

re:View Worldview Study **Topic 05 – Transcendentalism**

(To teach this session you will need: “05_Check_Transcendentalism” DVD, television or projector, DVD player, student handouts, this leader’s guide, and some popular culture examples for the “Activity.” You may also wish to use “review_05_VerseSlides.ppt” for the verses.)

*NOTE: If you’re teaching the abbreviated 7-session series, this is Session 5.
If you’re teaching the extended 13-session series, this is Session 8.*

Suggested Session Layout

Watch “Reset” Film [6:23]
Film Discussion [5:00]
Watch “Transcendentalism” Teaching Segment [8:06]
Teaching Segment Discussion [5:00]
Activity [10:00]
Challenge [5:00]
Total session time [35-40 mins.]

Watch “Reset” Film [6:23]

Brief Synopsis: When Sonya is awoken by a thud from the apartment next door, she decides to investigate. To her horror, she walks in on something she wishes she had never seen – pictures, videotapes, and newspaper clippings – all of and about her. Each decision leads to another ending, as the scenario keeps resetting. *(For further insight, be sure to watch the directorial comments before viewing the film with your students. You may also choose to show the directorial comments as part of the discussion time.)*

Film Discussion [5:00]

What is the film “Reset” about?

You will get a variety of answers. In its truest form, this film is “Groundhog Day” gone bad. It is about learning from your past experiences, and improving with each derivative thereof.

Why did the scenario keep on restarting?

She didn’t get it right. In order to break the cycle, she had to do the right thing. She has to learn and mature in each subsequent life. Unfortunately, she has no idea how long that will take. Hopefully, sooner or later, she’ll figure it out.

What happens at the end?

In the end, the scenario stops resetting. As we enter the stalker’s apartment for the last time, we see a bare apartment with no evidence of the stalker. Sonya has found peace and can now continue with her existence.

What if you had the ability to go back and “do over”? Would you want to?

You will get a variety of answers. Overall, you’re trying to point the discussion to an extreme of transcendentalism, which is reincarnation, getting another chance to do life over, etc. This will lead into Dr. Brown’s opening comment, “Wouldn’t it be great if we got as many chances as we needed to get it right?”

(Feel free to use optional handout “reView_05_ResetFilmQuestions.pdf”)

Watch “Transcendentalism” Teaching Segment [8:06]

Synopsis and Outline: The second of three worldviews is Transcendentalism, which is the natural bent of the human mind. We are not sinful, we are God! Transcendentalism has all the privileges of spirituality without any of the responsibility.

- I. Transcendentalism: The World as We Want It
- II. Transcendentalism: God, the World, and Me
- III. Transcendentalism Religions: Some Examples
- IV. Transcendentalism Answers the Ultimate Questions

(For your reference, a teaching outline of Dr. Brown’s teaching segment can be found under “reView_05_TeachingSegmentOutline.pdf.”)

Teaching Segment Discussion [5:00]

What are some of the specific forms that Transcendentalism takes?

- a. *Hinduism (prevalent in India)*
- b. *Buddhism (popular in the Far East)*
- c. *Confucianism (popular in China)*
- d. *Shintoism (popular in Japan)*

What are some common American versions of Transcendentalism?

- a. *Scientology*
- b. *Horoscopes*
- c. *Wicca*
- d. *Tarot Cards*

Why is Transcendentalism such a popular worldview?

Transcendentalism is the natural bent of the human mind, according to C.S. Lewis. The reason is that our depravity is replaced by divinity. We are not sinful; we are “god.” The answers to life’s mysteries are found deep inside me. There are no moral codes to follow, only a spiritual consciousness to nurture. Transcendentalism has all of the benefits of spirituality without any of the responsibility.

Why do you think so many celebrities are attracted to religions that are transcendental?

Because of the moral ambiguity that is so present in the entertainment culture, transcendental religions can address the spiritual conscience of a person without requiring them to make any moral choices.

Activity [10:00]

The goal of this activity is to have the students fill in each of the ideas or words that are in RED. They'll begin by filling in the four ultimate questions (first row) and then move to Naturalism (second row). After this brief review, have them fill in how Transcendentalism answers the ultimate questions. The next step would be to have students provide current examples from media (last row). (*reView_05_Handout_TranscendentalismQuestions.pdf*)

Ultimate Questions	Origins	Meaning	Morality	Destiny
Naturalism	Natural means	Accidental None	We decide right and wrong	None No judgment
Transcendentalism	Universe has always existed	Recognizing our own divinity and acknowledging the divinity of everything else	Finding peace and oneness	Numerous incarnations towards a path of total enlightenment
Media examples (movie, song, ad, video, magazine, book)	Example	Example	Example	Example

To be prepared for this exercise, be sure to check out our resources under the "downloads" section of www.re-films.com. After noting the movies and musical artists from your student's pre-session survey, search the downloads section of re-films.com to find relevant examples of how Transcendentalism answers the four ultimate questions. Examples may also be found in the re-films.com forums under the "Topic 05 – Transcendentalism" category.

Challenge [5:00]

Have your students open their Bibles to Colossians 2:8. Have someone read it. Point out how Paul cautions us in this passage against the natural bent of the human mind. We gravitate toward human philosophy and elementary principles of the world.

Have someone look up Hebrews 9:27, and have them read it. Ask your students what this passage has to say about each person's fate. Then ask how it relates to the view of transcendentalism.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are teaching the abbreviated 7-week study, spend some time discussing how our own lives demonstrate practical Naturalism or Transcendentalism. While we may not espouse these beliefs with our words, often our behavior says otherwise. If you are teaching the extended 13-week study, we will go into detail on this and other thoughts in next week's extended session (Topic 05x).

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