

Worldview and Culture Part 2

By Lloyd Kwast

Lloyd Kwast:

Because of his track record, more than, than uh how Lindsay, uh, well, I'm not being critical, of figuring out um what the grasshoppers will be in Armageddon, you know, um, because we're always working out in this direction rather than confirming what this will be in this direction. It will change our eschatology. We won't find those books the predict the future quite as satisfying. In fact, quite frankly, I won't read them. Um, but I find in my ethno-history great satisfaction on changing even my paradigm of high orient to time, to turning around. Could-is it true? Maybe it's my idea. But my picture of time in America is that we do stand in the present and face the future. Is that true?

Audience member:

[Unintelligible].

Lloyd Kwast:

Yeah. And as a result, I tend to ignore the past. I think that is a picture we have of reality. Isn't it better? Let's agree to it. Even Mark. Isn't it better if we turn around and admit that the best we grope blindly into the future, but we can anticipate what that groping is by this historical view? God has said it. God has promised it. He's been consistent. He doesn't spell it out. And couldn't I admit that it is lusting wrongly to know the future? Let me ask that again. Couldn't it be very wrong and hurtful to lust to know the future? Why? Because knowledge is powerful and we can manipulate. I have a lot of students come and counsel with me, even Talbott's students. And uh,

so often they want to as-know what is God's will for my life, and they want me to read a crystal ball. And it really bugs me. They don't know that they're asking that. But that's what they're asking. What should I do, what woman should I marry, or what--you know? And I don't pull out my crystal ball. And then I-I see another thing. And I'm not accusing these people, we're all this way. We have a lust to know the future.

And I've asked myself, Lloyd, if you did know, if God revealed to you what the future held, would it do you any good? And how would you use it? And let me tell you something about Lloyd Kwast. I-I hate to admit it. I would manipulate God with my knowledge, because there are things in the future. I don't want. There are some things that I know about myself at this stage of my growth that I would try to avoid in the future, not knowing how God would get me from here to here. I couldn't tolerate suffering, for example. But when I'm there, I could. Like it was Spurgeon preached on a dying grace, and a woman came up to him afterwards, outraged. She said, "You mean to tell me that you have dying grace?" He says, "Not at all. I didn't say that. All I said is when I die, I will."

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Okay. That's the point. So what I'm saying, Mark, is that our assumption about even the way we are oriented to time, if we take that as a paradigm and impose it on those Africans who have a very different one, we could be doing a lot of damage. Could I suggest, too, that my view, our paradigm of time is just as adequate to study the scripture and know it as theirs, and theirs has the strength of being more historically oriented than ours. Let's admit it. That's all I'm saying.

And the other argument is that God can use culture, and does use culture, to impact a peoples' perception wherever they are, and God has the power to change those through His word and through the ministry and illumination of the Holy Spirit. If I didn't have that faith, I'd give this business up. You notice how often I come back to confidence in the power of God, The Spirit, the power of the Word, to communicate to all worldviews, rather than telling you, or telling Sharon, yes, you've got to go and change that aspect of worldview. Because that puts me as the authority right away rather than the ability of the Holy Spirit, to lead them in ways that He knows best.

Another problem is you look at the history of missions, too often missionaries have made the changes, imposed a different worldview and suddenly, to their horror, realize it didn't work out the way they thought it would, or should. So there's danger, but crisis oriented people want to change that first thing, before they can really know God, they have to have our paradigms of reality. Be careful. That's all I'm saying. And know what theirs is and how it works, and know yours. Know the weaknesses of yours, know the weaknesses of theirs, know God's Word. And be careful that you examine the filters of your own worldview paradigms and how it might be twisting your view of eschatology. Your view of biblical history. That's all I'm asking.

[Pages rustling]

Audience member:

[Unintelligible] Isn't it a new birth? [Unintelligible] --change a worldview? I mean when you're thinking about converting, what is conversion without a change of worldview?

Lloyd Kwast:

Yeah, it does.

Audience member:

Born again means you have a whole new look at out in your world--

Lloyd Kwast:

Your pictures of reality change, about yourself, especially. Do you know, I-I came to the Lord when I was twelve, and it was a rather dramatic experience for you--for a young fellow. So I remember waking up the next morning. And I even commented to my mother, "I've never looked out on myself or life the way I do this morning." And I've never lost that radical change in way of viewing myself. I think up to this time, being in a typical ethnic church, I was uh very, very uh legalistic. I viewed myself as trying, but really being miserable and achieving it. And suddenly I had a transforming paradigm shift that I was valued in spite of myself, and my performance. And all that God loves in me is not what I was looking at. See, that's a paradigm shift. Yeah. You're right. Does that always happen? Do-to the mind?

Audience member:

I'm just thinking when you--I mean, the purpose of this whole thing, with these communications of cultures, uh you can have all kinds of changes take place, and it makes the worldview change when you look in terms of conversion.

Lloyd Kwast:

Mhm.

Audience member:

There's not much that has happened. Unless there is that change of worldviews.

Lloyd Kwast:

And what you're suggesting, there should be shift at this level before any place else. Maybe before the behavior changes all much--,so much. But it's interesting, my behavior changed very abruptly when I had a different view of who I was. Suddenly, that awareness of myself as an object of God's profound love, changed, especially in the area of your self-image. And some of you psychologically oriented people, we realizes the horrendous problem we have, especially with uh, legalistic Christians. I think some of the people who suffer the most from this is legalistic Christians. Good point. Very good point. There's another area that unlocks, and this is again, uh my model is simple, although it gets very complex. And I hope I don't offend any of you. I'm always nervous. You know, I come back at Mark uh, kind of aggressively, but. I think our are interchange is making the point, isn't it? The tensions we feel here, in our struggle with being crisis oriented, in our struggle with uh, with a very restricted world view that says, "Don't you touch this or I'm gonna vehemently attack the whole process."

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Not that you're doing that vehemently. You're really nice. I like your smile.

[Audience laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Okay. Another whole areas is the cause and effect. And these are simple keys to uh, to get at. If-- you know, uh, the first question you ask those people you're trying to figure out, what assumptions do you hold about time. Do you assume that you're facing the past or the future? That would be the kind of question you ask. What's the most important dimension of time? They would say where I stand right now. And we call that fatalistic. You know that, where they stand right now. Uh, and our gripe is they never plan ahead. Their gripe is you never get wise because you look at the bad, you don't look at the past. They would say they would suggest that only a fool would relive his mistakes.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Because we forget, don't we. Well--see, there's accusation flying back and forth. Another whole area, as-is when you--something happens, ask the question, what caused that? And the minute you do, you start to you start to unlock worldview perceptions or assumptions. You even get basic paradigm, uh, paradigms uh revealed through this. Again, I'll make a blanket statement. If you ask cause and effect questions in Europe, Western cultures, European cultures, you will typically get a paradigm that we call naturalistic on cause and effect. If you ask this in most Eastern cultures, you will almost be sure of getting a supernaturalistic paradigm reflected. Now there are exceptions, but typically, you have two very differing paradigms here. Want uh, I want--yeah, for sure go ahead Crystal.

Crystal:

[Unintelligible] and I was feeling better because the um, the doctor, a traditional healer, had pulled out this um, thorn right in here. And he was Christian, this man, and I was horrified--

Lloyd Kwast:

An unseen thorn? It was unseen. Yeah.

Crystal:

Yeah. [Unintelligible]

Lloyd Kwast:

What?

Crystal:

And he didn't know what I was asking, but I thought, I was convinced this man that it was--

Lloyd Kwast:

Sleight of hand. Yeah.

Crystal:

And uh, I didn't get through to him.

Lloyd Kwast:

Your question was so off the wall he couldn't imagine why you'd ever asked that. Well, if it's a thorn, where is the hole? Where is the wound. And he was startled wasn't he?

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Crystal:

[Unintelligible].

Lloyd Kwast:

Probably say, why would you ask that?

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Crystal:

But it was feeling better.

Lloyd Kwast:

Yeah, now see, our scientific worldview is so profound at this point, again, we get angry. Say, uh, you know, as a Christian, that was the proper question to ask, um. Or as as the cosmonauts ask, uh, if God is out there, did you see Him when you're out in space? Remember, that was a mocking thing. And the Christians say, well, you don't look for that kind of evidence. And so you have the same problem here. If the Holy Spirit's come in, you know, what difference does it make? By the way, are--some of the early mechanistic theologies actually had the openings of the body through which the spirit came. So you've got--and by the way, in eastern cultures, you have a mechanism in the aura, in the paradigms, too. The spirits have to have entry, and-but they

enter in certain places. Sometimes I ask that about demonized people. Where are the points of entry? But they're not holes in the head. Uh points of entry, of giving one's will, or the use of certain magic, or the use of astrology. These are points of entry. They're spiritual. They're not physical.

Okay. Cause and effect. I still remember an accident that occurred in Cameroon. This Land Rover was squashed by a big tree, one of those huge tropical trees fell over and this-killed the two guys in it. They were local politicians. And I came by shortly after it happened. And innocently, I ask what happened.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Then I got an answer that you would never believe. He-he went into a long discussion of how these guys were shysters, uh, cheating and fooling around with other men's wives. And his answer was to my question. And that wasn't my question. My question grew out of my paradigm, cause and effect. And that is, was the wind blowing? Does the tree have dry rot? And wasn't it unlucky, quote, unlucky, that they happen to be there just when the tree fell? His answer was an answer to why he thought I was asking. It grew out of a supernaturalistic paradigm. This is retribution. The spirits, the gods, they won't tolerate this forever. Sooner or later, your sin will find you out. That's what he was saying. And you ask the question, so I'll tell you what the sin and the offence was, and you can see the result. Interestingly--they're not dumb, I tried to point out that the tree had dry rot. Sure does. But you're asking the immediate cause, I'm telling you

the ultimate cause. See, cause and effect can be immediate and ultimate. I realize their paradigm doesn't deny the immediate cause, which is material and physical.

[Lloyd Kwast clears throat]

Lloyd Kwast:

But, that's unimportant. Of course, any idiot would know that, would be kind of the uh reaction.

But if you really want to know, it's the cause behind the cause, and luck had nothing to do with it. It wasn't an unfortunate accident. And then you have them come to Christ and they'll point out the verse, "With God, there are no accidents." You know, it really makes you nervous, doesn't it?

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

With God, there's no such thing as luck.

Mark:

We have that, don't we? I mean I guess I won't speak for everybody but [unintelligible].

Lloyd Kwast:

Well, typical Western cause and effect.

Mark:

But as Christians, western Christians--

Lloyd Kwast:

That's right. That's what-that's what uh--

Mark:

[Unintelligible].

Lloyd Kwast:

That's what [unintelligible] was just saying. We uh, yeah. We have paradigm shifts, although we still use in our language, "Well aren't you lucky?" Sometimes those paradigm shifts aren't that thorough. I find myself going back and forth on this, to be honest with you. Maybe yours is more-more thorough than mine.

Audience member:

Well I think maybe the world around us is always [unintelligible] that too, I mean I think--

Lloyd Kwast:

You're right.

Audience member:

You know, for me, my values since I've been a Christian is not that I do to achieve and to become somebody, but that God has already declared me His child.

Lloyd Kwast:

Yeah.

Audience member:

I do because of what God has done for me. And I desire to serve Him. With my very being I want to serve Him. But I am in constant conflict with the world that says, you know, you have to have money, or you have to be successful, or you have to look good, to be somebody. And-and you know, you go back to scriptures and you say no, God--you know, like you're saying, and I'm known as His child and that's enough. Now I go and do because of who He's made me. And that's so hard for us to buy into, that's the system. And that's, to me, that's an absolute, that's God's system.

Lloyd Kwast:

Yeah.

Audience member:

Um, but it's so hard to hold that. Because we're always in conflict.

Lloyd Kwast:

And call--remember, it's a worldview, particularly is a powerful force to conform you to its way of thinking.

Audience member:

Sure!

Lloyd Kwast:

And what I'm saying, too, is although there are differences, there is a basic naturalism to our worldview paradigms versus a natural soup--uh, uh-abnormal, supernaturalistic paradigms in many of the--two-thirds world culture. That's all I'm saying, although it's fun to sort this out. The other thing in this crisis analysis that Mark just gave us--

[Lloyd Kwast clears throat]

Lloyd Kwast:

You felt comforted by the fact that you had the right biblical paradigm and you didn't share in my-my first reaction of cause and effect. It wasn't an accident. But I'm not sure you'd buy fully into their paradigm either. They're-we're kind of caught here. When lightning struck and killed five of our leaders at a conference, my reaction is 'I wish they'd put up-I would have put up the um lightning rods that we were always urging them to use. It could have avoided that tragedy.' Could I have said that to the Christians? No, I didn't dare, because they already are very suspicious of our outlook. Now, there again, we're caught, aren't we? That's a dilemma. See--

Mark:

[Unintelligible] --because when the tower fell on the men and killed them, Jesus made an explicit example of what--so you didn't have to go back to the Bible, what does the Bible have to say about it.

Lloyd Kwast:

That's right. Yeah.

Mark:

We're not left in the dark about that.

Lloyd Kwast:

We're weak at the point of s-God's sovereignty over the affairs of man.

Mark:

Right.

Lloyd Kwast:

Yeah. Okay this where our thinking needs to be. And I'm not discouraging really groping for this, but I'm-I'm discouraging to come to quick and superficial answers, I guess, and realize that we're in a tension.

Audience member:

I can see why Ghandi--

Lloyd Kwast:

Why Ghandi used the Bible, the Koran, and other religious literature. Yeah. An eclectic approach where you just draw anything of truth. There's another question, is there truth in other religions? Is all truth God's truth? There's a big argument here. In other words, how does the total system

impact the elements and parts? Well, see, I told you, this is deep stuff, but let's go on simplistically. Um. Basic paradigms about um, cause and effect, are humans basically in charge? Can they control their fate and the forces of nature? And should they manipulate these forces, versus supernatural forces and sovereign divine forces are in control and will ultimately determine the outcome. Now, as a call, our culture is very manipulative when it comes to these forces, and we are the captain of our own fate. And that's why we plan ahead. That's why we get education, that we can control this. We're not fatalistic. You work hard, you'll be success. You jog and take vitamins, you'll live to at least 70, because that's what God promises we deserve, or we'll get. What is it, six.

[Audience member talking in background]

Lloyd Kwast:

What is it? Six, six plus ten? Yeah, 60 plus 10. Yeah.

Audience member:

I'm thinking affects the theological, uh theological thinking. You think about Calvinism, as opposed to arminianism--

Lloyd Kwast:

Arminianism. All right.

Audience member:

I mean, one is very strongly pre-determinism, and--

Lloyd Kwast:

And a sovereign--

Audience member:

A sovereign--

Lloyd Kwast:

--God in control.

Audience member:

Even within our theological circles, we have many-uh-really different contrasting worldviews.

Lloyd Kwast:

How much is human will and human destiny? How much is God's sovereign predetermined, um, purpose? Predestination? We are pre-destined, even to damnation, how about that? Okay. Good observation. Boy, I love this class. You guys are really--some of you uh seem sleepy, but as a whole, we're really wonderful.

[Audience laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Some of you aren't philosophic enough to keep up. Well, you can--go ahead. This, I to-warned you, this lecture would be different. Um. Science, political, economic strategies, and

organization give humans power overall things, versus God, the invisible principalities and powers, mystical forces, ultimately determine human destiny. There you have the contrasts. Now, what we can't do is fall into the trap of having a weak sovereignty of God. And that's what's happened in Western theology, the weak sovereignty. Okay. Another whole area is conceptions of time and space. We've already touched on this. Let me just add a few things regarding future or present or past orientation, three-dimensional time versus two dimensional time. Uh, views such as um, progress and change is good, versus progress and change is bad. You have whole paradigm shifts here. Typically, we think progress and change is good. And by the way, I might say the Bible makes it very clear, unless we do change, there is no hope for us. So that goes back to your transformation concept.

Interestingly, I grew up in a culture, and I think it's common to German cultures, that if you uh, temperamentally and character-wise, if you change too much, it's a sign of weakness. There is a stability, you know, uh. And so every Christian is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And I struggled with that. When I came to points of crisis, and admitted I was wrong, and I had to change, and fell on my face to confess it, and want God to change me. I really struggled with that. And one day it hit me, just like the Lord said to me, Lloyd, unless you change, there is no hope for you. That's what I've come to do. And that was a paradigm shift in my life. And it didn't happen when I was--came a believer. It happened long after that. And I was struggling with a cultural value that had been instilled in-in me as a-as a youth. And even to show too much emotion, or excitement, or enthusiasm was verboten, because it shows that instability. And now, you know, I just get wild with excitement sometimes about important things. At a basketball game, forget it.

Um, an orderly universe is viewed as a machine. Like a fine-tuned watch. And that's the marvel and the glory of it, versus a personal universe of unlimited space, and power, and spiritual forces, so that when you talk of the heavens, you think of principalities and powers, not dead, or cold, or white-hot stars. Another is a basic paradigm of space as being--and uh, time, and matter, being virtually limitless. Resources, virtually limitless, expansive worldview versus very limited, confined space resources. Another basic paradigm: space is that which is perceived basically as that arena of nothing, versus a view that space, even the word, is the arena of everything. We--when we use the term space, we usually think that arena of nothing, or lifeless. Another basic paradigm is of the nature of being, we think therefore we are, or are or--ont--we talked about epistemological aspects, now somewhat moving on to ontological aspects. The nature of being, and existence.

One basic paradigm, individualism, versus uh group-ism. Um, where does the--the nature of, of being a human being rest? Is it that I can identify myself as an individual, be self-contained, self-aware? Or is it that I find my identity and awareness through a group? Now, you say both is true, probably is true--that's true. But where does the Bible speak in this? What is helpful? What are paradigms of the church, for example? What are the metaphors used of the church? May I suggest their group Paradise? So even there, we find that our worldview paradigm works against us, theologically. May I suggest that it works against us in the earlier comments to a good eschatology too? It bothers me.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

In my opinion, you've got to be a historian to be a good um, to have a good eschatology. We forget that. Um, though they have a paradigm that the group reality is so overpowering that no- there's, there's no meaning to the individual part, apart from the context. Is there any importance to a cog in-a wheel in this watch, apart from the context to make the whole thing work? In other words, function determines the value of all its parts. It does always amazes us as Westerners that the sum of the parts, I mean that the uh, that the um, sum of all the parts is greater--that the whole is greater than the sum of all its individual parts. Somehow that doesn't register right with us. Could it be that two are stronger than one plus one? And could it be the three-strand cord is an infinitely more powerful than three times one? I suspect that's true. The Bible even has some riddles about that, doesn't it?

Okay, um, another paradigm. Is it helpful for a person to stand out in success, achievement, or is it destructive for a person to stand out too much? One thing that bothers me is we-we have spiritual heroes, superstars, and um, our identity must be seen and gloried in the person of Christ. We must lose ourselves. And yet our-our worldview paradigm doesn't reinforce that. Let me repeat that, that is so important.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Boy, he got it. In spite of our worldview paradigm that it's good to stand out or be outstanding in your field, as the farmer was. Um, it is-it is very important by the biblical paradigm that we lose our identity in Christ, and that all my significance is found in Him. Now, psychologically, that's

gonna be resisted, in typical Western thinking. Let me assure you. That you didn't--it might strike you as being a rather dangerous idea. Um, equality of persons versus strong hierarchical arrangement. Equality versus hierarchy. Now, there again, we assume that egalitarianism and equality is the-the um, paragon of-of uh, ideal worldview. Do we see hierarchy in God's way of working? You see it in the family, you see it even in the principalities and powers paradigm. Yes, you do. And we'll tend to misunderstand those, or even resist them. Study it. Think about it. Another paradigm: competition versus cooperation. We've talked about that a number of times. You know where we're shifting on that one. You get the best out of people by competing, don't you? We all know that. Other guys say no. You always you get the best of people when you work together. You'll say both are true. But ask, how do yo-how do you make your paradigms work?

I've served as an associate on several church staffs, and in every case it was a competitive paradigm. We never worked as a team. I told Schroede, I want to team teach with you. We don't. We call this team teaching. We don't. It's a pity, because I would learn a lot and he might learn a lot, but um, not that we're in competition either. I admit he's smarter. Okay. Uh, we have another paradigm. Fifty one percent democracy versus consensus democracy. And the irony is that we don't consider consensus democracy as democracy at all. It's railroad. It's rubber stamp. But it's not true. I saw consensus democracy work many, many times. Could it be that a-when a man comes to face-faith, his entire household could legitimately come to faith, too? I think so, but not in our culture. Um, could it be that the Holy Spirit would like to work in a paradigm other than 50 percent plus one vote? Possibly. Did the Holy Spirit work through consensus in the early church? I think so.

Another paradigm, human-centered versus God and spirit-centered universe, a human-centered vers-uh universe versus a God and spirit-centered universe. The measure of human value, is it money and material versus family relationship, family prestige, spiritual power. You know, it shook me up when I went to Cameroon, is I found out very quick that they were judging me. And what bothered me is they were judging me by a criteria, that a-criterion which I didn't even know. And you know what they called it? Power, in their vernacular. Some of you from PNZ, you would know this. A power, and I didn't even know what they're talking about. But they are quick to know. I thought aggressive, competitive, deep voice, shout when you have to, put people in their place, manipulate. That wasn't it at all. Some of the meekest, wimpiest people were viewed as being powerful, and the pushy guys were viewed as weak. How do we view power? Personal charisma, strength, eye contact. That's the answer.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Uh, but what was all important was to know if this person's a person of power. And then what makes you nervous is you don't even know how they're um, they're defining that. They don't know what-you don't know what they're analyzing, you feel psychologically naked, and you're ready to go home on the next airplane. Is it legitimate to measure a person's power, spiritual power, as a Christian versus all these other things? It fascinates me that our board uh, has raised a lot of money to pay for McNelly just in the last few weeks. And one of the criteria of um being on the board of trustees, even in a school like this, is that you have financial means to assist when the crunch is on. I'm not being-belittling that, because how can you have a school like this

without money, with a twenty-nine million dollar budget every year? But not all cultures would measure the worth of a person sitting on a board of trustees by that. You say, well, we don't measure by that alone. Granted, you're right.

But could you have a very poor man who doesn't express himself but has that spiritual power? What if he's a man of prayer, and it becomes quickly obvious he moves all of heaven for the institution? Can't give a penny. Well, can you really just trust prayer to do it? That's the big question. After all, the bills do come due.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

And for the sake of the tape, I had a twinkle in my eye when I said that, which you could not see.

[Audience laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Okay. Biological life as sacred versus social life is sacred. Did you catch that? Biological life as sacred versus social life as sacred. So if you do anything in one culture that threatens biological life, it's very serious. But could you go in as a gossip and start to undo the social context, just as serious. Tantamount to murder. Tantamount to unplugging the respiratory uh-uh, I mean, the um, the machinery to a comatose patient. And is it wrong to have a worldview that views the social health more important than biological survival? Uh, what about a country that capital punishment is no big deal? But I'll tell you, banishment from the tribe is worse than death. Banishment is worse than capital punishment by death. I know that's true. Do you know uh--let me give you

another paradigm. I just thought of this, and I'm gonna let you out early. That's why we didn't take a break.

There was a time in our own culture that banishment was considered a very severe punishment for crime. And the idea of criminals was they were cancer and you locked them out. So we had islands we'd put them out on. The British had a whole continent, Australia, they put theirs out on. That's a Western idea. But generally, we have a total paradigm shift. Now, we don't lock them out. We lock them in. That bothers me a little bit because have we examined what does it mean to put fire into our own bosom and lock it in? But you say it's cruel to lock them out. Not as cruel as in a culture than if you locked them out it's so worse-it's worse than death, huh? Think about things like this, because they're paradigms of reality. Is punishment locking them out or locking them in. Is it safe to lock them in? But how would other people look at it? See, I told you, you get a lot more questions in this course than you do answers. In fact, I don't think you're going to get many answers at all. As you grow old and wise and knowledgeable, you'll get more and more insights. The origin of being-- I uh, what's that, Roger?

Roger:

[Unintelligible].

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Yeah.

Roger:

[Unintelligible].

Lloyd Kwast:

And who knows you-- Chris-questions could make you a very wise person. Certainly not arrogant, or a know-it-all. Here's the ultimate ontological question: When does being human-being begin? Is it at conception? Every culture will have answers to this. Is it the first trimester? The second? Is that when the umbilical cord is cut, that there is independence from the mother. If you have a uh highly independent paradigm, it will be at the point of severing the umbilical cord. So prior to that, it's just a growth that's attached to the mother.

[Lloyd Kwast sighs in disgust]

Lloyd Kwast:

Did I say that? I don't believe it. It sends horror into my mind to think of it that way. But I've heard it described that way in some literature. You realize that worldview paradigm can become just horrendous in terms of what it comes out as? Uh, if you have a highly independent, individualistic paradigm, it could be when the umbilical cord separates. If you have a materialistic one, it's a point of conception. What are more adequate paradigms, and what--let's go back to the ones we like. What is the biblical--the biblical paradigm here? I got one, so I'm going to fool you on this one. I do have an answer, by the way. Did you have a comment? You looked like you want to say something.

Audience member:

[Unintelligible].

Lloyd Kwast:

We were conceived.

Audience member:

[Unintelligible].

Lloyd Kwast:

But that's not logical.

Audience member:

[Unintelligible] before the world was created.

Lloyd Kwast:

Oh, wow. Do you really mean that? Yeah, that's the answer. We have a statement. Now the problem and being creatures of culture, we can't handle it. It's like your problem with an-uh-you know, eternity. Infinitude. How could my significance as a human being begin before the foundations of the cosmos were even laid? Goes back to my first point. It's not so important that I know myself, or even know when I became a significant human being. It's more important to know that I've been known. That I was known. And this is a cosmology that sometimes just leaves us spinning. May I suggest to you, though, it's important for our own Christian life and

worldview to start thinking these thoughts, because it can-it can help us to answer the questions that are coming up more and more about abortion, for example.

[Lloyd Kwast clears throat]

Lloyd Kwast:

Rather than having quick and neat little answers, we grapple and we grope. Or we have the other alternative of ignoring the whole issue, which we're doing by and large, because we don't have the answers. Part of this problem grows out of our own Christian worldview. We haven't been doing our homework. Then finally, and what I will not cover today, but we'll pick up beginning the next lecture, is viewing worldview as a way we put or organize our structure, our frames of reality. This is one of the paradigms I've used the most often here. What frame do you draw around that aspect? For example, if I gave you a list of God, and demons, and spirits, and humans, and cows, and grass, and rocks, and sand, what-what boxes would you draw around those categories? How would you categorize those? Would you put God and Satan in the same one? By and large, we do. Would that horrify somebody from a different culture? Most likely. Would you put cows and women in the same one? Absolutely not. But you wouldn't put cows and grass in the same one either, although cows eat grass.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

Maybe you would. I don't know. How do you draw your categories, and how does the Bible draw its categories? And it has one. I'll give you a-see, I-I do have answers, Mark.

Mark:

Excellent, alright!

Lloyd Kwast:

And you won't like it, because you're gonna be on the wrong box. It's called a sinner.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

A crisis-oriented sinner. Yeah go ahead Tim, I'm just joking with you. I really like you.

[Lloyd Kwast laughs]

Tim:

[Unintelligible] really interesting about this. What they did is they gave you a set of pictures, and asked them to group the pictures according to what things went together, and uh they had things like a chainsaw, a power drill, a pickup truck, some wood, things like that. They said if you give it to any white kid and they put all the power tools together, you put the chainsaw and the drill, all the things together, you put the the wood and the trees, and you put those things together. But when they gave it to the Indians, the Indians put the pickup, chainsaw, and the wood together. They said, why'd you put that together? Why not the car with the power tools? And they said, you put the chains on your pickup to go get wood. And it's just a completely different framework, they saw things and they didn't group it by types of tools, they grouped it by reality of use.

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Mark:

Function.

Tim:

Function.

Lloyd Kwast:

Function. See? Not the form, but the function. Is that legitimate? Now, our intelligence tests--

[Audience member laughs]

Lloyd Kwast:

--Would-would really follow those poor people up. I heard—

[Audio cuts out]