

Living The Christian Life Series
“Lesson 1 – One’s Worldview Shapes One’s Life”

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Series Text: Romans 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

Introduction:

Among Christians there are frequent calls for Christians to become followers of Jesus. However, while such a call means well, it actually is a misnomer, because the word Jesus relates to the humanity God assumed in order to pay to become our redeemer, and while it is true that in His earthly ministry He called disciples to follow Him, it is not his life we are to imitate but the commission He has given us. We are Christians and each have a personal commission to which we are called to respond.

We are not Jesus’ans but Christians we are not called to imitate the life of Jesus but have been called to live out our individuals’ roles in the body of Christ, the church.

Some would say, but are not we followers of Jesus? The answer is, No! We are followers of Christ! You might then say but were they not the same person? The answer would be, Yes! However it was not His role as man that we are to imitate that required a virgin birth, a sinless life, a sacrificial death, a victorious resurrection, a glorious ascension, the present intercession, and His coming again.

Hopefully by now you have learned the distinction between the use of the words Jesus and Christ, as well as their association with the word Lord

The word “Lord” refers to His deity, the word “Jesus” refers to His humanity, and the word “Christ” refers to “the Anointed One” His role as the sent one of God to fulfill the messianic role. We are called Christians because that’s where our mission is, where our assignment lies. We are identified as “members of the body of Christ” not members of the body of Jesus.

The word Lord refers to the deity of Jesus Christ and identifies the Sovereignty, Omnipotence, Righteousness, Eternalness, Omniscience, Omnipresence, and the Love of God, the Creator and sustainer of all things.

The Word Jesus refers to the humanity God took upon himself in order to redeem man from his sin. We are not called to live that sinless life and die on a cross to redeem others. Jesus did that for the entire human race.

The word “Christ” refers to Jesus being “the Anointed one,” “the Sent one,” “the Messiah,” “the Savior of the World”. The focus of the word “Christ” is on the redemptive plan of God. We are part of that redemptive plan. The word Christian means “little Christs,” not “little Jesus’.” Jesus had His role in the redemptive plan, we have ours, together we carry out the Messianic mission of redemption-He provided the means, we carry forth the message.

The question in life ought not to be “What Would Jesus Do? But what are we to do? We are not called to do what Jesus did, but we are called to live out our role as Christians. Christians are individuals who have entered God’s plan of grace through salvation and are living out God’s personally designed ministry as His representatives. This passage in Ephesians says we are to be followers of God.

Ephesians 5:1-2 says: *"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour".*

The word *“followers”* is the Greek word *“μιμηται”* (mim-ae-ti), Yes! That is where we get our word *“mimic,”* it means *“imitators.”* But in this text it is imitators of God, and in the context, it is instructing us concerning forgiving others. We are to mimic God in forgiving others for Christ’s sake.

So, I have titled this series “Living The Christian Life” and we are going to examine our roles, and the provision God has given us to enable us to live the Christian Life. The calling for each of us is unique requiring personal and specialized provision for us such as spiritual gifting, but there are general provisions which apply to us all, such as promises, principles, doctrine, and the mechanics or techniques for “Living The Christian Life.”

Being a Christian should not just affect everything we do, it should dictate everything we do!

I. Some Introductory Passages Related To The Subject:

Matthew 16:24-27 ²⁴ *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.* ²⁵ *For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.* ²⁶ *For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?* ²⁷ *For the Son of man come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.*

Mark 8:34-38 ³⁴ *And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. ³⁵ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. ³⁶ For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? ³⁷ Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸ Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.*

Luke 9:23-26 ²³ *And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. ²⁴ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. ²⁵ For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? ²⁶ For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.*

John 12:24-25 ²⁴ *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. ²⁵ He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. ²⁶ If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.*

Romans 6:6 *“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”*

Galatians 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

You will observe that in a number of these passages Jesus refers to following Him. In order to understand those statement in light of my saying we are not to follow Jesus but follow Christ, we will need to examine them in our continuing study. Three essentials must always be considered when correctly understanding the interpretation of Scripture; (1) what does it say, (2) What is the context in which it is said, (3) How does it harmonize with the whole of Scripture. Context and harmony are the keys to understanding my statement. We will explore that in our future studies.

II. The Christian Life Is a Worldview:

A worldview is the overall perspective, set of beliefs, and assumptions that people use to interpret and understand the world and their place in it. It acts like a lens, filtering

how someone understands reality, makes judgments, and behaves, and is shaped by his or her beliefs, experiences, environmental culture, and education.

There are a variety of recognized worldviews which have been variously labeled as is seen in the following examples:

- **Religious Worldview (e.g., Christianity):**
A Christian worldview is based on the teachings and values found in the Bible and emphasizes the belief in Jesus Christ, the resurrection, and the concept of salvation through faith.
- **Humanist Worldview:**
A humanist worldview places humanity at the center, believing that people are capable of finding solutions to life's problems through reason, ethics, and compassion without needing supernatural intervention.
- **Atheistic Worldview:**
An atheistic worldview denies the existence of God and explains the origin of the universe and life through natural processes and random chance over vast periods of time.
- **Stoic Worldview:**
This philosophical worldview from ancient Greece teaches that individuals should cultivate wisdom and virtue by focusing on what they can control and accepting what they cannot change.
- **Naturalistic Worldview:**
This view maintains that the world is entirely explainable through natural forces and scientific observation, often with skepticism or outright disbelief in the supernatural.

A Christian worldview is the lens through which individuals interpret and engage with all aspects of their lives, from intellectual pursuits to daily interactions, all grounded in a Christian understanding of God and His creation.

The basic elements of a Christian Worldview include the following:

God: The belief of the reality of an eternal, all-powerful God as the creator and sustainer of the universe.

Biblical Authority: The Bible is considered the authoritative word of God, providing guidance on how to live and understand the world.

Creation: The belief that the universe and life were created by God.

Humanity: The understanding that humanity is inherently flawed due to sin but possesses inherent worth as beings created in God's image.

Redemption: The belief that God provided a way for humanity to be saved from sin through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Purpose or Destiny: A belief that life has meaning and purpose in God's plan, and that the world is temporary while heaven is the ultimate home.

Ethical Framework: A set of moral and ethical principles, such as love and compassion, that initiate decisions and behavior.

III. The Development of a Christian Worldview:

Because one's worldview is the overall perspective, set of beliefs, and assumptions that we use to interpret and understand the world and our place in it, and, because it functions like a lens, filtering how we understand circumstances, make choices, and conduct our lives, our worldview is formed by our experiences, environmental culture, and education. In the Christian way of life the Bible is foundational to our education. However, it is not what we know of it, but what we have mixed with faith allowing it to shape our standards.

Most of you have had an exposure to this process of formatting our minds in order to form our frame of reference as to the plan of God and the instructions enabling us to live the Christian life, but it is foundational to developing our worldview which determines our actions, so we are going to review that process in this introduction to our series titled "Living The Christian Life."

It is clear that one's behavior is not determined by what he knows but is determined by what he or she believes or accepts as fact. The human brain has two frontal lobes. Information is received through our empirical senses, seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling. That information is received in the left frontal lobe. It is also in the left frontal lobe that comprehension occurs. However, our actions are dictated by the right frontal lobe where our frame of reference is located. Our frame of reference is comprised of the basic elements of the soul's format; volition, mentality, emotion, self-awareness, and conscience. Our worldview is based on the information in the right frontal lobe.

Turning comprehension into behavior requires transferring information we have comprehended to our right frontal lobe and integrating that information into our worldview is a three-step process: Get Understanding, Faith Transfer, Make Application.

Let's review this three-step process for managing our worldview in order to effectively live the Christian life.

A. Get Understanding and Wisdom:

Proverbs 4:5-9

5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. 6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. 7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. 8 Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her. 9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

In this text from Proverbs the focus is on two key words, **Wisdom** and **Understanding**. **Wisdom** is a translation of the Hebrew word "khok maw" which means - the ability to understand how to apply the Scripture to your circumstances. The word "**understanding**" is from the Hebrew word binah (bee-nah) and it means comprehension of knowledge - in the context, comprehension of Scripture. Both are required to develop one's worldview based on Biblical Authority.

James 1:5 says

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

The word "**wisdom**" is from the Greek word "**sophias**" which means the ability to understand how to apply the Scripture to your circumstances. We must understand the Bible and we must understand how to apply it to our circumstances. Both communication and comprehension occur in the left frontal lobe of the human brain.

B. Our Personal Acceptance: (Faith/Transfer)

It is not what we know that dictates our behavior, but what we believe. While communication is received in the left frontal lobe and that is where comprehension also takes place, our behavior is dictated from our frame of reference and our conscience which are located in the right frontal lobe. In order to program our behavior we must move that which we have comprehended from the left frontal lobe to the right frontal lobe and we do that by granting acceptance of that information to our norms and standards to our conscience. I call that process Faith/Transfer.

While we claim to believe the Word of God, our actions often indicate that we do not always mix what the Word says in faith. That is, we do not practice what we say we believe. In order for our behavior to be in conformity to what we have learned from the Word of God we must personally accept it as truth and as a norm or standard for ourselves. If we accept it as a standard for our own personal behavior it is programmed into our frame of reference of right and wrong and programs our conscience and forms our worldview. It is only what we have

agreed to and granted acceptance to as a norm or standard for ourselves that dictates our behavior. In personally accepting what the Word says to be a norm or standard for our lives we develop a Divine View-Point - we look at things from God's point of view and thus have the basis for living the Christian Life supported by a Christian worldview.

C. Making Application (Applying Scripture to Circumstances)

Although we cannot control all of our circumstances, we can control our response to those circumstances. However, our response will be determined by that which is in accordance with what we believe and have accepted as a standard for ourselves. The response to any given situation is dictated by what we believe - I mean what we truly believe. Our response is dictated by the worldview we have established in our norms and standards. As a matter of fact if you want to know what you really believe, inventory your behavior. If you behave in a manner that contradicts what you say you believe you have not faith/transferred that to your right frontal lobe- you have not accepted it as a norm or standard for yourself. It may be that you truly believe what God has said is factually true, but you have not surrendered your will to His - you know what He has promised, but you don't like what He is doing or allowing in your circumstances. While you believe that God *"...causes all things to work together for good to those who love God to those who are called according to His purpose."* as stated in Romans 8:28, you don't like the way He is doing it, you would prefer He work it for your good in a different manner. When we would like God to manipulate our circumstances in a different way, it becomes evident that we have not surrendered our will to Him, and do not really believe that He always does that which is the best for us.

Conclusion:

We have begun this series with a focus on understanding that our worldview determines what we do and the need to develop a worldview based on biblical authority in order for us to live the Christian life. Living the Christian life begins with what we truly believe. In the studies that are ahead in this series we will explore the promises, principles, doctrines, and techniques (mechanics) of the Christian life. Each study will challenge us to make that information part of our worldview. Some of what we study will be material we have previously studied.

Because we are defining one's worldview as the overall perspective, set of beliefs, and assumptions that people use to interpret and understand the world and their place in it, and that our worldview acts like a lens, filtering how someone understands reality, makes judgments, and behaves, and is shaped by his or her beliefs, experiences, environmental culture, and education, it is imperative to know God's promises, principles, doctrines, and mechanics in order to effectively live the Christian life. This series will be a review of the basics needed to experience the fulness of God's design and enjoy the peace associated with it. It begins with losing our lives for His sake in order to find it. Remember! He designed us.

But it begins at Salvation:

- *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...*
- *The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...*
- *With the heart man believes unto righteousness...*
- *But with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...*
- *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!*

*In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He
shall direct thy paths.*

(Proverbs 3:6)