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Is Your Worldview Viable?

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The de Havilland DH 106 Comet was the first commercial jet airliner in the world to reach production. It initially flew in 1949, in the United Kingdom, and was considered by many to be a landmark in aeronautical design. But just a few years later some of its parts began to suffer from metal fatigue. Of the 114 planes originally produced, at least twelve crashed. What looked good on paper just didn't work out very well in real life.

If your worldview was an airplane, would it fly? Does it fly? Does your belief system offer you a sound basis for joy and well-being? Can you live consistently in terms of your worldview in the real world?

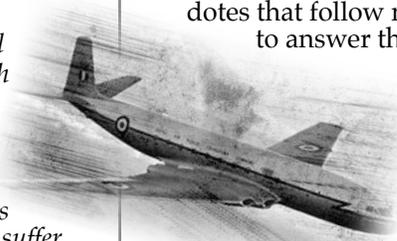
Christian apologist Ravi Zacharias says that there are at least three tests that any viable faith system must submit to: **1) logical consistency, 2) empirical adequacy, and 3) experiential relevancy.**

Regis Nicoll, writing in the June 2007 issue of *Breakpoint* (*Two Men and Two Worldviews; Part 1 – Deciding What to Believe*) puts it this way: “Deciding which is true involves considering three things: coherence, correspondence, and conclusion. Testing for **coherence**, we determine whether the tenets of a worldview are logically sound . . . Next there is **correspondence**, meaning how a worldview stacks up against what we know from history and from our own experience . . .

Lastly, we consider a worldview’s **conclusion**. If followed faithfully, where will a worldview lead and would it be livable? Our concern here is not primarily with what followers *do*, but what their worldview

says they *ought to do*; recognizing that every belief system has its hypocritical, misguided, or weak devotees.”

Many of you reading this do not hold to a Christian worldview. Yet it’s still important to run a viability test on your worldview. Whether, it’s Buddhism, secular humanism, objectivism, Islam, atheism, relativism, or Taoism — here’s the question: *Are you able to live consistently and purposefully with your worldview?* The quotes and anecdotes that follow may help you to answer that question.



• C. S. Lewis, in *Mere Christianity*, © Macmillan Publishing: “Human beings all over the earth, have

this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and cannot really get rid of it.” “Whenever you find a man who says he does not believe in a real Right and Wrong, you will find the same man going back on this a moment later. He may break his promise to you, but if you try breaking one to him he will be complaining ‘It’s not fair’ before you can say ‘Jack Robinson.’” “It seems, then, we are forced to believe in a real Right and Wrong.”

• Ronald Nash, in *Worldviews in Conflict*, relates the account of a man who went to the IRS and said that he’d recently learned in college that A equals non-A. Therefore he reasoned that *not* filing his income tax was the same as filing it. The IRS man said, “Well, I’ve never heard that one before. But if that’s the case, it should work to your advantage, since going to jail will be the same to you as *not* going to jail.”

• “Each day, as we drove from the hotel to the training center, we passed thousands of people. So many of them lived on the street or in shacks made of whatever they had. I expected to drive from the city to the slum, but in reality, the slum ran through the city in all

directions. What was really hard was seeing the people with blank expressions. Their faces weren’t happy, sad, or angry; they were just empty. It was really obvious that Hinduism offers them nothing. It doesn’t even offer them a *hope* of anything better. Contrast that with a woman I helped at the eyeglass clinic. To check whether the people have the right strength reading glasses, we asked them to read a short passage — usually John 3:16. When this lady realized that we were using a Bible, she grinned and said, ‘I am Christian.’ She then eagerly read from the Bible, and she was beaming the whole time. What a difference the hope found in Christ makes in the lives and countenances of people.” — Stephanie Panciera, Monson, Maine, reporting on a visit to Ahmedabad, India, in September of 2010.

• Ivan Pavlov, the famous Russian physiologist, once taught his dogs to jump to the right when they saw a circle and to the left when they saw an oval — all with rewards. Then he slowly began to merge the circle into an oval to the point where the dogs couldn’t tell the difference. The dogs eventually went mad. Is this not where moral relativism is bound to lead us, with no fixed reference point for distinguishing what is right or wrong in sexuality, genetics, politics, economics, or even in matters of law and justice?

• Despite his strong advocacy of euthanasia for old ‘useless eaters,’ ethicist Peter Singer (Princeton University) spent huge sums of money to care for his own mother when she was dying of Alzheimer’s Disease.

• In his book *A Shattered Image*, Ravi Zacharias says: “At one of my lectures . . . a student rose to his feet and shouted, ‘Ah, everything in life is meaningless.’ I insisted that he could not possibly mean that. With an equally intense retort he countered that he *did* mean just that. I then asked him if he thought that his statement was a meaningful one. There was an acute silence.”

• One can never convincingly deny the reality of absolute truth, rational thought, or logic — because to do so requires the use of logic.

Recommended for further reading:

<http://www.breakpoint.org/features-columns/archive/1373-two-men-and-two-worldviews>

More Evidence in Defense and Confirmation of the Christian Faith