



Worldview

A Handbook for Biblical Thinking and Lifestyle



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INTRODUCTION

Why Worldview Is Important

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK IS TO explore and engage matters of faith in connection with our everyday lives and to understand how our worldview affects our thinking and lifestyle. Our goal is for you to gain a better understanding of **what worldview is and why it matters.**

Perhaps you're thinking, "I'm not a pastor or church leader. I'm not that interested in philosophy. I don't intend to attend seminary or study psychology. Does this really apply to me?" The answer is YES! Worldview is not just an added component to our walk with God; it is

a *central* component of our relationship with Jesus. It is essential to our spiritual formation and maturity.

When some people use the term, “world-view,” they are referring to the study of comparative religions; this branch of study involves the systematic comparison of the doctrines of the world’s religions. While being versed in other religions is of value, that is not the focus of this material. For our purposes, ***worldview is the study and understanding of our beliefs about life and the universe and how we acquire them.***

The questions and ideas presented here apply to everyone! We are all servants to our thoughts and beliefs, and those thoughts are subject to reality and deception. What we perceive as reality—our worldview—determines our perspective and choices. Ideas have consequences. They form our beliefs, shape our convictions, and solidify into habits and lifestyle.

You can be saved and not have a Christian worldview.

Once we have decided to follow Jesus, He begins to change our hearts and give us discernment for our decisions. However, our former thinking is not automatically brought into alignment with the Word and character of God. We are responsible for evaluating our worldview and aligning it with God's principles. This means you can be saved and not necessarily have a Christian worldview.

What is worldview?

Our worldview is the set of personal beliefs and assumptions (presuppositions) we hold about society, culture, and the world around us, which determine our view of reality.

Maybe you're thinking, "Does God really care what I think about current topics? Does what I believe about the origins of

the world or society have anything to do with my belief in God?”

The answer is yes! Worldview has an immense connection to every aspect of life, which is why it's critical for Christians to understand the world through God's perspective. **What we believe, whether consciously or unconsciously, affects our choices, lifestyle, and influence.**

Let's look at what the Bible says about shaping our perspectives:

See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

—COLOSSIANS 2:8

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

—ROMANS 12.2

Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming 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.

—2 TIMOTHY 4:2-4

The Scripture is clear that we are to guard our hearts, examine our beliefs, and direct our thoughts to ensure that our mindsets and decisions are formed and led by God, and God alone. Within ourselves, we hold personal biases. In society, we look to other imperfect humans to give us answers. Relying on these flawed perspectives will never produce the righteousness of God.

The truth is, we may or may not be fully aware of all our beliefs. We could use the terms, “conscious and unconscious beliefs”

or “reflective and non-reflective beliefs.” In other words, we may have unintentionally chosen a philosophy or adopted a set of beliefs by default, unaware that our worldview was being shaped by the circumstances and influences in our lives.

Many Christians today have what is called a *syncretic worldview*—a blending of doctrines and beliefs from multiple religions or philosophies. They love Jesus but hold onto varied beliefs from other sources, producing a mixed worldview. A mixed worldview produces mixed messages—and often a lifestyle not fully reflective of Christ. We want to be believers with a fully integrated worldview based on the Bible and the principles that motivated the life of Christ.

Belief is usually based on evidence, facts, and experiential truth. Likewise, faith can be rooted in our beliefs, even when we don’t have all the facts. There is an element of trust in faith. Regardless of religious affiliation, everyone puts their

faith in something. The question is not, “Are you living by faith?” but rather, “By what faith are you living?”

Ultimately, everyone asks, “Why am I here?” Everyone chooses an answer to that question; therefore, everyone has a worldview—whether they recognize it or not.

This course will explore worldview in three parts:

- **Presuppositional** (what is in our hearts)
- **Evidential** (what is in our minds)
- **Applicational** (how we act and live)

We are all on a worldview journey

On the journey of discovering our worldview, we start out influenced. There are moments of interception when we are confronted with different perspectives, and we must decide how to respond. If we choose to align our thinking with

the Word of God, we set our direction of living by the truth and integrating it into our lives. Thus, we begin to live by design rather than by default.

Worldview and learning how to think (not what to think) require asking a lot of questions!

Three main questions determine our view of reality and our behavior:

1. What do we believe about the NATURE OF GOD?
2. What do we believe about the NATURE OF MAN?
3. What do we believe about the NATURE OF TRUTH?

The “nature” of something can be determined by asking:

- Does it exist?
- What is it like?
- How do we define it?

Worldview is a lifelong journey into truth.

There are no shortcuts to refining our thinking, effectively handling arguments, and attaining a clear worldview. It requires an ongoing commitment to developing a set of tools and resources for navigating decisions, choices, conflicts, relationships, and life itself. Although it takes time, patience, and understanding to develop this way of thinking, the rewards are significant, as they grant us a greater level of influence.

Most of this conversation comes down to our choices and how we live. How do we make decisions about things like religion and lifestyle? In Western culture, we tend to frame choices in terms of “right and wrong” (or “honorable and shameful” in many Eastern cultures). Yet, in the Bible, these issues are more often presented in the context of “life and death.” Certain

thought paths and decisions will reap death (physically or spiritually), while others will bring life more abundantly. As we search for answers to life's big questions, God's Word teaches us how to experience life, not death.

This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.

—DEUTERONOMY 30:19

Those who have begun “living by design” discover opportunities to grow and influence those around them both consciously and unconsciously. The battle begins in our hearts. The heart decides what kind of person we want to be and how far we are willing to go to be true to the beliefs we hold. We will always have a choice in how we engage with people who share their worldview with us or ask questions about our beliefs.

As Christians, we may approach evangelism with the desire to convince others of our point of view. This often results in debates, and even arguments, around big issues as both sides try to prove their point. We risk completely misunderstanding the heart of where someone is coming from. Healthy evangelism and cultural engagement involve asking the right questions—questions that help people discover their underlying beliefs—and allowing the Holy Spirit to move in the conversation. We must be prepared to give answers for our faith, but we don't want to get stuck in arguments.

Anything you can be argued into, you can be argued out of.

Ultimately, truth must be clearly expressed and received at a heart level, not just in the head. We can get caught up debating the fruit and completely miss the root. Once we see and define the root, we can ask the

right questions. Then we need to let those tough questions sink into the person's heart, give space for them to wrestle with those questions, and give God the room to draw them to Him.

As we engage this journey of critical thinking through worldview, our first focus should be on what God wants to do in and through us. As we grow in knowledge and understanding, we must remember to allow our hearts to be open to the Lord. Everything else will follow.

SUMMARY

- Worldview is a personal set of beliefs about culture and the world around us.
- A person can be a Christian without having a Christian worldview.
- Everyone has a worldview whether they realize it or not.
- Worldview is a process of perspective. Someone who has been argued into something can also be argued out of it. We must search out and decide on a worldview for ourselves.

(NO CORRESPONDING AUDIO/VIDEO TEACHING)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is your worldview currently more consciously or unconsciously influenced? Why?
2. What is a simple way to explain the concept of worldview to a friend?
3. How can we align our worldview with God's perspectives?



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