

LESSON ONE

INTRODUCTION: WORLDVIEW THINKING



OVERVIEW

KEY CONCEPT: Jesus Christ is the basis of a Christian worldview.

KEY VERSES: Colossians 2:6-7

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.

OBJECTIVES: By the end of this lesson, each class member should be able to

- ... explain how the Bible is as current as today's newspaper—relating to all areas of life.
- ... define the term, "worldview."
- ... defend the concept that a follower of Christ considers all of life sacred.

LESSON SUMMARY

The introductory lesson is intended to orient class members to the whole concept of thinking in terms of a worldview—understanding all of life as a connected whole. First, we define a worldview as consisting of ten categories, or disciplines of study: theology, philosophy, biology, psychology, ethics, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history.

Then, we make a case that Christianity addresses each of these ten disciplines, and is therefore a total worldview. Most Christians have never thought of their Christian life in this way. It is truly a mind-expanding experience!

Each lesson in this study is designed to focus on a single issue by coming at it from various angles. This approach reinforces the objectives for lasting impact.

LESSON PREPARATION

READ THE TEXT: *Thinking Like A Christian*, Chapter 1: Thinking About Worldviews.

CREATIVE TEACHING ACTIVITIES AND HANDOUTS: Note: Activities, handouts, and handouts are located in the "Lesson Resources and Handouts" folder in a document corresponding to this lesson.

- See the lesson outline II.A. to decide how you want to present the lyrics to the song *My World View*, either through handouts or by making an overhead cell. OPTIONAL: Secure a copy of the song *My World View* by Audio Adrenaline (from their 1993 CD, *Don't Censor Me*, available online from CDNow.com) and have a CD player available to play it in class.
- Look through the newspaper during the week and find 8 TO 10 articles that deal with different topics. It's easier to handle if you tape each article to an 8½ X 11 piece of paper. Review III. A.5 for examples of how these articles will be used and what you need to be able to say about each one.
- Have a pen or pencil for each class member.
- For each class member make a copy of the handouts, "Genesis Study" "Categories that Make a Worldview," "Redemptive Order Chart," and the video note-taking outline for the Introduction.
- VIDEO: Preview the five-minute opening segment, "The Biblical Christian Worldview." This section has a brief discussion on the difference between the secular and sacred, and then gives an overview of the history of the Bible. Stop the tape when the "Theology" title appears. Then, to prepare the tape for showing in class, rewind it to the opening title, "The Biblical Christian Worldview."

LESSON OUTLINE

NOTE: Words printed in **bold type** are only suggested dialogue for the leader as a model for how the lesson might be verbalized. Suggested answers to the questions are in (parentheses). DURING THE LESSON, THE LEADER SHOULD *NOT* READ DIRECTLY FROM THE LEADER'S GUIDE. A *TEACHING OUTLINE* TO USE IN CLASS IS PROVIDED IN THE "TEACHING OUTLINES" FOLDER ON THE CD IN A FILE CORRESPONDING TO THIS LESSON.

BEFORE CLASS:

- Before class begins, write the Schaeffer quote (See I. A.) on the board, or display on an overhead cell.
- As class members come into the room, ask several to read one of the articles you collected and be able to summarize it to the class. Ask them to summarize the big idea in one or two sentences. You are not looking for the details, but just the major idea of the article. Do this for each of the articles you have.

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. SCHAEFFER QUOTE: Read the following quote by Francis Schaeffer, the Christian philosopher and author, who wrote in the mid-1980's the following: "The basic problem of the Christians in this country in the last eighty years or so, in regard to society and in regard to government, is that they have seen things in bits and pieces instead of totals." (Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1981), p. 17).
1. ASK: **What do you think Schaeffer meant by this?** (Christians in American see Christianity like the various pieces of a puzzle, the "bits and pieces," but they faith to see the over-all big picture, i.e. how the pieces fit together into a coherent whole.)
 2. SAY: **Visualize a 500-piece puzzle. What do you have to have in order to put one of those together?** (The picture, usually on the box top.)
- B. TRANSITION: **What is the "big picture" that is missing for Christians today? The box top that makes sense of and gives meaning to the individual parts? In order to understand this, we need to define a word. That word is "WORLDVIEW." Write the word "WORLDVIEW" on the board. Exactly what is a "worldview?"**

II. WORLDVIEW DEFINITION:

- A. *MY WORLD VIEW*: Hand out copies of *My World View* (or display on an overhead cell) of as you SAY: **Listen to this song by Audio Adrenaline called, *My World View*. As I play the song, follow the words on your handout.** NOTE: If you don't have the music, just use the handout or put the words on an overhead.
1. ASK: **In this song, how is worldview defined?** (It's how I see the world; it's how I look at you.) Discuss these two aspects of a worldview by asking questions such as:
 - a. **What areas of your life would be included in the phrase, "it's how I see the world"?** (Various answers.)
 - b. **What would be included in the second phrase, "it's how I look at you"?** (Various answers.)

2. ASK: **According to the words of this song, what is the basis, or foundation for our worldview?** (Jesus.)

3. DISCUSS COLOSSIANS 2:6-8: Have class members turn in their Bibles to Colossians 2:6-8. Call on someone to read the verses and discuss the following:

(1) ASK: **What is meant by the terms philosophy, empty deception, and human tradition?** (Philosophy is another term for "worldview." Some philosophies are empty, without substance, and deceptive. They are like a bowl of plastic fruit—they look good from a distance, but on closer inspection are found to not be the real thing. These deceptive philosophies are based on man's ideas, instead of God's truth.)

(2) ASK: **In what ways are we captured by philosophies that stem from human tradition?** (We are captured by the ideas presented.)

(3) EXAMPLE: **For example, surveys indicate that the majority of Christians do not believe that morals are absolute; instead they believe that all moral choices are relative. As we will discover in our lesson on ethics, this deceptive idea is wrong. Yet it has captured the minds of most Christians today.**

(4) ASK: **How is Jesus the basis for building a worldview or biblical philosophy of life?** (Jesus is the foundation from which we build up our understanding of the world.)

B. TRANSITION: **But does the Bible relate to ALL of the different issues of life? To answer that question, lets look at this week's newspaper.**

III. THE BIBLE HAS A WORLDVIEW:

A. HEADLINE NEWS: Announce that you had given news articles from this past week's paper to several class members and that you want them to decide whether the Bible has anything to say about that idea or subject. If it does, place the article on the left side of the table at the front of the room. If they think that the article does not relate to the Bible, then place it on the right side of the table. Allow time for everyone to place his article on the table.

1. "RELATES TO THE BIBLE" SIDE: Start with one of the articles on the "Relates to the Bible" side. ASK: **Who had this article? What is your article about, what's the big idea of it?** After he/she responds, ASK: **Does the Bible have anything to say about that topic?** Continue to point out articles and ask the same questions, prompting where needed, until all the articles on that side have been discussed.
2. "DOES NOT RELATE" SIDE: Next, discuss each of the articles under the heading "Does NOT Relate to the Bible." ASK: **Who had this article? What is your article about, what's the subject?** After he/she responds, ASK: **Does the Bible have anything to say about that topic?** (Various answers.) Lead the discussion by showing class members how the general subject of each article relates to one of the categories of this course. Don't show them the handout, "Categories that make a Worldview," yet, but use it as your guide in summarizing the subject of each article.
3. ARRANGE ARTICLES: As each article is discussed, move it over to the "Relates to the Bible" side. Rearrange the articles as the discussion continues until all the articles are on the "Relates to the Bible" side. SAY: **By placing all the articles on the "Relates to the Bible" side, we have drawn a very important conclusion. We have discovered that everything in life relates to ideas found in the Bible. All these topics have religious, or sacred implications. We see that there are no secular events; all are sacred because they are part of God's design for the world.**
4. NOTE: Try to find articles that relate to each of the ten categories of this study. It will help for you to think through all the articles before teaching the lesson to make sure you can relate them to at least one of the categories. REMINDER: Do not show the ten categories to your class yet. That will come later in the lesson. The following examples may help you as you plan this aspect of the lesson:
 - a. As this lesson is being written, an F.B.I. agent was arrested for being a double agent. Since the man was caught for lying, then that relates to Ethics, an area that the Bible addresses.
 - b. Another article in the news is the crash of an airliner. The question this raises is "What is the cause of the accident?" While people are looking for a direct cause, it also matters if you believe in God or not. Is God in sovereign control of everything that happens? This relates to Theology. The Bible addresses this issue. REMINDER:

do not get into a discussion about God's sovereignty at this time. Stay to the point that the Bible *does* relate to the issue found in the news. Then move on to the next article.

- c. *NOTE: Don't let the above discussion go too long.* Keep the discussion brief and to the point. The issue here is not to elaborate on each article, but only to make the point that the Bible relates to the subject matter of each article. Practice this with your spouse or friends at work! It's a great mental exercise.

5. SUMMARY: **As you can see, the Bible is as current as today's newspaper! The Bible relates to ALL areas of life.**

B. WORLDVIEW CATEGORIES:

1. HANDOUT: Give each class member the handout, "Categories That Make A 'Worldview.'" SAY: **Each of these categories is a major discipline of study. Even though each one takes a lifetime of study to master, they each focus on primarily one or two themes. These themes are expressed in our study by a short definition, and then a key question for that category.** Review with the class each of the ten categories that make up a total worldview.

NOTE: Some class member may ask where popular culture, i.e., art, literature, music, and movies come into a worldview. There are two options: you could either have an eleventh category for "The Arts," or these areas can be subsumed under "Sociology," as an means of expressing ourselves in society.

2. SAY: **Each of these categories is like one piece of a puzzle. If we put all of these ten disciplines together, we have a total view of everything, or a worldview. The Bible has something to say about each of these ten areas. To demonstrate that, let's look at several chapters of the first book of the Bible, Genesis.**

C. GENESIS STUDY:

1. Provide class members pencils as you give them the handout, "Genesis Study." SAY: **Read the following verses silently and write in the blank which category relates to that verse.** Allow 4 or 5 minutes for writing.

2. DISCUSS: After 5 minutes, ask what they put in the blanks. There may be more than one category that fits. Then SAY: **The Bible presents us with a personal relationship with God. Through the application of that relationship, it shows us how we are to live in every area of life. From this we see that every area of life relates back to God. Every area is religious, or sacred. Nothing in life is secular. The Bible presents us with a total world and life view.**

IV. VIDEO:

- A. To review some of the points of this lesson, introduce the video by telling class members to listen carefully to the difference between the secular and the sacred and how the Bible presents a story of God's interaction with mankind throughout history.
- B. REDEMPTIVE ORDER CHART: Review the video by handing out the "Redemptive Order Chart" as you remind the class of the earlier exercise where news articles were all related to the Bible. During the video, Del Tackett mentioned the issue of the difference between the secular and the sacred. Relate those two ideas to show that they are describing the same idea—everything relates to the Bible and is sacred. Then link this idea with the biblical evidence of God's redemptive order by filling in the redemptive order chart. Suggested answers are found in the completed chart in Appendix B of the textbook. Review the entire chart to show that these ten categories are not artificially constructed, but that God's created order reveals these categories to be a part of His overall design.

V. PERSONAL APPLICATION:

- A. SAY: **Turn in your Bible to 1 Chronicles 12:32.** (Call on someone to read it aloud.)
 1. ASK: **We are told that two things characterized this small tribe in Israel, what are they?** After they respond summarize by SAYING: **First, they understood the times. Second, they knew what their nation should do.**
 2. SUMMARIZE: **Our goal for this course is to show how the Bible relates to a total way of looking at the world so that you will *understand the times in which we live*. Then you will *know what you should do* to be salt and light in our increasingly tasteless and dark society!**

B. CLOSE IN PRAYER

VI. ACTION POINTS:

- A. FAMILY PROJECT: Suggest a "Family Project" to do with their family: take Sunday's newspaper and have each member of the family look for an article and see if they can relate it to one of the ten categories that make up a worldview. TELL CLASS MEMBERS TO BRING ONE ARTICLE NEXT WEEK TO SHARE WITH THE REST OF THE CLASS.

IMPORTANT: PLAN AHEAD FOR THE NEXT LESSON

⇒ **BULLETIN BOARD IDEA:**

Before the next lesson use a bulletin board or large piece of paper, 4'X6', to draw a large puzzle with 11 pieces. Label each piece as one of the worldview categories, i.e. Theology, Philosophy, etc. See "Sample Bulletin Board" in the Resources document. You will use this next week to place the articles brought in by you and the class members. Then, each week, encourage class members to find additional articles or ideas that relate to the discipline being studied and tape it onto that piece of the puzzle. *THE BULLETIN BOARD WILL SERVE AS AN OBJECT LESSON AND FOCAL POINT FOR THE ENTIRE STUDY.*