

5-Time Oscar Winner Declares: 'There Is No Hell; This Is Heaven'

In an extensive *Wall Street Journal* (Aug. 17, 2019) interview with world-famous director, Francis Ford Coppola of "Godfather" fame, he shared about his new film project, which presents utopia here on earth. He also told us that, "There is no hell, but the other news is that this here is heaven!" He'd been raised in a strong Catholic Italian family, so obviously he's embracing a different worldview than that of Scripture and Roman Catholicism.

In his classic, Oscar winning "Godfather" series, the brilliant director featured a mafia kingpin making a memorable line often repeated to this day. "I'll make you an offer you can't refuse." It's apparent Mr. Coppola offers listeners a "deal" if they accept his belief about no eternal judgment and that they can escape accountability to a loving but holy and just God.

According to the Bible, the wisest human being who ever lived was Solomon. In his collection of divinely inspired wisdom, he stated, "A prudent man foresees the evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished" (Prov. 27:12).

He also summarized his lifetime of learning with these words, "Now all has been heard. Let us hear the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil" (Eccl. 12:13-14).

Jesus came to redeem us but made it clear we must repent and trust Him alone for salvation. He reinforced the doctrine of eternal judgment in which hell is real and real people go

there.

Secular vs. Scriptural Worldview

A biblical worldview means the lens through which we view reality. It's our personal belief system based on convictions riveted rock-solid in the authoritative, divinely inspired Word of God.

God's charge to us: be courageous amidst opposition and live by convictions not necessarily what's popular or politically correct. This has become increasingly important in light of the Barna Research report showing only 1 in 10 Americans has a biblical worldview and only 4% of Millennials do!

"...all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But continue in the things that you have learned and have been assured ("convinced," NIV) of" (2 Tim. 3:12-14).

Beliefs are what we hold. Convictions are what hold us.

It's enlightening to contrast prevailing unbiblical worldviews circulating in our culture with those grounded in sacred Scripture. Examining these worldviews side-by-side helps us to grasp the stark differences between authentic and counterfeit perspectives.

In our culture today, many are deceived into believing we can accommodate error, look for "common ground" and then gather to sing "Kumbaya" in sentimental interfaith services. A Methodist university in Virginia recently hired a Muslim chaplain to complement a cleric who's an LGBTQ advocate in their Spiritual Life Office. "Hey, we're progressive ... this is diversity ... we all pray to the same God anyway. and we're committed to being welcoming and all-inclusive!" They're in serious error, in fact, heresy!

Professing Christian leader Rob Bell sells scores of books and propagandizes people on campuses and in churches peddling his secular, heretical belief on the absence of eternal judgment.

“Secular” doesn’t necessarily mean atheism. It comes from the Latin word *saeculum*, which means “time or age” –focusing on this age alone; rejecting religion and eternity.

What you believe determines how you live and where you’ll go when you die. People flourish or flounder and face eternal separation from God based on their worldview.

The Scriptural ‘Sweet Sixteen’

The following is not an exhaustive list but it helps us with some core beliefs of Christianity. These are non-negotiables—fundamentals of our historic Bible-based faith. The list is written showing the issue first, followed by the secular view and then the scriptural view.

Truth: Subjective and experiential (what feels true to me); objective and biblical (“true truth” revealed by divine decree).

Bible: Religious book with stories and helpful insights; inerrant and inspired, revealed will of God

Origins: Evolution and man-centered; creation and God-centered.

Man’s Condition: Inherently good and ever-evolving; originally sinful and hopeless without redemption.

Source of Problems: Ignorance, environment, victim mentality; fallen condition and need for personal responsibility.

God: Whoever, whatever or denial; loving Creator, merciful Savior, righteous Judge.

Plight: Ignorant of potential, evolving; separated from God

(spiritually dead).

Sin: Redefined as sickness, addiction or weakness; willful violation of God's commands given for His glory and our good.

Solution: Legislation and education; regeneration (spiritual rebirth, supernatural transformation).

Provision: Education, science, technology and therapy; the person and finished work of Jesus Christ, mankind's only Redeemer.

Jesus: One of history's many religious leaders; Son of God, sovereign Lord and mankind's only Savior.

Response: Better self through human effort and possible charitable activity; change direction (repent) and trust Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

Change: Excuse, blameshift, plead ignorance, rationalize; By God's grace, "put off" harmful habits and "put on" responses of obedience reflecting His character.

Afterlife: Denied, ignored, reincarnated, all saved, hell only for history's worst; body decomposes awaiting future resurrection while spirit/soul enters heaven or hell based on one's response to gospel.

Judgment: Nonexistent as "God is love"; obedience is rewarded and disobedience punished by a just, holy and loving God.

Purpose of Life: Self-actualization, pursuit of pleasure and pleasing oneself, acquisition of fame and fortune; glorify God and fulfill one's destiny by joyful service, obedience and pleasing God.

Here's the Deal: Living in a time like one spoken of in Scripture when "Everyone did what was right in his eyes" (Judg. 17:6b), we must prioritize developing an uncompromisingly biblical worldview. Then with confidence and

compassion let's be "salt" as Jesus directed, as a bulwark against the avalanche of deception rampant today.

Look for the debut of the "Here's the Deal" podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network to engage and encourage you to be an informed influencer in these days of deception but incredible opportunity.