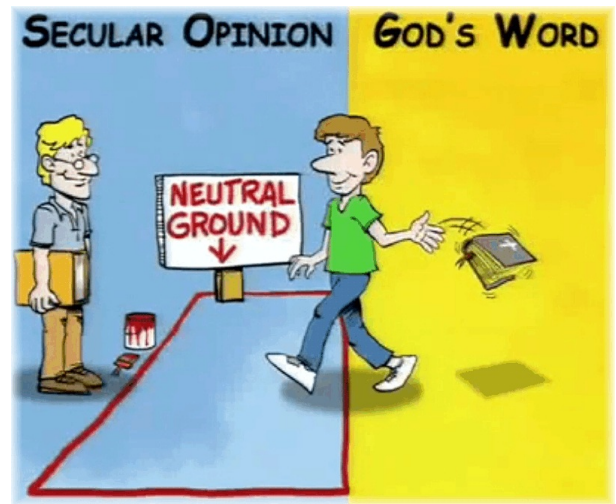


The Myth of Neutrality

Nonbelievers frequently attempt to coerce Christians into adopting a mentality in which both the parties are looking “objectively” at the “facts.” We call this compromise position “neutrality.” It is widely thought in the Christian world that through reasoning in a neutral way, in which all biases are left out of the picture, the believer can, through argument, beat the nonbeliever at his own game. In other words, the Christian can objectively, using only the facts, make a case that the Word of God is authoritative. What this approach fails to realize is that both the nonbeliever and the believer rely on their respective ultimate authority in order to interpret the “facts.” Thus there is no such thing as neutrality, and to assume neutrality essentially means that the Christian is exchanging his ultimate authority, “the truth of God,” for a lie, “the fundamental principles of the world.”



Taken from

answersingenesis.org

Neutrality is Philosophically Impossible

Facts Need a Reference Point	All facts are interpreted in light of one’s worldview. Creation itself demands a reference point in order to be understood correctly. If man is the reference point, everything is seen as it relates to man, if God, then everything is seen as it relates to Him.
If there is neutrality, why do we disagree?	If there is a “neutral” way of looking at facts, and if everyone starts from the same premises, then what’s the disagreement? Why is there such a wide divergence of theological and philosophical systems? If individuals are merely being inconsistent with their starting points, disagreements should be infrequent and simple. However, what we find when we look at the world are worldviews that are completely antithetical.
	When a believer accepts a nonbeliever’s starting point he is thus implicitly accepting their entire worldview, assuming that the nonbeliever is reasoning in a way consistent with his starting point.

Neutrality is Wrong Biblically

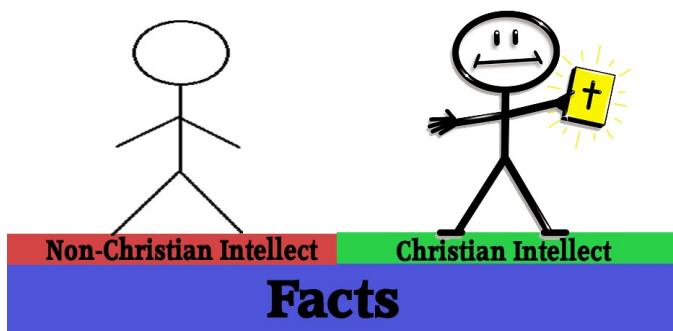
God commands us to not be neutral	Ephesians 4:17-18, Colossians 2:8, Ephesians 5:6
Neutrality is sinful	Romans 1:21 Luke 11:23 James 4:4
Man is sinful, and thus darkened in his understanding making his worldview unredeemable	2 Corinthians 4:3 Ephesians 2:1 Colossians 1:21 2 Corinthians 6:14
To accept neutrality requires compromise with Satan himself	1 John 5:19

It is All Common Ground, But None of it is Neutral Ground

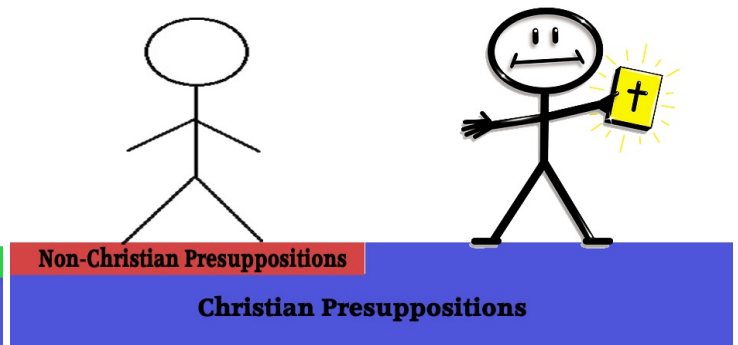
Man is Made in God's Image	Genesis 1:27, Ecclesiastes 3:11
Man is Made with the Capacity to Perceive Creation	Psalm 19:1
Man Knows God	Romans 1:21, Acts 17:23

Though there IS NOT such a thing as “neutral ground” there IS such a thing as “common ground.” We know that the nonbeliever relies on our worldview in order to make sense of reality. This is why a nonbeliever can be a proficient scientist, artist, or member of any profession imaginable and still be a nonbeliever. They are on borrowed capital so to speak. They are self-deceived, reasoning in such a way that while they deny God they actually know Him. We can use this common ground by showing the nonbeliever that they really do believe in the God of Christianity, though they suppress that truth. What we must never do is join them in their error and somehow attempt to persuade them through their own futile system of thought.

Neutral Ground



Common Ground



The Preconditions of Intelligibility

To make any rational sense of the world, human beings must start out as “knowers.” We know that certain things are true, and based on these known facts we build our worldview. Scientists understand this. In order to know that a certain reading or measurement is accurate they must rely on instruments. Through careful calibration the scientist fine tunes his equipment to ensure proper functioning. In order to know that a measurement is accurate, the scientist must first know that his instrument is accurate. In the same way, human beings, in order to know that what they perceive is accurate, must first know that their senses are reliable, that nature is uniform, that the laws of logic and mathematics are sound, and that morality is upheld. In order to trust the reliability of mental and sensory faculties, a person must first know that they are valid. These preconditions of intelligibility are only valid if they are upheld by some personal force outside the human being, the same way scientific instruments can only be trusted if they are first validated by the scientist. The Word of God is this validator. It makes sense of the preconditions of intelligibility in such a way that humans can accurately make sense of reality.

The Word of God Makes Sense of Reality By Giving Us the Preconditions of Intelligibility

<p>All Preconditions</p>	<p>Col. 1:2c-3, Genesis 1:27, Romans 11:36a, Romans 1:19-20, Hebrews 1:3</p>
<p>The Laws of Logic</p> <p>The Law of Non-Contradiction: There are no contradictions in God due to His honesty. It is this moral component of God that upholds the idea that there cannot exist two diametrically opposed propositions. Timothy is warned by Paul to avoid contradictions.</p> <p>The Law of Identity: Whenever God identifies a thing as possessing a distinct identity from other things, He is upholding that identity does exist.</p> <p>The Law of the Excluded Middle: The Bible constantly affirms there cannot exist a situation in which something both is the case and is not the case.</p>	<p>2 Timothy 2:13, Numbers 23:19, 1 Timothy 6:20</p> <p>Exodus 3:14</p> <p>Galatians 1:8, Romans 11:6</p>
<p>The Laws of Morality</p>	<p>Psalm 25:8, Romans 2:15</p>
<p>The Reliability of Sense Perception</p>	<p>1 John 1:1, Deut. 4:9, Deut. 4:12</p>
<p>The Uniformity of Nature</p>	<p>Genesis 8:22, Jeremiah 33:20-21, Matthew 5:45</p>

The Laws of Mathematics “There are at least 150 references to arithmetic and geometry in the Old and New Testaments.”

Genesis 5:3-5

God of Scripture



Laws of Logic Uniformity of Nature Objective Morality Laws of Mathematics Sense Perception

Preconditions of Intelligibility

You are in the line at the grocery store when you notice the person in front of you is shaking their head as they look at one of the tabloids on the rack. You notice the headline reads, “The Virgin Mary Appears on Toast!” The person in front of you notices you looking at the same magazine they are looking at so she turns to you and states, “That’s why you can’t trust faith. Only ‘science’ can tell us what’s true and what isn’t.”

A) What kinds of things can you tell about their worldview?

B) What problem(s) do they have accounting for the preconditions of intelligibility?

C) How can you engage such a person using apologetics?

You enter the break room at work to take your lunch break when you notice a few of your coworkers talking about a recent terrorist attack. One of them says, “You can’t just follow some book because it pretends to be the ‘word of god.’ That’s no different than Christians who bomb abortion clinics because they think ‘god told them to do it!’ You have to do what’s right for you, not some religion.”

A) What kinds of things can you tell about this person’s worldview?

B) What problem(s) do they have accounting for the preconditions of intelligibility?

C) How can you engage such a person using apologetics?

As you pull up in your car after work you notice there are two Mormon missionaries at your front door. They smile as you walk toward them and ask if you're interested in studying the Book of Mormon with them. You inform them that you are a Christian and ask what they believe about the Bible. One of them states, "The Bible is book that testifies to the truth that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God because it agrees with the book of Mormon." He goes on to tell you that he knows the Book of Mormon is true because of a subjective personal experience he's had called "burning in the bosom."

A) What kinds of things can you tell about this person's worldview?

B) What problem(s) do they have accounting for the preconditions of intelligibility?

C) How can you engage such a person using apologetics?

Your friend invite you to a YOGA class she just started attending. You respond by thanking her and saying that you already stretch at the gym. Your friend explains that she doesn't go to YOGA class just for stretching but instead because she seeks to become one with nature by freeing herself from all desires.

A) What kinds of things can you tell about this person's worldview?

B) What problem(s) do they have accounting for the preconditions of intelligibility?

C) How can you engage such a person using apologetics?

You try to share the Gospel with a coworker but as soon as you bring up the Bible he puts his hand up and states, “I only believe what I can see with my own two eyes and feel with these hands. Spare the religious talk unless you can prove it to me.”

A) What kinds of things can you tell about this person’s worldview?

B) What problem(s) do they have accounting for the preconditions of intelligibility?

C) How can you engage such a person using apologetics?