

Why the 4 Other Non-Christian Worldviews Fall Short

Suddenly there was with the angel a company of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men" (Luke 2:13-14).

Besides Christianity, there are four predominant worldviews that compete for allegiance:

1. Atheism declares that there is no God. The inevitable conclusion of atheism is that we're here for no purpose. When you die, there is nothing awaiting you. Atheism is emotionally deadly. If you come from no one, are here for no reason, and when you die you go nowhere, there is no hope for this life or eternal life.
2. Deism is the belief that God exists, but he is distant. He basically made the world and then left. Playing the devil in a movie, Al Pacino once said that God was an "absentee landlord." He doesn't pay any attention to you or the world, and he is certainly not becoming a man and entering into history to suffer or serve. You are on your own.
3. Pantheism and panentheism are similar. Pantheism is the belief that everything is God. Panentheism is the belief that God is in everything, like a force or energy. Good and evil essentially don't exist, because they are two sides of the same coin, yin and yang. The problem is that there is no justice. When we suffer and we see injustice or evil on the earth, where's the justice? The answer in pantheism and panentheism is—there isn't any justice. There's no judge outside of this system. All we have is what is, and good and evil are different sides of the same coin. It's all one. So if you're hurt, damaged, raped, abused, abandoned or betrayed, you can't

really say that was wrong. All you can say is “That happened.” You can’t appeal to any sovereign God separate from the world for help, because there’s no one beyond creation. You have no hope of final judgment in the end.

4. Theism allows for the existence of God, but this existence can range from the one god of monotheism (Judaism, Islam) to the many gods of polytheism (Mormonism, Hinduism). Most theistic worldviews acknowledge the difference between the creator and the created, but there is no savior. Instead, we have to save ourselves through religion and good works. The result is that we either keep the rules and get very proud of ourselves and judgmental of others, or we fail to keep the rules and fall into despair. In this way, meager religious works seek to close the infinite gap between sinners and the divine.
5. Christianity is about the one true God who is separate from his creation but enters into his creation as the God-man Jesus Christ. This is where Christianity is different. There is a God, He has not abandoned us; He is separate from his creation; and He has come on a rescue mission for us in love. We come from God, we belong to God and we’re here for God and find our joy in living for his glory. God is here with us to this day through the Holy Spirit, and one day, we will stand before God and experience a perfect eternity with Him, where sin and all of its effects are no more, if we turn from sin and trust in Him.

How would you describe your worldview? Where do you find hope in the face of great pain and suffering? {eo}

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