

Worldviews Matrix

Based on James W. Sire's *The Universe Next Door*

Worldviews	Theism	Deism	Naturalism (atheism)	Nihilism	Existentialism (atheistic)	Pantheism	New Age	Postmodernism
What is prime reality?	Transcendent and Personal God	Transcendent God (First Cause)	The Cosmos – No God	Matter only—No God	Matter only—No God	Everything is God	All is One and all is God	“God is dead.” Reality is whatever humans decide it is.
What is the nature of external reality?	Universe is a distinct creation of God	Universe is closed and deterministic	Universe operates by laws of cause and effect	Universe is eternal and closed	Universe is solely matter, but it's running down	God is the world	Universe is united in self	No objective reality because there is no God to define it
What is a human being?	Created in the image of God	Created in the image of God but still part of the “machine”	Entirely material—evolved by chance	Only an element in cosmic machine	Evolved by chance, but each person defines who he/she is by making free choices	Human beings are God	Humanity is God	As humans we are what we decide we are
What happens to a person at death?	Christian hope is based upon redemption	Deists differ on their beliefs in this area	Death brings oblivion	No afterlife and no hope. Life is absurd.	Becomes just another object in material world	Union with an impersonal God or Reality	Reincarnation	Probably nowhere
How is it possible to know anything at all?	Truth exists and is derived from God, who is the Truth	Truth is found only within the universe	Knowledge comes only by man's examination of the universe	Knowledge is not possible	Knowledge is known through science and logic	Knowledge can only be achieved experientially during meditation	Truth is found in experience	There is no objective knowledge
How do we know what is right and wrong?	Christian values are absolute and transcendent	Ethics are grounded in nature	Ethics are situational and utilitarian	Morality can't be defined	Ethics are created by individual choice	Moral conduct is relevant only at lower planes of existence	There are no absolute moral laws	Right and wrong do not exist objectively. “Whatever” is the word of the day.
What is the meaning and purpose of history?	History is linear and has eternal consequences	History is linear and purposeful	History is linear, evolving	History has no meaning	History is linear, but has no ultimate purpose	History is cyclical	History is cyclical	History is what we define it as