

The Christian Worldview: Thinking Biblically for Personal and Cultural Transformation

- See to it that no one carries you off as spoil or makes you yourselves captive by his so-called philosophy and intellectualism and vain deceit...following human tradition, just crude notions following...elemental teachings of the universe and disregarding [the teachings of] Christ [the Messiah]. For in Him the whole fullness of Deity (the Godhead) continues to dwell in bodily form [giving complete expression of the divine nature]...you are in Him, made full and having come to fullness of life...And He is the Head of all rule and authority.
- Colossians 2:8 - 10

Significant Reasons to Develop a Christian Worldview

Reason One: A biblical or Christian Worldview is a requirement for obedience to the greatest commandment, which is to love God with all of our being (Matthew 22:37-40).

Reason Two: It is important to develop a distinctively biblical (Christian) worldview because our mindset is a reliable indication of the essence of our identity.

Reason Three: How can we claim that Jesus is the Lord or Master of our lives if He is not the Lord and Master of our thought life?

Significant Reasons to Develop a Christian Worldview

Reason Four: It is necessary to develop a Christian mindset for the renewing of the mind which is God's method of transforming us into the image of Jesus (Romans 8:29).

Reason Five: The development of the a Christian Worldview equips Christians to be able to refute theological errors in the Church and to be ready to defend our faith in our culture.

Reason Six: The development of a Christian Worldview resulting in a biblical mindset creates a paradigm where not only people are discipled, but a city or nation is discipled and transformed God's way.

Seven Worldview Questions

- **Question One: What is ultimate Reality?**
What is the really Real? Is it just the material cosmos? Is it a Great Cosmic Mind? Is it a group of gods? Is it God?
- **Question Two: What is the nature of External Reality - the world around us?** Is the world/universe created or self-creating, chaotic or orderly, or matter, spirit, or a combination of both?
- **Question Three: What is a human being?** Are individuals made in the "image of God," are they naked apes, highly complex machines, or a sleeping god?
- **Question Four: What happens to a person at death?** Is death a transformation to a higher state, a shadowy existence, or to nothing?

Seven Worldview Questions

- Question Five: Why is it possible to know anything at all? Are we create beings with consciousness and rationality? Are we the product of survival of the fittest in the process of micro-evolution?
- Question Six: How do we know what is right or wrong? Is right or wrong determined by an objective standard which exists outside of ourselves established by God?
- Question Seven: What is the meaning of history? Is history moving toward a paradise on earth? Or to realize the purposes of God preparing for an eternal relationship with God?

The CHRISTIAN Worldview, Culture, and the Plausibility Structure

“If a culture reaches the point where Christian claims are not even part of its plausibility structure, fewer and fewer people will be able to entertain the possibility that they might be true. Whatever stragglers do come to faith in such a context would do so on the basis of felt needs alone, and the genuineness of such conversions would be questionable to say the least. This is why APOLOGETICS IS SO CRUCIAL TO EVANGELISM. It seeks to create a plausibility structure in a person’s mind, ‘favourable conditions’ as Machen puts it, so the gospel can be entertained by a person. To plant a seed in someone’s mind in pre-evangelism is to present a person with an idea that will work on his or her plausibility structure to create space in which Christianity can be entertained seriously. If this is important to evangelism, it is strategically crucial that local churches think about how they can address those aspects of the modern worldview that place Christianity outside the plausibility structures of so many.”

J.P. Moreland

“Thinking is indispensable on the path to passion for God. Thinking is not an end in itself. Nothing but God Himself is finally an end in itself. Thinking is not the goal of life. Thinking, like non-thinking, can be the ground for boasting. Thinking, without prayer, without the Holy Spirit, without obedience, without love, will puff up and destroy (I Corinthians 8:1). But thinking under the mighty hand of God, thinking soaked in prayer, thinking carried by the Holy Spirit, thinking tethered to the Bible, thinking in pursuit of more reasons to praise and proclaim the glories of God, thinking in the service of love - such thinking is indispensable in a life of fullest praise to God.”

John Piper

Basic Considerations

1. To understand the basic trends and influences that have weakened the Body of Christ;
2. To comprehend the biblical truths regarding the mind, reason, faith, and verifiable Truth-Claims;
3. To examine the nature of worldviews (belief systems);
4. To investigate the uniqueness and benefits of the Christian Worldview for individuals and cultures;
5. To ascertain the centrality of Christian Apologetics to verify the Christian Worldview;
6. To develop the principles of discernment regarding the Christian Worldview “grid” in daily living.
7. To examine the biblical principles and concepts related to the transformation of a culture and nation.

What is a Worldview?

A Worldview may be defined as how a person sees life and the world at large. Here are some definitions to clarify the meaning:

James Sire says in his book, *The Universe Next Door*, defines a worldview as “a more or less coherent frame of reference for all thought and action...A worldview is a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true, or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of our world.”

Christian theologian R.C. Sproul explains a worldview this way: “We all have values. We all have some viewpoint about what life is all about. We all have some perspective on the world we live in. We are not all philosophers, but we all have a philosophy. Perhaps we haven’t thought much about that philosophy, but one is certain - we live it out...The theories we live are the ones we really believe.”

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the Elements of a Worldview

- Ronald Nash: “...a conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place of fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge reality.”
- Norman Geisler: “...an interpretative framework through which or by which one makes sense out of the data of life and the world.”
- Michael D. Palmer: “Through our worldview, we determine priorities, explain our relationship to God and fellow human beings, assess the meaning of events, and justify our actions.”
- A person’s worldview supplies a general context of life, providing a vision of what one considers authentically real.

the Big Questions of Life

- Ultimate Reality: What kind of God actually exists?
- External Reality: Is there anything beyond the cosmos?
- Knowledge: What can be known and how can anyone know it?
- Origin: Where did I come from?
- Identity: Who am I?
- Location: Where am I?
- Morals: How should I live?

the Big Questions of Life

- Values: What should I consider of great worth?
- Predicament: What is humanity's fundamental problem?
- Resolution: How can humanity's problem be solved?
- Past/Present: What is the meaning and direction of history?
- Destiny: Will I survive death of my body and if so, in what state?

the Core Aspects of a Worldview

- One: Theology (Concept of God)
Each worldview considers the question of God or ultimate reality, either affirming or denying the existence of God.
Mortimer J. Adler: "The most important question is 'Does God exist?' When a person answers that question, all other questions flow from that point."
- Two: Metaphysics (View of External Reality)
Seeking answers to questions like: Is ultimate reality mind, matter, spirit, or a combination? Is reality comprehended by the five senses, by divine revelation, or an element of both? Is the origin of the universe natural or supernatural? Is there an explanation to time, change, and cause-effect relationships?

the Core Aspects of a Worldview

- Three: Epistemology (Theory of Knowledge)
The study of knowledge - investigating the origin, the nature, limits, and validity of knowledge.
- Four: Axiology (Study of Values)
The study of asking questions about the origin, nature, meaning, and criteria of values.
- Five: Humanity (View of Human Nature)
Studying humanity (anthropology) concerns the origin, the nature, problems, and destiny of human beings.
- Six: History (Study of Unfolding Historical Events)
The study of history deals with the nature, direction, and purpose of historical events. The Christian worldview is deeply connected to history.

the Christian Worldview and Spiritual Transformation

The mind is a crucial component in the spiritual journey of every believer. The Apostle Paul's writings provide the complete set of instruction, insights, and directives for discipleship for both the individual and the corporate fellowship.

One of the key texts regarding spiritual transformation is Romans 12:1,2. Verse two: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

The word "Renewing" is *anakainosis* in the Greek, and its meaning is vividly clear: making something new.

What transforms us? Close feelings toward Christ? Fellowship and worship? Paul highlights priority of our mind, our thoughts, and our belief.

the Structure of the Soul

To understand human persons, we must examine our nature.

The Nature of man: a human being is a unity of two distinct realities: body and soul.

I am a soul that lives inside my Body.

My soul is immaterial, invisible thing that makes me a conscious living human being.

Some Christian theologians believe the nature of mankind is triune: spirit, soul, and body.

The soul and body relate to each other in a cause-effect way.

the Five States of the Soul

State Number One: A SENSATION is a state of awareness, a mode

of consciousness, a conscious awareness of sound, color, pleasure, pain.

State Number Two: A THOUGHT is a mental content that can be expressed in an entire sentence and that only exists while it is being thought. Some thoughts imply other thoughts.

State Number Three: BELIEF is a person's view, accepted to varying degrees of strength, of how things really are.

State Number Four: DESIRE is a certain felt inclination to do, have, or experience certain things.

State Number Five: An ACT OF THE WILL is a volition or choice, an exercise of power, an endeavoring to do a certain thing.

the Mind's Role in Transformation

Beliefs are the foundational elements upon which our lives stand.

Here is the reality: it doesn't matter what we believe or what we want others to believe, we act out our beliefs most of the time.

Behavior is a good indicator of a person's beliefs.

the Five Aspects of Belief

- One: The Constant of Belief
What we believe matters.
Our beliefs are so important that according to the Bible, our eternal destiny is determined by what we believe about Jesus.
- Two: The Strength of a Belief
A belief's strength is the degree you believe it is true.
Your belief grows as you gather evidence to support that belief.

the Five Aspects of Belief

- Three: The Centrality of a Belief
This refers to the degree of importance the belief has to your entire set of beliefs.
- Four: How do we change beliefs?
- Five: How beliefs form the plausibility structure of a culture.

Impacting Culture

“God usually exerts that power in connection with certain prior conditions of the human mind, and it should be ours to create, so far as we can, with the help of God, those favourable conditions for the reception of the Gospel. False ideas are the greatest obstacles to the reception of the Gospel. We may preach with all the fervour of a reformer and yet succeed only in winning a straggler here and there, if we permit the whole collective thought of the nation or of the world to be controlled by ideas which, by the resistless force of logic, prevent Christianity from being regarded as anything more than a harmless delusion. Under such circumstances, what God desires us to do is to destroy the obstacle at the root.”

J. Gresham Machen

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J. P. Moreland

the Seven Mountains of Cultural Influence

- Religion
- Family
- Education
- Government
- Media
- Arts & Entertainment
- Business

Lance Wallnau

“The Church lacks cultural power because it focuses on changing the world from within the Church Mountain rather than releasing the Church into the marketplace to leaven all seven mountains...Taking the Gospel into all the world is no longer a simple journey of geography. The world is a matrix of overlapping systems or spheres of influence. We are called to go into the entire matrix and invade every system [mountain] with an influence that liberates that system’s fullest potential.”

Class Two

The Christian Worldview:

Thinking Biblically for Personal and Cultural Transformation

“...speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the Body for the building up of itself in love.”

Ephesians 4:15,16

Perhaps the most familiar statement in the Bible about the Bible is found in II Timothy 3:16,17: “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” A worldview that deserves the name ‘Christian’ begins with the questions, ‘What does God have to say about this issue?’ And II Timothy 3:16 states that what will make us “adequate, equipped for every good work.”

Allan Moseley (*Thinking Against the Grain*)

“Once we discover that the Christian worldview is really true, then living it out means offering up to God all our powers - practical, intellectual, emotional, artistic - to live for Him in every area of life. The only expression such faith can take is one that captures our entire being and redirects our every thought...Biblical truth takes hold of our inner being, and we recognize that it is not only a message of salvation but also the truth about all reality.”

Nancy Pearcey
(Total Truth)

Basic Considerations

- To understand the basic trends and influences that have weakened the Body of Christ.
- To comprehend the biblical truths regarding the mind, reason, faith, and verifiable Truth-Claims.
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Issues We face as the Body of Christ

- > **60% of the churches in our nation will be closed by 2023;**
- > **Four recognized research specialists: Evangelicals only account for 7% - 8.9% of U.S. population;**
- > **The Lost Generation:**
 - Josh McDowell - 69% teens leave the church after H.S.;**
 - LifeWay Research - 70% millennials quit attending by 23;**
- > **Barna predicts 80% of millennials will disengage by 23;**

- > **Barna Group: Most sobering survey - “One pattern emerged loud and clear: young adults rarely possess a biblical worldview. The current study found that less than one-half of one percent of adults in the Mosaic generation (aged 19 - 30) have a biblical worldview, compared to about one out of every nine older adults.”**

Challenges from our Culture

- Scientific Naturalism (Scientific Materialism)
Scientific Materialism is the worldview that reality only exists in the material realm with the belief that there are no non-material entities such as God, the soul, the mind, or an eternal dimension.
- Postmodern Relativism: There are no absolutes in reality.
- Islam: a theistic religion which worships Allah and elevates Mohammed as Allah’s prophet.
- The LBGTTQA Movement: the sexual revolution as expressed in normalization of homosexuality, same-sex marriage, and the transgender issues are major challenges to the Church.

Direct Challenges to Christianity and Core Beliefs

Core Beliefs being rejected by educators, political and media celebrities, and business leaders are:

- There is no God.
- The Bible is historically unreliable, filled with myths, and errors.
- If Jesus did exist, he was not God and did not rise from the dead.
- The Bible is no different from other religious books.
- There are many paths to God; Jesus is not the only way.

“...the business of apologetics is to establish the truth of Christianity as the absolute religion, directly and as a whole. Apologetics consequently takes its place at the head of the department of theological science, and finds its task in the establishment of that knowledge of God which forms the subject-matter of these departments.”

Benjamin Warfield

Noted Presbyterian Scholar and Theologian

What is a Worldview?

- “The Christian worldview relates to all of life. GOD’S TRUTH IS EVERYWHERE.”
David Noebel
- “Christianity is true, and its truth will be discovered anywhere you look very far.”
George Gilder
- “Beginning in infancy, our worldview emerges quietly and unconsciously from enveloping influences - culture, language, gender, religion, politics, and social economic status. As we grow older, it continues to develop through the shaping forces of education and experience.”
Philosopher Patrick J. Hurley

What is a worldview?

- “...the first step in conforming our intellect to God’s truth is to die to our vanity, pride, and craving for respect from colleagues and the public. We must let go of the worldly motivations that drive us, praying to be motivated solely by a genuine desire to submit our minds to God’s Word - and then use that knowledge in service to others.”
Nancy Pearcey
(*Total Truth*)
- “This is why truth is so powerful. It allows us to cooperate with reality, whether spiritual or physical, and tap into its power. As we learn to think correctly about God, specific scriptural teachings, the soul, or other important aspects of a Christian worldview, we are placed in touch with God and those realities.”
J.P. Moreland

“A worldview is what we assume to be true about the basic make-up of our world. A worldview is like a mental map of reality. We believe certain things about ourselves and God and life, and then we interpret our experiences through them. Everyone has a worldview, even though not everyone realizes they have one.

“Jesus’ worldview - His view of life - called a biblical worldview. Embracing a biblical worldview means understanding and living life from God’s perspective. It means understanding what we were meant to know and be and how we were meant to live. The biblical worldview works because it explains the truth about life and happiness, and the power to live according to the Kingdom of God.”

Josh McDowell
(The Unshakable Truth)

Significant Reasons to Develop a Christian Worldview

- Reason One: A biblical or Christian worldview is a requirement for obedience to the greatest commandment, which is to love God with all of our being (Matthew 22:37-40).
- Reason Two: It is important to develop a distinctively biblical (Christian) worldview because our mindset is a reliable indication of the essence of our identity. If we don’t love God in our minds, we just don’t love God.
- Reason Three: How can we claim that Jesus is Lord or Master, of our lives if He is not the Lord and Master of our thought life. When Paul explains about spiritual warfare, he indicates that the primary battlefield is our minds.

Reasons to Develop a Christian Worldview

- Reason Four: It is necessary to develop a Christian mindset for the renewing of the mind which is God's method of transforming us into the image of Jesus (Romans 8:29).
Donald Whitney explained: "Growth in Godliness involves a mental renewal that cannot happen without learning."
- Reason Five: The development of a Christian worldview equips Christians to be able to refute theological errors in the church.
- Reason Six: The development of a Christian worldview prepares Christians to be ready to defend our faith in our culture.

Seven Worldview Questions

- Question One: What is ultimate Reality?
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Testable Truth

Every person's worldview shapes his vision of what is real, true, right and valuable. It is the matrix through a person that makes sense of living, life, and death. Controversial issues such as abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, and war are tremendously impacted by worldview perspectives. That is why it is critical to have a clear and distinct view of what is the "true" worldview.

Testable Truth

Major worldview positions conflict and collide with one another. They do not agree about what constitutes the major issues of life. For example, Naturalism (scientific materialism) claims nature is the sole reality. Pantheism teaches that all is God and God is all. Theism declares that the world is the product of an infinite, personal, Creator God.

Which worldview is correct? Here are nine tests to determine which worldview aligns best with reality.

Testable Truth

- The Coherence Test: Is a particular worldview logically consistent?
- Balance Test: Is the worldview properly balanced between simplicity and complexity?
- Explanatory Power and Scope Test: How well does a worldview explain the facts of reality...and how wide is the range of its explanation?
- Correspondence Test: Does a particular worldview correspond with well-established, empirical facts, and does it correspond to a person's experiences in the world?

Testable Truth

- Verification Test: Can the central truth-claims of the worldview be verified or falsified?
- Pragmatic Test: Does the worldview promote relevant, practical, and workable results?
- Existential Test: Does the worldview address the internal needs of humanity?
- Cumulative Test: Is the worldview supported by multiple lines of converging evidence that together add increasing support for its truth-claims and extend the breadth of its explanatory power?
- Competitive Competence Test: Can the worldview successfully compete in the marketplace of ideas?

the Christian worldview of Truth

- Point One: God is ultimate truth.
- Point Two: Jesus Christ is the truth of God Incarnate.
- Point Three: All truth is God's truth, and He has revealed it to humankind.
- Point Four: Truth is objective, knowable, and applicable.
- Point Five: Truth is universal, absolute, and unchanging.
- Point Six: Truth excludes whatever is contrary as falsehood.
- Point Seven: To deny the reality of truth is self-refuting.

the Christian Worldview in Spiritual Transformation

- The mind is a crucial component in the spiritual journey of every believer.
- The Apostle Paul's writings provide the complete set of instruction, insights, and directives for discipleship for both the individual and the corporate fellowship.
- Key verse: Roman 12:2 - "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." The word "Renewing" is *anakainosis* in the Greek, and its meaning is vividly clear: making something new.
- What is it that transforms us? Paul highlights the priority of our mind, our thoughts, and our beliefs.

the Structure of the Soul

- To understand human persons, we must examine our nature.
- The nature of man: a human being is a unity of two distinct realities: body and soul. I am a soul and I live inside my body.
- My soul is immaterial, invisible thing that makes me a conscious, living human being.
- The soul and the body relate to each other in a cause-effect way.

the Five States of the Soul

- State Number One: Sensation
- State Number Two: Thought
- State Number Three: Belief
- State Number Four: Desire
- State Number Five: Act of the Will

the Mind's Role in Transformation

- Aspect One: The Constant of a Belief.
- Aspect Two: The Strength of the Belief.
- Aspect Three: The Centrality of the Belief.
- Aspect Four: Who do We Change Beliefs?
- Aspect Five: How do Beliefs form the “plausibility” structure of a Culture?

the Mind's Role in Seeing, Willing, Feeling, and Desiring

- First, there is simple seeing.
- Second, there is seeing as.
- Third, there is seeing that.

Apologetics Impacting Cultural Spheres of Influence

Noted Theologian J. Gresham Machen:

“God usually exerts that power in connection with certain prior conditions of the human mind, and it should be ours to create, so far as we can, with the help of God, those favourable conditions for the reception of the Gospel. False ideas are the greatest obstacles to the reception of the Gospel. We may preach with all the fervour of a reformer and yet succeed only in winning a straggler here and there, if we permit the whole collective thought of the nation or the world to be controlled by ideas which, by the resistless force of logic, prevent Christianity from being regarded as anything more than a harmless delusion. Under such circumstances what God desires us to do is to destroy the obstacle at the root.”

the Seven Spheres of Cultural Influence

- One: Religion
- Two: Family
- Three: Education
- Four: Government
- Five: Media
- Six: Arts & Entertainment
- Seven: Business

Lance Wallnau

“The Church lacks cultural power because it focuses on changing the world from within the Church Mountain (Sphere) rather than releasing the Church into the marketplace to leaven all seven mountains...Taking the Gospel into all the world is no longer a simple journey of geography. The world is a matrix of overlapping systems or spheres of influence. We are called to go into the entire matrix and invade every system (mountain) with an influence that liberates that system’s fullest potential.”

the Christian Worldview and the Supernatural: Developing Faith in God

- Hebrews 11:1- “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
Where does the “substance” and “evidence” come from? This comes from your knowledge of something or someone that allows you to trust in that someone or something.
- Notice the pattern: Evidence > Knowledge > Trust
Acts 1:3 - Exodus 3-4; 14:31; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 7:18-23.
- The two parts of reality: the two chairs

Class Three

“Now these words of Paul’s are familiar to many, but the critical point of verse 2 is that we cannot ‘prove,’ that is, ‘make known to ourselves and to others,’ without the renewing or transformation of our minds. This brings the mind to the spiritual stage, front and center! We all want to know God’s will, but this text is telling us we can’t unless we present our bodies, including our soul and minds, to the Lord for transformation and renewal!...be aware of this important insight: by ‘presenting our bodies,’ Paul means we must be available to do the hard work of understanding what God has said in His Word and take up the time to study it in order to have our minds transformed!”
J.P. Moreland (*Love God With All Your Mind*)

“The true reason why faith is given such an exclusive place by the New Testament, so far as the attainment of salvation is concerned, over against love and over against everything else in man...is that faith means *receiving something*, not *doing something* or even *being something*. To say, therefore, that our faith saves us means that we do not save ourselves even in slightest measure, but that God saves us.”
J. Gresham Machen (*What is Faith?*)

“Thinking is indispensable on the path to passion for God. Thinking is not an end in itself. Nothing but God Himself is finally an end in itself. Thinking is not the goal of life. Thinking, like non-thinking, can be the ground for boasting. Thinking, without prayer, without the Holy Spirit, without obedience, without love, will puff up and destroy (I Corinthians 8:1). But thinking under the mighty hand of God, thinking soaked in prayer, thinking carried by the Holy Spirit, thinking tethered to the Bible, thinking in pursuit of more reasons to praise and proclaim the glories of God, thinking in the service of love - such thinking is indispensable in a life of fullest praise to God.”

John Piper

Basic Considerations

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Josh McDowell

- “This is why truth is so powerful. It allows us to cooperate with reality, whether spiritual or physical, and tap into its power. As we learn to think correctly about God, specific scriptural teachings, the soul, or other important aspects of a Christian worldview, we are placed in touch with God and those realities.”

J.P. Moreland

The Necessity of Apologetics

“As Christian parents, pastors, teachers, and youth group leaders, we constantly see young people pulled down by the undertow of powerful cultural trends. If all we give them is a ‘Heart’ religion, it will not be strong enough to counter the lure of attractive but dangerous ideas. Young believers also need a ‘brain’ religion - training in worldview and apologetics - to equip them to analyze and critique the competing worldviews they will encounter when they leave home. If forewarned and forearmed, young people at least have a fighting chance when they find themselves a minority of one among their classmates or work colleagues. Training young people to develop a Christian mind is no longer an option; it is part of their necessary survival equipment.”

Nancy Pearcey (*Total Truth*)

- One: A requirement for obedience to the greatest commandment: love God with all your being.
- Two: It is important to develop a distinctively biblical worldview because our mindset is a reliable indication of the essence of our identity.
- Three: Is Jesus the Lord of our thought life?
- Four: It is necessary to develop a Christian mindset for the renewing of the mind which is God's method of transforming us into the image of Christ (Romans 8:20).
- Five: Christian worldview equips Christians to refute error.
- Six: Christian worldview prepares Christians to defend our faith in our culture. Note I Peter 3:15.

Understanding the First Principles of Logic

- Law One: The Law of Non-Contradiction (LNC)
"A" cannot equal "A" and equal "non-A."
- Law Two: The Law of the Excluded Middle (LEM)
Something is or it is not.
- Law Three: The Law of Identity (LID)
"A" IS "A."
Without exception the Laws of Non-Contradiction, Excluded Middle, and Identity apply to all matters of thoughts and hold true for any and all worldview. Therefore, the Truth-Claims of other religions can also be subjected to these principles.

The Issue of Truth and Logical Thinking

- Definition #1: Truth is Relative or What's true for you.
- Definition #2: Truth is what matches the Facts.

The Two Tests for Determining Truth

- Test #1: Examining All the Facts to See What matches Reality.
- Test #2: Learning to think Correctly (Logically)

Three Reasons Why We Need the Right View of Truth

- Reason One: Truth affects our Daily Life.
- Reason Two: Truth affects our Eternal Life.
- Reason Three: The Bible Makes Truth-Claims.

the Christian worldview of Truth

- Point One: God is ultimate truth.
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the Christian View of Knowledge

- One: Extreme skepticism is self - defeating.
- Two: Knowledge is possible with God as its source.
- Three: Knowledge is directly connected to God's acts of revelation.
- Four: Knowledge is properly justified true belief.
 - > Knowledge involves belief.
 - > A person can only know things that are true.
 - > A person can believe something to be true that is...false.
- Five: Human knowledge is limited and affected by sin.
- Six: The Christian faith involves knowledge and is compatible with reason.

the Christian Worldview in Spiritual Transformation

- The mind is a crucial component in the spiritual journey of every believer.
- The Apostle Paul's writings provide the complete set of instruction, insights, and directives for discipleship for both the individual and the corporate fellowship.
- Key verse: Roman 12:2 - "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." The word "Renewing" is *anakainosis* in the Greek, and its meaning is vividly clear: making something new.
- What is it that transforms us? Paul highlights the priority of our mind, our thoughts, and our beliefs.

the Mind's Role in Seeing, Willing, Feeling, and Desiring

- First, there is simple seeing.
- Second, there is seeing as.
- Third, there is seeing that.

Apologetics Impacting Cultural Spheres of Influence

Noted Theologian J. Gresham Machen:

“God usually exerts that power in connection with certain prior conditions of the human mind, and it should be ours to create, so far as we can, with the help of God, those favourable conditions for the reception of the Gospel. False ideas are the greatest obstacles to the reception of the Gospel. We may preach with all the fervour of a reformer and yet succeed only in winning a straggler here and there, if we permit the whole collective thought of the nation or the world to be controlled by ideas which, by the resistless force of logic, prevent Christianity from being regarded as anything more than a harmless delusion. Under such circumstances what God desires us to do is to destroy the obstacle at the root.”

The CHRISTIAN Worldview, Culture, and the Plausibility Structure

“If a culture reaches the point where Christian claims are not even part of its plausibility structure, fewer and fewer people will be able to entertain the possibility that they might be true. Whatever stragglers do come to faith in such a context would do so on the basis of felt needs alone, and the genuineness of such conversions would be questionable to say the least. This is why APOLOGETICS IS SO CRUCIAL TO EVANGELISM. It seeks to create a plausibility structure in a person’s mind, ‘favourable conditions’ as Machen puts it, so the gospel can be entertained by a person. To plant a seed in someone’s mind in pre-evangelism is to present a person with an idea that will work on his or her plausibility structure to create space in which Christianity can be entertained seriously. If this is important to evangelism, it is strategically crucial that local churches think about how they can address those aspects of the modern worldview that place Christianity outside the plausibility structures of so many.”

J.P. Moreland

Insights About Spheres of Cultural Influence

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The word for intercede is derived from the Latin words *inter* (meaning “between”) and *cede* (meaning “to go”).

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the Seven Mountains of Cultural Influence

- Religion
- Family
- Education
- Government
- Media
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“The Church lacks cultural power because it focuses on changing the world from within the Church Mountain rather than releasing the Church into the marketplace to leaven all seven mountains...Taking the Gospel into all the world is no longer a simple journey of geography. The world is a matrix of overlapping systems or spheres of influence. We are called to go into the entire matrix and invade every system [mountain] with an influence that liberates that system’s fullest potential.”

How Christianity Changed the World

- One: The high value for human life.
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- Eight: The development of art and music.
- Nine: The motivation and basis for modern science.
- Ten: The concept of labor and economic freedom dignified.

Class Four

“And he [Paul] entered the synagogue continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the Kingdom of God. But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”

Acts 19:8-10

“To think secularly is to think within a frame of reference bounded by the limits of our life on earth: it is to keep one’s calculations rooted in this-worldly criteria. To think Christianly is to accept all things with the mind as related, directly or indirectly, to man’s eternal destiny as the redeemed and chosen by God.”

Harry Blamires (*The Christian Mind*)

“Western civilization is for the first time in its history in danger of dying. The reason is spiritual. It is losing its life, its soul; that soul was the Christian faith... We do apologetics not to save the Church but to save the world.”

Peter Kreeft and Ron Tacelli

What is a Worldview?

- “A worldview is what we assume to be true about the basic makeup of our world. A worldview is like a mental map of reality. We believe certain things about ourselves and God and life, and then we interpret our experiences through them. Everyone has a worldview, even though not everyone realizes they have one.”

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- “This is why truth is so powerful. It allows us to cooperate with reality, whether spiritual or physical, and tap into its power. As we learn to think correctly about God, specific scriptural teachings, the soul, or other important aspects of a Christian worldview, we are placed in touch with God and those realities.”

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Additionally he urges Christians in Philippi to “have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

Scientist Johannes Kepler expressed his prayer to God as “thinking thy thoughts after Thee.”

- One: A requirement for obedience to the greatest commandment: love God with all your being.
- Two: It is important to develop a distinctively biblical worldview because our mindset is a reliable indication of the essence of our identity.
- Three: Is Jesus the Lord of our thought life?
- Four: It is necessary to develop a Christian mindset for the renewing of the mind which is God’s method of transforming us into the image of Christ (Romans 8:20).
- Five: Christian worldview equips Christians to refute error.
- Six: Christian worldview prepares Christians to defend our faith in our culture. Note I Peter 3:15.

Misconceptions of Christianity

- Misconception One: Christianity is a Blind Faith.
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Basic Considerations About Thinking and Thoughts

1. We were created to Think! (Genesis 2 & 3; Romans 8:5)
2. We were created to Think God's Thoughts
(I Corinthians 2:16; Ephesians 4:23,24)
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The Nature of Thoughts

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“Philosophers can speculate, but only God can articulate the ultimate truth about what we are - matter and spirit, physical and non-material. Only one can tell us about ultimate answers and realities, and that is God.”

William Backus, Christian Psychologist

Understanding the First Principles of Logic

- Law One: The Law of Non-Contradiction (LNC)
“A” cannot equal “A” and equal “non-A.”
- Law Two: The Law of the Excluded Middle (LEM)
Something is or it is not.
- Law Three: The Law of Identity (LID)
“A” IS “A.”

Without exception the Laws of Non-Contradiction, Excluded Middle, and Identity apply to all matters of thoughts and hold true for any and all worldview. Therefore, the Truth-Claims of other religions can also be subjected to these principles.

The Seven Worldview Questions

- One: What is Ultimate Reality?
- Two: What is the nature of External Reality?
- Three: What is a human being?
- Four: What happens to a person at death?
- Five: Why is it possible to know anything at all?
- Six: How do we know what is right or wrong?
- Seven: What is the meaning of history?

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I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic (universal) Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen!

God's Written Word - The Scripture

Historic Christianity considers the Bible to be the propositional Word of God. There are at least six reasons why it is intellectually credible to believe that the Bible is God's actual revelation to man:

1. Unlike most other religious books, the Bible is uniquely connected to history. Therefore, many of its central claims are open to historical investigation (verification/falsification).
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“...people interact and organize while taking all the raw materials of planet earth and doing something with them...How people communicate, work, travel, order their familial and societal lives, and create technology are all artifacts of culture...Christians are involved in the creation of culture. There is no such thing as a culture-free Christianity...we were given the mandate to make something of this world (Genesis 27 - 28).”

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Spiritual Discernment

- Comments, Reports, and Surveys
- Context and Avenue of Communication
- Considerations in Discernment
- Spiritual Warfare and Intercession
Acts 12:1-19
Acts 19:1- 10

Class Five

Ephesians 4:1-6

“Therefore, I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.”

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“No movement, political or religious, or otherwise, can survive with dignity or flourish in a culture if it allows the following to arise:

- > A culture where its viewpoint is considered irrational by a significant number of people and is not adequately represented among the intellectual leaders who shape the plausibility structure of that movement.
- > A culture in which the movement itself enlists others to join, not primarily in terms of the importance of ideas and the truth that defines that movement, but in terms of the satisfaction of felt needs for those who sign up.
- > An atmosphere wherein the movement does not mobilize a growing number of its soldiers to be articulate advocates and defenders of its ideology who can engage in debate in the public square.”

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“People want to be taught more about the social and political issues of our day. In August, 2015, respected George Barna released the results of a survey that revealed this remarkable insight. But the survey also revealed an odd behavioral pattern. People who label themselves as *conservatives* do not speak up.

Why? The answer might surprise you. It is not because they are afraid. They are not fearful of being called derogatory names, such as *intolerant* or *hateful*. According to the survey, they are quiet for one reason: *they do not know what to say!* They do not know how to state a biblical basis for their convictions....The results revealed that theologically and politically conservative people hold deep convictions. They simply are not sure how to convey those beliefs.

One year prior, a Pew Research poll revealed more quite surprising, and unanticipated, information: people want their churches and pastors to speak up on the social and political issues of the day.”

James Garlow (*Well Versed*, pp 3,4)

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MISSION:

Equipping Followers of Christ for the Evangelization and Transformation of our nation and culture through the Body of Christ and the Local Church.

“There is no more crucial issue facing us today than the relationship of the church and the gospel to contemporary culture.”

Tim Keller

Engaging our Post-Christian or Pre-Christian Culture

“...as a society we are in the midst of the secularization, and therefore we are an utter irreconcilable mix of rival views of the universe, of human nature, and the human good...The culture wars are cosmological wars.”

Benjamin Wiker

“If Christians are to minister effectively in the postmodern world and avoid its temptations, they must understand the spirit of the age.

Gene Edward Veith

“Most Christians do not perceive the Church to be in the midst of the most severe struggle it has faced in centuries.”

George Barna

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“Confess to one another therefore your faults (your slips, your false steps, your offenses, your sins) and pray [also] for one another, that you may be healed and restored [to a spiritual tone of mind and heart]. The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working.”

James 5:16 (Amplified)

No movement, political or religious, or otherwise, can survive with dignity or flourish in a culture if it allows the following to arise:

A culture where its viewpoint is considered irrational by a significant number of people and is not adequately represented among the intellectual leaders who shape the plausibility structure of that movement.

A culture in which the movement itself enlists others to join, not primarily in terms of the importance of the ideas and the truth that defines that movement, but in terms of the satisfaction of felt needs for those who sign up.

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What is a Worldview?

- “A worldview is what we assume to be true about the basic makeup of our world. A worldview is like a mental map of reality. We believe certain things about ourselves and God and life, and then we interpret our experiences through them. Everyone has a worldview, even though not everyone realizes they have one.”

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- “This is why truth is so powerful. It allows us to cooperate with reality, whether spiritual or physical, and tap into its power. As we learn to think correctly about God, specific scriptural teachings, the soul, or other important aspects of a Christian worldview, we are placed in touch with God and those realities.”

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Paul states in I Corinthians 2:16:

“...we have the mind of Christ.”

Additionally he urges Christians in Philippi to “have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.”

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- One: A requirement for obedience to the greatest commandment: love God with all your being.
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- Five: Christian worldview equips Christians to refute error.
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Every person's worldview shapes his vision of what is real, true, right and valuable. It is the matrix through a person that makes sense of living, life, and death. Controversial such as abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, and war are tremendously impacted by worldview perspectives. That is why it is critical to have a clear and distinct view of what is the "true" worldview.

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Which worldview is correct? Here are nine tests to determine which worldview aligns best with reality.

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- The Coherence Test: Is a particular worldview logically consistent?
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The Historic and Biblical View of God: The Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Christian theism affirms the existence of an infinite, eternal, unchanging, and tripersonal spiritual God. This Being is the transcendent Creator and immanent Sustainer of the world and is the Sovereign Ruler over all things.

Historic Christianity demonstrates a special Trinitarian form of monotheism: God eternally and simultaneously exists as three distinct and distinguishable (though not separate) persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Trinity's Biblical Basis

1. There is only one true God.
2. The Father is called or referred to as God.
3. The Son (Jesus Christ) is called or referred to as God.
4. The Holy Spirit is called or referred to as God.
5. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct persons and can be distinguished from one another.
6. The three Persons (Father or God; and Son or Christ or Lord; and Holy Spirit or Spirit) are frequently listed together in a triadic pattern of unity and equality.

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Jainism	Mahavira	Heroic Figure	Teach asceticism
Judaism	Moses	Prophet	Communicate the will & law of Yahweh
Islam	Muhammad	Final Prophet	Share the will of Allah
Zoroastrianism	Zoroaster	Prophet	Share the will of Ahura-Mazda
Christianity	Jesus	God Incarnate (Lord, Messiah, Savior)	Redeem Mankind

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Noted Theologian J. Gresham Machen:

“God usually exerts that power in connection with certain prior conditions of the human mind, and it should be ours to create, so far as we can, with the help of God, those favourable conditions for the reception of the Gospel. False ideas are the greatest obstacles to the reception of the Gospel. We may preach with all the fervour of a reformer and yet succeed only in winning a straggler here and there, if we permit the whole collective thought of the nation or the world to be controlled by ideas which, by the resistless force of logic, prevent Christianity from being regarded as anything more than a harmless delusion. Under such circumstances what God desires us to do is to destroy the obstacle at the root.”

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Steps to Community and Cultural Transformation

“Transformed communities do not materialize spontaneously...community transformation is not an arbitrary event but rather the product of a cause and effect process...God’s Word makes it clear that divine revelation and power are called forth by sanctified hearts, by right relationships and by united, fervant and selfless intercession (II Chronicles 7:14; Jeremiah 29:13; John 15:16; I John 3:21,22; 5:14).”

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Class Seven

“...he (Paul) entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people, he (Paul) withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”

Acts 19:8-10

“There is no more crucial issue facing us today than the relationship of the church and the gospel to contemporary culture.”

Tim Keller

Redeemer Presbyterian Church

“As society strains under the collective weight of pluralism and secularism and is deeply divided along worldview lines (not just political or socioeconomic ones), we need to think Christianly about all of life and seize the opportunities we have as Everyday Ambassadors to speak and embody the eternal kind of life Jesus offers to our culture. Tragically, many of these cultural moments pass us by unclaimed - either because we don't notice them or haven't adequately prepared ourselves to engage them.”

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Contemporary Worldview Issues: Counterfeit Christian Worldview

The National Study of Youth and Religion conducted the largest and most detailed study of teens and religion ever done. The study revealed that students were remarkably inarticulate about their faith. But could talk with precision and detail about pop culture, social media, and other topics, but they were not able to say much about the basic tenets of their faith. Researchers Christian Smith and Melinda Denton stated that the dominant religion of today's teens is called "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD).

Most teens described God in the following statements:

- > A God exists who created and orders the world and watches over human life of earth.
- > God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
- > The central goal in life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
- > God does not need to be particularly involved one's life, except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
- > Good people go to heaven when they die.

The two main reasons that a great many teens left the Christian faith when they leave home or college:

1. Teens experience isolation and are separated from adult relationships.
2. Teens have not been grounded in a strong Christian worldview with apologetics training taught how to think to arrive rationally at the truth.

Basic Statements of a Christian Worldview According to George Barna

1. Absolute moral truth exists.
2. The Bible is totally accurate in all the principles it teaches.
3. Satan is considered to be a real being or force, not merely symbolic.
4. A person cannot earn his or her way into heaven by trying to be good or do good works.
5. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth (also had a miraculous ministry, died on the cross, and rose from the dead).
6. God is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the world, and God still rules the universe today.

To possess a Christian Worldview, a Person must commit to:

1. To think in a manner that is consistent with the propositional truth of the Bible;
2. To learn why the Truth of the Bible is both reliable and rational;
3. To understand the ways in which a biblical worldview differs from other worldviews;
4. To live in accord with the truth of the Bible;
5. To develop the ability to communicate to others coherently and compellingly the basis and implications of a biblical worldview.

The Factual Foundation of a Christian Worldview

1. The Issue of Truth: Question: Does Truth Exist?
2. The Factual Evidence for the Existence of God
 - > The Cosmological Arguments for the Beginning of the Universe
 - > The Design Arguments
 - Fine-Tuning Argument (aka: the Anthropic Principle)
 - The Design of Life and the Informational Argument
 - Human Consciousness as Evidence for God's existence
 - > The Case for the Reality of Miracles
 - > The Case for the Moral Argument for God's Existence

The Factual Foundation for a Christian Worldview

3. The Case for the Christian Faith

- > Investigating the Primary Source Documents for the Christian faith:
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Thinking Biblically for Personal and Cultural Transformation

- See to it that no one carries you off as spoil or makes you yourselves captive by his so-called philosophy and intellectualism and vain deceit (idle fancies and plain nonsense), following human tradition (men's ideas of the material rather than the spiritual world), just crude notions following the rudimentary and elemental teachings of the universe and disregarding [the teachings of] Christ [the Messiah]. For in Him the whole fullness of Deity (the Godhead) continues to dwell in bodily form [giving complete expression of the divine nature]...you are in Him, made full and having come to fullness of life [in Christ you too are filled with the Godhead - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - reach full spiritual stature].
- And He is the Head of all rule and authority [of every angelic principality and power].
- Colossians 2:8 - 10

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What is a Worldview?

A Worldview is defined as how a person sees life and the world at large.

James Sire says in his book, *The Universe Next Door*, defines a worldview as “a more or less coherent frame of reference for all thought and action...A worldview is a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true, or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or sub-consciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of our world.”

Christian theologian R.C. Spoul defines a worldview: “We all have values. We all have some viewpoint about what life is all about. We all have some perspective on the world we live in. We are not all philosophers, but we all have a philosophy. Perhaps we haven’t thought much about that philosophy, but one is certain - we live it out.”

Significant Reasons to Develop a Christian Worldview

Reason One: A biblical or Christian Worldview is a requirement for obedience to the greatest commandment, which is to love God with all of our being (Matthew 22:37-40).

Reason Two: It is important to develop a distinctively biblical (Christian) worldview because our mindset is a reliable indication of the essence of our identity.

Reason Three: How can we claim that Jesus is the Lord or Master of our lives if He is not the Lord and Master of our thought life?

Significant Reasons to Develop a Christian Worldview

Reason Four: It is necessary to develop a Christian mindset for the renewing of the mind which is God's method of transforming us into the image of Jesus (Romans 8:29).

Reason Five: The development of the a Christian Worldview equips Christians to be able to refute theological errors in the Church.

Reason Six: The development of a Christian Worldview prepares Christians to be ready to defend or faith in our culture.

Direct Challenges to Christianity and Core Beliefs

Core Beliefs being rejected by educators, political and media celebrities, and business leaders are:

- There is no God.
- The Bible is historically unreliable, filled with myths, and errors.
- If Jesus did exist, he was not God and did not rise from the dead.
- The Bible is no different from other religious books.
- There are many paths to God; Jesus is not the only way.

“...the business of apologetics is to establish the truth of Christianity as the absolute religion, directly and as a whole. Apologetics consequently takes its place at the head of the department of theological science, and finds its task in the establishment of that knowledge of God which forms the subject-matter of these departments.”

Benjamin Warfield

Noted Presbyterian Scholar and Theologian

“A worldview is what we assume to be true about the basic make-up of our world. A worldview is like a mental map of reality. We believe certain things about ourselves and God and life, and then we interpret our experiences through them. Everyone has a worldview, even though not everyone realizes they have one.

“Jesus’ worldview - His view of life - called a biblical worldview. Embracing a biblical worldview means understanding and living life from God’s perspective. It means understanding what we were meant to know and be and how we were meant to live. The biblical worldview works because it explains the truth about life and happiness, and the power to live according to the Kingdom of God.”

Josh McDowell

(The Unshakable Truth)

Seven Worldview Questions

- Question One: What is ultimate Reality? What is the really Real? Is it just the material cosmos? Is it a Great Cosmic Mind? Is it a group of gods? Is it God?
- Question Two: What is the nature of External Reality - the world around us? Is the world/universe created or self-creating, chaotic or orderly, or matter, spirit, or a combination of both?
- Question Three: What is a human being? Are individuals made in the “image of God,” are they naked apes, highly complex machines, or a sleeping god?
- Question Four: What happens to a person at death? Is death a transformation to a higher state, a departure to a shadowy existence, or to nothing?

Seven Worldview Questions

- Question Five: Why is it possible to know anything at all? Are we create beings with consciousness and rationality? Are we the product of survival of the fittest in the process of micro-evolution?
- Question Six: How do we know what is right or wrong? Is right or wrong determined by an objective standard which exists outside of ourselves established by God?
- Question Seven: What is the meaning of history? Is history moving toward a paradise on earth? Or to realize the purposes of God preparing for an eternal relationship with God?

Testable Truth

Every person's worldview shapes his vision of what is real, true, right and valuable. It is the matrix through a person that makes sense of living, life, and death. Controversial issues such as abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, and war are tremendously impacted by worldview perspectives. That is why it is critical to have a clear and distinct view of what is the "true" worldview.

"...he (Paul) entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the people, he (Paul) withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. This took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."

Acts 19:8-10

“There is no more crucial issue facing us today than the relationship of the church and the gospel to contemporary culture.”

Tim Keller

Redeemer Presbyterian Church

“As society strains under the collective weight of pluralism and secularism and is deeply divided along worldview lines (not just political or socioeconomic ones), we need to think Christianly about all of life and seize the opportunities we have as Everyday Ambassadors to speak and embody the eternal kind of life Jesus offers to our culture. Tragically, many of these cultural moments pass us by unclaimed - either because we don't notice them or haven't adequately prepared ourselves to engage them.”

Jonathan Morrow

“No movement, political or religious, or otherwise, can survive with dignity or flourish in a culture if it allows the following to arise:

- > A culture where its viewpoint is considered irrational to a significant number of people and is not adequately represented among the intellectual leaders who shape the plausibility structure of that movement.
- > A culture in which the movement itself enlists others to join, not primarily in terms of the importance of the ideas and the truth that defines that movement, but in terms of the satisfaction of felt needs for those who sign up.
- > An atmosphere wherein the movement does not mobilize a growing number of its soldiers to be articulate advocates and defenders of its ideology who can engage in debate in the public square.”

J. P. Moreland

Contemporary Worldview Issues: Counterfeit Christian Worldview

The National Study of Youth and Religion conducted the largest and most detailed study of teens and religion ever done. The study revealed that students were remarkably inarticulate about their faith. But could talk with precision and detail about pop culture, social media, and other topics, but they were not able to say much about the basic tenets of their faith. Researchers Christian Smith and Melinda Denton stated that the dominant religion of today's teens is called "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism (MTD).

Most teens described God in the following statements:

- > A God exists who created and orders the world and watches over human life of earth.
- > God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
- > The central goal in life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
- > God does not need to be particularly involved one's life, except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
- > Good people go to heaven when they die.

The two main reasons that a great many teens left the Christian faith when they leave home or college:

1. Teens experience isolation and are separated from adult relationships.
2. Teens have not been grounded in a strong Christian worldview with apologetics training taught how to think to arrive rationally at the truth.

Apologetics Impacting Cultural Spheres of Influence

Noted Theologian J. Gresham Machen:

“God usually exerts that power in connection with certain prior conditions of the human mind, and it should be ours to create, so far as we can, with the help of God, those favourable conditions for the reception of the Gospel. False ideas are the greatest obstacles to the reception of the Gospel. We may preach with all the fervour of a reformer and yet succeed only in winning a straggler here and there, if we permit the whole collective thought of the nation or the world to be controlled by ideas which, by the resistless force of logic, prevent Christianity from being regarded as anything more than a harmless delusion. Under such circumstances what God desires us to do is to destroy the obstacle at the root.”

the Seven Mountains of Cultural Influence

- Religion
- Family
- Education
- Government
- Media
- Arts & Entertainment
- Business

Lance Wallnau

“The Church lacks cultural power because it focuses on changing the world from within the Church Mountain rather than releasing the Church into the marketplace to leaven all seven mountains...Taking the Gospel into all the world is no longer a simple journey of geography. The world is a matrix of overlapping systems or spheres of influence. We are called to go into the entire matrix and invade every system [mountain] with an influence that liberates that system’s fullest potential.”

Steps to Community and Cultural Transformation

“Transformed communities do not materialize spontaneously...community transformation is not an arbitrary event but rather the product of a cause and effect process...God’s Word makes it clear that divine revelation and power are called forth by sanctified hearts, by right relationships and by united, fervent and selfless intercession (II Chronicles 7:14; Jeremiah 29:13; John 15:16; I John 3:21,22; 5:14).”

George Otis, Jr

Informed Intercession

Informed Intercession

Are there specific steps that Christian leaders can take that position churches and communities for a visitation of God?

After identifying dozens of transformed communities, George Otis shared that common threads and patterns reveal reproducible principles. Otis and his team discovered the following factors responsible for transformed communities and cities.

Factors Responsible for Transformed Communities:

1. Persevering Leadership (Nehemiah 6:1-16)
2. Fervent, united prayer (Jonah 3:5 - 10)
3. Social reconciliations (Matt 5:23,24;18:15-20)
4. Public power encounters (Acts 9:32 - 35)
5. Diagnostic research/spiritual mapping (Joshua 18:8-10)

Four Stages of Progress in Transformation

1. SPIRITUAL BEACHHEADS
2. SPIRITUAL BREAKTHROUGH
3. SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
4. SPIRITUAL MAINTENANCE