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**Local Student Advocates Intolerance of Christianity**

by [Ken Ham](https://answersingenesis.org/bios/ken-ham/) on June 2, 2016

*The hundreds of AiG staff members attend many local churches in our Greater Cincinnati area. These include well-known churches like Grace Fellowship, Florence Baptist, Calvary Baptist, and so on, where thousands of other believers also attend.*

Most people in these churches agree with the theologically conservative Christian message of AiG and how it is taught at our well-attended [Creation Museum](http://creationmuseum.org/). And that’s not true of only our area; there are several thousand churches across the USA, with millions of church attendees, that support the evangelistic outreach of AiG. …

Recently, a resident of Northern Kentucky, Carlos Ramirez, who is a sophomore at Columbia University (New York), wrote an anti-Ark opinion piece that appeared in today’s *Cincinnati Enquirer* (and it was posted to the paper’s [website](http://www.cincinnati.com/story/opinion/contributors/2016/06/01/ark-makes-us-look-ignorant/85032820/) yesterday).

The student makes a number of unfounded, false statements about what we as Christians believe and how the Ark is being funded. He ended his piece with this very alarming, highly intolerant comment:

It is in our best interest as a society to disallow the existence of institutions such as this and collectively decide to not tolerate ignorance of the natural world.

This college student is essentially calling for the culture to abandon the First Amendment guarantee of the freedom of religion and its free exercise because he disagrees with our beliefs about origins based on the Bible.

Obviously influenced by evolution, this young man states:

When the United States is already lagging behind many prominent nations in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics, the creation of the ark can only be detrimental to our nation’s standing because of the false information it presents.

Carlos, I have a few things for you to consider:

1. Name one thing that your belief about origins has had to do with developing technology,
2. Come up with one way a person’s belief about origins has anything to do with engineering,
3. And name one way your belief concerning origins has anything to do with mathematics.

Now I would say there actually is a connection of sorts, and it’s this: the reason we can develop technology, gain engineering skills, and do math is because we accept the laws of nature, the uniformity of nature, and laws of logic that just cannot be explained by natural processes. They only make sense within a biblical worldview of a Creator God who brought those laws into existence.

Does Carlos really understand what he’s saying when he declares that the Ark will somehow contribute to a decline in society’s advancement? For one, he does not understand the difference between belief (historical science, like origins) and empirical science (observational science, that helps develop technology). Actually, his thinking is typical of the millennial generation that has been brainwashed in evolutionary thinking. He’s advocating that the culture stop Christians, who believe God’s Word beginning in Genesis, from being able to freely proclaim their beliefs in the culture. Is he also making similar claims about Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Orthodox Jews (and the list could go on)? Or is he only fighting against Bible-believing Christians?

Sadly, young men like Carlos are representative of the millennials who have been indoctrinated in the religion of secularism and brainwashed into thinking that anyone who disagrees with their “enlightened” beliefs is a hindrance to the culture, and that people must “disallow the existence of” the Ark so they can impose their own secular worldview on the population.

Christians, please wake up! This young man represents the next generation. His beliefs and intolerance are a consequence of a secular education and a lack of understanding the nature of science. Such thinking has even entered Christian homes and churches. This new generation by and large doesn’t just want their views tolerated, but they also want opposing views to be eliminated.

The freedoms the West once enjoyed are being lost as the culture becomes unhinged with increasing numbers of people building their foundation on man’s fallible opinions instead of God’s infallible Word.

…

At least Carlos admits that ultimately his debate with us is about a conflict of beliefs—his beliefs (presumably evolutionary) about the natural world versus the account of origins given in Scripture. And yes, his blatant intolerance of a belief that is differing to his own is very telling. I trust he will see his hypocrisy and will be tolerant enough to allow Christians to exercise the liberties afforded them by the US Constitution and to enjoy the same freedoms he does.

You can [read his entire opinion piece](http://www.cincinnati.com/story/opinion/contributors/2016/06/01/ark-makes-us-look-ignorant/85032820/).

<https://answersingenesis.org/blogs/ken-ham/2016/06/02/local-student-advocates-intolerance-christianity/>

# Science—Worldview Neutral?

by Dr. Georgia Purdom on April 9, 2012; last featured May 21, 2016

*Can science be studied neutrally, without committing to any worldview? Dr. Georgia Purdom, AiG–US, explains.*

A few months ago I received a flyer for a homeschool science curriculum called *Real Science-4-Kids*. The flyer stated that the curriculum is “worldview-friendly science . . . without the spin.”

I wondered exactly what that meant, so I went to the curriculum website and read the following:

In order for science to be “scientific” it must not commit itself to any one worldview, ideology, philosophical or religious perspective. Science and scientists must be free to follow the evidence where ever it leads. Anything short of this is not real science.

I remember thinking something very similar twelve years ago when I first started researching the origins issue. The evidence would lead me to the truth, I thought. I just needed to follow.

As young people study our world, they need God’s Word. The Bible should be their main lens for true understanding.

But what I discovered instead was that while science itself may be an objective exercise, scientists are not objective—especially in the area of historical science (evolution and creation). Presuppositions and biases play a definitive role in determining how scientists interpret evidence and the conclusions they draw about the past.

There is only one truth source for the past as it concerns the beginnings of the universe, earth, and life—and that is the eyewitness account God gave to us in the book of Genesis. Everything else is merely human opinion, imaginations, and ideas—subject to fallible thinking.

As I looked through the *Real Science-4-Kids* curriculum, I noticed a mixing of observational science (i.e., the technology that produces airplanes, vaccines, and computers) and historical science. For example, the author of the curriculum wants students to explore the question, “Did God create humans?” She poses these follow-up questions: “Who discovered it? When was it discovered? What is the evidence?”

These questions are not directly applicable because the question “Did God create humans?” is historical science. The follow-up questions fall under the category of observational science.



Both creationists and evolutionists approach observational science—such as the laws of physics or the laws governing genetic inheritance (my field of study)—very similarly. However, when it comes to how the laws of physics and genetic inheritance came into existence in the past, the presuppositions of the scientists govern their interpretations and conclusions.

The curriculum mainly focuses on observational science such as atoms, cells, animals, plants, chemical reactions, laws of physics, planets, stars, and so on. But a closer look revealed it was not “worldview neutral” at all. For example, the biology textbook for grades 4–6 states the following:

The animal kingdom, Animalia, includes ALL of the animals: dogs, cats, frogs, sea urchins, bees, birds, snakes, jellyfish, bunnies, and even us!

This isn’t neutral language at all. You see, biblical creation holds that mankind was created in God’s image separate and distinct from the animals (Gen 1:26–27). Instead, the language is “friendly” to evolution (and to the Intelligent Design Movement, since many in the ID Movement believe humans evolved from ape-like ancestors).

There is no such thing as being “worldview neutral” because that belief in itself is a worldview! Moreover, Jesus dispelled the myth of neutrality when He stated, “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad” (Mt 12:30).

In an attempt to sell us on the idea that her curriculum is “neutral,” the author states the following:

In my opinion anytime we present information as “undisputed fact,” we have crossed over into “dogma.” This includes both scientific “facts” and religious “facts.”

What does she mean by religious “facts”? Would this include the virgin birth and Resurrection of Jesus Christ? Are they not to be considered undisputed fact and therefore not dogma? If these events in the New Testament did not happen, they would chime the death knell for Christianity (1Cor 15:14). Not affirming the Bible’s authority in Genesis, and the miracles of creation recorded there, is a slippery slope to questioning its authority everywhere else.

Moms and dads: I challenge you to carefully evaluate the books, DVDs, and curricula that your children use (including materials purchased at homeschool conferences) and choose resources that have the Bible as their ultimate authority—and that glorify Jesus as Creator.

<https://answersingenesis.org/presuppositions/science-worldview-neutral/>

**Shades of Nye in Attack on Australian Homeschoolers**

by Ken Ham on September 11, 2014

Homeschooling and the debate on origins are in the news in Australia. To understand the background to what is happening, here is an excerpt from an article by the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA):

With over 30,000 homeschooling families, Australia has one of the larger homeschooling populations in the world. Currently, homeschooling is legal in all states and territories, where regulations vary. One of the largest states is New South Wales with a population of about 7 million. Homeschoolers in New South Wales must submit lengthy applications and are then subject to an intrusive “home inspection” to confirm that they measure up to standards. Since parents must reapply annually and go through the same process it’s no wonder that many homeschooling parents simply choose not to comply. As a result of a protest against more regulation, a petition of over 10,000 signatures was submitted to the New South Wales parliament, resulting in the initiation of a “parliamentary inquiry.”

**A Battle of Worldviews**

Because of this inquiry, the secular media immediately jumps on the issue of origins—creation, evolution, and the age of the earth! So why single out the origins issue? It’s because this subject really deals with the foundational battle of two worldviews—a secular worldview founded in man’s word on evolutionary naturalism versus a Christian worldview founded in God’s Word.

John Kaye, one very vocal opponent responding to this inquiry, is from the Australian Greens political party. This parliamentarian was quoted in the *Sydney Morning Herald*:

Greens NSW MP John Kaye, the committee's deputy chairman, said he was concerned a cohort of home-schooled children would not be able to tell the difference between religious belief and scientific theory. "Their ignorance will impose costs not only on themselves but also on the society they will grow up in," he said.

The Australian Greens claims to be the third largest political force in Australia. As their name implies, they are very much involved in environmental issues. But as is usual for such groups, they really put the environment first over the welfare of humans.

John Kaye, an electrical engineer, was elected as a Greens member of the NSW Legislative Council in March 2007. He is described on the Australian Greens website as “a strong advocate for public education, renewable energy, effective public services, consumer rights and securing a sustainable water supply. . . . John is committed to the core principles of the Greens—social justice, grassroots democracy, ecological sustainability and non-violence.”

Interesting that he is committed to non-violence—I assume then he would be against abortion?

Well, back in 2010 we read in the *Sydney Morning Herald* newspaper:

The NSW Greens have renewed calls for the decriminalisation of abortion after a poll found broad support for such a move. Greens MP Lee Rhiannon said on Monday the results should act as a reminder to the government that NSW laws were out of step with community opinion and in need of change. "It's a human rights issue, it's an issue of dignity in terms of managing one's own reproductive health," Ms Rhiannon told AAP.

And as expected, the Australian Greens support Euthanasia:

On Thursday Lead Senate Candidate Cate Faehrmann stood alongside Australian Greens health spokesperson Senator Richard Di Natale to announce the Greens’ intention to introduce national Dying with Dignity laws into the next Parliament.

In 2009, “a same-sex marriage bill is introduced by the Australian Greens in the Senate.”

**Creationism Hindering Scientific Progress?**

The above is just meant to document that the reason this Member of Parliament in Australia has so vocally attacked homeschooling is because this is a battle of worldviews. This is why I detailed this issue so carefully in my recent debate with Bill Nye. In fact, John Kaye really made similar statements to Bill Nye in his attack on homeschoolers that teach the creation account in Genesis to their children. On the Australian Greens website, we read this:

Dr Kaye said: “A cohort of home-schooled children will not be able to tell the difference between religious belief and scientific theory.

“Their ignorance will impose costs not only on themselves but also on the society they will grow up in.”

“These children will be excluded from a comprehensive understanding of the biological sciences.”

“They are at risk of becoming intellectual fringe dwellers.”

“The public policy challenge is to regulate thousands of home schoolers to stop them corrupting the curriculum and leaving their children with a very loose grip on the scientific process.”

“Education Minister Adrian Piccoli should move to tighten regulations on home schooling to ensure that the teaching of science is not undermined by young earth creationism and other myths,” Dr Kaye said.

Yes—definitely shades of Bill Nye!

Remember, Bill Nye in his attempts to denigrate Christianity has claimed over and over again that if children are taught creation, it will hinder scientific progress. In fact, it was the Bill Nye video where he claimed “[Creationism is inappropriate for children](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHbYJfwFgOU)” (now over six million views) that resulted in the debate between Bill Nye and me at the Creation Museum this past February. Our conservative estimate is that the [debate](https://answersingenesis.org/countering-the-culture/bill-nye-debates-ken-ham/) has now been viewed by upwards of 15 million people.

Now, what I did in that debate with Bill Nye is really what needs to be said to John Kaye and to all those involved in this inquiry into homeschooling in Australia.

I opened by pointing out that biblical creationists can practice observational science, which enables one to build technology, and that an evolutionary worldview is not required to do such a thing. I showed some scientists who explained that very thing in video clips in their own words (e.g., [Dr. Raymond Damadian](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOM0v0dQnjI) who invented the MRI scanner, for example).

I used this definition of “science”:

the state of knowing : knowledge as distinguished from ignorance or misunderstanding.

Then I discussed the dual nature of science, pointing out that science needs to be broken into two parts: experimental (observable or operational) science and origins (historical) science. Both creation and evolution involve historical science (beliefs) and observational science (such as the study of genetics and so on).

Experimental science, which builds technology, is accomplished based on the scientific method. And origins or historical science is the non-repeatable, non-observable science (knowledge) dealing with the past—which then enters the realm of beliefs (really, religion).

I used this definition of the scientific method:

a method of procedure . . . consisting in systematic observation, measurement, and experiment, and the formulation, testing, and modification of hypotheses.

I summed up with the point that the debate is actually a religious debate over two different worldviews based on two different starting points (God’s Word or man’s word). This is the essence of the debate in Australia now in regard to homeschooling.

**Evolution Comes from a Naturalistic Worldview**

You see, if John Kaye (or Mr. Nye, for that matter) were to admit that historical science is not observable and repeatable, then he would be opening the door to let the public become aware that evolution is a religion that makes religious claims about the past, and not the type of science that builds technology (observable and repeatable science).

Here is why this is so significant. In today’s education system, the religion of secular humanism with its foundation of naturalistic evolution based on mans’ word or man’s beliefs about the past (molecules-to-man evolution), is guised in textbooks, secular museums, and so on by being called “science.” But the same word *science* is also used for experimental science that builds technology. Because students aren’t taught the difference between historical and observational science, they are brainwashed into thinking that molecules-to-man evolution is the same science as that which built technology—but it is not. It is a bait-and-switch fallacy (a fallacy in logic).

Here is how I explained it during the debate:

Public school [government school] textbooks are using the same word *science* for observational and historical science. They arbitrarily define science as naturalism and outlaw the supernatural. They present molecules-to-man evolution as fact. They are imposing the religion of naturalism/atheism on generations of students.

I went on to state the following:

The word *science* has been hijacked by secularists in teaching evolution to force the religion of naturalism on generations of kids. . . . The creation/evolution debate is really a conflict between two philosophical worldviews based on two different accounts of origins or historical science beliefs.

Observational science is certainly a wonderful, observable, and experimentally methodological tool used to build cars, trains, computers, and the other great technology we use today. Sadly though, so many people are duped into believing that evolution (molecules to man) *is also science* in the same way (bait-and-switch) and that it therefore can remain in the classroom when religion was supposed to be kicked out. Secularists basically renamed the religious aspect of evolution called “naturalism” as “science,” knowing that most people would not understand that the bait-and-switch used to indoctrinate people in the religion of naturalism or atheism. Naturalism is a vital aspect for the religion of secular humanism, which teaches that autonomous man is the one who determines truth.

I put it this way in my debate presentation:

The word *evolution* has been hijacked using a bait-and-switch. . . . The word *evolution* is used for observable changes and then used for unobservable changes such as molecules to man.

By delineating between experimental/observational and historical/origins science, I placed Mr. Nye on the horns of a dilemma. Either he had to admit that molecules-to-man evolution is founded upon a belief in what happened in the past (a religious view based on naturalism), or he is forced to show molecules-to-man evolution for the audience to observe. But he knows the past clearly cannot be repeated or observed—a hallmark of sound observational science. But if Mr. Nye admitted that he has beliefs about the past that influence his view of what is allowed to be called “scientific” (e.g., evolution, naturalism, materialism, the big bang, and so on), then he would be admitting on a very public stage that tax dollars are being used to impose the religion of naturalism on generations of students in government schools and on the public as a whole. I reiterated twice during the debate, “They [the secularists] present molecules-to-man evolution as fact. They are imposing the religion of naturalism/atheism on generations of students.”

**Observational Science Comes from a Christian Worldview**

Actually, observational science comes out of a Christian worldview that is built on a literal creation. One cannot account for the laws of logic or the laws of nature within a naturalistic worldview. Bible-believing Christian Francis Bacon, for example, developed the scientific method. Bacon understood that God set up the laws of logic and the laws of nature and upholds the world in a particular fashion that makes science possible. We can trust that those same laws won’t change and thus can be relied on. Moreover, Bible-believing Christians developed most fields of science. This is why I publicly asked Bill Nye this question during the debate:

How do you account for the laws of logic and laws of nature from a naturalistic worldview that excludes the existence of God?

If you look carefully, you will see great parallels between John Kaye’s statements and Bill Nye’s claims. Now, consider again the statements by John Kaye in Australia:

“A cohort of home-schooled children will not be able to tell the difference between religious belief and scientific theory.

“Their ignorance will impose costs not only on themselves but also on the society they will grow up in.

“These children will be excluded from a comprehensive understanding of the biological sciences.

“They are at risk of becoming intellectual fringe dwellers.

“The public policy challenge is to regulate thousands of home schoolers to stop them corrupting the curriculum and leaving their children with a very loose grip on the scientific process.”

His claims are false. Actually, it’s those students who are taught incorrectly about science who “will not be able to tell the difference between religious belief and scientific theory.” Such students will not understand the difference between origins and observational science—they will not have the critical thinking skills they need. It’s really homeschoolers taught from a biblical perspective that will be able to recognize the difference between “religious belief” and “scientific theory.”

What John Kaye wants is for students to be indoctrinated in the religion of naturalism—after all, this is what gives a basis for his worldview in regard to moral issues like abortion, euthanasia, homosexual marriage, and so on. And because they will have been taught to look incorrectly at the world (which supposedly resulted from natural processes), they will not be able to understand the design in the creation that can be a basis for furthering technology.

Our five children were homeschooled and were taught biblical creation. Our number one child obtained a degree in computer programming and works for a very large insurance company in sophisticated programming. Number two obtained a degree in nursing and worked in hospitals to help save lives. Our number three received a degree in piano pedagogy and is a piano teacher. Number four obtained a degree in management information systems and has worked for IT and in web development. Our number five received a degree in kinesiology. Obviously, homeschooling hindered their academic progress! Of course not!

I understand that Bill Nye is traveling to Australia in February. No doubt he will be recruited to speak against students being taught creation as he has done here in the USA. I pray people in Australia and elsewhere in the world will have their eyes opened to what is really happening in regard to the statements about homeschoolers who teach creation.

It’s actually a conflict of worldviews—Christianity versus secularism.

Notes missing

<https://answersingenesis.org/homeschool/shades-nye-attack-australian-homeschoolers/>

# What’s a Christian Worldview?

*by Del Tackett*

A recent nationwide survey completed by the Barna Research Group determined that only 4% of Americans had a "biblical" worldview. When George Barna, who has researched cultural trends and the Christian Church since 1984, looked at the "born- again" believers in America, the results were a dismal 9%.

Barna’s survey also connected an individual’s worldview with his or her moral beliefs and actions. Barna says, "Although most people own a Bible and know some of its content, our research found that most Americans have little idea how to integrate core biblical principles to form a unified and meaningful response to the challenges and opportunities of life."

***1. What’s a worldview?***

A worldview is the framework from which we view reality and make sense of life and the world. "[It’s] any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding God, the world and man’s relations to God and the world," says David Noebel, author of Understanding the Times.

For example, a 2-year-old believes he’s the center of his world, a secular humanist believes that the material world is all that exists, and a Buddhist believes he can be liberated from suffering by self-purification.

Someone with a biblical worldview believes his primary reason for existence is to love and serve God.

Whether conscious or subconscious, every person has some type of worldview. A personal worldview is a combination of all you believe to be true, and what you believe becomes the driving force behind every emotion, decision and action. Therefore, it affects your response to every area of life: from philosophy to science, theology and anthropology to economics, law, politics, art and social order — everything.

For example, let’s suppose you have bought the idea that beauty is in the eye of the beholder (secular relative truth) as opposed to beauty as defined by God’s purity and creativity (absolute truth). Then any art piece, no matter how vulgar or abstract, would be considered "art," a creation of beauty.

***2. What’s a biblical worldview?***

A biblical worldview is based on the infallible Word of God. When you believe the Bible is entirely true, then you allow it to be the foundation of everything you say and do. That means, for instance, you take seriously the mandate in Rom 13 to honor the governing authorities by researching the candidates and issues, making voting a priority.

Do you have a biblical worldview? Answer the following questions, based on claims found in the Bible and which George Barna used in his survey:

* Do absolute moral truths exist?
* Is absolute truth defined by the Bible?
* Did Jesus Christ live a sinless life?
* Is God the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe, and does He still rule it today?
* Is salvation a gift from God that cannot be earned?
* Is Satan real?
* Does a Christian have a responsibility to share his or her faith in Christ with other people?
* Is the Bible accurate in all of its teachings?

Did you answer yes to these? Only 9% of "born- again" believers did. But what’s more important than your yes to these questions is whether your life shows it. Granted, we are all sinners and fall short, but most of our gut reactions will reflect what we deep-down, honest-to-goodness believe to be real and true.

***3. How does a biblical worldview get diluted?***

Here is the big problem. Nonbiblical worldview ideas don’t just sit in a book somewhere waiting for people to examine them. They bombard us constantly from television, film, music, newspapers, magazines, books and academia.

Because we live in a selfish, fallen world, these ideas seductively appeal to the desires of our flesh, and we often end up incorporating them into our personal worldview. Sadly, we often do this without even knowing it.

For example, most Christians would agree with 1Th 4:3 and other Scriptures that command us to avoid sexual immorality, but how often do Christians fall into lust or premarital and extramarital sexual sin? Is it simply because they are weak when tempted, or did it begin much earlier, with the seductive lies from our sexualized society?

***4. Why does a biblical worldview matter?***

If we don’t really believe the truth of God and live it, then our witness will be confusing and misleading. Most of us go through life not recognizing that our personal worldviews have been deeply affected by the world. Through the media and other influences, the secularized American view of history, law, politics, science, God and man affects our thinking more than we realize. We then are taken "captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ" (Col 2:8).

However, by diligently learning, applying and trusting God’s truths in every area of our lives — whether it’s watching a movie, communicating with our spouses, raising our children or working at the office — we can begin to develop a deep comprehensive faith that will stand against the unrelenting tide of our culture’s nonbiblical ideas. If we capture and embrace more of God’s worldview and trust it with unwavering faith, then we begin to make the right decisions and form the appropriate responses to questions on abortion, same- sex marriage, cloning, stem-cell research and even media choices. Because, in the end, it is our decisions and actions that reveal what we really believe.

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom 12:2).

# What’s Your View of the World?

## Everyone has a worldview. But what is it and does it really make a difference?

*by*[*Del Tackett*](javascript:void(0);)

When Jimmy Carter became president in 1976 and Charles Colson published his best-selling book that same year, their stories made the phrase "born again" an instant media buzzword.

Originally spoken by Jesus in Jn 3, the phrase began showing up often. I recall watching a televised golf match in which the announcer declared that the man teeing off had been born again. I was delighted, yet curious to see how he was going to explain this on national TV. He continued, describing how the golfer had merely changed his grip a little and was miraculously "born-again."

We are beginning to see the same thing happen to the term "worldview." I have heard people use it as a synonym for personality, as in "She has such a delightful worldview." You have undoubtedly heard it—maybe even used it. But do you know what it means?

***What is a Worldview?***

Charles Colson says a worldview is "the sum total of our beliefs about the world," [1](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnote1) while James Sire says it is our "set of presuppositions … about the basic makeup of our world."[2](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnote2) Webster defines it as "a comprehensive conception or apprehension of the world." [3](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnote3) A worldview is something much deeper than your personality or how you hold a golf club. It defines your beliefs about reality and your outlook on life.

In order to better understand the concept, it’s important to know that there are two different kinds—or two "levels"—of worldview. Allow me to explain…

***Formal Worldviews***

A formal worldview is a major system of ideas that orders human hearts and minds. To visualize this, picture a bookshelf with twenty or thirty books on it. Some are old, some are new. Some are thick, others thin. Each book has a title: Christianity, Islam, Marxism, Pagan Mysticism, etc.

If you were to study them, you would find that each builds a case that the things it claims are true (its "truth claims") accurately reflect reality. Some are better defined than others, but each one asserts that it has discovered or crafted the real truth about everything important in life. Marxism, for example, basically claims that the secret of life lies in economics and, as a result, reality consists in the clash between those who control the means of production and those who don’t.

A formal worldview is usually comprehensive in scope, offering its proponents a lens they can look through to formulate universal beliefs about life, from philosophy to science, from anthropology to politics, from economics to social order.

***Personal Worldviews***

If we camp out on this definition, we might begin to think that our personal worldviews are in one-to-one relationship with the established formal worldviews. We would be wrong. There is a huge difference between a systematic set of truth claims and the complex, fragmented, and elusive beliefs of most human beings.

If someone claims to be a Marxist, what does that mean? Can we assume that his personal beliefs exactly match the Marxism book on the shelf? Or what if someone claims to be a witch? It’s hard to say what that means in terms of her assumptions about life. Likewise, when someone says, "I am a Christian; therefore, I have a Christian worldview," it’s not necessarily true.

Late in 2003, pollster George Barna attempted to determine how many Americans held a "biblical worldview." [4](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnote4) He asked people questions taken straight from Scripture, to find out if they really believe what is written there. [5](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnote5) The results were dismal: Only four percent do. When he looked at the born-again [6](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnote6) believers in America, the results inched up to an anemic nine percent. How can this be? Instead of adopting the formal framework of a biblical worldview, it seems that "Christians" have accepted a hodgepodge of individual truth claims that come from everywhere.

***Life on a Smorgasbord***

Look back at the bookshelf for a moment. On the end, you will find another, very large book titled Miscellaneous. In here we find all of the unconnected truth claims that simply float around our culture. They may be distant cousins or distortions of a formal worldview or unexamined claims that don’t at all reflect reality.

For example, if you listen carefully to what people are saying and read between the lines, you will hear this belief: "I am stupid and worthless." Where did that come from? I can think of several "formal" worldviews that give rise to this truth claim, but not directly. People in our culture are perhaps more influenced by these miscellaneous truth claims than by any formal worldview.

So what’s wrong with that? To begin with, living with a hodgepodge of unexamined beliefs makes our lives purposeless and fragmented. On top of that, when our beliefs don’t accurately represent reality, we end up acting in ways that hurt ourselves and our relationships.

I challenge you to examine your worldview. Do your personal beliefs really come from a biblical framework, or are they collected from various belief systems and your own (perhaps inaccurate) interpretation of reality? If we say that our God, in Jesus, is truth, we would do well to live lives that are based on the truth He has revealed to us in his Word.

[1](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnoteRef1)Charles Colson, How Now Shall We Live? Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1999, p. 14.

[2](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnoteRef2)James Sire, The Universe Next Door (3rd. Ed.). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997, p. 16.

[3](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnoteRef3)See "weltanschauung," [Merriam-Webster](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/weltanschauung) online.

[4](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnoteRef4)Barna, George. "A Biblical Worldview Has a Radical Effect on a Person’s Life." The Barna Update, December 1, 2003.

[5](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnoteRef5)For the purposes of the research, a biblical worldview was defined as believing that absolute moral truths exist; that such truth is defined by the Bible; and firm belief in six specific religious views. Those views were that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life; God is the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe and He stills rules it today; salvation is a gift from God and cannot be earned; Satan is real; a Christian has a responsibility to share their faith in Christ with other people; and the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings. See Barna Research.

[6](http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian_worldview/whats_a_christian_worldview/whats_your_view_of_the_world.aspx" \l "footnoteRef6)In Barna Research Group studies, born again Christians are not defined on the basis of characterizing themselves as "born again" but based upon their answers to two questions. The first is "have you ever made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in your life today?" If the respondent says "yes," then they are asked a follow-up question about life after death. One of the seven perspectives a respondent may choose is "when I die, I will go to Heaven because I have confessed my sins and have accepted Jesus Christ as my savior." Individuals who answer "yes" to the first question and select this statement as their belief about their own salvation are then categorized as "born again."

# What’s Your Worldview?

## What’s a worldview? Tracy Munsil explores this question.

*by Tracy F. Munsil*

The scene: The African plain comes alive with the gathering of zebras, gazelles, giraffes, elephants, all the animals on a majestic pilgrimage to see their future king, the cuddly newborn lion cub, Simba. After receiving the blessing of Rafiki, the lion pride’s shaman monkey, the animals big and small all bow on bended knee in worship to the uplifted cub. In the background plays the song, "The Circle of Life" - "It’s the circle of life/ And it moves us all/ through despair and hope/ Through faith and love/ Till we find our place/ On the path unwinding/ In the circle, the circle of life."

Any parent with children older than about 8 knows the scene described above well, and most can still sing the song. Disney movies are like that -full of wonderfully creative characters, compelling story lines and memorable music. Millions of families across America watched the popular movie The Lion King when it came out in 1993, delighting in Simba and the antics of his friends Pumbaa and Timon singing "Hakuna Matata." Pure Disney genius. But what worldview was being absorbed by millions of impressionable preschoolers? Is the concept of the "circle of life" true according to God’s Word? Do the ideas in the movie square with the Christian worldview?

Like everything we watch, listen to or read, The Lion King contains a worldview. And unless you know what you’re looking for, unless you have a strong understanding of your own worldview, it is often difficult to discern.

So what’s the worldview in The Lion King? Despite a handful of good moral lessons, it is not biblical Christianity. The notion of the "circle of life," that history is circular and the present is heavily influenced by the spirits of one’s ancestors, is closer to Eastern pantheism or native spiritualism than the linear view of history presented in the Bible. But how is the average parent to know and discern the worldview, and how can parents equip their children to evaluate worldview for themselves?

***WHAT IS WORLDVIEW?***

Worldview is the latest buzzword in Christian circles. We’re all told we need one, and whether we know it or not, we all have one. But what is a worldview? Literally, of course, worldview is how a person views the world. A person’s worldview consists of the values, ideas or the fundamental belief system that determines his attitudes, beliefs and ultimately, actions. Typically, this includes his view of issues such as the nature of God, man, the meaning of life, nature, death, and right and wrong.

We begin developing our worldview as young children, first through interactions within our family, then in social settings such as school and church, and from our companions and life experiences. Increasingly, our media culture is playing a key role in shaping worldview. We are a culture saturated with powerful media images in movies, television, commercials and music. And like the entertaining and seemingly benign Lion King, what we watch, listen to and read, impacts the way we think. Consistently consuming entertainment with false ideas will inevitably distort our view of the world.

Although the Bible never uses the word "worldview," in Colossians 2: 6-8, we are commanded to be able to discern and discard false philosophy-which is essentially worldview. "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world, rather than on Christ."

Jeff Baldwin, a fellow at the Texas-based Worldview Academy, says worldview "is like an invisible pair of eyeglasses-glasses you put on to help you see reality clearly. If you choose the right pair of glasses, you can see everything vividly and can behave in sync with the real world. ... But if you choose the wrong pair of glasses, you may find yourself in a worse plight than the blind man - thinking you see clearly when in reality your vision is severely distorted." To choose the "right" glasses, you have to first understand and embrace the true worldview.

***WORLDVIEW FOR ADULTS***

As an adult, you already have a worldview. The challenge is to formalize it by asking probing questions to help you understand what you believe and why you believe it. During this process, if your thinking is inconsistent with biblical teaching, you can discard the false ideas and replace them with truth. A number of worldview resources are available to help you through this formalizing process. Different resources employ somewhat different approaches, but they all provide foundational answers to the big questions of life.

In my teaching of worldview and Great Books to homeschool students ages 12 to 18, I’ve used a series of seven questions to help them formalize their own worldview and to help them evaluate competing worldviews. These seven questions are common to many worldview resources and provide an effective tool for adults, as well as teenagers, particularly to evaluate the worldview of books, music and movies:

* Is there a god and what is he like?
* What is the nature and origin of the universe?
* What is the nature and origin of man?
* What happens to man after death?
* Where does knowledge come from?
* What is the basis of ethics and morality?
* What is the meaning of human history?

A similar seven-question approach is found in the excellent worldview resource, The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog by James W Sire, and also in Worldviews of the Western World, a three-year worldview and Great Books curriculum for homeschoolers written by David Quine. Chuck Colson’s How Now Shall We Live uses a four-question approach. It doesn’t matter how many questions you use, just that you begin asking the big questions of life in four key areas-deity, origin, nature and rules- and then answer them based on Scripture.

Finding answers using the Bible provides the foundation of the Christian or biblical worldview. For example, someone who holds the biblical worldview would answer the question, "Is there a god and what is he like?" using what he knows to be true about the character of God according to Scripture. The Bible teaches that God is sovereign, personal, infinite, transcendent, just, omniscient, immanent, and good. These attributes are not exhaustive by any means, but do establish the basic character of God. This checklist provides a starting point for identifying false or competing worldviews. Answers to the other questions can be derived from Scripture as well, and are presented in numerous worldview books or works of Christian apologetics.

Once you can answer those questions clearly for yourself based on Scripture, you then can apply them to everything you watch, read or listen to. For example, last year’s Academy Award for Best Picture went to the film, Gladiator. In answer to "Is there a god in the movie and what is he like? "-there was not only a god, but many gods, which was the prevailing religious view in ancient Rome. In addition, early in the movie, the lead character Maximus sets up a shrine in his tent, and prays to these gods daily to watch over his wife and child. Yet these gods could not offer the true hope of salvation or deliverance through Jesus Christ.

What about the basis of ethics and morality in the movie? It does portray virtue in Maximus’ loyalty and devotion to the dying emperor of Rome. Yet his morality and code of ethics is driven by his iron will to survive to avenge the murders of his wife and son. We see that, like Maximus, each character has his or her own set of moral guidelines or ethical agenda, depending on their individual situation. The morality of Maximus’ trainer is guided by his greed and desire for notoriety based on his gladiators’ performance. He has no ethical problem sending innocent men to a gory, violent death to turn a profit or increase his social standing. Likewise, the Emperor Commodius’ sister takes Maximus into her confidence in a plot to avenge his family’s slaying, only to betray him later to save her own son. The morality and ethics in the movie are not based on the belief in transcendent truth, as in the biblical worldview, but on what is expedient for each character’s circumstances--utilitarianism, or moral relativism. Similarly, the other questions can also be applied to the movie, then compared to the biblical worldview. Despite portions of the movie that uphold virtue and self-sacrifice, the worldview of Gladiator as a whole is not consistent with the biblical worldview. The powerful images, attractive packaging of false ideas, and emotional manipulation pervasive throughout the entertainment industry demonstrate the need for Christians to have a clear worldview understanding.

Tracy F. Munsil was with the Center For Arizona Policy when this article was written. She has taught worldview to high school.

**The Overview**

***The Christian Worldview***

This is the true story as it was recorded at God’s instruction by early man and carefully passed down through the centuries.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. He also created the plants and animals, and finally he created man. At that time man was created to not know the difference between good and evil, and to not know death. God was present and had a different and more direct relationship with man.

To the first man and woman, God also gave a simple command that God warned, if broken, would cause them to die—and so God gave man free will. Man was tempted and curious, and eventually violated the command. This act caused man to first learn the difference between good and evil, and evil entered the world. This is also when man first learned distrust and disobedience. The death God spoke of occurred when God explained that man would not be allowed to live forever in this new condition.

Over subsequent generations the wickedness of man increased. The first murder occurred in the second generation. In time the world became so filled with violence that God brought floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens—every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth perished. Those that God spared became the progenitors of the people now living today.

God selected a single person to be the father of a “model people”—the descendants of which became of the nation of Israel. God maintained a close relationship with this people over numerous generations in which he protected them both openly and miraculously. He dwelt among them, gave them special laws, administered justice, and established them as a lasting people.

A king was selected to lead the people, but the first king was a flawed man. Subsequent kings were unreliable and varied from good to evil. God prepared the people for a special king that would be the messenger of a new and everlasting arrangement between God and man—in which God said he would put his law in their minds and write it on their hearts; he would be their God, and they would be his people. No longer would a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they would all know him, from the least of them to the greatest. He said he would forgive their wickedness and would remember their sins no more.

The orthodox religious community had been waiting for many centuries for the arrival of the new king that was to be sent from God, when a male child was born in Bethlehem. The name given is Ἰησοῦς, Iēsous, also called "Yeshua", and in English he is now called “Jesus” and "The Son". A new star appeared in the sky and moved to rest over the place where the child lay for a period of time, and it drew people to him. Later when he had grown to be a man he began speaking of things the world had not heard.

He said that sinners should repent—saying the kingdom of God is near. Everyone is called to turn away from the work of their hands—the worship of demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—as well as murder, magic arts, sexual immorality, and thefts. He also warned of the condemnation the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, and all liars—saying their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.

He also said that to do these things in your heart is equivalent to doing them in the flesh—saying that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart, and that anyone who hates his brother without cause is a murderer—and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

He said that no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is “born again”. He explained that Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. As we have already been born once of a fleshly body, we must still be separately born of spirit.

He said that no one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man (a title that he applied to himself). He went on to say that he needed to be “lifted up” (a frequent reference to his death) in such a way so as that everyone who believed in him may have eternal life.

A new command he gave us: to love one another. As he has loved us, so we must love one another—saying that no one has greater love than the one who would lay down his life for his friends, and that we are his friends if we do what he commanded. He also said if we (as individuals) forgive men when they sin against us, then our heavenly Father will also forgive us; but, if we do not forgive men their sins, our Father will not forgive our sins. The measure we use with others is the measure God will use with us, so we should love one another.

He said that God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.

Concerning Jesus calling God his own Father and how that makes himself equal with God—he gave this answer:

**"I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.**

**“I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.**

**“I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.**

**"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me."**

Many have asked the question, "What must we do to do the works God requires to inherit eternal life?", and Jesus replied simply, **"The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."**; for which he also performed miraculous signs. The blind were given sight, the lame were made to walk, those who were diseased were cured, the deaf were made to hear, and the dead were raised—all of which were done publicly, in the sight of many. He explained that when a man believes, he does not believe in the one God has sent only, but also in the one who sent him. To those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become "children of God".

He said, **"If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."**

**"If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me."**

**"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.**

**"You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me, but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.”**

Shortly thereafter, Jesus was publicly executed through crucifixion, by the religious and secular states, as a dissident—although no crime could be found against him. He submitted, suffered, and died, and was laid to rest in a tomb. Then on the third day after all this took place, he returned back to life. God had given him the authority to lay his life down and to take it back up again—to firmly establish the validity of his testimony to the world. He showed his disciples where his hands and side had been pierced, and he stayed for a time and continued to teach. He was later seen to ascend into heaven, and we were then told that he would someday return in the last days in the same way that he departed.

Those who witnessed these events were charged with spreading the good news, and thereby established Christianity as a religion. Many did so at the cost of their lives. The religion quickly grew into the most consequential religion on earth, as it remains to this day. We were warned, however, that in the last days there will be a great falling away of the Church as the love of many would grow cold, but those who stand firm until the end will be saved.

**Conclusion: The Good News**

God has spoken to us through his son, Jesus.1 If you believe Jesus, then you believe God who sent him.2 Whoever believes in him is not condemned,3 and has eternal life.4 Whoever does not believe stands condemned already 5 and God’s wrath remains on him.6 Jesus commands sinners to repent and turn from evil,7 and for us to forgive others,8 to love others,9 and to believe God.10 Those who have his commands and obey them will be loved by God, and Jesus will love him and show himself to him.11

To those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ,12 and also to those who obey God 13 through him,14 and to those who ask God,15 Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit 16 which comes from God.17 That person is born again—born of the Spirit.18 The Holy Spirit is a deposit and a seal which guarantees our inheritance which is to come 19 until the redemption of those who are God’s possession.20 The Holy Spirit will then guide you into all truth,21 will teach you all things, and will remind you of everything that Jesus has said to you.22

When you sin, you will be reminded to repent and to turn away from all of the sins you have committed—to do what is just and right.23 The Sovereign Lord declared 24 that for repentance you will be forgiven. Because of the righteous things you have done, you will live.25 You heard Jesus call you to repent,26 you believed, and were forgiven. This is now your righteousness,27 which came from Jesus, and will save you from the wrath that is to come upon the wicked who remain unrepentant.28 To this end you are commanded to go and be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit—in the name of Jesus Christ—and directed to be taught to obey everything Jesus has commanded you.29 This water symbolizes baptism that now saves us—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.30

When your brother sins against you and repents, you will be reminded to forgive him.31 When you forgive him, he will be forgiven by God.32 In this case, forgiveness for yourself has already been purchased 33 by the covenant Jesus made for you in his blood.34 This new covenant places God’s laws in your heart, writes them on your mind, and your sins and lawless acts God will remember no more.35

You will be reminded to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength,36 and to love your neighbor as yourself 37—there is no command greater than these.38 Love for God is defined to be obeying his commands.39 Love for your neighbor is defined this way: When your neighbor was hungry, you gave him something to eat. When thirsty, you gave him something to drink. As a stranger, you invited him in. When in need of clothes, you clothed him. When sick, you looked after him. When in prison, you came and visited him.40 Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Jesus, you did for him.41

When Jesus returns in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another.42 The righteous 43, which are those who are right by these standards of God, will be given an inheritance—the kingdom prepared for them since the creation of the world,44 and they will go on to eternal life.45 Jesus says, "All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved 46". And this good news (or gospel) of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.47

The Holy Bible (NIV) contains the eyewitness accounts of those who witnessed Jesus and who were directed by the Holy Spirit, and is the source of all of this information. The references are provided:

1: (Jn 14.24), 2: (Jn 12.44), 3: (Jn 3.18), 4: (Jn 3.36), 5: (Jn 3.18), 6: (Jn 3.36), 7: (Lu 5:32), 8: (Lu 17:3-4), 9: (Mk 12:29-31 & Mt 25:31-46), 10: (Jn 6:29), 11: (Jn 14:21), 12: (Act 11:15), 13: (Act 5:32), 14: (Jn 14:15-16), 15: (Lu 11:13), 16: (Mt 3:11 & Jn 20:21-23), 17: (Jn 14:15-16 & Lu 11:13 & Act 5:32), 18: (Jn 3:3-8), 19: (2Cor 1:22), 20: (Eph 1:13-14), 21: (Jn 16:13), 22: (Jn 14:26), 23: (Mt 4:17 & Lu 5:32), 24: (Ez 18:23), 25: (Ez 18:22), 26: (Mt 4:17 & 11:20 & Mt 12:41 & Mt 21:32 & Mk 6:12 & Lu 13:3-7), 27: (Rom 3:21-26), 28: (Rev 21:8), 29: (Mt 28:19-20), 30: (1Pe 3:21-22), 31: (Lu 17:3-4), 32: (Jn 20:23), 33: (Rev 5:9), 34: (Mt 26:28), 35: (Heb 10:15-20), 36:(Mk 12:30), 37: (Mk 12:31 and Mt 25:31-46), 38: (Mk 12:29), 39: (1Jn 5:3), 40: (Mt 25:31-46), 41: (Mt 25:40), 42:(Mt 25:31-32), 43: (Mt 25:37), 44: (Mt 25:34), 45: (Mt 25:46), 46: (Mt 10:22), 47: (Mt 24:14)

I pray that you believe.

The Mobile Jesus Story And The Christian World View

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**Is the Christian Worldview Logical?**

by Dr. Jason Lisle May 5, 2014

Many people have the impression that Christians live in two “worlds”—the world of faith and the world of reason. The world of faith is the realm that Christians live in on Sunday morning, or the world to which they refer when asked about spiritual or moral matters. However, it would seem that Christians live in the world of reason throughout the rest of the week, when dealing with practical, everyday matters. After all, do we really need to believe in the Bible to put gasoline in the car, or to balance our checkbook?

**Misconceptions of Faith**

The notion of “faith versus reason” is an example of a *false dichotomy*. Faith is not antagonistic to reason. On the contrary, biblical faith and reason go well together. The problem lies in the fact that many people have a misunderstanding of *faith*. Faith is not a belief in the absurd, nor is it a belief in something simply for the sake of believing it. Rather, faith is having confidence in something that we have not perceived with the senses. This is the biblical definition of faith, and follows from Heb 11:1. Whenever we have confidence in something that we cannot see, hear, taste, smell, or touch, we are acting upon a type of faith. All people have faith, even if it is not a saving faith in God.

For example, people believe in laws of logic. However, laws of logic are not material. They are abstract and cannot be experienced by the senses. We can write down a law of logic such as the law of non-contradiction (“It is impossible to have **A** and **not A** at the same time and in the same relationship.”), but the sentence is only a physical representation of the law, not the law itself.[[1]](#footnote-1) When people use laws of logic, they have confidence in something they cannot actually observe with the senses; this is a type of faith.



When we have confidence that the universe will operate in the future as it has in the past, we are acting on faith. For example, we all presume that gravity will work the same next Friday as it does today. But no one has actually observed the future. So we all believe in something that goes beyond sensory experience. From a Christian perspective, this is a very reasonable belief. God (who is beyond time) has promised us that He will uphold the universe in a consistent way (e.g., Gen 8:22). So we have a good reason for our faith in the uniformity of nature. For the consistent Christian, reason and faith go well together.

It is appropriate and biblical to have a good reason for our faith (1Pe 3:15). Indeed, God encourages us to reason (Is 1:18). The apostle Paul reasoned with those in the synagogue and those in the marketplace (Act 17:17). According to the Scriptures, the Christian faith is not a “blind faith.” It is a faith that is rationally defensible. It is logical and self-consistent. It can make sense of what we experience in the world. Moreover, the Christian has a moral obligation to think rationally. We are to be imitators of God (Eph 5:1), patterning our thinking after His revelation (Is 55:7–8; Ps 36:9).

**The Mark of Rationality**

There are those who would challenge the rationality of the biblical worldview. Some say that the Christian worldview is illogical on the face of it. After all, the Bible speaks of floating ax heads, the sun apparently going backward, a universe created in six days, an earth that has pillars and corners, people walking on water, light before the sun, a talking serpent, a talking donkey, dragons, and a senior citizen taking two of every land animal on a big boat! The critic suggests that no rational person can possibly believe in such things in our modern age of scientific enlightenment. He claims that to believe in such things would be*illogical*.

The Bible does make some extraordinary claims. But are such claims truly *illogical*? Do they actually violate any laws of logic? Although the above biblical examples go beyond our ordinary, everyday experiences, none of them are *contradictory*. They do not violate any laws of logic. Some biblical criticisms involve a misuse of language: taking figures of speech (e.g., “pillars of the earth”) as though these were literal, when this is clearly not the case. This is an error on the part of the critic, not an error in the text. Poetic sections of the Bible, such as the psalms, and figures of speech should be taken as such. To do otherwise is academically dishonest.

Most of the criticisms against the Bible’s legitimacy turn out to be nothing more than a subjective opinion of what is possible. The critic arbitrarily asserts that it is not possible for the sun to go backward in the sky, or for the solar system to be created in six days. But what is his evidence for this? He might argue that such things cannot happen based on known natural laws. With this we agree. But who said that natural laws are the limit of what is possible? The biblical God is not bound by natural laws. Since the Bible is indeed correct about the nature of God, then there is no problem at all in God reversing the direction of the planets, or creating the solar system in six days. An infinitely powerful, all-knowing God can do anything that is rationally possible.

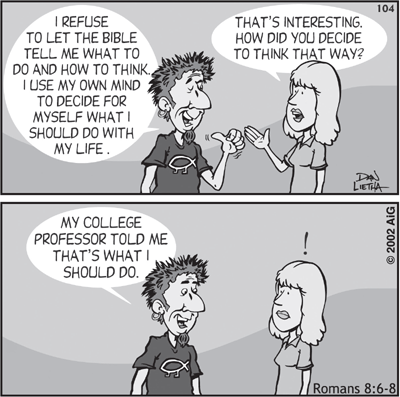
Non-Christian circles of reasoning are ultimately self-defeating. They do not pass their own test.

When the critic simply dismisses those claims of the Bible that do not appeal to his personal, unargued sense of what is possible, he is being irrational. He is committing the logical fallacy known as “begging the question.” Namely, he has decided in advance that such things as miracles are impossible, thereby tacitly assuming that the Bible is not true because it contains miracles. But this is the very assumption with which he began his reasoning. The critic is reasoning in a vicious circle. He has decided in advance that there is not an all-powerful God who is capable of doing the things recorded in Scripture, and then argues on this basis against the biblical God. Such reasoning is not cogent at all. So, when the critic accuses the Bible of being illogical because it goes against his subjective assessment of what is possible, it turns out that it is the critic—not the Bible—who is being illogical.

When people argue that something in the Bible seems strange or unreasonable, we must always ask, “strange or unreasonable by what standard?” If it is merely the critic’s personal, arbitrary opinion, then we must politely point out that this has no logical merit whatsoever. Personal feelings are not the limit of what is true or possible. In fact, since all the treasures of knowledge are in Christ (Col 2:3), it turns out that God Himself is the limit of what is possible. His Word is therefore the standard of what is reasonable, and we have no independent (and non-arbitrary) standard by which we can judge the Word of God.

**The Laws of Logic**

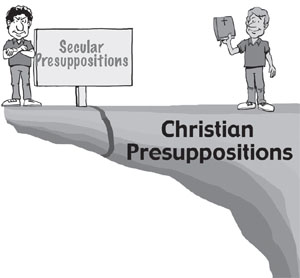
The extraordinary claims of Scripture cannot be dismissed merely on the basis that they are extraordinary. If indeed the biblical God exists, and if indeed He has the characteristics attributed to Him by the Bible (all-knowing, all-powerful, beyond time, etc.) then the critic has no basis whatsoever for denying that the miraculous is possible. Clearly, an all-powerful God can make a donkey talk, can create the universe in six days, can bring two of every animal to Noah, etc. These are simply not problems in the biblical worldview. When the critic dismisses the miraculous solely on the basis that it is miraculous, he is simply begging the question.

Everyone has an ultimate standard, whether he realizes it or not. If it is not the Bible, it will be something else.

However, sometimes the critic asserts that the Bible has actually violated a law of logic; he claims that two passages in the Scriptures are contradictory. This is a more serious challenge, because two contradictory statements cannot both be true—even in principle. If the Bible actually endorsed two contradictory statements, then necessarily one of them would have to be false, and the Bible could not be totally inerrant. In reality, most alleged contradictions turn out to be nothing of the kind. They simply reveal that the critic does not truly understand what a contradiction is. A contradiction is “**A** and **not A** at the same time and in the same relationship” where *A* is any proposition. To contradict is to both affirm and deny the same proposition. And this is not the nature of most alleged biblical contradictions. (See the [contradictions series](http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/contradictions-scripture-index) on the Answers in Genesis website for more information on this.) Here’s an example:

The fact that Christ has two genealogies is not contradictory. Indeed, all people have (at least) two genealogies—one through their dad, and one through their mom. Some people have more than two because their biological father may not be their legal father. The fact that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but is nonetheless “of Nazareth” is no contradiction since Jesus did grow up in Nazareth. The fact that Mt 8:28 mentions two demon-possessed men does not contradict the fact that Mk 5:2 and Lu 8:27 chose to mention only one of the two. Perhaps one was much more violent than the other; in any case, there is no contradiction.

**Alleged Contradictions Demonstrate That the Bible Is True!**



Amazingly, when the critic asserts that the Bible contains contradictions, he has unwittingly refuted his own position, and has demonstrated that the Bible is true. The reason is this: the truth of the Bible is the only cogent reason to believe in the law of non-contradiction. Virtually everyone believes in the law of non-contradiction. We all “know” that two contradictory statements cannot both be true. But have you ever thought about *why* this is?

The law of non-contradiction stems from the nature of the biblical God. God does not deny Himself (2Tim 2:13), and all knowledge is in God (Col 2:3), thus true knowledge will not contradict itself. The law of noncontradiction (as with all laws of logic) is a universal, invariant law because God Himself upholds the entire universe (Heb 1:3), and God does not change with time (Heb 13:8). We know these things because God has revealed them in His Word. Thus, the Bible is the only objective basis for knowing that the law of non-contradiction is universally and invariantly true in all situations.

Therefore, when the unbeliever applies the law of non-contradiction, he is implicitly standing upon the Christian worldview. Even when he argues against the Bible, the critic must use God’s standard of reasoning in order to do it. The fact that the critic is able to argue at all demonstrates that he is wrong. God alone is the correct standard for reasoning because all truth is in Him. We must therefore start with God as revealed in His Word in order to have genuine knowledge (Pr 1:7), whether we admit this truth or suppress it (Rom 1:18). So while it may seem at first that we do not need to believe the Bible in order to put gasoline into the car or to balance our checkbook, implicitly we must indeed rely upon the Bible. Without God as revealed in the Bible, there would be no rational basis for the laws of logic upon which we depend in order to function in our everyday life.



Since rationality itself stems from the nature of the biblical God, it follows that the Christian worldview is necessarily rational. This isn’t to say that all Christians are rational all the time. We do not always follow God’s standard in practice, even though God has saved us by His grace. Nonetheless, the Christian worldview as articulated in the Scriptures is fully logical and without error. This must be the case since the Bible is the inspired Word of the infallible God. It also follows that non-biblical worldviews are inherently illogical; they deny implicitly or explicitly the revelation of the biblical God in whom are deposited all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col 2:3).

Although non-biblical worldviews may have “pockets” of rationality within them, they must ultimately appeal to Scripture as a basis for laws of logic, which they then deny as the one and only inspired Word of God. So not only is the Christian worldview logical, it is the only worldview that is ultimately, consistently logical. The Christian has faith—he believes in things (such as the accounts of Scripture) that he has not personally observed by sensory experience. But he has a very good reason to believe in the Scriptures; the biblical God alone makes reason possible. So a good reason for my faith is that my faith makes reason possible.

The unbeliever must use Christian principles to argue against the Bible. The fact that he is able to argue at all proves that he is wrong. The non-Christian does not have a good reason for his beliefs. He has a type of faith, too, but his faith is “blind.” He is without an apologetic (a defense of his faith) such that he has no excuse for his beliefs (Rom 1:20). In the essay, “My Credo,” Cornelius Van Til cogently argued that “Christianity alone is reasonable for men to hold. It is wholly irrational to hold any other position than that of Christianity. Christianity alone does not slay reason on the altar of ‘chance.’ ”

Yes, the Christian worldview is logical. But what’s more, only the Christian worldview is logical. Competing systems of thought cannot account for laws of logic and their properties, the ability of the human mind to access and use laws of logic, or the moral obligation to reason logically. Such truths are entirely contingent upon Almighty God as objectively revealed in the Bible.

<http://www.answersingenesis.org/articles/nab3/christian-worldview-logical>

1. Otherwise, when you erase the sentence, the law would cease to exist! [↑](#footnote-ref-1)