



A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF POSTMODERNISM AND ITS ROOTS

by

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Introduction

Several factors have an influence on how the Christian message is received by non-Christian hearers. One such factor is the philosophy or worldview of the audience. While few people are professional philosophers or are even avid students of philosophy, everyone nevertheless holds sets of beliefs and values that shape how they see reality. Such a collection of presuppositions, whether held consciously and consistently or not, defines one's worldview. While a particular worldview might be deliberately chosen by an individual, it might just as easily be the result of living in a certain society or culture. If the latter is the case, unless the individual comes into contact with a competing worldview, their way of looking at things may never be challenged or critiqued.

One such ideology that developed in the mid to late twentieth-century, which has become prominent in the modernised societies of the West, is Postmodernism. This broad movement expresses itself in a variety of subjects including art, architecture, history, literature, medicine, and religion. As the movement gained ground, postmodern approaches were adopted in a variety of academic and theoretical disciplines. Today, it seems, the term "postmodern" is not so much on everyone's lips as it was a few decades ago. However, despite a lower profile, its influence is still with us. Many people have lived all of their lives in a climate of postmodernism. As

noted by D.A. Carson, the conclusions of postmodernism are now adopted as cultural “givens” without the perceived need to justify them.¹

Since postmodernism still holds sway as a worldview, it is the task of the Christian apologist to evaluate this ideology in relation to the Christian faith. To this end, the following questions may be asked: What is postmodernism? How does Christianity challenge postmodernism? and finally, What are the implications of postmodernism for apologetics?

The concept of postmodernism is too broad and shapeless to describe easily. But since the very term “postmodern” defines itself in relation to what is *modern*, it seems reasonable to begin by understanding *modernism* or *modernity*.²

Modernism and the Age of Enlightenment

A movement that greatly shaped and defined the modern era is what is known as the Enlightenment, sometimes called the Age of Reason. Though it is true that the Enlightenment reached its climax in the eighteenth-century, it is fair to say that its beginnings can be traced back to sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries.³ Of significance to the Age of Reason was the attempt of philosophers to provide a sure foundation for knowledge. Rene Descartes (1596–1650), often called the “father of modern philosophy,”

¹ D.A. Carson, “The Postmodernism That Refuses to Die,” *Themelios* 43, no.1(April 2018): 1–3, accessed August 19, 2019, <http://themelios.thegospelcoalition.org/issue/43-1>.

² The terms *modernity* or *modernism* are used by different writers in talking about the roots of postmodernism. The two terms are also used to refer to distinct but related movements. Whilst *modernism* was a late nineteenth century and early twentieth century philosophical movement, *modernity* is defined by the modern era of humanity as opposed to the medieval era.

³ C. Brown, “The Enlightenment,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., ed. Walter J. Elwell (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House Company, 2001) 377.

sought to do this by means of his own thinking. Though he might doubt everything, even his own being, the fact that he did indeed doubt provided convincing proof of his existence, he thought.

Also an important figure in Enlightenment ideology was Immanuel Kant (1724–1804). Sharing Descartes' confidence in the power of human reason, Kant assumed it possible to make rational decisions about religious and philosophical beliefs in an objective and detached manner. The belief that self can be the ultimate arbiter of truth is seen in Kant's chosen motto for the Enlightenment, *Sapere aude*—"Dare to be wise," meaning "Have courage in your own understanding."⁴ Kant very much saw the Enlightenment as humanity's coming of age. According to Kant, man, in his immaturity, has been bound by the external authorities of Bible, the church, and the state, but man must no longer be shackled to worn-out creeds and customs; these barriers must come down for the sake of progress.

The most prominent philosopher of the nineteenth century, G.W.F. Hegel (1770–1831) perhaps sowed seeds of relativism with the idea that history may be viewed as a progression of worldviews, none of which are completely false, and all of which contain a degree of truth.⁵ Hegel's huge, all-embracing system of philosophy, which rests on his celebrated dialectical method, may perhaps justly be called a *grand narrative*.

The modern era, too, was a period of striking political change. Enlightenment thinkers reacted to pre-Reformation and Reformation views that existing forms of government were endorsed by divine sanction. Questions regarding the source of political authority became of utmost

⁴ Brown, 377.

⁵ B.E. Benson, "Postmodernism," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, 2nd ed., ed. Walter J. Elwell (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House Company, 2001) 940-41.

importance. Political thinkers such as Thomas Hobbs, John Locke, and Jean Jacques Rousseau based legitimate governmental authority on the new idea of social contract. One needn't wait for Russian Revolution of 1917 to see this change, but the mid-seventeenth-century saw the English Civil War and the execution of Charles I, with the subsequent century bringing the French Revolution and the abolition of a monarchy. Both the *Declaration of Independence* of the United States of America and the *Statement of Human and Civil Rights* of the French National Assembly display Enlightenment thinking. Interestingly, though God is mentioned in the texts, the documents make their appeal to *self-evident truths*.

The Enlightenment has also been described as the Age of Scientific Reason, and Modernity is characterised by remarkable scientific and technological advancement over that of the preceding ages. By far the most eminent physicist of his day, Isaac Newton (1642–1727), formulated a universal law of gravitation able to explain the motion of the planets and the behaviour of everything in the solar system. The universe began to be no longer seen as irrational, but something that is understandable, functioning according to fixed deducible laws. Darwin's theory of evolution was seen to account for the origin of species, and much later, Stanley Miller's experiments seemed to be able to account for the origin of life. The spectacular success of science in the popular mind caused many to think of science as the ultimate source of truth. The logical positivism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century concluded that the language of theology and metaphysics is essentially meaningless. Knowledge must either be relations of ideas, which are tautologies, or matters of fact derived from sensory experiences.⁶

⁶ E.D. Cook, "Logical Positivism," in *New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Sinclair B. Ferguson and David F. Wright, (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 394.

The generally high view of science had an impact on theology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century. Movements such as the English or Catholic Modernism believed the proper response to modern thought and knowledge was to make radical changes to Christian doctrine.

Scepticism towards religion, though, began much earlier. Attacks against the church and institutional Christianity were made by both Rousseau and Voltaire in the eighteenth-century. Rousseau, though professing belief in a supreme being, renounced all creeds while asserting that all beliefs should be brought to the bar of reason. Voltaire, influenced by English Deism, maintained that true religion, unlike Christianity, was one of reason and nature. The quest for the historical Jesus, too, may be traced back to Enlightenment Deists, who distinguished the Jesus of history from that of Christian orthodoxy.⁷

That “reason” should rule instead of revelation was the direction taken in ethics as well as religion. Guided by a strong belief both in the existence of moral law within human beings and in God’s unknowability, Kant proposed a morality independent of divine command: the categorical imperative. According to this construct, the test for moral maxims should be that we act only according to those which we could will to become universal moral laws. The Social Contract theory of ethics proposed by Hobbes, Rousseau, et al encouraged thinking of moral rules in terms of rights: moral rules ensure the rights of others are respected. Later, the system of ethics known as utilitarianism came to dominate much nineteenth-century ethical thought, and a good action was defined as one that does the maximum good for the maximum number of people.

⁷ Brown, 378–79.

Given the significant advancements of modernity, we might wonder why there was a need for the new ideology of postmodernism. After all, the twentieth century saw the success of modern medicine in making many diseases now treatable, technology had freed many from drudgery, and the standard of living had risen far beyond anything that might have been imagined a century or two ago.

Reasons for a sense of disappointment and disillusionment with modernity may be accounted for by a number of factors. The French Revolution beginning in 1789, which hoped to create a nation of free individuals protected by the law, soon gave way to a Reign of Terror in which thousands of people were executed. Marxism, which had hypothesised the liberation of the oppressed proletariat and hoped to usher-in a classless, humane society, itself brought oppression and horror on a grand scale, as it became known that 20 million Soviet citizens had been killed under Stalin. Hope in a future utopian society begins to wane. Disillusionment may also be attributed to the failure of peace shown by the twentieth century's two devastating World Wars. H.G. Wells' phrase, "the war to end all wars," though once said idealistically, is now used only sardonically. In science, too, cause was found for disappointment. It had not delivered the absolute and final truth once promised. Newton's law of inertia and his concept of rest are no longer deemed tenable. His simple and elegant theory of universal gravitation, which had been the accepted for two centuries, was discredited by Einstein's theory of General Relativity. General Relativity, in turn, was found to be at odds with Quantum Mechanics, and to date a single unifying theory is still wanting. In addition, widespread environmental pollution, the thalidomide tragedy, and the threat of nuclear destruction, reminded many of the problems that science had caused. Slowly, people

began to see the scientific view of the world as a poor religion, neglecting the spiritual and religious dimensions of human beings.⁸

Postmodernism

These and other difficulties with modernism led to the philosophical movement of postmodernism, which arose in the mid to late twentieth-century. Originating primarily in France, postmodernism is identified with such philosophers as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean François Lyotard, and American academic, Richard Rorty. However, the movement also appears to owe much to Nietzsche and Kierkegaard.⁹ Before characteristic postmodern claims are considered, it must be stressed that postmodern thought is quite wide and varied, and unanimity between postmodern thinkers is not easy to find. Another difficulty is that the term “postmodern” has become a buzzword in contemporary society, and is often used loosely to refer to anything that diverges from traditional standards or is relativistic. Nevertheless, as difficult as it may be to define such a broad movement, some consensus can definitely be found.¹⁰ It is, of course, true that postmodernism is a repudiation of many of the tenets of the Enlightenment and modernity, yet it is not a wholesale rejection of them all. Some ideas of modernity it rejects, some it holds on to, and some it reinterprets.

⁸ Gene Edward Veith, “Postmodern Times: Facing a World of New Challenges and Opportunities,” *Modern Reformation* 4, no. 5 (September/October 1995): 16, accessed September 8, 2019, <https://www.whitehorseinn.org/article/postmodern-times>.

⁹ Benson, 941.

¹⁰ David L. Dance, “Preaching and Postmodernism: An Evangelical Comes to the Dance,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no.2 (Summer 2001):62–63, accessed Sept 5, 2019, <https://equip.sbts.edu/publications/journals/journal-of-theology/sbjt-52-summer-2001/preaching-and-postmodernism-an-evangelical-comes-to-the-dance>.

Perhaps the greatest difference between postmodernism and modernity is the denial of an objective natural reality. Though in the eighteenth-century Bishop Berkley brought it into question, we generally think of things as existing independently of us, and not depending on our minds for their being. Kant's noumenal world of *things-in-themselves*, existing beyond our perceptions, might qualify as objective reality. However, Kant maintained we are tied to the phenomenal realm of appearances and can never know that other realm. Since, according to Kant, we cannot experience the objective reality of the noumenal realm, perhaps post-modernism is not so far removed from Kant's Enlightenment thinking. To say that we cannot experience objective reality is perhaps not too different from saying that there is no objective reality. One could say that in this regard, postmodern thinking, rather than opposing Enlightenment thinking, has taken it a step further.

Closely related to the denial of objective natural reality is the denial of objective truth. Truth, says postmodernism, instead of being something that is discovered, is something that is constructed. Postmodernism maintains that communities construct truth according to their use of language and the experiences which shaped their linguistic community.¹¹ Different linguistic communities will therefore have different "truths." This position may be seen as a reaction against the scientific rationalism of modernity which had failed to deliver the objective truth it promised.

Of course, to say that there is no objective truth is itself an attempt to assert an objective truth, and, therefore, is self-contradictory. However, contradiction need not be a problem, if, as believed by the postmodernist, logic and reason is not universally valid. Logic and reason, according to

¹¹ Dance, 67.

postmodernism, are merely conceptual constructs, valid only in the established intellectual traditions in which they were used. But by denying the law of contradiction, it is difficult to see how we do not lose all ability for reasoned argumentation. In fact, even the value of argumentation appears to be questioned by postmodernist Richard Rorty's comment that there can be no real "arguments," but simply "re-descriptions" of things which make positions seem appealing.¹² The postmodern position on logic and reason seems to be again a reaction against the Enlightenment notion that man is capable of reasoning in a completely objective manner. Kant's ideal of thinking for oneself is renounced by postmodernist Hans-Georg Gadamer as impossible and undesirable. Gadamer stresses how greatly we are dependent on the judgements passed on to us by tradition.¹³

Postmodernism responds to the Enlightenment's faith in science with similar scepticism. Scientific advancements, rather than being the mechanisms of human progress, they argue, have led to the development of technologies for killing on a massive scale. Since scientific advancement does not always proceed linearly through scientific method, but often moves forward by means of paradigm shifts, credence is given to the notion that scientific theories are merely social constructs. Other forms of knowledge production, postmodernists maintain, might serve one's personal and spiritual needs better.¹⁴ The human sciences, too, are met with suspicion. According to Michel Foucault, the emergence of the human sciences in the eighteenth century, which subjected humans to scientific observation, was connected with the establishment of systems of disciplinary control.¹⁵

¹² Benson, 944.

¹³ Benson, 942

¹⁴ "Science wars," in *Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia*, last modified July 23, 2019, accessed Sept 6, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Science_wars.

¹⁵ Stephen Law, *Philosophy: Eyewitness Companion* (London: Dorling Kindersley, 2007) 342.

Another view against much of the Enlightenment's epistemology is postmodernism's anti-foundationalism. Foundationalism's approach to knowledge maintains that beliefs can be justified if based on basic or foundational truths. According to this theory, if we trace the chain of justification back far enough we will arrive at basic truths that do not require justification.¹⁶ These are indubitable truths, about which one cannot be mistaken. Descartes attempted to establish such a foundation by his *cogito*, and hence is often singled out by postmodernists in order to attack foundationalism. Foundationalism is disliked by postmodernist because it assumes that all epistemic systems must include a class of beliefs that are exempt from challenge. In addition, foundationalism operates on the premise that reasoning can only proceed in one direction, from foundational beliefs to others, and not the reverse. In view of the destruction wreaked by totalitarian ideologies in the twentieth-century, we can understand postmodernism's reluctance to assume any belief to be unchallengeable.

Central also to postmodernism is its suspicion of meta-narratives. In fact, leading postmodern figure, Jean François Lyotard defined postmodernism simply as "incredulity towards meta-narratives."¹⁷ By the term "meta-narrative" Lyotard has in mind some kind of unified, complete, universal, and epistemically certain story that is seemingly able to explain or interpret everything. Kantianism, Hegelianism, and Marxism are sometimes considered examples of such grand narratives. Lyotard particularly had in view narratives of man's emancipation—Christianity or Marxism—and the narrative of the triumph of science. Meta-narratives, it is argued, have been used to give cultural practices some form of legitimisation or authority, and

¹⁶ Law, 60.

¹⁷ Christopher Butler, *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002) 13.

have often led to totalitarian persecution. These sorts of narrative do not allow disputes about value and are therefore illiberal.

An area about which postmodernism has much to say is *language*. Language, they say, is not the “mirror of nature,” as supposed by the Enlightenment view. On the contrary, Derrida and his followers believe that the Western tradition has too often falsely supposed that the relationship between language and the world is well founded and reliable. It was assumed, they say, that the meaning of a word has its origin in the structure of reality, and hence makes that structure directly present to the mind.¹⁸ In opposition to this, postmodernists maintain that language is self-contained and self-referential. The meaning of a word is not a static thing in the world or an idea in the mind, but rather a range of contrasts and differences with the meaning of other words. When we use conceptual opposites like “masculine and feminine,” “literal and metaphorical,” “soul and body” we tend to put one of these terms above the other. Hence, we get a lot of these relationships wrong, conceiving things as too rigidly fixed. But by employing a more relativistic conceptual scheme we are able to see that these things really depend on one another for their definition.¹⁹ By a process known as “deconstruction,” all expressions, anything from Shakespeare to a scientific experiment, may be taken apart and analysed to reveal unstable linguistic contradictions which are masks for cultural power and justification for oppression.²⁰

Postmodernists further challenge traditional thought with their view of human nature and identity. It is usually agreed that human beings possess certain aptitudes and dispositions at birth. However, postmodernists reject

¹⁸ Butler, 17.

¹⁹ Butler, 20.

²⁰ Veith, 3.

the idea that people have an essential nature. Instead, they insist that nearly all aspects of human psychology are self or societally constructed. Furthermore, to “fit in,” the self is forced to adopt various roles in different circumstances. The postmodern argument is that rather than this being merely role play, our very *identity* or notion of our self is affected by these circumstances.²¹ Hence, instead of talking about *our self*, we should really talk about *ourselves*. It has also been observed that the postmodernist view of self lacks the optimism of modernity’s liberal humanists. Rather than seeing themselves as autonomous and rational, the postmodern view of self is one which is dominated and controlled by language systems. Those critical of postmodernism suggest that this encourages people to see themselves as victims.²²

Lastly, some comment should be made regarding postmodernism’s position with regard to ethics and morality. Postmodernism, as we have seen, is highly relativistic and maintains that values are culturally determined. This means that ethics is not seen in terms of the absolute transcendent standards of the Bible, or even in terms of what is good for society as proposed by Kant. Author and scholar, Gene Veith, suggests that there are two guiding principles to postmodernist ethics. The principle of *tolerance* is one of the few virtues remaining for a relativistic philosophy. The idea might be described as a willingness to put up with actions or beliefs you consider to be wrong, for the sake of a greater ideal, such as the autonomy of others in the construction of their own narrative. To impose our views or values on others is against the principle of tolerance and therefore morally wrong. In practice, the principle of tolerance might be applied, for instance, in allowing the punishments prescribed by Sharia Law to be carried out, even

²¹ Butler, 50-52.

²² Butler, 59.

though one doesn't believe in it. The other principle is *choice*. Actions are perhaps permissible if they are based on choice. Thus abortion is often justified on the basis that it is the woman's *choice*. Similarly, euthanasia is defensible because it is the patient's *choice*.²³

Now that most of the major concepts of postmodernism have been set forth, the ideology may be evaluated in relation to the biblical Christian worldview. In what ways does Christianity challenge postmodernism?

Postmodernism and Christianity

It has been said that postmodernists believe that there is no objective reality and no objective truth. If reality, as they believe, is constructed by language, language can be interpreted in different ways and give rise to different realities. Of course, this view is at odds with the Christian worldview. Indeed, the Christian view in this matter is significantly different from that of both modernity and postmodernity, because neither movement has accepted revelation as a means of knowledge. Objective reality in the Christian worldview is derived from the Scriptures, which is God's Word, and as such is God-breathed, inerrant, and infallible. Since men are image-bearers of God, being created with rational minds endowed with knowledge, righteousness and holiness, bearing the creature-creator distinction, but with likeness to God, they are able to know the same truth that God knows, not exhaustively but qualitatively. These truths are found in the propositions of Scripture and cannot be endlessly reinterpreted but have a finite meaning, though man can never exhaust the truth expressed in them. Thus, the author of any a document must be able to make his intent known

²³ Veith, 18.

to a reader; otherwise, the postmodern writers themselves could never be understood.

The view that there is no objective truth, suggesting that truth is relative, is often reflected by the general public in statements such as, “That may be true for you, but it’s not for me.” However, both modernity and Christianity accept that there are universal truths. For modernity these might be, for example, the laws of mathematics and geometry. For Christianity universal truths are found in propositions such as “There is none righteous, no not one,” and “And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement.” Though the New Testament addresses dissimilar linguistic and cultural groups, there is never the thought of such statements being true for one group, but not true for another.

The biblical Christian worldview would also challenge postmodernism’s claim that logic and reason are not universally valid but are merely conceptual constructs. The laws of reason are universal principles that underlie our reality and thought. Without them it is impossible to communicate coherently. To deny the law of contradiction, for instance, is to maintain that the statements, “Madrid is in Spain,” and “Madrid is not in Spain,” are both true. Without these laws no argument is possible either for or against postmodernism, modernity, Christianity, or anything else. The use of reason is very important for Christianity in understanding what the Scriptures say. Yet this is not unaided human reason, but reason under the governing authority of the Scriptures and with the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

To Christians, postmodernism’s scepticism toward science might be preferred to the position of modernity, which often defends vehemently the

theory of evolution without question. However, for the Christian, unlike some postmodernists, the advance of science and technology need not be seen as the means of a certain group to assert control, and therefore necessarily bad. The Christian worldview in regard to science also distinguishes itself from postmodernism, by the knowledge that the universe is rational and was created by a rational God. Without this notion, held by Newton and others, scientific advancement would never have happened. Equally, science is not the unquestionable arbiter of final truth as modernity asserts.

With regard to the accusation of foundationalism, Christianity might well accept this charge. While the Bible assumes the existence of God, it nowhere attempts to prove his existence, or the truth of the reality which the Bible describes. This would seem to support the idea that there are some truths that are so fundamental that they must be assumed in order for knowledge to advance. In presuppositional apologetics, the single axiom, the Bible alone is the word of God, provides a foundation upon which knowledge is possible. Though an ideology as sceptical as postmodernism would wish to exclude all presuppositions, the fact is that every philosophical system holds its own set of a priori commitments, and this is true for postmodernism as well.

Christianity also challenges postmodernism in its acceptance of meta-narratives. The story of redemption which is planned in eternity, applied in history, and has its fulfilment in the new heaven and earth, is unashamedly a grand, narrative or an all-encompassing story—a meta-narrative. But it must be recognised that postmodernism itself is a meta-narrative in maintaining that the only all-embracing story is that there is no all-embracing story. And though postmodernists complain that meta-narratives

are totalitarian, leaving no room for disputes about value, the so-called “Christian meta-narrative” actually makes disputes about value possible, because it contains knowledge that sets ethics on an objective footing, and at the same time condemns totalitarianism.

Christianity’s insistence on the truth of God’s word, the Bible, also appears to conflict with the postmodern view of language which includes the practice of deconstruction. The Christian believes that truth may be obtained from Scripture which correctly presents reality. But the postmodern deconstructionist maintains that all language systems are unreliable cultural constructs. Yet the postmodernist intends to use language in order to show that language has gone astray, and in doing so, shows some confidence at least, in the reliability of language. One wonders also what would be the reaction of the deconstructionist were his own discourse also subjected to deconstruction? Might the deconstruction of his texts also reveal hidden strategies for power and oppression?

As we have seen the biblical Christian worldview is also in conflict with the postmodern view that denies human nature. The universality of language and logic in the human race demonstrate a distinct and enduring commonality commensurate with a creature made in God’s image. That fallen human nature is fundamentally sinful is supported by abundant evidence of the existence of evil in the world. Despite having a postmodernist leaning, people seldom have a problem in describing certain acts as “wicked,” revealing their own relationship to the Creator as His image-bearers.

Christianity also challenges postmodernism in the field of ethics. Postmodernism, subscribing to no absolutes, cannot establish any universal

principle of morality. Since philosophical truth is considered relative to a community, moral truth, too, can only be relative to that same community. On the other hand, the moral law which God has given by revelation, is unambiguous, universal to all communities in all periods of history, and can be put in simple terms that are not subject to deconstruction.

In conclusion to the above discussion, the implications of postmodernism on Christian apologetic are now considered. It is obvious by now that postmodernism is an extremely relativistic and sceptical worldview. Of the ideas of postmodernism that have been examined, postmodernism's scepticism is perhaps most evident in the denial of objective reality, objective truth, the universality of logic and reason, and its assertion of the instability and unreliability of language. If logically reasoned arguments are ineffectual, and appeals to foundational truths are incredulous to the postmodern mind, a significant hurdle is set before the cause of Christian apologetics. However, there is reason to believe that reaching postmodern man with the Christian message might not be as difficult as first thought. The reason is *inconsistency*. Despite the repudiation of reason and objective reality, people tend not to live their lives according to these premises. Most people believe reality is objective enough to stop them from deciding to drive their cars on the wrong side of the road, for instance. Similarly, it is assumed by the justice system that most people have a good enough grasp of what is *true* to allow them to give testimony in court. The computer software designer, though postmodern, still must use logic to do his job properly. This inconsistency in postmodernist behaviour demonstrates that it might be premature to abandon the use of reasoned argument in Christian apologetics. If the image of God in man is expressed in man's rationality, it is difficult to see how it could be fully erased.

Postmodernism relativism is especially seen in its ethics and morality. Yet, the same could be said for modernism. And while there is the thought amongst postmodernists that, at a deeper level, all religions are the same, this too was a feature of the old modernism.

However, the “tolerance” of postmodernism has the potential to make people more open to Christian friendship and hospitality. Generally, postmoderns will likely value personal relationships over truth. Since they perceive meta-narratives and knowledge to be about the pursuit of power, presentations of the gospel to postmoderns should be persuasive, but not coercive. Because postmoderns like narratives, perhaps preachers could draw more on narrative passages rather than discourses in their teaching. Happily, the Bible has no want of engaging stories which also teach vital spiritual lessons. At some stage postmoderns should be challenged on meta-narratives. Yet it must be borne in mind that many believers understand little of the comprehensiveness of God’s eternal plan of salvation, yet have a credible profession of faith and are doubtlessly Christians.

Lastly, the Christian may well agree with the postmodernist, that modernism has not served man’s spiritual and personal needs well. However, postmodernism has its own set of problems and these are not minor. Take away language, morality, logic, knowledge, and reason, and man is left only with solipsism, entire self-absorption, and crushing loneliness. He is left to his own mind, only.

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