

The Christian Worldview Compared With Other Worldviews

FCBC Bible Institute

Week 1 – September 9, 2008

Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question . . .
Oh, do not ask, “What is it?”
Let us go and make our visit.

- T. S. Eliot

I. Purposes of this study:

- A. To study all the major worldviews that underlie the ways modern people think about the world, ultimate reality, themselves, others, and their actions.
- B. To learn how the major western worldviews have evolved over the last few centuries (and continue to evolve now).
- C. To learn to think in terms of worldviews, so that we can more quickly understand people of other cultures and, ultimately, effectively communicate the gospel to them. See 1 Cor. 9:19-23; Acts 14-17.

II. What is a worldview?

A. Observation: *Few people have anything approaching an articulate philosophy – at least as epitomized by the great philosophers. Even fewer, I suspect, have a carefully constructed theology. But everyone has a worldview.* [Sire, James W. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 4th Ed. InterVarsity Press, 2004, p. 17]

B. Definition: *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 subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being.* [Sire, p. 17]

Again, more slowly:

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 subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently)
about the basic constitution of reality*

That provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being

III. Seven basic questions that a worldview should answer:

[Sire, p. 20]

1. What is the prime reality – the really real?
2. What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?
3. What is a human being?
4. What happens to a person at death?
5. Why is it possible to know anything at all?
6. How do we know what is right and wrong?
7. What is the meaning of human history?