

Worldview Paper

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Christian Thought and Contemporary Worldviews
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In the August 29th issue of the *Colorado Springs Christian Examiner*, columnist Nancy Harris asks the question, “Do you have a biblical worldview?”¹ She based her question on recent research done by the Barna Research Group. Barna defined a biblical worldview as one who believed in absolute moral truth, believed that the Bible is totally accurate in all of the principles it teaches, and that God is the all-knowing, all-powerful Creator of the world who still rules the universe today. Nancy Harris writes that based on the research done by the Barna Research Group, only nine percent of individuals who call themselves Christians have a biblical worldview. Harris concludes her article by referencing Proverbs 22:6, “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” It must be noted that before one can train others, one must know for himself. This paper is an attempt to firm up my worldview based on the seven questions from James Sire’s book, *Naming the Elephant, Worldview as a Concept*.

From about the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century, very few did not believe in the existence of God. God was the prime reality. It was just what one believed. But that train of thought began to shift in the eighteenth century and the existence of God, the prime reality, was put into question. Today, it is almost in vogue to be in opposition to the ways and direction of God. The truth of the matter is that God does exist. In Exodus 3:14, God spoke to Moses and said “I am who I am.” He is the one who creates all other reality. And thankfully, he isn’t an impersonal god, not just a force to reckon with; He speaks to His children personally. I know, I experience it all of the time. I experienced

¹ Nancy Harris, “Do You Have A Biblical Worldview?”, *Colorado Springs Christian Examiner*, August 29, 2009.

him personally when He changed a wayward teenager and gave me a second chance. God exists in trinitarian form. To me, He is the prime reality; nothing else can be.

God created the universe, the external reality in which we live. He created it ex nihilo—out of nothing. God is the source of everything. Isaiah writes in Isaiah 45:18 “He who created the heavens, He is God; He who fashioned and made the earth, He founded it; He did not create it to be empty, but formed it to be inhabited.” It is wonderful to know that God didn’t just create the world and then depart to a distant location and watch his creation; He is involved intimately. Without His direct interaction, the world would come to a halt. When God created the world, He created human beings with a free will. Regrettably, Adam and Eve rebelled against God which had terrible consequences. But God set into motion a plan that would redeem mankind by sending His son into the world to live as a human, to be tempted as humans are tempted, to live above reproach, to die on a cross for our sins, and to rise from the dead.

It is this same God in whose image we are made. In Genesis 1:26-27, the writer states; “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” We are rooted and grounded in the personality of God. Is it ever a wonder why so many individuals are depressed and lonely in our world? Yes, there are many causes for this, including medical reasons; but there are multitudes who are trying to fill an empty void in their lives with entertainment and materialism. Ontologically speaking God is, but how do we know (epistemologically) who God is? We are made in the image of God. If we

seek to know God, we will begin to understand more about His ways and why we do the things that we do. In John 1:1-4, the writer states “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.” God is all-knowing, and He imparts His knowledge to us as His created beings.

We can know about God and we know him personally. God has reveals Himself to us through two ways, general revelation and special revelation. In general revelation, God speaks to us through his creation. In Psalm 19:1 the Psalmist writes “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands.” But general revelation is that, general. Special revelation is the extra-natural. God, in sending His Son, did the ultimate form of special revelation. Foundational to understanding God is to give Him access to one’s life. Without having received the free gift of redemption that God offers to all, it is impossible to know God. Complimenting that relationship with God, He has given us His Word. The Bible contains instructions on how to live, how to deepen our relationship with God and ultimately, how to spend eternity with Him.

History tells us the story of God and mankind. God created the world and called it good. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sin entered the world. Ever since that act, history tells us the story of God on a rescue mission. He loves His creation so much, that He was willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice to atone for our sins. That is a personal God, who loves us so personally, that He was willing to give everything to redeem us. The story of creation as well as the fall of humanity is told in a few short chapters in Genesis. The remaining Scriptures tell us what God did about it and is doing about it.

One day, we are going to depart from this world. Scripture tells us repeatedly that we have two possible destinations; eternal life with God or eternal separation. Some religions teach that at death we are reincarnated, others teach that we cease to exist. But the Scriptures tell us that we are transformed at death. We either enter eternity with Christ or we are separated from Him forever. In the end, it is our choice.

Considering that we were made in God's image and that God is moral, we automatically have moral categories. When we have to make a decision, we often have a sense of what choice is right and what choice is wrong. That has been somewhat skewed by our sin nature, but we still innately know when our action is right and wrong. The key to making right decisions is based upon giving our life to Christ, confessing our sins, and living as close to God as possible, reflecting the Image of the Redeemer.

Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood, made her worldview clear when she espoused the belief system that the source of social and personal dysfunctions was the rise of Christian morality.² She advocated that the only way to have inner-peace and to be truly satisfied is to be liberated sexually. And in 2009, look where our culture is. We are a sex-saturated, pleasure-driven society attempting to fill the empty void in our lives. Sanger's worldview has in part helped form that false sense of fake happiness and a temporary high.

Having a proper Biblical, Christ-centered worldview is paramount in our culture. Without it, our individual lives and our culture will continue to spiral toward destruction. We all have a worldview, even if we don't think that we do.

² Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*. (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008). 144.

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