



Worldview Thinking

Revisiting the Fundamental Orientations of Our Minds and Hearts

Welcome!

We are glad you have joined us today for Part 15 of our series on *Worldview Thinking*. As we near the end of this study, it is my hope that you have grown closer to Christ and gained new insights and wisdom about how to think and live *worldviewishly* before our triune God and the watching world.

From the beginning, we identified seven objectives for this series. The last one is the crown of the other six: “To become aware of the ethical component of worldviews.” Today, we will investigate how our worldviews are channels for our ultimate beliefs which give direction and meaning to our lives.



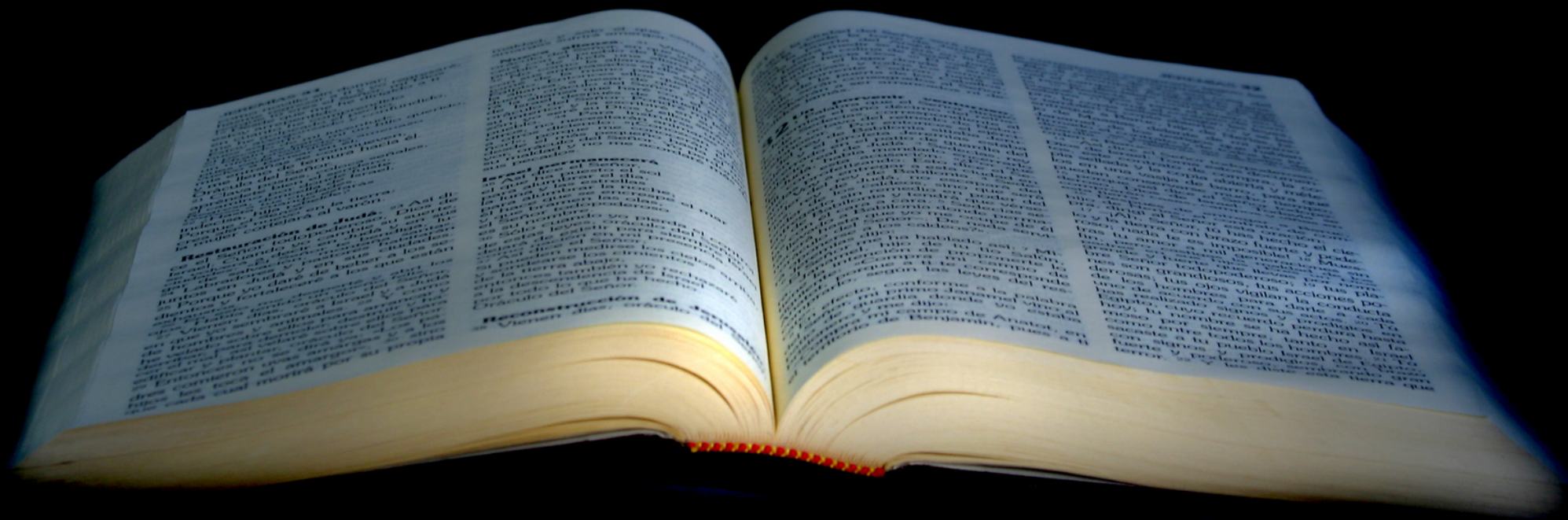


Introduction

The triune God is the central theme of the Bible. In many texts of the Old Testament, He has made it clear that He wants to be known as the Lord. He is Yahweh, *I am who I am*, and there is no other. In the New Testament, “Jesus is Lord” encapsulates the teaching of this portion of the Bible. During this series, my highest priority has been to exalt the name of Jesus above every other name, philosophy, religion, god, and ideology. Christ is the exalted Lord of heaven and earth - incomparable, matchless, unequalled, transcendent. Yet how many people in the world today are obsessed by personal autonomy and refuse to bow the knee to anyone other than themselves. Would that we would be obsessed with one holy passion: to glorify His name in everything.



There are 31,086 verses in the Bible.
In the ESV, the Hebrew and Greek words for “Lord”
appear 7,776 times in 6,603 verses.



Introduction

It is true that over the course of 14 lectures, I have brought the names, ideologies, and philosophies of many people to your attention: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, David Hume, Rene Descartes, John Locke, Simon Blackburn, Ernst Mach, Stephen Hawking, John Stuart Mill, Friedrich Hegel, Richard Dawkins, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, and many more. The purpose was not to honor their lives, legacy, nor writings but to put on full display the lies, deceit, and quest for power that led to catastrophic consequences for millions of people who lost their lives – physically and/or eternally - by following their empty deceptions and rejection of the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

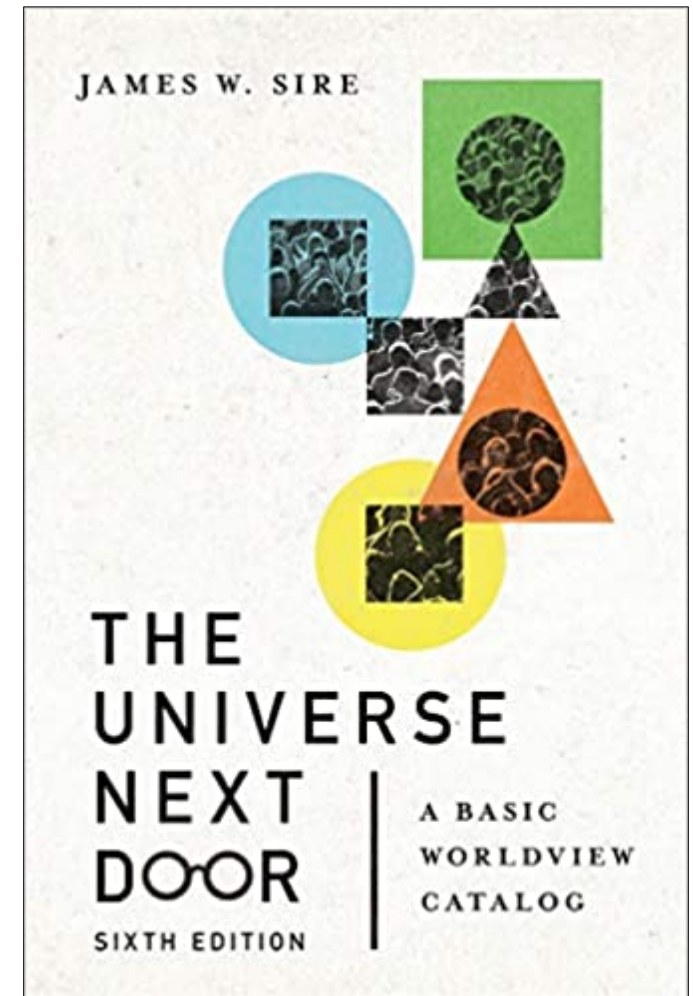
Worldview Thinking and Ethics

- A biblical worldview provides us with a conceptual framework from which we can seek **to live our lives for the glory of God**.
- Our worldview governs our thinking, and our **thinking determines our behavior**.
- It is possible for a person **to live for Christ** (never perfectly) by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- “If you are **building a life**, the truth will not show up immediately. We will find our beliefs either true or false” (Willard).
- The aim of worldview studies is to foster an openness for **re-evaluation and change** (transformation) in the sight of God.

Reviewing James Sire's Definition of Worldview

“A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or unconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides **the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.**”

- James W. Sire (1933-2018)





What Is Christian Ethics?

- “Ethics is theology, viewed as a means of determining which persons, acts, and attitudes receive God’s blessing and which do not” (John Frame).
- “Biblical ethics is concerned with the manner of life and behavior which the Bible requires and which the faith of the Bible produces” (John Murray).
- “Christian-theistic ethics deals with man’s *summum bonum* (highest good), man’s standard of living, and with man’s ethical motive, and obtains its light on all these problems from the Scriptures” (Cornelius Van Til).

What Is Christian Ethics?

“Christian ethics is any study that answers the question, ‘What does the whole Bible teach us about which acts, attitudes, and personal character traits receive God’s approval, and which do not?’”

[Note: Grudem indicates that his definition is adapted from John M. Frame’s definition as given in his book, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life*].

The aim of ethics, as Grudem states, is “to collect and synthesize the teaching of all the relevant Bible passages about that topic and then to apply that teaching wisely to various life situations.”



Wayne Grudem, PhD
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Phoenix Seminary

A Concise Definition of Ethics



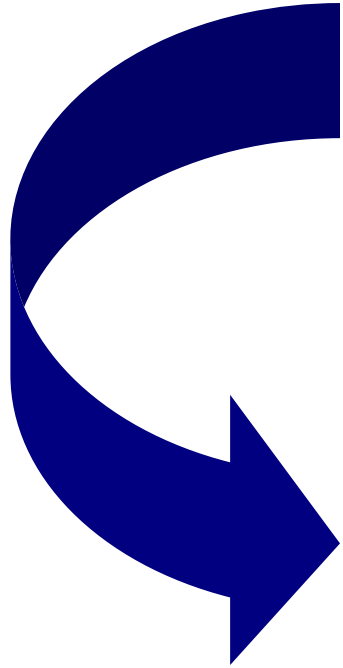
Dr. John M. Frame

1939 – (82 years old)

Reformed Theological Seminary

Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy Emeritus

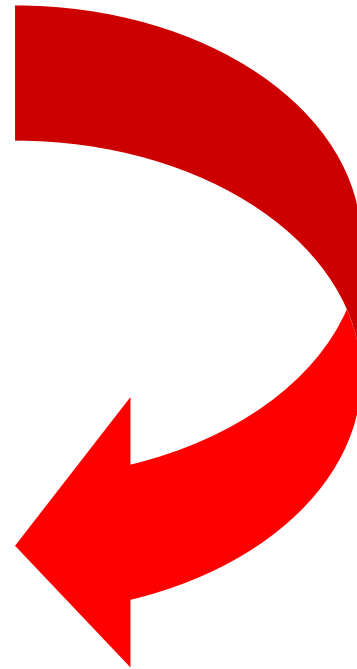
**“Living under God’s law,
in God’s world,
in the presence of God himself.”**



Worldview

Thinking

**Behavior
(Ethics)**





Past Beliefs

Present Beliefs

Future Beliefs

“What we believe are the rails upon which our lives run.”
- Dallas Willard



Worldview: A Grid to the External World

Over the years, many of you have benefited greatly from Francis Schaeffer's keen philosophical and theological mind. He clearly saw that "people's presuppositions (the basic way an individual looks at life) lay a grid for all they bring forth into the external world. Their presuppositions also provide the basis for their values and therefore the basis for their decisions." His own position was that "the biblical message is truth and it demands a commitment to truth." If his statement is true (and it is), it means that we must "live under God's revelation. Here there are morals, values, and meaning, which are not just the result of statistical averages."



The Foundation for Ethics

Since God has clearly spoken through Creation, conscience, His only-begotten Son, the *imago Dei*, and His inspired, infallible, inerrant, and authoritative Word, we should not be living independently in rebellion against the triune God but under the moral compass of His divine commandments. It is vital that we combine truth and obedience to the truth (knowing and doing, believing and obeying, theory and practice, orthodoxy and orthopraxy).

Ephesians 4:17-24

“Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ! – assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”

Rejecting the Language of Ontological Individualism

- “I really feel this is the right thing to do.”
- “You have the answer within you. Find that, and you will know what to do.”
- “Let your conscience be your guide.”
- “No one will even notice. Who cares? Just do it.”
- “Go ahead. The majority of people feel the same way as you.”
- “If it’s done with love, it must be right.”
- “It all depends on the situation.”
- “You are free to do whatever is in your best interest.”
- “My facts are different than your facts.”

The Triangle of Necessary & Sufficient Conditions

DEONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Christian Ethics is Triperspectival

SITUATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

EXISTENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

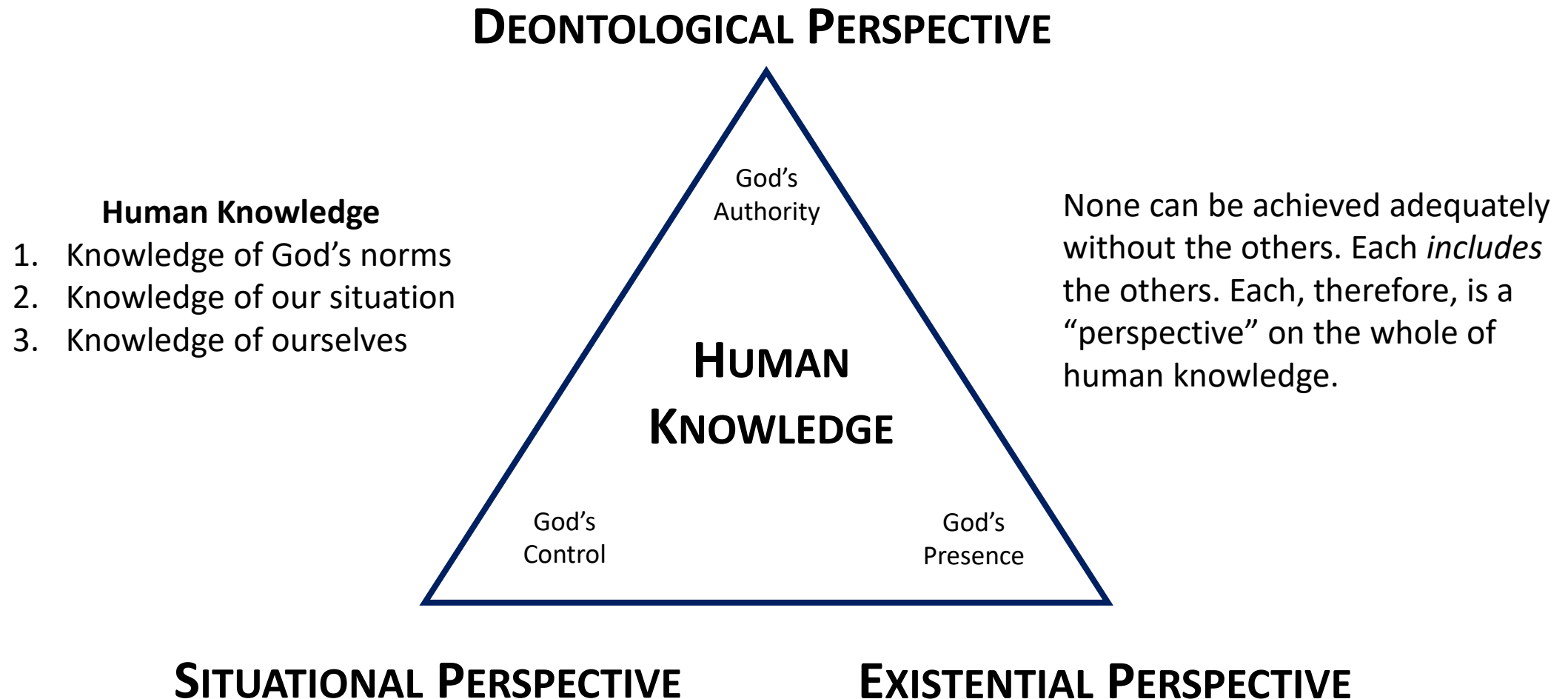




The Triangle of Necessary & Sufficient Conditions

1. Every ethical decision involves the application of a law (norm, principle) to a situation (facts), by a person (self).
2. The situation, law, and person are part of an organic whole, together revealing God's Lordship.
3. Each perspective covers the same ground with a different emphasis.
4. The knowledge of God's law (norm), the world (situation), and the self (existential) are interdependent and ultimately identical.
5. All three perspectives represent the same knowledge viewed from three different "angles."
6. Scripture must interpret Scripture; we must read every part of the Bible in the light of the rest.

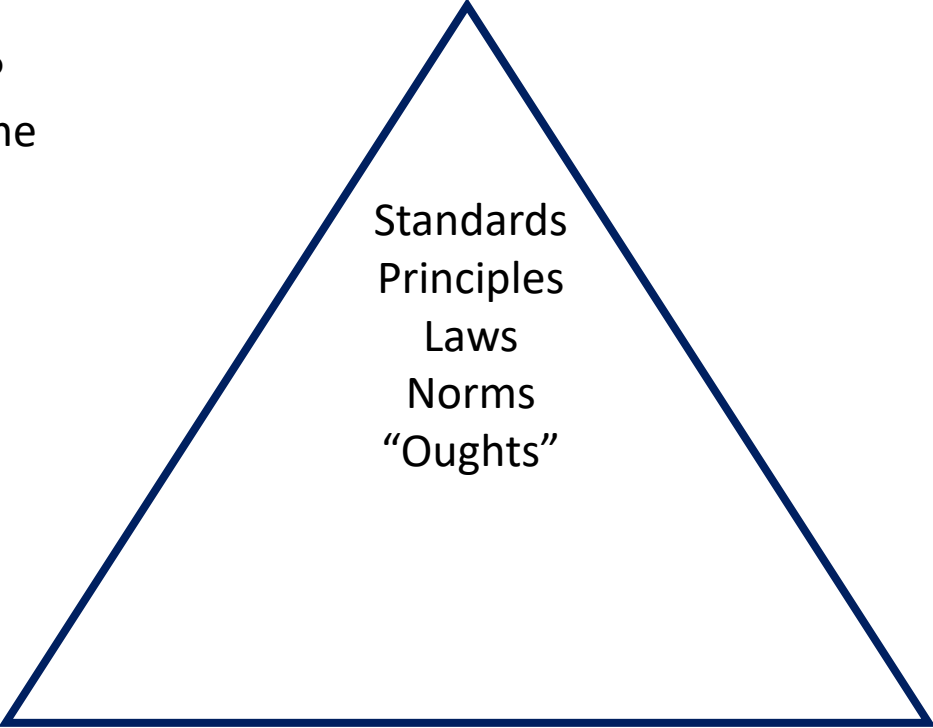
The Triangle of Necessary & Sufficient Conditions



The Deontological Perspective

DEONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

- What does God say about it?
- What does God's Word tell me to do?
- What norms, laws, and principles has God revealed about it?
- What is authoritative?
- God's will revealed through nature, history, conscience, theophany, prophecy, and Scripture.



Standards
Principles
Laws
Norms
"Oughts"

The word **deontological** is derived from the Greek word **deon**, which means "that which is binding, needful, right, proper, duty." Deontology, then, is "that branch of knowledge which deals with moral obligations" (OED).

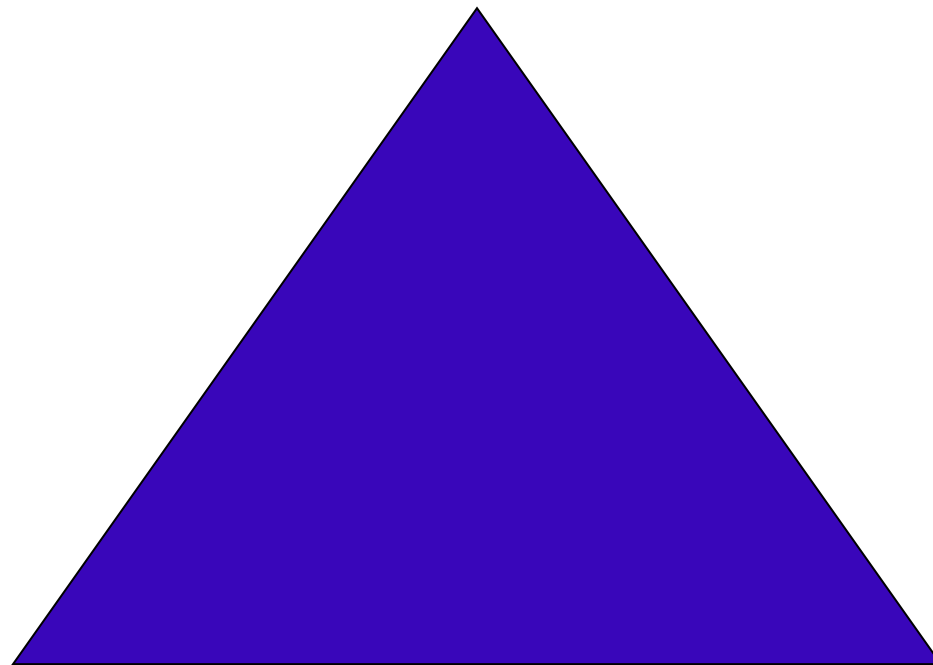
SITUATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

EXISTENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

What “Binds” You?

DEONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Book of Mormon
- Parental Messages
- Old Testament (Jews)
- Bhagavad-Gita (Krishna)
- Koran (Islam)
- The Sayings of Confucius
- Vedas (Hindu)
- Pali Canon (Buddhism)
- University Professors



- Cultural Norms
- Government Laws
- New Age Philosophy
- Ayn Rand
- Marx
- Freud
- Benjamin Franklin
- Voltaire
- Bible

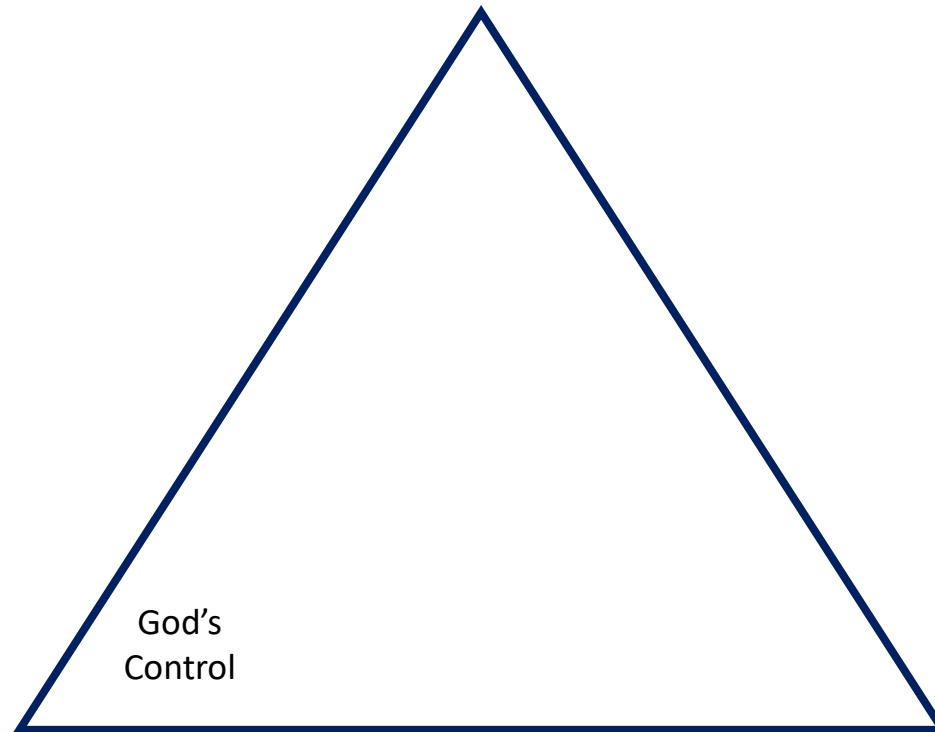
Prime Reality Possibilities

Canaanite gods (general)	Magic	Judaism	New Age
Golden Calf (Aaron)	Soothsaying	Deism	Postmoderism
Metal gods (gold/silver)	Teraphim (ancestral)	Rationalism	Marxism
Moloch (Ammonites)	Islamic Theism	Intuition	Scientism
Baal (Canaanite)	Buddhism	Materialism	Secularism
Melkart (Phoenician)	Confucianism	Naturalism	Humanism
Astarte/Ashtoreth (Egypt)	Zodiac	Empiricism	Pragmatism
Chemosh (Moabites)	Nature gods	Nihilism	Positivism
Tammuz (Mesopotamia)	Nebo (Babylonian)	Existentialism	Pluralism
Horus the hawk (Egypt)	Nisroch (Assyrian)	Pantheism	Hedonism
Mythology	Platonism	Subjectivism	Relativism

The Situational Perspective

- Knowing God involves knowing His world – studying it.
- What are the facts of the situation?
- What are the qualities of the object? What are the God-honoring uses for the object?
- What do I learn by studying God's world (natural revelation), including His mighty acts of creation, providence, and redemption?
- God wants His people to apply His Word to their own situations.

DEONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

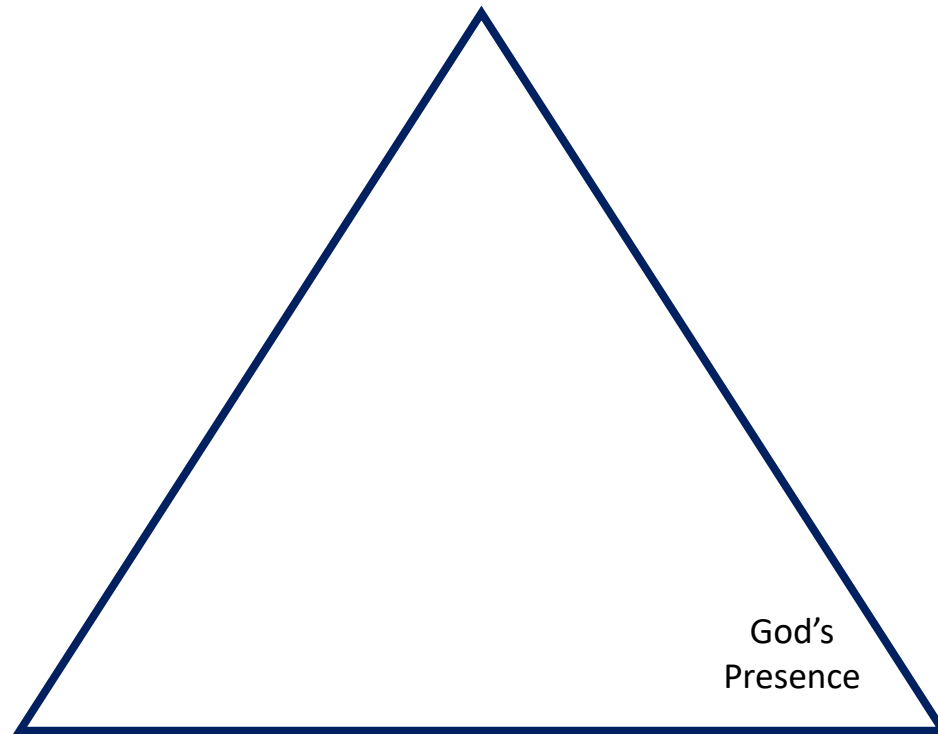


SITUATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

EXISTENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

The Existential Perspective

DEONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE



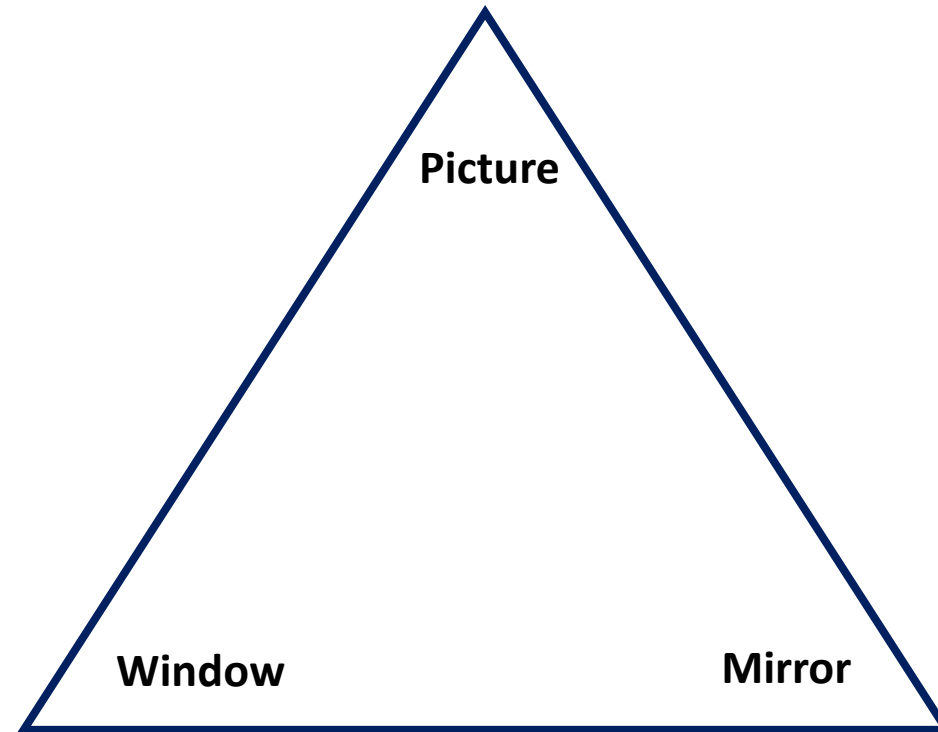
SITUATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

EXISTENTIAL PERSPECTIVE

- “I cannot know myself rightly until I see myself as God’s image” (Frame).
- How am I a part of the problem and a part of the solution?
- What am I thinking, feeling, believing?
- What are my motives?
- Will I choose to obey?
- Have I prayed?

Picture, Window, Mirror

DEONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE



SITUATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

EXISTENTIAL PERSPECTIVE



Howard Hendricks' 9 Questions to Ask About a Text for Personal Application

1. Is there an example for me to follow?
2. Is there a sin to avoid?
3. Is there a promise to claim?
4. Is there a prayer to repeat?
5. Is there a command to obey?
6. Is there a condition to meet?
7. Is there a verse to memorize?
8. Is there an error to mark?
9. Is there a challenge to face?



Personal
Convenantal
Relationship



Key Questions:

What do I truly believe?

What does my life tell me about my worldview?

What spiritual changes do I need to make?

What intellectual changes do I need to make?

What emotional changes do I need to make?

What experiences in my life have significantly shaped my mind and heart? Have I interpreted these events according to the Word of God?

Am I willing to ask the question: "What is true?"

Am I willing to go to God in repentance for wrong beliefs and disobedience to His Word?

CREATION

FALL

REDEMPTION

CONSUMMATION



“God has the ultimate viewpoint on the world, the broadest, deepest understanding of it. His Word, therefore, about Himself or about the world, is more credible than any other word, any other means of knowing. It obligates belief, trust, and obedience.”

- John M. Frame

