

The Christian Vision of the Person and Society

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“There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal.” C.S. Lewis

- **Introduction:** The Person at the Center of Society, Politics and the Economy: How we understand the nature and destiny of the human person shapes everything else.
- **Christian Vision of Person:** Coherent, Reasonable, Recognizes Complexity, Aligns with experience
- **Approach is to Think:** Biblically / Philosophically / With the Tradition /Phenomenologically

7 Characteristics of the The Human Person

1. Intelligence and Reason: overarching characteristic of the person includes: Discursive Reasoning / Conceptual Thought / Self-reflection / Practical and Moral Reasoning

Primer on Reason: Modern Reason limited to the Empirical is incoherent on its own terms This has serious consequences for Politics and Deepest Human Experiences

2. Free: Persons: Moral agents with capacity to make free decisions. From reason and freedom comes responsibility, the capacity for self-donation and sacrifice, and the ability to love and worship.

3. Good but Fallen: We are created in the image of God as good. But because of original sin we are fallen. This has impact on political and economics. There is a need for coercion and for limits on rulers. A key difference between the Jewish/Christian and most modern visions of the person and society is over the issue of sin and human perfectibility

4. Social Beings: Persons achieve human flourishing in relationships with others. The Family is the fundamental unit of society. It is natural community and pre-political unit not merely a social construct.

5. Embodied Persons: We are embodied persons. *2 Dominant Fallacies: Materialist & Spiritualist.*

6. Spiritual / Reasonable Emotions: emotions and passions ordained by reason

7. Everlasting: All our political, economic, charitable, and social decisions need to be made in the light of our eternal destiny.