

A dramatic sunset or sunrise over the ocean. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, with a bright light source breaking through near the horizon, casting a golden glow. A single lightning bolt strikes down from the upper left. The water in the foreground is dark and textured with small waves.

THE IMMEASURABLE GREATNESS OF
GOD'S MAJESTY & POWER

Introducing Carl F.H. Henry

The year was 1976, the year I graduated from seminary. Word Books in Waco, Texas released the first of six volumes of Carl F.H. Henry's *magnum opus* entitled *God, Revelation and Authority*.

In 1976, Henry was 63 years old, had two earned PhDs in philosophy and theology, was a leading evangelical scholar, had served twelve years at Billy Graham's invitation as the first Editor-in-Chief of *Christianity Today*, had written fourteen previous books, and was influential in the creation of numerous, major evangelical institutions.

He died on National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, December 7, 2003, at the age of 90, and is buried next to his wife in Watertown, Wisconsin. Their gravestone simply reads: "Friends of the King."

A Transformative Meeting

You can imagine my delight, as a young pastor, when I was given the opportunity to spend two hours with Dr. Henry when he traveled to Ft. Lauderdale to give a lecture at Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church. That memorable visit opened a life-long portal for me into the broader world of philosophy, theology, history, science, and apologetics which posed some of the most challenging and important questions anyone can have about authentic religious experience, intelligible divine disclosure, and conjectural alternatives to evangelical Christianity.

In the many years since that life-changing meeting, I have continued to learn from his penetrating and godly mind through the books he left behind, most notably, *God, Revelation and Authority*.

Our Current Concerns

During the current crises we are facing in our nation, I wondered what Dr. Henry would say to us? We have all been impacted and affected in many ways by the events of 2020. As if Covid-19 was not enough, we have concerns and anxieties about the future of our country, the prevalence of Marxist ideology and nihilism in our institutions and culture, daily scenes of violence and mayhem, threats to our liberties, the up-coming election, international relations, blatant and pervasive lying, and the general well-being of our families – just to name a few.

The reports of how people are handling loss, uneasiness, isolation, loneliness, worries, and fears are troubling: increased anxiety, sleepless nights, family breakups, abuse, suicide, depression, grief, and anger. Where, or to whom, can we turn for help?



Surveying the Landscape for Answers

Many have directed their eyes horizontally - looking to man rather than to God - in their search for any signs of hope, security, relief, safety, and reassurance. But how many times have you heard Psalm 11:3 quoted in the past several months? “If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?” This is a voice of despair. If the pillars of social and moral order, truth, law, and justice are destroyed, subverting the basis of society, what can the righteous do who seek peace? “In his chapter entitled *The Meaning or Myths Man Lives By*, Carl Henry notes that even secular scholars “concede that cultural cohesion would crumble without some common convictional framework.” How can a building resting on corroded or deteriorated pillars continue to stand?

A Society Without Consensus

Dr. Henry agrees with the secularists: “When a society as a whole lacks consensus on what is true and sacred, then that society or culture is surely staggering toward intellectual chaos, spiritual deterioration and moral ruin.” It is hard to hear Henry’s assessment of what follows from this downward spiral: “What recede in this instance are truth, value and hope. What looms ever larger is the encroachment of nihilism and despair, an existence empty of any persuasive and enduring sense of the significance and worth of man.”



Edvard Munch
The Scream
1893



Nihilism

The total rejection of prevailing religious beliefs, moral principles, laws, etc., often from a sense of despair and the belief that life is devoid of meaning. Also, more generally, negativity, destructiveness, hostility to accepted beliefs or established institutions (OED).





Chuck Colson

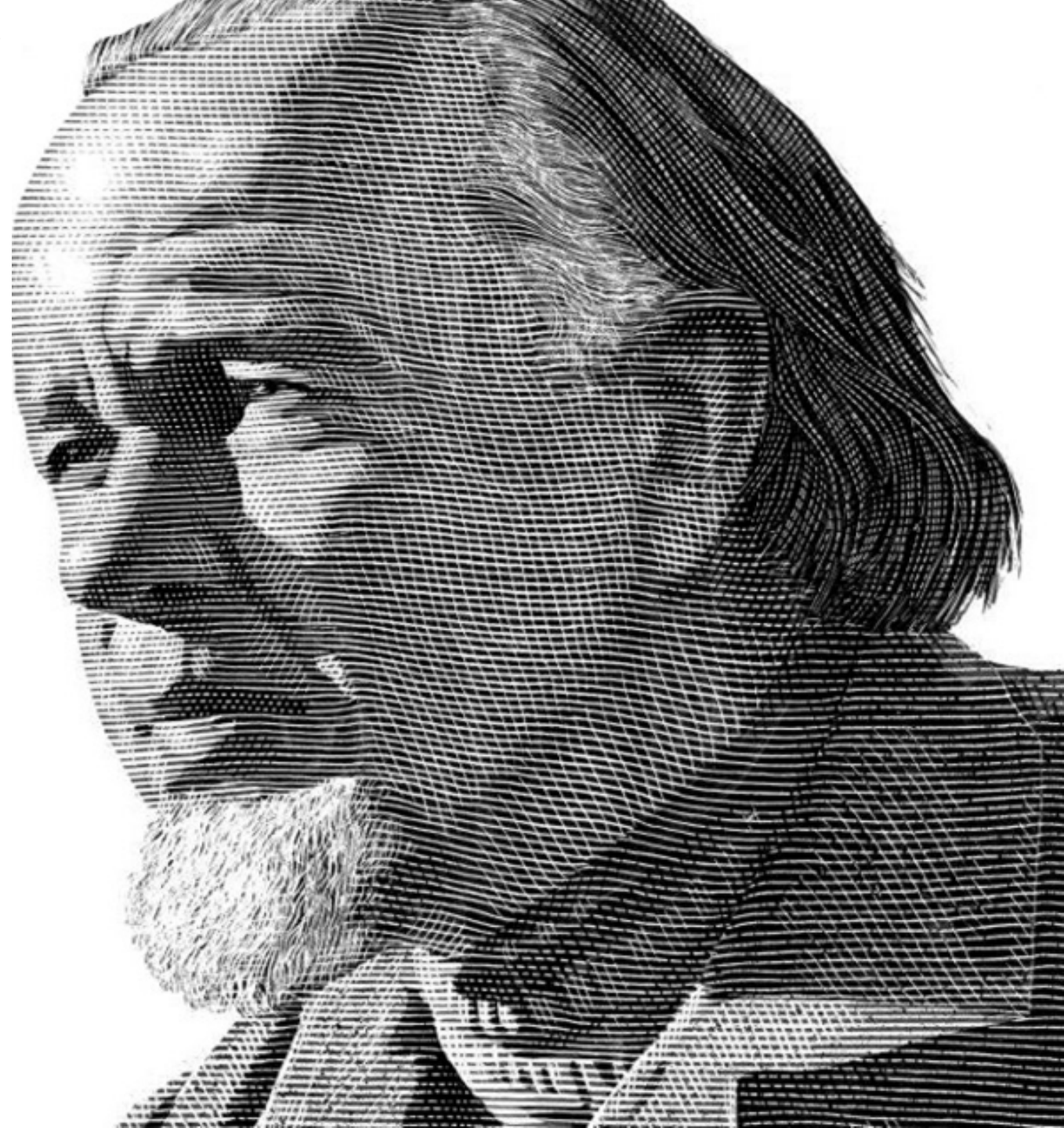
1931-2012

How Shall We Live?

There are two books, similar in title, which ask this important question. Francis Schaeffer asked: ***How Should We Then Live?*** while Chuck Colson and Nancy Pearcey inquired: ***How Now Shall We Live?*** Both offer an analysis of how cultures are formed and decline, and biblical counsel on how we can live *in* the world without being *of* the world. Colson and Pearcey direct believers to live “by embracing God’s truth, understanding the physical and moral order he has created, lovingly contending for that truth with our neighbors, then having the courage to live it out in every walk of life. Boldly and, yes, joyously.”

Francis A. Schaeffer

“As Christians, we are not only to *know* the right world view, the world view that tells us the truth of what *is*, but consciously to *act* upon that world view so as to influence society in all its parts and facets across the whole spectrum of life, as much as we can to the extent of our individual and collective ability.”





A Much-Needed Reminder

In his 1986 book, *Lifeyes: Understanding the Ideas that Shape Society Today*, R.C. Sproul reminds us that “the kingdom of God is real. At this very moment Jesus sits in the seat of cosmic authority. He is now the supreme ruler of the world. He stands over the governments of this world. He is King. The Premier of the Soviet Union must answer to Him. The Dalai Lama of Tibet must answer to Him. The Prince of Morocco must answer to Him. The President of the United States must answer to Him. But there is one big problem. His kingdom is *invisible*. Not everyone knows about it. All over the world people are living as if Jesus were not King.”

A Brief Summary of Their Answers

1. At this very moment Jesus sits in the seat of cosmic authority. He is King. Everyone must answer to Him.
2. We are expected to know the biblical worldview and to act upon it.
3. We should seek to influence society in all its parts and facets across the whole spectrum of life – individually and collectively.
4. We must embrace God's truth and contend for that truth with our neighbors.
5. We must boldly and joyously have the courage to live out the truth in every walk of life.

Why This Series?

Like many of you, I have given much thought to the times in which we are living. I am quite sure that I have been asking many of the same questions that you have been asking. To guide my thinking and to strengthen my trust in our triune God, I have returned again and again to His divine self-disclosure as given to us in Holy Scripture. Over a period of weeks, the Lord began to impress upon my heart my need to examine the Old and New Testaments to discover anew what He has to say about the immeasurable greatness of His majesty and power. Out of my own reflections and meditations on the truth of God's infinite power, I sensed the leading of the Lord to teach on the "thunder of His power" in creation, government, and redemption.

Questions We Will Seek to Answer

1. If God is all-powerful, why do we distrust him so? “Distrust of God implies either that He was always destitute of power, or that His power is exhausted by His former works, or that it is limited, and near a period. It is to deny Him to be the Creator that molded heaven and earth” (Stephen Charnock).
2. If God is all-powerful, why do we fear other people? The fear of man credits the might of man while disrespecting the arm of God.
3. Doesn't God have the sole right to govern the world?
4. Should not the efficacy of God's power give us a passion for worshiping Him?

Questions We Will Seek to Answer

5. If God is all-powerful, why do we trust in ourselves so much? Why do we try every human avenue before turning to God for recourse? Does the ax boast and believe itself to be more mighty than the arm that swings it?
6. If God is all-powerful, why don't we allow ourselves to be easily taken up into the folded arms of Omnipotence?
7. If God is all-powerful, isn't He capable of delivering us from all of our afflictions and distresses? "My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Ps. 121:2).
8. Will not the Almighty God fulfill all of His promises to us?

Questions We Will Seek to Answer

9. When we are confused or don't know which way to go, can't we plead His power and leave the entire matter in His hands? "Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting Rock" (Is. 26:4).
10. Isn't it true that when you have thought all you can think about God's power, your souls will prompt you to conceive something greater than what you have thought?
11. How vast is God's power? Is He capable of doing all things?
12. How does God's power give life to all of His other attributes?
13. What is the difference between God's ordinate and absolute power?



Life-Transforming Truths from John Frame

1. “God wants the doctrine of omnipotence to edify his people (2 Tim. 3:16-17).”
2. “God’s power drives his people to worship.”
3. The doctrine of omnipotence “warns us against governing our lives by our own expectations of what is possible, leaving God out of account.”
4. “What is impossible with men is possible with God” (Lk. 18:27).
5. “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” (Gen. 18:14; Lk. 1:36).
6. “God does for us what we could never do for ourselves” (Is. 55:11).



Life-Transforming Truths from John Frame

7. God “often works behind the scenes, and he often does his most wonderful works through apparent defeats. So he tells Paul, ‘My power is made perfect in weakness’ (2 Cor. 12:9).”
8. “God’s will is anything he wants to happen.”
9. “God’s will is what pleases him.”
10. “God is utterly beyond the descriptive power of human language.”
11. “God controls all things: inanimate objects, the detailed course of nature, events of history, human lives, free human decisions, and even human sins.”

“He stretches out the north star over the void and hangs the earth on nothing. He binds up the waters in His thick clouds, and the cloud is not split open under them. He covers the face of the full moon and spreads over it His cloud. He has inscribed a circle on the face of the waters at the boundary between light and darkness. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astounded at His rebuke. By His power He stilled the sea; by His understanding He shattered Rahab. By His wind the heavens were made fair; His hand pierced the fleeing serpent. Behold, these are but the outskirts of His ways, and how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power who can understand?”

Job 26:7-14