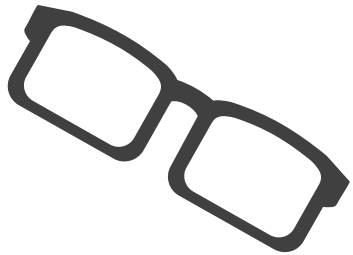




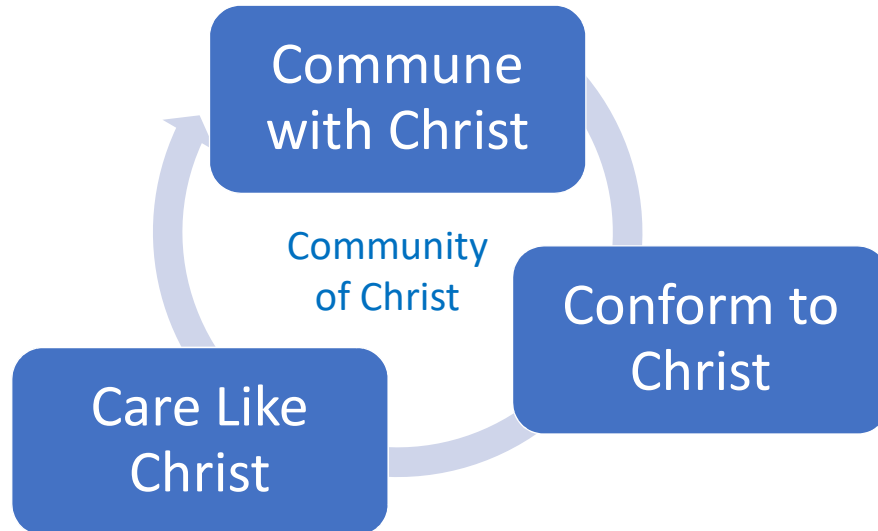
Engaging Our World through Biblical Lenses

Saturday Equipping Training—Growing as a
Discipleship Community
05 Feb 2022

Content

- 
1. Why do we need Biblical Lenses?
 2. What are Biblical Lenses?
 - Asking 8 existential questions
 - Finding Answers by Discovering James' biblical worldview
 3. How do we apply Biblical Lenses in our discipleship community?
 - An example
 - A Case Study for reflection and/or discussion

4C's of Discipleship within the Community of Christ



Go to your Zoom “Chat”

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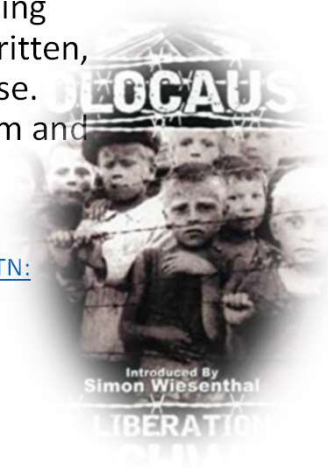
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- Oct-Dec: Please type in ‘D’

1. Why Do We Need a Biblical Worldview?

Ideas Have Consequences

“Adolf Hitler did not come out of nowhere. Before there was the Holocaust, decades of philosophical theories advocating superior races were presented, nationalistic laws were written, and the use of eugenics to weed out inferior peoples arose. Throw in a dash of “survival of the fittest” from Darwinism and perhaps the pursuit of raw power from nihilism”

- David S. Dockery and Trevin Wax, [Christian Worldview Handbook \(Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2019\)](#).



Better to Attend a Funeral Than a Party

- Ecc 7:2 It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for this is the end of all mankind, and the living will lay it to heart.
- Ecc 7:4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.
- Jas 4:14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

Worldview Is Wisdom

“Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do” (1 Chronicles 12: 32)

VS

“The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good.” (Psa 14:1)

Worldview Is Warfare

“The apostle Paul said that people repress the knowledge of the truth, . . . that opposition, is something that we have to take seriously, because according to the Bible, it’s very important that if your worldview is opposed to God, that you turn around, that you repent of that and you become a believer in the Lord.

Now, of course, that repentance means that the history of thought is a kind of spiritual warfare. It’s a spiritual warfare in the life of the mind. In our minds, there is a constant warfare between belief and unbelief, between a Christian worldview and a non-Christian worldview, and by God’s grace, through the Holy Spirit, we’re led away from the worldview of unbelief to embrace the world of truth, which God has revealed to us in the Word of God.”

John M. Frame, [CS101 Biblical Worldview and Critical Thinking, Logos Mobile Education \(Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018\)](#)

Hedonistic vs Christian Worldview

“If the dead are not raised, Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die,” (1 Corinthians 15:32).

The worldview and life of hedonism—the pursuit of pleasure—is acceptable *unless the claims at the center of Christianity are true.*

→ *If Christ has been raised, then there is something more important than immediate pleasure and comfort.*

- David S. Dockery and Trevin Wax, [Christian Worldview Handbook \(Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2019\).](#)

The Shifting Sand of Secular Worldviews

“There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good.”
(2 Timothy 3:1–3)

The Christian Response

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, **by the mercies of God**, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

(Rom 12:1-2)

Biblical Lenses/Worldview is Foundational and Formative in Our Discipleship Journey



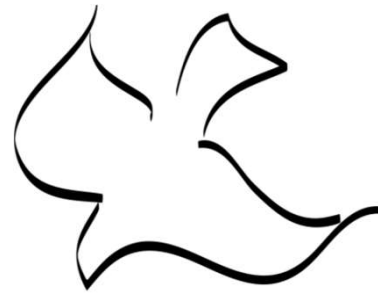
Biblical Worldview is Seeing with Enlightened Eyes



- Eph 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,
- Eph 1:18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,
- Eph 1:19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might

Biblical Lenses Are Spirit-Given

- 1Co 2:9 But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him” —
- 1Co 2:10 these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.



That we may put on the Mind of Christ

- 1Co 2:14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, . . . because they are spiritually discerned.
- 1Co 2:15 The spiritual person judges all things, . . .
- 1Co 2:16 “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.



Worldview → Faith → Inward Peace

“He who wrote those glowing words, “We faint not,” - “Our light affliction which endures but for a moment works in us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” - was the man who wrote with the same pen, “We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” - It is the man who said, “I live by the faith of the Son of God,” who said, in the same Epistle, “the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” - It is the man who said, “To me to live is Christ,” who said, in the same Epistle, “I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content.” - “I can do all things through Christ.” - The more faith the more victory! The more faith the more inward peace! (Eph. vi. 16; 2 Tim. i. 12; 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18; Gal. ii. 20; vi. 14; Phil. i. 21; iv. 11, 13.)”

- J C Ryle, [*The Fight - For Holiness, n.d.*](#)

2. What is a Biblical Worldview

6 Elements of a Worldview

- Ideology
- Narrative
- Norms
- Rituals
- Experience
- Social Element

Michael D. Palmer, ["Elements of a Christian Worldview,"](#) in *Elements of a Christian Worldview*, ed. Michael D. Palmer and Stanley M. Horton (Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 1998), 28–29.

6 Elements of a Biblical Worldview

- Ideology-Creed and Doctrines formed by The Word
- Narrative-Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation

Worldview applied and reinforced

- Norms – Law, Ethics, Values, Character pointing toward Christlikeness
- Rituals –Formal and informal/Individual and corporate spiritual disciplines & sacraments.
- Experience –Daily living out our relationships with Christ, self, and others
- Social Element- Family, Friendship, and Fellowship in the body of Christ

Understanding Biblical Worldview through 8 Existential Questions

8 Existential Questions

1. Where do we find wisdom for life in a broken world?
2. What comes to our mind when we think about God? (Is it Satan's or Christ's view?)
3. Whose are we? (Whose story have we embraced? Who am I?)
4. What is the root of our troubles?
5. How did Christ change our situation?
6. How does our future in Christ empower our present?
7. Where can we find a place to belong and become?
8. Why did God put us here?

Adapted from Bob Kellemen

Finding Answers by Discovering James' Worldview



1. Where do we find wisdom for life in a broken world

See James 1:5, 17, 22, 25; 2:8, 9, 12; 3:1, 14; 4:12

- God gives us His Word as our mirror to expose our true condition
- God implanted His Word in us to give us life
- It's the perfect law that gives us true freedoms
- It's the Royal Law, the King's law for living in His kingdom
- We must submit wholeheartedly to live under its authority and judgment
- Teachers of the word will be judged more strictly
- Being false to the truth (of God's word) is living under demonic wisdom

See James 3:17-18→the character of God's law

- It gives wisdom from God that is pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial, sincere, producing righteousness and peace in our relationships, family and community.
- **4:12**: The Law comes from God alone as the Lawgiver. He will judge, save or destroy to uphold His word.

2. What comes to our mind when we think about God?

A. See James 1:5, 12, 17; 5:11

- he is the source of wisdom and all good gifts, a rewarder of those who love Him, the Creator of new life. He is merciful and compassionate.

• → God Is Good

B. See James 1:1, 6-7; 2:1, 19;

- James serves /worship Him. He is worthy of our unwavering single-minded loyalty. He is the One of God Israel, whom Israel is to hear, obey and love with all their hearts. The Devil shudders before Him. See the Jewish Shema in Deut 6:4

→ God Is Glorious

C. See James 2:23-25; 4:6-8; 5:15-16, 19

- He justifies sinners like Abraham and Rahab by their faith. He gives grace to the humble, draws near to sinners. Listen to our prayers. He is the shepherd who goes in search for His lost sheep.

→ God Is Gracious

D. See James 4:12-15, 5:11, 13

- He is the lawgiver and judge. He sovereignly directs history according to His *will* and *purpose*. He is returning to judge the world and vindicate His people. Hence prayer is powerful. Rest in Him.

→ God Is Great

3. Whose are we? (Whose story have we embraced?)

• **See James 1:18; 3:9**

- We are Created by God. We belong to Him.

→ Our meaning and purpose are found in God.

- We are created in His image and likeness to be

→

i) **Rational**-with a mind to take in God's word and adopt a biblical perspective (**4:17**)

ii) **Volitional**- with a will that acts justly to serve others (**1:22, 27**)

iii) **Emotional**- with feelings to be managed, like anger, joy, sadness. (**1:2,19; 5:13**)

iv) **Relational**- to live in a community as God's assembly (**2:1-2; 5:14, 16**)



4. What is the root of our troubles? What went wrong?

See James 1:14-15; 2:10; 3:8-12, 14-15; 4:1-4, 16- 17; 5:1

- We sin because of the sinful desires in us.
- Sin leads to death
- We cannot keep the Law and are guilty as lawbreakers
- Our corrupt speeches come from our corrupted hearts within us
- We are taken in by demonic wisdom
- Our relational troubles are due to our sinful ambitions
- We love this world instead of God
- We are spiritual adulterers, enemies of God
- Miseries await all on judgment day regardless of those having had a good life on earth

5. How did Christ change our situation?

A. See James 2:23

→ Our New Status before God in Christ

- Justification—counted as righteous
- Reconciliation—friendship with God

B. See James 1:18; 21-22, 27

→ Our New Heart, New Life in Christ

- Regeneration—new creation, new nature able to respond to God
- Redemption—freed from sin to serve God and others in righteous actions

6. How does our future in Christ encourage our present?

See James 1:12, 18; 2:12-13; 3:1,18; 4:10, 12; 5:7-9

- Endurance of suffering for those who love God will be rewarded
- Mercy to others begets God's mercy
- Teachers will be judge more strictly → teach faithfully, not hypocritically
- Wise living will produce a harvest of righteousness
- God will exalt the humble rather than the grasping and ambitious.
- Christ coming is at hand, wait patiently and expectantly

7. Where can we find a place to belong and become?

See James 1:1; 2:1-5, 15-16; 3:1,9-10; 4:11; 5:13-16, 19-20

- The church is God's new people, the reconstituted nation of Israel, living in exile in this world.
- The church assembled together, accepting all regardless of social status, to give praise to God.
- The church cares for one another, the poor and the sick
- The church is cared for by the teachers, elders and members.
- The church helps one another fight and confess sin, resist the Devil, restore the fallen and draw near to God, transforming into God's image increasingly.
- The church awaits the return of the Lord

8. Why did God put us here?

See James 1:1-4, 18-21, 27; 2:1; 3:9-10, 18; 5:8-11, 19-20

- God allows suffering to perfect our character so that we will be blameless, lacking nothing in our faith and conduct.
- That we will glorify the glorious Lord Jesus as His church
- That we will reflect God's image and live in consistency and integrity
- That we will produce a harvest of righteousness
- That we will be like the OT prophets who trusted God, to establish our heart and faith as we await the Lord's return.
- That we should restore the fallen brothers and sinners to God.

Summary of the 8 Existential Questions

1. **The WORD:** Where to find wisdom?- Truth to set me free
2. **The Trinity:** Who is God? –Become a worshipper from an idolater
3. **Creation:** Who am I? – My being, identity, significance and purpose
4. **The Fall:** What's my problem?- Dead in Sin
5. **The Cross:** What's my solution?-Saved and Changed by Christ
6. **Consummation:** What's my hope?-Spurred by heaven's glory
7. **The Church:** Who's my community?-No longer travelling alone
8. **Our Sanctification:** What's God's goal for me?-Become like Christ.

Adapted from Kellemen, Robert W.. Gospel-Centered Counseling (Equipping Biblical Counselors) (p. 290-93). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Biblical Worldview—The Drama of Redemption

Bookend One: The Word Given — The Sufficiency and Authority for Discipleship Community

Prologue: The Trinity—God's Community in Eternity Past

- Act I: Creation — In the Beginning
- Act II: Fall — The End of the Beginning
- Act III: Redemption — New Beginning
- Act IV: Consummation — New Age

Epilogue: The Church in Christ— God's community in Eternity Future

Bookend Two: The Word Applied — Sanctification, the Goal of Discipleship Community

- Modified from Kellemen, Robert W.. Gospel Conversations (Equipping Biblical Counselors) (p. 53). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.



Application of these Biblical Lenses

A Biblical worldview helps us discern the times

“Of Issachar, men who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do” (1 Chronicles 12: 32)

Bible Lenses enable us to pastor and disciple one another with the truths of the Gospel

- In our daily struggle with sin and suffering
- with comfort, hope and grace of the Gospel
- to sustain, heal, reconcile and guide
- over a lifetime
- in the safety of a community
- which in turn prepares and empowers us to engage non-believers in the version of “their gospel” with ours.

Adapted from Chester, Tim; Timmis, Steve. Everyday Church: Gospel Communities on Mission (Re:Lit) (p. 65-75). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

Biblical Lenses Empower Us to Humble Ourselves & Draw Near to God Because

1. **God is good**, so we do not have to look elsewhere.
2. **God is glorious**, so we do not have to fear others.
3. **God is gracious**, so we do not have to prove ourselves.
4. **God is great**, so we do not have to be in control.

- Chester, Tim; Timmis, Steve. Everyday Church: Gospel Communities on Mission (Re:Lit) (p. 76). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.” Jas 4:10

Biblical Lenses points to the 4 Gospel Realities of the Cross that transform us

New Status

- Justification-Forgiven, Reckoned as Righteous
- Reconciliation- Welcome Home as Sons

New Heart

- Regeneration-New Creation in Christ
- Redemption-Servant of (Sin) Righteousness

Transforming us to reflect God’s image rationally, volitionally, emotionally, and relationally with God, self, and others.

Putting on Biblical Lenses in Sufferings

Why did God allow sufferings?

- “But this happened **that we might not rely on ourselves** but on God, who raises the dead.” 2 Cor 1:9
- Psalm 40:2 – 3. “He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. **Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD.**”

Remember Christ—who holds our Past, Present and Future

- Rev 1:5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. **To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood**
 - Rev 1:6 and **made us a kingdom, priests to his God** and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
 - **Rev 1:7 Behold, he is coming** with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth **will wail** on account of him. Even so. Amen.
- Rev 1:8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, **“who is and who was and who is to come,** the Almighty.”



Remember His Coming—the Consummation of All Things

- “[This] is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, **because the time is near**” (Rev. 1:2 – 3).
- “Behold, **I am coming soon!** Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book” (Rev. 22:7).

Because Faith & Love Spring from Hope in Christ

- “because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints — **the faith and love that spring from the hope** that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel” (Col. 1:4 – 5).

So that putting all together, God’s Surpassing Power Is Experienced in my Suffering

“But we have this treasure in jars of clay **to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us**. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.” (2 Corinthians 4:7 – 9)

“**that I may know him and the power of his resurrection**, and may **share his sufferings**, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”(Php 3:10-11)

Case Study

Jason's Story

Jason is your good buddy. You sit at his bedside, waiting for him to open his eyes. He has just undergone an operation. His wife Marie has just told you the doctor's prognosis. The growth in Jason's brain is cancerous. You turn on your phone to look at the picture you took for the family three years ago. You saw the joy on the faces when 9 months old Johnny was baptized with his 2 years old sister Jasmine. The children are now 4 and 6. Their eyes and smiles look so like their father. You pray in your heart, "Lord, why did this happen? What do I say to Marie and Jason? How can I help? What would the Lord Jesus do if He is here?"

And then you ask yourself, "What if I'm Jason, how would I respond?"

Rate yourself from 1 (strongly no) to 10 (strongly yes)

1. In my suffering, I will find comfort in God my Sustainer.
2. I will admit my helplessness and cry out to God for His strength and care.
3. I will face my suffering with Christ beside me, finding comfort in Him so that I can also comfort others in their suffering.
4. I will find assurance in Christ who is my deliverer and future hope.
5. I will turn to the body of Christ to share and sustain me in my suffering.

Share & Discuss

- Reasons for your low or high score items.
- As you wait, listen, and empathise with Jason and Marie, seeking to place yourself in their shoes, what biblical encouragement would you bring them as you filter their predicament through the 8 existential questions?

8 Filtering Questions Defining Our Lenses

1. Where do we find wisdom for life in a broken world?
2. What comes to our mind when we think about God? (Is it Satan's or Christ's view?)
3. Whose are we? (Whose story have we embraced?)
4. What is the root of our troubles?
5. How did Christ change our situation?
6. How does our future encourage us now?
7. Where can we find a place to belong and become?
8. Why did God put us here?



Q&A