



Is Reality Secular?: Testing the Assumptions of Four Global Worldviews

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From Finding Calcutta to Finding Reality

In her new book, *Is Reality Secular?*, Mary Poplin, author of *Finding Calcutta* and professor of education at Claremont Graduate University in California, uproots the reasons why cultures clash so violently in today's society and how our incredibly diverse and often contentious worldviews are often the cause of said clashes.

The disagreements between cultures and their inability to find common ground has become a cause for great concern for many people worldwide. However, few people understand the basic worldviews that are the foundation for these stark differences.

Following her time working with Mother Teresa as outlined in *Finding Calcutta*, Poplin returned home to the States only to begin grappling with these difficult questions as well as the concept of relating her experiences to others. "I was struggling myself to understand the worldviews that operate in the university, the U.S. and the world, particularly as they relate to Christ's teachings," writes Poplin. "I was trying to more fully understand the Christian worldview and those contending worldviews. Then, I realized that most people (Christian or not) do not understand them either."

Is Reality Secular? provides a brief, highly readable explanation of our differences and similarities by looking closely at the worldviews of naturalism, secular humanism and pantheism as seen through the lens of Judeo-Christianity. Poplin demonstrates that there are some principles of these worldviews that overlap with Christianity, some principles that lie outside Christianity and some principles of Christianity that lie outside of the others.

"Mary Poplin has lived out many of the ideologies of the past fifty years—secular humanism, ivory-tower Marxism, radical feminism, New Age spirituality, you name it," writes Jim Sire, author of *The Universe Next Door*. "*Is Reality Secular?* is her penetrating analysis of these ideologies and a brilliant exposition of the profound truths of the Christian faith. A terrific book for undergraduates, grad students and all those who want to be really educated—that is, aware of the sweep of intellectual history, what it has been and is now, and where it should be headed."

Poplin's book combines explanations and details on each of these worldviews, and provides for readers the consequences of holding and acting on them, arguing that the ultimate test of a worldview, philosophy or ideology is whether it corresponds with reality. Since different perspectives conflict with each other, how do we make sense of the differences? And if a worldview system accurately reflects reality, what implications does that have for our thinking and living?

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BOOK DETAILS



Mary Poplin (Ph.D., University of Texas) is a professor of education at Claremont Graduate University in California, where she has served as director of the teacher education program and dean of the School of Educational Studies.

Poplin conducts research inside urban classrooms and schools that promote both justice and accountability. She teaches courses on pedagogy, history and philosophy of education, as well as Christian principles related to these areas. She is also a frequent speaker at Veritas Forums and for both Protestant and Catholic retreats across the country.

“Like many others, I believe an understanding of worldviews is critical for every person and even more critical for Christians because the culture that was formed out of the loins of Christianity is now decidedly non-Christian and in some cases anti-Christian,” writes Poplin. “I hope the book will help Christians and non-Christians simply understand the range of worldview options so that we all can be more conscious of the foundational principles of our thoughts, feelings and actions.”

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