

MODERNITY & WORLDVIEW AND THEIR IMPACT ON SPIRITUAL POWER

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heart, for they will see God.”**

- Matthew 5:8

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“Blessed are the pure (*undivided, unencumbered*) in heart, for they will see (*perceive*) God (*wherever they are in the here and now*).”

—Matthew 5:8

How did we lose our spiritual perception, sensitivity & power?

Historical Overview:

- Pre-history-2500 B.C.
- 2500 B.C.-500 A.D. – Ancient World
- 500-1500 A.D. – Medieval World
- 1500-2000 A.D. – Modern World (Modernity)
- 2000 A.D. - ? – Post-Modernity

Modernity's Impact on Philosophy/Theology:

- Movement from **Theism** to **Deism** to **Naturalism**
- Increased Naturalism culminates in a “God is Dead” Philosophy (Nihilism)
- ***“If God is dead then everything is permissible”*** —Dostoevsky
- *“Sinners are living with more integrity than ever before!”*

Implications for 20th & 21st c. Christianity

- Christians begin to fight science with science subtly succumbing to Modernity's prevailing Worldview
- Western Christians say they are **Theists** but live like **Deists**
- Naturalism gives birth to Rationalism **"God in a Box"** Theology

- **“There are many concepts that the Church holds dear desiring to maintain a devotion to Scripture. But some of these actually work against the true value of God’s Word. For example, many people who reject the move of the Holy Spirit have claimed that the church doesn’t need signs and wonders because we have the Bible. Yet that teaching contradicts the very Word it seeks to exalt...”**

- **If you assign ten new believers the task of studying the Bible to find God's heart for this generation, not one of them would conclude that spiritual gifts are not for today. You have to be taught that stuff! The doctrine stating signs and wonders are no longer needed because we have the Bible was created by people who hadn't seen God's power and needed an explanation to justify their own powerless churches."**
- **- Bill Johnson, When Heaven Invades Earth, pp. 93,94**

Definitions (2 concepts):

1. **Worldview**: “A worldview is a set of presuppositions which we hold about the basic makeup of our world.” (James Sire p.17).



Definitions (2 concepts):

2. Flaw of the Excluded Middle: A growing acceptance of Platonic dualism during modernity caused the belief in the middle zone (see next slide) to fade away. A new science based on materialistic naturalism emerged. The end result was a **secularization of science** and a **mystification of religion**. There is no connection between the two worlds. (Paul Hiebert, p.36)

TRANSCENDENT WORLD VIEW BEYOND

OURS: *includes*

Hells, heavens, other times i.e. eternity
High god (African), Vishnu, Siva (Hindu)
Cosmic forces; karma
Jehovah, angels, demons, spirits of worlds

RELIGION

Faith
Sacred
Miracles
Other-worldly
problems

SUPERNATURAL FORCES ON THIS

EARTH: *includes*

spirits, ghosts, ancestors, demons
earthly gods and goddesses who live within trees, rivers, hills,
villages
supernatural forces: magic, sorcery, witchcraft
Holy Spirit, angels, demons, Divine Healing, Gifts of the Spirit

EXCLUDED

MIDDLE

By Westerners

EMPIRICAL WORLD OF OUR SENSES:

includes

folk sciences to explain how things occur
explanations based on empirical observations
theories about natural world and human relationships

SCIENCE

Sight & experience
Natural order,
secular
this-worldly
problems

Factors Influencing Our SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION:

1. Our Worldview – Acts 14:8-12

In Lystra there sat a man crippled in his feet, who was lame from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk. When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!" Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker.

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2. The Limitations of Our Experience

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5. The "SIN" Factor

The Need for a “Paradigm Shift”



How Does One Acquire a New Paradigm?

- I. Confession—Take God out of the box**
- II. Re-read the Scriptures with “Kingdom” Lenses**
- III. Get involved with a believing community whose worldview accepts the “excluded middle” tier and observe what is happening there**
- IV. Start praying for the sick, asking the Lord to change your worldview by granting you a new experience of His present power and activity**