A Worldview Wakeup Call

By James Pingel

Britney Spears’ bestselling memoir, *The Woman in Me*, received intense attention this past year because of her heart-wrenching abortion account. Spears’ boyfriend at the time, fellow pop star Justin Timberlake, “didn’t want to be a father” and encouraged the abortion. Spears gives a detailed account of her physical suffering and “one of the most agonizing things” she ever experienced in her life. “I never had strict ideas about religion,” she writes, acknowledging how she lost her way and questioned her faith. With Timberlake long gone from her life, Spears confesses that she still searches daily for meaning, purpose, and healing.

Among the combative cultural issues of today, transgenderism is second only to abortion as the fundamental moral question of our time. Both ask us to contemplate what decisions adults can make for children and who defines reality and truth. As Graham Hillard pointedly asks in the August 2023 issue of *National Review*: “Is a fetus a living human being, as science, common sense, and the evidence of our eyes and ears attest? Can a woman become a man? In their deepest essence, the two questions are the same. Shall truth reign, or shall a lie?”

Worldviews inform and shape people’s thoughts, words, and deeds. Defined as “a mental map that tells us how to navigate the world effectively,” *worldview* is a translation of the German word, *Weltanschauung*, which means “a way of looking at the world.” A *Christian worldview* “is the imprint of God’s objective truth on our inner life”—the driving force and inspiration to learn from God and to “take every thought captive to obey Christ.”

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The battle of worldviews plays out in staggering and destructive ways in our culture today. Young elementary
students receive questionnaires asking them (without parental consent) about sex and what they think about touching other people’s private parts. Principals and athletic directors are charged with criminal contempt for praying over a meal. College students are ordered to leave lecture halls when professors object to their reading the Bible reading before class.

Drag queen shows and safe sex carnivals are allowed on university campuses, while Christian organizations are banned from college sidewalks. School workers are banned from using religious phrases like “I will pray for you” and “You are in my prayers”—even in their private conversations—inside public school buildings. Public school teachers send letters home telling parents that the use of religious words like God, devil, and Jesus will not be tolerated, even as terms like gender fluid remain permissible.

University instructors ignore science while accepting and encouraging student self-selected identities. Grade schools are cancelling daddy-daughter dances because they violate school district policies regarding transgender and gender nonconforming students. Disney animators are pressured by groups like Planned Parenthood to create a new princess hero—one who has had an abortion.

At some air force bases across the country, recruits can no longer be given Gideon Bibles. Student Bibles are being confiscated at public schools and reported to Child Protective Services for such acts. College students wearing cross necklaces are asked to remove them because they offend others. Religious songs are being banned from winter concerts. Pro-family Christian ministries are labelled as “Domestic Hate Groups” alongside the KKK and Neo-Nazis.

Orthodox pastors have been disinvited from Democratic presidential inaugurations because they dared to call homosexuality a sin. Many public grade school teachers can no longer say “boys and girls” as they line up their students for recess or lunch.

Parents are not informed that their children receive encouragement and counseling for their gender fluidity and puberty blocking medication. Students, teachers, and coaches are sanctioned or fired for praying in school or on the playing field. Christians are labelled bigots and disseminators of hate speech simply for speaking biblical truths on abortion, mar-
riage, sex, gender, and identity issues. In some places, the very mention on “Jesus” is considered a macroaggression. What people look like, especially in regard to race (skin color) or ethnicity, has eclipsed what people believe.

We are living in the Thursday evening of Holy Week. The cock has not yet crowed, but Christianity is on the ropes. The “ABC moment”—Anything but Christianity—has arrived.º

So what can and should you do as a teacher or leader in a Lutheran school?

For one, remember that the word culture comes from the Latin cultus, which means care. The Latin root of the word, cultura, means to grow or, literally, to till.º By God’s grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, you are the tool and instrument called to impart a Christian worldview to those you teach and interact with daily. You do so because you truly care about each individual’s eternal soul.

Second, remember that Christianity is not conservative but revolutionary. The Christian worldview has always been countercultural. You must help and liberate those you serve from their idols as well as their captivity and blindness to secular worldviews.º Rick Warren once wrote that “those who follow the crowd usually get lost in it.”ºº Indeed, people construct a worldview based on what they pay attention to,ºº and God calls you to teach and equip people to fix their eyes on Jesus and God’s Word.

Third, remember that truth insecurity is real. Too many people today don’t know the truth, can’t handle the truth, or don’t like the truth. By comparing God’s Word and design to the realities our fallen world, you can teach the life-saving differences between the Christian worldview and one that isn’t.º
Working the Worldview

Since worldview is the eye glasses or lenses through which you see the world, here are some ways and advice on how to become more discerning and intentional in leading and living with a distinctly Christian worldview:

- **Read and study your Bible.** “All Scripture,” the Bible teaches, “is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.” If you don’t know what God says, you will never know the truth. You are already living in times “when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.” The Bible tells the story of Jesus’ sacrifice for the forgiveness of your sins as well as provides a divine blueprint for how you are to live.

- **Reject any assertions that truth is subjective.** Postmodernism teaches that truth cannot be objective—it’s a social construct and not a discovery or revelation. For postmodernists, truth is relative, shaped by culture and context, an act of individual will, and ultimately unknowable. Ironically, they are absolutely sure that there is no absolute truth.

- **Rebuff a “pick-and-mix” society or buffet-like approach to religious faith.** Relativists rationalize that believing in Jesus, Buddha, the Beatles, crystals, mother earth, or anything else that takes your interest all have equal validity. You buying that?

- **Be suspicious and skeptical of tricky and obscure language or arguments.** Translated into common street talk, postmodernism is exposed for its shallowness and silliness. For example, when they say there is no such thing as evil in the world—only people’s perceptions of evil—ask them if they defend rape, genocide, or slavery with this same rationale.

- **Embrace the truth that the Christian worldview is countercultural.** A secular worldview is human-centric, while the biblical worldview is Christocentric. As a Christian, you will stand out like a sore thumb in this world. Prepare for this reality—and the pain and sacrifice which will come with it—not by playing defense or setting up sandbags to brace against the pagan flood, but by building arks or communities, institutions, and networks of resistance that can outwit, outlast, and eventually overcome a heathen occupation.

- **Realize that anti-Christian worldviews allow for sex outside the confines of a biblical marriage.** The old cultural battle over sex outside of marriage has now expanded to gender fluidity and, according to one Christian writer, “the bullying agenda of the LGBTQ coalition.”
Identify people’s idols. Everyone believes in something or someone. Expose people’s idols including your own. Repent and ask God for help in confronting your idols.

Be on the lookout for “red flag” words or phrases that expose secular and anti-Christian worldviews: Words or phrases like “-phobic” (e.g. homophobic, Islamophobic, transphobic, etc.), “debunked,” “anti-immigrant,” “anti-science,” “settled science,” “denier,” “bombshell,” “no evidence,” and “without evidence” often reveal individuals projecting their own secular views on to you.20

Notice if people make their worldview case by a fact/value split. People used to debate over evidence. “Prove to me that Jesus rose from the dead!” Now they argue over values. “What right do you have to say that? What right do you have to judge anyone’s moral life?”21 Feelings are the currency of cultural mores today.

Ask people directly why they embrace their particular worldview. Many volatile and boisterous individuals fold when you ask them a few consecutive “why” questions. On the flipside, make sure you can answer the question: Why are you a Christian?22

Beware of people who talk more about “systems” than “sin.” Today the progressive left repudiates the Christian and Jewish faiths as “the single god religion of White privilege.”23 Indeed, the first response of progressive paideia (pedagogy) is to look for “systemic” problems, not sin, that can be corrected by lawmakers. Progressives repeatedly ask how the state, or government, can fix a problem.24 The only systemic problems in our fallen world are sin, death, and the power of the devil. Jesus fixed those problems—which only the Christian worldview teaches.

Recognize that which people rejoice over and celebrate. There are two kinds of human beings in this world: those who justify themselves and their sinful ways and those who know they are justified by faith in Christ alone.
Worldview Warrior

You know the old story of an older goldfish who swims past a few smaller fish and says, “How’s the water, boys?” They respond: “Water? What’s water?” Daniel Boorstin once said, “The greatest enemy of knowledge is not ignorance; it is the illusion of knowledge.” Many who are critical or ambivalent about the Bible and Christianity ignorantly advocate for or enjoy the fruits of a Christian worldview without realizing it. Equality, compassion, consent, enlightenment, science, freedom, and progress—all came from Christianity.25

C.S. Lewis once wrote: “I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”26 Indeed, “words make worlds,”27 and God’s Word provides the life-saving message of salvation and a life-changing worldview for you to embrace. Even as our culture abandons biblical teachings and values, remember that hope, especially during hard times, is a hallmark of the Christian worldview.28

Therefore stay grounded in God’s Word—for your own faith and for the faith that you are trying to share, teach, and nurture in others. Do not let your heart be troubled. Instead of living scared, depressed, or resigned to our decaying and unraveling world, let God use you to bring joy, peace, contentment, inspiration, love, and truth to the people around you for such a time as this. Instead of talking about a post-Christian world, think about serving and leading in a pre-revival one. After all, as Isaiah 29:16 says, biblical Christianity has a way of turning the world upside down.29

By the power of the Holy Spirit, live confidently and faithfully with your Christian worldview for you already know the answers to life’s big questions:30

- **Origin?** You came from a loving, heavenly Father, and He created only one of you in human history.
- **Identity?** You are His, a special child of God. He made you in His image.
- **Meaning?** God put you right where you are supposed to be for such a time as this. He has grand plans for you.
**Morality?** God has given you commands and loving admonitions to live by. He gave you His Son to redeem you and to show you how to live.

**Destiny?** God will show you the way and make your paths straight. You will not travel in this life alone. Heaven is your home.

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**Endnotes**

3. 2 Corinthians 10:5.
8. Jenkins, 2023, p. 199
13. 2 Timothy 3:16.
14. 2 Timothy 4:2-4.
24. Hegseth and Goodwin, 2022, p. 98.
26. Chatraw, 2020, p. 44.

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