Rethinking Worldview: A New Paradigm for Christian Discipleship  
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Room For Doubt is a grant-funded program that provides learning experiences and resources to strengthen the faith of committed Christians, address the questions of those who have doubts about their Christian heritage, and represent the Christian message to those who are skeptical about its claims.

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Introduction

A. The “worldview” concept
   1. Complexity, confusions, and criticisms (e.g. 2004 “After Worldview” conference).
   2. Personal connections: Classes, programs, books, and more.

B. Basic claim: The worldview concept can be an extremely valuable and versatile tool that facilitates desperately needed discipleship diagnosis and development in an increasingly post-Christian culture.

C. Primary points of presentation

I. Disconcerting Data about Discipleship

A. “Biblical Worldview”
   1. “Born again” adults? __________ 45%.
   2. “Biblical worldview”: All Adults? __________ 9%; All Teens? __________ 2%.
   3. “Biblical worldview”: Those 18-23? __________ <.5%.

   1. Adults: 1990 8.1%; 2007 15.3%; 2012 19.3%; 2014 __________ 22.8%.
   3. 18-29 year olds: 2007 22%; 2012 32%.
      a. 2014: Older Millennials (25-33): __________ 34%.
   4. From “religious homes”? __________ 73%.
   5. Religious “de-converts”? __________ 66%.

C. “Churched Doubters and Dropouts”
   1. “Churched Teens”: No longer active in church in their 20s? __________ 59%.
   2. Significantly doubted their faith? __________ 38%.
   3. Felt like rejecting their parents’ faith? __________ 32%.

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1 Check the session webpage for additional resources, including slides and outline with answers for blanks.
2 For the Barna Research Group, the criteria for having a “biblical worldview” are as follows: Made a personal commitment to Christ with belief in salvation from Jesus; acceptance of absolute moral truth, biblical moral standards, Satan’s existence, and Jesus’ sinless life; and trust in Christ for salvation.
“… The most frequently mentioned role of Christians in de-conversion was in amplifying existing doubt.’ De-converts reported ‘sharing their burgeoning doubts with a Christian friend or family member only to receive trite, unhelpful answers’” (Drew Dyck, “The Leavers: Young Doubters Exit the Church,” Christianity Today [Nov. 19, 2010]).


D. Anecdotal data from an online “worldview test” at www.worldviewweekend.com.

1. This test has problematic assumptions, but it’s still enlightening.
2. Worldviews identified: Strong Biblical; Moderate Biblical; Secular Humanist; Socialist; Communist/Marxist/Socialist.
3. Eight sub-categories (civil government, economics, education, family, law, religion, science, social issues).

II. Discipleship Problems and Worldview Prospects

“After more than a decade and a half of research into American faith, I believe that the Christian church in the United States has a shallow faith problem because we have a discipleship problem. Moreover, diagnosing and treating shallow faith among young adults is urgent because we have a shallow faith problem among all adults.… The dropout problem is, at its core, a faith-development problem; to use religious language, it’s a disciple-making problem” (David Kinnaman, You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church...and Rethinking Faith [Kindle locations 1873, 216]; emphasis added).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipleship Problems</th>
<th>Worldview Prospects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Contentment with the “milk” of the word (Hebrews 5:12–14)—a “shallow” faith.</td>
<td>1. _________________ MEAT for maturity.</td>
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<td>3. A GAP between professed beliefs and behavior.</td>
<td>3. Needed _________________ INTEGRATION.</td>
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<td>4. A GAP between “sacred” and “secular.”</td>
<td>4. Relevance to _________________ ALL of life.</td>
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<td>5. Don’t know WHY we believe the Christian way and why we don’t believe something else.</td>
<td>5. A strategy for comparisons and apologetic _________________ CONVICTION</td>
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III. Prominent Worldview Perspectives and Recent Shifts

A. Different “doorways” to worldview.

1. **ISM-comparisons** (e.g. James Sire, The Universe Next Door)

“Where did we come from and who are we (Creation)? What has gone wrong with the world (Fall)? And what can we do to fix it (Redemption)? These three questions form a grid that we can use to break down the inner logic of every belief system or philosophy that we encounter.….” (Colson, Pearcey, and Fickett, How Now Shall We Live? 144; emphasis added).

3. **Socio-Academic** areas (e.g. Del Tackett and the Truth Project at www.thetruthproject.org; Colson’s Center for Christian Worldview at www.colsoncenter.org; Summit Ministries at www.summit.org).

B. Correct criticisms of worldview.

1. Too focused on the _________________ MIND and on mere _________________ BELIEFS.
2. Too _________________ ABSTRACT.
C. Recent and helpful shifts in thinking about worldview.

1. Emphasis on HEAD (e.g. James Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, editions 1-3 [1976, 1988, 1997])

   Worldview is “a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic makeup of our world” (emphasis added).


   “The heart of the matter of worldview is that worldview is a matter of the heart…. I propose that the heart and its content as the center of human consciousness creates and constitutes what we commonly refer to as a Weltanschauung” [worldview] (Naugle, pp. 269-270; emphasis added).


   Worldview is “… a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions …” (emphasis added). Also see Sire’s *Naming the Elephant*.

3. Emphasis on ACTIONS oriented by ultimate DESIRE (e.g. James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, 2009).

IV. Discipleship Diagnosis and Development: A New Paradigm for the Worldview Tool

A. Your “WORLDVIEW” is the “CORE” of WHO YOU ARE “functioning components”).

   1. Mind (basic beliefs and assumptions about universal human questions)
   2. Attitude (emotion/conscience)
   3. Behavior (actions/communication)
   4. Will (motives/desires)

B. Definition of “A WORLDVIEW”: “A worldview is a way of life guided by basic beliefs and priority values that are expressed in prevailing behavior.”

C. Definition of a “CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW”: “A Christian worldview is a way of life with basic beliefs, priority values, and prevailing behavior that are consciously directed by a love for God and His Word for humanity.”

   1. Connection to the “greatest commandment” (Mk 12:28–31; Mt 22:34-40; Lk 10:25–28) and to the Shema (Deut. 6:4–9).
   2. Emphasis on love, not mere professed belief.

D. Using the worldview tool: Some practical applications

   1. Identify the “functioning components” in Bible passages (e.g. Rom 12:1–2; Col 3:5–10; Eph 4:20–32).
      a. Mind (basic beliefs and assumptions about universal human questions)
      b. Attitude (emotion/conscience)
      c. Behavior (actions/communication)
      d. Will (motives/desires)

   2. Evaluate your individual “integrity” based on biblical reflection (see the graphic below on “Discipleship Diagnosis: How’s Your Integrity?”).

   3. Assess how consciously and consistently you are LIVING a Christian worldview in ALL of life (see the graphic below on “Living a Christian Worldview”).

To what extent …
a. Personal Integrity:
   - Am I motivated by a love for God in my mind, attitudes, behavior, and will (Mk 12:30)?
   - Do I have a transformed mind (Rom 12:1–2)—the “mind of Christ” (1 Cor 2:15)—that is led by the Spirit of God (Rom 8:5–14)?
   - Do I desire to be consistent (in mind, attitude, behavior, and will)? How/Where can I be more consistent?
   - Do I seek to know God’s revelation and its profitability for every good work (2 Tim 3:15–17)?
   - Do I consciously allow God’s revelation to inform my thoughts, attitudes, speech, actions, and deepest desires?

b. Individual Involvement:
   - Do I “take every thought captive” to Christ (2 Cor 10:5) in my own involvement with culture (e.g. media, leisure, work, education, sports, money)?
   - Do I conduct myself “in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ” (Phil 1:27)?
   - Am I providing “salt” and “light” for my culture (Matt 5:13–14)?
   - Am I, like Lot, “distressed” and “tormented” by a sinful culture (2 Pet 2:4–9)?

c. Relational Investments:
   - Do I understand the implications of a Christian worldview for all my relationships?
   - Do I apply a Christian worldview to my relationships (family, friends, church, community, work)?

d. Social-Academic Influence:
   - Do I see the relevance of the Christian worldview for socio-academic areas (e.g. law, politics, economics, history, education, psychology, art, biology, cosmology, philosophy, sociology, anthropology)?
   - Are my social values adequately informed by God’s revelation?
   - Do I recognize and critically engage the assumptions that are incompatible with a Christian worldview?
   - Do I try to offer constructive Christian contributions to the socio-academic areas?
   - Do I understand the implications of a Christian worldview for my college major or career?

e. Cultural Impact:
   - Do I engage in and support cross-cultural and global witness (Matt 28:18–20)?
   - Do I view the Gospel as equally important for all ethnic groups?

f. Apologetic Interactions:
   - Am I personally convicted of the truth of the Christian faith?
   - How prepared am I to give a reasoned account of my Christian hope (1 Peter 3:15)?
   - Can I detect the presence and influence of other worldviews and avoid being taken captive by deceptive philosophies (Col 2:8; 2 Cor 10:5)?
   - Can I politely but persuasively dialogue with someone with a different worldview (1 Pet 3:15)?

E. Someone who LIVES a Christian worldview:
1. ________________LOVES God with all of one’s heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mk 12:30).
3. Has a ________________TRANSFORMED mind (Rom 12:1–2) that is led by the ________________SPIRIT (Rom 8:5–14).
4. Is not taken ________________CAPTIVE by deceptive philosophies (Col 2:8) but takes every thought ________________CAPTIVE to Christ (2 Cor 10:5).
5. Is always ready to give ________________REASONS for the Christian hope (1 Peter 3:15).
6. Applies the obligations and implications of the Christian worldview to ________________ALL of life (3 John 1:4; Eph 4:1,14–15; Col 2:6; 1 Thess 4:1).
“Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength” (Mark 12:30).

Discipleship Diagnosis: How’s Your Integrity?

1. Read the scriptures and note what is especially significant or relevant for you in each area.
2. Do an honest spiritual appraisal in each of these areas.
3. In what ways are you inconsistent in these areas? How can you improve?
   - Do I say but don’t do?
   - What do I do that I should do but don’t really want to do?
   - What beliefs do I affirm but don’t act out?
   - What do I not want to do but often do anyway?
   - Does my speech match my expressed beliefs?
   - Is my conscience genuinely hurt after doing what my faith says is wrong?
4. To what extent are you consciously motivated by your love for God in each area?
LIVING a Christian Worldview

“... walk in a manner worthy of the calling” (Eph 4:1);
“... how you ought to walk and please God” (1 Thess 4:1);
“I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth” (3 John 1:4) [NASV]

How CONSCIOUSLY and EFFECTIVELY am I LIVING a Christian Worldview in ALL of life?

Use this for personal devotions or small group interaction: How would I grade myself in these areas? Where do I need the most growth? What steps should I take? What resources can I use?

1. Personal Integrity?
2. Individual Involvement with Culture?
3. Relational Investments?
4. Socio-Academic Influence?
5. Cultural Impact?
6. Apologetic Interaction? (E.g. Do I know WHY I accept and live a Christian worldview? Have I gone beyond mere mental assent to personal conviction? Do I know why I don’t believe something else? How “ready” am I to give reason for my Christian hope? How often do I?)