

# Peering Into the Peers

*But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. (Gal. 6: 14)*

*How can you find out what your children really think about a variety of issues, and how can you quickly bring them up to speed on the worldview alternatives - including what and why you believe? Here's one way. First, you give your child a test that identifies how close to or far away from a conservative Christian worldview he or she is. That's Nehemiah Institute's "PEERS" test... If the child scores poorly on the test, he or she then has the incentive to brush up on his or her worldview via this course. (Mary Pride, *Practical Homeschooling*<sup>1</sup>)*

By Lynn & Sarah Leslie

It seems to be a strange quirk of sinful human nature that we are constantly compelled to compare ourselves with one another. In this present generation we use a vast array of gadgets, inventions, and other artful contrivances to make ourselves "better". A massive advertising industry plays off our worst fears - that we might not pass the muster, measure up - that someone else might have beat us to the punch, reached the destination ahead of us, or trumped us in some aspect of life. Enter into this arena the diverse psychobabble industry, publishing books galore that hype our deepest, darkest needs and urges. How can we possibly attain perfection? How can we reassure ourselves that we are "okay"? Let's take that latest magazine survey to see if we are compatible with our husband or wife! Let's try that latest pill, cosmetic, or health food!

Is it any wonder, then, that we turn to psychological testing methods, which we believe are fail-safe and scientific, to reassure ourselves that we, and our children, are "okay"; that we measure up to the expectations of the "experts", whoever they are?

## **Introduction to Testing**

Testing under such educational reforms as Outcome-Based Education (OBE) has been considered offensive to many Christian parents due to its affective nature, i.e., that it assesses a child on attitudes, opinions, values, and beliefs. A significant factor in these tests is that one particular set of attitudes, values, and beliefs is "correct". Children who do not possess the "correct" attitudes may not score well on the test. In "When Johnny Takes the Test",<sup>2</sup> we documented that these attitudinal scores were interwoven and integrated throughout the

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<sup>1</sup> Pride, Mary. "Reviews," *Practical Homeschooling*, Nov./Dec. 1996, p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> Hoge, Anita; Fields, Melanie; and Leslie, Sarah, "When Johnny Takes the Test," *The Christian Conscience*, (Vol. 1, No. 8) Sept. 1995, p. 8-17 (<http://tinyurl.com/lfdrg>). Reprints of this article available for \$1.00 plus a self-addressed, stamped envelope sent to Iowa Research Group, PO Box 449, Ravenna, OH 44266. Elsewhere in *The Christian Conscience* we have profuse documentation as to the modern education reform testing methods mentioned in this section.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and then sent on to a national databank and beyond, with personally identifiable information connecting the test with the student.

Parents may recall taking achievement tests during the days when questions dealt with math or science, such as  $2 + 2 = 4$ . The tests seemed to be objective measures of facts. But were they really? Most asked questions based on an evolutionary model of science. Today's tests have progressed beyond this more obvious bias. These new tests are reflective of the particular philosophical worldviews of the education reformers, past and present. Many Christian parents and their children do not hold these particular worldviews.

In this article we will examine the Use of a particular test, the PEERS Test, published by the Nehemiah Institute of Lexington, Kentucky. This test was given a "four-heart" rating (on a scale of one to five, five being most highly recommended) by Mary Pride in her popular homeschooling magazine<sup>3</sup> and is rapidly gaining in popularity within the homeschooling community. This test, which purports to measure an older child's or adult's "biblical worldview", is also used in church groups and Christian schools. Several friends first brought the PEERS Test to our attention a few years ago because of its similarity to OBE-style tests. When we analyzed the test, we came up with some grave cautions and serious concerns which are delineated in this article.

The PEERS Test is a psychological attitudinal test. In order to discuss this particular test we must first "invent the wheel." In our research over the years on the integration of psychology and theology, we have not encountered a critical examination of the issue of psychological testing methods and assessments. It is therefore necessary to lay the proper groundwork before discussing the merits of the PEERS Test.

## **The Roots of Modern Testing**

The roots of psychological testing go back to the late 1800s, when Sir Francis Galton, James Cattell and Alfred Binet began to attempt to measure things of the mind. Galton, a cousin to Charles Darwin, was interested in the heredity basis for intelligence. Cattell and Binet worked on constructing tests that would predict scholastic achievement. Other names associated with early psychological testing are Jung, Thorndike, Rorschach, etc., which are associated with psychological treatment and counseling. From this early work arose the early intelligence tests and later tests of achievement, intelligence, aptitude, interest and personality.

From the very beginning psychology was wedded to education and neither held to a Christian view of man. William Wundt established the world's first psychological laboratory in Leipzig in 1875. "Wundt asserted that man is devoid of spirit and self-determinism. He set out to prove that man is the summation of his experiences, of the stimuli which intrude upon his consciousness and unconsciousness."<sup>4</sup> It was Wundt who first proposed the concept that education could be a process of exposing students to experiences which would produce certain reactions based on his ideas about stimulating the central nervous system.

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<sup>3</sup> Pride, loc. cit.

<sup>4</sup> Paolo Lionni, *The Leipzig Connection* (Sheridan, OR: Heron Books, 1993), PO Box 503, Sheridan, OR 97378, p. 7. This book is very helpful in providing background information on modern psychology and education, but be forewarned that it is now being sold by the Scientologists.

A number of Wundt's disciples migrated over to America and began to introduce his concepts. Cattell, Wundt's first assistant, was the first to propose that students do not see letters but "word pictures."<sup>5</sup> Cattell was exposed to the ideas of Galton, and "quickly absorbed Galton's approach to eugenics, selective breeding, and the measurement of intelligence."<sup>6</sup> Based on these ideas, Cattell began psychological testing. Later he became head of Columbia University's new psychology department, from which he and others launched psychology into the mainstream of American life. Edward Thorndike was trained directly by Wundt's disciples. He was the first to apply his research on animal behavior to human children, laying much of the groundwork for the later work of B.F. Skinner at Harvard University. Thorndike's ideas about education are quite acceptable in today's reform climate. He was the first to propose the de-emphasis on academics order to train children for "vocational interests and aptitudes."<sup>7</sup>

In the 1930s the early social-psychologists began experimenting on test questions that would determine the attitudes, values and beliefs of a child. Hilda Taba of UCLA, Ralph Tyler of the University of Pennsylvania, and their colleagues took Thorndike's theories in behavioral psychology and designed new ways to integrate these concepts into testing with built-in rewards and punishments.<sup>8</sup> Their work formed the basis modern-day psycho-behavioral assessment tests which test and remediate children "on the basis of what they *believe* (cognitive), not on the basis of what they know (academics)."<sup>9</sup> Ralph Tyler's work was crucial to the development and promulgation of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

The social-psychologists, like John Dewey and other early education reformers, wished to transform society via the vehicle of education and psychology.

At the Dewey School in Chicago, and later at Teachers College of Columbia University, Dewey was able to implement and promote the interchangeability of psychology and education successfully enough to become the leading figure in American education. Yet Dewey, the "Father of American Education," was only one of the practitioners of Wundt's revised psychology who critically transformed American education and, consequently, American life.<sup>10</sup>

Modern psychology has never been separated from modern education - except in the public mind. Both fields of academia have come home to roost in modern reform efforts exemplified by Outcome- Based Education and codified into law by GOALS 2000 and its companion legislation. The chief vehicle for accomplishing reform is the use of a feedback mechanism, i.e., the psychological assessment test. It is testing which gives the reformers a tool upon which to evaluate how an individual progressing towards their goals for society. Rewards and punishments for performance on these tests have been proposed by various reformers and have appeared in state legislation, including depriving a student of a driver's license, financially penalizing schools and teachers - even shutting down schools that aren't up to par.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 23-24.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Eakman, B.K., *Educating for the New World Order* (Portland, OR: Halcyon House, 1991), p. 47.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., see chapter 9, "'Cognitive' versus 'Academic': A Critical Distinction," pp. 65-69.

<sup>10</sup> Lionni, op. cit., p. 20.

<sup>11</sup> Hornbeck, David, "Draft Recommendations to the Business and Education Roundtable," (paper Sept. 19, 1991). In addition to Hornbeck's reform plan for Iowa, he discusses rewards and penalties in the context of assessment tests in other state reform plans he wrote. Driver's licenses have been linked to state assessment performance in several states over the past several years.

## Operational Definitions of Liberalism and Conservatism

Definitions of Conservatism and Liberalism provided by the publisher to text analysts, used in "An Evaluation of the Validity and Reliability of The PEERS Test, by Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., August 1995, Defini05.neh, page 12

### **Liberalism**

Liberalism is a political and economic philosophy emphasizing freedom and equality. Liberals generally hold to a principle that "humans are good" and that most problems are the result of one's environment rather than being caused by any innate evil desires. In addition, liberalism places strong emphasis on social responsibility.

Liberals see the need for frequent and widespread government action to provide the conditions under which individuals can realize their human potential. This includes action in areas such as civil rights legislation and minimum wage, unemployment insurance, old-age pension, health insurance, various other anti-poverty measures, and environmentalism.

Liberals also believe that moral standards are highly personal and come from the natural evolution of humans into "higher" beings; moral standards must necessarily change with time. With respect to moral issues, assuring the rights of individuals is generally viewed as most important even if it requires a concession on the part of the public.

### **Conservatism**

Conservatism (sic) is an attitude or philosophy that places great emphasis on tradition. Conservatism promotes conserving (saving) traditional institutions, values, and ideas. Conservatives seek progress by keeping with proven values of the past.

Political conservatives today believe in the concept of limited government, with government's primary purpose being the provision of defense of the citizens and protection of individual freedoms. They believe, however, that most political and economic problems are basically moral problems and must be addressed first by emphasizing the personal responsibility of those involved rather than by use of governmental action. Moral standards are seen as objective rather than subjective, typically from the Judeo-Christian tradition, and quite static.

Conservatives see a valuable connection between things such as freedom and private property, free enterprise and the talent of individuals, self-government and small, low-financed state and federal governments, and the surrendering of a limited number of individual liberties for the benefit of the public.

"Assessment" has been linked with the idea of a student as "human capital," an offensive reform term which aptly describes the student as a worker in a global economy.<sup>12</sup> An "authentic assessment" requires that the student actually engage in the new desired behaviors; it is a mechanism for ensuring that the new beliefs have taken root. The key to understanding modern assessment, then, is recognizing that it is a measure of human value or worth to society, and will fulfill a vital role in determining each child's future. Those children who do not perform up to par on these tests - meaning they do not exhibit the proper attitudes, opinions, values, beliefs, and behaviors - will be penalized, ostracized, or otherwise denied the privileges of full "citizenship".<sup>13</sup> This is the ultimate consequence of wedding psychology and social psychology to education.

### **Mixing Oil and Water**

Can a Christian utilize psychological tests? Can these tests be incorporated into Christian counseling, schools, and other realms for various purposes? We have already demonstrated that the history of psychological testing is rooted firmly in the modern psychological movement which was ungodly and opposed to the gospel from its inception. Therefore, it would seem logical that those who reject the integration of Christianity and psychology would also reject the use of psychological testing. However, this is not always the case. Most Christians have a very limited understanding of testing and have participated in psychological tests for years without giving it much thought. In fact, because psychological testing has the veneer of being "scientific", most Christians have assumed that these tests were founded upon some kind of truth. But are they "Truth"?

In 1978 Bruce Narramore first postulated that "All truth is God's truth" regarding psychology in the Christian community. His little book, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology*<sup>14</sup> opened wide the doors to evangelical seminaries across the land to accept counseling into their programs of study. Psychology jumped into the realm of the church, and with few exceptions has found a comfortable home to roost. In the 1980s, Martin and Diedre Bobgan began writing against the "psychoheresies"<sup>15</sup> in the church and challenged the various models of integration that began emerging. Explaining why they do not believe that a Christian can integrate the two, Bobgans state:

Psychotherapies and their underlying psychologies constitute religion rather than science. In attempting to change the inner man, they intrude into God's territory. They contradict and interfere with God's means of transforming the inner man. By offering various other means of change, they subvert the Gospel and bypass the Cross and the resurrected life. Because they are man-made, humanistic religions, psychotherapies are religions of works. Paul urged believers to walk in Christ and have nothing to do with worldly means of growth and change. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

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<sup>12</sup> Weatherly, Cynthia, "When Is Assessment Really Assessment?" *The Christian Conscience*, (Vol. 1, No. 9) Oct. 1995, pp. 28-32, 50.

<sup>13</sup> Bobgan, Martin & Diedre, *Competent to Minister: The Biblical Care of Souls* (Santa Barbara, CA: Eastgate, 1996), p. 21.

<sup>14</sup> Narramore, Bruce, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology*, (1979), cited in "The Transformation of the Evangelical Church," by Sarah Leslie, *The Christian Conscience*, (Vol. 1, No. 8) Sept. 1995, p. 19.

<sup>15</sup> The term "psychoheresy" was coined by Martin and Diedre Bobgan to describe the heresy of psychology in the modern church. To obtain their monthly newsletter or order their books, write PsychoHeresy Awareness Ministries, 4137 Primavera Rd., Santa Barbara, CA 93110.

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” (Colossians 2:6-8)<sup>16</sup>

In their book, *Four Temperaments, Astrology & Personality Testing*, the Bobgans examine several tests currently popular among evangelical Christians such as Myers-Briggs and Taylor-Johnson Temperament Analysis (TJTA) tests. Not only do Christians routinely participate in these secular tests, but over the last two decades they have developed their own “in house” tests as well. Many of these tests have no more validity or reliability than the types of questionnaires one might find in a magazine. Yet, great stock is placed in “spiritual gifts” inventories and other analyses of personality and temperament.<sup>17</sup>

## Psychological Tests & Testing

Back to the original question: Are psychological tests “scientific”? Are they “truth”? Before we can adequately address these questions, we must take an academic look at testing.

For perhaps thousands of years teachers and tutors have employed tests as a way to assess if a child has actually learned what the instructor has taught. Does Joey know that  $2 + 2 = 4$ ? A simple mathematical quiz will quickly reveal Joey’s strengths and deficiencies in knowledge of the subject matter. A competent teacher will then review the material with Joey and make sure he learns the answers he has missed. This type of academic test is non-standardized; it is simply a way to find out what Joey has actually learned. This type of fact-based test does not normally conflict with one’s Christian faith.

Curriculum-based tests are standardized, however, and require more scrutiny.

A standardized test is simply one that has fixed directions for administration and scoring, having been constructed by professional test makers and administered to a representative sample of examinees from the population for whom the test is intended.<sup>18</sup>

A curriculum-based test can be completely content-oriented and factual, i.e., it can address only the subject matter in the lesson ( $2 + 2 = 4$ ). Curriculum-based tests move into the psychological or spiritual realm when values, attitudes, and beliefs are incorporated into the material. Questions such as “Did Joey do the right thing when he returned the man’s lost glove?” build morality into a curriculum and teach children a lesson. Of course, there is a right answer to this question based upon the truth contained in the Scriptures, and it is hoped that Joey’s character will be built upon this biblical foundation. Many children in the early years of this country learned to read and study from nothing more than a Bible.

Today, students are being asked to answer curriculum-based test questions that are assigned correct moral answers which are contrary to the values of their traditional parents and/or in direct conflict with the Word of God. For the child, this creates a conflict in

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<sup>16</sup>Bobgan, Martin & Diedre, *Competent to Minister: The Biblical Care of Souls* (Santa Barbara, CA: Eastgate, 1996), p. 21

<sup>17</sup>Bobgan, Martin & Diedre, *Four Temperaments, Astrology & Personality Testing* (Santa Barbara, CA: Eastgate, 1992) see chapters 8 and 9 on psychological and personality testing.

<sup>18</sup>Aiken, Lewis R., *Psychological Testing and Assessment*, Third Ed. (Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, Inc., 1979), p. 7.

worldviews, which can create cognitive dissonance. At this point many children are remediated through continued teaching and testing until they get the “correct” answer. Much of this is presented as academic testing. It is important to recognize that “cognitive” no longer means “academics”, but has more to do with the “intellectual component of values which permits psychologically manipulative curricula to be passed off as ‘basic’ subject matter. . .”<sup>19</sup> In other words, “cognitive” now means demonstrated “beliefs” – beliefs about values.

Testing expert, Dr. Anne Anastasi, defines psychological testing as “essentially an objective and standardized measure of a sample of behavior.”<sup>20</sup> Standardization is defined as “*uniformity of procedure* in administering and scoring the test.”<sup>21</sup> Psychological tests can be given individually, or in groups. An objective test is defined as having fixed scoring criteria; a non-objective test may have scoring criteria but no fixed standard. In our estimation, a portfolio assessment would be an example of a non-objective test since interpretation of the scoring criteria and standards are subject to the bias of the evaluator.

There is a wide range of psychological tests. “An *achievement test* . . . measures knowledge of some school subject or trade, [and] focuses on some school or trade . . . on the examinee’s past behavior – what has already been learned or accomplished. An aptitude test, on the other hand, focuses on the examinee’s future behavior – what the person is capable of learning when given appropriate training.”<sup>22</sup> Both are classified as tests of ability. “*Affective tests* are designed to measure interests, attitudes, values, motives, temperament traits, and other noncognitive aspects of personality.”<sup>23</sup> There are many other types of psychological assessment methods, such as interest surveys, aptitude tests, personality tests, etc. We would get bogged down in this report if we attempted to delineate them all. The point is that these tests have become much a part of mainstream American life in matters such as determining one’s job qualifications, entitling one to a license, and otherwise affecting the life and future of the person taking the test.

There are many complex concepts behind psychological assessment, For the narrow purposes of this article, several terms are relevant. These are statistical terms associated with research methods and not normally part of one's everyday vocabulary, so please bear with us.

**CORRELATION:** Correlation determines “[T]he degree to which two sets of measures, such as intelligence and academic achievement are related. The degree of relationship between two variables is expressed as a numerical index known as the *correlation coefficient*.”<sup>24</sup> This measurement only indicates if something is related, it does not mean that one thing caused another.<sup>25</sup> Intelligence tests have a high correlation to academic achievement test results, for example.

**RELIABILITY:** Is a test reliable? “[T]he concept of the *reliability* of a test refers to its relative freedom from unsystematic errors of measurement. A test is reliable if it measures consistently under varying conditions that can produce measurement error.”<sup>26</sup> It is safe to say

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<sup>19</sup> Eakman, op. cit., p. 69

<sup>20</sup> Anastasi, Anne, *Psychological Testing*, (New York, NY: Macmillan, 1976), p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>22</sup> Aiken, op cit., p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

that having a "bad hair day" can alter the results of test scores. Reliability tells how much the results can change. Cronbach's internal consistency alpha was the method used to determine the reliability of the PEERS Test, which means that answers to similar test questions were compared to each other to verify that responses were consistent.

**VALIDITY:** Does the test measure what it claims to measure? This is what is called validity. For our purposes in the analysis of the PEERS Test, we shall consider the type of validity that was used in its evaluation: construct validity. "The construct validity of a test is the extent to which the test may be said to measure a theoretical construct or trait. Examples of such constructs are intelligence, mechanical comprehension, verbal fluency, speed of walking, neuroticism, and anxiety."<sup>27</sup> In the case of the PEERS Test - does it measure "the abstract construct of worldview"<sup>28</sup>

We will return again to these terms when we examine the PEERS Test and its evaluation. But, back to the original questions. Are psychological tests "truth"? Are they scientific?

## The Problems With Testing

Psychological tests are not exact. There are many variables, all of which can contribute to differing outcomes. "Any influences that are specific to the test situation constitute error variance and reduce test validity."<sup>29</sup> Influence can include such variables as test administration, location, preparation, testing conditions, rapport, test anxiety, previous experience taking tests, and other examiner and situational variables.<sup>30</sup> Tests can be improperly administered, procedures can be altered, people can be coached and test results can be misinterpreted or misapplied. Tests may be culturally biased and discriminate against a group, such as minorities, i.e., "[d]ifferences in experiential backgrounds of groups or individuals are inevitably manifested in test performance."<sup>31</sup> Literally anyone can construct a psychological instrument, but this doesn't mean that it is valid, reliable -- or even credible! Magazine surveys are a classic example.

In addition, human behavior is simply not as measurable, quantifiable, predictable, or consistent as psychologists would like. A test can predict that a certain person might act a certain way in a certain situation. But human nature being what it is, there is a distinct possibility that the person won't act that certain way. Psychological testing requires that specific definitions be used. It utilizes pre-set parameters, hypothetical situations, and reliance upon human self-reporting. One can never say anything for certain in psychological testing, like  $2 + 2 = 4$ . There are too many unknown variables. "Tests of ability and personality have . . . been denounced as promoting a narrow and rigid classification of people according to supposedly static characteristics."<sup>32</sup>

Finally, affective psychological tests have unresolved ethical issues and privacy matters. They also carry additional baggage:

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<sup>27</sup> Anastasi, p. 151.

<sup>28</sup> Brian, D. Ray, Ph.D. "An Evaluation of the Validity and Reliability of the PEERS Test," (paper, Aug. 1995), p. 3.

<sup>29</sup> Anastasi, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., see pages 32-44.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 58.

<sup>32</sup> Aiken, op.cit., p. 274.

[T]he psychometric qualities of personality tests... frequently leave much to be desired. Criterion-based inventories tend to have higher validities than other assessment procedures, but, even so, the validity coefficients often decrease substantially when the inventories are applied in situations other than the ones in which they were devised. Also, the psychiatric labels and other categories on which certain instruments are scored are rather unreliable in themselves.<sup>33</sup>

The social "sciences" and psychology have long yearned for the respectability of the other disciplines, and have touted themselves as science for many decades. But both fields arose out of the same humanistic cesspools of the last century. In discussing the shift to modern "naturalistic" or "materialistic" science, Francis Schaeffer warned:

When psychology and social science were made a part of a closed cause-and-effect system, along with physics, astronomy and chemistry, it was not only God who died: Man died. And within this framework love died. There is no place for love in a totally closed cause-and-effect system. There is no place for morals in a totally closed cause-and effect system. There is no place for the freedom of people in a totally closed cause-and effect system. Man becomes a zero. People and all they do become only a part of the machinery.<sup>34</sup>

## A Reformed Response

Rev. Paul Armes

**The Old Testament laws were necessary to govern Israel until the arrival of the Messiah. However, we are now governed by the Holy Spirit through grace and are not bound to any kind of Old Testament law.** --Question # 42 from the PEERS Test.

In the first book of the Bible it is taught that God gave to Adam a law wherein it was agreed between the two parties that if he kept it he would have eternal life and if he broke it he would receive eternal death. Adam had the power and ability to keep this agreement (or covenant). Though Adam fell into transgression, this law that he was given continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness and as such was delivered by God in ten commandments.

Besides this law, commonly called moral, God gave to the people of Israel as a church under age, ceremonial laws containing several typical ordinances; partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth diverse instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament. (*Westminster Confession of Faith*, ch. 19, sec. 3)

To them also, as a body politic, he gave sundry judicial laws [civil] which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require. (*Ibid.*, ch. 19, sec. 4)

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 283.

<sup>34</sup> Schaeffer, Francis A., *How Should We Then Live: The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1976), pp. 147-148.

The moral law is still in force today for Christ in speaking of the two great commandments in Mt. 22:37-40 said that, *on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*. He did not say that the law was cut off, but that it hangs and so it is unified to the teachings of the New Testament (see also Mt. 5:17-19)

It uses then are to inform men of holy nature and will of God (Rom. 7:12); of their duty, binding them to walk accordingly (James 2:10, 11); to convict them of their inability to keep it, and of the sinful pollution of their nature, hearts, and lives (Rom. 3:20), to humble them in the sense of their sin and misery (Rom. 3:23) and thereby help them to a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ and of the perfection of his obedience (Gal. 3:21, 22; Rom. 10:4; see also *Westminster Confession of Faith, Larger Catechism*, Q. 95).

The law is of a special use to the unregenerate in that it either draws them to place their faith in Christ (1 Tim. 1:9, 10; Gal. 3:24) or it leaves them inexcusable and under the curse (Rom. 1:20; Gal. 3:10). It has special use to the regenerate in that it shows them how much they are bound to Christ for his fulfilling it and enduring the curse thereof in their stead and for their good (Gal. 3:13, 14; Rom. 8:3, 4); and so provokes them to more thankfulness and greater care to conform themselves to it as a rule for their obedience (Rom. 7:22, 12:2; Titus 2:4-14; also *Westminster Confession of Faith, Larger Catechism*, Q. 97).

These previously mentioned uses of the law are not contrary to the grace of the gospel, but “do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the law requires to be done.” (*Westminster Confession of Faith*, ch. 19, sec. 7; see also Gal. 3:21; Ez. 36:27; Heb. 8:10; Jer. 31:33)

Therefore the question at issue begs many questions to be asked and assumes many errors. The first sentence does not grasp the nature of Old Testament law. The second sentence assumes that Old Testament saints were void of grace and that moral law is of no effect in the New Testament. It has been shown that the moral law is still in effect, it being written on tablets of stone teaches its lasting significance. Old Testament saints were also saved by the same principles as those in the New. King David speaks to that when quoted by Paul in Romans 3:6-8. The agreement (or covenant) within the Godhead to save some of the lost through grace was made in eternity past (Rev. 13:8) and had all saints of all ages in mind. A gospel preached without law is a false gospel because by law comes the knowledge of sin which then draws the sinner to saving grace offered in Christ. These antinomians who cast off God’s law in effect replace it with their own man made ones and by these make judgments as to whether souls shall go to heaven or hell. Representative of this are Papists, Amish, Mennonites, the cults and any other ordinances of men contrary to the sound teachings of the Scriptures. In doing this the individual becomes entrapped in a system of legalism to which there is no end nor any salvation.

Psychological testing is performed with statistical formulas, yet none are exact or perfect. The fact remains that these instruments are crude, insufficient and inadequate. They are not “Truth”. They are not Absolute. They are not Absolute Truth. They are not founded upon the Word of God, but on a shaky man-centered foundation that shifts whichever way the wind blows. Should Christians employ such psychological instruments, even if they claim to be “biblical”? An analysis of the PEERS Test will shed some light on the problems inherent in trying to measure one’s faith with a psychological attitudinal test.

# A Baptist Response

Pastor David Pitman

**The Old Testament laws were necessary to govern Israel until the arrival of the Messiah. However, we are now governed by the Holy Spirit through grace and are not bound to any kind of Old Testament law.** -- Question #42 from PEERS Test

This question is flawed in its approach to the law. There are three kinds of laws in the Old Testament. There are ceremonial laws governing sacrifice and worship; there are civil or national laws governing Israel; and there are moral laws governing and guiding all men. Ceremonial laws have no present application because Christ has fulfilled the type and picture of the ceremonies. Civil laws have ceased with the dispersion of the Jews; modern Israel is not the theocracy or monarchy of the Old Testament. The moral laws of the Old Testament, for example, the Ten Commandments, are still in force today as revelations of God's character and as rules for man's conduct.

This question is flawed in its application of the law. It implies that all Old Testament laws are unnecessary and suggests that the Holy Spirit governs without principles or requirements. It is true that the Holy Spirit enables the born again believer to obey and to fulfil the law. It is also true that the Holy Spirit produces the love that causes the believer to reach the goal of moral laws.

This question is flawed in its appreciation of the law. The law was never intended to save. It is a schoolmaster that we might know that we are lost and that we fall short of God's glory. Old Testament saints were saved by grace through faith in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Baptists believe that there is a great harmony between the moral law and the gospel. The New Hampshire Confession of Faith in Article 13 says,

We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just, and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.

The moral laws of God will never cease; they will always be testimonies to the Holiness of God. This question is flawed in its approach, in its application and in its appreciation of God's laws.

## **Addendum from the 1689 London Confession of Faith, Chapter 19, Of the Law of God**

1. God gave to Adam a law of universal obedience written in his heart, and a particular precept of not eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil;(Gen. 1:27; Eccl. 7:29) by which He bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience;(Rom. 10:5) promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.(Gal. 3:10,12)

2. The same law that was first written in the heart of man continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness after the fall,(Rom. 2:14-15) and was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two tables, the four first containing our duty towards God, and the other six, our duty to man.(Deut.10:4)

3. Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, His graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; (Heb. 10:1; Col. 2:17) and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties,(1Cor. 5:7) all which ceremonial laws being appointed only to the time of reformation, are, by Jesus Christ the true Messiah and only law-giver, who was furnished with power from the Father for that end abrogated and taken away.(Col. 2:14,16-17; Eph. 2:14,16)

4. To them also He gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any now by virtue of that institution; their general equity only being for modern use.(1Cor. 9:8-10)

5. The moral law doth for ever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof, (Rom. 13:8-10; Jas. 2:8,10-12) and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it;(Jas. 2:10-11) neither doth Christ in the Gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.(Mt. 5:17-19; Rom. 3:31)

6. Although true believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned, (Rom. 6:14; Gal. 2:16; Rom. 8:1; 10:4) yet it is of great use to them as well as to others, in that as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; discovering also the sinful pollutions of their natures, hearts, and lives, so as examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against, sin;(Rom. 3:20; 7:7-25) together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ and the perfection of His obedience: it is likewise of use to the regenerate to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin; and the threatening of it serve to shew what even their sins deserve, and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curse and unallayed rigour thereof. These promises of it likewise shew them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof, though not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works; so as man's doing good and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law and not under grace. (Rom. 6:12-14; 1Pet. 3:8-13)

7. Neither are the aforementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the Gospel, but do sweetly comply with it, (Gal. 3:21) the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God, revealed in the law, requireth to be done. (Eze. 36:27)

## **The PEERS Test**

The PEERS test is published by the Nehemiah Institute, Inc. The test itself says that it is designed to measure your 'worldview philosophy' in five primary areas of interaction . . . Politics, Economics, Education, Religion and Social Issues (PEERS). The test will also reflect your opinion regarding the amount of direct government involvement needed in personal lives.<sup>35</sup> The students rate each of 70 test questions on a five-point Likert scale, from Strongly

<sup>35</sup> Nehemiah Institute Inc., "The PEERS Test: A World View Opinion Survey," 1994, p. 2.

Disagree through Strongly Agree. The recommended age level for taking this test is junior high to adult. According to a review of the test, the cost for the student edition is \$24.50 and teacher guide is \$8.50.<sup>36</sup> The curriculum contains a numbered copy of the PEERS test and is entitled *Developing a Biblical Worldview: An introductory course to basic Christian philosophy*.

The test is designed to be administered to groups or individuals. Groups or associations are assigned a code and there is a test version code. Completed tests are sent to the Nehemiah Institute for scoring. In addition to test answers, Nehemiah also collects data on the following: name, address, social security number, test date, gender, ethnic group, age, education, occupation, income, political affiliation, religion, and high school data. There is no explanation of why this personal data is collected, but we can surmise that Nehemiah uses the statistical information gathered to promote and sell the test to various groups.<sup>37</sup> There are no statements in the manual, or on the test itself, that absolutely guarantee privacy or confidentiality of test scores. However, there is a "PEERS Confidentiality Policy" which one can obtain that states: "It is a policy of Nehemiah Institute, Inc., to not reveal PEERS Test results to other than those in a 'need to know' position." The statement goes on to say that the data results are presented "in summary format only" and that the data at their office is "kept secured and accessibly only to employees on a need to know basis."<sup>38</sup> We are not told exactly who is in a "need to know" position. It is not known if PEERS Test data is scored by a subcontractor. It is also not known if the PEERS Test data is purchased by, or available to, subcontractors or entities other than Nehemiah Institute for research or alternative purposes.

Who actually authored the PEERS Test? A test of this nature would require a great deal of academic expertise in its construction. The names Daniel J. Smithwick and Dennis L. Woods, M.R.E. appear on the title page as authors of the student manual in which the test is contained. A brochure advertising the PEERS Test states that the test is "Scientific, Accurate and Professional." It further states that "This test has undergone years of research and refinement, and is computer scored and evaluated for unbiased accuracy."<sup>39</sup> Other material from Nehemiah Institute states:

After an eight year development and 'beta test' period of Biblical worldview testing, Nehemiah Institute is now offering this unique assessment service to Christian educators through out the United States and Canada. Other organizations working with the Institute in developing the final product were Summit Ministries, Manitou Springs, CO and the Foundation for American Christian Education, Chesapeake, VA.<sup>40</sup>

In addition to being marketed to Christian schools and homeschools, the test is also being sold to teachers, churches, and Sunday School classes. The test is marketed in a highly unusual manner. Nehemiah Institute recruits independent contractors who gain exclusive marketing rights to the test in assigned areas, such as telephone area codes. These individuals earn a commission on test sales of 40-55%, depending on their sales volume. Nehemiah also advertises in Christian publications such as *World* magazine and *Practical Homeschooling*. In

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<sup>36</sup> Pride, loc. cit.

<sup>37</sup> Wolfe, Charles Hull, Ph.D. "New Tests in 12 Schools Validate Principle Approach," *ASCI Today*, (Vol. 1, No. 2.), Fall 1994. The information contained in this article concerns the statistical uses of the test.

<sup>38</sup> "PEERS Confidentiality Policy", Nehemiah Institute letterhead.

<sup>39</sup> "The PEERS Test: Biblical Worldview Testing," Nehemiah Institute brochure.

<sup>40</sup> "PEERS Independent Representative Packet," Nehemiah Institute letterhead. Note: Cindy Weatherly reports that the PEERS Test is also used in New Zealand.

order to sell the PEERS test, an independent representative must take the PEERS test and score “a minimum composite score of 70.”<sup>41</sup> In other words, they must possess the correct “biblical worldview.”

### What Is Worldview?

The PEERS test is an attitudinal psychological test that purports to measure someone's “biblical worldview”. A brochure describes the method: “To use the PEERS Test as a diagnostic tool in Christian education to identify and help correct weaknesses in Biblical thinking about our world.”<sup>42</sup> The test deals with “values, attitudes, and beliefs.”<sup>43</sup> The term “worldview” has to do with one's “views of life” and it is predicted that through the course that the student will be “making changes in . . . personal views and behavior . . .”<sup>44</sup> The test itself states that it will measure “how opinionated you are (conviction of beliefs) and how consistent you are in your philosophy of life.”<sup>45</sup>

Worldview is defined in the third lesson of the student manual:

“In simplest terms, a worldview is a set of beliefs about the most important issues in life.”<sup>46</sup>

“The term worldview refers to any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement, or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God and the world. Specifically, a worldview should contain a particular perspective regarding each of the following ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history.”<sup>47</sup>

The Christian worldview in the curriculum is contrasted to the worldviews of Socialism, Secularism, Pragmatism, Pantheism, Materialism, Existentialism, Marxism, and Hedonism. In her review, Mary Pride notes: “Islam, Hinduism, nationalism, and some other `isms' are missing from this list, as is the most prevalent worldview in today's Western world, namely, the `psychological' worldview.”<sup>48</sup> This is an important point, because PEERS' construction is *based* upon the psychological worldview. In stating why it is necessary to examine (test) one's “attitudes and beliefs”<sup>49</sup> and compare them, the student manual uses a number of Bible verses that contain the word “examine” (in the English translations) in the context of examining one's Christian walk. This begs the question: How did believers for thousands of years “examine” themselves before 20th century psychological testing methods? (See sidebar, p. 16)

During Session 4, the scored test is returned to the student. The test states that the student will receive a report that provides “a numerical rating on each of the five subject areas, a

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Brochure, loc. cit.

<sup>43</sup> Ray, op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> Smithwick, Daniel J. and Woods, Dennis L., M.R.E., *Developing a Biblical Worldview: An introductory course to basic Christian philosophy* (Lexington, KY: Nehemiah Institute, Inc., 1994), Session I, p. 4.

<sup>45</sup> PEERS Test, op. cit., p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> Smithwick, Sessions 2 & 3, p. 5. This quote is attributed to Ronald H. Nash, *Worldviews in Conflict*, (This quote is attributed to Ronald H. Nash, *Worldviews in Conflict*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1992), p. 16.

<sup>47</sup> Smithwick, Ibid. This quote is attributed to David Noebel, *Understanding the Times*, (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 1994), p. 8.

<sup>48</sup> Pride, loc cit.

<sup>49</sup> Smithwick, Session IV, p. 1. The statement reads, “The PEERS Test is simply one way in which we can evaluate how our attitudes and beliefs compare to biblical principles.”

Limited-Government rating, and a Composite Score rating.”<sup>50</sup> Each student is provided with their incorrect answers, and if they took the test in a group, the group is provided with the top six incorrect answers. The group is then able to place each missed question into its proper context on grids which show them where they have missed the boat in exhibiting a correct worldview.

It is important that the reader understand that this worldview “opinion” test has **correct and incorrect answers**. The 5-point Likert scale (strongly agree, tend to agree, neutral, tend to disagree, strongly disagree) employed by the test is used in psychological testing to ascertain attitudes. This Likert scale is weighted with right and wrong responses. Who has determined the rightness or wrongness of each answer? The test publisher? A panel of judges? We are not told. “This scoring method measures the *intensity* of the person's *conviction*, and thus, the likelihood of his becoming influential either on the conservative or the liberal side of issues.”<sup>51</sup>

The purpose of the test's accompanying curriculum is to remediate (our word choice) the missed answers and to teach the proper worldview. After each lesson there is a post-test which re-assesses the student(s) on the subject matter. This fact is touted by Jeff Myers of Summit Ministries in a letter of recommendation that is sent out from Nehemiah Institute. “[H]ave you thought about conducting a ‘before’ and ‘after’ test of your worldviews class?”<sup>52</sup> There are a total of 17 lessons which guide the student through fill-in-the-blanks. The teacher edition has the correct answers to guide the student to a more complete understanding of the “biblical worldview.”

### **What Does the PEERS Test Measure?**

In conducting our review of the test we also examined a document entitled “An Evaluation of the Validity and Reliability of the PEERS Test,”<sup>53</sup> prepared by Dr. Brian D. Ray, Ph.D., a well-known homeschooling expert who collects and disseminates statistical data on homeschooling and related issues. Dr. Ray founded the National Home Education Research Institute in 1990, a non-profit corporation, which makes its research available to legislatures, courts, education publications, etc. Dr. Ray's name also appears on the letterhead of the Nehemiah Institute as a member of the Advisory Council. This close association between Dr. Ray and the Nehemiah Institute does cast a shadow on the unbiased objectivity of his evaluation of the PEERS Test, and this should be kept in mind when considering his analysis. The purpose of this type of evaluation is to give the test additional credibility within psychological circles.

To evaluate the PEERS, Dr. Ray assembled a panel of ten “experts” with varying “worldviews.” There is a very brief description of the panelists to assure the reader that they came from a broad spectrum of perspectives about worldview. These panelists were provided with several operational definitions of liberalism and conservatism (see sidebar, p. 8). Dr. Ray explains:

The publisher believed that the operational definitions were valid for guiding the evaluation of

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<sup>50</sup> PEERS Test, loc. cit.

<sup>51</sup> Wolfe, op. cit.

<sup>52</sup> Letter dated Oct. 1994, “Understanding the Times, A Division of Summit Ministries” letterhead.

<sup>53</sup> Ray, loc. cit.

the validity of the instrument's items. The publisher believed that the definition of conservatism (sic) represented a biblical Christian worldview. They were then supposed to decide whether each of the 70 items on the test would identify the strength of a person's liberalism or conservatism. That is, would a person's response to a given item indicate whether the person favors a liberal or conservative worldview?<sup>54</sup>

Is the PEERS test “valid”? According to Dr. Ray:

A substantial majority of the experts agreed that the large majority of the items were valid. At least 70% of the experts decided that 83% of the items would identify worldview as defined by the publisher. The general agreement among the experts supports the validity of the test.<sup>55</sup>

Is the PEERS Test “reliable”? Dr. Ray answers:

Using Cronbach's internal consistency alpha method of analysis (with a scale of 0.0 to 1.0, and 1.0 being the highest reliability), the PEERS Test overall alpha rating was .94. This evidence indicates that the reliability of the PEERS Test is very good.<sup>56</sup>

If these statistics were derived honestly, then the PEERS test does a good job of measuring what it purports to measure and does so accurately. This becomes an important point. What exactly does the PEERS test measure? What does it purport to measure? It is much more than simply a “biblical worldview”. Dr. Ray explains the confusion and difficulty that the experts had with their review of the test instrument items:

Some of the experts thought that there was some ambiguity regarding whether the instrument's purpose was to measure worldview in terms of certain “nonreligious” or “non-philosophical” realms (e.g., politics and economics) versus the religious or philosophical realms. In other words, it appears that some of the experts thought that a person can have a biblical Christian worldview and simultaneously be a political liberal, while they perceived that the test publisher did not believe this to be possible. The publisher suggests that a consistent biblical Christian worldview can and should translate into a philosophy that has practical effects and relatively predictable, principled applications in all areas of life . . . Some of the experts, however, did not seem to share this belief. This dichotomy in philosophy, therefore, generated some cautionary comments by some of the experts.

Some of the experts believed that the operational definitions of “conservative” and “liberal” that guided the instrument were too polemic or in some ways not representative of typical or “mainstream” liberals or conservatives.<sup>57</sup>

Does the test publisher equate modern American conservative political views with Christianity? In the introduction to the test, the publisher acknowledges that it will “reflect your opinion regarding the amount of direct government involvement needed in personal lives.”<sup>58</sup> The curriculum teaches the following: Biblical Principles of Politics, Biblical Principles of Economics, Biblical Principles of Education, Biblical Principles of Religion,

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<sup>54</sup> Ray, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>58</sup> PEERS Test, loc. cit.

Biblical Principles of Social Issues (from whence the acronym PEERS arises). The content of the curriculum teaches that there is a *proper* biblical understanding of each of these areas, and in some cases equates these views to modern conservatism. (Two over-simplified statements by David Noebel of Summit Ministries provide examples: “The Christian worldview embraces democratic capitalism . . . and “Clearly, the only economic system the Christian can accept while remaining practical and consistent with his worldview is free enterprise.”<sup>59</sup>)

One method to ascertain the answer to this question is by looking at the statistical table of reliability coefficients for total PEERS Test and its five subscales.<sup>60</sup>

Scale	Alpha	# of Items	#of cases
<b>Total</b>	<b>.9429</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>373</b>
Politics	.8265	14	374
Economics	.7989	14	373
Education	.8201	14	374
Religion	.6475	14	374
Social Issues	.7768	14	373

Because psychological attitude tests normally have low reliability scales, the .9429 score means that the PEERS Test is abnormally high. The *lowest* reliability score can be found in the religion category, which is what the test is supposed to measure. The *highest* score in an individual category is in the politics category, which means that the test is a better predictor of one's political orientation than one's religious orientation. A correlation of .6475 predicts/accounts for just over 36% of the “variance” of religious behavior of test takers; it accounts for about 65% of the political behavior of the test takers. In other words, *the PEERS Test more accurately measures one's “political worldview!”*

### The Hard Questions

This fact brings us back to the point that the test is scored in a computer databank. As we noted above, private attitudinal information is divulged by the person taking the test, and the test is personally identifiable; that is, things like social security number, test number, address, etc. are provided by the test-taker. We would hope that a Christian test publisher would have more integrity than our own government, which we have already demonstrated is willing to conceal the extent to which children's NAEP test scores are personally identifiable and sent out to subcontractors.<sup>61</sup> However, we feel we must raise some difficult questions at this point.

First, this information would be very valuable to a political party or a candidate running for office. This is because the test is a better predictor of one's political orientation, and in fact the test includes a question that asks about one's political party affiliation. Attitudinal tests like these have also been shown to be valuable for businesses marketing certain products, charities soliciting funds, and others who wish to profit from knowing someone's personal opinions and/or political beliefs. Is personally identifiable information on children and adults taking this test being passed along to subcontractors? Parents should ask!

<sup>59</sup> Smithwick, Sessions VII & VIII, p. 8.

<sup>60</sup> Hoge, et. al., loc. cit.

<sup>61</sup> Myers letter, op cit.

Second, Christian parents and schools administrators are putting great stock in this test to find out if their children have a “biblical worldview.” Much emphasis is put on the comparison value of the test. One promotional piece calls the test “A measuring stick to see how your students match up against others around the country.”<sup>62</sup> Christian schools utilizing certain curriculum can compare how they are doing against Christian schools using another curriculum or model. Some examples of this were published in 1996 in *ACSI Today*, the publication of the Association of Christian Schools International:

... last winter came Nehemiah Institute's PEERS Test, assessing the Biblical worldview of Christian students in public schools, Christian schools, and a Principle Approach Christian school. The idea was to compare the schools' ability to develop a distinctly Scriptural way of thinking about all of life, including government, economics, and social issues, in the minds of 11th and 12th grade students.

Said researcher Daniel Smithwick, director of Nehemiah Institute, “What impressed me most was that the difference between the scores of the Principal Approach Schools and the other Christian Schools was even greater than the difference between the other Christian schools and the public schools.”<sup>63</sup>

Few parents and educators will be privy to Dr. Brian's Ray's caution in his evaluation of the test: “As with any instrument, however, great caution should be used with respect to making major decisions (and especially those that might affect the individual's personal life) regarding an individual based solely upon the results of that individual's score on the PEERS Test.”<sup>64</sup> We would hope that major life decisions for children are not being made by parents based upon their child's results on this psychological test.

There is danger when this test is used as a “litmus test” for one's “biblical worldview.” Children and adults who do not pass questions on the test are taught the correct “biblical Worldview” throughout the curriculum, which is to be read aloud word for word, with fill-in-the-blanks --- a teaching method designed to keep a student's attention and maximize subject material retention. Just what worldview are these people being taught? Are children being taught the worldview of their parents? Are adults being taught the worldview of their church? Not necessarily.

A number of questions on the test demonstrate doctrinal bias. We have included one such question in the sidebars on pages 11 and 12, illustrating how two different branches of Christianity might answer this question. As you can see, the respondents had difficulty with the structure of the question itself. There is a correct answer for this question on the PEERS Test, but it may not reflect the biblical doctrines which you have taught your children. Is the test doctrinally (theologically/culturally) biased against those children who do not hold the views of the test publisher? Do you want your child to participate in the 17-week curriculum which remediates their attitudes and beliefs to conform to the “biblical worldview” of the publisher?

Finally, there are questions on the test for which there are no simple, cut-and-dried

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<sup>62</sup> Wolfe, op cit.

<sup>63</sup> Ray, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>64</sup> Weatherly, Cynthia. “From SPIRITUALIST to Spiritual TWIST?” *The Christian Conscience*, (Vol. 2, No. 10) Nov. 1996, p. 64-65.

answers. For example, how does one respond “simply” to the following issues-laden, test questions?

- All religious belief is personal and should never be imposed on others, particularly on children.
- Decentralized government is more likely to be efficient and cost effective than centralized government.
- Instruction in any field should present all known theories about the given subject in an unbiased manner and encourage each student to develop his/her own beliefs.

Read each question, word for word, very carefully. We can think of a number of different perspectives that could be brought to bear on answering these complex statements. They might be read in several different ways, each with a differing interpretation and answer. Is there an “absolute truth” answer to each of these questions? How would you answer them? Again, there is a correct answer provided by the test publisher, which indicates a proper “biblical worldview.”

## The Oxymoron of “Christian” Psychology

**Oxymoron** --- (Greek *oxymoros*: acutely silly) a figure of speech in which opposite or contradictory terms or ideas are combined.

**Psychology** --- psycho- (Greek *psyche*: breath, spirit, soul) and -logy (Greek *logia logos*: word a combining form meaning science, doctrine or theory of) the science dealing with the mind and with mental and emotional processes; the science of human and animal behavior; the sum of the actions, traits, attitudes, thoughts, mental states, etc. of a person or group. See also *logos*: in Greek philosophy, reason, thought of as constituting the controlling principle of the universe and as being manifested by speech; in Christian theology, the Word, or ultimate reality, especially the creative sustaining spirit of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. [Note how the dictionary tries to lump Christianity in as just another philosophy.]

For centuries man has attempted to define himself apart from an omnipotent Divine Creator. In recent years this endeavor has been given an aura of respectability by cloaking it in scientific garb and calling it psychology. Psychology, as evidenced by its derivation noted above, is a study of the soul. While the study of man’s soul may seem to be consistent with Christianity, in the case of psychology it is not. Psychology and Christianity are clearly opposites. Put quite simply, the focus of psychology is self along with a blatant denial of the existence of God. With Christianity, however, the focus is on God and His redemptive power where the Christian is called to die to self and to allow Christ to live in and through him.

Let’s take a look at where the so-called scientific look at self takes us. Any scientific study of human behavior will necessarily draw comparisons of an individual’s behavior with that of other individuals. The development of psychological tests and the application of statistical methods to their results has produced a convenient means for defining, measuring and comparing behavior. It also allows for those who measure that behavior to set the standard(s) for what constitutes “normal” behavior. The result is

a tendency to compare oneself to others in constant competition to measure up to man's standards, i.e., those standards established by the "experts."

Intelligence tests, for example, allow us to compare ourselves to others and the standard called normal intelligence. Such tests also allow us to determine whether we are smarter and, therefore, better than other people, as well, thereby, feeding our natural (sinful) propensity for self gratification. But what does the Bible say in this regard? The scriptures cited in the PEERS Test curriculum manual make reference to either the Lord examining us or our examining ourselves to see if we are living our lives in accordance with God's will. At first blush it would appear that is what the authors of PEERS are assisting us in doing. However, all psychological tests (including PEERS) are measures of the consensus of the subject matter experts who were consulted when developing the test. Thus those who rely on the PEERS to determine the status of their worldview are doing so through the filter of the test's designers rather than through a Holy Spirit led self examination that helps one to see how well he is meeting God's standards (as opposed to a consensus of men as to what constitutes God's standards). Yet the scriptures make it clear that it is essential for us to perform such spirit-led self-examination. Why? As the apostle Paul told the Romans, *So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God* (Rom. 14:12). When we stand before God at the judgment He will not accept our defense that we were just trying to be "normal."

Paul's instruction to the Corinthians is most enlightening in this regard:

*Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? but we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:6-16)*

*Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men. (1 Cor. 3:18-21a)*

*But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord (1 Cor. 4:3-4)*

The use of psychological tests leads not only to unscriptural comparisons, but also to the only logical end result --- manipulation of behavior. Test results are used to: 1. determine behavior; and 2. change (manipulate) behavior where it is deemed necessary, or, in the case of personality inventories, to manipulate someone else based on knowledge of his or her personality type.

The application of statistical methods to human behavior in the name of science is misdirected and inappropriate. When we measure natural phenomena, we get results that will vary depending upon the environmental factors affecting the thing being measured. For example, we can measure the speed at which a rock falls from a certain height. Although the rock's speed may be affected by external factors, such as air resistance, there is nothing the rock can do, no decision it can make that will affect the speed at which it falls. However, when we measure a person's attitudes or opinions, that person can change his or her attitude or opinion from time to time, often because of a conscious, volitional decision to do so. Such volition is extremely difficult, if not impossible to measure.

Psychology (and so-called Christian psychological theories) can never adequately account for repentance, salvation, regeneration, sanctification, justification, and the other essentials of our Christian life. Psychology through its tests claims to predict human behavior. In doing so it also repudiates God and His presence in the lives of men. When we accept psychology's view of us, our temperament, for example, we deny God's ability to mold us as vessels for His use. We know from the great stories of biblical history that human beings, through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, have the capacity to defy man's predictions and overcome great obstacles in their lives. We have a tremendous example in the New Testament of a small group of crusty fishermen being transformed into apostles, defying all odds and human predictions.

### **Politics or Religion? Or Both?**

Let us review what we have just learned. We have learned that the PEERS test is a better predictor of one's politics than one's religion. We have learned that the test evaluators noticed that the publisher equates conservative beliefs with Christian beliefs. Is this unusual? Perhaps not when viewed in context. The context of this test and its curriculum can best be explained by examining the particular, and perhaps peculiar, "biblical worldview" of the Coalition on Revival (COR).

Daniel J. Smithwick, one of the authors of the PEERS Test, and president of the Nehemiah Institute which publishes the test, was in attendance at the Coalition on Revival Church Steering Committee meeting held last summer at Arrowhead Springs in California.<sup>65</sup> He was one of the men considered to join Dr. Jay Grimstead in leadership, and was assigned to a committee in charge of restructuring the organization. Dr. Grimstead's name appears on the list of Advisory Council members on Nehemiah Institute letterhead. Also listed on the letterhead are the names of other prominent individuals who are associated with the Reconstructionist movement (which is loosely connected with the Coalition on Revival) including Andrew Sandlin, editor of the Chalcedon Report.<sup>66</sup>

Coalition on Revival was founded in 1984 by Dr. Jay Grimstead. During the 1980s the organization gathered 500 leaders from diverse denominations to work on producing consensus documents, called "Sphere Documents" regarding many areas of life and ministry: Law, Government, Economics, Business, Education, The Arts and Communications,

<sup>65</sup> Letter from Daniel J. Smithwick to Marla Quenzer, 1994.

<sup>66</sup> COR documents cited in Dager, Albert J., *Vengeance Is Ours* (Redmond, WA: Sword Pub., 1990), Chapter 5, "Coalition on Revival: Putting Feet on the Dominion Agenda," pp. 235-258. Available from Sword Publishers, PO Box 290, Redmond, WA 98073, 206-391-7315.

Medicine, Psychology and Counseling, Science and Technology, Church Unity, Evangelism, Discipleship, Helping the Hurting, Social/Political Action, Revitalizing Christian Colleges and Seminaries, The Family, and Pastoral Renewal.<sup>67</sup> Significantly, one can recognize that the 5 “worldview” realms from the PEERS test are included on this list.

What is the worldview which they wish to implement? We can turn to their “Sphere Documents” for some answers. From “The Christian World View of Social, Political and Moral Issues,” we find Article 20:

We deny that God and His truth should ever be separated from the State; that absolute separation of Church and State is either right or possible; and that Christians should ever be silent in the face of evil.

Article 22:

We affirm that Christians must be involved in all processes and offices of civil government in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, so that the government may rest upon His shoulders (Isaiah 9:6, 7), and that such involvement is part of the Church's prophetic role in society.

From “The Christian World View of Helping the Hurting,” the Preface:

In addition to organizing united efforts to help the hurting, the Church must conform social, economic, legal, educational, medical, and governmental structures to Biblical order.

Under Specific Actions of “The Christian World View of Art and Communications,” Article 7:

Those pastors and churches that mistakenly think that neither pastors nor churches have any business trying to change society and stand for social righteousness by constitutional means must become exposed to the COR Manifesto and the COR sphere document “The Christian World View of Educating Christians [on] Social, Political, and Moral Issues” in order to disabuse their minds of that false dichotomy.

From “The Christian World View of Making of Disciples,” Article 1:

We affirm that the making of Bible-obeying disciples of all nations and the bringing of all things under the lordship of Christ is the primary purpose and defined objective of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 10:5).

Under Specific Actions of “The Christian World View of Making Disciples,” Article 3:

We must launch a program to re-educate the Church about the nature of Christian discipleship that includes the following points: . . . Biblical discipleship involves participation in intimate relationships, commitment, confrontation, and accountability. It must reach down into the daily details of life: decision making, finances, relationships, habits, values, etc. Much of what travels under the name of “discipleship training” is merely the transfer of academic Biblical principles from one notebook to another without the essential ingredient of

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

accountability and changes in thought and behavior.”<sup>68</sup>

The point in mentioning these COR beliefs and doctrines is not to engage in doctrinal debates (which would be impossible within the limited confines of this paper), but rather to point out that the beliefs expressed by COR are not necessarily shared by mainstream evangelical Christianity. The Coalition on Revival is one of the many groups working towards an ecumenical consensus and unity in the church for the coming millennium. One mechanism for doing so is by having pastors sign on to COR's many documents promoting their new theology for the new millennium. COR has strong beliefs about *not* separating church and state, working instead for a return to a “Christian America” and equating this with the “Kingdom of God.”

The Coalition on Revival has a dominionist worldview. This is not necessarily post-millennialism, although many COR leaders possess that doctrine. Rather it is their dominionist mandate which becomes the defining doctrinal issue.<sup>69</sup> According to COR expert, Albert Dager, “Rather than maintaining the role of merely defining the Christian worldview as a consensus of varied thought within the Christian community, COR has determined that it is mandatory for all Christians to implement that worldview in society . . .”<sup>70</sup> The key word here is “mandatory”. There are vast historically-rooted disagreements which form deep chasms within Christianity regarding eschatology and church/state relationships. In its zeal to implement ecumenical unity and doctrinal consensus for the new millennium, COR has pre-determined that its worldview is “mandatory”. Even though COR has captured a diverse array of denominational and doctrinal adherents, their essential doctrines remain “non-negotiable . . . we're telling the premillennialists, who are scared to death of the postmillennialists and don't like the word Dominion or Kingdom or Reconstruction, to wake up and realize there's no other option.”<sup>71</sup> This statement strongly implies that there is zero tolerance for the eschatology of millions of Christian believers.

Many of the other leaders associated with COR have very strident views about church and state, as well as eschatology, and have written voluminous materials documenting their theological position on these matters. Among these include Greg Bahnsen (dec.), Gary De Mar, Dr. Ronald Nash, Gary North, and Calvin Beisner. Many sincerely believe that the greatest threat to their religious liberties and the greatest force stopping the worldwide dominion of the Kingdom of God on earth is those who hold traditional anabaptist beliefs, which are separatist regarding church and state matters. So black and white is the literature on this topic that one finds no mention of alternative positions regarding Christian activism on church and state matters.

From its inception COR has been a controversial organization, both within and without

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid. In this chapter of Dager's book, we learn that COR leader, Jay Grimstead, chaired “The Christian World View of Pastoral Renewal” Sphere Document. Other names referenced in the PEERS Test curriculum include Gary DeMar, who chaired “The Christian Worldview of Government” and E. Calvin Beisner who chaired “The Christian World View of Economics.” There are other common names as well.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid. This fact is born out by much of COR's profuse written material.

<sup>71</sup> Miesel, Rick. “Coalition on Revival (COR): A Revival of Old Testament Law,” Biblical Discernment Ministries Notebook, (PO Box 679, Bedford, IN 47421). Visit the BDM Internet web site --- <http://www.rapidnet.com/%7Ejbeard/bdm/Psychology/cor/general.htm>. Also see “Notes on Reconstructionism: Roots of a New ‘Christian’ Inquisition?” [http://www.rapidnet.com/%7Ejbeard/bdm/Psychology/cor/notes\\_on.htm](http://www.rapidnet.com/%7Ejbeard/bdm/Psychology/cor/notes_on.htm). Also see “Dominion Theology/Kingdom Now/Reconstructionism: Blessing or Curse?” <http://www.rapidnet.com/%7Ejbeard/bdm/Psychology/cor/dominion.htm>.

the Christian community. COR shares dominionist beliefs with many leaders in the signs and wonders movement, and has openly welcomed these controversial “signs and wonders” charismatics into positions of leadership. Well-known COR advocate Dennis Peacocke is submitted to Bob Mumford, one of the original “Fort Lauderdale Five” who founded the shepherding movement in this country, which is closely associated with the controversial Word of God cult in Michigan (which spawned Promise Keepers among other things). Peacocke has been a shepherd over Colonel Doner, who co-chaired “The Christian World View of Government” Sphere Document. Colonel Doner was on the national advisory board of Christian Voice at a time when it was totally taken over by the Unification Church (Moonies).<sup>72</sup> Peacocke also founded the secretive Anatole Fellowship to gain influence with the Republican Party.<sup>73</sup>

COR has adopted the very non-scriptural principle that “the ends justify the means” by expanding their political consensus to include obvious cults, and by building ecumenical bridges with highly controversial, charismatic-fringe Christian groups. Why the issue of COR's strange bedfellows hasn't been addressed and strongly condemned by respected Christian leaders remains a mystery to us.

### **The Mindset of the Worldview**

Does the PEERS Test fulfill, in part, the urgent call put forth from Coalition on Revival to disciple others to their worldview? The “mission” of the PEERS Test is said to be “at the forefront of the socio-political reconstruction of America and the moral reform of its citizens in accordance with the Biblical worldview.”<sup>74</sup> Does the PEERS Test and its curriculum reflect a bias towards the particular worldview of the Coalition on Revival?

Before proceeding, let us state that there are many facets of the curriculum that accompanies the PEERS test with which we would find wholehearted agreement, and with which many, if not most, of our readers would have no substantial difficulty. Concern arises over the philosophical *equation* that links modern American conservatism with biblical Christianity. While we have a substantial appreciation of the historical and biblical foundation of western civilization, we have strong reservations about simplifying these issues down to the lowest common denominator (which must be done in the process of psychological test construction), especially considering the current trends in American conservatism which are moving far off track from a biblical foundation. We wondered: Is this **conservative = biblical worldview** equation a result of the particular Coalition on Revival “worldview” of the test publisher? An examination of the curriculum confirms this hypothesis.

The curriculum quotes heavily from a number of recognized Christian leaders on topics related to “worldview.” There is a significant amount of material contained in the curriculum

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<sup>72</sup> Documentation on these points can be found in *The Coors Connection* by Russ Bellant, (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1991), p. 47. We were eyewitnesses to the unfolding events as Christian Voice was taken over by the Unification Church and formed the American Freedom Coalition in 1987. Documentation for this statement appears on a personal letter from Dr. Robert G. Grant, Chairman of Christian Voice to Mrs. Lynn Leslie, dated June 15, 1987. Also see *Not For Sale* by David G. Racer, Jr. (St. Paul, MN: Tiny Press, 1989). Col. Doner remains active in the Christian Right and is listed on the Board of Directors of Home School Legal Defense Association. Michael Farris of HSLDA co-chaired one of the Sphere Documents, “The Christian World View of Law.”

<sup>73</sup> Bellant, *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Brochure, *op cit.*

which comes from David Noebel of Summit Ministries, which was involved in the development of the PEERS Test. The web site for Summit Ministries proclaims its purpose: “Summit Ministries equips tomorrow's servant leaders to analyze competing worldviews . . .”<sup>75</sup> Also, “Summit Ministries challenges Christians to develop a biblical worldview.”<sup>76</sup> David Noebel has been very popular in Baptist circles even though he has been connected with COR. His message is dominionist,<sup>77</sup> but he has toned it down: “. . . we bow humbly before the one true God, and --- without establishing Christianity as the mandatory religion for all citizens --- obey God's principles for justice.”<sup>78</sup> Noebel provides a working definition of “Christian psychology” and Christian sociology”,<sup>79</sup> which may account for why he believes Christians can utilize a psychological test to measure biblical faith. At Summit Ministries' summer leadership camps for youth the PEERS Test is administered and many books written by COR members are required reading.

A number of prominent Reconstructionists, some with connections to COR, are frequently quoted in the curriculum and are listed in the “Recommended Reading” section,<sup>80</sup> including Ronald Nash, Calvin Beisner, Douglas Wilson, Gary North, and Greg Bahnsen. One is Gary DeMar, whose material undergirds “The Biblical Principles of Politics” section of the manual. Some branches of Christianity might take issue with the following statement, especially when understood in the context of DeMar's other writings, and in the context of the curriculum itself which equates “civil government” with God's Old Testament “ordinances” (Lev. 19:36):<sup>81</sup>

The rulers in the realm of civil government, who are ministers of God, must rule according to God's law, the standard of good and evil. No government has the freedom to rule by some arbitrary man-centered standard of good and evil. No ruler or group of rulers has the authority to establish any law that is in opposition to the laws of God.<sup>82</sup>

The conclusion of the manual contains some rather odd doctrinal material which (curiously) is not footnoted as to source. It concludes with a timeline which lists how God gave his “Law-Word” to various individuals at 500 year intervals throughout the history of man. It is here that one can most obviously find the theology and eschatology imbedded in the PEERS Test and curriculum. We quote from several sections at length (containing fill-in-the-blank spots for students, which we have underlined):

With patient but persistent growth, the Word of God is gradually overcoming evil with righteousness. The gospel of Jesus Christ, like yeast in dough, permeates all aspects of life.

Jesus said, *All authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth.* With that authority He then said, *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations ---* . (Matthew 28:19, 20) . . . .

<sup>75</sup> “Welcome!” page, Summit Ministries. <http://www.christiananswers.net/summit/sumhome.html>

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> See “Politics Fact Sheet”, Summit Ministries, for example, <http://www.christiananswers.net/summit/politics.html>. Also see material by Biblical Discernment Ministries cited previously.

<sup>78</sup> “America's Godly Heritage,” Summit Ministries. [http://www.christiananswers.net/amer\\_her.html](http://www.christiananswers.net/amer_her.html)

<sup>79</sup> “Four Models of Western Religious Thought,” Summit Ministries. <http://www.christiananswers.net/fourmodl.html>.

Much of the information in this section of the Summit Ministries web site can also be found in the curriculum that accompanies the PEERS Test.

<sup>80</sup> Smithwick, Sessions XVI & XVII, p. 15-16.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, Sessions V & VI, p. 6.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid

. . . God's Word, powerful enough to create all that exists merely by 'speaking things into existence,' has been and continued to be the agent of change in a program of rebuilding the world to glorify God.

Christ will one day return to earth to receive a victorious bride, fully and wonderfully clothed

Beginning with Noah, we see that God imparted and re-affirmed his Law-word to key individuals at specific intervals. Approximately every 500 years God seemingly chose one or two key individuals, to reawaken mankind's need of possessing His Word as the standard for righteous and prosperous living.<sup>83</sup>

This timeline of key individuals includes Noah, Abraham, Moses, David/Solomon, Nehemiah/Ezra, Paul, Augustine, St. Bernard, Calvin/Luther, and has a question mark in the spot for the year 2000 with a paragraph stating that

. . . history is about to embark on its tenth '500 year' interval since the days of Noah. If God allows history to continue, it would appear that we are likely to see another period of time when God raises up one or two key leaders who will be instrumental in returning humanity of our day to depending upon God's Law-Word for righteousness and success.<sup>84</sup>

Obviously, many would disagree with the premise of this timeline and the historical significance of the individuals placed within it, not to mention the theology of it all. The fact that this prepares children to accept a new leader sometime in the near future should be of grave concern, especially to those studying the signs and wonders movement and its push for modern-day self-anointed, self-appointed apostle/prophets. This same theology can also be found in recent COR documents.<sup>85</sup> Other evidences of the particular theological bent of this curriculum is evident in the following quotes from the final section:

Jesus reaffirmed that God's Law-Word, given in the Old Testament has continuing validity in the New Testament.<sup>86</sup>

Nehemiah, representing the government, and Ezra, representing the 'church,' stood together and proclaimed God's Word as the basis for righteous and prosperous living.

This does not support the modern day view of 'separation of church and state,' but on the contrary, it gives evidence for government and church institutions working together, both under the authority of God, in bringing the citizens to a proper relationship with God and society.<sup>87</sup>

The Law was not 'set aside,' with the coming of Christ, but rather is to be implemented fully (established). Other than the laws which Christ fulfilled in His sacrificial death on the cross, the laws of God can now be fully obeyed through the power of the Holy Spirit who indwells the believer.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid., Sessions XVI & XVII, p. 4.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>85</sup> See for example: Moes, Garry J. "Christian Discipline," (A Paper for Preliminary Dialogue, North American Protestant Church Council Executive Committee [COR], 2/12/93).

<sup>86</sup> Smithwick, Ibid, p. 8.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

## Caution Advised

Clearly, if an adult or child is to undergo the 17 lessons in *Developing A Biblical Worldview*, in conjunction with taking the PEERS Test, they need to be aware of the theology of the “biblical worldview” that they will be taught and exercise discernment accordingly. While these beliefs are reflective of a particular group within Christianity, they are not necessarily reflective of the beliefs of Christianity at large. Further, it appears that the course in worldview training could also be viewed as an exercise in indoctrination to the COR worldview.

The constraints of developing a psychological attitudinal test require that rigid parameters be set in defining the human behavior, attitudes, values, opinions or beliefs to be measured. PEERS has chosen to define “biblical worldview” within the narrow confines of their own theological framework, ignoring the larger base of Christianity. Further, they have intermingled and equated political perspectives with their theological beliefs, and have created a test which more honestly measures an individual's “political worldview” while inadequately assessing one's true “biblical worldview.”

From a testing perspective, the *Developing A Biblical Worldview* curriculum presents a classic example in the pre-test, post-test assessments being utilized in the OBE-style education reforms. Also known as the “testing loop” in reform circles, a series of tests has proven to be a most effective means of indoctrinating children in the correct worldview that the education reformers are promulgating. The PEERS Test is utilizing state-of-the-art methods in psychological assessment testing, which may be of concern to some parents, especially those who pulled their children out of public education to avoid such tests. We have further concerns about the inadequate statement on test confidentiality and the databanking of student test results.

Can one use a psychological instrument to measure one's “biblical worldview”? Can psychology be used to measure faith? Our conclusion is no, that the entire premise of psychology is biblically flawed from its inception, and that the use of psychological testing instruments is faulty. The parameters upon which the PEERS Test was built and problems inherent in the publisher's definition of “biblical worldview” demonstrate that it is not possible to measure this construct of one's faith through the use of a psychological attitudinal assessment. The PEERS Test is but one example of the inadequacies of psychological assessments to “measure” any component of one's faith.

## Two Final Thoughts

There are two final thoughts we would like to share. First, the Scripture admonishes us, *Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds* (Prov. 27:23). In the RSV this verse reads: *Know well the condition of your flocks, and give attention to your herds*. There are so many occasions in the Bible when shepherding flocks is mentioned in the broader context of caring for one's family (and church) that this verse has come to have special meaning for parents (and pastors). A psychological test cannot substitute for a parent “knowing well the condition of their children.” A psychological test cannot substitute for a pastor “knowing well the condition of his flock.” If a child or adult is seriously erring towards

exhibiting worldly attitudes and conduct, a psychological “worldview” test will not address the causes, or offer the solutions, to this matter which is sin in the heart of the child. Parents and pastors must take this matter and deal with it forthrightly in a manner which is consistent with whole counsel of Scripture, not by resorting to worldly psychological assessment tools.

Finally, we sincerely regret that publication of this article could endanger family businesses that have been built from the sale of this psychological test. We encourage anyone profiting from the sale of this test to examine this article, and the accompanying articles by Robert Stoner, Paul Zylstra, and John Moffat in this issue of the magazine, and to prayerfully consider a change of occupation. We realize that this may require a dependence upon God for source of income, yet we encourage you to stand fully confident that He will honor those who honor Him (1 Sam. 2:30). May God bless you as you seek Him.

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