



GLC  PRESENTS:

APOLOGETICS REBOOT: IS GOD REALLY NEEDED FOR LIVES TO CHANGE?

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Being — Who am I?

World View

The world view in apologetics:

1. Origin
2. Meaning
3. Morality
4. Destination

As we go thru life we are continually trying to understand who we are, seeking to answer that question “*Who am I?*”

All of us seek to construct an identity, and we try and define who we are. All of us want to become the people we envision. We want to build an identity for ourselves which we think will make us completely happy.

However, if we look at our Christian faith, we see that there is something very profound in the Christian faith. The Christian faith speaks to this issue of being more profoundly and more strongly than many of us know. It is right at the very heart of the Gospel. It is right at the very heart of understanding what the Christian faith is about.

World View — Meaning

Any world religious system or philosophical non-religious system will be rooted in one, or a combination of three ways:

1. **Our thinking**
2. **Our feeling**
3. **Our doing**

Systems rooted in **“thinking”** tell us that the single most important thing is the pursuit of ideas.

Systems rooted in **“feeling”** tell us to reach out with our feelings, have some kind of mystical experience in life, which will be the defining moment for you.

Systems rooted in **“doing”** focus on the pragmatic: do these things, live this way, and eventually you will become the person you’ve always intended to be.

The Christian faith is more than this. It is not less than this. It contains all of these, but it is actually more than these.

Thinking. The Christian faith cannot be reduced to a set of ideas to be mastered, even though there is nothing more profound than meeting the person of Jesus Christ.

Feeling. The Christian faith cannot be reduced to some kind of experience, even though there is nothing more life changing than meeting Jesus Christ.

Doing. The Christian faith cannot be reduced into a set of things to do and not to do, even though Jesus Christ Himself said Christians should be known for how they live.

Main Truth

Jesus Christ did not come into this world to give us new thoughts about God or to give us some kind of new experience of God, or to tell us how to do new things for God. Jesus Christ came into this world as God.

Christianity — Our Thinking

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (John 1:1)

This was not a communication or a revelation to us in the abstract of thought, but a revelation of the person of God in the flesh, in the being of Jesus Christ, who He is.

Christianity — Our Feeling

“In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.” (John 1:4)

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life.” (John 3:36)

Jesus Christ is claiming that encountering Him is not so much a moment or an experience in life, it is the moment of life itself.

“Because of God’s tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace.” (Luke 1:78-79)

Christianity — Our Doing

They said to Him, “What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” (John 6:28–29)

In asking Him what to do, they were looking for a way to live.

“We don’t know where you’re going, how can we know the way?” (John 14:5)

Jesus Christ says, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.” (John 14:6)

Phillip said, “Lord, show us the Father and it is enough for us.” (John 14:8)

Jesus answered, “Don’t you know Me Philip, even after I have been among you for such a long time? He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9)

Jesus is saying, I don’t have to show you a way because I am the Way. Christ claims and puts all His claim and weight on the basis of His person; about who He is. Jesus is saying that if you know who He is, you will actually know God.

Jesus didn’t come to take people who are living to make their life better, He has come to take people who are dead and to make them alive. Jesus Christ didn’t come into this world to take bad people and make them good. He came to take dead people and make them alive.

That is what we know as life change or reboot which leads to transformation which we will discuss shortly.

The Christian Faith

The Christian faith is rooted in the being of God in terms of Christ's incarnation.

“Jesus Christ has no peers, no competitors, no equals.”—John Stott.

Jesus is not claiming to be numbered among the prophets or the wise men. He is claiming to be God Himself.

The Christian faith is rooted in being of God, and also in terms of its salvation.

To become a Christian is not to give intellectual agreement to a set of ideas, or to have a certain type of feeling, to promise to lead a certain life. To become a Christian is to meet and encounter the person of Christ, the risen Christ who comes into your being and changes you from the inside out.

Principle

Our being and our identity, and the answer to the question “Who am I” is found in Christ alone. Every attempt to seek our identity elsewhere will be futile.

“For in Him we live and move and have our being.” (Acts 17:28)

The fundamental problem that we face as human beings is not that we need a little more knowledge or a little better morality or slightly better experience. The problem is much deeper than that.

Sin. There is something wrong in us. Something has gone wrong at the center of every human heart. Which is why answering that question “Who am I?” at the fundamental level often gives a fundamentally scary answer.

Something has gone wrong with the human being. We need someone who can transform us. Jesus Christ is the only one who can bring about that work of transformation in our lives, that we can become a new type of being.

Jesus offers to start where others want to finish. **Jesus Christ says, “Come to Me and I will give you new life, new hope, a new start, a new birth, new creation.”**

When we come to Christ, and say “All things are new, all things have changed”, what does that mean?

The answer is: At the point of our conversion the very frame of our being is changed and we have this new life or have become aware of it.

How does that work out? Through our thinking, through our feeling, through our doing.

Christ changes the very framework of our being and our discipleship and our pursuit of Him is so that we can grow in knowledge and thought.

Transformation

This is what we know as transformation. That the reality and the fruit of this transformation may be seen in everything we say and everything that we do and even in the manner in which we express ourselves.

Christians may think they're Christians because they're trying to think certain thoughts, or they're trying to have certain feelings, or they're doing their utmost to do certain things. But what you must first and fundamentally realize is that you are a Christian because you are in Him. You have met Christ. He has entered you and He has changed you and you now have a new birth into a living hope.

After He has changed you into a new creation, He longs to see you discipled so that you can grow up to be everything He intends you to be.

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.” (Galatians 2:20)

“But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” (Galatians 6:14)

We boast only in Christ and only in His cross because that's the only thing that can bring about this transformation.

Nice Men or New Men?

C.S. Lewis – in Mere Christianity poses the question: Nice Men or New Men?

Jesus meant exactly what He said. Those who put themselves in His hands will become perfect, as He is perfect. The change will not be completed in this life, for death is an important part of the treatment. How far the change will have gone before death in any particular Christian is uncertain.

Fine feelings, new insights, greater interest in “religion” mean nothing unless they make our actual behavior better. In that sense the outer world is quite right to judge Christianity by its results. Christ told us to judge by results. A tree is known by its fruit. When we Christians behave badly, or fail to behave well, we are making Christianity unbelievable to the outside world.

“For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” (Luke 6:43–45)

“Niceness” – a wholesome, integrated personality – is an excellent thing. We must try by every medical, educational, economic, and political means in our power, to produce a world where as many people as possible grow up “nice”; But we must not suppose that even if we succeeded in making everyone nice we should have saved their souls. A world of nice people, content in their own niceness, looking no further, turned away from God, would be just as desperately in need of salvation as a miserable world – and might even be more difficult to save.

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

“All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags.” (Isaiah 64:6)

For mere improvement is not redemption, though redemption always improves people even here and now and will, in the end, improve them to a degree we cannot yet imagine. God became man to turn creatures into sons: not simply to produce better men of the old kind but to produce a new kind of man.

“Yet to all who did receive Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.” (John 1:12–13)

It is no good trying to “be myself” without Him. The more I resist Him and try to live on my own, the more I become dominated by my own heredity and upbringing and surroundings and natural desires. Give up your self, and you will find your real self. Lose your life and you will save it. Submit to death, death of your ambitions and favorite wishes every day and death of your whole body in the end: submit with every fibre of your being, and you will find eternal life.

“Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?” (Matthew 16:24–26)

Keep back nothing. Nothing that you have not given away will ever be really yours. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else.

“Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.” (John 12:25)

God changes lives. This is the most fundamental thing that affects who we are.

The fundamental thing that defines you, if you are Christian, is you are in Christ. Christ not only gives us our identity at the most basic and fundamental level, He alone can transform it.

Principle

God transforms our life – our thinking, our feeling, our doing, our entire being – to be conformed to His likeness.

“And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into His image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18)

Is God really needed for lives to change?

- Our being and our identity, and the answer to the question “Who am I”, is found in Christ alone. Every attempt to seek our identity elsewhere will be futile.
- The fundamental problem that we face is not that we need more knowledge, better morality, or greater experiences. The problem is much deeper than that – it is sin.
- Therefore, it is no good trying to “be myself” or become a better person without Him. We need a change in the very framework of our being.
- When we come to Christ and find our identity in him, transformation takes place. A Christian becomes a new creation.
- Being a Christian is not merely thinking certain thoughts, or having certain feelings, or doing certain things. What you must first and fundamentally realize is that you are a Christian because you are in Him. You have met Christ.
- Christ does not simply change you into a “nice” person, but into a new person.
- The reality and the fruit of this transformation may be seen in everything we say and do.
- God transforms our life – our thinking, our feeling, our doing, our entire being – to be conformed to His likeness.

