



Thru God's Eye: Life in the REAL World

What is Your Worldview?

Crossroads, September 11, 2011 - Mark Bickel



TEACHING NOTES

Intro:

Colossians 2:6-8

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

Romans 12:2

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

PRAY

- **Barna Survey on Worldview ~ *answer to yourself each of these questions ~***
 - Do absolute moral truths exist?
 - Is absolute truth defined by the Bible?
 - Did Jesus Christ live a sinless life?
 - Is God the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe, and does He still rule it today?
 - Is salvation a gift from God that cannot be earned?
 - Is Satan real?
 - Does a Christian have a responsibility to share his or her faith in Christ with other people?
 - Is the Bible accurate in all of its teachings?

Only 4% of 2033 people surveyed said "yes" to all ...

Only 9 percent of "born- again" believers answered YES to each of these.

One of the most striking insights from the research was the influence of such a way of thinking upon people's behavior. **Adults with a biblical worldview possessed radically different views on morality,** held divergent religious beliefs, and **demonstrated vastly different lifestyle choices.**

People's views on **morally acceptable behavior** are deeply impacted by their worldview. Upon comparing the perspectives of those who have a biblical worldview with those who do not, the former group were 31 times less likely to accept cohabitation (2% versus 62%, respectively); 18 times less likely to endorse drunkenness (2% versus 36%); 15 times less likely to condone gay sex (2% versus 31%); 12 times less likely to accept profanity 3% versus 37%); and 11 times less likely to describe adultery as morally acceptable (4% versus 44%). In addition, less than one-half of one percent of those with a biblical worldview said voluntary exposure to pornography was morally acceptable (compared to 39% of other adults), and a similarly miniscule proportion endorsed abortion (compared to 46% of adults who lack a biblical worldview).

Among the more intriguing **lifestyle differences** were the lesser propensity for those with a biblical worldview to gamble (they were eight times less likely to buy lottery tickets and 17 times less likely to place bets); to get drunk (three times less likely); and to view pornography (two times less common). They were also twice as likely to have discussed spiritual matters with other people in the past month and twice as likely to have fasted for religious reasons during the preceding month. **While one out of every eight adults who lack a biblical worldview had sexual relations with someone other than their spouse during the prior month, less than one out of every 100 individuals who have such a worldview had done so.**

How is Your Vision?

- *Example: What glasses are you wearing?*
 - **Looking at the world through rose colored glasses** ... Each of us has a perspective we see the world through
 - **Religions:** Christian, Muslim, Jewish ... Buddhist, Hindu, New Age ... Atheist, Agnostic ...
 - **Philosophies:** Naturalist, Nihilist, Existentialist ... Modern, Post-Modern ...
 - **Cultural Ideologies:** Individualism, Consumerism, Capitalism, Therapeutic Psychology ...
 - Question world might ask: Which color glasses are you looking through
 - I want to ask a more fundamental question, and give us a higher goal: **How do I see rightly – how do I see what is really there, not some colored over version of reality**
 - **First:** I need to take a **look at the glasses I am wearing**, see them for what they are, and remove them - I do not want rose, or blue, or yellow glasses ... I want to remove them all
 - **Second:** I need to **determine if my vision is good** or not (I would argue it is not)
 - **Third:** I need to put on glasses that **properly correct my vision** (i.e. I need a standard to measure my vision against, and I need to then adjust my vision to that standard)
 - *Example: when I got glass*
 - **First: I did not even know I did not see correctly** ... at times could not read slides on a Sunday, but thought they must just be unclear. Could not read street signs or house numbers well – but no one can. Headlights when drive hurt eyes, but I am getting older...
 - **Second: Went to eye doctor** ... he tested my eyes against the 20/20 standard and said they were bad
 - **Third: he gave me glasses to correct eyes** ... But I also had to decide to put them on – when I did I was amazed – could read signs I did not even see where their without glasses! Could read screen easy. Also headlights not bother. Also, saw some things I did not want to, but needed to – grass at home was a mess, not just a little long, but scruffy and ugly, which motivated me to cut it.
 - **Conclusion:** I began to sense something wrong with vision, but needed someone to show me how bad it was. I also needed standard to measure it against and someone to make me glasses that would help my seeing. Then I had to use those glasses, and even today I need to be careful not to leave them at home!

What is Your Worldview?

- What is a “Worldview”?
 - **Basic Definition:** how I view / understand the world, how I fundamentally look at / live life
 - **James Sire Definition:**

"a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in 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 construction of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being."
 - **Three ways to express Worldview ... Biblical examples of each**
 - **Fundamental Presuppositions**
 - *Presupposition: an implicit assumption about the world or background belief relating to an utterance whose truth is taken for granted in discourse.*
 - *7 Basis Worldview Questions (James Sire)*
 1. ***What is really real? What is prime reality?***
Possible answers: (a) God, (b) matter, (c) energy, (d) some impersonal force
 2. ***What is the nature of external reality, the world around us?***
Possible answers: It is (a) real, (b) designed, (c) created, (d) orderly, (e) sustained, (f) an illusion, (g) here by chance, (h) chaotic
 3. ***What or who is a human being?***
Possible answers: A human is a (a) machine, (b) sleeping god, (c) naked ape, (d) person made in the image of God
 4. ***Is there life after death? What happens to a person at death?***
Possible answers: (a) extinction, (b) transformation, (c) some higher state
 5. ***How do we know? Why is it possible to know at all?***
Possible answers: (a) Humans are made in the image of God. (b) Evolution is responsible for our ability to think. (c) Thinking is a survival tactic. (d) We can't really know anything for sure.
 6. ***What is the basis for morality? How do we know what is right and wrong?***
Possible answers: (a) It is determined by the culture. (b) It is determined by human individual choice alone. (c) God's character is good, right, and just; He is the standard.
 7. ***What is the meaning of human history?***
Possible answers: (a) What goes around comes around. (b) It is to make a paradise (utopia) on Earth. (c) It is to realize the purpose of gods or God.
 - ***Biblical Expressions***
 - Prime Reality – God
 - External Reality – Created
 - Human Beings – Created, with a purpose, for eternity
 - After Death – Heaven and Hell
 - How Know – God tell us in Creation and Bible
 - Morality – anchored in God, expressed in Scripture, Like Christ
 - History – God make all for a purpose, with will come to be

▪ **Meta-Narrative**

- *More post-modern explanation ... start with our life as story*
- *A narrative about a narrative - is a story about a story, encompassing and explaining other "little stories" within totalizing schemes - a comprehensive explanation of historical experience or knowledge.*
- *My story fits into multiple larger stories – family, friends, work, community...*
- *Larger meta-stories – nation, family tree, history...*
- ***Biblical Expressions***
 - Bible full of stories of people ... and nations
 - Bible interprets stories, knits them together into larger story
 - Knits all stories into a overarching meta-narrative, eternal story of God's Kingdom
 - Shows God not just as initiator, or observer, but controller of that story
 - Makes radical claims – if see self in God's larger story, will live as aliens here, store up treasure in heaven, hope in suffering because it is temporary...

▪ **Heart**

- *Heart - used almost 1,000 times in Bible – today heart often used to refer to emotions - in Bible used more for the entirety of the non-material side of man, the true nature and motives of a person – often linked with soul, spirit, mind, conscience, and will – in inner life one lives before God*
- ***Biblical Expressions***
 - Above all else, guard your heart*, for it is the wellspring of life. (Proverbs 4:23) *keep with all vigilance
 - For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; ... for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; (Proverbs 2:6,10)
 - The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouths of fools feed on folly. (Proverbs 15:14)
 - The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none who does good. (Psalm 53:1)
 - They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. (Ephesians 4:18)

- **How We Will Study Worldview**

- We Could Do:
 - Comparative Religions
 - Philosophy of Life (the isms)
 - Cultural Influences
- **Instead: Look Thru God's Eyes!**
Biblical Categories
 - Systematic Theology: God, Man, Sin, Christ, Salvation, Church, Eternity
 - God's Story: Creation, Fall, Redemption
 - Heart: Love God, Love Neighbor
- **Our outline - Through God's Eye**
 - ...
 - Sept. 25 Who is God? Why does it matter?
 - Oct. 2 Who Are We? Why are we here?
 - Oct. 9 What Went Wrong?
The problem of evil, and good
 - Oct. 16 What About Religion?
Can it meet our most basic needs?
 - Oct. 23 *Fresh Encounters Weekend*
 - Oct. 30 Does Love Really Win? Heaven, Hell and
the end of life as we know it
 - ...
- Note: someone might comment at this point that this is not a true worldview study at all – we are starting with a conclusion, and building our entire study around that conclusion ... namely we are assuming the Bible and the God of the Bible as our starting point ... I make no apology for that, but also do not want to ignore the question – so before jumping to anything else we will ask next week - how do we know anything at all? Is their truth and if so where does it come from?
 - Sept. 18 The Elephant in the Room: How Do We Know Anything
- And we will wrap up this section with how to help others see:
 - Nov. 6 Opening Eyes: Helping others discover
life in the REAL world
- Finally, we will look more at Who is Jesus as part of our Advent series:

- **Video: Thru God's Eye: Life in the REAL World**

Why is Worldview Important?

1) Worldview shapes our actions

1. *There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him." ... And he said, "What comes out of a person is what defiles him. For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."* (Mark 7:15, 20-23)
2. What we believe, both consciously and unconsciously, whether correct or not, will shape what we think, say and do!
3. ***Therefore we need to carefully examine our worldview to assure it is Biblical***

2) Our Actions Shape Our Worldview

1. ***For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*** (Matthew 6:21)
2. Naugle puts it this way: Into the heart go the issues of life. Before the springs of life flow out of the heart something must first and even continue to flow into the heart ... things are internalized before they are externalized
3. ***Therefore we need to carefully analyze what we are putting into our heart***

EXAMPLE: 9/11 – worldview shape response of terrorists, people in building, firemen, family, all of us watching, pastors who comfort, pastors who speak against islam or against sin in America ... Luke on Tower of Salom

3) We Will Each Face Challenges to Our Worldview

1. We will face challenges from the World, the Flesh and the Devil ... our belief structure will be challenged ... ex. Claims science disproves God, Sociology of Religion, Atheists damage God does... also attacked from 'Christians' who claim Bible but have non-biblical worldview
2. We will also face suffering and other very personal issue that will challenge our worldview ... natural disaster, health, loss of job, abuse, divorce, friends turn against ... will we turn to God, accuse God, give up on God ...
3. ***And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.*** (Eph. 4:11-14)
4. ***Therefore we need to build deep, solid foundations NOW so we can stand later***

EXAMPLE: Classes / PBS Shows – challenge creation, challenge Bible, show "evidence" no God

EXAMPLE: Recent Natural Disasters – God distant, God angry ... Mad at God, No God, Comforted by God ... hope anchored in security, or possessions, or job those can be shaken, hope deeply anchored in God/ Eternity stable

4) Understanding Worldview, and the Heart takes work ... But it is well worth it

1. ***The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.*** (proverbs 20:5)
2. ***Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*** (Romans 12:2a)
3. ***Therefore we need to put in the effort to understand God, ourselves and the people around us***

5) Whether They Know it or Not, Everyone Lives out of a Worldview ... Which they will answer for one day

1. Every one of your friends, family, neighbors, coworkers lives out of a worldview
2. If that worldview is not a true view of the world it will fail them – both philosophically it will have holes in it, and practically it will eventually fail them
3. Just like us, they will face both philosophical and practical challenges to their worldview, places where they will be in search of answers, and ultimately in search of a new worldview
4. And Scripture claims that our worldview choices are not just our own for this life
5. ***for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God." So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. (Romans 14:11-12)***
6. Scripture also claims that to not make any choice about Jesus Christ is a tragic mistake ... Just as everyone has a worldview, all outside Christ stand condemned already
7. ***For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. (John 3:16-19)***
8. ***Therefore we each have a responsibility to show others the flaws in their worldview and the truth of the Biblical Worldview ... including being especially sensitive to those moments of crisis as openings for the Gospel (as well as at times helping create crisis of conscious)***

6) Whether They Admit it or Not, Everyone Knows There is a God

1. ***... So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. (Romans 1:20b-23)***
2. "Cry for You, A desperate pleading and yearning for you, But we don't know who, We should be crying for" (song by Reilly)
3. "Thou hast created us for Thyself, and our heart is not quiet until it rests in Thee." (Saint Augustine)
4. ***Therefore we can speak with them about the true God with confidence it is touching something deep within, even if they refuse to admit it***

7) God Can and Does Open Eyes and Change Hearts

1. ***{Paul sent to Gentiles} ... to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' (Acts 26:18)***
2. ***And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. (Ezekiel 36:26-28)***
3. ***Therefore we need to pray – for we can not open eyes or change hearts – but also trust God, no matter how blind and heard-hearted someone seems God can totally transform them***

Goal 1: See Through God's Eye – See world / life not from world's perspective, but God's!

Goal 2: Life in the REAL World - as we see the world from God's perspective that will form an anchor for our soul and will have very profound yet practical applications to the life we live in this world

Goal 2': Help Others Understand Life in the REAL World - Deeply enter into the lives of other people, helping them to see the world and themselves as they really are

Goal 1': Seeing Other People's Eyes Opened to God - Trusting in God to open the eyes of our friends, family, neighbors and co-workers so that they would see, repent, and turn to the one True God

Example / Conclusions: (excerpts from “Life After God” by Douglas Coupland)

1. **“Life after God” excerpts of people’s lives ... without God**
 - i. *(use excerpts or summarize Children, Pills - pages 271-275)*
 - ii. *(Summarize 7 friends, if time read excerpts from Stacey – pages 286-291)*
 - iii. **Read Narrator Story – Pages 309-310, option page 311, then 313**
 - iv. I do not want my life, or yours to end up here
 - v. Notice moments of deeper reflection ... we can be there to ask the good questions and to listen, to walk with people when their worldview no longer works
 - vi. **(personal example: “Dan” at Drexel – share how his answers not work, then life collapse)**
2. **“Life After God” conclusion ... God is what is missing**
 - vii. **Read Conclusion – Page 359**
 - viii. Non-Christian, looking at life, concludes the missing piece is God
3. **“Life After God” application ... float away**
 - ix. **Summarize End – float away – Pages 357-358, 260**
 - x. Real choice for people – when see God, will they turn to God, repent, adopt a new worldview, be adopted into a new family... or let the moment pass and go on floating through life
 - xi. **(personal example: “Dan” at Drexel – did not give gospel, drink instead)**
4. **Where are you**
 - xii. Maybe not know God, worldview not include God ... come to God
 - xiii. Maybe know God, have come to Christ, but never thought about the implications in terms of what you believe or how you live ... let’s build those foundations over these upcoming weeks so you are no longer tossed about
 - xiv. Maybe you know God and are solid in your beliefs ... Never hurts to shore them up ... and let’s pray for opportunities to talk with others and learn how to share the gospel at a deeper level
 - xv. Maybe you are at a place where the narrative of your life does not seem to mesh with the meta-narrative you thought you were in ... maybe you see something of your need for God but are tempted as well to float away rather than face God ... let God search you these next weeks, let him challenge you, be willing to put your doubts, questions, concerns out there and let’s trust God to answer and meet us each deeply.

PRAY

Recommended Reading (each week have 2-3 books on topic)

“The Universe Next Door” by James Sire

“The Universe Upstairs” by Merve Jones

“Hidden Worldviews” by Steve Wilkens and Mark L. Sanford

NEXT WEEK: The Elephant in the Room: How Do We Know Anything