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Christian Ethics-TH604.OA

Week 5 (5-3-1)

**QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the Metanarratives? (p109).
2. What is the Fragmentation of Life? (p113-115).
3. Why is “Tolerance,” considered the great virtue? (p116-118).
4. Why is David Wells, “Losing Our Virtue” so significant? (p120).
5. What is the Triumph of the Therapeutic? (p118-121).

**ANSWERS:**

1. Known as the “grand narrative.” The constructs of a story by using “grand ideas,” that describe the big picture and is how it gives the meaning of life to the story (p109).
2. Derrida believes that there is no single cause behind any event, but instead are many causes. He believes because of the many variables that make up an event, such as from either an individual or a particular society, everything is fragmented to make up a whole and also that it’s in postmodernity (p113-115).
3. Tolerance is considered the great virtue because it is believed that tolerant people tend to value the whole of a person, even their independence and freedom of choice. It’s believed that when one is tolerant then fairness, justice and respect will become primary. It’s also believed that when one is tolerant of others they will not cause harm to them. This is why it’s considered as the great moral virtue (p116-118).
4. It is a tale, by David Wells, where he speaks of two spiritualities: Classical and postmodern. He speaks of how the church is in danger of losing its moral authority that allows it to speak to a culture who is losing its moral compass and standards. The postmodernism has produced a godless culture that is not willing to accept moral standards (p120).
5. Sociologist, Philip Rieff’s analysis of how to shift the framework of the culture for moral life. It is a study of faith, psychology and culture and it tends to analyze what ties them together (p118-121).

## **TERMS:**

**Deconstruction:** Is a process of breaking down, taking apart and analyzing the structure of an objects meaning, especially in the work of fiction and nonfiction, so one can get the original meaning and significance (p109).

**Fragmentation:** Derrida believes that there is no single cause behind any event, but instead are many causes. He believes because of the many variables that make up an event, such as from either an individual or a particular society, everything is fragmented to make up a whole and also that it's in postmodernity (p113-115).

**Logocentrism:** Refers to deconstructing language, the rationality, truth and meaning of words. It is based on the tradition of the western science and philosophy. It's a concept of words that gives the illusion the actual meaning of a particular word has its origin in the structure of reality and at the same time changes the truth part of that structure (p109).

## **SUMMARY:**

According to Hollinger, postmodernism is a new way of thinking that tends to influence and governs moral life and "ethical reflection." "The intellectual tenets are a combination of deconstruction, one questioning metanarratives, the social construct of one's reality, the power of ideas, one's trends in the culture, fragmentation, tolerance being the great virtue and the therapeutic. All of these tenets are designed to transform society's most traditional ethics and morals.

The metanarratives has caused concern among many. It is stated that the modern world is godless and full of pride that threatens the very moral fabric of the postmodern world. Hollinger advises that although the world is changing, for the church to continue to thrive and be the moral fabric of society, they will need to make connections and understand the postmodern world, while not succumbing to its agenda and taking on the postmodern attributes. He quotes from Romans 12:2 which states, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. - Romans 12:2, NIV (p122-123).