Sunday School Class Notes on Biblical Worldview

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On December 8 we will be starting a new (3-week) Sunday School class on the Biblical Worldview. We will discuss the foundations and important elements of the Biblical Worldview and compare this with competing worldviews that are prevalent in our postmodern world – Islam, Secular Humanism, Marxism, New Age, and Post Modernism. Our Biblical Worldview affects not just our theology and ethics, but also the way we think about science, philosophy, economics and many other areas of contemporary thought. This collection of convictions comprises a worldview. The battle for our hearts and minds is being waged in the area of worldviews. Thus it is important for us to understand the various worldviews so that we can be more effective witnesses for Christ.

God is the Creator of this world and His Word must guide our thoughts and our lives. The Christian view of the world affirms the existence of a personal God, the creation of the world by God, the fall of man into sin, the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the redemption of the world through Christ's atoning death, and the founding of God's Kingdom on earth.

We will study the key foundations of a Biblical Worldview such as:
1. The Authority and Sufficiency of Scripture
2. Cultivating a Biblical Mindset
3. Understanding Creation
4. Coming to Grips with Sin
5. Viewing the Nations from God's Perspective

as well as issues such as:
1. A Scriptural View of Science
2. A Biblical View of Church and State
3. A Biblical Approach to Economics
4. Law According to the Bible.

Research has shown that very few Christians understand what it means to have a Biblical Worldview. This will be a good time to learn how to have and live this worldview. 1 Chron. 12:32; Prov. 3:5-6.

Definition: A worldview is a philosophy, ideology or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man’s relationship to both. A complete worldview contains a perspective regarding each of the ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and interpretation of history.

A Biblical Worldview defines each of these ten disciplines by investigating what the Bible has to say about them. A biblical worldview contains these perspectives:
1. Theology – the existence of a personal, ethical, self-revealing God
2. Philosophy – supernaturalism, as opposed to naturalism and materialism in philosophy
3. Ethics – the ethical absolutes understood from the Bible (not situational ethics)
4. Biology – special creation of life and all its supports
5. Psychology – dualism (body and mind) psychology
6. Sociology – priorities organized as home, church, state in sociology
7. Law – laws based on biblical and natural law
8. Politics – politics based on justice, freedom, and order
9. Economics – economics as stewardship of God’s gifts and property
10. History – history is God-directed and includes resurrection, judgment and the dividing of the righteous and wicked to their respective eternal existences with God or separated from Him.
**Introduction to Biblical Worldview**

1. Roadblocks to faith in Christ
   a. Lack of intellectual knowledge of God
   b. Other Christians – their perceived hypocrisy
   c. Sin – accepting Christ would require turning away from sin
   d. If God is all-loving and all-powerful, why is there so much pain, suffering, and evil?
   e. Perceived conflict between Science and the Bible, e.g. Creation v. Evolution
   f. No answers from the church to the hard questions

2. Based on surveys done by Barna Research:
   a. 4% of American adults have a biblical worldview
   b. 9% of “born-again” Christians have a biblical worldview
   c. 5% of married people v. 2% of single people have a biblical worldview
   d. 10% of Republicans and 1% of Democrats have a biblical worldview
   e. 51% of Protestant pastors have a biblical worldview.

3. Based on other surveys by Barna Research, those without a biblical worldview are more likely to:
   a. endorse abortion (46% v. < 1%)
   b. say that exposure to pornography is morally acceptable (39% v. < ½%)
   c. say that living together before marriage is morally acceptable (62% v. 2%)
   d. believe that homosexual lifestyle is acceptable (31% v. 2%)
   e. endorse drunkenness (36% v. 2%)
   f. accept profanity (37% v. 3%)
   g. say adultery is OK (44% v. 4%)
   h. gamble by purchasing lottery tickets (8 times more likely).

4. What constitutes a biblical worldview?
   a. belief in absolute moral truth as defined in Scripture
   b. acceptance of the accuracy of biblical teaching
   c. acceptance of the sinless nature of Jesus Christ
   d. acceptance of the literal existence of Satan
   e. acceptance of the omnipotence and omniscience of God (and ruling today)
   f. acceptance of salvation by grace alone
   g. acceptance of the personal responsibility to evangelize.

5. Apply one or more of the ten disciplines to each Bible verse listed here (God’s Created Order):
   a. Gen. 1:1 theology, philosophy (in the beginning …)
   b. Gen. 2:9 ethics (knowledge of good and evil – God establishes what is right)
   c. Gen. 1:21 biology (according to its kind)
   d. Gen. 2:7 psychology (a living thing)
   e. Gen. 1:28 sociology (be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth)
   f. Gen. 3:11 law, ethics (I commanded you)
   g. Gen. 9:6 law, politics (whoever sheds man’s blood)
   h. Gen. 1:29 economics (it shall be for food)
   i. Gen. 3:15 history (enmity between you and the woman)
   j. Ps. 24:1; 50:10-12 economics
   k. Tit. 2:13 theology, philosophy (supernaturalism)
   l. Luke 1:46-47 psychology, theology
   m. Rom. 13:1-10 politics, law, sociology.
6. A **Biblical Worldview** is important because it has a _______ effect on a person’s life. Peoples’ ________, _______, _______, _______ and _______ determine their behavior. The primary reason that people do not act like Jesus is because they do not _______ like Jesus.

7. Worldviews have consequences:
   a. **Prov. 23:7** – “As a man _______ in his heart, so is he.”
   b. **Eccl. 12:13** – “The whole duty of man is to _____ God and to _____ His commandments.”

8. What do these verses have to say about a **Biblical/Christian Worldview**?
   a. **1 John 5:11** – there is ____ beyond the grave.
   b. **1 Pet. 1:3** – we have a ______ hope
   c. **Phil 3:20** – our citizenship is in ______
   d. **Heb. 11:3; 1 Pet. 2:11** – we are sojourners here on ______
   e. **Matt. 6:19-20** – we do not store our ________ on earth, but lay them up for heaven
   f. **Phil. 2:5** – we develop the mind of ______
   g. **James 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:6** – we _______ put others before ourselves
   h. **Gal. 6:2** – we _______ bear each others’ burdens.

9. How do we develop a **Biblical Worldview**?
   a. realize that we are a “new ________” and have been “_____ _____” – 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 Pet. 1:23
   b. be _______ and __________ in our _____ - Rom. 12:1-2
   c. gird up the loins of our _____ - 1 Pet. 1:13
   d. diligently pursue the study of the _____ and effectively apply to our lives the Bible’s __________
      _______ – 2 Tim. 2:15
   e. be ___ and _____ to a lost and dying world – Matt. 5:13-16

10. Taking another look at the **Biblical Worldview**: ____ truth is God’s truth. Ultimate reality is found in ______, whom the Bible describes as the logos or plan of creation. The ______ of God is the overarching truth of biblical revelation. God is the _______ (______) of the world, ____ (____ ____) was introduced into the world by human disobedience, and _______ therefore becomes the way we can be restored to a right relationship with God. God commands us to _____ _____ (_________________) all his creation. **John 14:6; 1 Chron. 12:32.**

11. Here are some things you should know about the **Islamic Worldview**.
   a. Islam claims its origins on September 24, ____ A.D by the prophet ____________
   b. Their cry is”_______ _______ ______, and _______ _______”
   c. Islam is an all-___________, _______ and _______ system
   d. Five articles of faith: 1) God _______, 2) Prophet __________, 3) God created ________, good and bad, 4) ________ is God’s final revelation, 5) final day of __________ - heaven or hell
   e. Five pillars of practice: 1) Repeat ___ to become Muslim, 2) pray salat __ times/day, fast during ______, 4) 1/____ of income to needy, 5) pilgrimage to ________
   f. History of __________ and __________

12. Here are some things you should know about the **Marxist/Leninist Worldview**.
   a. Well-developed _________ worldview
   b. One of Christianity’s most vocal ________ and ______________
   c. “Christian _____” supports Marxist position
   d. Dominant view in some African and South American countries under the guise of __________
   e. Thousands of Marxist professors on __________’s campuses
f. Fully developed ___________ (a branch of Secular Humanism)
g. Manifested in ____________, __________ ____________

13. Here are some things you should know about the **Secular Humanist Worldview**.
   a. Vies for total control of ____________
   b. Also making inroads in many __________ colleges
   c. __________ ________ (1750, Christian influence)
   d. __________ ____ (1842, Unitarian influence)
   e. __________ ____ (1933, Humanist influence)
   g. Turner, Sagan, Dewey, Maslow, etc. - __________ of the Year.

14. Here are some things you should know about the **Cosmic Humanist Worldview**.
   a. Also known as the _____ _____ movement
   b. Truth resides within each ____________ (no one has a corner on ________)
   c. Whatever you decide is right for ____ is what’s right, as long as you don’t get _______ -
      minded and _________ about it
   d. Manifested in ____________, __________, __________
   e. Spiritualized __________ __________.

15. Here are some things you should know about the **Postmodern Worldview**.
   a. Everyone did what was _____ in his own eyes, Judges 21:25
   b. Unifying values: 1) ____________, 2) against ____________, 3) culturally created ________
   c. No belief system for which one would be willing to ______
   d. Results in death of _____, ______, and ________
   e. All truth is socially constructed by ________ communities
   f. Some truths are more useful than others in specific _________________
   g. There is no such thing as ___________ truth
   h. Often expressed as “that may be true for ___ but it’s not true for ___.” How do we see that
      belief system manifested today? How can/should we address this issue?

16. The significance of each discipline is seen as God manifests Himself in the form of Christ:
   a. in theology, Christ is the “________ of the Godhead”, Col. 2:9
   b. in philosophy, Christ is the ______ of God, John 1:1
   c. in ethics, Christ is the “true ______”, John 1:9; 3:19-20
   d. in biology, Christ is “the _____”, John 1:4, 14; 11:25; Col. 1:16
   e. in psychology, Christ is “_______”, Luke 1:46-47; Tit. 2:13
   f. in sociology, Christ is “_____”, Luke 1:30-31;Is. 9:6
   g. in law, Christ is ________, Gen. 49:10; Is. 9:7
   h. in politics, Christ is “_____ of _______ and _____ of _______”, Rev. 19:16; 1 Tim. 6:15; Is. 9:6;
      Luke 1:33
   i. in economics, Christ is ______ of all things, Ps. 24:1; 50:10-12; 1 Cor. 10:26
   j. in history, Christ is the ______ and ________, Rev. 1:8.

**2 Cor. 10:5**, “Take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ.”

**Dietrich Bonhoeffer** “There are not two realities, but only one reality, and that is the reality of God,
which has become manifest in Christ in the reality of the world.”
The Biblical Worldview can be compared with the philosophies and ideologies of five competing worldviews as shown in the chart "Comparing Competing Worldviews" constructed by Summit Ministries in Colorado Springs, CO.

**Fact Sheets** can be found at [http://www.summit.org/resources/fact-sheets/](http://www.summit.org/resources/fact-sheets/): The Worldview Fact Sheet provides several descriptions of what we mean by a Worldview. Following the Worldview Fact Sheet are summary descriptions of the six different Worldviews covered in these notes.

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**Biblical (Christian) Worldview** - Defines each of the ten disciplines by investigating what the Bible has to say about them. A biblical worldview contains the perspectives defined on page 1 of these notes. The Christian Worldview is unlike any other in that we have God’s Word in the Holy Bible upon which to base our beliefs. God’s Word is truth; He does not lie. We have voluminous evidence of the reliability of the scriptures. Therefore, we have a secure source of accurate information from which to build our worldview. The foundation of all worldviews is the answers to life’s big questions: Where do we come from? What is the meaning of life? What are good and evil? Where do we go when we die? A ‘true worldview’ reflects the world as it truly is.
The **Islamic Worldview** - The Islamic worldview is grounded in Allah (God), Mohammad (the ultimate and final prophet of Allah), and the Qur’an (the Word of Allah delivered through Mohammad beginning in about 610 AD). Islam means submission to Allah and a Muslim is one submitted to Allah. About 1/5th of the world’s population is Muslim, about three-quarters of which are non-Arabs. The Islamic Worldview is more than a religion. Islam covers all aspects of life for its followers. The Islamic worldview is a monotheistic religion following five simple “pillars” of faith:

1. The confession of faith “There is no God but Allah, and Mohammad is his prophet”
2. Prayers five times a day, facing Mecca
3. Almsgiving about 1/40th of income and holdings, primarily for the poor
4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan
5. Pilgrimage to Mecca

The **Secular Humanism Worldview** - Man is the ultimate measure by which truth and values are to be determined. According to Secular Humanism, all reality and life center upon human beings. In fact, we act as God. The Secular Worldview is a comprehensive view of the world from a materialistic, naturalistic standpoint. Therefore, the Secular Humanist sees no place for the supernatural or immaterial. There is no place in the Humanist worldview for either immortality or God in the valid meanings of those terms. Humanism contends that instead of the gods creating the cosmos, the cosmos, in the individualized form of human beings giving rein to their imagination, created the gods. There is no God; science and the scientific process have made God obsolete. Humanists believe that only matter—things we can touch, feel, prove, or study—exists and has always existed. Man is only matter (no soul or spirit). No supernatural explanation is needed for the existence of this matter.

The **Marxism-Leninism Worldview** – Comes from Karl Marx and *The Communist Manifesto, Das Kapital,* and *On Religion* (with Friedrich Engels). The Marxist worldview is a comprehensive ideology from the philosophical lineage of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and Vladimir Lenin. Religion was regarded as a drug and was to be fought against. Materialism is another word for naturalism. Whatever advances the working class and the cause of communism is morally good.

The **Cosmic Humanism (New Age) Worldview** - Most New Agers reject any notion of doctrine, creed, or organization. The New Age movement is an extremely large, loosely structured network of organizations and individuals bound together by common values (based in mysticism and monism—the world view that ‘all is one’) and a common vision (a coming ‘new age’ of peace and mass enlightenment, the ‘Age of Aquarius’). New Agers believe that ‘all is one’—everything that exists consists of one and the same essence or reality. A second assumption is that this Ultimate Reality is neither dead matter nor unconscious energy. It is Being, Awareness, and Bliss (which is to say, a Hindu conception of God as an impersonal, infinite consciousness and force). The first two assumptions imply two more: all that is, is God (which is pantheism); and man, a part of ‘all that is,’ is likewise divine.

The **Postmodernism Worldview** - Postmodern theory is a broad and somewhat ambiguous belief system tied to the philosophical and cultural reaction to the convictions of Modernism (sometimes equated with Humanism). Postmodernism is the philosophical proposal that reality is ultimately inaccessible by human investigation, that knowledge is a social construction, that truth-claims are political power plays, and that the meaning of words is to be determined by readers not authors. Postmodern theory sees reality as what individuals or social groups make it to be. There is no such thing as absolute truth. Belief in objective reality is rejected.

An explanation for each discipline within a Worldview can be viewed by placing your mouse over the term in the Worldview chart published by Summit Ministries:

[http://www.summit.org/resources/worldview-chart/](http://www.summit.org/resources/worldview-chart/)
In summary there are three questions we need to ask:

A. What good is a Worldview if it is not true?
B. What good is a Worldview if we cannot defend it?
C. What good is a Worldview if we are not living it?

A. What good is a Worldview if it is not true?
1. Four criteria for determining if a Worldview is true:
   a. Inner intellectual coherence, e.g. assume we can know something. Laws of thought (identity, non-contradiction, excluded middle) and reasoning are valid.
   b. Ability to comprehend the data of reality, e.g. all types of data gained through our daily life experience through critical analysis and scientific investigation.
   c. Explanation of what it claims to explain, e.g. morality, humans can think, love, hate, create, destroy, want, desire, etc.
   d. Subjectively satisfactory, e.g. meets our sense of personal need, satisfies by being true; only truth will satisfy ultimately.
2. All but Theism (Christianity) have serious flaws:
   a. Christianity – coherent, rational, matches reality; explains the real world. “It provides the frame of reference in which we can find meaning and significance. It stands the fourfold test for an adequate worldview.” Dr. James Sire.
   b. Islam – false prophecies, conquer by the sword, false god, theocracy.
   c. Secular Humanism – man at the center, no absolute truth, denies design & supernatural.
   d. Marxism-Leninism – predicted man would improve over time, worldly utopia not realized, only mass slaughter perpetrated.
   e. Cosmic Humanism – man is central, man is divine, universal tolerance, moral relativism.
   f. Postmodernism – no absolute truth, no coherence, irrational, reality is illusory.

B. What good is a Worldview if we cannot defend it?
1. Course on Christian Apologetics, details below and at www.osta.com/apologetics
2. Course on Creation vs. Evolution, details below and at www.osta.com/creation
3. Course on Biblical Worldview, details below and at www.osta.com/worldview
4. Apologetics Forum of Snohomish County (AFSC), http://afsc.nwcreation.net

C. What good is a Worldview if we are not living it?
2. “To be a Christian theist is not just to have an intellectual worldview; it is to be personally committed to the infinite-personal Lord of the universe. And it leads to an examined life that is well worth living.” Dr. James Sire.

Some References:
1. The Universe Next Door, Dr. James Sire, 2009.
2. Understanding The Times, Dr. David Noebel, 2006, [1 Chron. 12:32.]
This set of lectures/presentations is suitable for use in a Sunday School class, for teaching students in Bible Schools, and for others interested in learning more about Christian Apologetics. The Word documents and the PowerPoint slides will help the believer see that the Truth found in God's Word does match reality. They will also challenge skeptics to ask the same hard questions about their "truth" and see whether what they believe matches reality. The following topics/questions are addressed:

1. Does Your Truth Match Reality? - Reality.ppt [Notes]
2. Jesus' Credibility - Is He God? - IsHeGod.ppt [Notes]
3. Prophecies Come True - Messianic + Others - Prophecies.ppt
4. Christ Rose From The Grave - What is the Evidence? - Resurrected.ppt [Notes]
6. Does Archaeology Verify the Bible? - Archaeology.ppt
7. Creation Apologetics - CreationApologetics.ppt
8. Is the Bible Reliable Scientifically? - Bibrel.ppt
9. Why Is There So Much Pain and Suffering? - PainSuffering.ppt [Notes]

These lectures demonstrate that the Christian faith is reasonable, rational and defendable. Does your "truth", i.e. what you believe to be true, match reality when you subject it to the same objective scrutiny? References to web pages, books and Christian Apologetics organizations are provided for those who wish to study this topic further.
Lectures on the Creation/Evolution Controversy

This set of presentations is suitable for use in a Sunday School class, for teaching students in Bible Schools, and for others interested in learning more about the Creation/Evolution controversy from a biblical perspective. The PowerPoint slides will help the believer defend the Bible’s teaching on Creation. It will challenge the skeptic to take an honest look at what the Bible AND science have to say about creation. The following questions/issues are addressed in these presentations:

1. What is the controversy and why does it matter? - intro.ppt
2. Is the Bible reliable scientifically? - bibrel.ppt
3. What does archaeology say about the Biblical record? - archaeology.ppt
4. What does the Bible say about creation? - bibcreat.ppt
5. The evidence for a global flood? - flood.ppt
6. What do the physical sciences say about creation? - scicreat.ppt
7. What do the life sciences say about creation? - scicreat2.ppt
8. What do the earth sciences say about creation? - scicreat3.ppt
9. Scientific evidence for a young earth. - young.ppt
10. The Scientific Case Against Evolution. - EvolutionNo.ppt
11. Compromising theories - Theistic Evolution, Day-Age theory, etc. - compromises.ppt
12. What is Intelligent Design? - design.ppt
13. Ten Frequently-Used Icons of Evolution. - ten-icons.ppt
14. God’s Incredible Creatures. - creatures.ppt
   [See also slides 9-30 from Dr. Gish - Creation, Evolution and Biology.ppt]
15. What is the impact of evolution on our society? - impact.ppt
16. How then should we as Christians respond? - response.ppt

Evolution is the greatest myth ever foisted on our society in the name of science. If you wonder what your children are being taught in public school about the origin of the universe and of life, you will want to make yourself familiar with this material. If you believe in the Bible as the infallible Word of God AND in evolution, find out the real facts. References to web pages, books and Creation organizations are provided for those who wish to study this topic further.
This set of lectures is suitable for use in a Sunday School class, for teaching students in Bible Schools, and for others interested in learning about the Biblical Worldview. We discuss the foundations and important elements of the Biblical Worldview and compare this with competing worldviews prevalent in our Western world – Islam, Secular Humanism, Marxism, New Age, and Post Modernism. A worldview is a philosophy, ideology or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world, and man’s relationship to both. A complete worldview contains a perspective regarding each of the ten disciplines: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and interpretation of history. The complete Biblical Worldview course consists of the following modules:

1. Thinking Biblically - intro.doc
2. Biblical Theology - theology.doc
3. Scripture - Inspired, Inerrant, Infallible, Authoritative, Sufficient - scripture.doc
4. The Sufficiency of Scripture - sufficiency.doc
5. Biblical Worldview - Sociology - sociology.doc
7. Biblical Worldview - Psychology - psychology.doc
8. Biblical Worldview - Philosophy - philosophy.doc
12. Biblical Worldview - Politics - politics.doc
13. Biblical Worldview - Economics - economics.doc
15. Biblical Worldview - Summary - summary.doc

These lectures demonstrate a coherent rational Christian Worldview consistent with the Bible.