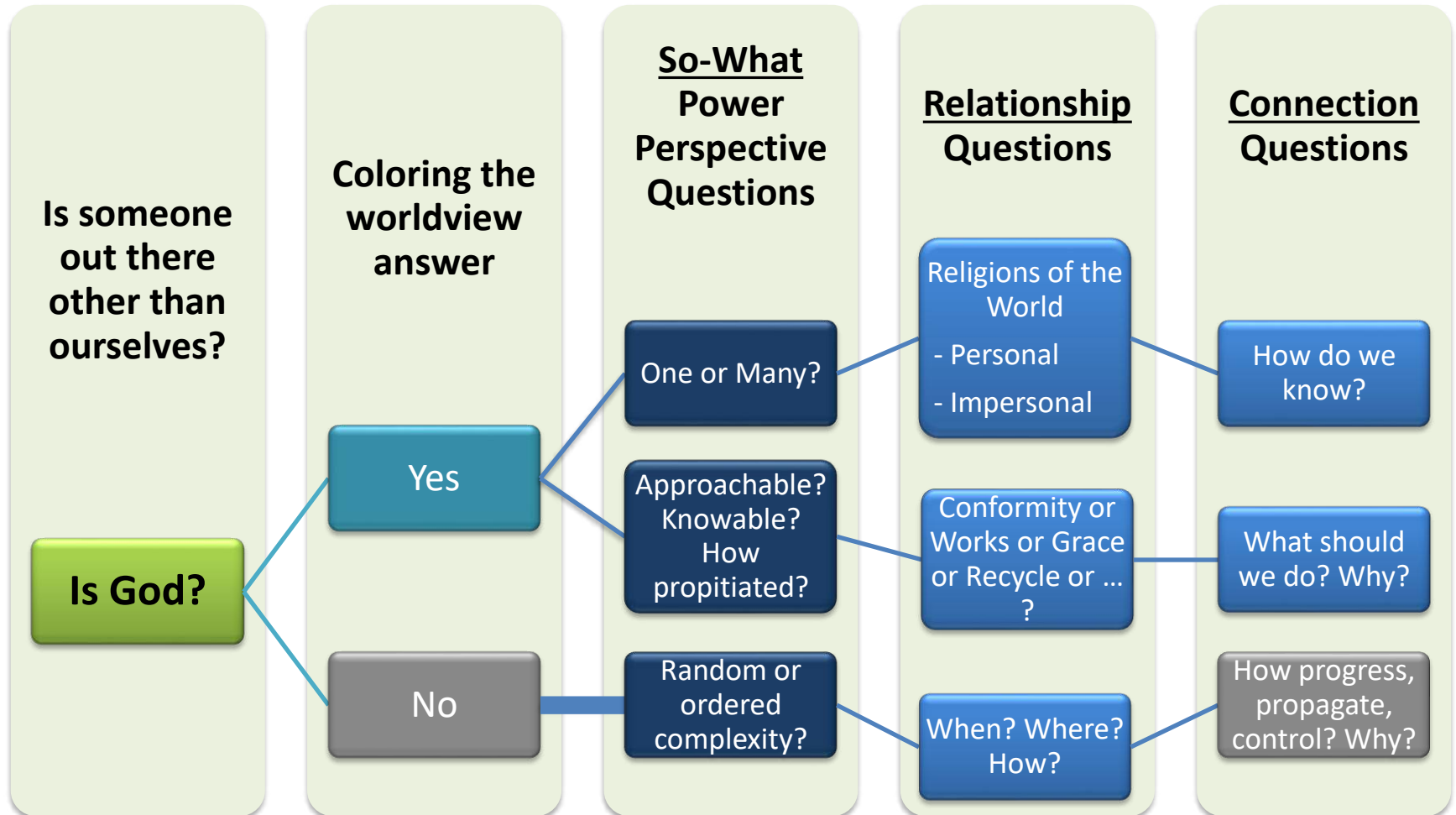
On-Line
Connection



The circle cannot be drawn.

What are the Key Truth Questions?

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Pegging the Meter

Oh, thou Holy Ghost, parade round
our minds taking captive our thoughts
unto the Christ.



Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with
all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all
thy mind and with all thy strength.

. . . And thy neighbor as thyself.

God Is

Revealed

- Trinitarian
- No break in Godhead (especially Psalm 22)
- Creator of all, seen & unseen
- General & Special Revelation
- Personal & Impersonal

Chalcedonian Christology

Nicene – Apostles – Athanasian Creeds

- Fully God & Fully Man
- Virgin birth
- Mary is Theotokos, the God bearer.
- Manhood of Christ is not dissolved into the sea of the Godhead.

Resolvable Conflicts

What is His purpose?

- He said He would come for us, and He did.
- He said He would send the Comforter to lead us into truth, and He did.
- Maintain Unity
- Science has a voice
- Young Earth position not required
- The Fall of Man without complete depravity of reasoning
- Saul's armor does not fit David, i.e., differing multigenerational perspectives
- Pray . . .

Continuum of Thought

Fencepost Positions in the Philosophies of Science

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B. B. Warfield

(Princeton Theologian early 1900s; encouraged creation/evolution discussions.)

- “Evolution must be ranked as a more or less probable or more or less improbable working hypothesis.”
- Delineates 2 types of creation:
 - from nothing (*ex nihilo*) and
 - *mediate*, i.e. injecting more than what is available.
- Evolution is modification of what exists and is ultimately purpose-driven, i.e. *teleos*.

Theodosius Dobzhansky

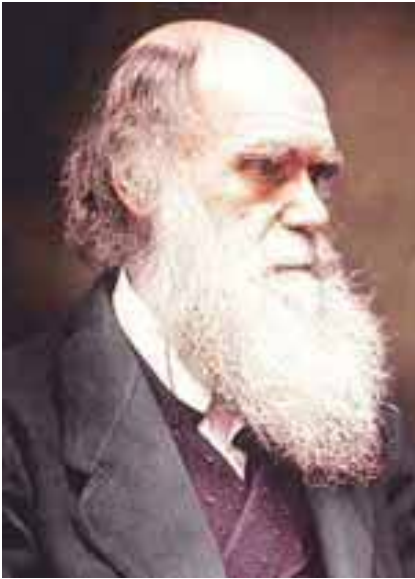
(Columbia Biologist, mid 1970s; considered “father of modern genetics.”)

- Quotes from Teilard de Chardin:
“... evolution is a general postulate to which *all* theories, *all* hypotheses, *all* systems must bow and satisfy in order to be thinkable and true.”
- Evolution explains the problem of evil; i.e. *theodicy*.
- Evolution is random and unguided.



Slime to Bugs ○ Bugs to Frogs ○ Frogs to Dogs and a Dog-eat-Dog World

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Neo-Darwinian Synthetic Theory of Evolution

- Natural Selection
 - Darwin
- Inherited Characteristics
 - Mendel's Peas
- Population Equilibrium Equations
 - Hardy & Weinberg

Cultural Icons with questionable validity

- Common Descent
 - Tree of Life
 - Embryonic Similarities
 - The Fossil Record
- Ascent of Man
- Life rising as a necessity
 - Miller-Urey Experiment

"If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous successive, slight modifications, my theory [of natural selection] would absolutely break down." – Charles Darwin



Protein Machinery

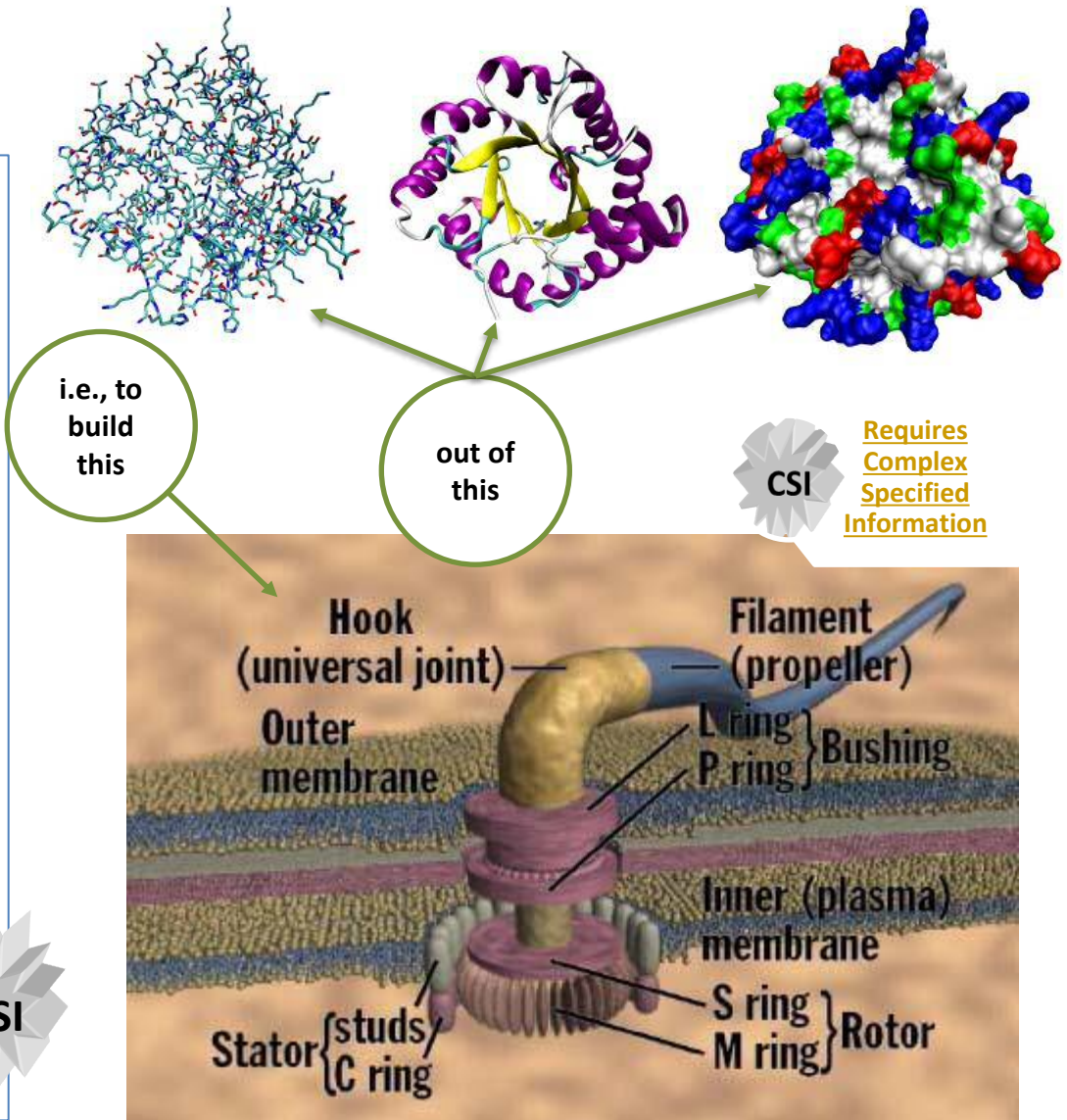
Nano Factory

- Protein Structures & Systems
- Shape determines function
- Precision folding

Cellular Lean Manufacturing

- Marshalling the right stuff at the right time in the right place in precise quantities
- Using catalysts to conserve energy
- Minimizing inventory
- Controlling access to parts
- Initiating process control sequences
- Using multilayer feedback loops
- Dismantling, reallocating, reusing
- And doing it quickly

Knee-high by the 4th of July



Viewpoint Distinctions

Intelligent Design

Theistic Evolution

Naturalistic Evolution

Species Variation

Adaptation to environment is true, i.e., *microevolution*.

Evolution is a method of creation.

All life evolved from simpler forms; i.e., *macroevolution* is true.

Complexity of Life

Time + Chance + Natural Selection + Mutation are NOT sufficient.

Time + Chance + Natural Selection + Mutation *might be* sufficient.

Time + Chance + Natural Selection + Mutation are *sufficient*.

Information

Introduced from outside the system; i.e., *open system*.

Available from the beginning; i.e., *front-end loaded*.

There is nothing outside the system; i.e., *closed system*.

Designer

Mark of intelligence is *identifiable* through scientific inquiry.

Knowledge about designer is *NOT accessible* through scientific inquiry.

Limits scientific inquiry to natural causes and denies intelligence; i.e., *Methodological Naturalism*.



The circle cannot be drawn.

Sorting Truth Claims

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Exclusivism

- Central Truth claims of Christianity are true.
- Where Truth claims conflict, other religions are false.
- Jesus Christ is the unique incarnation of God. Salvation is available only via person & work of Jesus Christ.
- God has revealed Himself definitively through the Bible.
- Universe was created revealing His handiwork to all. Evolution may reflect some truths, i.e., recognizes both general & special revelation.

Inclusivism

- Central Truth claims of Christianity are true and ...
- Links to skepticism, higher-critical analysis of history & scripture and recognizes Darwinian conclusions challenging Truth claims.
- Jesus is superior savior, but non-Christian religions may provide other saving ways.
- Uses interreligious dialog as means of reaching mutual truths.
- Expect anonymous Christian – implicit salvation w/o preaching. *(Karl Rahner)*

Pluralism

- Rival Truth claims are parts of kaleidoscope of preferences & values.
- Exclusivism is a vestige of intolerant religious imperialism.
- Rejects Christianity as superior, unique or normative. If a God, then expect soteriological universalism solution.
- Salvation / Enlightenment / Liberation is reality of all major religions. Evaluate pragmatically.
- Religion is private, i.e., not in public fact domain.

Defining Evangelism, Dialogue & Tolerance

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Exclusivism	Inclusivism	Pluralism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth is <u>rational & propositional</u> • <u>Traditions</u> defended as truth claims <u>w/o</u> sufficient rehearsal of links to truth. • <u>Difficulty maintaining unity</u>, i.e., much in-house fighting. • <u>Group discriminations</u>. • Lack of connections between Special & General revelation. • <u>Stress</u> on evangelism & <u>conversion</u>. • “Echo Chamber” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth <u>becoming experiential</u> & defined by group. • <u>Traditions</u> losing power to hold or persuade. • <u>Difficulty teaching precepts</u>. • <u>Broadening base of acceptability</u> of varying practice & values. • Growing awareness of <u>world religions & holiness pursuits</u>. • Dialogue is <u>not</u> to be about <u>conversion</u>. • <u>Reason loses</u> validity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth is <u>relative</u> to context. • There is <u>no metanarrative</u> that can command obedience. • <u>No tolerance</u> for public religious discourse or display. • <u>Narrowing inner circle</u> of acceptability, i.e., groups become smaller. • <u>Power dictates</u> social behavior & <u>tolerance</u>. • <u>All religions are true</u>. • Power struggles dominate.

If there is a God, God reveals self, not truths about self, i.e., not propositional.

~ Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Rudolf Bultmann, . . .

Exclusivism

Basic Tenants

- Central Truth claims of Christianity are true.
- Where Truth claims conflict, other religions are false.
- Jesus Christ is the unique incarnation of God. Salvation is available only via person & work of Jesus Christ.
- God has revealed Himself definitively through the Bible.
- Universe was created revealing His handiwork to all. Evolution may reflect some truths, i.e., recognizes both general & special revelation

Relational Issues/Difficulties

- Truth is rational & propositional
- Traditions often defended as truth claims w/o sufficient rehearsal of links to truth.
- Difficulty maintaining unity, i.e., much in-house fighting.
 - Short tenure pastors
 - ...&...&...&...&
- Group discriminations.
- Lack of connections between Special & General revelation.
 - Demanding literal interpretation
- Stress on evangelism & conversion.
 - Only we have the Truth
- Belly-button focus

D1: p is a defining belief of R if and only if being an active participant in good standing within the religious community of R entails an acceptance of p.

D2: A religion R is true if and only if all its defining beliefs are true; if any of its defining beliefs are false, and then R is false.

- ☐ **P1:** If a defining belief p of a religion R is self-contradictory then p is false.
- ☐ **P2:** If two or more defining beliefs of R, are mutually contradictory at least one of them must be false.
- ☐ **P3:** If a defining belief of R is self-defeating it cannot reasonably be accepted as true.
- ☐ **P4:** If the defining beliefs of R, are not coherent in the sense of providing a unified perspective on the world, then R cannot plausibly be regarded as true.
- ☐ **P5:** Any religious worldview which is unable to account for fundamental phenomena associated with a religious orientation or which cannot



provide adequate answers to the central questions in religion should not be accepted as true.

☐ **P6:** If a defining belief p of R contradicts well-established conclusions in other domains, and if R cannot justify doing so, then p should be rejected as probably false.

☐ **P7:** If a defining belief p of R depends upon a belief in another domain (e.g., History) for which there is good reason to reject as false, then there is good reason to reject p has probably false.

☐ **P8:** If one or more defining beliefs of R, are incompatible with widely accepted and well-established moral values and principles; or if R includes among essential practices or rites,



activities which are incompatible with basic moral values and practices, then there is good reason for rejecting R as false.

☐ **P9:** If the defining beliefs of R entail the denial of the objectivity of basic moral values and principles; or if they entail the denial of the objective distinction between right and wrong, or good and evil, then there is good reason for rejecting R as false.

☐ **P10:** If R is unable to provide adequate answers to basic questions about the phenomena of moral awareness this provides good reason for rejecting R as false.

Truth is rational & propositional

Logical Principles:

Identity: If A is true then it is true, i.e., **A = A**.

Non-contradiction: If A is true, then A is not false, i.e., **A is ≠ not A**, that is, a principle cannot be both true and not true.

Excluded middle: Any statement is **either true or false**.

Center Point of all Eternity

"On the third day
the friends of Christ

coming at daybreak to the place
found the grave empty and the
stone rolled away.

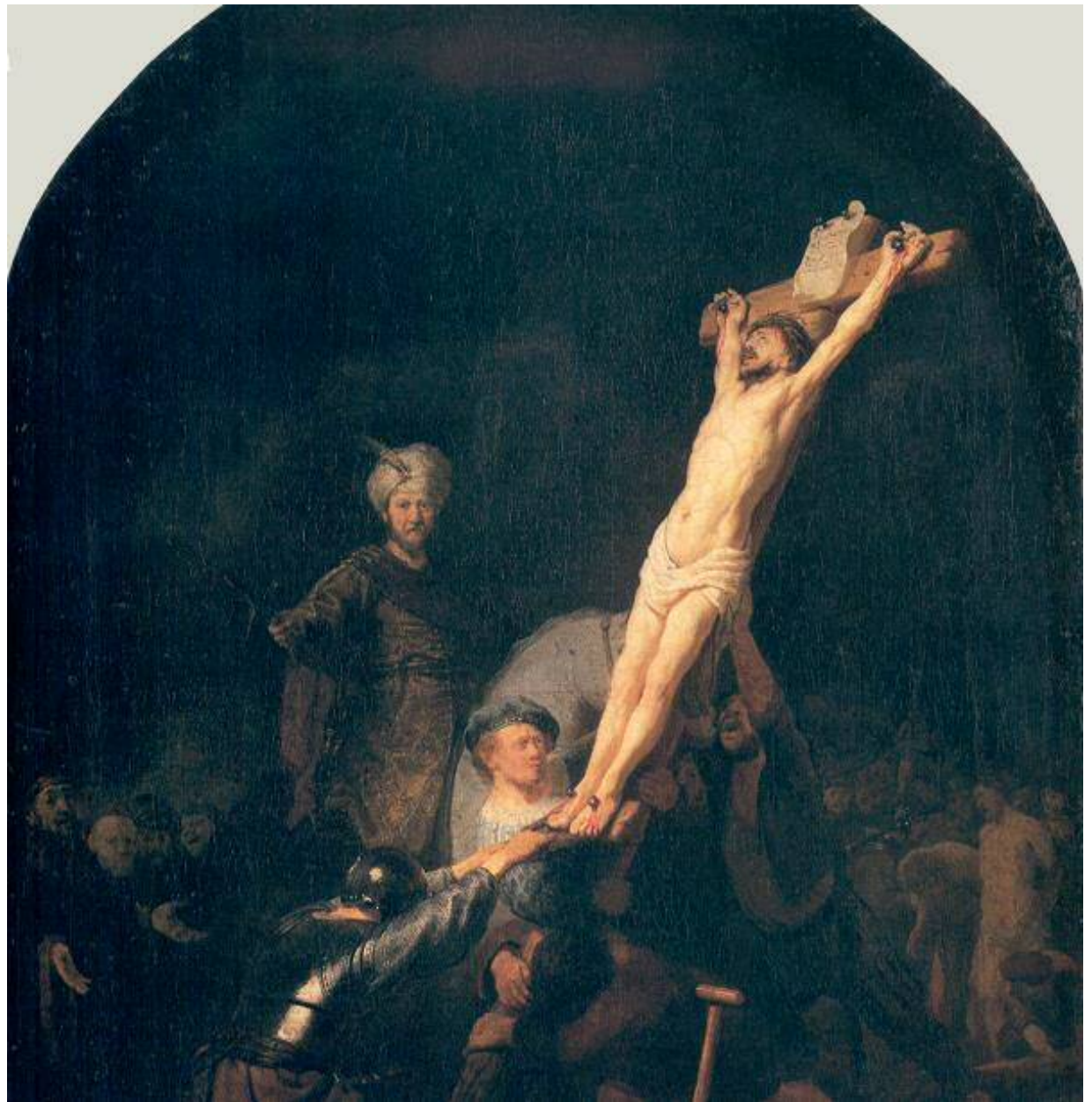
In varying ways
they realized the new wonder;

but even they hardly realized
that the world had died in the
night.

What they were looking at was
the first day of a new creation,
with a new heaven and a new
earth;

and in a semblance of the
gardener God walked again in
the garden,
in the cool not of the evening
but the dawn."

G. K. Chesterton – Everlasting
Man



Raising the Cross by Rembrandt 1603

Wheels within Wheels

Roman Catholic

Nature-Grace Interdependence

Christ-Church Interconnection

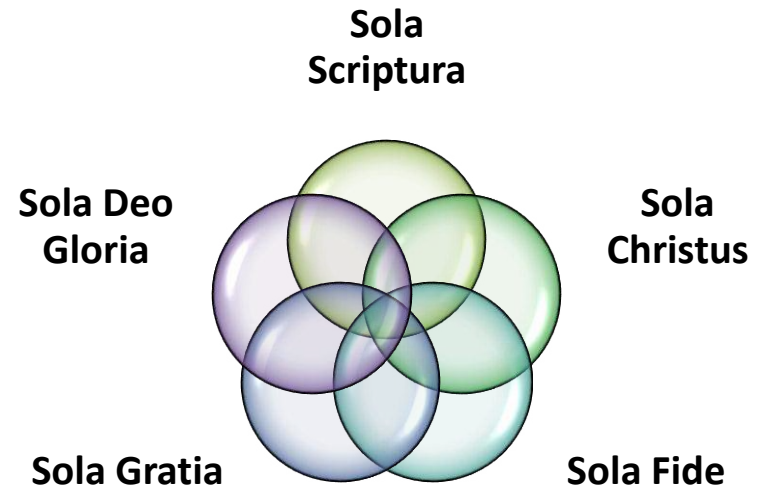
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The Vision of Ezekiel
Bury Bible, c. 1135

Evangelical Protestantism

Five Solas



Even the very wise cannot see all ends

J.R.R. Tolkien Lord of the Rings, Bk1, chap2, pg58

Roman Catholic

Nature-Grace Interdependence Christ-Church Interconnection

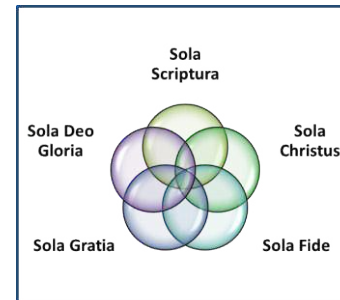
- Nature created by God as interdependent
- Capable of receiving Grace
- Capable of transmitting Grace
- Consecrated, confers healing, wholeness, regeneration
- Jesus Christ mediates Grace to Nature
- The Church is the incarnate Christ
- Scripture/Tradition tightly interwoven
- Interpretation must conform to Magisterium



The Vision of Ezekiel
Bury Bible, c. 1135

Evangelical Protestant Five Solas

- Sola Scriptura – only Holy Scripture as the inspired word of God is the inerrant, sufficient, and final authority for the church.
- Sola Christus – only Christ is the full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for sin.
- Sola Fide – believer receives right standing with God only through faith.
- Sola Gratia – salvation is through grace alone.
- Sola Deo Gloria – as author & finisher of salvation God alone receives glory.



Eucharist

**And does Faith see the coming unity
of believers in answer to the high
priestly prayer of the risen Son to the
Father?**

**Indeed, this must be so.
Perhaps another gift though the Jews.**

References:

- History of the Great Reformation, J.H. Merle d'Aubigne 1846
- Summa Theologica, St Thomas Aquinas
- Richard Hooker, Theologian of the English Reformation, Christianity Today 1966
- Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist, Brant Pitre 2011 Doubleday

Transubstantiation "This is my body"

- Aquinas
- The Sacrament is fully established in the consecration.
- Elements of bread & wine cease to exist

Consubstantiation "This is my body"

- Luther
- Christ physically present
- Elements remain under & joined with Christ ('sword in scabbard')
- Rejects arguments from Reason or mathematics. Faith determines Truth.

Wm. of Occam

- Accepts Church position on Transubstantiation
- Argues in support of Luther's Consubstantiation
- Asks, when do the elements become Body & Blood?

Symbol "The body availeth nothing"

- Zwingli
- Argues using Reason & Scripture to refute Luther; desperate to hold Protestantism together but neither yield that Christ can be physically present..
- Rejects Popery of presiding priests. Reconciliation with Luther fails.

Real Presence in body of believer

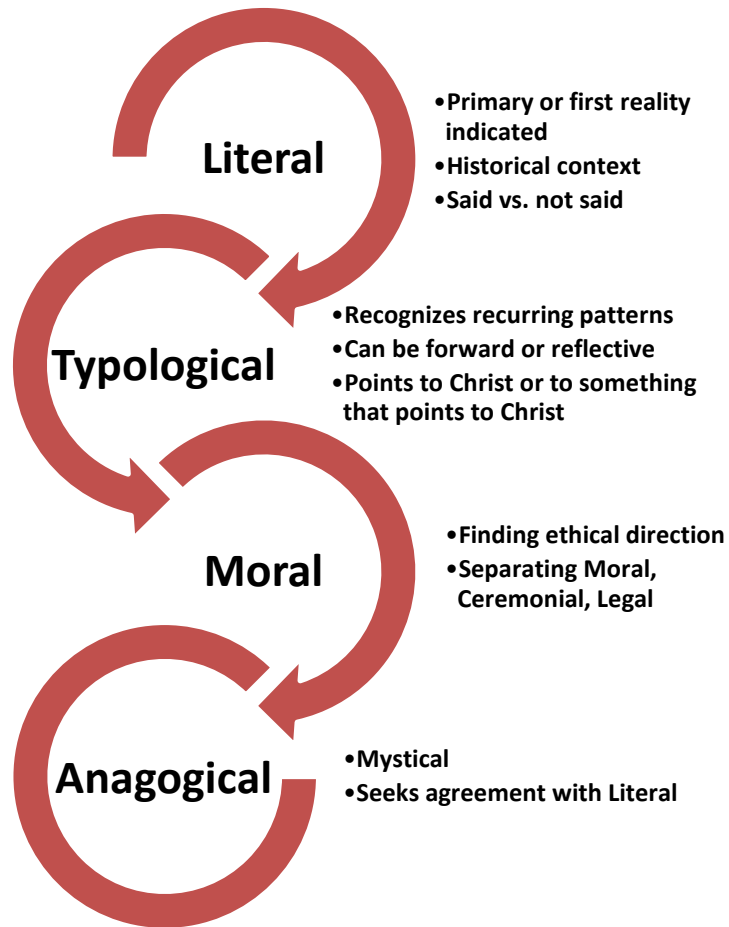
- Hooker
- Oral manducation is nowhere taught but affirms spiritual manducation worship.
- The Celebration is an event connecting worshippers with Jesus.

Face of God, Bread of the Presence

- Brant Pitre
- Recent scholarly analysis of historical Hebrew documents. Show Bread annually paraded in front of gathered men of Israel.
- Quoting Jewish scholars of tradition but needs concurrence and validation.

Methods of Scriptural Interpretation

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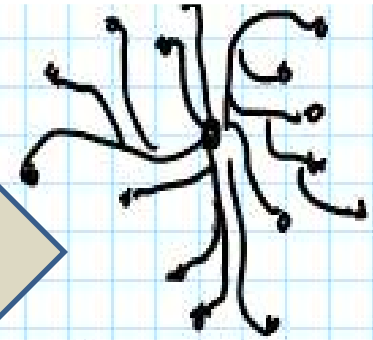
Examples for discussion

- **Scott Hahn**
 - Hebrews 9:15-22
 - “Covenant, Cult, and the Curse of Death” 2004
 - Focus: Challenges the use of the word Testament in the clearly Hebrew cultic passage
- **NT Wright**
 - Galatians
 - “Messiahship in Galatians? 2014
 - “Paul and the Faithfulness of God” 2013
 - Focus: New Perspectives on Paul NPP; asks for recognition of Paul's use of Christos and Messiah
- **Notes**
 -
 -
 -

Are you the man from Krumme?



And
where on
the map
would
you place
Krumme?



i.e, the hinterland, of the hinterland, of the hinterland,
of the hinterland . . .

. . . And that qualifies you to make your own creeds
and truth claims ???

Infinitely Large Infinitely Small Infinitely Complex

Scaling down to nanoMfg:
100nm > nanoMfg > 1nm

Meter

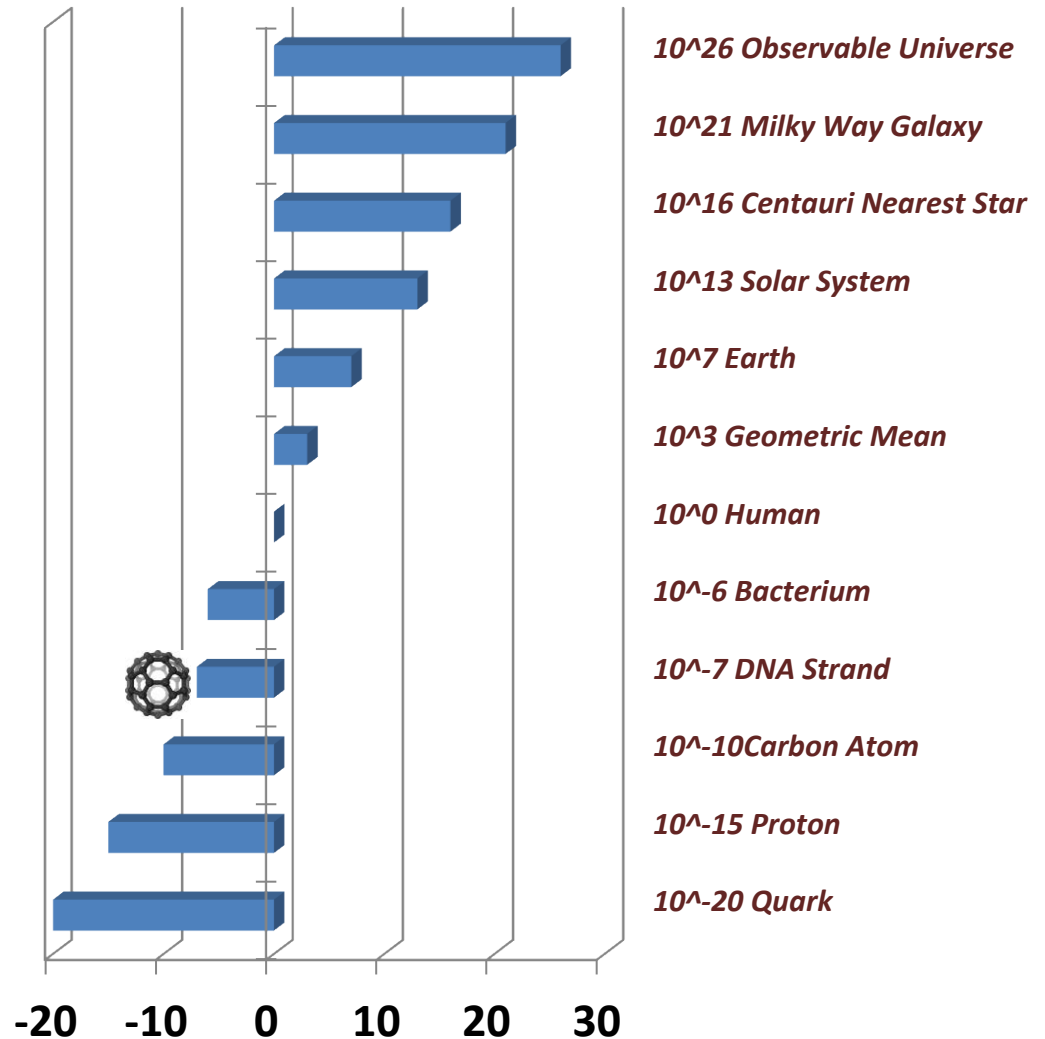
Millimeter	10^{-3} meter
Micrometer	10^{-6} meter
Nanometer	10^{-9} meter
Picometer	10^{-12} meter
Femtometer	10^{-15} meter

Below the nano scale are
Ångströms and quantum physics.

An Ångström is $1/10^{\text{th}}$ of a
nanometer and often used to
measure light waves.

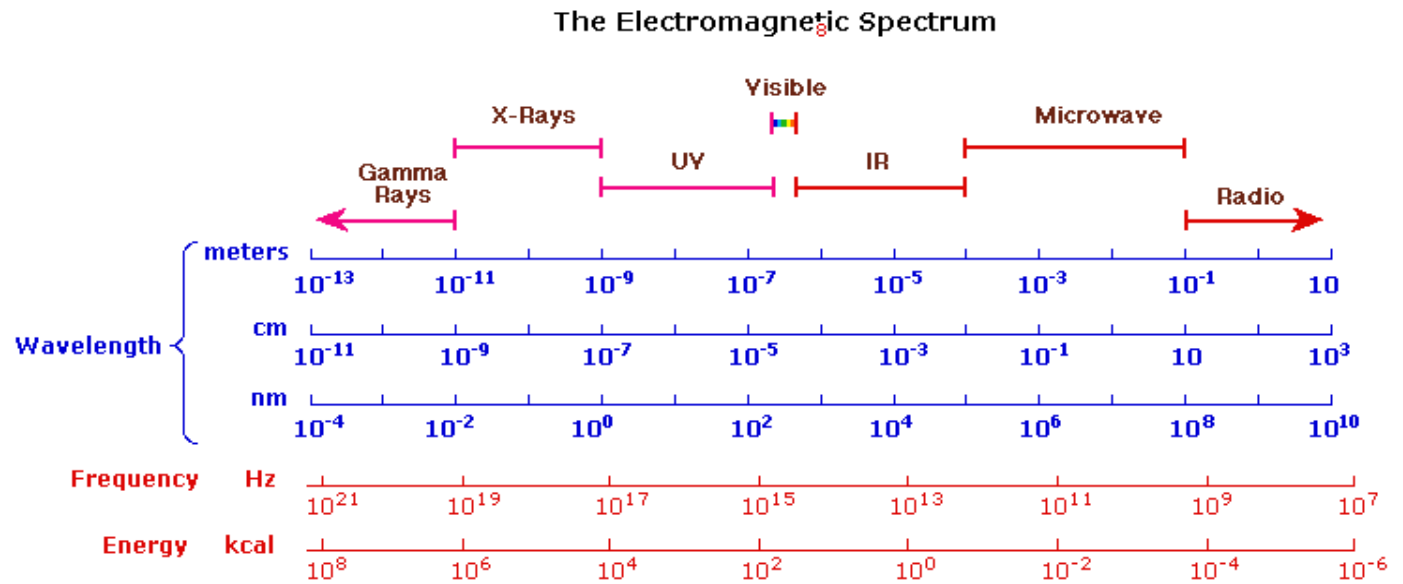
Visible light spectrum includes
wavelengths from 380 to 780nm

Comparative Log Scale in Meters



How much are we seeing?

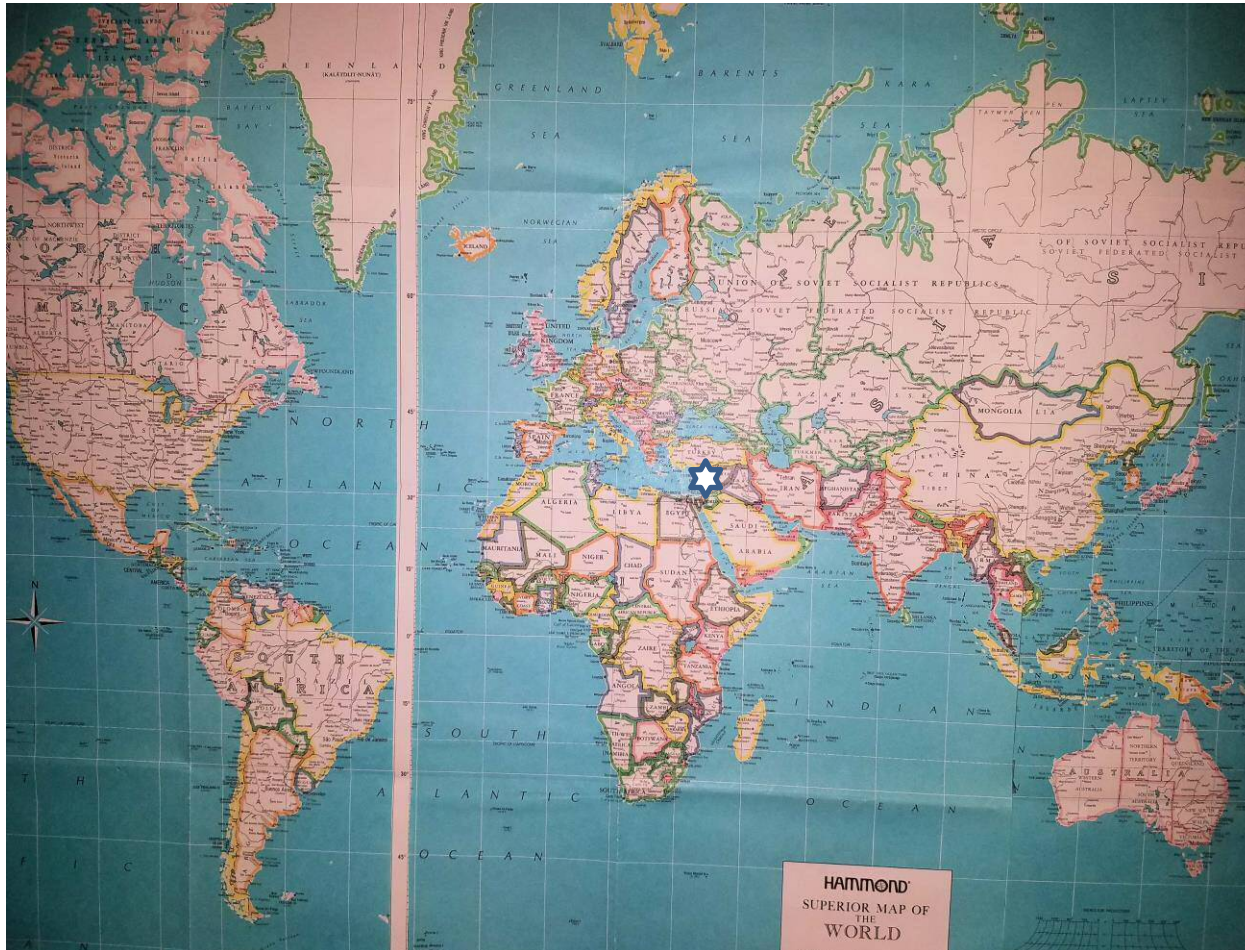
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For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light. – Psalm 36:9

Where is World Central? Universe Central? City of the Great King

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Rabbis present the Wave Offering as an ingathering to the Lord from the four corners of earth.

Psalm 107

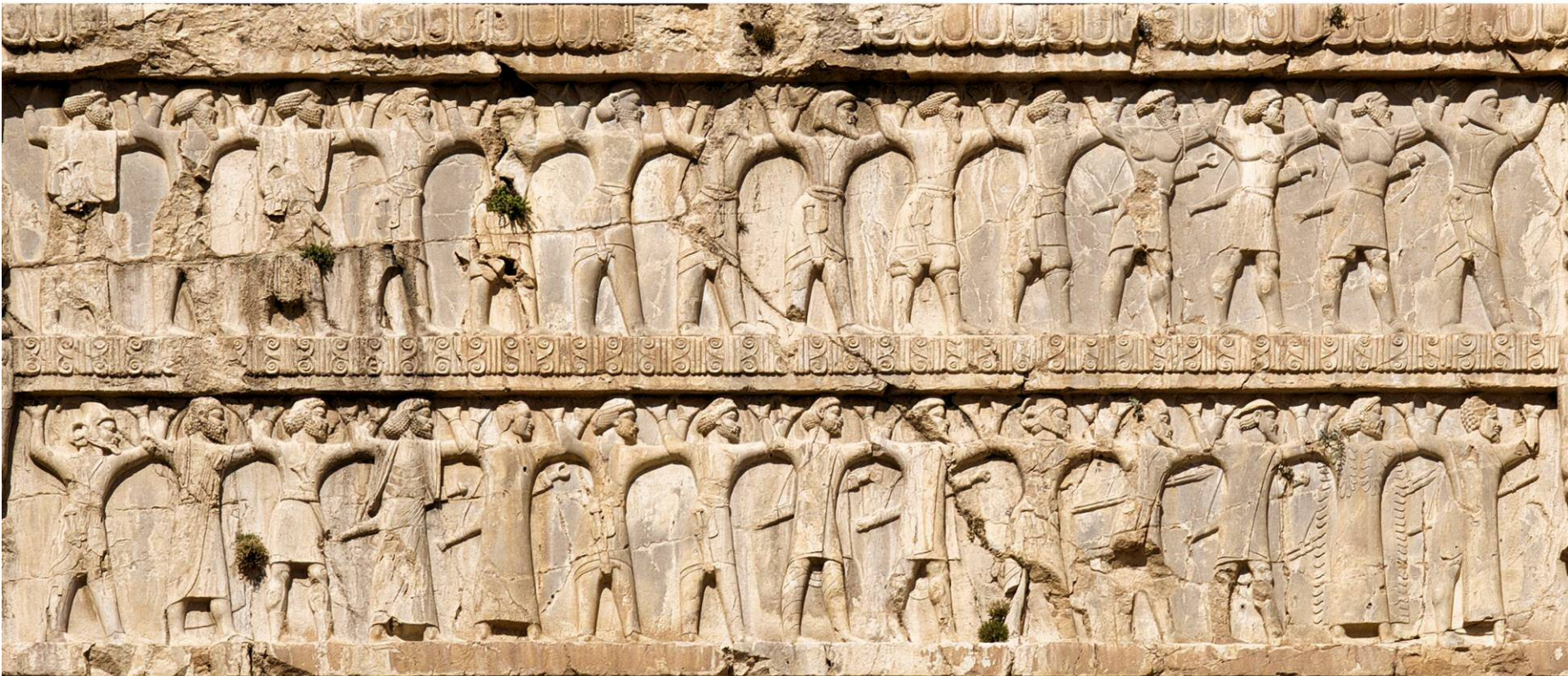
Oh, give thanks to the Lord,
for He is good;
For His Mercy endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,
Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the adversary,
And gathered from the lands,
From the east and from the west;
From the north and from the south.

World of Xerxes, King of the Medes and Persians, Son of Darius

All peoples support the Achaemenid dynasty (600 – 300 BC)

Persian Median Elamite Parthian Arian Bactrian Sogdian Choresmian Zarangian Arachosian Sattagydia Gandharan Hindush Saka haumavarga

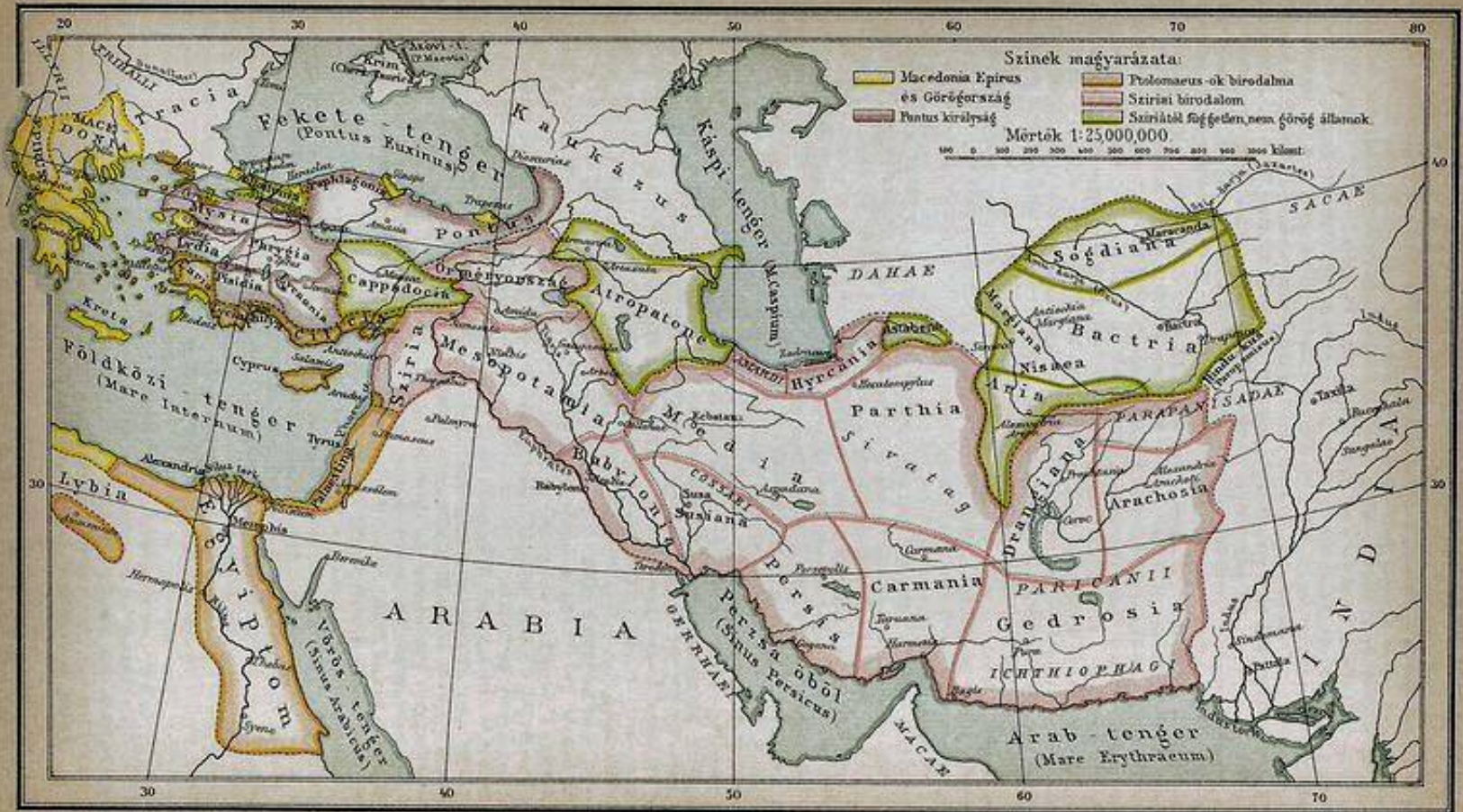


Saka tigraxauda Babylonian Assyrian Arab Egyptian Armenian Cappadocian Lydian Ionian Overseas Saka Skudrian Ionian with shield-hat Libyan Ethiopian



C.S. Lewis sees influence as greatest in past. We don't influence our ancestors, they influenced or had potential to influence all those who came after them.

Persian Reference Map



Some Survey Details

Geert Hofstede, Dutch management researcher, created the cultural dimensions theory in 1980 (Hofstede, 1980).

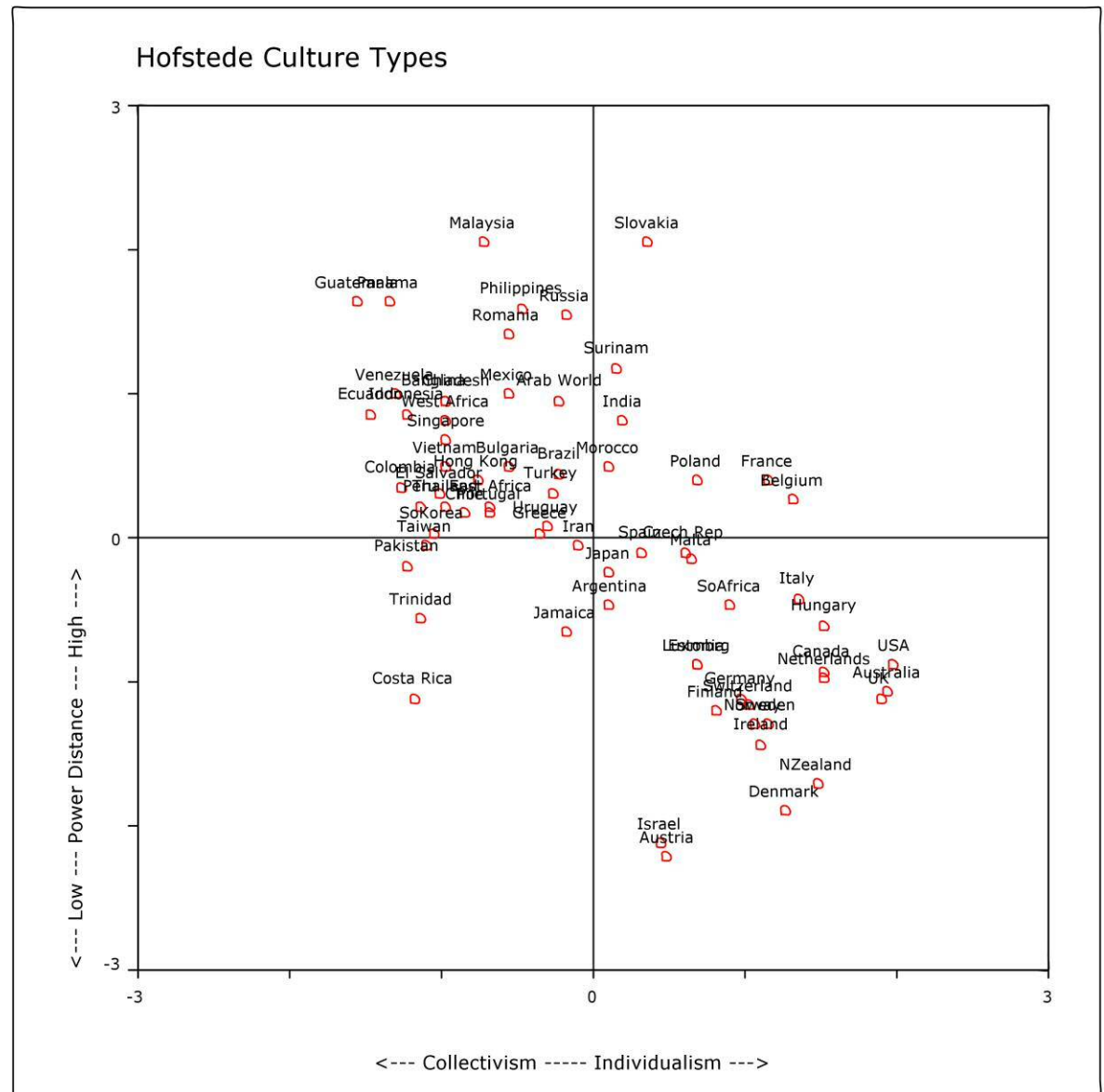
Cultural dimensions originate from a survey of 117,000 that he conducted from the 1960s to 1970s that examined value differences among different divisions of IBM, a multinational computer manufacturing company.

50 countries across 3 regions

Using factor analysis, initially identified four value dimensions: individualism and collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity and femininity.

Later research from Chinese sociologists identified a fifth dimension, long-term or short-term orientation (Bond, 1991).

Replication of Hofstede's study, conducted across 93 separate countries, confirmed the existence of the five dimensions and identified a sixth known as indulgence and restraint (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010).



Source of explanation: Nickerson, C. (2022, May 04). Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory. Simply Psychology. www.simplypsychology.org/hofstedes-cultural-dimensions-theory.html. Map generated by Open Space from Hofstede data.

Hofstede Cultural Dimensions

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Power Distance Index

High PDI

- Centralized organizations.
- More complex hierarchies.
- Large gaps in compensation, authority & respect.

Low PDI

- Flatter organizations.
- Supervisors & employees are near equals.

Individualism Collectivism

High IDV

- High value on people's time
- High value on need for privacy and freedom.
- Enjoyment of challenges
- Expectation of individual rewards for hard work.
- Respect for privacy.

Low IDV

- Emphasis on building skills
- Becoming master of something
- People work for intrinsic rewards.
- Maintaining harmony among group members overrides other moral issues.

Masculinity Femininity

High MAS

- Strong egos – feelings of pride and importance are attributed to status.
- Money and achievement are important.

Low MAS

- Relationship oriented/consensual
- Focus on quality of life

Uncertainty Avoidance

High UAI

- Conservative, rigid, structured
- Will change if danger of failure requires flexible attitude
- Many societal conventions
- People are expressive
- Allowed to show anger or emotions, if necessary.
- A high energy society if in control

Low UAI

- Openness to change or innovation
- Generally inclusive
- Inclined to open-ended learning or decision making
- Less sense of urgency

Source Psychologist Dr. Geert Hofstede published his cultural dimensions model at the end of the 1970s, based on a decade of research.
<https://www.mindtools.com/a1ecvyx/hofstedes-cultural-dimensions>

Why bye, bye Miss American Pie?

... and a lost connection to a rational humanity

- **Assumed** we were Godly people passing good moral values to our children
 - *What have been our traditions without Truth connections?*
 - *Why did we learn to read?*
 - *What is accepted as a source of power?*
- **Assumed** we were a Godly nation passing on good moral values to the world
 - *... but the Africans are saying they will bring Christ back to us.*
 - *Challenging the claims of Darwinism in the USA is as intolerable as challenging the Party in China.*
- **Chose** conformity rather than unity & built out onto sand
 - *Expecting to smooth over the details.*
 - *Long accepted social intolerances have seeded destruction.*
- **Used** Special Revelation to refute General Revelation,
 - *i.e., misapplication of the Word of Truth*
 - *Allowing that the hinterland can make its own rules.*
- **Promoted** a picture of God that is other than what He has shown of Himself,
 - *i.e., incorrectly dividing the Word of Truth*
 - *It was never the Devil in the details.*

The Establishment Tryptic Society, Culture, Traditions, Power

