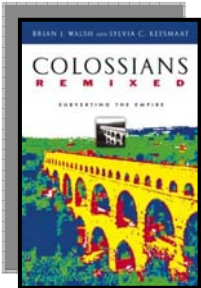


**“In Christ Alone: Considering the Sufficiency of Christ
The Son Is Sufficient For Salvation”**

Stuart McAllister
Ravi Zacharias International Ministries

Colossians 1:13-23



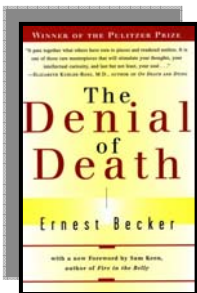
“Globalization isn’t just an aggressive stage in the history of capitalism. It is a religious movement of previously unheard of proportions. Progress is its underlying myth, unlimited economic growth its foundational faith, the shopping mall (physical or on-line) its place of worship, consumerism, its overriding image. I’ll have a Big Mac and Fries its’ ritual of initiation, and global domination its ultimate goal.”¹

“When a religion aggressively proselytizes and seeks to transform imagination, its most important resource is its images. It is image that transforms imagination, and it is imagination that engenders a lifestyle. And what globalization does better than anything else is transform the imagination. That is why the entertainment and advertising industries are the first wave of the emerging global consciousness.”

Consider...

- The distraction factor. So much to do, to see, to try, and so little time. No need to argue about truth, there is little time for it.
- The pluralism factor. All views are equally true or equally false, it is all simply a question of taste or perspective, whatever works, for you.
- The world and life view factor. All dwell in their own self contained “reality” and find ways and means to navigate the morasse of life by the art of skillful (and constant) adaptation.

¹ Brian J. Walsh and Sylvia C. Keesmaat, “Colossians Remixed: Subverting The Empire” (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004), pp. 29-30



“It is that they so openly express man’s tragic destiny: he must desperately justify himself as an object of primary value in the universe; he must stand out, be a hero, make the biggest possible contribution to world life, show that he COUNTS more than anything or anyone else.”²

I. The Human Condition

All worldviews attempt to answer (broadly) similar questions.

- What is the ultimate nature of reality, a background theory of the universe:
- Who and what is man?
- What is wrong in life, in the world, and with me?
- How can it be put right or change affected?

² Ernest Becker, “The Denial of Death” (New York, New York: Free Press Paperbacks, Simon and Schuster, 1973), p. 4

A. Alienation is central to our status

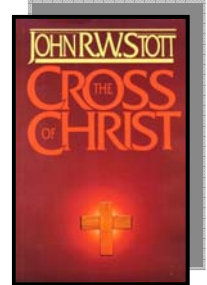
Colossians 1:13; 2:13

Ephesians 2:1-3

B. The scandal of atonement

Colossians 1:14; 19-22

“In Christianity faith in the Mediator is not something optional, not something about which, in the last resort, it is possible to hold different opinions, if we are only united on the ‘main point’. For faith in the Mediator – in the event which took place once for all, a revealed atonement – is the Christian religion itself; it is the ‘main point’, it is not something alongside of the center; it is the substance and the kernel, not the husk. This is so true that we may even say: in distinction from all other forms of religion, the Christian religion is faith in the one Mediator.....And there is no other possibility of being a Christian than through faith in that which took place once for all, revelation and atonement through the Mediator.”³



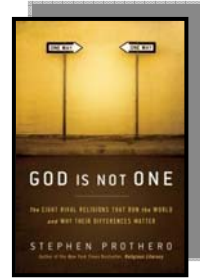
C. The Gospel AS good news

The Finnish evangelist, Kalevi Lehtinen said at a European gathering, *“For most Europeans the gospel is neither good (they see it as life restricting) nor news (they believe they’ve heard it all before).”*

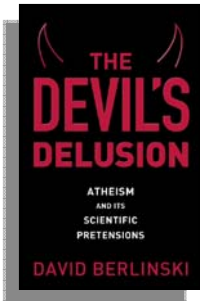
³ John R. Stott, “The Cross of Christ” (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1986), p. 44

II. If We Don't Know The Problem We Can't Offer An Answer

*“The ideal of religious tolerance has morphed into the straight jacket of religious agreement”, a fundamental mistake he believes. He goes on, “even if religion makes no sense to you, you need to make sense of religion to make sense of the world.”*⁴



A. There is no god, freedom from religion is salvation



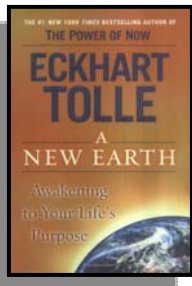
*“figures as diverse as Bertrand Russell, Jacques Monod, Steven Weinberg, and Richard Dawkins have said it is so. It is an article of their faith, one advanced with the confidence of men convinced that nature has equipped them to face realities the rest of us cannot bear to contemplate. There (says Berlinski) is not the slightest reason to think so.”*⁵

- Do their claims have the necessary support they need?
- Does the evidence demand this verdict?
- Does it fit reality, experientially and practically?

⁴ Stephen Prothero, “God Is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Form The World – and Why Their Difference Matter” (New York, New York: Harper One, 2010), pp. 4-5

⁵ David Berlinski, “The Devil’s Delusion: Atheism and Its Scientific Pretentions” (New York, New York: Crown Forum, 2008), intro.p.xiv

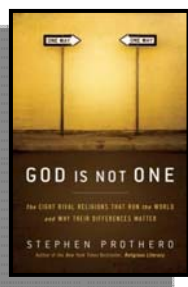
B. All is one, the quest for enlightenment and liberation



*“You must know the workings of the ego, (or) you won’t recognize it, and it will trick you into identifying with it again and again” and secondly, “when you recognize the unconsciousness in you, that which makes the recognition possible is the arising consciousness, is awakening.....the light of consciousness is all that is necessary. You are that light.”*⁶

- It is a universal and democratic spirituality open to all.
- It demands little and offers much.
- Does it meet us, and life, as our real condition demands?

C. Submit or else, the Islamic option



*“Neither is there any need for salvation from sin. In Islam, the problem is self-sufficiency, the hubris of acting as if you can get along without God, who alone is self-sufficient. ‘The idol of your self’, writes the Sufi mystic Rumi, ‘is the mother of (all) idols’. Replace this idol with submission to Allah, and what you have is the goal of Islam: a soul at peace (89:27) in this life and the next: Paradise.”*⁷

⁶ Eckhart Tolle, “A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life’s Purpose” (New York, New York: A Plume Book, Penguin Group, 2005), p. 8

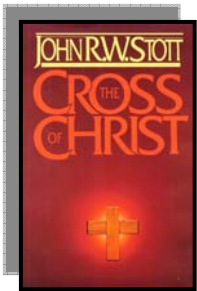
⁷ Stephen Prothero, p. 32

Once again we evaluate.

- The reliability and credibility of the prime witness.
- The reliability and veracity of the core text.
- The actual “fit” with life and experience, does it deliver?

III. God’s Gift of Salvation in Christ

Colossians 1:19-20



“When we look at the cross we see the justice, love, wisdom and power of God. It is not easy to decide which is the most luminously revealed, whether the justice of God in judging sin, or the love of God in bearing the judgment in our place, or the wisdom of God in perfectly combining the two, or the power of God in saving those who believe. For the cross is equally an act, and therefore a demonstration of God’s justice, love, wisdom, and power. The cross assures us that this God is the reality within, behind and beyond the universe.”⁸

⁸ John R. Stott, p. 226

A. He has delivered us.....true freedom

Colossians 1:13; Galatians 5:1

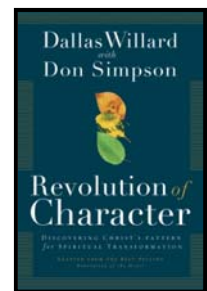
In *John 8:31-32*, Jesus promised that those who heeded His word, “*would know the truth, and the truth would set them free*”.

B. Union and communion

Colossians 1:21-22

2 Corinthians 5:17.

*“It is a revolution that changes peoples ideas, beliefs, feelings, and habits of choice, as well as their bodily tendencies and social relations. It penetrates to the deepest layers of their soul.”*⁹



C. Salvation on all fronts

Romans 8:24-25 (see Colossians 1:3-5)

The salvation of Christ provided for us, speaks in three tenses and to three needs.

- I am saved. My past is forgiven, I can be cleansed and covered for all that has gone before in my life.

⁹ Dallas Willard and Don Simpson, “Revolution of Character” (Colorado Springs, Colorado: NavPress, 2005), p. 14

