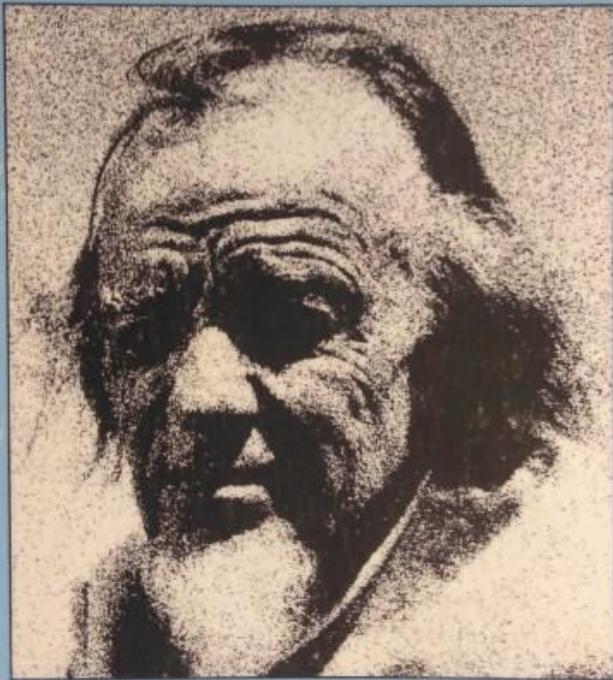


THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
**FRANCIS A
SCHAEFFER**
A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW



VOLUME 1
A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF
PHILOSOPHY AND CULTURE

“THE GOD WHO IS THERE”

In “*The God Who is There*,” Francis Schaeffer accentuates the idea of absolute truth which as being grounded in the “God Who is There,” the God who actually exists. To deny Gods’ existence has resulted in a despair that has decimated the West for the last 120 years or so. This despair is visible in the areas of philosophy, art, music, general culture, and even in theology.

There’s a *line of despair* that arises when absolute truth is jettisoned. According to Schaeffer, this truth is grounded in God, and when he is denied, the upper and lower story obtains. These are the line of despair. The *Upper Story* is where faith that is not open to verification resides. Here this experience gives meaning to the person. The

Below the Line is where rationality resides. This is where we get our facts of the world through science, through man’s ability to reason. Here man is essentially a chance machine having no purpose or meaning in life. This despair results from making mankind the measure of all things (i.e., the ground of all reality).

1

The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer, *Volume 1: A Christian View of Philosophy and Culture*

© 1982 Francis Schaeffer, Crossway Books.

2017 Summaries by Sergio R. Tangari

www.AnswerstoToughQuestions.com

The Christian Worldview radically differs from said despair. For it answers man's deepest longings and needs consistently with how his "mannishness" expresses itself. This is not a world of wishful thinking, but reality: *God exists!* This means that mankind is not here by chance, but by design: *mankind images God!* And sadly, because of man's alienation from God, self, others, and nature, true guilt obtains. This God has the solution to man's plight: *Christ Jesus who rescues from God's wrath!* His work of redemption happened in real space, time history: *not a myth, but reality.* Depending on man's response to Christ Jesus, theirs is either joy or despair which is deepened in his experience.

The Christian's Approach must be one of understanding mankind's plight and compassionately *championing absolute truth*—grounded in God. There must be the awareness that to "take the roof off" of a modern, it's very painful for them. Therefore, one must let the weight of the truth demonstrate the *existential impossibility* of said W.V.

One must further understand that the chapters of Genesis 1-3 are the ground for the Gospel. Evangelism must start here, "In the beginning God..." *Clarify true-truth. Real guilt must be seen. Christ must be treasured. Disciples must be made.* Believers must be in word and prayer, in community with outsiders and insiders—God's people. *Remember:* be in community where the Bible is being faithfully taught as objective truth and not some other theology.

"ESCAPE FROM REASON"

In "*Escape from Reason*," Francis Schaeffer goes into more detail in how man, by denying Absolute Truth, and becoming the measure of all things, has been swallowed up into the "river of despair" seen in its philosophy, music, art, general culture and the new theology.

Schaeffer argues that the Christian view of man not only gives man meaning, but it also has a rational justification which is grounded in being created in the image of God.

Hence, the need remains for the believers to diligently understand the present "Thought-forms" in order to preach Christ effectively. For, to "Escape from Reason" is the most tragic madness—for it (in many ways) keeps us on the road that leads to destruction.

“HE IS THERE AND HE IS NOT SILENT”

In *“He Is There and He is Not Silent,”* Schaeffer considers the three main areas of philosophy: *Metaphysics, Ethics, and Epistemology*. He uses the pre-suppositional method as a means to consider how *Being, Ought-ness, and Knowing* make the most sense from that which is *Impersonal* compared to that which is *Personal*.

He skillfully argues for the *Personal* over against the *Impersonal* as the most rational option. This conclusion is based on what he terms as the “mannish-ness” of man (i.e., because human beings are created in God’s image, they always mirror this reality in the way they think and live). The world is such that in these 3 categories (metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics), God is there and He is not silent. God has spoken and as such He is the “Hub” of Being, of Ought-ness, and of Knowing, not the creature.

Hence, to deny God as the Absolute, Personal, Uncreated, Infinite Creator is to embrace madness. This is seen in the philosophical systems that aren’t Judeo-Christian. Man is an image bearer. To look into the mirror and not know and live in that reality is tragic indeed!

“BACK TO FREEDOM AND DIGNITY”

In *“Back to Freedom and Dignity”* Schaeffer considers the natural outcome of a culture run by a physicalist world-view (i.e., matter is all there is, immaterial realities do not exist). The end result is that man is just a machine, without an enduring “I” at the mercy of the “mighty” “elite” “those in the know” (i.e., scientists).

The *“freedom and dignity”* afforded to man ends up being no less than a lab rat to discover what can be “improved upon.” Skinner, Crick, and Company must be taken seriously, because their ideas are so lethal to man’s “mannish-ness” (i.e., the inescapable characteristics of humanity that evidence being created in God’s image rather than being a purposeless accident).