



**WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL**  
**Volume 19 Number 39**  
**October 16, 2024**

**False Religion Masquerading as Christianity**

By Freddy Davis

Probably beginning in the early 1400s, shepherds began placing a bell around the neck of the lead wether. A wether, in Middle English, was a castrated male sheep. The sheep with the bell was the lead wether, and was also called the belle-weder. By using the bell, a shepherd could keep track of the movements of his flock by hearing the bell, even when it was not in sight. Over time, the language slightly changed and the word morphed from "weder" into the current "wether." Eventually, the expression began being used in other contexts to refer to a person or thing that assumes the leadership or forefront, for instance in a profession or industry. A bellwether year is one that is considered a sign of what will happen in the future.

2024 has been a bellwether year for Methodists – though not in a good way. While the signs of division have been present for a long time, this is the year when the divisions within the United Methodist Church came to a head and there was an actual split. This split is changing the entire look of Methodism as one contingent moves to follow traditional biblical beliefs, while the other seeks to follow the lead of other liberal denominations that have left biblical theology to follow some strand of non-biblical, liberal theology.

In the Methodist split, it was the churches that were determined to remain faithful to biblical teachings who are leaving the denomination. These churches are either forming their own new denomination, or joining together with other already established churches of the Wesleyan tradition. Those who are remaining in the United

Methodist denomination are primarily the ones who are holding to liberal theological beliefs.

Obviously, both groups claim to be Methodist, and beyond that, both claim to be Christian. The question we need to answer, though, is: Is it true that both are Christian? To answer that question, we need to look specifically at what constitutes a genuine Christian faith.

**Understanding the Core of a Faith System**

The first thing a person needs to grasp when looking at a faith system (any faith system) is its core beliefs. There is a set of beliefs that define every faith system's essential core, and if any of those core beliefs are changed, you have moved out of that belief system and into another one.

The way those essential core beliefs are identified is by answering three worldview questions based on the authority source of that faith system. The three questions are:

1. What is the nature of ultimate reality? (Who is God?)
2. What is a human being? (What is man?)
3. What is the ultimate a person can gain in this life? (What is salvation?)

We will now take a look at how biblical Christianity answers those questions. We will follow up by looking at how "United Methodists" answer them. Once we do that, we will be able to compare the answers to see where they are the same and where differences lie.

**How Biblical Christianity Answers the Questions.**

The primary authority source for biblical Christianity is what is taught in the Bible. Thus, we are looking for

## Permission to Reprint

If you wish to reprint this article in your own print or electronic newsletter, please include the following text:

*Reprinted from **Worldview Made Practical**; a free e-zine produced by **MarketFaith Ministries** featuring practical teaching and life tools to help Christians become more effective in their faith life. Discover **MarketFaith Ministries** at [www.marketfaith.org](http://www.marketfaith.org).*

## Speaking Schedule

If you are interested in having Freddy Davis or Tal Davis present one of our **Worldview Seminars** or to share about worldview and its practical implications at your church or organization, please contact **MarketFaith Ministries** to schedule your event. All contact information is at the bottom of this e-zine.

## Worldview Resources

It is one of the primary purposes of **MarketFaith Ministries** to provide resources to help Christians understand the practical implications of worldview. You can find many free resources that will help you in your quest at <http://www.marketfaith.org>.

how the Bible answers the three essential worldview questions.

### 1. What is the nature of ultimate reality?

The Bible teaches that there exists a spiritual, eternal part of reality and a material, temporal part. The eternal part exists outside of the material universe, and is not bound by its natural laws. Living in that eternal part is an eternal God who is described in the Bible as a trinitarian person, and as holy, just, and love. This eternal God, Himself, created the natural universe out of nothing based on His own will.

### 2. What is a human being?

The Bible describes human beings as persons created in the image of God, but fallen. Being created in the image of God, human beings have the personhood characteristics of God.

However, human beings are also fallen creatures. That is, while having God's personhood characteristics, they have them imperfectly – whereas God has them perfectly. Man's fallenness came about because Adam and Eve sinned and brought this condition upon the human race.

### 3. What is the ultimate a person can gain in this life?

God's purpose for creating mankind in the first place was for relationship with Himself. The Bible teaches that to solve the problem of our fallenness, individuals must enter into a personal relationship with God based on Christ's substitutionary death on the cross and resurrection from the dead. This is done by personally receiving Christ as Savior and Lord by grace through faith.

### ***How United Methodists Answer the Questions.***

As we evaluate the beliefs of United Methodists, it is important to make

a couple of careful distinctions. First, not all people who have remained a part of the United Methodist denomination have bought into the liberal theology that they have adopted. There are still many faithful Christians who have, for one reason or another, stayed in the denomination. Some have stayed in because they find it difficult to part with the church or tradition they grew up in. Others have stayed in because they want to serve as a faithful biblical witness within the denomination, much like missionaries – even though their biblical beliefs have been pushed aside. There are still others who remain in because their churches were not able to afford the cost of getting their churches out. And another group is still in because of shenanigans that were pulled by certain denominational leaders who slow-walked their exit until past the exit deadline.

What we are dealing with here is the United Methodist Church as a denomination that has been taken over by people who hold to some form of theological liberalism. This liberal theology takes different forms in different places, but all of the forms are based upon the same underlying worldview platform.

What is most visible to most outsiders about the denomination's beliefs is that they have gone to the mat to accept abortion as acceptable, gay marriage as an appropriate family structure, and acceptance of practicing homosexuals into their clergy. In addition to these, they have also substituted an emphasis on "social justice" for individual spiritual salvation.

In acknowledging these emphases, it is also important to note that these more outward expressions are based upon a more fundamental set of beliefs from an entirely different worldview. More specifically, the authority source for their liberal theology is not the Bible, but naturalistic philosophy

## Subscription Information SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE:

A subscription to **Worldview Made Practical** is complementary for anyone interested in receiving it. If you received this email as a forward from a family member or a friend and wish to subscribe for yourself, you may do so at [www.marketfaith.org](http://www.marketfaith.org). If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, simply follow the instructions found at the bottom of each edition.

## Contact Information

If you wish to contact us directly, you may do so by the following methods:

321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312

E-mail:  
[info@marketfaith.org](mailto:info@marketfaith.org)  
Phone: 850-383-9756

You can order our products and examine our services at <http://www.marketfaith.org>.

This issue of **Worldview Made Practical** is a production of **MarketFaith Ministries**, © 2024. All rights reserved.

with its relativistic moral and ethical expressions. With that knowledge, we are able to answer the three worldview questions based on their beliefs, and see how those are different from biblical worldview beliefs.

### 1. What is the nature of ultimate reality?

It can sometimes get a little tricky at this point because even theologically liberal United Methodists generally (though there are exceptions) claim to believe in God. The problem is, they interpret the Bible in such a way as to create their own version of who this God is. The Bible clearly does not support abortion, gay marriage, allowing people living in open sin to be pastors, or emphasizing social justice above individual spiritual salvation. To get around this, they use a methodology for interpreting the Bible that is based on naturalistic philosophy rather than Biblical Theism. So while they give a nod to the existence of an eternal spiritual reality, they have redefined the biblical narrative in a way that sees sin as primarily a societal issue rather than an individual one. And it sees the proper focus of the Christian faith as solving the problems of society, rather than of pointing people to personal salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.

### 2. What is a human being?

The basic thought concerning the nature of humanity is that humans are the highest order of creation. However, they are generally not thought of as individuals who need God, but of social groups that need advocates to help them overcome the more powerful who oppress them.

### 3. What is the ultimate a person can gain in this life?

Rather than thinking of salvation in terms of leading a person from eternal separation from God into eternal life, salvation is broadly thought of in more temporal terms. People are generally conceived of as either be-

ing in an oppressed class or an oppressor class. The ultimate goal, then, is to help the "oppressed (the down and out)" overcome their oppressors. Thus, salvation is generally thought of in terms of something that happens in temporal society. The church can promote this salvation by being advocates for the oppressed.

## Liberal Theology Is Not Actually Christian

While United Methodists definitely think of themselves as Christian, the theology that is promoted by the denomination is not. True salvation, as revealed in the Bible, is based on the decisions individuals make concerning their personal relationship with God. What the denomination promotes really has nothing to do with that. It has more to do with creating a utopian society based on the values they determine to be right according to their own priorities. I have no doubt that there are many people who worship in United Methodist churches who are genuine Christians. But if they are, it is not by following the theological teachings of the denomination itself.

The theology promoted by the denomination is a false religion masquerading as Christianity. And the way we know this is by comparing how biblical theology answers the three essential worldview questions to that promoted by the United Methodist Church.

Dealing with false teachings is something that the Christian church has had to deal with since its establishment in the first century. In fact, much of the New Testament was written to warn the early Christians not to be led astray by various false faiths.

The concern about false religions remains today. Probably the most prominent false teachings inside the modern church setting is theological liberalism.

Of course, it is more widespread than just in the United Methodist Church. Most other protestant denominations have faced the same thing – and most of them have ended up splitting in the same way as the Methodists. It has happened with the Presbyterians, Lutherans, Anglicans, Baptists, and more recently we see it beginning to happen in the Christian Reformed Church of North America. These denominations are not separating because of minor disagreements, but because the very core of the Christian faith itself is being compromised.

Because this false faith exists, and is even dominant, within many churches and denominations that are recognized as "Christian," many people have been, and are continuing to be, deceived into believing that they represent actual Christianity. They do not! And because of that, it is critical that modern day Christians get up to speed on how to recognize false religions when they come across them.

### **Would You Consider Supporting Us?**

Would you consider financial support for **MarketFaith Ministries**? I feel confident that what we are doing is consistent with your beliefs about spreading the gospel and equipping the saints for ministry. Would you let us be one element of your hands and feet in this process? **MarketFaith Ministries** is a 501 (c) (3) not for profit corporation, so your contributions are tax deductible. If you would consider this we would be very grateful. Also, if you would like to know more about the ministry, it would be my pleasure to share with you personally what we are working on and how you can plug in. I can be reached at 850-383-9756 or by e-mail at [Freddy@marketfaith.org](mailto:Freddy@marketfaith.org). As for any donations, they may be sent directly to **MarketFaith Ministries** at 321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312, or you can contribute through our secure website at [www.marketfaith.org](http://www.marketfaith.org). Simply click on the "Donate" button at the bottom of the homepage. We are deeply grateful for your support of this ministry.

And, as always, if you have any thoughts, opinions or suggestions about how **MarketFaith Ministries** can help you, please feel free, at any time, to call (850-383-9756) or e-mail ([info@marketfaith.org](mailto:info@marketfaith.org)). We are here to serve you.