



Seeing a World of Difference

Introduction and Lesson 1

by

Dr. Peter Jones

*Director, [truthXchange](http://truthXchange.org) and
Scholar in Residence, Westminster Seminary California*

Introduction and Lesson 1

Brought to you by the

Blue Letter Bible Institute

www.blbi.org

A ministry of the

Blue Letter Bible

www.blueletterbible.org

Introduction and Lesson 1

In this course, *Seeing a World of Difference*, truthXchange 101, you will discover more detail and a richer understanding of the principles we examined in the Introductory Course, *Only Two Religions*, truthXchange 100. You will remember the definitions we gave for the terms “Oneism” and “Twosim”:

We call the worship of creation Oneism.

Oneism is defined as the worship of creation, where all is one when creation is worshipped and served as divine. In Oneism all distinctions are eliminated and through “enlightenment” Oneism proclaims that man also is divine.



We call the worship of the Creator Twoism.

Twoism is defined as the worship of the divine Creator. All is two when we worship and serve the eternal, personal Creator of all things. In Twoism God *alone* is divine and is distinct from His creation, *yet* through His Son, Jesus, God is in loving communion *with* His creation.

Specifically, this course examines Romans 1 and sets the following goals for Christians faced with a growing flood of pagan spirituality: Analyze, Construct, Communicate. These three areas will be emphasized particularly in the Study Questions, which are for your use in personal reflection or for use in a church or Bible study discussion group. The Study Questions are open-ended and are not a part of the graded True/False and Multiple Choice questions.

Analyze

Christians must use biblical categories to identify and analyze current Oneist cultural trends.

Construct

Christians must use biblical principles to reconstruct their own thinking in every area and to delight in and defend Twoist truth.

Communicate

Christians must be able to live a life of love to God and neighbor and to speak the Twoist truth courageously in an increasingly Oneist world.

In order to accomplish these goals, this course will:

- Strengthen the confidence of intimidated Christians by giving them biblical categories to identify cultural forms of Oneism and to understand the coherence of a Twoist worldview;
- Equip Christian laymen and clergy to distinguish orthodoxy from heresy in the Church;
- Provide a new evangelism approach that encourages non-Christians to consider their Oneist worldview and the power of Twoist truth, in order, God willing, to start a revival of gospel-centered, Twoist witness;
- Encourage Christians to resist the trend to multi-faith **syncretism** and to recover an “antithesis” (One or Two) approach to preaching, scholarship, art, music, literature, science, law and commerce, to the glory of God, the Creator and Redeemer who is blessed forever. Amen.

This course is written from the perspective of Christians in the United States and deals with many particularly North American cultural issues. Nonetheless, in the ministry of truthXchange, we have seen that Christians in other countries easily identify in their own neighborhoods and settings the Oneist influences noted in this course. This is true because the Twoist principles we examine are drawn straight from the Bible, which is “breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). God has given us in his Word everything we need to live and speak truth in our own generation, no matter where we live!

Whether or not you live in the West, you may be discovering that your once-Christian friend is turning to Buddhism; that your young nephew is confused about his sexuality; that your wife is learning worship techniques from a spiritual guide or seeking the help of a witch doctor to heal your child. As you hear your friends and loved ones talk, perhaps you yourself are beginning to wonder if Christianity is too narrow. If these and other such issues are a concern to you, to your friends or to your loved ones, then this course is for you.

How you face these questions or doubts will be determined by your *worldview*—what you think when you’re not even thinking about it! Your worldview is often shaped by your culture, and in the

US, the culture today is not shaped by the Christian gospel in the same way it was a generation or two ago. Christians must not idealize any period in history, and it is not the intention of this course to make you wish for the “good old days.” However, those of you who have never lived in a culture soaked in Christian ideals may have a hard time understanding the shock of those who used to live in a neighborhood soaked in gospel attitudes and principles. I have lived through the revolution of spirituality that occurred in the West since the 1960s, and it is there that I start my story.

Dr. Peter Jones’ Story

John Lennon, famous member of the Beatles rock band, accumulated phenomenal fame, riches and Eastern spiritual experience in his tragically shortened life. Since “money can’t buy you love,” John wrote to a famous TV preacher asking what love *really* is. I knew John before he was asking that question. He was a school friend with whom I played music and skipped out on school from time to time in the 1950s, when we both attended Quarry Bank High School for Boys in Liverpool, England. At age sixteen, I lost contact with John when he left school. At age twenty-three, in 1964, we both arrived in America, though on different planes (in both senses of that word). John would deeply influence modern culture. I would write about it.

After studying in the US for a decade, I got married and accepted a teaching job in France, where I lived for seventeen years with my growing family. When my family returned to the US in 1991, culture shock knocked me flat. I had *never* seen or even read about such radical changes as those I saw! The “Christian” America of my 1960s student days had become not only *post-Christian*, but *anti-Christian*. When I had *first* set foot on American soil, I discovered a nation so Christian that it seemed a taste of heaven. Christian ministers could play golf for free, and that’s the way it will be in heaven—I’m counting on it! Seriously, the change from “Christian” America to “anti-Christian” America is the burning subject of this course. I have watched these momentous events from their beginning to their contemporary fulfillment, and I hope to share with you the changes that have occurred.

How could America, the great twentieth century missionary-sending nation, become the incubator and exporter of the most toxic anti-Christian ideology the modern world has ever seen—all in my lifetime? The ideology we are now exporting is contaminating nations around the world. Our faith and that of our children and grandchildren hangs on how we understand and begin to combat that change.

Not a Frog

Perhaps I noticed cultural trends because I was not the proverbial “frog in the water.” Having left the French “frogs” behind (the English nickname for the French), I was plunged into the scalding waters of the American melting pot, which smelled more like a witch’s brew. I noticed cultural changes in 1991 that are growing in strength by the day. Who of us alive in the 1960s would have believed that a US state (Massachusetts) would sponsor tax-funded programs to teach twelve-year-old children techniques of homosexual sex? I would not have believed it even in 1991, when I began my research and writing. But this, and much like it, has happened. Those born after the 1980s can’t

Seeing a World of Difference

understand how revolutionary these changes are. They assume that our times are normal and that our cultural lot is improving. The older generation, on the other hand, feels confusion and distress. They have lived through the *real* American Revolution, yet are often unable to analyze the change.

Western culture, often called Christendom, is being hijacked by a spiritual ideology that I call Neopaganism, or Oneism.ⁱ The irony is sumptuous. As a culture, Americans have largely freed themselves of any restraining notions of God the Creator, but when they need civic pomposity, they refer to the Declaration of Independence that claims to “hold these truths to be self-evident”—rights “endowed by their Creator,” according to the same document! Apparently, our “rights” include the right to stick our finger in the Creator’s eye! This disjunction between our past and present creates *the* great moment for religious paganism to take political and social power. Christianity as a *social* force is on the decline. By destroying the notion that mankind can save itself through reason and material development, **Postmodernism** has demolished many social structures, just as whole cities are physically turned to rubble in many a war. Now people are hoping for some kind of savior who will clear the rubble we have made of our society—someone who can reconstruct and rebuild something beautiful from the ashes of Postmodernism. Massive economic and environmental problems create fear and stimulate a search for global solutions. Neopagans are the darlings of a variety of movements. They lead the way in the “green” movement, in systems of wealth distribution, in planetary programs for social justice, in solutions to supposedly man-made global warming, in interfaith conferences, in the normalization of all sexual expressions and in the promotion of globalist theories through the United Nations (UN).

Kernels of truth in these theories give politicians and power brokers an excuse to seize geopolitical power. Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, whose wisdom I greatly respect, said in December, 2009:

The freedom to conduct Christian ministry according to Christian conviction [in America] is being subverted and denied before our eyes...The threats to our religious liberties are immediate and urgent...the sanctity of human life, the integrity of marriage, and religious liberty are very much in danger at this very moment.”ⁱⁱ

We have never seen times like this in the United States of America or in the West in general. In the 1950s, the headmaster of my state school in Liverpool, England began every day in the school assembly with a Bible reading and a prayer. In those years, on US soil, the very Christian Moody Science films were disseminated in schools and in the military, and were often aired on television. Times have changed. To celebrate Thanksgiving in 2009, National Public Radio read President Abraham Lincoln’s 1863 Thanksgiving Proclamation—with every mention of God expunged!

ⁱ See Peter Jones, *The Gnostic Empire Strikes Back* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1992) and *Spirit Wars: Pagan Revival in Christian America* (Mukilteo, WA: Main Entry Editions and Winepress Publishing, 1997).

ⁱⁱ See albertmohler.com/2009/11/23/why-i-signed-the-manhattan-declaration.

Disney's Fairies Franchise, aimed at young girls, takes "independence" (from the Creator) to another level. "When kids ask, 'Why do leaves turn color? Why are there dew drops?' the answer they suggest for parents is: 'The fairies did it.'"ⁱⁱⁱ

How Is the Church Faring?

Large sections of the Christian Church, intimidated by this religiously pagan agenda, are responding in ways that endanger a clear pronouncement of the gospel. Christians can begin to believe that the culture's rejection of the Church is due not to the timeless confrontation between God's power and worldly power, but to an overly narrow understanding of the gospel. This attack on the Church comes from the *inside* as well as from the *outside*. The search for cultural approval has led some Christians to modify both their message and their behavior. They criticize the Church of previous generations for focusing on individual salvation at the expense of social justice. They consider the emphasis on sin, repentance and the cross to be faulty because it made Christians forget that God's gospel of love for the world should lead to a this-worldly kingdom that eliminates poverty, disease and war. God should not be known so much through the revelation of biblical truth or through his work of vicarious atonement, but rather through human love and mystical experience.

This reasoning sounds good, especially to Christians who may have fallen prey to God's critique of being "arrogant, overfed, and unconcerned" (Ezekiel 16:49). Defining spirituality as a combination of social justice and mysticism, however, constitutes the essence of the new religious paganism. If you weren't around to see the revolution, you might think these changes come from the usual generational differences. The revolutionaries knew, however, that something major was afoot. In 1965, Barry Maguire's song, *Eve of Destruction* hit the top of the charts. **David Horowitz** and **Peter Collier** (leaders of the Berkeley Students for a Democratic Society) later wrote a book about the 1960s entitled *Destructive Generation*. Bob Dylan caught the "eschatological" character of the times in his 1963 song, "The Times, They Are A-Changin'."

Come mothers and fathers throughout the land,
And don't criticize what you can't understand.
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command.
Your old road is rapidly agin'.
Please get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand,
For the times, they are a-changin'.

This was, as others said, the "Dawning of the **Age of Aquarius**." After centuries of a worldview canopy of biblical Twoism (God is outside his creation), the West is rushing headlong into the brave "new" world of pagan Oneism (God *is* the creation). The New Spirituality loves to go back to the ancient words of pagan philosophers and priests, but Christians must consider the ancient wisdom of the apostle Paul, which turned the world upside down. Paul's gospel shook emperors from their

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://articles.latimes.com/2008/aug/04/business/fi-fairies4/2>.

Seeing a World of Difference

thrones, brought adulterers like Augustine to their knees in repentance and ended the mad dash to generalized sexual perversion and moral decay. If there is any hope for us in the twenty-first century, gorged as we are on materialism, Oneist pagan spiritualities, endless sensual fantasies and cock-eyed global utopian illusions, the old rabbi must speak to us again.

If you have felt the force of this “new” thinking, this course is for you, because the categories of Oneism and Twoism will bring clarity to your situation. Without such penetrating analysis, we cannot wisely answer questions posed by our friends and neighbors. The light offered by the apostle will show that the real issue behind every debate about public policy, personal morality, spirituality, religious truth or the Church’s strategy and message is a very simple one: Is reality one or two? Once you ask and answer this question, you will start “seeing a world of difference.”