

How to Communicate the Christian Worldview in the Public Square

For about twenty years Espen Ottosen has been participating regularly in debates of various kinds in the media in Norway. In a country like Norway, which is very secularized, standing up for a Christian perspective on same-sex marriage, biotechnical issues, and gender issues is a big challenge. In this lecture, Ottosen will share some of his experiences focusing on engaging people in the public square who have little knowledge and/or many prejudices about classical Christian belief.

Espen Ottosen has worked as the information director for Norwegian Lutheran Mission since 2003. In that capacity, he has frequently appeared in national television and radio debates. Also, he has written essays and articles in a wide range of Norwegian newspapers and publications. For many years he wrote a column regularly in *Aftenposten* (see www.ap.no), currently the biggest newspaper in the country. Ottosen has published about 20 books and pamphlets in Norwegian and Spanish, mostly on popular theology. Before taking the position of information director, he was a missionary in Peru together with his family.

I. Ethical questions vs. the Christian worldview

- A. The will of God says something about the Christian Worldview (Matt 19:4; Rom 1:20-25)
- B. It's not helpful, at least not always, to deny participating in ethical debates
- C. The importance of communicating that Christianity is not about opinions and a specific lifestyle (see 1. Cor 1:21-23).

II. How to address the (specific, secular) audience

- A. We are all sinners (Rom 3)
- B. Everyone is loved by God (Matt 5:43-48)
- C. The difference between the law of a country and Christian ethics (see 1 Cor 5:9-13)
- D. There is more to ethical thinking than “do no harm” and “individual happiness trumps everything”.

Additional Readings:

Rosaria Butterfield: *The Gospel Comes with a Housekey*, Crossway Books 2018

Glynn Harrison: *A better story*, IVP 2017

Carl R. Trueman: *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*, Crossway Books 2020