

Building a Biblical Worldview

by Dr. Jay L. Wile, Ph.D.

Qualifications

- Ph.D. in Nuclear Chemistry
- University Professor 1990-1995
- NSF-sponsored scientist with >\$200,000 in research grants
- Published over 30 articles in nationally recognized peer-reviewed journals
- Currently writes junior high and high school science curriculum for homeschooled

What is a Worldview?

1. The overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world.
2. A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group. -
American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language

Too many people focus on #2 and not on #1!

Clive Staples Lewis

He is regarded by many as the most influential Christian apologist of his time. His book *Mere Christianity* was voted best book of the twentieth century by Christianity Today in 2000. He has been called “The Apostle to the Skeptics.”

Salvation View: Arminianist
Scripture View: Infallible but not inerrant
Creation View: Theistic Evolutionist
Denomination: Anglican

Alvin Plantinga

Author of many books, but *Warranted Christian Belief* has been instrumental in many people coming to Christ. He was called “America's leading orthodox Protestant philosopher of God” by *Time* magazine.

Salvation View: Calvinist
Scripture View: Inerrant
Creation View: Theistic Evolutionist
Denomination: Christian Reformed Church

Henry Morris

The *Seattle Times* called him “the father of modern creation science.” According to *The World's Greatest Creation Scientists*, he showed “how one man can make a difference... Almost every creationist leader today is indebted to his life and works.

Salvation View: Calvinist
Scripture View: Inerrant
Creation View: Young Earth Creationist
Denomination: Independent Baptist

J. P. Moreland

One of today's major Christian apologists. "J.P. Moreland is considered one of the elite philosophers of our age, Christian or otherwise. As such, there are nearly as many books *about* him as there are books *by* him." – Christianity Resurrected

Salvation View: Arminianist
Scripture View: Inerrant
Creation View: Old Earth Creationist (mostly)
Denomination: Vineyard

On Four Major Issues, Four Amazing Men of God Having Strikingly Different Views

- Two Calvinists, Two Arminianists
- Three who believe the Bible is inerrant; one who believes it is infallible but not inerrant
- Two theistic evolutionists, one old-earth creationist, one young-earth creationist
- Four completely different denominations, ranging from charismatic to fundamentalist.

Many Christians Would Say That Some of These Men Do Not Have a Biblical Worldview

I see that as nonsense!

“For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit.” -Luke 6:43

It is hard to believe that such fruit has been produced by men who didn't have a Biblical worldview!

I Think All Four of Them Have a Biblical Worldview

Remember the first definition:

“The overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world.”

Each of them viewed the world through Biblical glasses. Rather than seeing it all the same, however, they saw many things differently. To me, this is not surprising or bad.

The goal is not to have an “approved” set of beliefs. It is to see the world through the Bible, as the Bible speaks to *YOU*.

How do you accomplish this?

1. Learn what the Bible actually says
2. Learn how theologians interpret the Bible
3. Know the history of Biblical times
4. Know the history of the Bible
5. Know the history of Christian thought
6. Think critically about what you believe.

Learn What the Bible Actually Says

It is too easy to rely on what other people say the Bible says. The problem is that these people often aren't telling you what the Bible says. They are telling you what they *think* the Bible says.

- ↪ Don't spend more time on books about what the Bible says than on the Bible itself.
- ↪ Read commentaries and the like from many different theological viewpoints.

Learn How Theologians Interpret the Bible

Anyone can read the Bible to learn about salvation, discipleship, Christian living, etc. Remember, however, that you are reading a *translation*, and there is no such thing as a perfect translation.

There are idioms and phrases that cannot be perfectly translated, and thus some meaning is lost. Germans, for example, say “that does me sad” in order to apologize.

There are idioms that mean something in a specific culture, such as “on a journey” in 1 Kings 18:27

Advantages of Homeschooling

- You stay on top of your child’s educational needs!
- With a good knowledge of your child’s abilities, you will be able to better counsel them on their plans!
- Your student will stay SAFE!
- You control peer group! Psychologists say that peer influence increases from 20% in elementary school to 80% by the high school year
- You control the moral and religious education!

Know the History of Biblical Times

Biblical times were different from today. To understand what the Bible is saying about certain things, you need to understand the times in which it was written.

The traditional view of the nativity is probably wrong. The word “inn” in Luke 2:7 probably means “guest house,” probably owned by a distant relative. The manger was probably in the lowest level of a building that was part of a family compound.

Know the History of the Bible

Very few Christians know how the Bible came to be.

- ? There are many, many books that claim to report on the life of Jesus. Why are only Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Bible?
- ? There are many, many books that claim to be authored by an apostle. Why aren’t they in the Bible?
- ? What is the Apocrypha and why is it in Roman Catholic Bibles?
- ? Who made these decisions, anyway?

Know the History of Christian Thought

In *The Origins of Christianity & the Bible*, Andrew D. Benson tried to claim that the early church did not believe Jesus was God. (also in *The Da Vinci Code*)

However, Ignatius (AD c35-c110), Polycarp (AD 69-155), Irenaeus (second century), and many others affirm that the early church believed it. Athenagoras (AD c133-c190) wrote this of the early church:

“they hold the Father to be God, and the Son God, and the Holy Spirit, and declare their union and their distinction in order” (*A plea for the Christians* 10.3)

Another Reason To Know The History of Christian Thought

Many of the things we believe as Christians today are the same as what has been believed in the past, such as the concepts in the Apostle's Creed. Many are different, however.

Understanding what beliefs the church had in the past and how they differ from what it has now helps us distinguish between **essential** Christian beliefs and **non-essential** Christian beliefs.

Think critically about what you believe

Critical thinking is a disciplined manner of thought used to assess the validity of a statement, news story, argument, proposition, etc. It is based on:

- ⇒ Asking questions
- ⇒ Examining Evidence
- ⇒ Looking at all sides
- ⇒ Analyzing Assumptions and Biases
- ⇒ Avoiding Emotion and Personal Desires

Discuss Things With Brothers and Sisters

When you come across a new idea and you honestly don't know how to apply the Bible to it, talk to your brothers and sisters. They may have a good insight that you don't have.

I have a brother with whom I disagree frequently when it comes to Biblical issues. He is one of my "go to" guys when I come across a new idea or a challenge to one of my long-held views.

The Most Important Thing:

Be sure you know the difference between what the Bible SAYS and what people INTERPRET IT to say.

- ☞ "Recent observations confirm that the universe is only a few thousand years old, as the Bible says." -Answers in Genesis
- ☞ "The Genesis Flood: Why the Bible Says It *Must* be Local" -God And Science
- ☞ "The Bible Says to Diversify Your Sources of Income" -Free Money Finance