

The background of the slide is an abstract composition. On the left side, there are several concentric circles in shades of blue and teal, creating a tunnel-like effect. In the center of these circles is a small, colorful vortex or nebula with orange, red, and blue hues. The right side of the image is a blurred, ethereal landscape with soft, pastel colors like pink, orange, and blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise over a body of water or a dreamlike sky.

Worldview Thinking

Revisiting the Fundamental Orientations of Our Minds and Hearts



Welcome!

We are glad you chose to join us this morning for Part 8 of our series on *Worldview Thinking*. We are seeking to gain the widest view possible of reality as God has revealed it through creation, Holy Scripture, and His Son, Jesus Christ, so that we might know Him as He truly is and learn to walk in His ways in humble obedience. Our view of God and the world – our worldview - will ultimately determine how we live before Him in time and space (now) and in eternity (future). If there is anything we can do to enhance your learning experience, please let us know.

Introduction

Over the past two weeks, we have focused our attention on the nature of external reality and considered the various ways by which we come to know anything (epistemology). As we have seen, worldview formation and reformation is not just an intellectual endeavor, but a robust matter of the heart as well. From our most cherished beliefs and convictions, we make an abundance of choices which not only impact us personally, but also others around us. Every decision we make will lead to certain consequences of one type or another, whether consciously or unconsciously, intended or unintended, and not only in this life, but in the one to come. Therefore, we press on, seeking to build a biblical worldview which is coherent, consistent, and comprehensive.

Introduction

The best explanation for our ability to discover (know) the “really-real” is that we are image-bearers of God, endowed with the ability to interact with the world which He created and in which He placed us. We have God-given capacities and gifts to know Him and His creation so that we might glorify Him in all things. The foundation of our thought is God’s eternal truth which He has disclosed to us through *General* and *Special* Revelation (God’s world and God’s Word). Studying Scripture and engaging in analogical, rational thought deepens human understanding, strengthens faith, and helps us develop a biblical worldview in accordance with His divine precepts, commandments, and ordinances. God, and God alone, is the absolute standard of truth.



Through what filter do you
see and interpret the world?



“You Shall Have No Other gods Before Me”

Exodus 20:3

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



“See to it that no one take you captive through *philosophy and empty deception*, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ” (Col. 2:8).

Socrates	Berkeley	Kierkegaard	Charles Darwin
Plato	Hume	Jean Paul Sartre	De Chardin
Aristotle	Kant	Heidegger	Marx
Cynics/Diogenes	Hegel	Picasso	Rousseau
Stoics	Bentham	Altizer	Beatles
Epicureans	John Stuart Mill	Paul Tillich	Marquis de Sade
Skeptics	Schopenhauer	Karl Barth	Rudolph Bultmann
Descartes	Nietzsche	Reinhold Niebuhr	Albert Camus
Hobbes	Auguste Comte	A. North Whitehead	Richard Dawkins
Spinoza	Bertrand Russell	Stephen Hawking	Sigmund Freud
Locke	Ernst Mach	Marcuse	Aldous Huxley



“My mama always said, ‘Life was like a box of chocolates – you never know what you’re gonna get.’”

- Forrest Gump

This illustration introduces our subject for today:

The Use of Analogy In Worldview Thinking





Our Starting Point

- There are two levels of being, or two levels of existence: the Creator and the creature. Autonomous man rejects the existence of God.
- First, God is the all-sufficient Creator and Lord of the universe. “The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all” (Ps. 103:19). “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom. 10:9).
- **The Westminster Confession:** “God is alone in and unto Himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them.”



The Second Level of Being

- Second, man is made in the image of God and is, therefore, **dependent and derivative**. “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them’” (Gen. 1:26-27).
- “The simple declaration of the Scripture is that man at his creation was *like* God” (Charles Hodge).
- Man at creation was like God, though “the **analogy** between God and ourselves will always have disanalogy with it. So we are looking for qualities in man that constitute finite replicas of God’s infinite qualities” (Frame).

Creator-Creature Distinction

Two Different Starting Points

1. For believers, the starting point for worldview development is the triune God of the Bible who created man in His image (*imago Dei*).
2. The starting point for unbelievers is man himself and his philosophy (literally, *love of wisdom*) about the “really real.” Have you ever wondered why all of these brilliant philosophers cannot agree about the meaning of life?





The Relationship Between God and Ourselves

John Calvin: “Our wisdom, in so far as it ought to be deemed true and solid wisdom, consists almost entirely of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. As these are connected together by many ties, it is not easy to determine which of the two precedes, and gives birth to the other. For, in the first place, no man can survey himself without forthwith turning his thoughts towards the God in whom he lives and moves.” On the other hand, “it is evident that man never attains to a true self-knowledge until he has previously contemplated the face of God, and come down after such contemplation to look into himself.”

To summarize, we know ourselves as we know God, and we come to know God as we come to know ourselves.



The Enormous Capacity of Knowing

Man – male and female – is the very image of God. Having been made in His image, we have been given this enormous capacity to know, to think, to perceive, to feel, to observe, to make judgments, to discern, to comprehend, to understand, to become aware of, to scrutinize, to see, to acknowledge, to note, to detect, to recognize, and to learn.



Four Reasons Christians Ought to Study the Bible

1. The Bible provides us with knowledge that cannot be learned from any other source.
2. Since Scripture is divine self-disclosure, it reveals to us the mind of God on many matters.
3. God commands it (Deut. 6:4-9). Therefore, it is our duty to study it.
4. “It is blessed to eat into the very soul of the Bible until, at last, you come to talk in Scriptural language, and your spirit is flavored with the words of the Lord, so that your blood is Bibline and the very essence of the Bible flows from you.... I would quote John Bunyan as an instance of what I mean. Read anything of his, and you will see that it is almost like reading the Bible itself. He had read it till his very soul was saturated with Scripture” (Spurgeon).



Analogy in Biblical Interpretation

- **Analogy**, *n.*, “a comparison made between one thing and another for the purpose of explanation or clarification” (OED).
- **In Logic**: “The process of arguing from similarity in known respects to similarity in other respects; the use of parallel cases as a basis for reasoning” (OED).
- “Life is like a box of chocolates.” How, or in what ways, is life like a box of chocolates? Mysterious? Full of surprises? Bitter or sweet?
- ***New York Times***: “Human beings are *analogy machines* (emphasis added)... dealing with new information by comparing it to things they already know something about (March 23, 2008, Business Section).



Statue of Sherlock Holmes on Baker Square, London

The Use of Analogy in Sherlock Holmes

Sherlock Holmes: “You (Dr. Watson) may recollect that in the case which you, in your sensational way, coupled with the Copper Beeches, I was able, by watching the mind of the child, to form a deduction as to the criminal habits of the very smug and respectable father....My line of thoughts about dogs is **analogous**. A dog reflects the family life. Whoever saw a frisky dog in a gloomy family, or a sad dog in a happy one? Snarling people have snarling dogs, dangerous people have dangerous ones. And their passing moods may reflect the passing moods of others.”

- *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*



The Meaning of *Analogy* to the Greeks

- “There is warrant in classical Greek for the meaning ‘analogy’ in the sense of that which is in agreement or correspondence with something else....In classical Greek it is used of mathematical proportion...and bears the sense of agreement or correspondence.”
- This means, according to Professor John Murray, that “God’s word is not to go beyond that which God has given a man to speak.”
- For us, we should never presume to speak on our own authority (e.g., “Well, I don’t think the Bible means what it says”; or, “I believe there are many ways to interpret the Bible. After all, I don’t believe you can interpret the Bible literally.”



Analogies to God

- “Analogy between creatures and God pervades our language. Everything in creation bears some analogy to God. All the world has been made with God’s stamp on it, revealing Him.”
- For example: Christ is the “lion of Judah.” God’s strength is like the “cedars of Lebanon.” God is the “rock of Israel.” Christ is “the door.”
- “But for every analogy there is also disanalogy. God is not an inanimate object – not a mere rock or door; He is not a plant, animal, human being, or abstract idea. To identify God with any of those things is idolatry. Disanalogy represents God’s transcendence, His control and authority over His creation.”

- John M. Frame

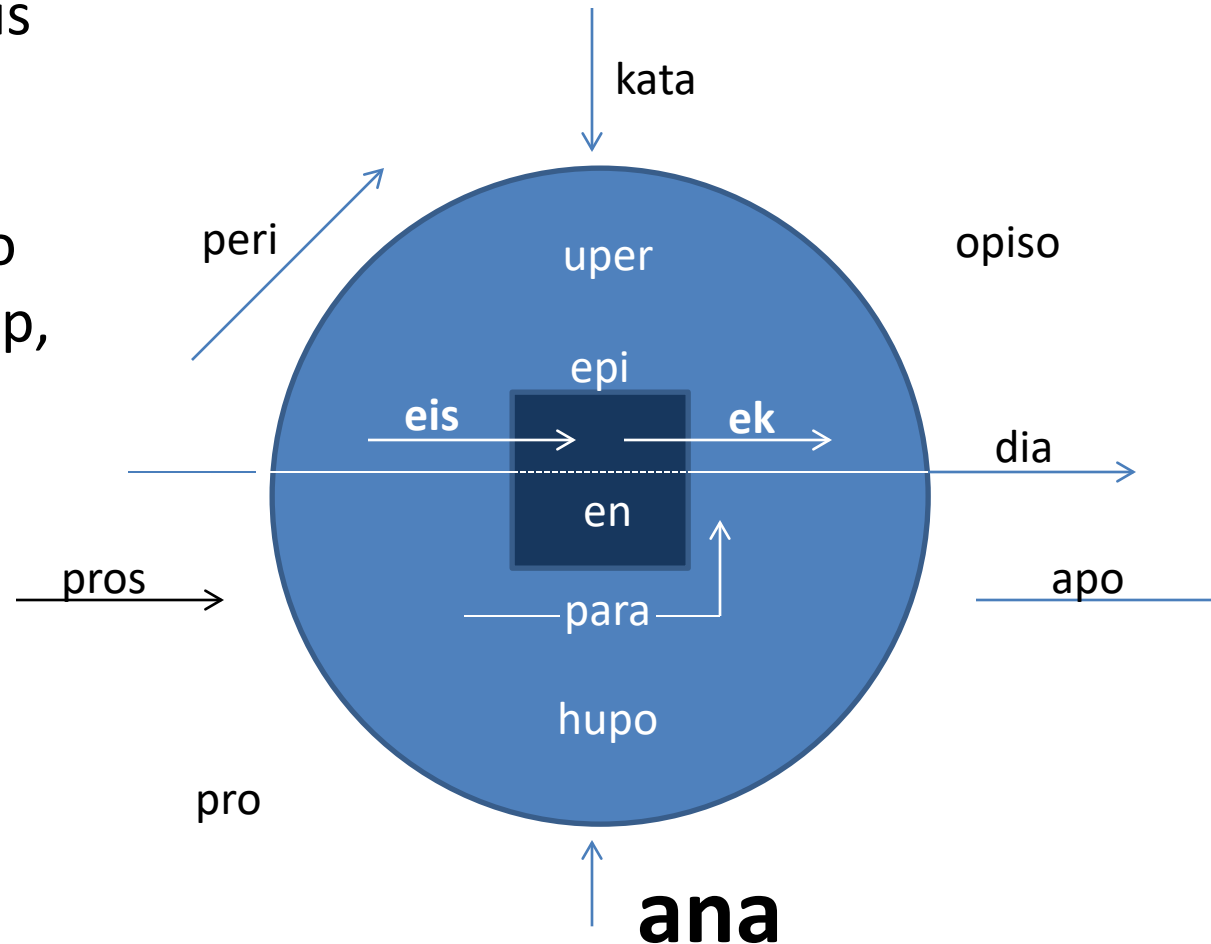


The Meaning of *Analogy*

- **Analogía**, *n.*, right relationship, proportion, in agreement with” (Arndt and Gingrich Greek Lexicon). Plato calls it “a law of proportion.”
- “The correspondence of a right relationship, or proportion” (Kittel).
- “The principle of analogy opens the eyes of men to discern the similarities and differences of things, and their relations to one another. At first, these are such as lie on the surface only; after a time they are seen by men to reach farther down into the nature of things” (Benjamin Jowett, Introduction to Plato’s *Phaedo*).
- What, then, is analogical thinking?

The Greek Word, *Analogical*

The word *analogical* is from the preposition *ana* (up) and *logos* (word) and means “to reckon up, to count up, to consider.” It can include the idea of meditation.





God's Interpretation of Everything Is Prior

- “God as Lord interprets everything definitively, so that when we want to know something, we must seek to think his thoughts after him” (e.g., What is a male? What is a female?).
- “God has revealed his truth clearly, and all of us have some knowledge in each area on which we can build.”
- “We do not come to know God, or anything else, in a vacuum. In knowing God, we come to know His relations to the world and to many things in the world, especially to ourselves.”
- “We cannot know other things rightly without knowing God rightly.” Ungodly men suppress the truth (Rom. 1:18).

- John M. Frame



Analogical Thinking

“By this is meant that God is the original and that man is the derivative. God has absolute self-contained system within himself....Man must, to be sure, think God’s thoughts after him; but this means that he must, in seeking to form his own system, constantly be subject to the authority of God’s system to the *extent* that this is revealed to him” (Cornelius van Til). R.C. Sproul explains that analogical knowledge implies true but limited knowledge and takes into account the Creator’s infinity and human finitude.

Cornelius Van Til
1895-1987

Dutch-American Christian Philosopher
and Reformed Theologian





Analogical Thinking

When we consider the eternal existence of the triune God and embrace the truth that He has clearly spoken to us in Creation, His only-begotten Son, the *imago Dei*, and His inspired, infallible, inerrant, and authoritative Word, it is not difficult to accept the reality that we can actually “think His thoughts after Him” (analogical thinking) and live our lives in ways that are pleasing to Him. Thus, we can accept biblical ethics based on God’s lordship and self-disclosure. Ultimately, “everyone who rejects divine authority must accept some other authority” (Frame), whether it be utilitarianism, hedonism, egoism (self-interest), cultural norms, moderation, existentialism, or one of the twenty-six religious books that claim to be from God.



Limitations on Our Knowledge of God

“Errors in our knowledge arise from immaturity and weakness...Certainly, then, even apart from sin, human knowledge may be incomplete; we may be ignorant in comparison to what we may know later....To be a creature is to be limited in thought and knowledge, as in all other aspects of life.”

- John Frame





Conclusion: There Are Two Ways of Thinking

- Man as man either thinks *analogically* or *univocally*. “If man acts self-consciously before the background of an absolutely personal God he acts analogically. On the other hand, if man acts self-consciously before the background of an ultimately impersonal principle, he acts univocally...If man is a creature of God, he must, to think truly and to act truly, think and act analogically” (Van Til).
- “All human thought imitates divine thought” (Poythress).
- “Christ must remove our rebellion in the area of logic as well as in every other area. And this removal is not easy, partly because sin can be subtle and deep” (Poythress).