

## The Fallacy of Instrumentalism

“*Be making straight wheel-tracks*” refers to the ongoing process of carving out a conscience based on God’s character with emphasis on divine righteousness: norms and standards which determine right and wrong from divine revelation.

“*Be making straight wheel-tracks*” refers to the development of an inventory of ideas based on God's integrity: a lifestyle determined by the leadership and guidance of Bible doctrine. Thus, the word *trochia* or “*wheel-track*,” refers to a well-worn path created by consistent usage. It is a rut.

### Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, s.v. “rut”:

*A track worn by a wheel or by habitual passage. A groove in which something runs. Channel or furrow. A usual or fixed practice.*

When I was a small boy, my grandfather retired and bought about 160 acres of land just outside of Troy. Not soon after, he bought about 50 pets which he kept on that farm. The pets were cows, actually 49 cows and one busy bull. There were no roads on this piece of land when he first bought it. If he decided he wanted to go from point A to point B, he headed out in his ‘49 Ford. Soon, a path was evident and before long ruts were worn and a road established. The wheels of that ‘49 Ford soon etched wheel-tracks into the face of that property. If you wanted to go to the fish pond, you got in the wheel-tracks that headed that way, followed them faithfully, and soon arrive at your destination. It was on this farm and on these wheel-tracks that I learned to drive. If the wheel-tracks were deep enough and you had a deft touch, you could drive the car by letting the wheel-tracks do the guiding with very little assistance from the steering wheel. However, when using this technique, if I ever let the car jump out of the wheel-tracks, my grandfather would impose verbal discipline.

My father had this story to tell when I was growing up. He had a friend named Charles Harrell who owned a 1930-something Chevrolet. They liked to do the following which I do not recommend you young people attempt today. Circumstances are far different in the ‘90s than they were in the ‘30s. In those days there were very few cars and it was easy to find out train schedules. Even so, the idea is fraught with potential disaster. That disclaimer said, here’s what they did. They would take Charles’s car, pull it up on the railroad tracks, deflate the tires about half way, and take off. The weight of the car would cause the steel wheel to center over the rail as the deflated tire gripped the sides of the rail. In those days, cars had chokes on the dashboard. Pull it out full throttle and the car would drive itself down the railroad track which had now become wheel-tracks. The route was established, the car supplied the power, and the passengers, Charles, my dad, and others, would soon arrive at the neighboring town for an evening of social life.

“*Be making straight wheel-tracks*” refers to the recovering reversionist fixing his sights on the objective of spiritual maturity.

Through positive volition, the newly reempowered believer begins to habitually develop a righteous lifestyle by means of repetition.

God has already built the tracks in principle: rebound recovery, the filling of the Holy Spirit, the Grace Apparatus for Perception, and availability of the ten problem-solving devices. The recovering reversionist’s job is to repeatedly utilize these assets on a continual basis so as to develop these wheel-tracks in his soul. This process produces a person of integrity who possess in his conscience the character, the virtue, the ethics, and the integrity of the God of the universe.

Life lived on wheel-tracks such as these is called the “*wheel-tracks of righteousness*.” Such a lifestyle cannot be developed through the resources of human energy, human good, and emotional ideas of what is right and wrong.

Character, integrity, virtue, and ethics must indeed be based on values but those values may not be defined by human ideas of goodness but only upon the principles of divine righteousness. This is why the president, his wife, and our nation are so unstable. They have their own vision of righteousness based on concepts of “*instrumentalism*.”

We have defined this philosophy before. It was advanced by John Dewey and holds that what is most important in an idea is its value as an instrument of action and that the truth of an idea lies in its usefulness. (i.e., the end justifies the means; in a word, expediency.)

**Hook, J. N. *The Grand Panjandrum*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1980, p. 119:**

*Pragmatists believe that ideas have value not in themselves but only as guides to action; an idea is valid if the action it generates is successful. This belief is called instrumentalism.*

Under this philosophy, which is the core of all problem-solving, self-esteem, decision-making, and conflict-resolution courses taught in schools today, the spirit of compromise is the supreme virtue.

The philosophy of instrumentalism cannot work if anyone within a group has firmly held beliefs, especially a core of firmly held beliefs based on religious convictions.

The Christian believes that his norms and standards are based on the absolute principles of divine righteousness. He therefore considers his lifestyle to be characterized by the outworking of divinely approved standards of conduct ingrained into his soul by the Word of God. [Truth —> Integrity. Integrity under pressure which remains loyal to truth —> Honor.]

This honor reflects such character traits as morality, virtue, integrity, and righteousness. When the Christian encounters philosophies, or their followers, which do not subscribe to these standards, then there will inevitably be conflict.

In the area of nonessential doctrines, the Christian may choose to be tolerant of others without compromising his own integrity. However, in the area of essential doctrines, the Christian is placed in a position of no compromise and is forced to take a stand for truth.

This steadfastness of purpose presents a major problem to the instrumentalist. Therefore, if his philosophy is to be successful, religious beliefs must be neutralized. One of the ways this is presently being accomplished is through multiculturalism, a concept which places all cultures and religions on the same level, with none considered superior or inferior to the other.

Thus, when the instrumentalist speaks of values, he does not refer to absolute principles of right and wrong but to concepts of compromise, concession, and capitulation. When the instrumentalist speaks of change, he does not speak of restoration, that is, a return to the “permanent things,” but rather the compromise of these very principles in favor of multitudinism.

**Hook, J. N. *The Grand Panjandrum*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1980, p. 116:**

*Multitudinism . . . says that the interests and well-being of the multitude are more important than those of the individual.*

You may recognize this as a paraphrase of a much more ominous philosophy promoted by Marx and Engels. Such so-called “change” is in opposition to the very nature of the Christian way of life and will ultimately lead to a critical point where religion comes into conflict with the state.

Religion quite often is accused of being the catalyst of all wars. If the adjective is “some” or “many,” then this is a true statement. But more often than not, the catalyst of religious oriented wars lies in a government’s attempt to force humanist principles upon a religion whose members, because of deep seated, ingrained, and heartfelt beliefs, are forced into a position of no compromise.

The current notion of “change” as espoused by our president is of the type which promotes compromise for the sake of the multitude. A good analysis of the vocabulary of these competing visions is offered by:

**Kohl, Herbert. From Archetype to Zeitgeist. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1992, pp. 158–159:**

*“There are a number of words used to indicate the nature and direction of social, political, and economic change.*

*The status quo is the current historical situation in a particular community, state, or nation. Conservatives are people who want to maintain the status quo [neoconservatives]. Progressives are people who advocate a new social, political, or economic order [liberals]. Reactionaries are people who want to return to an older order characterized by some traditional authoritarian rule [Paleoconservatives/restorationists].*

*If change is partial and occurs through the channels of power considered legitimate in the status quo, it is called reform [Fabianism]. Reform adds to the current arrangements or modifies them but it does not attempt to create a new order.*

*Change is radical when it involves new power relationships that are fundamentally different from those under the status quo [instrumentalism, multiculturalism, humanism].*

*Radical change can take place over a period of time, or it can happen suddenly. When radical change takes place suddenly and power relationships change practically overnight, such change is called revolutionary.*

*It is important always to remember that change is measured from the perspective of the prior status quo.*

*Once you discover the nature of that situation, you can begin to understand the direction of the change that is taking place.”*

The Christian may legitimately seek to influence his elected representatives as they consider changes in or maintenance of the status quo. But regardless of which direction any change may take, the believer must remain ever loyal to the principles of truth which have established within his conscience the straight wheel-tracks of righteousness. And how are these straight wheel-tracks established? The pronoun:

*su* + the plural noun: *pous* - “by means of your feet.”