

The background features a large, abstract circular pattern on the left side, composed of many concentric, slightly blurred blue and purple rings that create a tunnel-like effect. In the center of this tunnel, there is a bright, colorful lens flare with orange, yellow, and red hues. The right side of the image is a soft, out-of-focus background with warm, ethereal colors like orange, pink, and light blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise sky.

Worldview Thinking

Revisiting the Fundamental Orientations of Our Minds and Hearts



Welcome!

Thank you for joining us for our new series on *Worldview Thinking*. We hope you will benefit significantly by considering the large and noble ideas that impact the ways we think, relate, and act in the world in which we live. Throughout our study, you are encouraged to detect the basic intellectual commitments you have made as a human being and delight in new insights as you discover “true truth” and align your life with the “really real.”



About the Title Slide

Twenty years ago, Pete Bocchino and Norman Geisler co-authored a book entitled *Unshakable Foundations: Contemporary Answers to Crucial Questions About the Christian Faith*. In the first chapter, they made the following comparison: **“A worldview is like an intellectual lens through which we see the world.”** To clarify their simile, they wrote: “If someone looks through a red-colored lens, the world looks red to him. If another individual looks through a blue-colored lens, the world will look blue to her. So the question we must answer is: ‘What color lens (worldview) is the right color to wear in order to have a correct view of the world?’” To reinforce their simple, but powerful, comparison, I selected a photo of a camera lens for our title slide.



Introduction

During this past year, it is safe to say that two of the words which we have heard time and again are *unprecedented* and *uncertain*. I would add another: *shaken*. Wounds have been opened. Losses have been painful. Beliefs have been challenged. Questions raised. Fears exacerbated. Anxiety intensified. In one way or another, we have been, so to speak, *rattled*, as in “he rattles me, hate to hand it to him, but there it is” (OED). No one has gone untouched by the events of 2020. Therefore, the Lord has led me to offer this series so that you may learn how to develop a comprehensive, biblical framework through which you may view the world and by which you may live *coram Deo* (before the face of God). I pray it will be life-transforming.

Introduction

As we begin our study, it is important for me to remind all of us that absolute, objective truth has been under attack for millennia, from the Garden of Eden until the present. As a result, many intellectuals and apologists for the Christian faith have sounded the alarm and warned us that we are now living in the midst of a serious deterioration of truth. Numerous authors from the past and present have offered significant and clear thinking to educate us on the importance of developing a biblical worldview and discovering the worldviews of others, including Abraham Kuyper, John R.W. Stott, Os Guinness, Francis A. Schaeffer, R.C. Sproul, Nancy Pearcey, Douglas Groothuis (GROH-tyce), Ronald Nash, James Sire, John Frame, and Chuck Colson, to name a few.



Introduction

We need their voices now more than ever to help us understand the differences between a Christian worldview and all the other “cosmic pictures.” Philosophy professor Ronald Nash (1936-2006) assists us by using his own lens motif. “The right eyeglasses can put the world into clearer focus, and the correct worldview can function in much the same way. When someone looks at the world from the perspective of the wrong worldview, the world won’t make much sense to him. Or what he thinks makes sense will, in fact, be wrong in important respects. Putting on the right conceptual scheme, that is, viewing the world through the correct worldview, can have important repercussions for the rest of the person’s understanding of events and ideas.”



OBJECTIVES

Course Objectives

- To understand the concept of worldview
- To understand how worldviews are formed
- To “see” your own worldview, to dig below the surface
- To learn how to analyze other worldviews
- To develop “habits of the mind” which glorify God
- To develop a comprehensive, unified Christian worldview
- To become aware of the ethical component of worldviews



Our First Consideration:
What Is a Worldview?

Alvin Toffler



Alvin Toffler
1928 - 2016

“‘Every person carries in his head a mental model of the world – a subjective representation of external reality,’ writes Alvin Toffler in *Future Shock*. This mental model is, he says, like a giant filing cabinet. It contains a slot for every item of information coming to us. It organizes our knowledge and gives us a place from which to argue....These ‘more or less fixed ideas’ *we think with* constitute our mental model of the world – in other words, our world view.”



Ronald Nash and Nancy Pearcey

- **Ronald Nash:** “A worldview is a set of beliefs about the most important issues in life....[It] is a conceptual scheme by which we consciously or unconsciously place or fit everything we believe and by which we interpret and judge reality.”
- **Nancy Pearcey:** “To say that Christianity is the truth about total reality means that it is a full-orbed worldview. The term means literally a *view of the world*, a biblically informed perspective on all reality. A worldview is like a mental map that tells us how to navigate the world effectively. It is the imprint of God’s objective truth on our inner life.”



James Sire and R.C. Sproul

- **James Sire:** “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 Sire:** “A worldview is the fundamental perspective from which one addresses every issue of life.”
- **R.C. Sproul:** “A worldview is “a unifying system of thought.”



Wilhelm Dilthey, James Orr, & David Noebel

- **Wilhelm Dilthey:** “A worldview is a set of mental categories arising from deeply lived experience which essentially determine how a person understands, feels and responds in action to what he or she perceives of the surrounding world and the riddles it presents.”
- **James Orr:** “A worldview is the widest view which the mind can take of things in an effort to grasp them together as a whole from the standpoint of some particular philosophy or theology.”
- **David Noebel:** “Worldview refers to 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.”



James Olthuis

James Olthuis: “A worldview is a framework or set of fundamental beliefs through which we view the world and our calling and future in it. This vision need not be fully articulated; it may be so internalized that it goes largely unquestioned; it may not be explicitly developed into a systematic conception of life; it may not be theoretically deepened into a philosophy; it may not even be codified into creedal form; it may be greatly refined through cultural-historical development. Nevertheless, this vision is a channel for the ultimate beliefs which give direction and meaning to life. It is the integrative and interpretive framework by which order and disorder are judged; it is the standard by which reality is managed and pursued; it is the set of hinges on which all our everyday thinking and doing turns.”

Chuck Colson, Nancy Pearcey, & Andrew Hoffercker

- **Chuck Colson and Nancy Pearcey:** “A person’s worldview is intensely practical. It is simply the sum total of our beliefs about the world, the ‘big picture’ that directs our daily decisions and actions.”
- **Andrew Hoffercker:** “A person’s worldview is the collection of presuppositions or convictions about reality, which represent his total outlook on life.”



Nancy Pearcey

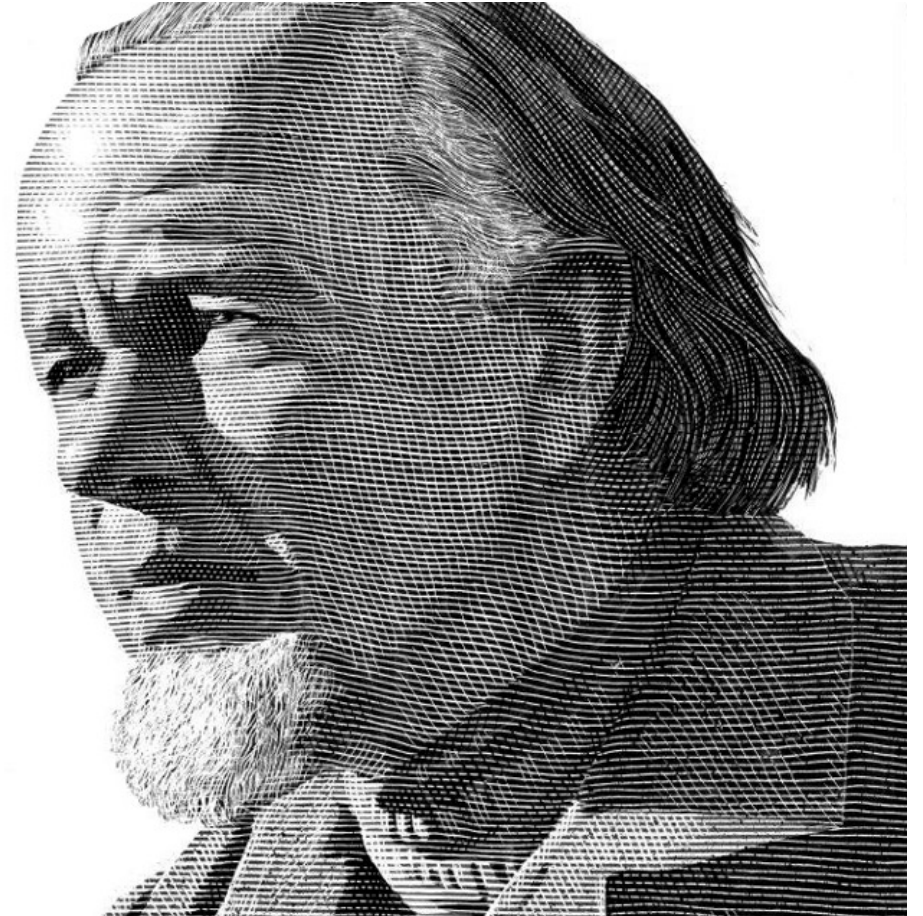


John M. Frame

“The biblical worldview is radically different from all other worldviews, whether religious or secular. The Bible teaches (1) that this world is created and governed by an absolute person, in fact an absolute tripersonality; (2) that this God is both transcendent and immanent in his relationship to the world – his transcendence is his covenant control and authority, and his immanence is his covenant presence; (3) that divine revelation provides and limits human access to the knowledge of God and his world; and (4) that Creator and creature are radically distinct from one another, but that the Creator is always close to his creation.”

Francis Schaeffer

“By presuppositions, we mean the basic way an individual looks at life, his basic world view, the grid through which he sees the world. Presuppositions rest upon that which a person considers to be the truth of what exists. People’s presuppositions 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.”



Summary: Fifteen Theses

1. Everyone has a worldview, a mental model of the world.
2. Refusing to adopt an explicit worldview is a worldview in itself, or at least a philosophical position.
3. Worldviews connect the heart (the biblical seat of the intellect, emotions, and will) to the world and life.
4. A worldview is a “cosmic picture,” the widest view the mind can take.
5. A worldview is the imprint of God’s objective truth on our inner life.
6. A worldview is a giant filing cabinet into which we fit our beliefs and from which we interpret and judge the world.



Summary: Fifteen Theses

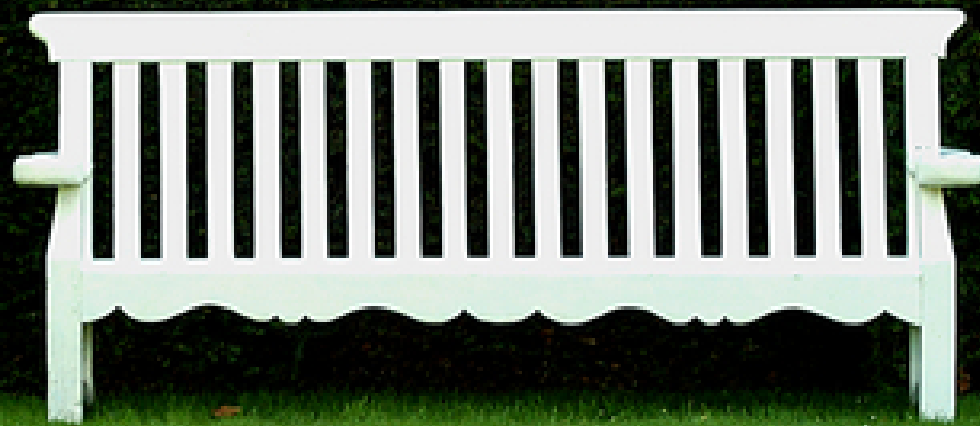
7. One's worldview can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions.
8. No one is perfectly conscious of, or consistent in, his/her thinking about the basic constitution of reality.
9. A worldview is a unifying system of thought.
10. Worldviews involve our perceptions and experiences of the world.
11. A worldview is a channel for the ultimate beliefs which give direction and meaning to our lives.
12. A worldview is the set of hinges on which all our everyday thinking and doing turns.



Summary: Fifteen Theses

- 13. A worldview is a collection of presuppositions or convictions about reality.
- 14. The biblical worldview is radically different from all other worldviews, whether religious or secular.
- 15. Our presuppositions form a grid for all we bring forth into the external world.





“Pursue truth regardless of its implications for one’s life or the life of one’s community or country.”

- James W. Sire

How Clearly Do We Reflect the “Really Real”?

