

What Is A Worldview Anyway And Do I Have One?

Many Christians have been fairly successful at loving God with their heart. Such Christians have an obsession or fixation with what Os Guinness calls “heart religion,” a religion that can lead, unfortunately, to a separation of the mind and the heart.¹ This is especially true for those in evangelical congregations, whether they are charismatics, Bible-church, Baptist or smaller-pocket groups within mainline denominations or even Catholicism. The essence of their Christian faith might well be summarized by the refrain of the old hymn *He Lives*.

“He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me along life’s narrow way.
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart.
You ask me how I know He lives: He lives within my heart.”²

Such an approach to the Christian life certainly has biblical support. It testifies to a living relationship with the risen and resurrected Son of God. But, is this enough? Is this all that there is, all that God intends?

A more balanced investigation of Scripture would demand a negative answer. There is more because there is more to the human person than the emotions. There is also the mind. The Bible speaks a consistent message in calling all Christians to love the true and living God with the totality of their being. Anything less is to rob God of His glory and His complete Lordship over our lives. Listen to the challenge of the apostles and also Jesus Himself.

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

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
(emphasis mine)

¹ Os Guinness, *Fit Bodies, Fit Minds: Why Evangelicals Don’t Think and What to Do About It*. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994).

² Hymn 279, *Baptist Hymnal*, 1956.

Loving God with our minds is a missing jewel in the treasury of many Christians. Having become lazy on the one hand, or seduced by sirens of modernity on the other, we have put our minds in neutral or reverse when it comes to our Christian life. To such a sad state of affairs C.S. Lewis has a prophetic word:

“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.”³

As we enter the first years of the 21st century, Christians must be “armed for the battle for the mind.” We must learn to think like a Christian in a counter-Christian culture. We must as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 10:5, “cast down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ.” We must as Romans 12:2 teaches, “Be transformed by the renewing of [our] mind.”

In other words, if we are serious about living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and for the glory of God, we must know both what we believe and why we believe. We must have an informed faith. The urgency of this mandate has never been more important.

In this time of instruction I want us to consider 5 crucial questions and then attempt to answer them in a way that will equip us to be worldview Christians.

- 1) What is a worldview?
- 2) What does a worldview do?
- 3) What are the main worldview competitors seeking my allegiance?
- 4) What does one’s worldview have to do with one’s source of authority for life?
- 5) What difference does my worldview really make?

1. What is a worldview?

Do you have a worldview? Well, if you are able to think and make life decisions then the answer is yes. You see everyone has a particular way of looking at life that causes them to see life in a certain way and to live life in a certain way. That, very simply, is what a worldview is and you have one whether you realize it or not.

My worldview is shaped and influenced by the fact that I am a white male from the South, married with children, mid age, committed to historic, orthodox Christianity. I suspect the way I see life is significantly different from an Asian female from the West Coast, who is a lesbian, in her early twenties, who is into New Age spirituality.

However, my simple definition can and should be further developed, because one’s Worldview has far reaching implications that we often do not consciously see. Let’s look, then, at several more full definitions and descriptions of a worldview.

³ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2001), 78.

- 1) A worldview is a comprehensive view of life through which we think, understand, and judge, and which determines our approach to life, meaning, and decision-making.
- Danny Akin
- 2) “A worldview is the 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
- 3) “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.”⁴
- James Sire
- 4) “Ones 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?”⁵
- James Olthius

To James Olthius questions I would add one other, “what would I die for?”

- 5) A worldview is “*a person’s guiding outlook on life.*”⁶
- Robert Wuthnow

The term *worldview* refers to any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement, or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man’s relations to God and the world. Specifically, a worldview should contain a particular perspective regarding each of the following ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history.⁷

- David Noebel

- 6) Whether conscious or subconscious, every person has some type of worldview. A personal worldview is a combination of all you believe to be true, and what you believe becomes the driving force behind every emotion, decision and action. Therefore, it affects your response to every area of life: from philosophy to science,

⁴ James W. Sire, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalogue, expanded ed.* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1988), 17.

⁵ James H. Olthius, “*On Worldviews*,” *Christian Scholar’s Review* 15, No. 2 (1985): 153-164.

⁶ Robert Wuthnow, *Christianity in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Oxford Un. Press, 1993), 104.

⁷ David Noebel, *Understanding the Times.* (Manitou Springs: Summit Press, 1991), 8.

theology and anthropology to economics, law, politics, art and social order - everything.⁸

- David Tackett

Here then, are a number of definitions of a worldview. You have one. I have one. We all have one. And, the particular worldview you hold is being challenged with greater intensity than ever before in our Western Culture. There are several reasons for this. One is the fact we are more aware of how our location at birth and upbringing shape who we are and how we think. Now this can be overstated, to be sure, as is the case with a statement made by atheist and evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins.

“If you have a faith, it is [probably] the same faith as your parents and grandparents had. No doubt soaring cathedrals, stirring music, moving stories and parables help a bit. But by far the most important variable determining your religion is the accident of birth... Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence. Faith is belief in spite of, even perhaps because of, the lack of evidence.”⁹

- Richard Dawkins

While I take issue with the complete accuracy of Dawkins statement, there is no denying he has a point. Where we are born and how we are raised certainly shapes who we are.

The other factor is the fact that through technology our world is getting smaller. We really are becoming a “Global Village” where different ideologies, faiths, and political perspectives are only the click of a mouse away. We are cognizant of the fact, now more than ever, that we are not the only show in town or all that special, all that unique. It is sobering to realize, as we formulate and develop our worldview perspective, that if the world’s population of nearly 5 billion people was reduced to a village of 100 people, this would be the result:

Area

50 would be Asians
12 would be Africans
10 would be Western Europeans
8 would be Latin Americans
5 would be North Americans
1 would be an Australian or New Zealander

Language

17 people would speak Mandarin
9 would speak English
8 would speak Hindi or Urdu
6 would speak Russian
4 would speak Arabic
The rest would speak Bengali, Portuguese, Indonesian, Japanese, German, French or any of 200 other languages

⁸ David Tackett, “What’s a Worldview Anyway?” In *Focus on the Family* (July-Aug., 2004), 8.

⁹ Richard Dawkins quoted in *Servant*, Winter 2001

Religion

- 29 would be Christians
- 17 would have no religion
- 14 would be Muslims
- 13 would be Hindu
- 12 would be Buddhists
- 9 would be Confucian and Shinto
- 5 would be Animist
- 1 would be Jewish

Education

- 70 would be illiterate
- 1 would have a college education

- *Unheard Voices: Celebrating Cultures from the Developing World*

Obviously there are a large number of worldview options in the mall of ideas that would enjoy having you visit their shop!

2. What does a worldview do?

In a survey on prayer, *USA Today* reported adults' responses when asked what they would ask a god or supreme being if they could get a direct and immediate answer.

- Six percent would ask, "How long will I live?"
- Seven percent would ask, "Is there intelligent life elsewhere?"
- Sixteen percent, "Why do bad things happen?"
- Nineteen percent, "Will I have life after death?"
- Thirty-four percent, "What's my purpose here?"

- *USA Today*, May 28-31, 1999.

One's worldview will guide you in how you answer these kinds of questions. In fact there are at least 5 functions that a worldview will perform or accomplish as you work yours out in your own life.

5 Functions of a Worldview:

1. *A worldview seeks to provide a coherent and organized thought system.* It brings rhyme and reason, clarity to your life perspective. If it cannot do this, it is an incoherent, inconsistent and inadequate worldview.
2. *A worldview attempts to define the "good life," thereby bringing hope and meaning to life.* For example is the good life the "Sex in the City" life of 4 New York vamps who sleep around, or the dream world of "American Idol," or is it the Christian life that worships Jesus and serves others, perhaps in a foreign land in relative obscurity?
3. *Worldviews bring sense to life by offering explanations for the seemingly irrational events that occur in life.* Why did 9-11 happen? What was God doing or not doing when the Tsunami struck Southeast Asia in December 2004?
4. *Worldviews determine our values.* What is important to you? What matters most to you? What are your hopes and dreams?

5. *A worldview guides actions by assigning values and priorities to those actions.* What matters most to you? Is it God or gold? Success or service? What would you sacrifice? What would you die for?

Scott Elliott lost his parents, Larry and Gene in Iraq in the Spring of 2004. This precious couple were missionaries who were murdered, martyred by people they came to serve. Scott shared with me that had his Mom and Dad know in advance that going to Iraq would have meant their death, they would have still gone. Why? Love for and obedience to Jesus, and love and compassion for the Iraqi people. This was God's plan for their lives. This is what they had to do.

You see your worldview not only determines how you live, it may also determine how you die.

3. What are the main worldview competitors competing for my allegiance?

This question could be addressed in several ways. We could look at competing philosophies like humanism, naturalism, modernism, post-modernism, hedonism, relativism, pluralism. Allan Moseley provides a clear and helpful survey of these "isms" in his fine book *Thinking Against The Grain*.¹⁰

For our purposes we will address the "God question," an inescapable and foundational component of a worldview. Basically it seems to me that the options can be reduced to And, in spite of the fact that survey after survey reveals that 90-95% of Americans still believe in God, this does not answer the question "which God?" or "what kind of God?" And, one cannot ignore the expansive growth of atheism, if not in America, then worldwide.

Back in 1900 a mere 0.2% of the inhabitants of planet earth claimed to be atheist, agnostic, or nonreligious. By the close of the 20th century, 988 million people (18.3% of the global population) said they didn't believe in God. Evangelist Luis Palau cites this "massive intellectual and religious shift" as "one of the most striking trends of the past century..."¹¹

And more young Britons believe in the existence of aliens and ghosts than believe in the God of Christianity. A poll of 1,000 young people aged 15-24 showed that 70 percent had "some belief" in ghosts and 61 percent in aliens. Only 39 percent had any belief in Christianity.¹²

Germans who believe in any god has dropped from 50% to 45% since 1993. Atheism has grown from 20% to 28%. Only 25% say they believe in Jesus.¹³

What then are the main worldview competitors when it comes to the God question?

¹⁰ Allan Moseley, *Thinking Against The Grain* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003), 44-73.

¹¹ Luis Palau Responds *E-zine*, Nov. 15, 1999.

¹² *Bible Believer's Newsletter*, January 8, 2000.

¹³ *Secular Humanist Bulletin*, Winter 1997-98.

7 BASIC THEISTIC WORLD VIEWS

1. **ATHEISM – No god exists beyond (transcendence) or in (immanence) the universe.** Marxism, Hinayana Buddhism, and Secular Humanism are examples. It should be noted the agnosticism is a “soft form” of atheism, professing no knowledge of God.
2. **POLYTHEISM – There are many gods in the universe.** Examples include the ancient Greek and Roman gods, Shintoism, and Mormonism. Mormonism, a polytheistic worldview, states, “*As man now is God once was, as God now is man may become.*” (The “John 3:16” of the Mormon religion). This is nothing less than idolatry.
3. **PANTHEISM – God IS the universe.** God is equal to all that there is, and all that there is equal to God. Examples include Hinduism, Zen Buddhism, Christian Science, and many new age religions.
4. **PAN-EN-THEISM – God is IN the universe.** God is the director of the world, the world is the same as God’s body. God cooperates with, and is interdependent with the world. He is actually finite, temporal, continually changing, constantly being perfected, and has two natures (bi-polar). Examples include Liberal philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947 – the Father of Process Philosophy), and liberal theologians Shubert Ogden and John Cobb. Star Wars and liberal strains of Judaism are also representatives of this view.
5. **FINITE THEISM – A Finite God exists beyond and in the universe.** God is actually beyond the universe, but acts within it in limited ways. Examples of major thinkers include Plato, and Rabbi Harold Kushner, author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, and freewill theist like Clark Pinnock, John Sanders and Greg Boyd.
6. **DEISM – God exists beyond the universe, but not in it supernaturally.** God exists in total transcendence to the universe. He created it, but does not care about it, nor intervene in it. Do not pray He is not there. Do not pray He does not care.
7. **THEISM – A personal, infinite God is beyond the universe, but also acts within it.** This worldview provides a balance between transcendence and immanence.

There are **THREE GREAT MONO – THEISTIC WORLDVIEW SYSTEMS:**

1. JUDAISM

2. ISLAM

3. CHRISTIANITY

So, here are the options. Now it should be noted before moving to our 4th question, that an important admission must be made if we are to be honest and forthright. God cannot be proven absolutely. The Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard no doubt was correct when he wrote, “Whoever therefore attempts to demonstrate the existence of God ... [is] an excellent subject for a comedy of the highest lunacy!”¹⁴ But, neither can God be dis-proven absolutely either. However, there is sufficient evidence to justify belief in a Supreme Being as both reasonable

¹⁴ Soren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments* (Princeton: Princeton Un. Press, 1936), Ch. 3, 34.

and rational. The I.T. (Intelligent Design) movement, as well as the classical arguments for God's existence serve us well in this respect. However, this does not settle the issue: What kind of God are we talking about? To answer that Christians appeal to special revelation, the Bible. That issue will be addressed at a later time.

4. What does one's worldview have to do with one's source of authority for life?

Just as everyone has a worldview, everyone also has a source of authority. That authority, whatever it is, will shape your worldview and influence your decision making. When it comes to establishing, or perhaps recognizing, your source of authority, the options can really be reduced to 4, or perhaps 5.

- 1) Reason – I do what I do because I think this is right. I gather data, examine the facts, analyze what I discover, and then I act.
- 2) Experience – I do what I do because I feel this is right. I feel good when I do this or think about doing this. It seems to have good and desirable results when the “pleasure principle” is applied.
- 3) Tradition – I do what I do because this is the way it has always been done, this is the way we have always done it. It worked in the past. It was believed by those who went before us, therefore we should believe and act as they did today.
- 4) Peer Pressure – I do what I do because other are doing it. There is a particular group whose acceptance I desire. In order to receive their approval I will think like they think and act like they act. Here the “herd mentality” is adopted. I go along to get along and get in.
- 5) Revelation – I do what I do, think the way I think, and live the way I live, because God says so. I have immersed myself in the Word of God. I know what it says. It has become my guide and compass for life. I trust in neither a fallen mind, deceitful heart, shallow feelings, or pressure from others. I chose to live under the authority of God's Word and the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

In a world that revels in superstition, irrationality, naturalism, and determinism, this 5th perspective will swim against the tide and think against the grain. It will march to the beat of a different drum that will not receive the applause of others. In a world where God is presumed to be dead or is treated as if He were dead, our problem will not be that we believe nothing. No, the problem becomes that we begin to believe everything. A.W. Tozer was certainly correct, “It is no sin to doubt some things, but it may be fatal to believe everything.”¹⁵

The late Christopher Lasch noted, “The contemporary climate is therapeutic, not religious. People today hunger not for personal salvation... but for the feeling, the momentary illusion, of personal well-being, health, and psychic security.” In the midst of this intellectual and moral confusion, our Christian task is to recover a biblical foundation so that we may live like

¹⁵ Quoted in *Berean Call* (Dec. 1995).

redeemed people, and help a fragmenting society pick up the pieces of broken lives and a broken world.

Al Mohler says it well, “The first task is biblical recovery. Too many Christians live out of the world’s moral wisdom, rather than the wisdom of God as revealed in the Scriptures. The Bible presents us with a moral framework embedded in the Gospel, and directs our lives to an obedience that glorifies God and leads to true human happiness.

Second, we must live before the watching world like redeemed people, demonstrating the joyful and liberating freedom of living under God’s rule by grace. Our churches must be seen as communities of believers growing in grace—living out the moral authenticity of the Christian life.

Third, we must help a fragmenting and hurting society to pick up the pieces. Love of neighbor compels us to seek the good of others, even when they will not seek it for themselves. Christians are sinners saved by grace. By grace, we can help others to find moral sanity on the other side of confusion and rebellion.¹⁶

5. What difference does a worldview really make?

We live in confusing times. Ours is a world where CBS TV Anchorman Dan Rather can say on national television, “I think you can be an honest person and lie about any number of things.” He was attempting to explain why he thought former President Bill Clinton was an “honest person.”¹⁷ The moral confusion we live in is captured well in a song entitled “Living Life Upside Down.”

“Living Life Upside Down”
 Some say we’ve risen to a new age of truth...
 We have a program for saving the earth
 while unborn children are denied their right to birth.
 One baby’s blessed, another one cursed.
 Well, you tell me, have we made this world better or worse
 Now that the life of a tree comes first.
 And you say we’ve risen to a new age of light,
 You’re telling me what used to be wrong is now right.
 But I say - What if we’re living life upside down?
 (--Adapted from “Living Life Upside Down”
 Words and music by Gary Driskell and Karla Worley)

It is an incredible time to be alive. “The sum total of all human knowledge is now doubling about every 22 months.”¹⁸ But, are we getting smarter? Are we getting wiser? “Researcher George Barna’s surveys of born-again Christians reveal that: 1) 66% do not believe in absolute truth; and 2) 45% believe that Jesus Christ committed sins.”¹⁹

¹⁶ Albert Mohler, “Recovering A Worldview of Moral Clarity,” *Crosswalk.com* (3-1-04).

¹⁷ *World*, May 26, 2001.

¹⁸ *PrayerNet Newsletter*, Jul. 18, 1997.

¹⁹ *What in the World!*, Vol. 23, No. 5, 1998, p. 2.

Your worldview certainly does make a difference. George Barna discovered that adults without a biblical worldview and those with such a worldview had vastly different views of immoral and unethical behavior. For instance, those without a biblical worldview were:

- Approximately 100 times more likely to endorse abortion (46 percent of those without a biblical worldview believed it to be OK, compared to less than 1 percent of those with a biblical worldview).
- Around 80 times more likely to say exposure to pornography is morally acceptable (39 percent vs. less than one-half of 1 percent).
- 31 times more likely to believe living together before marriage is morally acceptable (62 percent vs. 2 percent).
- 15 times more likely to believe homosexual sex is acceptable (31 percent vs. 2 percent versus).
- 18 times more likely to endorse drunkenness (36 percent vs. 2 percent).
- 12 times more likely to accept profanity (37 percent vs. 3 percent).
- 11 times more likely to say adultery is OK (44 percent vs. 4 percent).
- 8 times more likely to gamble by purchasing lottery tickets.²⁰

Yes, your worldview matters. This inescapable companion is the eye glasses through which you see the world, live life and understand reality. You can change it, but you cannot escape it.

Your worldview: how will it guide you to think? How will it lead you to live? We will consider 2 major and opposite perspectives in closing. These two dominate the debates of our culture war and play a significant role in our political conversations as well. Perhaps you are an atheist. Then you may hear your own voice and thoughts in the following:

“I regard Christianity as the most fatal and seductive lie that has ever existed – as the greatest and most impious lie ... I urge people to declare open war with it.”

- Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*.

It is clear as the sun and evident as the day that there is no God; and still more, that there can be no God.

- Ludwig Feuerbach, German atheist philosopher

My only wish is ... to transform friends of God into friends of man, believers into thinkers, devotees of prayer into devotees of work, candidates for the hereafter into students of this world, Christians who, by their own procession and admission are “half animal, half angel” into persons, into whole persons.

- Ludwig Feuerbach, *Lectures on the Essence of Religion*, p. 285.

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

- Carl Sagan, deceased atheist scientist, host of the PBS *Cosmos*

²⁰ George Barna, “The Barna Update: A Biblical Worldview Has a Radical Effect on a Person’s Life,” <<http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=154>>, December 1, 2003.

The significance of our lives and our fragile planet is determined only by our wisdom and courage. We are the custodians of life's meaning. We long for a Parent to care for us, to forgive our errors, to save us from our childish mistakes. But knowledge is preferable to ignorance. Better by far to embrace the hard truth than reassuring fable. If we crave some cosmic purpose, then let us find ourselves a worthy goal. On behalf of Earthlife, I urge that, with full knowledge of our limitations, we vastly increase our knowledge of the solar system and then begin to settle other worlds.

- Astronomer Carl Sagan (in *Pale Blue Dot* [Random House, 1994], quoted in *Impact*, Jun. 1995)

Christianity is a "religion for losers."

- Ted Turner, Atheist billionaire

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*, as reported in *The Washington Post*

The only God I could believe in would be a bumbler. How could an omnipotent, omniscient being permit there to be much suffering in the world?

- Peter Singer, professor of Bioethics, Princeton University, *RNS* 3-9-00

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 human kind is to survive.

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

Why should it be socially acceptable to make fun of psychics and not priests? What's the difference between crossing yourself or hanging a mezuzah outside your door and avoiding black cats? Believing that you've been abducted by aliens or that Elvis is still alive is, on its face, no sillier than believing that Christ rose from the dead or that God parted the Red Sea so that Moses and his followers might traverse it."

- Wendy Kaminer, quoted in *Free Inquiry*, Fall 1999

In speaking of the fear of religion ... I am talking about ... the fear of religion itself. I speak from experience, being strongly subject to this fear myself ... I want atheism to be true and am made uneasy by the fact that some of the most intelligent and well-informed people I know are religious believers. It isn't just that I don't believe in God and, naturally, hope that I'm right in my belief. It's that I hope there is no God! I don't want there to be a God; I don't want the universe to be like that ... My guess is that this cosmic authority problem is not a rare condition and that it is responsible for much of the scientism and reductionism of our time. One of the tendencies it supports is the ludicrous overuse of evolutionary biology to explain everything about life, including everything about the human mind.

- Thomas Nagel, quoted in *Real Issue*, Feb. 2000.

Now turn in a different direction. Pause for a moment and here the words of the Christian; some young, some old. Some intellectual giants and two, in particular, simple high school girls who saw their life come to a sudden and unexpected end at the tender age of 17.

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.

- Cassie Bernall, martyred April 20, 1999 Columbine High School

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?"

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

"It's like I have a heavy heart ... I lost friends at school. Now that I've begun to walk my talk, they make fun of me ... If I have to sacrifice everything, I will ... If my friends have to become my enemies to be with my best friend, Jesus, that's fine."

- Rachel Scott, 4-20-98, written exactly 1 year before her death at Columbine High School

I don't want to ever lose the passion of being totally in love with you alone! God, please continue to stir my heart, make me passionate now and always.

- Wedgewood Baptist Church martyr Kim Jones, written in her journal Sept. 13, 1999; two days before her death (Southwestern News, vol. 58, No. 2; p. 7)

It is easy to die for Christ, it is hard to live for him. Dying takes only an hour or two, but to live for Christ means to die daily. Only during the few years of this life are we given the privilege of serving each other and Christ ... we shall have heaven forever, but only a short time for service here, and therefore we must not waste the opportunity.

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

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

- Jim Elliott, Missionary and Christian martyr

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

- Apostle Paul (Phil. 1:21)

Here then is a worldview worth living for. Here is a worldview worth dying for. What is your worldview? It really does matter.