

A Mindset for Evaluating the World Around Us

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Whether we are looking at a movie, a cultural ceremony or characteristic, a newly published book, a report card layout, a curriculum model or proposal, or even a blueprint for the construction of new school, retail, or home buildings, as Christians we want to develop a biblically authentic understanding of, and response to, these events/activities. The pattern or mindset below may be of assistance in providing a platform for this transformational thinking. It is not a set of rules but it is a useful approach for considering things in an authentically Christian manner. The mindset reflects a Creation-Fall-Redemption-Renewal-Fulfilment perspective that some may be familiar with.



Step One: Report

- What is actually involved – generate a dispassionate and systematic report of the resource/activity. As far as possible, you should withhold judgment at this stage.

Step Two: Contextualise

- How did it come about? Explore and explain the cultural/historical milieu in which the resource/activity is located.
- Who/what are the main components or participants?
- Where is the resource in a spatial and historical sense

Step Three: Critique (& Provide Examples)

- Identify the key worldview characteristics that were or are important in the resource/activity¹:
 - Where is the resource coming from in a religious sense?
 - What challenge, problem or area is the resource seeking to address?
 - What beliefs about life and purpose are implicit in the resource?
 - What solutions or meaning and purpose are offered in the resource?
 - What is the intended outcome as a result of exposure to the resource.
- Critique the resource/article and its embedded worldview from a biblically authentic worldview perspective (Remembering that all truth is God's truth wherever it may be found, you may be able to discern both areas of agreement/strengths and disagreement/weaknesses)
- Ensure that your critique is based on a biblical worldview and not just the public worldview of your own cultural/historical time and place
- Verify that your response is aligned with your pre-identified and biblically-shaped (outcome) priorities (Phil 1:9-11)

Step Four: Respond

- Respond to the resource/article by identifying how we as Christians should live in response to the resource/article
- Remember the Romans 14 principle:
 - be prepared to vigorously argue your position from a Christian worldview perspective, which should reflect a biblically-shaped understanding of the issues involved;
 - remember that, as in all disputable matters, this must be done with humility which recognises the frailty of our own position (reformed critical realism);
 - knowing how to respond is not completed until we action our response in our lives.