

What is a Worldview?

Armed for The Battle

How to Think Like a Christian in a Counter-Christian Culture

A Believer's Worldview Workbook

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THE CALL TO BATTLE

For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7

Timothy, guard what have been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge. 1 Timothy 6:20

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15

Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:13

*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

*Always be prepared to give an answer [*apologia*] to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. 1 Peter 3:15

*And He [Jesus] said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." Matthew 22:37

God is no fonder of intellectual slackers than any other slackers. If you are thinking of becoming a Christian, I warn you, you are embarking on something which is going to take the whole of you, brains and all.
- C. S. Lewis

A Christian living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ must know both what he believes and why he believes. In the day in which we live, this has never been more important.

What is a Worldview?

A worldview is a comprehensive view of life through which we think, understand, and judge, and which determines our approach to life and meaning.

"A worldview is that basic set of assumptions that gives meaning to one's thoughts. A worldview is the set of assumptions that someone has about the way things are, about what things are, about why things are."

-Russ Bush

"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."

-James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalogue*, expanded ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988), 17.

"One's worldview is perhaps best reflected by one's answers to the 'ultimate questions of life': Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going? What's it all about? Is there a god? How can I live and die happily? What are good and evil?"

-James H. Olthius, "On Worldviews," *Christian Scholar's Review* 15, no. 2 (1985): 153-164.

One additional question I would add: "Is there anything I would be willing to die for?"

5 Functions of a Worldview:

1. A worldview seeks to provide a coherent and organized thought system for life and living.
2. A worldview attempts to define the "good life," thereby bringing hope and meaning to life.
3. Worldviews bring sense to life by offering explanations for the seemingly irrational events that occur in life.
4. Worldviews determine our values and establish what we think is important and really matters.
5. A worldview guides actions by assigning meaning and priorities to those actions.

*Everyone has a worldview, a particular way of looking at life. It is shaped and

influenced by where you were born and live, but it is not unchangeable. It can be adjusted, altered or radically overturned (ex. Christian conversion).

Recommended Sources for Additional Study:

Little, Paul. *Know Why You Believe*. IVP, 2000.

_____. *Know What You Believe*. Victor, 1999.

Moreland, J. P., and William Lane Craig. *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. IVP, 2003.

Moseley, Allan. *Thinking Against the Grain*. Kregel, 2003.

Noebel, David. *Understanding the Times*. Summit, 1991.

Sire, James. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalogue*. IVP, 1997.

The Worldview of the Atheist / Agnostic

The cosmos is all that is or ever was or ever will be.

--Carl Sagan

Deceased atheist scientist, former host of the PBS television production "Cosmos"

Almost every religion talks about a savior coming. When you look in the mirror in the morning, when you're putting on your lipstick or shaving, you're looking at the savior. Nobody else is going to save you but yourself.

--Time Warner Vice Chairman Ted Turner in an interview, *USA Today* (2-17-00)

Human babies are not born self-aware, or capable of grasping that they exist over time. They are not persons . . . The life of a newborn is of less value than the life of a pig, a dog, or a chimpanzee.

--Peter Singer, new tenured professor of bioethics at Princeton University and advocate of infanticide, in his book, *Practical Ethics*, (pg. 122-123) as reported in *The Washington Post*

I am convinced that the battle for humankind's future must be waged and won in the public school classroom by teachers who correctly perceive their roles as the proselytizers of a new faith: a religion of humanity that recognizes and respects what theologians call divinity in every human being. These teachers must embody the same selfless dedication as the most rabid fundamentalist preachers, for they will be ministers of another sort, utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey humanist values in whatever subject they teach regardless of the educational level—preschool day care center or large state university. The classrooms must and will be an arena of conflict between the old and the new—the rotting corpse of Christianity together with all of its adjacent evils and misery and the new faith of humanism. . . . it will undoubtedly be a long arduous painful struggle replete with much sorrow and many tears, but humanism will emerge triumphant. It must if the family of humankind is to survive.

--John Dunphy, *Humanist*, Jan/Feb 1983.

The Worldview of the Christian

Now I have given up on everything else—I have found it to be the only way to really know Christ and to experience the mighty power that brought him back to life again, and to find out what it really means to suffer and to die with him.

--Christian teenager Cassie Bernall (1981-1999)
martyred April 20, 1999
Columbine High School
(www.cassierenebernall.org)

I am just so thankful for everything He's done for me, as well as for others. Even when things are bad, He's stood next to me and things are a little less prone to becoming blown out of proportion by my emotions. . . . You know, I wonder what God is going to do with my life. Like my purpose. Some people become missionaries and things, but what about me? What does God have in store for me? Where do my talents and gifts lie? For now, I'll just take it day by day. I'm confident that I'll know someday. Maybe I'll look back at my life and think "Oh, so that was it!" Isn't it amazing, this plan we're a part of? . . .

--Cassie Bernall
letter to a friend, June 28, 1998
printed in *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall*

One day a week or so before Cassie's death we were sitting at the kitchen table, talking, and got onto the subject of death. I don't remember how. She said, "Mom, I'm not afraid to die, because I'll be in heaven." I told her I couldn't imagine her dying—that I couldn't bear the thought of living without her. She replied, "But Mom, you'd know I was in a better place. Wouldn't you be happy for me?"

--Cassie Bernall, printed in *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall*

When God doesn't want me to do something, I definitely know it. When he wants me to do something, even if it means going outside my comfort zone, I know that too. I feel pushed in the direction I need to go . . . I try to stand up for my faith at school . . . It can be discouraging, but it can also be rewarding . . . I will die for my God. I will die for my faith. It's the least I can do for Christ dying for me.

--written by Cassie Bernall in 1998
printed in *Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall*

He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.

--Jim Elliot (1927-1956)
Missionary to the Auca Indians of Ecuador, Christian martyr for Jesus Christ
Life portrayed in the movie "The End of the Spear".

There was a time when one could almost be afraid to call himself a disciple of Christ because it meant so much. Now one can do it with complete ease because it means nothing at all.

--Soren Kierkegaard, (1813-55)
Danish philosopher/theologian
quoted in *Bible Review*, April 2000.

When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.

The Cost of Discipleship
--Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945).
German pastor/theologian
Hanged by the Nazi's for attempting to assassinate Adolf Hitler

For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

--Apostle Paul (Phil. 1:21)

Everyone has a worldview, but few have one that is biblical.

The Barna Research Group found that just 4 percent of American adults have a biblical worldview and only 9 percent of those categorized as born-again Christians have a biblical worldview.

Not surprisingly, those without a biblical worldview have a vastly different view of immoral and unethical behavior. For instance, those without a biblical worldview were:

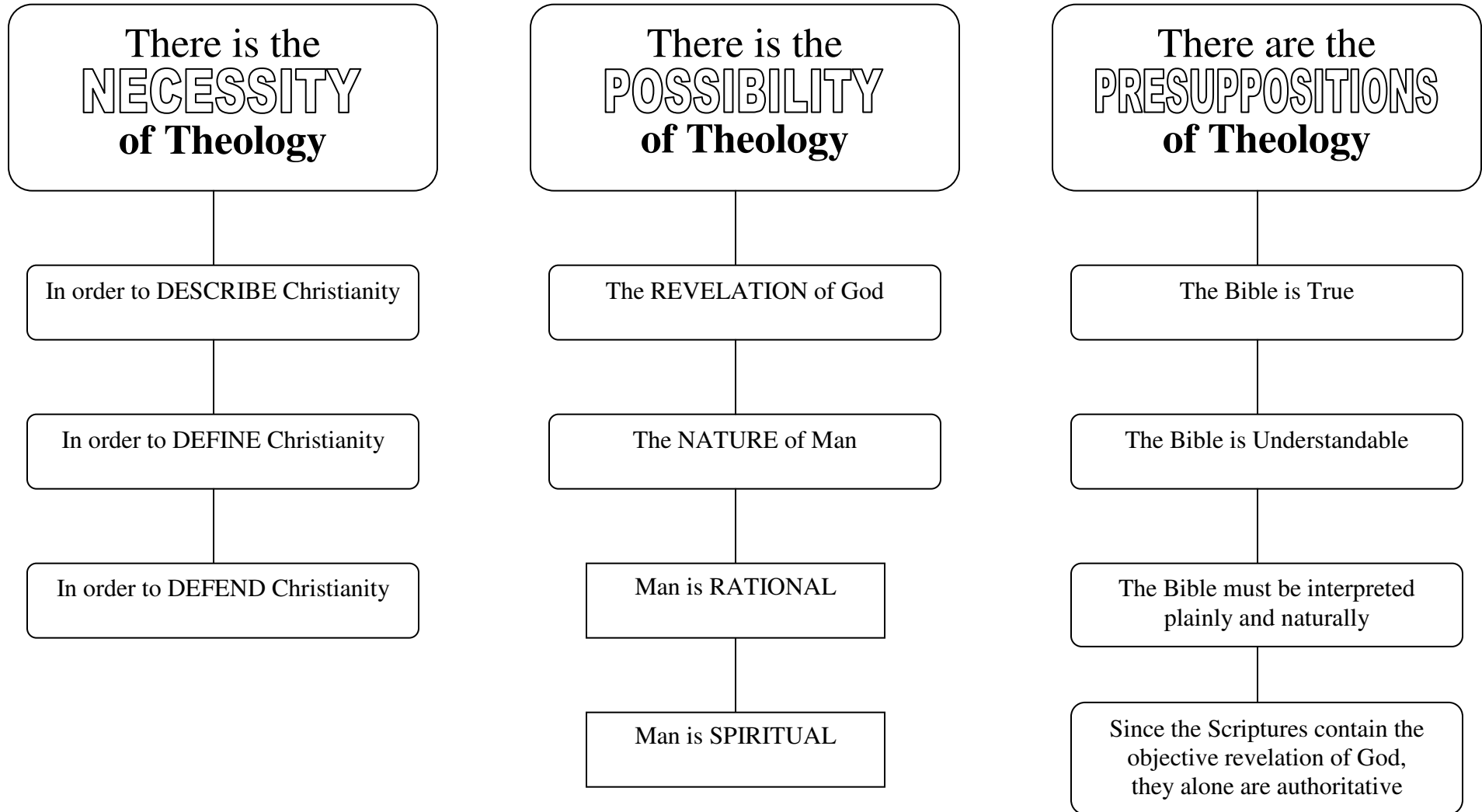
- Around 100 times more likely to endorse abortion
- Around 80 times more likely to say exposure to pornography is morally acceptable
- 31 times more likely to believe living together before marriage is morally acceptable
- 15 times more likely to believe homosexual sex is acceptable
- 18 times more likely to endorse drunkenness
- 11 times more likely to say adultery is OK

“The primary reason that people do not act like Jesus is because they do not think like Jesus,” Barna said. “Behavior stems from what we think—our attitudes, beliefs, values, and opinions.”

--“Barna: Biblical Worldview Held by Only 4 Percent of Adults,” *Baptist Press* (December 2, 2003).

PROLEGOMENA

(Foundational Principles)



THEOLOGY

DEFINITION

Theology comes from “theos” (God) and “logos” (speech/discourse, word, or message) –
“A discourse on one specific subject, namely, God.”
“Thinking about God and expressing those thoughts.”

Historical

“Discipline which traces the historical development of doctrine as recorded in the writings of individuals and church councils.”

Systematic

“Discipline which follows a scheme of doctrinal development which incorporates into its system all the truth about God from any and every source.”

Biblical

“Discipline which investigates the truth about God and the universe as set forth in the unfolding revelation of the Bible.”

Bibliology

Scripture

Prolegomena

Revelation
- General
- Special

Anthropology

Man

Hamartiology
“Sin”

Soteriology

Salvation

Ecclesiology

Church

Eschatology

Last Things

Theology Proper

God

Creation

Angelology

Christology

Christ

Pneumatology

Holy Spirit

