

## The Heart and Definition of a Worldview

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The term worldview refers to any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement, or religion that provides an overarching approach to understanding the existence of God, the universe, man, and man's relationship to God, and the universe.

In its simplest terms, a worldview is a set of beliefs about the most important issues in life. It is, therefore, imperative to achieve an awareness of our worldview. A worldview is one the most important things the Christian must develop in order to enhance a greater understanding of *what* and *why* he/she believes, and in order to have greater insight into the worldviews of other people. It is essential to an understanding of what makes us, and them tick!

The concept of a worldview has been defined in various ways, and one popular definition of a worldview has been offered by Charles Kraft, in his thought-provoking book: *Christianity In Culture*. He described a worldview as:

*“The central systematization of concepts of reality to which members of the culture ascend (largely unconsciously) from which stems their value system.”<sup>1</sup>*

Kraft's definition highlights the two elements of a worldview:

- (i) It's a perspective of reality, and
- (ii) It's the resulting value system that forms the basis for lifestyles choices.

Another definition is echoed in this twofold emphasis of a worldview: A person's worldview is:

- (i) Their way of thinking about life and the world, and this is,
- (ii) Coupled with the values they set for themselves in the context of that way of thinking.

Yet, a worldview can be described as:

- (i) A comprehensive framework of beliefs that help us to interpret what we see and experience, and it
- (ii) Also gives us direction in the choices that we make as we live out our days, and it
- (iii) Provides a person (the Christian) with a framework in which he can see his whole life as being lived out in the presence of God.

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<sup>1</sup>Charles Kraft, as quoted by Philip and Brown in: *A Biblical Worldview*, p. 28.

A worldview is, **first** of all, *an explanation and interpretation of the world*, and **second**, *an application of this view to all of life*. In simple terms, our worldview is a view **of** the world, and a view **for** the world –and its logical conclusions.

A person's worldview is **his own** blueprint for life, and what is final reality, it is also describing **one's** understanding of the world and presenting how **one** will live in it. It is important, however, to help others achieve a better understanding of their worldview and its conclusions, and to help them develop a worldview that is concerned with –what final reality is!

Christian Apologist, Cornelius Van Til, added the following comment concerning worldviews: “. . . . The point of contact between the Christian message and the non-Christian world is a ‘head-on’ collision.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Viewing Christianity as a Total Worldview:**

Instead of thinking of Christianity as a collection of theological bits and pieces to be believed or debated, Christians should approach the Truth-claims of Christianity as a conceptual system, *therefore, as a total world-and-life view*. Once people understand both what is in the Christian thought-forms, and what is in the adversaries, world of ideas (worldview), they will be in a better position to judge the relative merits of the **total** Christian system.

Christianity is a *total world-and-life view, because Christianity is grounded in divine revelation*. The Christian Faith has important things to say about the whole of human life. The reason why so many people reject the Christian Faith, it is not due to their problems with one or two isolated issues; but it is the result of their anti-Christian thinking. Their antipathy toward the Christian worldview leads them to reject information, and historical arguments, that, for believers, provide a pivotal support for the Christian worldview.

The Christian worldview accounts for the:

- (i) The existence of God,
- (ii) The universe, and its form and beauty, and
- (iii) Man and his intrinsic worth, value, and his moral problem.

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<sup>2</sup>Cornelius Van Til, as quoted by Collin Brown in: *Philosophy And The Christian Faith*, p. 247.

There is no need for the Christian to be intellectually ashamed of or disappointed in the Gospel as a system. The Christian Gospel is a total system. The Apostle Paul was surrounded by the Greek and Roman world—thinking with all its intellectual understanding—yet he was not ashamed of the Gospel, or its great intellectual content and substance. Paul said:

“For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greeks. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “But the righteous man shall live by faith.”

(Romans 1:16-17) [NASB].

**Conclusion:**

Therefore, it is important to equip ourselves so that we are able to show the enemies, and detractors of the Truth-claims of Christianity, that the Christian worldview with its objective morals and ethics is *superior* rationally and *intellectually* to any alternative system.