I. **Our Biblical Mandate concerning Truth and Error**

A. Know the truth (John 1:14, 17; 8:31–32; 14:6).

B. Be changed by the truth (Rom. 12:1–2; Col. 3:10).

C. Mature in the truth (1 Cor. 14:20; Eph. 4:11–13, 21; Heb. 5:11–6:2).

D. Develop a Christian mind (2 Cor. 10:5b).

E. Present the truth (Eph. 4:15; 2 Tim. 2:15).

F. Defend the truth (1 Pet. 3:15).

G. Discern truth from error (1 John 4:1–6).

H. Avoid contradictions (1 Tim. 6:20–21).

I. Refute error (2 Cor. 10:5a; Titus 1:9; Galatians; Hebrews; Matt. 12:22–29).

II. **Truth vs. Error in Our Culture Today: Some Sample Issues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th>AMERICAN CULTURE</th>
<th>HISTORIC CHRISTIANITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>Views them as hateful, ignorant, bigoted; strives to push them out of the public square</td>
<td>Love good; hate evil; know &amp; proclaim the truth; avoid &amp; refute error; do good to all peoples; engage the culture; expect persecution¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Worldview Assumptions</td>
<td>Assumed as true: naturalism &amp; scientism along with truth as relative (perspectival)</td>
<td>Assumed as true: supernaturalism, revelation, absolutism, &amp; the ultimate compatibility between faith, reason, and experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Nature</td>
<td>Chance product of naturalistic evolution; a social construction; malleable</td>
<td>Designed creation of God; divine image-bearer; fallen &amp; redeemable²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Gender</th>
<th>Elastic &amp; subjectively assigned</th>
<th>Divinely established as male &amp; female&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>Waivers between it as genetically determined &amp; subjectively changeable</td>
<td>Adversely affected by the Fall; only heterosexual orientation a moral good&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Activity</td>
<td>Every kind that’s consensual is good</td>
<td>Only loving heterosexual sex in marriage is good&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Obsessed with group identity (tribes) while exalting self</td>
<td>Defined by Family identity with its Head, Jesus Christ; the self is intrinsically valuable, morally corrupt, and yet redeemable&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Defines us and divides us by race; conflicted over racial differences while asserting racial equality</td>
<td>Only one race—the human race; humanity should not be divided against itself; all humans equal in Christ &amp; as divine image-bearers&lt;sup&gt;7&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Moving toward statism &amp; socialism; the state is the highest authority</td>
<td>God is the highest authority; the state divinely established to uphold the good &amp; punish evil&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### III. How We Can Answer Our Critics

A. Understand our times and how we got here.

B. Build bridges of commonality wherever possible.

C. Probe the issues more deeply and more thoroughly than the critics do.

D. Fairly and accurately restate what the critics believe and why.

E. Expose and refute the errors of the critics, including their self-defeating claims.

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<sup>3</sup> Gen. 1:27.


<sup>5</sup> See Geisler, *Christian Ethics*, chs. 15–16.

<sup>6</sup> Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians; cf. Gen.1:27; 9:6; Jam. 3:8–9.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. 1:27; Mal. 2:10; Acts 17:26; Gal. 3:28.

<sup>8</sup> Consider Jesus’ ministry among the people and his interactions with the religious and political leaders (the Gospels), and the disciples’ ministry among the people and their interactions with the religious and political leaders (esp. Acts). See also Rom. 13:1–7; 1 Cor. 2:6–8; 6:1–8; Rev. 13–18.
F. Use the betrayal of behavior.

G. Focus on fundamentals, not peripherals, and on assumptions, not just stated beliefs and arguments.

IV. **Brief Bibliography on the Issues**

A. **Christians**
   - *It's Dangerous to Believe: Religious Freedom and Its Enemies*, by Mary Eberstadt
   - *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America*, by Richard John Neuhaus
   - *Is Religion Dangerous?,* by Keith Ward
   - *Christ and Culture*, by H. Richard Niebuhr
   - *Christ and Culture Revisited*, by D. A. Carson
   - *The Body: Being Light in Darkness*, by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn
   - *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus’s Essential Teachings on Discipleship*, by Dallas Willard
   - *The Example of Jesus*, by Michael Griffiths
   - *The Christian Mind: How Should a Christian Think?,* by Harry Blamires
   - *Love Your God with All Your Mind: The Role of Reason in the Life of the Soul*, by J. P. Moreland

B. **Major Worldview Assumptions**
   - *Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted in Mid-Air*, by Francis J. Beckwith and Gregory Koukl
   - *Fear of Knowledge: Against Relativism and Constructivism*, by Paul Boghossian
   - *Scientism and Secularism*, by J. P. Moreland
   - *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*, by Alvin Plantinga
   - *Darwin Devolves: The New Science about DNA That Challenges Evolution*, by Michael J. Behe
   - *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, by Norman L. Geisler

C. **Human Nature & Gender, Sexual Orientation & Activity**
   - *When Harry Became Sally*, by Ryan T. Anderson
   - *Soma in Biblical Theology*, by Robert H. Gundry
   - *The Importance of Being Human: Some Aspects of the Christian Doctrine of Man*, by E. L. Mascall
   - *Taking Sex Differences Seriously*, by Steven E. Rhoads

D. Identity & Race
In the Beginning: The Opening Chapters of Genesis, by Henri Blocher
Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled—and More Miserable Than Ever Before, by Jean M. Twenge
The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society, by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.
The Mismeasure of Man, by S. J. Gould
The End of Racism, by Dinesh D'Souza
Shattering the Myth of Race: Genetic Realities and Biblical Truths, by Dave Unander
Blexit.com
Candace Owens, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL0u5uz7KZ9q-pe-VC8TY-w/featured
Race and Culture: A World View, by Thomas Sowell
Wrong on Race: The Democratic Party's Buried Past, by Bruce Bartlett
Reconstruction, 1863–1877: America's Unfinished Revolution, by Eric Foner
From Darwin to Hitler: Evolutionary Ethics, Eugenics, and Racism in Germany, by Richard Weikart

E. Government
The Politics of Envy: Statism as Theology, by Doug Bandow
The Road to Serfdom, by F. A. Hayek
Modern Fascism, by Gene Edward Veith
Animal Farm, by George Orwell
The Black Book of Communism: Crimes, Terror, Repression, by Stephane Courtois et al
The State in the New Testament, by Oscar Cullmann
Protestant Concepts of Church and State, by Thomas G. Sanders
We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition, by John Courtney Murray