

Lesson 3 The Biblical Christian Worldview

Charles Finney

“The Christian church was designed to make aggressive movements in every direction- to lift up her voice and put forth her energies against iniquities in high and low places- to reform individuals, communities, and governments and never rest until the whole Kingdom, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the most high God, till every form of iniquity is driven from the earth.”

Carl F.H. Henry

“The task of Christian leadership is to confront modern man with the Christian world life view.”

I. In what ways did Jesus _____ society?

God was discipling Israel out of many things into his Kingdom:

- A. From Polygamy to a one couple relationship.
- B. From the oppression of Woman to the honouring and uplifting of woman.
- C. From the burden of the _____ to the freedom of Grace.
- D. From their ethnocentric views to a multi-cultural understanding of God’s creation and Kingdom.
- E. From oppressive economic systems to just revolutionary empowerment systems.
- F. From the oppression of children to the welcoming of children.
- G. From the form and bondage of religion to the freedom of relationship.
- H. From the _____ of the Old Testament to the healing and Love of The New.

(K. Phiri, Worldviews and Transformation)

Martin Luther

“I don’t want people to fight on the side of the gospel with force and killing....the World is to be won with word of God.”

II. What are some foundations of a Biblical Christian Worldview?

- A. God

There is only one true God who is King of heaven and earth.

B. The Bible

The Bible is the truth about God and His world.

C. Man

Man is God's special, yet fallen creation.

D. Satan and his fallen angels

Satan and his demons are at war with man.

E. Morality

God's character and law are the bases of all right and wrong.

F. Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

G. The Kingdom of God

The Kingdom of God is being established in all the earth.

This translates practically into:

- Knowing God.
- Knowing our Bible.
- Knowing ourselves.
- Knowing our enemy.
- Living righteously.
- Acknowledging Christ's Lordship.
- Seeking first His Kingdom.

III. What are some basic presuppositions of the Biblical Christian Worldview?

The Biblical Christian Worldview is based on certain presuppositions that are foundational and non-negotiable. If any of these truths are twisted or removed there will be a perversion of true Christianity. These presuppositions are seen in how the Biblical Christian Worldview answers the basic questions of life or worldview themes.

A. The cosmos – what is _____?

1. How we understand God is foundational to our worldview – our understanding or reality.

2. God being infinite and humans being finite, our understanding of God will always be limited (1 Cor. 13:12).
3. However, it is possible to know God, even if it is in a limited way.
4. God has been gracious in His self-disclosure to us of Himself in ways we can comprehend.
5. To the Christian God is truly God – that is infinite, omniscient, omnipotent and uncreated. He is the self-existing one without equal or opposite. Consider:
 - a. God is a person – the universe is relational
 - b. God is rational – the universe is intelligible
 - c. God is good – the universe is moral
 - d. God is Trinitarian – the universe balances the one and the many
 - e. God is infinite – the universe has endless creative possibilities
 - f. God is Sovereign – the universe is under His control and moving towards His desired end
6. God has other key _____ of God such as
 - a. Creator – we were specially created by God and are not an unplanned mistake. We are unique, special and planned not a freak accident of nature or lucky mud.
 - b. King – God is our majestic King and worthy of worship and allegiance.
 - c. Judge – we cannot act anyway we like; there is a coming Judgment Day.
 - d. Saviour – we are saved not by our own merit but Christ’s grace based on the work of Calvary.
 - e. Father - God is our loving and intimate Daddy who deeply desires a personal relationship with us.
7. God is both *transcendent* and *immanent*.
He is above and beyond His creation (transcendent), which contrasts with Hinduism and the New Age, but He is also intimately involved with His creation (immanent) which contrasts with Deism and Islam.
8. God created the cosmos *ex nihilo* to operate with a uniformity of natural causes in an open system.
9. The creation is both physical and spiritual.

B. Knowing – what is truth?

- a. We can know because God wants us to _____. (1 Cor. 2: 6-16).

“For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.” (1 Cor. 2:16)

The word *mind* here means, insight, understanding and thinking. We have access to God’s insights.

- b. Just as the world was created with certain _____ laws, we can also think and reason because we are created in the image of God.
- c. Rationality can give us knowledge and facts, however, it cannot give us authoritative and final truth.

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate. Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?” (1 Cor. 1:19-20) NIV.

The word foolish here means to be made a fool of, or to be saltless, tasteless, or inert.

- d. God’s general revelation to man is through creation (Rom 1:19-20; Ps 19:1-2) and His special revelation is through Christ and the Bible, in particular (Heb 1:1-3; 2 Tim 3:16). In His light we see light.

C. Self – what is _____?

Blaise Pascal

“There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man.”

Augustine

“Our hearts are restless till they rest in thee.”

- a. We are made in the image of God (Gen 1:27) and therefore are more than a developed animal.
- b. We are personal and have _____ because God is personal and has personality. We are unique, self-conscious, intelligent (rational), moral, social, creative, and have self-determination, which contrasts with Secularism which believes we are just machines. God has bestowed great dignity on us.
- c. We were created for dominion not to be dominated (Gen 1:28) and are God’s stewards and cultivators (Gen 2:15).
- d. We are physical and spiritual – we have a soul and body (Gen 2:7).
- e. Man is God’s special yet fallen creatures. We were created good (Gen 1:31), but fell through deliberate disobedience (Gen 4), corrupting every aspect of life. We live in a fallen world and we have a depraved nature (tendency to sin but can still do good).
- f. We need redemption not just _____ - as every other religion suggests. Though we are rebellious (not inherently good) we can still choose and make moral judgments. The most important decision to make is to be redeemed by restoring our relationship with God through accepting the sacrifice of Jesus as a substitute for our sins.
- g. The self will survive this life (our spirits are immortal) and in the afterlife we will be resurrected from the dead, face eternal judgment, and go to heaven or to hell based on our acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ.

D. Community – what is society?

- a. Biblical Christianity teaches that we all have the same original parents, we are all created in the image of God and Christ died for us all.
- b. We are created for community. We need relationships (Gen 2:18).
- c. A religion that has as its centrepiece the love of others is intrinsically communal.
- d. The community of faith is called the church and is actually organically linked as the body of Christ. If one part suffers all suffer and if one part rejoices all rejoice. We belong to each other and need each other as we are one unit made up of many parts (1 Cor. 12).
- e. The church is both universal (all born-again believers everywhere) and local (born-again believers in a city who are gathered as a worshipping community) and is God's chosen instrument for the propagation of the Gospel and is the expression of Christ globally and in a locality. All believers should be "*added*" to the local church and "*devoted*" to the local church (Acts 2:41-42). A Christian out of a local church is possible but an aberration of true Christianity.

E. Time – How do we _____ the procession of life?

- a. There are three _____ words that describe time:
 - i. **Eschatos** – moving towards a final goal
 - ii. **Chronos** – the measured, unchanging procession of time
 - iii. **Kairos** – a season, or meaningful period of time, a 'divine moment' or a 'window of opportunity'
- b. Biblically time moves towards a goal – it is purposeful, progressive, and meaningful and leads to fulfilment. Time is seen optimistically and is revealed in the word *hope*. Christians are people of hope – both in this life and particularly in the life to come. This is linked to the concept of the advancing Kingdom - the Kingdom of God is being established in all the earth now in time and will ultimately be completely established when Christ returns at the end of time.
- c. God reveals Himself in time and influences things that happen in time. There are three particularly important time events that are important to Christians:
 - a. **Creation** – God specially created us at a given point in History.
 - b. **Incarnation, Crucifixion & Resurrection** – Christ came in human form and died and was raised from the dead in time.
 - c. **Resurrection & judgment** – time as we know it will end when Christ returns , resurrects the righteous and the wicked, eternally judges us, creates the new heavens and earth, and we pass from mortality to immortality.
- d. Christianity thus connects past, present and future in a meaningful way. We were created and Christ was raised in the past, how we respond to Christ now determines the future and the coming judgment will definitely happen.
- e. Time is not reversible or repeatable. It is neither cyclical nor meaningless. Therefore time is opportunity. Christianity gives us a sense of peaceful

urgency. God is Sovereign and in control (peace) but time must be fulfilled as it can be wasted (urgency).

- f. We are called to “*make the most of every opportunity*” and to “*redeem the time*” (Eph 5:16) Punctuality and progress are therefore very important to Biblical Christianity, unlike in animism where time recycles so is retrievable or at least repeatable, or in Islam where God is so in control of time that we can be passive and fatalistic. In Secularism time is seen as ending in death so time is frightening and is running out.

F. Values – what is good?

- a. How do I live righteously and do good?
For the Christian morality and ethics are grounded in the absolute nature of God not relative circumstances of earth (culture, custom & circumstance). They are rooted in universal truth. We are not the measure of morality, God is. The Bible is therefore the final authority on right and wrong.
- b. The church should uphold the Biblical standard of right and wrong.
Ultimately the ethic that Christianity produces is the royal law of love, “*Love your neighbour as you love yourself.*” There is no law against love – love is the fulfilment of the law.
- c. Every person also has a conscience and community to guide their morals.
The conscience is the inward law of God in their hearts which convicts of wrongdoing. It is a good guide to conduct but can be dulled or even seared.
- d. Community, starting with family, is also a God-given guide to right and wrong, but again can be deficient. The first value system that children embrace is the one they learn at home.
- e. Kingdom values result in Kingdom living which is neither legalistic nor lawless - not legalistic, totalitarian control or lawless, anarchistic freedom. Islam promotes legalism whilst Secularism promotes lawlessness.
- f. Christianity also teaches emphatically that we can’t live out our values without grace, found only in Christ, received as a free gift not an earned reward.
There are three kinds of people with regard to righteousness: 1) *Sinful man* who rejects living righteously 2) *Moral man* who tries to be self-righteous and yet of course falls short and 3) *Saved man* who receives righteousness by faith in Christ’s grace. Or to put it another way: Unrighteous man; self-righteous man and; Righteous man.

G. Destiny – how will my _____ and the world end?

Heb 9:27

“Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.”

Eph 1:9-11

“And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfilment-- to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. 11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will.”

- a. For the Biblical Christian the soul will not become extinct at death but will pass on to either heaven or hell depending on the choice an individual made about Jesus on earth. Those who live under the Lordship of Christ will go to heaven and those who rejected Christ will go to hell. Before passing on to heaven or hell will come the resurrection and judgment.
- b. On a corporate level the world as we know it will end with the return of Christ. History will thus follow a Creation – Fall – Redemption – Glorification pattern.
- c. The controlling force in all of human History and the purpose of God is the Kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is being progressively accomplished and should be advancing in all the earth (Matt 6:10). However, the Kingdom will only fully come with the return of the King at the end of time.

IV. How do the different realms of existence interface with each other?

A. The Kingdom of God is _____.

1. At its basis is God, who is spiritual, eternal and timeless. The Pharisees and teachers of the Law missed the Kingdom of God because they perceived it as being physical and political, rather than spiritual.
2. When the people wanted to make Jesus king by force He fled to the mountains (Jn. 6:14). When Peter struck Malchus, the servant of the High Priest when they came to arrest Jesus, Jesus rebuked him and healed his ear. Jesus clearly stated that He was not leading a rebellion and insurrection, seeking to physically overthrow the Roman government, as Barabbas was (Lk. 22:49-52). When Jesus spoke to Pilate He said, *“My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place”* (Jn 18:36).
3. The Kingdom of God manifests in the physical, but that is not its source. Of course, this does not negate the need to extend the Kingdom of God into every sphere of life, it simply delineates that we do not use carnal, worldly, and physical weapons, but spiritual weapons. Thus fomenting physical revolutions, murdering people, bombing abortion clinics and assassinating political opponents and such carnal warfare, are far removed from the righteous revolution that Jesus is leading in the nations.

B. Man is prophet, priest and _____ under God.

1. As priests nothing separates us from God and we are all responsible for bringing our worship to God.
2. As kings we take dominion over the world, using exploration, discovery and science to harness the forces of creation.
3. As prophets we have the truth and revelation knowledge of God as Creator (origin), Revealer (knowledge), Redeemer (value), Guide and Coming King (destiny), and thus act as God’s ambassador to His fallen world.

C. No institution can interpose itself between God and man.

Jesus alone is our great High Priest and He alone can mediate between God and man (1 Tim 2:5). Family, church and state cannot act as our priest or mediator.

D. All of life is based on a holy (or wholly) commonwealth _____.

This means that every area of life is based on a triangular, covenantal order. God is Lord over every area of life and is applicable to every area of life. Therefore every relationship or institution should have a covenantal arrangement, over which God is head. Thus it must be arranged according to His purposes, patterns and principles. All of life is based on Theocracy (not churchocracy).

- E. **There is a tension between the sovereignty of God and the depravity of man.** Man without God is lost and fallen without hope and unable to rescue himself. Every worldview that does not recognise that man is desperately sinful and in need of Jesus Christ as Saviour will either be deceived into a false optimism, or become extremely pessimistic as they realise the true condition man is in. However the Biblical Christian is entitled to be optimistic because although he recognises the depravity of man, he knows that God is sovereign and in control of history and destiny. Where sin abounds, grace abounds even more (Rom 5:20).
- F. **A Biblical Christian Worldview begins and _____ with God.**

God is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End (Rev 1:17). *“In Him we live and move and have our being”* (Acts 17:28) and *“In Him all things hold together”* (Col 1:18).

1. Once these foundational presuppositions are in place, we can apply a Biblical view to all of life. A Biblical Christian Worldview begins with God and then moves to *individuals* who are created in His image and therefore enjoy the right to *life, liberty and property*.
2. There are 3 *primary institutions* ordained by God: 1) *the family* 2) *the church* 3) *the state*. These three have separate spheres of influence and jurisdiction. None should encroach on the others authority and when one exalts itself, it becomes tyrannical and abusive.
3. When one of these institutions exalts itself, it will take on a *mediatory* function between God and man, and may even try and replace God e.g. family in African cultures, church in Dark Ages, state in modern times.
4. Jesus Christ Himself is the only legitimate mediator between God and man. He is before all things and is to have the supremacy in every area of life. Whenever a person, group or institution tries to take that place of mediator that belongs to Jesus there will be some form of idolatry, tyranny, slavery and judgement.
5. The various spheres of life can then be divided into 7 areas: family, church, state, economics, education, law and art. These seven areas are the basis for our society and culture.

“For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is BEFORE ALL THINGS, and in HIM ALL THINGS HOLD TOGETHER...he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in EVERYTHING HE MIGHT HAVE THE SUPREMACY.” (Col 1:16-18)

“For there is ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN, the man CHRIST JESUS.” (1 Tim 2:5)

In this next section we will explore how the Biblical Christian Worldview can be applied to seven spheres of society.

V. What have been the consequences of not having a biblical view of _____?

A. Television has degenerated.

There is a constant bombardment with violence, soft-pornography, anti-family sit-coms, commercials that appeal to immediate gratification, and senseless children's cartoons that are full of violence, occultism, and disobedience to parents. It often portrays pastors as psychotics, priests as pedophiles, and religious people as insecure, ignorant, and bigoted.

B. The News is _____ biased

When speaking in areas where religious and secular morals collide, it uniformly presents information with loaded words. Instead of "pro-life" we hear "anti-abortion rights." Instead of "conservative" it is "right wing fundamentalist." Other words are used such as "Bible thumpers," "censorship," "intolerance," "bigoted," etc.

"According to the Center for Media and Public Affairs, the average TV watcher sees 14,000 references to sex and the average child "watches 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence by the end of elementary school."

C. Illegitimacy is on the rise.

D. Entrance of New Age thinking

VI. What is the Biblical Christian Worldview concerning Family?

A. Family is the first institution _____ by God.

2. The family's function is to:

- a. Reflect the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26-18).
- b. Extend the Kingdom of God (Gen 1:26-18).
- c. Raise up godly offspring (Mal 2:15).
- d. Reflect the love relationship between Christ and the church (Eph 5:25-33).
- e. Show the Father heart of God (Eph 3:14-15, 6:1-4).
- f. Form the foundation for strong, free and prosperous nations (Gen 18:18-19).
- g. Conform us to the image of Christ (Lk. 9:23-24).

- B. Marriage is a _____ not a reneagable contract.
- C. As the family have these purposes, in the Kingdom of God it is strictly forbidden for a believer to marry a non-believer (Mal 2:10-12).
- D. Homosexuality is also an abomination in God's eyes because it aborts His purpose for marriage (Rom 1:21-27).
1. It should also be realised that homosexuality is associated with and releases a whole host of society destroying sins (Rom 1:28-32, Gen 19:4-9).
 2. Homosexuality and sexual perversion will always result in the destruction of a civilisation, either through internal collapse, external invasion or God's judgement (Gen 18:20, 19:13, 24-29).
 3. All sexual perversions, such as lust, fantasy, pre-marital sex, adultery, bestiality, pornography, masturbation, polygamy, paedophilia, orgies, rape, incest, etc are sin and erode the Biblical family (1 Thess 4:3-8, 1 Tim 5:1-2).
 4. Sexual perversion defiles the land, causing the land itself to vomit out its inhabitants (Lev 18:24-25).
 5. Abortion is completely wrong in God's sight because it aborts God's purpose in the earth.
- E. God has given the mandate for education to the family (Gen 18:19, Deut 6:1-9, 20), as parents have been entrusted to transfer the purposes of God to the next generation.
- F. God has also given the family the calling to business, for provision. In fact God confirms his covenant by giving us the ability to create wealth (Deut 8:18).
- G. God has also given the family the primary concern for the art arena, entertainment and culture, which should reflect 'family-friendly' values.
- H. God has given the *rod* to the family as its agency of discipline (Prov 19:18, 20:30, 22:6, 22:15, 23:13-14, 29:15, 29:17).

VII. What is the Biblical Christian view of Church

- A. The church is the agent of the Kingdom on earth with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:3-8, Rev 22:17). The main emphasis of the church should be the Great Commandment (Matt 22:37-40) and the Great Commission/Kingdom Commission (Matt 28:18-20). There are two essential elements to this: *relationship* and *rulership*. We could convey God's ultimate purpose through three synonymous statements: God wants to have a people; 1) *In His image and likeness who express His dominion* (Gen 1:26-18). 2) *Who are priests and kings* (Rev 5:10). 3) *Who are mature sons and a passionate bride* (Rom 8:14-19, Rev 21:2-3).
- B. The highest biblical authority in the local church are the elders (five-fold, governmental ministries), also referred to as overseers or bishops (Acts 14:23, 15:2, 4, 6, 22, Tit 1:5, Eph 4:11), who are assisted by the deacons (Acts 6:1-6, 1 Tim 3:1-13), with every believer being a saint, priest, king, and child of God (Phil 1:1, Rev 5:10, Jn.1:12). The biblical pattern is that apostles and apostolic

teams partner with elders in networking cities, regions and nations with the Gospel of the Kingdom. They father the churches and spiritual sons under their care. The apostolic directive given by Paul declares that the five-fold ministry is ordained to prepare a church that: *1) has equipped the saints for the work of the ministry 2) builds up the body of Christ 3) has the unity of the faith 4) experiential and theological knowledge of God 5) maturity 6) fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ 7) speaks the truth in love 8) grows up in all things into Christ 9) is joined and held together 10) and grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work* (Eph 4:11-16).

- C. The church can speed the day of the Lord's return (2 Pet 3:11-12) by finishing the job that she was given to do, and being prepared as a purified, unified and glorified bride and calling Jesus to return in agreement with the Spirit (Rev 22:17). This is done by: *preparing a bride and mature sons, by discipling all nations, by planting New Testament churches, by raising up and releasing leaders (kingly ministry), by discipling all believers (priestly ministry), by seeking and saving the lost.*

- D. The church has been given the sword of the Spirit as well as the keys of the Kingdom, for encouragement, edification, conviction, correction, rebuke and binding and loosing.
 - 1. The Church's authority is spiritual – not physical (Matt 18:15-18, 1 Cor. 5:5, 1 Tim 1:20).
 - 2. The church has indirect authority in all areas of life, but no direct authority in any area except its own.
 - 3. When the church usurps authority it begins to dominate the family and the state, which is what happened in the Medieval period. This led to many abuses and a great fall from true spiritual authority.
 - 4. However, it should be remembered that although there should be a separation of church from family and state, there should NEVER be a separation of GOD from church, family and state! Particularly, in the day we live in, it is important that the church regain her authority as the moral watchdog of society and as God's prophet to the king (the state).

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