

ANSWER READY:

RESPONDING TO THE TOUGH OBJECTIONS IN EVANGELISM

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THE PROBLEM OF RULES

Firmly planted in the worldview of the average American secularist today is the concept of extensive personal freedom. Indeed, people tend to be intensely passionate about their enjoyment of personal freedom.

- Charlotte Brontë's declaration has become the mantra of our society. She says through her character, *Jane Eyre*, "I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will."
- Albert Camus was a French Nobel Prize-winning philosopher and author who contributed to the rise of "absurdism," which is a philosophical school of thought stating that the efforts of humanity to find inherent meaning will ultimately fail, because the sheer amount of information, as well as the vast realm of the unknown. Camus strongly advocated for broad personal freedom. Writing in the early- to mid-1900s, he states somewhat confusingly, "The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion."

Clearly, a fierce loyalty to personal freedom is a growing and defining trademark of Western secularism.

Discussion: How do people you know define this freedom?

In this lesson, our goal is to consider **the idolatry of personal freedom** and the objections it brings against Christianity.

—THE IDOLATRY OF PERSONAL FREEDOM—

1. Culturally

a. Evolutionary Thought (1859, 1871)

A December 2, 2015 article in *The Atlantic* entitled, “Is Human Morality a Product of Evolution?” (<http://theatlantic.com/1Z1QSBn>), argues for this underlying source of today’s idolatrous commitment to personal freedom. In 1859 Charles Darwin published his book, *The Origin of Species*, which marked a huge shift in biological thought and eventually the understanding of human origins—a shift that hinged on a purely naturalistic explanation of the universe.¹ Twelve years later, in his book, *The Descent of Man*, Darwin began to make the connection between natural selection and ethical morality. In *The Atlantic* article, Emily Esfahani Smith explains:

Nearly 150 years ago, Charles Darwin proposed that morality was a byproduct of evolution, a human trait that arose as natural selection shaped man into a highly social species—and the capacity for morality, he argued, lay in small, subtle differences between us and our closest animal relatives. “The difference in mind between man and the higher animals, great as it is, certainly is one of degree and not of kind,” he wrote in his 1871 book The Descent of Man.

In his podcast commentary, Al Mohler explains Darwin’s hypothesis this way (“The Briefing 12-10-15,” <http://bit.ly/1Z1Paa0>):²

[Darwin] simply argued that what we call morality is just a coping mechanism as human beings evolved into social creatures, and the social creatures who tended to survive and replace themselves by reproduction were those who lived according to these rules—and we just call these rules morality.

According to Mohler, this understanding has directly affected the way our society thinks about morality today. He writes,

If you do hold to the understanding of anthropology (of what it means to be human) that is directly explicit in mainstream evolutionary theory, then you have to believe that whatever we call morality isn't really about morals. It's about patterns of behavior that lead to increased chances of survival.

These “patterns of behavior,” these ideas about morality, then, are as likely to change as the evolutionary landscape supposedly has.

b. Einstein's Theory of Relativity (November, 1916)

Al Mohler deals with this in his daily podcast, “The Briefing,” on December 4 (<http://bit.ly/1NbVnuU>; cf. <http://bit.ly/1M3z9r9>). He writes, “It's important for Christians to understand that ideas indeed have consequences and some of those consequences are unintended and unforeseen.” He then goes on to illustrate that premise by considering the consequences of Albert Einstein's now 100-year-old Theory of Relativity. In essence, Einstein argued that “there is not an absolute but a relative relationship between time and space and matter.” This theory added a fourth dimension of time to the standard three dimensions of Newtonian physics, and so it quickly transformed scientific observation and understanding of the universe. However, its unintended consequence is far more germane and fascinating for our consideration.

While Einstein's theory had nothing to do with morality and has little daily impact upon most modern people, historian Paul Johnson demonstrates that its greatest practical influence has actually been in the realm of cultural morality (<http://bit.ly/1M3yS7q>):

At the beginning of the 1920s, the belief began to circulate for the first time at a popular level, that there were no longer any absolutes of space and time, of good and evil, of knowledge above all of value. Mistakenly but perhaps inevitably, relativity became confused with relativism. ... The public response to relativity was one of the principle formative influences on the course of twentieth-century history. It formed a knife, inadvertently wielded by its

author, to help cut society adrift from its traditional moorings in the faith and morals of Judeo-Christian culture.”

Mohler concludes his history lesson with these statements, “That’s how ideas are transformed in a culture, from one thing to another in a line of moral rebellion. And perhaps the lesson for us, 100 years after Einstein’s lectures are published is that what happens in the laboratory doesn’t stay in the laboratory.”

c. The Sixties (1963-1974)

The cultural decade known as “The Sixties” saw people exploring the application of relativism into every facet of morality. These years were filled with countercultural revolution in social norms about clothing, music, drugs, dress, sexuality, formalities, and schooling. Those who denounced this revolution did so on the grounds of irresponsible excess, flamboyance, and the decay of social order. The decade was also labeled “the Swinging Sixties” because of the fall or relaxation of social taboos, especially relating to racism and sexism that occurred during this time (Wikipedia, “1960s,” <http://bit.ly/1NbUYZz>). Its unconventional and wild insurrection is expressed well in the bumper sticker, “Peter Pan and Wendy turned out fine.” Specifically, two developments assisted the sexual revolution: (1) the development of the birth control pill in the early 1960s, which minimized the potential of having a baby via sex outside of marriage; (2) the legalization of no-fault divorce, which liberated couples to pursue their own self-interests.

d. The Moral Revolution (1990-present)

In 1992, SCOTUS Justice Anthony Kennedy issued what John Piper calls “probably the most destructive sentence that the Court has ever spoken,” when he said, “At the heart of liberty is the right to define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life.”³ That blasphemous worldview compelled him (and usually the majority of the Supreme Court of the United States justices) to casually support abortion and aggressively support homosexuality. His championing of gay rights has been

chronicled in a series of key court decisions in which his vote played the key role and in which he wrote the majority opinion. These cases include *Lawrence v. Texas* in 2003 (which overturned a 1986 Supreme Court decision and declared criminal laws against homosexual sodomy to be unconstitutional), *United States v. Windsor* in 2013 (which effectively annulled the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act), and *Obergefell v. Hodges* 2015 (which mandated the legalization of same-sex marriage in all 50 states).

In these cases (and many, many more), America's highest court both reflected the brazen individualism and moral insanity of our culture and shaped it. Now, the conversation of the moral revolution, aided by a handful of individuals in the judicial branch (not the legislative branch, as it should be), is advocating unconditional toleration (except, of course, towards those who don't tolerate the moral revolution), seeking to dictate religious conviction and eradicate religious freedom, and pushing individual expression into further reaches of moral rebellion (e.g., transgenderism, polygamy, tax-funded abortion, etc.).

2. Theologically

a. Human pride — rejecting divine existence

God's Word paints the fallen human race as a blind people of arrogant defiance; those who, like their deceiver Satan, desire to usurp God's authority and exchange His sufficiency. Ungodliness (i.e., without God) is the root of all sin.

Read Psalm 14:1-4 and 53:1-4 (cf. Romans 3:10-18)

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5

b. Human independence — rejecting divine authority

Like the Israelites of old, humanity persists in doing "what [is] right in [its] own eyes" (*Judges 17:6; 21:25*), which leads to expressions of personal freedom that are horrifying (cf. *Judges 19, 21*).

(cf. Part 1 of "The Briefing 12-8-15," <http://bit.ly/1NVEatc>)

c. Human rebellion — rejecting divine accountability

Read Romans 1:18-32 (cf. Ephesians 4:17-19) — This passage gives us a really good window into the universal nature of the human heart that reasons for unrestricted personal freedom. Paul climaxes this revelation with this statement in Romans 1:32, “Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”

ITS IDEOLOGY

The ideology of today’s idolatry of personal freedom has four core tenants.

1. Humanism — freedom from subordination

Humanism is the underlying worldview and basic religion of the secularist. It is the evaluation of man as preeminently important. The Google dictionary defines it this way, “An outlook or system of thought attaching prime importance to human rather than divine or supernatural matters. Humanist beliefs stress the potential value and goodness of human beings, emphasize common human needs, and seek solely rational ways of solving human problems.”

In his book, *The Reason for God*, Tim Keller relates the story told by M. Scott Peck of a woman he was seeking to counsel. Concerning Christianity, she objected, “There’s no room for me in that. That would be my death! ... I don’t want to live for God. I will not. I want to live for...my own sake” (M. Scott Peck, *The People of the Lie: The Hope for Healing Human Evil* [Simon and Schuster, 1983], Chapter 4, p. 168 quoted in Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God* [Penguin Publishing Group: Kindle Edition, 2008-02-14], pp. 33-34).

Usually it is stated more innocuously, as in Ralph Ellison’s affirmation, “When I discover who I am, I’ll be free” (*Invisible Man*).

2. Individualism — freedom from an overarching purpose

The famous atheist Richard Dawkins states, “In a universe of electrons and selfish genes, blind physical forces and genetic replication, some people are going to get hurt, other people are going to get lucky, and you won’t find any rhyme or reason in it, nor

any justice. The universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference...DNA neither cares nor knows. DNA just is. And we dance to its music" (*River Out of Eden: A Darwinian View of Life* [London: Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1995], pp. 132-33).⁴

That belief, that there is no ultimate meaning or purpose to life, is not merely a worldview conclusion that the secularist arrives at; it also becomes the springboard to individualistic expression.

Marilyn Vos Savant declared, "The freedom to be an individual is the essence of America." The early-twentieth-century social activist Emma Goldman, agreed, stating it in the negative and simultaneously attacking Christianity. She called Christianity "the leveler of the human race, the breaker of man's will to dare and to do...an iron net, a straitjacket which does not let him expand or grow" (Emma Goldman, "The Failure of Christianity," first published in 1913, in *Goldman's Mother Earth* journal. <http://bit.ly/1NVSxxL>. Quoted in Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God* [Penguin Publishing Group: Kindle Edition, 2008-02-14], p. 34).

Tim Keller illustrates this cultural understanding of freedom from the movie *I, Robot* (TRFG book, p. 34):

At the end of the movie I, Robot (2004), the robot named Sonny has fulfilled the objectives in his design program. But now he realizes he no longer has a purpose. The movie concludes with a dialogue between Sonny and the other main character, Detective Spooner.

Sonny: "Now that I have fulfilled my purpose, I don't know what to do."

Detective Spooner: "I guess you'll have to find your way like the rest of us, Sonny. ... That's what it means to be free."

In this view, "freedom" means that there is no overarching purpose for which we were created. If there were, we would be obligated to conform to it and to fulfill it, and that is limiting. True freedom is freedom to create your own meaning and purpose. The Supreme Court has [blasphemously] enshrined this view in law when it opined "the heart of liberty" is to "define one's own concept of existence, of the meaning of the universe."⁵

3. Relativism — freedom from absolute truth

We'll let the opinion of two young artists from the streets of New York state this tenant of today's freedom idolaters (Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God* [Penguin Publishing Group: Kindle Edition, 2008-02-14], p. 33):

Keith says, "Christians believe that they have the absolute truth that everyone else has to believe—or else. That attitude endangers everyone's freedom."

Chloe echoes, "Yes, a 'one-Truth-fits all' approach is just too confining. The Christians I know don't seem to have the freedom to think for themselves. I believe each individual must determine truth for him- or herself."

4. Revolution — freedom from ethical standards

The above commitment to individualism naturally leads into this tenant of today's idolatrous freedom.

(TRFG video discussion⁶) Aldous Huxley, an early 1900s English writer, novelist, and philosophy, said, "The philosopher who finds no meaning in the world is not concerned exclusively with a problem in pure metaphysics. He is also concerned to prove that there is no valid reason why he personally should not do as he wants to do" (*Ends and Means* [New York: Harper, 1937], 269-273).

What are the implications of his line of reasoning? Huxley went on to say, "For myself...the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument for liberation...political and...sexual." Huxley was speaking frankly and saying (1) that if there is a God, I'm not free. So, (2) if I'm going to be free, I'll have to decide there is no God. Indeed, if there is no God, then nothing has been created; there is no design. Nothing has an author and everything is meaningless. So he is effectively saying, it is all an accident, it means nothing—that is the price of absolute freedom.

1. Affects our morality

Currently, we see this “moral revolution” affecting two areas of morality:

- **Abortion** — This is illustrated (“The Briefing 12-8-15,” <http://bit.ly/1NVEatc>) graphically in a new book by famed feminist icon Gloria Steinem. In this memoir, she dedicates the book to a now-deceased London physician who gave her an illegal abortion in 1957. She explains that this dedication was to honor him, for when he gave her the illegal abortion, he demanded, “You must promise me two things. First, you will not tell anyone my name. Second, you will do what you want to do with your life.”

Why was his memory and counsel to her so significant to her? She later explained in a radio interview, “I just knew that if I went home and married, which I would’ve had to do, it would be to the wrong person; it would be to a life that wasn’t mine, that wasn’t mine at all.” She went on to say, “It seems to me that every child has the right to be born loved and wanted, and every person has the right to control—male and female—to control their own bodies from the skin in.” Her implication is that if the unborn child is not “loved and wanted,” the mother has the right to control her own body and thus abort the child (who is inconsistently denied the right to its body).

The progression from an idolized belief in one’s individual freedom to a biblically-defiant morality is clear in her testimony. Al Mohler summarizes:

That is an almost symphonic expression of the modern protean autonomy that so many people claim, an absolute autonomy that is one of the most toxic ideas that is part and parcel of the modern secular worldview—that idea of radical individualism by which Gloria Steinem actually says that she wouldn’t have been who she means to be (which means who she wants to be) if she had been forced to have this baby and thus

to become a wife and a mother at that point in her life. What she is stating emphatically is that the unborn life within her was getting in the way of her own plan for her life and thus that life had to go in order for her to have the life she wanted for herself.

- **Sexuality** — Humanism, individualism, and relativism have resulted in a revolution in heterosexual behavior (i.e., premarital sex, multiple partners, sleeping around, “friends with benefits,” etc.), homosexual acceptance, and perspective on pornography (cf. Part 2 of “The Briefing 12-02-15, <http://bit.ly/1ORCWhw>)

In his novel, *The Fault in Our Stars*, John Green simplifies the connection between personal freedom and sinful morality. He writes, “Some tourists think Amsterdam is a city of sin, but in truth it is a city of freedom. And in freedom, most people find sin.”

2. **Affects our community**

Currently, we see this “moral revolution” affecting community in two ways:

- **Disestablishmentarianism** — “opposing the established order”: We see this in culture, through its apathy toward or rejection of government and its abandonment of the church (which has also infiltrated Christianity in the phenomenon of the “churchless Christian”).
- **Distrust of authority** — parental, governmental, spiritual, etc.

ITS ERROR

We hear the idolization of personal freedom expressed in many ways. Each expression betrays rational and biblical error that can be exposed by the thoughtful and biblical Christian.

1. **“Truth claims are power plays.”**

(TRFG video discussion) The French philosopher Foucault writes, “Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of

power.” Foucault is saying that when you claim to have the truth, you are trying to get power and control over other people. If for example you made a truth claim such as “everyone should seek justice,” Foucault would question whether it was because you really love justice or because you want to start a revolution that would give you control. Jesus’ condemnation of the Pharisees in Matthew 23:2-4 makes the same point as Foucault. The Pharisees’ truth claims were a way of getting power over God and other people.

However, one cannot insist that all truth claims are power plays, that all truth claims destroy freedom, for such insistence would itself then be a power play. To say that no one should make truth claims because they are just power plays is itself a power play, as is evidenced by a simple logical syllogism.

- Premise A — Truth claims are power plays.
- Premise B — “No one should make truth claims because they are just power plays” is itself a truth claim.
- Conclusion — Therefore, “No one should make truth claims because they are just power plays” is itself a power play.

Everybody makes truth claims. It is not making a truth claim that leads to oppression; it is the content of the truth claim and the way it is held that may or may not lead to oppression.

(TRFG book) Tim Keller writes (pp. 35-36):

C. S. Lewis writes in The Abolition of Man: “But you cannot go on ‘explaining away’ for ever: you will find that you have explained explanation itself away. You cannot go on ‘seeing through’ things for ever. The whole point of seeing through something is to see something through it. It is good that the window should be transparent, because the street or garden beyond it is opaque. How if you saw through the garden too? ... a wholly transparent world is an invisible world. To ‘see through’ all things is the same as not to see.”

If you say all truth-claims are power plays, then so is your statement. If you say (like Freud) that all truth-claims about religion and God are just psychological projections to deal with your guilt and insecurity, then so is your statement. To see through everything is not to see.

2. **“Every person or culture has to define right and wrong for themselves.”**

(TRFG video discussion) People say, “Every person or culture has to define right and wrong for themselves.” But if you ask them, “Is there anyone in the world right now doing things you believe they should stop doing no matter what they personally believe about the correctness of their behavior?”—they would invariably say, “Yes, of course” (otherwise, Hitler [“This is what I define as right”] & pedophiles [“It’s my orientation”] are by definition okay). Then the question arises, “Doesn’t that mean that you *do* believe there is some kind of moral reality that is not defined by us, that must be abided by regardless of what a person feels or thinks?”

One non-Christian admitted, “I don’t have to experience some form of genocide to form an opinion about it. I have this overwhelmingly passionate feeling that any life should be protected if I can step in. Where does that come from? I don’t know where that comes from.” Ecclesiastes 3:11 and Romans 1:19-21; 2:1-3, 14-16 provide the answer—God has planted an absolute moral standard within us.

3. **“Christianity, with its statements of exclusive truth and absolute morality, is repressive to both individuals and communities, because it divides rather than unites, and it diminishes our humanity by robbing us of our freedom to determine our own path.”**

(TRFG video discussion) **First, the Christian community is not alone in holding exclusive beliefs.** By definition, every community has particular beliefs and practices that are held in common by its members. For example, if you are in the leadership of some political party and then you change your views or position on some matter of importance to that party, you will be asked to leave. That is not intolerance or exclusivity—it is just that every community has goals or beliefs to which they hold people accountable. By definition, all communities are exclusive—but that does not make them intolerant.⁷

Second, people think that what it means to be truly human is to be free to choose their own path, that what liberates humanity is to be free of restraints that dictate how we should live. In other words, we are told that real freedom is having no restraints or restrictions and being able to do whatever you want.

The problem with this is that, in many ways, this idea (that freedom is the absence of restraints) misses the complexity of what freedom is (TRFG video discussion).

a. First, it is naïve about the complexity of the human heart.

People have lots of wants, and they often contradict each other. For example, people often want to eat whatever they like, but they also want good health. In this situation, the individual is going to have to choose the right restriction—he has to decide which of those wants is the liberating one and which one will bring them into bondage. The wise choice, of course, is to restrict your freedom of diet in order to access the richer, deeper freedom of good health and longer life. Likewise, a wise musician will restrict himself now (practice) to be released later into the far richer and deeper freedom of being able to perform and express himself.

The key therefore is not to avoid every kind of restriction and constraint—but to find the constraints that are liberating. If that is true when it comes to dieting, vocations, hobbies, sports—why wouldn't it also be true for the moral and spiritual realms? Freedom is not the absence of restrictions; it is the presence of the right restrictions. The commands laid out in the Bible are not there to limit us or to oppress us, but are the blueprint on how to unleash our full human potential.

b. Second, it is naïve about the complexity of motivation.

We have hundreds of choices every day, usually between good options—why do we choose the ones we do (and forfeit our freedom to enjoy the other options)? The answer is that every person has an ultimate value, what the Bible often calls an idol. We all believe that if we could just attain that “one thing” (e.g., money or status, etc.) we would find freedom. The trap is, unless that one thing is God, the object of our pursuit ends up controlling us (Psalm 115:4-8).

c. Third, it is naïve about the fabric of reality.

Reality is like a fabric—there is a pattern, a design to reality that must be honored or the fabric tears or unravels. For example, a fish must honor its design (i.e., to live in water) or it will die. Its desire for freedom from all restraints (i.e., to live outside of water) will inevitably result in its demise. A fish is designed for water, not for land. That is a restriction. But if it honors its design, it is free to do all it was designed to do.

We can further illustrate the pattern or design of reality by considering a car's designer's manual. That manual's rules (i.e., change the oil every 3,000 miles) isn't meant to deceive or sadistically oppress the car owner, but rather to provide instruction on how to maximize the vehicle's potential. The instructions aren't busy work; they are absolutely necessary!

So it is likewise true for humanity—human flourishing will be known only if we honor our design and implement the right restrictions in every area of morality.

What are human beings made for? The clue is to look at how human love works. If you are selfish and not married, that is hard. If you are selfish and married, it is a disaster. John Stott put it this way, "True freedom is to be one's true self, but my true self is made for loving [cf. Matthew 22:34-40], and loving is self-giving. So in order to be myself, I have to deny myself and give myself. In order, then, to be free, I have to give up my freedom. In order, then, to live, I have to die to my self-centeredness. In order to find myself, I've got to lose it."

Real freedom is not doing what we most want to do. Real freedom is knowing which of the things we most want to do is siding with what we were designed to do. Real freedom is finding the right restrictions, and that is why Jesus says, "*If you hold to My teaching...you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free*" (John 8:31-32; italics added for emphasis); "*Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it*" (Matthew 10:39; italics

added for emphasis); “Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. *Take My yoke upon you* and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, *and you will find rest for your souls*. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30; italics added for emphasis).

CONCLUSION

In discussions on this point with people, let us be sure that we are engaging with two principles in mind.

First, converse with graciousness! Donald Wuerl, an American cardinal of the Catholic Church, correctly identifies the conversational danger inherent in the disconnect between the Christian worldview and the secularist’s perspective on personal freedom. He warns, “We sometimes get so caught up in one or another aspect of the teaching, we forget that if a person hasn’t been introduced to Christ, if a person hasn’t embraced the risen Lord..., what we’re saying just sounds like a bunch of rules or negative statements limiting their personal freedom.”

Second, magnify Christ above rules! In *The Reason for God* video discussion, Tim Keller says, “It is a little hard to understand how rules actually function inside the Christian faith. They actually don’t operate the same way that rules operate in other philosophical systems or religious systems.” He then explains the difference by using an illustration of loving a girl and restricting yourself to do what pleases her. That is a natural expression of “true love,” and is a good illustration of how “restrictions” and “rules” work within the Christian faith. He concludes, “Traditional religion says if I obey the rules, then God accepts me. Whereas Christianity says that because I believe in Christ who has done everything for me, he has died in my place, I am accepted—and therefore, I obey the rules. ... For Christians the rules are not at the center.”

FOOTNOTES

¹ Mohler explains the impact of this naturalistic viewpoint on the understanding of man, “If one is seriously committed to the theory of evolution in its naturalistic mainstream form, then eventually evolution has to come to explain everything. That’s because if you believe in evolution as evolution is taught in the mainstream theory worldwide, you believe in a naturalistic materialistic universe. You believe in a universe, a cosmos in which everything must be explained in purely natural and materialistic terms and that includes the human being, it includes the human mind, it includes the human heart and it includes a human understanding of morality”

² Following and building on Darwin’s teaching, psychologist Michael Tomasello the director of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany has recently released a book that will soon be available in English, entitled, *A Natural History of Human Morality*.

³ John Piper, “Will You Use Target’s Transgender Bathroom?”, <http://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/will-you-use-target-s-transgender-bathroom>.

⁴ “Many unbelievers create the illusion of purpose in their lives by saying something like, ‘This is the only life we have. That makes it even more special and meaningful than those who believe in an afterlife.’ That argument might be attractive to a middle or upper class educated atheist in the West. But what about those who suffer on a daily basis with some kind of disease, paralysis, poverty, or the thousands of other types of gross suffering in the world? Is this one life sweet and special for them? It is important to point out that the atheistic, humanist worldview is utterly bankrupt in what it has to offer those who experience horrific suffering in this life.

Yet, even if an unbeliever manages to have a successful, almost pain free and pleasure filled life, Pascal would remind them that someone will soon throw earth over their head, and all that meaning in their life will be rendered null and void. The memory of them will be completely wiped off the face of the earth within a few generations. Just curious: can you name your great-great grandfather?” (“Death and the Judgment to Come: Pascal’s Beginning” [2015-09-09] on the CredoHouse blog, <https://wp.me/p6mxql-T1>)

⁵ “This is from the famous ‘Sweet Mystery of Life’ statement in the Supreme Court’s *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* ruling: “At the heart of liberty is the right to define one’s own concept of existence, of meaning of the universe, and the mystery of human life.” Notice that the statement does not say we are just free to ‘discover’ truth for ourselves but rather to ‘define’ and create it” (Keller’s footnote on this in TRFG book, p. 250).

⁶ Tim Keller, *The Reason for God: Conversations on Faith and Life* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010). Cf. crossimpactui.org/the-reason-for-god

⁷ Tim Keller helpfully researches and responds to the objection that “Christianity is...a cultural straitjacket.” He writes, “[Christianity] allegedly forces people from diverse cultures into a single iron mold. It is seen as an enemy of pluralism and multiculturalism. In reality, Christianity has been more adaptive (and maybe less destructive) of diverse cultures than secularism and many other worldviews”

(Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God* [Penguin Publishing Group: Kindle Edition, 2008-02-14], p. 38).

In another vein, the moral revolution really is challenging the freedom of exclusion for any community. This has recently become evident in California, where a group of girls (biological girls who want to be known as girls, not boys who are gay or transgendered scouts) are demanding admission to the Boy Scouts (cf, “The Briefing 12-9-15,” <http://bit.ly/1HXtZBX>).