

Evangelism in a Post-Christian Society

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The thesis argued here is that understanding the implications of a culture's vision of reality shaping the intellectual life of any society is crucial to developing approaches for the proclamation of the gospel. A society's vision of reality determines what is deemed acceptable or important. The danger today in the West is how anti-metaphysical realism is leading to the receptivity of cultural possibilities that are destructive to humanity and subversive to historic Christianity. As a consequence, four challenges present themselves to Christian evangelism: (1) the decline in conversation skills; (2) the loss of rational argument in public discourse; (3) the obsession with options; and (4) the fading sense of the sacred. The conclusion is that Christian evangelism must be guided by a Medieval realism to avoid the current distortions and disorderliness created by aberrant visions of reality today that are inimical to our evangelism.

Key Words: conversation, evangelism, media technology, mediated reality, options, post-Christian, progress, rational, realism, sacred

The gospel no longer penetrates. We seem to be confronted by a blank wall. Now if we want to go further, either we must find a door, or we must break down the wall. But first we must investigate this wall, in order to find out whether there is a door: thus we need to explore this world in which we are living. If there is not a door (as seems to me to be the case) then we must find (or create) the instruments we need in order to make a breach in it.

~Jacques Ellul¹

I came to know Christ in May 1965 just prior to entering the US military. The time of my conversion and baptism was the time of great social upheaval across Europe and America. Since the 1940s existentialism had been taught in universities in the West, and in the 1960s the logical conclusion of that view of reality broke forth with a vengeance upon the West. The denial of metaphysical realism and with it with denial of objective truth threatened the very foundation of western societies. It was a

¹ *The Presence of the Kingdom*, 2nd ed., trans. Olive Wyon (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers & Howard, 1989), 115.

time of sexual, religious, educational, and political rebellion, an attempt to overturn the familiar, the very foundation of society itself. It appeared as an all-out attempt to bury the past and rebuild, but that was the problem—rebuild with what? There was no idea of what should follow other than the destruction of anything before them. Metaphysical realism was handed a pink slip. It was a rejection of a vision of reality that had a long history in the West from Augustine, through the Medieval period, and into the nineteenth century.

Unfortunately, few evangelical churches understood what was happening on university campuses. Most did not understand why objective reality and objective truth had come under such fierce attack—why tradition and social order were so despised. Although evangelicals had the right message, they lacked a basic understanding of the shifting intellectual life of the West, which was fundamentally a shift in a vision of reality. In frustration, many evangelicals saw only two options. One was to ignore and/or denounce those in rebellion. The other was to accommodate the new way of thinking in hopes of reaching those by adapting to the new lifestyle—to accommodate the new mindset. Francis Schaeffer warned that this adaptation would, in time, result in a great evangelical disaster. He wrote: “It is so easy to be a radical in the wearing of blue jeans when it fits in with the general climate of wearing blue jeans.”² He was right, and both options had undesired consequences for evangelicalism—consequences that continue to plague evangelicalism and the West to the present moment.

In the midst of this intellectual upheaval, Schaeffer, who was hardly known at that time in the evangelical world, was serving as a missionary in Europe. However, in 1965, he was invited to Wheaton College as the speaker for the spiritual emphasis week. In those meetings, many young Christians heard of a third option, namely, giving honest answers to honest questions—answers found in the Bible or what Schaeffer called historic Christianity.³ He confronted them with Truth—Truth that could only stand within a Christian realism. Schaeffer died in May 1984. By then, anti-metaphysical realism was firmly entrenched in university curricula across America. It was death to metaphysical realism and everything that had been built on it.

² Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*, vol. 4, *A Christian View of the Church* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1982), 370.

³ Os Guinness says that Schaeffer was the “most brilliant and compassionate face-to-face apologist I ever met” (*Fool's Talk* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015], 37).

Today, we are witnessing the West's attempt to maintain social order without any intellectual/spiritual foundation sufficient for such a task. It is an attempt to have social order without spiritual order. The search for meaning has turned inward, and mankind has lost his external reference point—God. Consequently, today's intellectual world courts two competing visions of reality that make the idea of God either unnecessary or implausible. First, there is the anti-realism of what is called postmodernity, where everyone is her own authority and personal happiness is the goal of living. Second, there is anti-metaphysical realism or naturalistic realism, which is the scientific vision of reality. This affirms objective reality but denies anything existing above experience, which, in the words of Richard Weaver, means that “man is the measure of all things.”⁴ Mankind is his own guide as well as his goal. There is no unifying principle of knowledge—fragmentation and individualization prevail. Into the intellectual/moral vacuum flowed ideas grounded only in the senses. In the end, there is no way to distinguish important matter from the trivial. Both visions of reality proved subversive to the Christian message. Today, we must understand what this means for speaking to the post-Christian mind. Fail here, and we will be like the Wright brothers, trying to build an airplane without understanding the basic principles of aerodynamics. We forget that Genesis comes before Matthew, and for theologically necessary reasons at that.

Understanding the predominant vision of reality must always stand at the beginning of developing evangelistic strategies. The evangelical world missed that truth in the 1960s and '70s, which, at least in part, led to the two fateful directions mentioned earlier. They only responded to the symptoms, not the underlying ideas. The lack of attention paid to the intellectual life of society handcuffed the good intentions of evangelicals and often confused the message when it was preached. It is true that following generations have tried to do better, which is commendable. There has been an attempt to relate properly to the world; yet in too many cases good intentions suffer from the same disinterest in understanding the vision of reality that determines what the society approves or denies.

The thesis I argue here is that understanding implications associated with the vision of reality controlling the intellectual life of any society is crucial to developing approaches for the proclamation of the gospel. It is not just understanding the vision of reality, but how society's vision of reality shapes what is acceptable and what is important. I am not speaking of areas of morality; they are easy to see. The real danger exists in how anti-metaphysical realism leads to the receptivity of possibilities that are

⁴ Richard Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 4.

destructive to humanity and subversive to historic Christianity.

In general, this is a call for the evangelical world to think better philosophically than we have done in the past and to see its importance for our evangelism. I am thinking of something akin to the example of C. S. Lewis or Francis Schaeffer. George Sayer wrote of Lewis, “He devoted himself to developing and strengthening his belief, and, almost from the year of his conversion, he wanted to become an evangelist for the Christian faith.”⁵ In *Mere Christianity*, Lewis wrote, “The church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose.”⁶

I am not suggesting that every evangelist or missionary be either a professional philosopher or professionally trained theologian. But it is important that all think well and know scripture. All must understand the intellectual bent of the spirit of the age as well as the truth of the Word and, in particular, to understand the current vision of reality.

I suggest there are at least four cultural conditions that present a challenge and danger to evangelism. These conditions owe their success to two competing visions of reality that are complicit in shaping the minds of young and old: (1) anti-realism of postmodernity⁷ and (2) anti-metaphysical realism of naturalism (naturalistic realism). For convenience I will collect both under one term—anti-Medieval realism. Neither caused the anti-Christian cultural conditions of today single-handedly; rather, the intellectual life they created weakened the idea of moral restraint and human responsibility. In addition, the technological/digital age that developed within these visions of reality gave people new ways to express their freedom from the realm of the transcendent. In turn, this changed the entire intellectual landscape.

As Neil Postman wrote: “New technologies alter the structure of our interests: the things we think *about*, they alter the character of our symbols: the things we think *with*. And they alter the nature of community: the

⁵ George Sayer, *Jack: C. S. Lewis and His Times* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 138.

⁶ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1960), 155.

⁷ Postmodernist poster child Richard Tarnas writes: “Properly speaking, therefore, there is no ‘postmodern world view’, nor the possibility of one. The postmodern paradigm is by its nature fundamentally subversive of all paradigms, for at its core is the awareness of reality as being at once multiple, local, and temporal, and without demonstrable foundation” (*The Passion of the Western Mind* [New York: Ballantine, 1993], 401).

arena in *which* thoughts develop.”⁸ Media technology has provided a way to create a mediated reality that gives us the sense of being our own god. No longer are we guided by the constraints of true community, rational discourse, or moral responsibility. We are free from the old traditional way of seeing things, the old traditions that gave security and meaning to society. Now progress through efficiency and convenience rule our choices, moral and otherwise. The dismissal of the transcendent realm done in the name of progress was cheered as good riddance. Now we must live with the consequences in our society.

The first cultural condition of concern is the serious decline in conversation skills, which has led to the avoidance of face-to-face conversation and proper understanding of community. This reveals a radical change in social activity that once re-enforced our *humanness*. Now conversation is only about conveying information (fact, not truth, is the subject), which does not require face-to-face encounters. Functionally, media technology provides the means whereby face-to-face conversation can be avoided. As Ellul notes, “We can no longer communicate with man, because the only intellectual method of expression is a technical one. Communication transcends technics because it can only take place where two human beings are fully engaged in a real conversation.”⁹

Naturalistic realism leaves humanity as only another part of the big machine (naturalism); *humanness* is stamped out. This leads to a very functionalistic view of conversation. It has nothing to do with giving of oneself, as one has nothing to give but information.¹⁰ We are not functionalists because we misuse technology; we misuse technology because we have come to view mankind only functionally. This is because of our anti-Medieval view of reality. When this happens, as Weaver says, mankind loses the conviction “. . . that man *is* somebody.”¹¹

While not restricted to what is now called the IGen,¹² young people

⁸ Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology* (New York: Vintage, 1993), 20.

⁹ Ellul, *Presence of the Kingdom*, 95.

¹⁰ One of the best books on how this works is: Nancy K. Baym, *Personal Connections in the Digital Age*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2015). I think she is too optimistic that technology can overcome the negatives in conversation, but her well-documented book raises the right questions. It is interesting to note that she is a visiting professor at MIT.

¹¹ Richard Weaver, *Visions of Order: The Cultural Crisis of Our Time* (Bryn Mawr, PA: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1995), 38.

¹² According to Jean M. Twenge, “Born in 1995 and later, they grew up with cell phones, had an Instagram page before they started high school, and do not

are the ones most defenseless to the dangers of media technology because they have been breathing the anti-Medieval realism air from birth. Sherry Turkel, Abby Rockefeller Mauzé Professor of the Social Studies of Science and Technology at MIT, writes in a *New York Times* article, “It’s not only that we turn away from talking face to face to chat online. It’s that we don’t allow these conversations to happen in the first place because we keep our phones in the landscape.”¹³ Her research confirms: “By now, several ‘generations’ of children have grown up expecting parents and caretakers to be only half there. . . . parents and babysitters ignore children when they take them to the playgrounds and parks. In these new silences at meals and at playtime, caretakers are not modeling the skills of relationship, which are the same as the skills for conversation.”¹⁴ As Turkel points out, it is not surprising that “children, too, text rather than talk with each other at school and on the playground. Anxious about the give-and-take of conversation, young people are uncertain in their attachments. And anxious in their attachments, young people are uncertain about conversation.”¹⁵ Think how this impacts what are called gospel conversations. We are not just giving out information. Christ is a person, not a product. If information is all there is to evangelism, then we can all stay home and evangelize from our computers. Of course, we do not believe that, but we must not give the appearance that we do.

Turkel’s latest book, *Reclaiming Conversation*, is dedicated to exposing the growing flight from human conversation and considering ways to reverse the trend. Her well-documented book reveals not only her own extensive research but also that of many other professionals who confirm her findings and concerns regarding the decline of face-to-face conversation and the role technology plays. This also means a decline in any sense of community. Ellul echoes this concern when exposing the negative consequences of media technology and its impact on conversation. He writes, “No longer is any kind of relationship established. Henceforth the word is definitely detached from the one who speaks. Nobody is behind it.”¹⁶

The Internet allows for disembodied communication, disembodied

remember a time before the Internet” (*IGen* [New York: Atria Books, 2017], 2).

¹³ Sherry Turkel, “Stop Googling, Let’s Talk,” <https://nytimes.com/1VhHsVN>. A version of this op-ed appears in print on September 27, 2015, on Page SR1 of the *New York Times* edition with the headline: “Stop Googling. Let’s Talk.”

¹⁴ Sherry Turkel, *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015), 27.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Jacques Ellul, *Humiliation of the Word*, trans. Joyce Main Hanks (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 157.

presence while pretending it is the same as face-to-face. Thomas de Zengotita calls this a “mediated reality.”¹⁷ This means we are losing the habit of reading the face both in terms of the other’s person^{ness} and responding to what is happening in the conversation.¹⁸ As Christians, we must understand that this decline in conversation is directly related to a vision of reality that is quite contrary to Christianity.

It is possible, however, for Christians to make a difference here. The first suggestion is to bring the Christian vision of reality to bear upon the subject of relating to others. Another way is for Christians to rethink their uncritical use of digital possibilities and social media for evangelism in particular and Christian living in general. While social media may be an initial way to get somebody’s attention, we must move away as quickly as possible and get to the business of face-to-face sharing. Of course, there are always exceptions, but let us not allow the exception to give way to the rule. This means rethinking our methods, church services, and expectations accordingly. This is not condemning all social media, but it strongly suggests we need to ask serious questions before blindly using it simply because it is a way to reach more people or it is more convenient. We must understand how it destroys the idea of community and humanity. Media technology is very much like Bilbo’s ring in J. R. R. Tolkien’s *The Hobbit*; it may provide a great convenience, but it comes at a great price—enslavement.

Interestingly Turkel suggests that “one start toward reclaiming conversation is to reclaim solitude.”¹⁹ Serious reflection is unique to humanity, and it is the way by which we are brought face to face with ourselves and things that matter. In this post-Christian society, humanity is smothered, and reflection denied by a world filled with noise. Furthermore, we must be intentional about engaging in face-to-face conversation in our homes, in our communities, and in the church.

We must help others to learn the importance of face-to-face conversation by our community living. This will include a commitment to raise a generation of young people who have a healthy view of technology and sacrifice. For this, Christian parents must train their children in the home

¹⁷ Thomas de Zengotita, *Mediated* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2005).

¹⁸ Some try to justify the use of media technology by redefining words. In order to continue an uncritical defense of what is happening with social media and conversation there has been an attempt to redefine words such as “relationship,” “community,” “friend,” and “conversation.” Of course, some words are redefined over time, but they are functional terms, not terms of agency. Redefining such words only masks the real danger facing us in the arena of conversation.

¹⁹ Sherry Turkel, “Stop Googling. Let’s Talk,” *New York Times*, September 26, 2015, <https://nyti.ms/1VhHsVN>.

about the importance of conversation and the dangers of social media, taking seriously the word to “train up a child in the way he should go” (Prov 22:6) to mean more than learning Bible verses.

The second cultural condition is that rational argument is losing its place in private and public discourse. This also means the loss of civility. Often, arguments given are either unattached to the issue, or they are merely emotive rants. It is not only that rational argument has been spayed, but fewer and fewer people care about rational argument because there is nothing that really matters; there is no objective reality. Warring tribes only fight for their own rights to be right, regardless of the truth of things. Think of what that means for the gospel, either in witnessing or preaching in the church, if people cannot follow a line of reasoning. Giving up a Medieval vision of reality removes the grounding for rational argument, so we should not be surprised when our society today is being ripped apart by social tribalism. It is reminiscent of Lewis’s words: “We castrate and then bid the gelding be fruitful.”²⁰

In her new book, Jean M. Twenge notes in the title that the IGen is “more tolerant” than those before them.²¹ What is important to note is that they are not tolerant on principle, but rather because of indifference. They are tolerant because their vision of reality leads them to think that there is no way to say this or that is wrong—each is free to see things as it pleases her. Everything becomes self-referential; there are no restrictions on personal freedom and little attention to the facts. Thinking of our missionary activity, this may very well mean that most simply do not care about what we have to say as it is irrelevant to their view of things. It is not that they disagree with us because they have no basis for disagreement. In fact, they have no frame of reference for understanding what we are saying. Often, they just react in hostility because the Christian message conflicts with their vision of reality in practical ways, not philosophical ways. Likewise, many who reject Christianity have not rejected it based on some well-constructed argument. It is more herd instinct or bandwagon mentality.

If this is so, some of the time-tested theistic arguments may not be as persuasive today as in the past. In this case, we must learn to confront humanity with truth but in a way that recognizes the true nature of mankind and uses reality as the assayer of one’s beliefs. Here I suggest it is important to begin by explaining a Christian vision of reality as Paul did

²⁰ C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 35.

²¹ Jean M. Twenge, *IGen: Why Today’s Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood* (New York: Atria Books, 2017).

on Mars Hill (Acts 17). This means re-acquainting them with concepts of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. This must be done in how we order our lives, develop our communities, and create our cultural artifacts. This may prove more fruitful evangelistically speaking than always attempting to correct the conclusions of the non-Christian.

Schaeffer suggests that when dealing with the non-Christian, “We ought not try first to move a man away from the logical conclusion of his position but towards it. . . . We should try to move him in the natural direction his presuppositions take him.”²² Here Schaeffer is certain that any non-Christian vision of reality will fail at the end when carried to its conclusion. Reality itself is the judge of the truthfulness of one’s beliefs as we all live in the same reality.

The third cultural condition creating difficulty in evangelism is society’s obsession with options. Naturalistic realism says technology is the way to happiness and happiness is the chief end of man. More options mean greater happiness. It is media technology through its mediated reality that cultivates and encourages this fantasy of options. Mara Einstein argues that it is advertising with the new power of media technology that keeps options ever present before us, ever feeding the insatiable desire for the next new option.²³ Living in a mediated reality may appear more exciting for many reasons, but it makes us less socially functional as well as less satisfied with everyday life. In fact, according to David Myers and Robert Lane, it destroys community as a living, vital relationship among human beings.²⁴ The truth of this point is incontrovertible.

Thomas de Zengotita writes, “Mobility among the options in a virtualized environment gives to human freedom a new and ironic character. You are completely free to choose because it doesn’t matter what you choose. That is why you are so free.”²⁵ That means we are always holding

²² Francis A. Schaeffer, *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*, vol. 1, *The God Who Is There* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1982), 138.

²³ Mara Einstein, *Advertising: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 229.

²⁴ Sherry Turkel quotes David Myers and Robert Lane who “independently concluded that in American society today, abundance of choice (and this would apply to choices in products, career paths, or people) often leads to depression and feelings of loneliness. Lane points out that Americans used to make their choices in communities, surrounded by the ‘givens’ of family, neighborhood, and workplace.”²⁴ According to Turkel, William Dereiswicz thinks “our communities have atrophied. . . . So, when we talk about communities we have moved ‘from a relationship to a feeling’. We have moved from *being* in a community to having a *sense* of community” (Turler, *Reclaiming Conversation*, 173).

²⁵ Zengotita, *Mediated*, 17.

out for a better option thinking it will increase happiness. Turkel makes a similar point quoting psychologist Barry Schwartz’s “paradox of choice”: “While we think we would be happiest if we had more choices, constrained choice often leads to a more satisfied life.”²⁶

The obsession with options undercuts the idea of commitment and sacrifice, something at the heart of Christianity. Why commit to anything today when maybe tomorrow a better choice will be presented? In fact, this obsession with choices weakens the very foundation of society itself. However, more concerning to Christians is that this is lethal to the call of Christ, who says take up your cross and follow Me (Matt 16:24). Christ is not one option among many; he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6). Personal commitment and sacrifice are precisely to what we are called as Christians. It is counter-productive to Christian evangelism to share Christ based on a better option, so we must not think this is an acceptable way to reach the post-Christian society.

Here evangelicals must have a fierce commitment to the truth of what is, which means we begin with a Christian vision of reality. That is, greed and selfishness do not fit with the way the universe is, if humanity is to flourish. Christians must show the truth of single-mindedness by living against this spirit of the age. We must not allow our evangelistic methods or church life to encourage this lust for options. This would mean taking care in how we structure our church services or speak of Christ as just another option, as if he were a breakfast cereal. We must resist anything in our evangelism or our ministries in general that accommodates or encourages the present obsession with options—it is subversive to the calling of Christ on our lives.

The fourth cultural concern militating against evangelism is the fading sense of the sacred. Unfortunately, it naturally follows from anti-Medieval realism. Theologically, Medieval realism provided the grounding of the notion of the sacred. However, with anti-Medieval realism all that is left is nature—a nature that has been demystified, something under our control. Now science alone defines mankind and tells us what it is important. Furthermore, there is no foundation for making proper distinctions within society or treating humanity as ontologically unique. Diversity is championed without any understanding of unity, which results in warring tribalism. Lower order concerns replace higher order principles. Functionalism replaces Medieval realism.

The loss of the sacred has robbed humanity of any sustaining sense of significance and worth. Beyond this, the loss of the sacred means death

²⁶ Turkel, *Reclaiming Conversation*, 182.

to the transcendent categories of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. One cannot fail to see the ugliness all about us and feel the oppression of the repudiation of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. Christians stand in a unique position today to order their lives and community around Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. But where this is not understood, even well-meaning Christian art can be as ugly and meaningless as that of the world.

In general, it is not difficult to see where the loss of the sacred has led. For instance, marriage and even life itself are devalued on every hand. Everything is common. Respect, honor, and heroism are empty concepts, and hope rests in technology alone. We must resist the temptation to offer Christianity on functionalistic grounds—for example, that it gives you a better marriage or makes you a better worker. That may be true, but it is not the heart of the gospel. If we do that to fit with the intellectual form of the day, we must acknowledge we are betraying our own our vision of reality, which is to say our view of truth. When we fall prey to the functionalist view (not in principle, but in deed/method), we make Christianity just another new product on the market to be tried for increased sociological functional value.

The loss of the sacred has removed the idea of mankind's moral guilt before God. This idea that secular man has lost a sense of the sacred is pointed out in Stephanie R. Derrick's comments on C. S. Lewis's Christmas sermon:

Real Pagans differ from post-Christians, Lewis continued, firstly in that they were actually religious: "To [the Pagan] the earth was holy, the woods and waters were alive." Secondly, they "believed in what we now call an 'Objective' Right or Wrong," that is, that "the distinction between pious and impious acts was something which existed independently of human opinions." Finally, Pagans, unlike "post-Christian man," had "deep sadness" because of their knowledge that they did not obey the moral code perfectly. To compensate for this shortcoming, the Pagan developed a wealth of ceremonies to "take away guilt."²⁷

Lewis's point was that in a world of anti-metaphysical realism there is no sense of offending a higher power because none exists: the post-Christian person must first learn of the bad news, namely that he is a sinner, before considering the Good News. So today, with the loss of the sacred, we must begin with the problem before we get to the cure. This begins with

a proper vision of reality that restores the truth of the sacred. Furthermore, the idea of the sacred must return to the Christian home. Our children must be trained to live against the world in light of the sacred where loving God means not only keeping his commandments but also loving our neighbor. It means understanding sacrifice and commitment because of the higher order of things.

In conclusion, I have tried to point out the relationship between cultural conditions that make evangelism difficult in our day because of the reigning anti-Medieval view of reality. Along with this, I have also pointed to possible ways of overcoming these difficulties. Everything the church does must have evangelism in mind, but this means more than having a program. Fundamentally, this means the church must present to the world a community of people who think, act, and worship differently than the world. We must develop our Christian communities where a robust Christian culture is on display—where our music, literature, architecture, liturgy, and preaching all serve as an incarnation of a Christian vision of reality. This means our worship spaces should be places where the noise and cultural distractions are not welcome. This would give the world a living picture of how Christianity would order both one's personal as well as her corporate life. It means rejecting the disordering of the world and ordering life according to the spirit of Christ, not the spirit of the age. Such an instantiation of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty draws people to what is intrinsic to them as they are made in God's image.

Only historic Christianity provides the vision of reality that orders life the way the universe is. This truth explains why Christianity, when applied consistently, has encouraged science, uniquely cared for humanity, and birthed a culture marked by Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. Metaphysical reality in Medieval terms confesses that created reality is only understood in light of the transcendent categories that undergird and order it. Our evangelism must be informed and guided by a Medieval realism lest we succumb to the distortions and disorderliness created by aberrant visions of reality today. By this we can confront modern humanity with the truth that fits who he is as understood in the transcendent categories of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. It is not coincidental that the Bible begins with Genesis and not Matthew; understanding a Judeo-Christian vision of reality stands before everything.

²⁷ Stephanie L. Derrick, "Christmas and Cricket: Rediscovering Two Lost C. S. Lewis Articles After 70 Years," *Christianity Today*, December 15, 2017, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2017/december-web-only/christmas-cricket-lost-c-s-lewis-articles.html>.