

Understanding The Christian Worldview

Apostolic Christian Counseling And Family Services
877-370-9988

www.accounseling.org
info@accounseling.org



Scope of the Presentation

- To encourage Christians to be salt and light in the world without being overtaken by the world.
- To note some specific challenges to faith which are commonly experienced by Christians and how to refute those challenges.
- Due to time constraints, the presentation may not be as in-depth in certain areas as you may want. Please feel free to contact me to discuss any further questions or comments.

What Is Truth?

John 18:37-38

"Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?..."

One Way: Truth that Divides

- Jesus made a "truth claim" in **John 14:6** when he said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*
- This claim goes completely against the concept of **religious pluralism** – "the belief that every religion is true."
- Many in American society today promote the idea that religious pluralism and its accompanying ethics, **moral relativism**, is the way to world peace.

Jesus: Cornerstone or Rock of Offense

1 Peter 2:4-6

- 4 *"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,"*
- 5 *"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."*
- 6 *"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."*

1 Peter 2:7-9

7 "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,"

8 "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

9 "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"

What is a Worldview?

- "It is simply the sum total of our beliefs about the world, the 'big picture' that directs our daily decisions and actions."
- Worldviews function as lenses through which people view and interpret their world. It helps them determine what is and is not important in life.
- Worldviews are often tied directly to various religions, however, not all worldviews are *explicitly/overtly* religious in nature.

How Worldviews Operate

- Worldviews can be simplified to encompass the following three domains:
 1. "Where did we come from and who are we?" (**Creation**)
 2. "What has gone wrong with the world?" (**The Fall**)
 3. "What can we do to fix it?" (**Redemption**)

Questions to Ask to Learn About Another Person's Worldview

1. "How do you believe life began?" or "Why is there something rather than nothing?"
2. "How do you explain human nature?"
3. "What happens to a person at death?"
4. "How do you determine what is right and wrong?"
5. "What is the purpose of life?"

C. Colson, & N. Pearcey (1999). *How Now Shall We Live?* & J. Solomon (1994). *Worldviews* www.probe.org

Why Do Worldviews Matter?

- Worldviews affect an individual's beliefs about the relative importance or non-importance of:
 - Knowing the nature and character of God
 - Separation from God because of sin
 - The Holy Bible
 - Jesus Christ
 - God's plan of salvation
- In short, worldviews are of **eternal significance**.

Today's "Hot Issues" are Really Debates Between Worldviews

- Multiculturalism and diversity
- Gay, lesbian, bisexuality, & transgender issues
- Premarital sex and promiscuity
- Inequity between social classes
- Ethnic and racial prejudice
- Male/Female gender issues
- Abortion
- Use of fetal stem cells
- Active euthanasia and end-of-life issues

Three Major Worldviews

Compared and Contrasted

Three Major Worldviews

1. **Biblical Christianity (BC)** – this includes any Christian church that believes the Bible is inerrant and is God’s revealed Truth.
2. **Eastern Pantheism (EP)** – this includes New Age cults, Buddhism, etc.
3. **Secular Humanism (SH)** – this includes atheists, agnostics, secular scientists, etc.

Theology

“The study of the existence (or non-existence), nature and attributes of god.”

Theology

1. **BC: Christian Theism** – the belief there is an omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient God (existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit) who can be personally known.
2. **EP: Pantheism** – the belief that everything both living and nonliving is a part of a universal life force. Everyone and everything is a part of the divine.
3. **SH: Atheism** – the belief there is no God -- no spiritual realm exists.

Philosophy

“The attempt to discover an explanation for the whole of existence of reality.”

Philosophy

1. **BC: Supernaturalism** – “God is the explanation for the universe and everything in it.”
2. **EP: Non-naturalism** – all things are essentially spiritual. Pursuing and attaining an enlightened mind is the highest form of virtue. “Mind over matter.”
3. **SH: Naturalism** – the use of the scientific method is the only way to know reality. Only matter and things that can be objectively studied exist.

Ethics & Morality

“Study of conduct, moral values, duties, actions, and ends”

Ethics and Morality

1. **BC: Moral Absolutes** – God’s moral law is unchanging and is true for all people, in all places, at all times.
2. **EP: Moral Relativism** – ethical/moral reasoning is relative because each person determines it through getting in touch with “universal god-consciousness.”
3. **SH: Moral Relativism** – since no God exists, it is up to each individual to find the best situational ethic to deal with each situation.

Human Nature & Psychology

“Study of human behavior and mental processes”

Human Nature & Psychology

1. **BC: The Battle Between Carnal & Spiritual Natures** - Human beings are born into sin, have a sin nature, and are not naturally good in and of themselves. Because of Christ’s shed blood, human beings can be reconciled to God, take on a new nature, and then do good works to glorify Him.
2. **EP: Collective Consciousness** – Human beings are good at the core. Society, lack of connection with the environment, and unenlightened living/thinking obscure their natural goodness.
3. **SH: Self-Actualization** – Human beings are good at the core and are meant to evolve into an even better being. Problems with society causes people to make poor choices.

Biology

“Study of living organisms”

Biology

1. **BC: Creation** – God created all things (both living and non-living). He is the source of order in nature and the universe.
2. **EP: Evolution** – Evolutionary processes are part of the “progression to godhood.” Striving for enlightenment leads to promotion and growth.
3. **SH: Darwinian Evolution** – Evolution/random chance is the source of life – God doesn’t exist. Survival of the fittest.

Sociology

"Study of social institutions and society"

Sociology

1. **BC: God ordained the institutions of the Home, the Church, and the State** – God created, made roles for, and gave authority to each of these institutions to preserve Godly order and to help humanity.
2. **EP: Non-traditional home, non-traditional church, and non-traditional state** – traditional approaches to the home, church, and state are at the core of the problems in the world.
3. **SH: World State, Societal Norms** – in order for the world's problems to be addressed we need one world government.

Preparing Your Heart:

"Put on the whole armour of god..."
See *Ephesians 6:11-18*

Colossians 2:2-5

- 2 *"That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;"*
- 3 *"In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*
- 4 *"And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words."*
- 5 *"For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ."*

Colossians 2:6-10

- 6 *"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:"*
- 7 *"Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."*
- 8 *"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."*
- 9 *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."*
- 10 *"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:"*

Know What You Believe & Why You Believe It

- **Study the Word**
 - **2 Timothy 2:15** *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*
- **Memorize Scripture** – be able to briefly share the core verses about Salvation. **Psalms 119:11** *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*
- **Get Yourself to Church!**
 - **Hebrews 10:25** *"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."*

Know What You Believe Cont'd

- Ask yourself these questions:
 - Are you moving from the “milk to the meat?”
 - Are you maturing in your faith?
 - Can you explain your faith to another person?
 - Try practicing with a family member or roommate.
- Don't be ashamed of your need to grow and to learn. Take your questions to your elder, ministers, and **mature/experienced Christian mentors**.

Basic Defenses

1. **Paul (Mentor)** – An older and wiser Christian person who can give you advice, perspective, direction, and corrective feedback.
2. **Barnabas (Accountability Partner)** – A peer who is in the same life-stage as you. Good for support, encouragement, and accountability.
3. **Timothy (Person that you Mentor)** – Someone who is younger than you are that you can help learn and grow.

Filter Everything You Learn Through the Christian Worldview

- Don't accept something is true simply because someone makes an emotional appeal that sounds good.
- Don't accept something someone presents as fact just because he or she has a Ph.D.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:21** *“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”*

Acts 17:10-12

10 *“And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews.”*

11 *“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**”*

12 *“Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few.”*

Danger Signs

Indicators You Might Be On Sinking Sand Instead Of a Solid Rock

Danger Signs #1

- **Being a Loose Cannon:** fighting enthusiastically (often loudly) for a Christian position, but being more of a hindrance than a help.
- **Spiritual Fads:** getting caught up in the latest spiritual idea that is going through the Christian or campus community. *Zeal and sincerity don't equal truth.*
- **Lack of Personal Accountability:** not seeking out feedback and accountability from others.
- **Lack of Spiritual Accountability:** seeing yourself as “above” needing shepherding by Church leadership.

Danger Signs #2

- **Becoming Overly Interested in Other Doctrines and Religions:** putting an overemphasis on studying other doctrine/religions.
- **Becoming Lazy in Your Own Personal Walk With Jesus:** Being “too busy” for personal devotions, church, and time with other believers.
- **Missionary Dating:** trying to “win-over” non-believers but getting overly emotionally involved.

Common Challenges...

And Ideas On How To Meet Those Challenges

1 Peter 3:12-14

12 “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.”

13 “And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?”

14 “But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;”

1 Peter 3:15-17

15 “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:”

16 “Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.”

17 “For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.”

Multiculturalism and Diversity

- Your spiritual beliefs and religious culture are part of your multicultural heritage.
- If you are talking with someone who is challenging/ridiculing/etc. the Christian worldview, ask them to make their worldview explicit.
- Your beliefs may not be respected. Jesus didn't always receive respect either. Stay focused on being Christ-like.

Talking with Someone Who Has Had a Bad Experience With Christianity

1. If wrong occurred, acknowledge it. Don't get into the position of defending something that is wrong.
2. Tell the person the story about the “stolen coat.”
3. Refocus the discussion onto the person of Jesus Christ.
4. Challenge the person to read the Word for what it says, not what they have heard.
 - **Romans 10:17** “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Colossians 4:6

Knowing when to speak & when to remain silent is one of the biggest challenges.

“Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

How did Jesus Handle Conflict?

- Chose His words carefully, not impulsively.
- Didn't react hastily.
- Was sometimes completely silent.
- Sometime used forceful language.
- Always went to the heart of the matter.
- In short... Jesus picked His battles and used his actions and words **to make an impact**.
- His actions were always focused on the **long-term** spiritual outcome of the people He was talking to.

Categories of Responses

1. Sometimes you need to stay silent – speaking up (especially if you speak impulsively) may hurt your chances of being heard and may actually hurt your witness.
2. Sometimes you need to use carefully placed questions – Jesus masterfully used questions to prove His points.
3. Sometimes you need to respectfully point out contradictions.
4. Sometimes you need to “plant your flag.”

A Model for Clarifying When You Need to Take a Stand

- **Preferences** – Personal opinions and choices.
- **House Rules** – Customs, rules, norms, and traditions set by a members of a “House.”
- **Organizational Norms** – guidelines/standards of conduct set out by businesses, social organizations, churches, etc.
- **Biblical Absolutes** – God's moral law that is explicitly stated in Scripture. True for all people, all places, at all times.

When Differences Occur In...

- **Preferences:** Agree to disagree.
- **House Rules:** Live according to your conscience before God *AND* respect that others may choose differently.
- **Organization Norms:** Respect authority and be submissive.
- **Biblical Absolutes:** Don't compromise.

Debate Versus Dialogue

- **Debate** occurs when two people argue and seek to “win” a discussion by overpowering each other's positions.
 - Heated debate rarely causes people to change their minds. Rather, it often stirs up anger and causes people to become more entrenched in their positions.
- **Dialogue** occurs when two people, with an attitude of respect, share their positions and seek to understand each other's perspective (even though they don't/won't necessarily agree).

Watch Out for the Extremes!!



Having a "Ready Answer"

1. **Study the Word: 2 Timothy 2:15** "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
2. **Ask God for Wisdom and Trust He will give you words to speak: James 1:5** "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."
3. **Prepare Your Heart:** Regularly figure out how you would give an answer to particular issues.
4. **Talk with an experienced Christian mentor.**

If You Are a Student

- Be the best student you can be and show good effort.
- If you can show you understand the concepts being discussed (e.g., evolution etc.), you have a much better chance of being listened to in a dialogue.
- In academics, as in many places, respect is earned.
- When reviewing your behavior and performance at school/work, would you like to say this paper/job/etc. was, "Performed by a disciple of Jesus Christ"?

Matthew 10:14

"Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

Your Job is to Plant a Seed

- Your job is to live in a Christ-like manner.
- The people coming in contact with you on a daily basis should be able to see and sense something is different about you.
- **1 Corinthians 3:6-9**
6 "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."
7 "So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

NEVER FORGET!!

- The Gospel according to Jesus Christ is simple: **John 3:16**
- **1 Timothy 3:12** "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
- **John 8:32** "And ye shall know the truth, that the truth shall make you free."
- **Romans 1:16** "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also the Greek."