

What is your Worldview?

by Steve Cornell

There are many different ways of understanding the world and life in it. A worldview is simply a way of looking at the world. And, knowingly or not, we all have a worldview and we use it to navigate through life. Worldviews embrace a set of convictions about life and the world: convictions that shape our purposes, values and lifestyles.

Our goal should be to formulate and live by a worldview large enough to address the realities and complexities of life. I believe that a Christian worldview offers the best, most satisfying and most comprehensively consistent answers to the main issues of life.

Four main questions of life

1. The question of origin: Where did we come from?
2. The question of meaning: Why are we here?
3. The question of morality: How should we live?
4. The question of destiny: Where are we going?

The Christian worldview is based on God (the Creator) as He reveals Himself in Scripture and nature. It's the most adequate for explaining and directing life in this confusing and difficult world. It enables one to "think with Christian integrity about the problems of the contemporary world" (John Stott). It equips one, "to handle data of secular controversy within a framework of reference which is constructed of Christian presuppositions." (Harry Blamires).

"Human beings need to orient their lives by means of some sort of comprehensive perspective that helps them comprehend life's particulars. Our profound yearning can be met only by a spacious narrative, personal enough to help us find our particular place in it and enduring enough to make that place significant."

"The Biblical chronicle of the Triune God is the perfect narrative to empower us to envision the meaning of our lives. The Scriptures enable us to discern our most profound longings (expressed or not), to name who human beings are and what we want to do, to fathom even more clearly who God is, and to perceive how all these things connect. It is a meta-narrative large enough, thorough enough, and promising enough to give us the hope we need to live courageously in the midst of an unbalanced, technologically driven, co-modification-distorted world."

"The Bible offers a grandly sweeping meta-narrative. That is one of the thrills of reading scriptures, for they paint an account of God's action on our behalf from the beginning of the world to the culmination of God's purposes in the recapitulation of the cosmos" (Marva J. Dawn, *Unfettered Hope: A Call to Faithful Living in an affluent Society*).

The Bible uses a fourfold context for thinking about life and the world.

Four pillars of a Christian worldview:

- I. Creation:** the good — *Question:* Where did we come from?
- *the image of God* (dignity)
- II. Fall:** the evil — *Question:* What went wrong?
- *the image marred* (depravity)
- III. Redemption:** the new — *Question:* What can we do about it?
- *the image of God renewed*
- IV. Restoration:** the perfect — *Question:* Is there hope?
- *the image of God restored*

Each pillar in the Biblical account addresses a specific reality of the world and a specific question in human hearts. Together they offer *the most* comprehensive and satisfying view of life. If you remove any one of these four pillars of Biblical truth, the world becomes more difficult to understand and potentially more painful to endure.

"Here, then, are four events, which correspond to four realities—first the Creation ("the good"), secondly the Fall ("the evil"), thirdly the Redemption ("the new"), and fourthly the End ("the perfect"). This fourfold biblical reality enables Christians to survey the historical landscape within its proper horizons. It supplies the true perspective from which to view the unfolding process between two eternities, the vision of God working out His purpose. It gives us a framework into which to fit everything, a way of integrating our understanding, the possibility of thinking straight, even about the most complex issues" (John R. W. Stott).

There is clearly a God-centeredness to the Christian worldview. "... it is God who creates, judges, redeems and perfects. The initiative is His from beginning to end. In consequence, there is a cluster of popular attitudes which are fundamentally incompatible with Christian faith: e.g. the concept of blind evolutionary development, the assertion of human autonomy in art, science and education, and the declarations that history is random, life is absurd and everything is meaningless. The Christian mind comes into direct collision with these notions precisely because they are "secular"—that is, because they leave no room for God. It insists that human beings can be defined only in relation to God, that without God they have ceased to be truly human. For we are creatures who depend on our Creator, sinners who are accountable to him and under his judgment, people who are lost apart from his redemption. This God-centeredness is basic to the Christian mind." (John R. W. Stott).