How Shall We Then Live?

Search For Answers

December 13, 2015

John Babich, Presenter
The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog (5th Ed.), by James W. Sire
Worldviews Revisited Series

• Introduction to Worldviews (10/25/15)
• Christian Theism, Deism, Islamic Theism (11/01/15)
• Naturalism, Nihilism (11/08/15)
• Existentialism (11/15/15)
• Eastern Pantheistic Monism (11/22/15)
• The New Age (11/29/15)
• Postmodernism (12/06/15)
• How Shall We Then Live? (12/13/15)
What is a 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 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.”

“The Slide…and the Leap”

- Christian Theism
- Deism
- Theistic Existentialism
- Naturalism
- Atheistic Existentialism
- Pantheistic Monism
- New Age
- The Void
- Brahman
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Postmodernism

God

Search for Answers - November 29, 2015
Seven Basic Questions

“If a worldview can be expressed by propositions, what might they be? Essentially, they are our basic, rock-bottom answers to the following seven questions:”

Eight Basic Questions

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 after 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?
8. What personal, life-orienting core commitments are consistent with this worldview?

Christian Theism

A Universe Charged with the Grandeur of God
Question #1

What is the prime reality – the really real?

*(CT)* Prime reality is the infinite, personal God revealed in the Holy Scriptures. This God is triune, transcendent and immanent, omniscient, sovereign, and good.

Question #2

What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?

*(CT)* External reality is the cosmos God created ex nihilo to operate with a uniformity of cause and effect in an open system.

*Source: James Sire, p. 31, The Universe Next Door, 5th Ed. (2009)*
What is a human being?

(CT) Human beings are created in the image of God and thus possess personality, self-transcendence, intelligence, morality, gregariousness and creativity.

Question #3

What is a human being?

(CT) Human beings were created good, but through the Fall the image of God became defaced, though not so ruined as not to be capable of restoration; through the work of Christ, God redeemed humanity and began the process of restoring people to goodness, though any given person may choose to reject that redemption.

Question #4

What happens to a person after death?

(CT) For each person death is either the gate to life with God and his people or the gate to eternal separation from the only thing that will ultimately fulfill human aspirations.

Question #5

Why is it possible to know anything at all?

(CT) Human beings can know both the world around them and God himself because God has built into them the capacity to do so and because he takes an active role in communicating with them.

Question #6

How do we know what is right and wrong?

(CT) Ethics is transcendent and is based on the character of God as good (holy and loving).

Question #7

What is the meaning of human history?

(CT) History is linear, a meaningful sequence of events leading to the fulfillment of God's purposes for humanity.

Question #8

What personal, life-orienting core commitments are consistent with this worldview?

(*CT*) Christian theists live to seek first the kingdom of God, that is, to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

What Does This Mean to Me?

A follower of Christ lives to seek first the kingdom of God, that is, to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Source: Matthew 6:31-34 (NIV)
What Does This Mean to Me?

Q1: What is the chief end of man?

A1: Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever

Source: The Westminster Shorter Catechism (1647)
Appendix
Christian Model of Knowing the Truth

Source: Dr. David Yue, MD, PhD
Two Books: Nature & Scripture

Source: Dr. Deborah Haarsma - http://www.asa3.org/ASA/education/origins/books-dh.ppt
## Worldview Beliefs Needed for Science

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<th>Worldview Beliefs Needed for Science</th>
<th>Christian Beliefs</th>
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<td>Humans have the ability to study nature and to understand, at least in part, how it functions.</td>
<td>Humans are God’s image bearers in this world (Gen. 1:27). Thanks to the abilities that God has given us, we can understand, at least in part, how the world works.</td>
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<td>Events in the natural world work by natural cause and effect. For example, a tree falls because the wind exerts a force on it, not because it wanted to fall, nor because a forest god made it fall, nor because it simply was fated to fall.</td>
<td>There are no nature spirits, no capricious gods, no fate. There is only one God (Deut. 6:4) who created and rules the world (Gen.1) in a faithful, consistent manner (Ps. 119:89-90).</td>
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<td>Natural phenomena are repeatable; they are regular across space and time. Scientists will find the same experimental result in laboratories all over the earth, and will find the same result today as they found last week. This consistency allows the phenomena to be studied using logic and mathematics.</td>
<td>God has established natural laws (Jer. 33:19-26) and faithful covenants (Gen. 8:22) with the physical universe. So we are not surprised to discover that nature typically operates with regular, repeatable, universal patterns.</td>
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<td>Observations and experiments are necessary to build and test scientific models that correctly describe natural phenomena. Logic and deduction alone are not sufficient to build an accurate understanding of the natural world.</td>
<td>God was free to create the world in many ways. Humans are limited and sinful. We are unable to understand God’s ways completely (Job 38). So our scientific models based on logic and deduction must also be tested by careful experimentation and observation, comparing them to what God has actually made.</td>
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<td>Science is a worthwhile use of human time and resources.</td>
<td>Studying nature is worth doing because we are studying the very handiwork of God (Ps. 19:1). God has called us to study his creation (Gen. 2:19-20; Prov. 25:2) and to be stewards of it (Gen. 1:28-29; Ps. 8:5-8).</td>
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Source: http://biologos.org/blog/from-the-archives-are-scientists-biased-by-their-worldviews
## Two-Story Dichotomy

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<th>THE NONRATIONAL AND NONLOGICAL</th>
<th>Existential experience; the final experience; the first-order experience.</th>
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<tr>
<td>THE RATIONAL AND LOGICAL</td>
<td>Only particulars, no purpose; no meaning. Man is a machine.</td>
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God – Humanity – Universe

TRANSCENDENCE

God

Creator

The Universe

Humans

Creation

IMMANENCE

God

The Universe

Humans
Human Exceptionalism

Source: Adapted from p.29, Francis Schaeffer, Complete Works (Vol. 5) (1982)
“Nothing-buttery”

“Nothing-buttery is characterized by the notion that by reducing any phenomenon to its components you not only explain it, but you explain it away.”

Soli Deo Gloria

http://searchforanswers.org