

Christian Worldview and Apologetics

Section 1, The Christian Worldview

I. Introduction (1½ class)

- Pass around email list
- Give examples of Christians who live inconsistently with their beliefs:
 - “We don’t want children.”
 - Barna: “There is no absolute truth.”
- Give personal testimony to my struggle with unbelief

A. Structure of Class

- Our goals in the class are three-fold: the three “E’s,” we want to Educate, Encourage, and Equip the saints about the robustness of the Christian Worldview and the defense of it.
- Introduce the Class Outline
- Class participation wanted
- Class topics not easy because unbelief is sophisticated

B. What Is a Worldview?

- Illustration: Rose-colored glasses.
- Simple definition, “A comprehensive philosophy of life.”
- Detailed definition: “The whole network of fundamental beliefs about reality, knowledge, and ethics that function as an interpretive grid by which all information and experience are interpreted.”
- Fundamental Beliefs: Basic assumptions that serve as the criteria by which life is evaluated and lived.
- Every person has a worldview by which he interprets and acts in the world. Most people couldn’t define their worldviews in the detail we looked at earlier, but they still have worldviews. Some people have very sophisticated worldviews.

1. What's Ultimate Reality? (Metaphysics)

- The way things really are!
- Examples: materialism and dualism.

2. What & How Do We Know? (Epistemology)

- Asks, “what counts as true knowledge and how do we know?”
- Examples: empiricism and rationalism

3. How Ought We to Behave? (Ethics)

- Asks, “What ought we do in this matter?” “What is the purpose of life?”
- Examples: utilitarianism and existentialism.

C. Why Study Worldviews?

- **Because Jesus is the Lord** of our whole life!

The Scriptures set forth a worldview for Christians to believe. God wants us to espouse this worldview, live in the light of it, and grow in our knowledge of it. Our worldview is given by revelation and is distinctly God-centered rather than man-centered.

Christians must first cultivate a Biblical Worldview and then exercise godly wisdom in relating to culture: In thy light we see light; I will teach him in the way that he should choose; the Proverbs.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2).

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. *We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8).

- **Because we must understand our neighbor** in order to evangelize him more effectively.

Since the fall of Adam, unbelieving people have sought to create worldviews—sometimes brilliantly—in order to suppress the truth in unrighteousness (Romans 1).

Culture: The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought.

Culture is a reflection of the prevailing worldview(s) in a nation or people group. Fallen men create fallen cultures. To put it another way, sinful human nature is the energy behind fallen culture and apostate worldviews are the blueprints that structure fallen culture. (Ask the class for examples of prevailing worldviews and their manifestation in American culture, including the differences between Mormon culture and Las Vegas culture.)

Subculture: A cultural subgroup differentiated by status, ethnic background, residence, religion, or other factors that functionally unify the group and act collectively on each member.