

Session 2: “A Game Plan for Cultural Underdogs”

■ **Americans, American Christians and a Biblical worldview.**

Authority:

**Pre-Modern World.

**Modern World

Reason – Knowledge, truth, and all of reality was to be discovered and explained by reason and the scientific method.

Empiricism – Humans are born with a mental *tabula rasa*, so that all that is known is based on experience through the five senses.

**What about modern authority and the Christian?

**Postmodern World

One, culture and community

Two, personal experience

**What about Post-modern Truth and the Christian?

■ **Pause for some implications.**

- Questioning, if not outright denial, of ultimate and absolute authority in general and especially the Bible as the revealed word of God. Which leads to . . .
- “Tolerance” for other spiritual paths – religious pluralism and designer spirituality. And . . .
- “Tolerance” for designer ethics and morality. If there are no absolutes and no ultimate authority, I/we can make our own morality. Eventually, this leads to . . .
- The demeaning of human life and a culture of death. If there is no absolute authority which speaks to the meaning of life, then Darwinianism rules. Eventually, that leads to . . .
- Meaninglessness, despair, and addiction, all of which we try to fill with stuff, with entertainment, with sex, and with food. Consequently, holding to Biblical truth and practice, will lead to . . .
- Marginalization, criticism, ridicule, and maybe even persecution. If you hold to the authority of Scripture, teach it, and try to practice it, you will be in the minority. Is already leading to the . . .
- Shrinking of congregational size, of resources, and of public influence. But . . .
- The greatest opportunity in a long time to be salt and light and demonstrate what a committed disciple and community of Christ looks like! However, need to be aware that there is also a . . .
- Shrinking of the usual missions/outreach “fishing pool.”

■ **The Church at an Authority Crossroads**

The choice of the evangelical Christian

With the *Pre-modern* we agree that the Bible is the revealed word of God.

With the *Modern* we agree that reason and experience are real and are to be used as tools.

We also agree with the *Modern* that there is absolute, objective, and certain truth.

With the *Post-Modern*, however, we agree that we are all, to some degree, constructs of our environment and our community, whether family, race, culture, or nation.

Therefore, what can we conclude about the Bible, our authority anchor – the playbook, if you will?

- 1) *Absolute truth is a reality.*
- 2) *Absolute truth is not just information about God.*
- 3) *We can know truth sufficiently, correctly, and with certainty.*
- 4) *We cling to the authority of the Bible with confidence.*
- 5) *We believe that the best reading, interpreting, and application is done in community.*
- 6) *Finally, we believe we can build a Biblical worldview.*

■ Helping your people develop a biblical worldview.

Worldviews, the Bible, and the Post-Modern American

** Definition of Worldview.

A worldview is simply the lenses through which we see, interpret, and understand reality.

** Definition of Biblical Worldview.

- 4% of Americans adults have a Biblical worldview
- 9% of “born again” Americans have a Biblical world view
- 51% of Protestant pastors “passed the test on whether they possess a Biblical worldview.”
- SBC pastors scored 71%, which is the highest of any group of Protestant pastors, but . . .
- 29% of us don’t register a Biblical worldview?

So, some elements that should be included in a Biblical worldview:

- The Trinitarian God
- Creation
- Satan, the demonic, and angels
- The nature of man, our fall, and sin
- God's general revelation in nature and history
- God's specific revelation in the Bible
- The solution for sin: the sinless life of Jesus, the cross, the resurrection, salvation, sanctification, church, and the ultimate restoration of creation
- Heaven and hell

** Assumptions/Principles.

- 1) Don't assume anything!
- 2) Start with moral character.
- 3) Don't confuse absolute truth with your ability to perceive and verbalize truth in an absolutely true manner.
- 4) Don't assume this is an easy task.
- 5) Work hard at transcending your own non-Biblical worldview lenses (and we all have them).
- 6) Find out where your people are, especially those under 40.
- 7) Biblical Worldview, marginalization, and empathy.

Conclusion.

Worldview Survey

(These questions are not all-inclusive and could be asked in different ways)

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
There is one transcendent, sovereign, all-powerful God					
God created all things from nothing and his creation is good					
God created human beings in his image, male and female.					
Human beings are born with a sinful nature					
Sin explains what is wrong with the world: brokenness with God, among humans, and in creation.					
Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity, Son of God, fully God and fully man.					
Jesus led a sinless life					
The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, a person and not a force.					
The solution for sin is found only in the cross and resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, Jesus is the only way to God.					
Salvation and the hope of eternal life cannot be earned by good works					
Although other world religions may have some elements of truth, none are absolutely true and none offer a way of salvation from sin.					
Satan is a real fallen angel in rebellion against God.					
Heaven and hell are literal places where believers and non-believers respectively spend eternity.					

Miracles can only be explained by a supernatural intervention in creation					
The Bible is God's word to us, divinely inspired and fully authoritative for life and faith.					
The moral code for human life was given to us by God in the Bible					
Life is highly valued by God. It begins in the womb at conception and ends at natural death.					
God intended for marriage to be between one man and one woman, united for life.					
Sexual activity outside of God's plan for marriage is sinful.					
The Bible informs us in all aspects of life and faith, including government, economics, politics, culture, social life, and so on.					
The Bible teaches us about absolute truth, morals, and ethics.					

Survey on the Bible

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
The Bible is God's revealed Word to us.					
The Bible is divinely inspired, authoritative, and without error.					
The Bible judges all aspects of a person's life.					
The Bible judges all aspects of every human culture.					
The Bible is the authority for how to operate our individual lives, our families, and our church.					
The Bible's moral and ethical code never changes.					
The Bible applies to all times in history and to all cultures.					
When common practices and the Bible conflict, common practice should change.					
What the Bible teaches on marriage as being between one man and one woman still applies today.					
What the Bible teaches on sexuality and sexual behavior still applies today.					
What the Bible teaches on homosexuality still applies today.					
The Bible teaches that any sexual behavior outside of marriage between one man and one woman is sin.					

Questions for further reflection:

1. What are some ways I have failed as a leader to fully believe and practice a Biblical Worldview?
2. What are some ways I have seen my congregation fail to live according to a Biblical Worldview?
3. What are some cultural, social, life issues I need to identify and address with a Biblical world view?
4. What are some specific Biblical doctrines I need to address?
5. What are some possible assumptions I am making about what people know and do that need to be changed?
6. How can I prioritize by own preaching and teaching and the church's programs and events to better teach and model a Biblical worldview?
7. What are some ways a Biblical worldview can be better taught and modeled?

Resources

Dockery, David, ed. *Shaping a Christian Worldview*

Moore, Russell. *Onward*

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

Newport, John. *Life's Ultimate Questions*

Schaeffer, Frances. *The God Who is There*

_____. *Escape From Reason*

_____. *He is There and He is Not Silent*

Sire, James. *The Universe Next Door*

_____. *Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a concept*

Smith, Fred. *Developing a Biblical Worldview*

Wilkins, Steve and Mark L. Sanford. *Hidden Wordviews: Eight cultural stories that shape our lives.*

The Chuck Colson Center/Breakpoint: <http://www.colsoncenter.org/bp-home>

Articles on aspects of developing a Biblical worldview:

<http://www.godresources.org/?p=biblical-worldview#.VpLv0RUrKhf>