Worldviews Revisited

Search For Answers

October 25, 2015

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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, Eastern Pantheistic Monism (11/15/15)
• The New Age, Postmodernism (11/22/15)
• How Shall We Then Live? (11/29/15)
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.”

A Commitment

“The essence of a worldview lies deep in the inner recesses of the human self. A worldview involves the mind, but it is first of all a commitment, a matter of the soul. It is a spiritual orientation more than it is a matter of mind alone.”
A Matter of the Heart

“Worldviews are, indeed, a matter of the heart. This notion would be easier to grasp if the word *heart* bore in today's world the weight it bears in Scripture.”
The Heart

“The biblical concept includes the notions of

• **wisdom** (Proverbs 2:10),
• **emotion** (Exodus 4:14; John 14:1),
• **desire and will** (1 Chronicles 29:18),
• **spirituality** (Acts 8:21), and
• **intellect** (Romans 1:21).”
Wisdom

for wisdom will come into your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;
(Proverbs 2:10, ESV)
Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses and he said, “Is there not Aaron, your brother, the Levite? I know that he can speak well. Behold, he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.

(Exodus 4:14, ESV)
Emotion

Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.

(John 14:1, ESV)
Desire and Will

O LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you.

(1 Chronicles 29:18, ESV)
Spirituality

You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.

(Acts 8:21, ESV)
For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

(Romans 1:21, ESV)
The Heart

"the central defining element of the human person"
The Self

“A worldview, therefore, is situated in the self—the central operating chamber of every human being. It is from this heart that all one's thoughts and actions proceed.”
A Story

“A worldview is not a story or a set of presuppositions, but it can be expressed in these ways. When I reflect on where I and the whole of the human race have come from or where my life or humanity itself is headed, my worldview is being expressed as a story.”
“One story told by science begins with
• the big bang and proceeds through
• the evolution of the cosmos,
• formation of the galaxies, stars and planets,
• the appearance of life on earth and on to
• its disappearance as the universe runs down.”
Another Story

“Christians tell the story of
• creation,
• Fall,
• redemption, and
• glorification
—a story in which Jesus' birth, death and resurrection are the centerpiece.”
No Little People

“Christians see their lives and the lives of others as tiny chapters in that master story. The meaning of those little stories cannot be divorced from the master story, and some of this meaning is propositional.”
Presuppositions

“When, for example, I ask myself what I am really assuming about God, humans and the universe, the result is a set of presuppositions that I can express in propositional form.”
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:”

Question #1

What is the prime reality – the really real?

“Our answer here is the most fundamental.”

Question #2

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

Question #3

What is a human being?

Question #4

What happens to a person after death?

Question #5

Why is it possible to know anything at all?

How do we know what is right and wrong?

Question #7

What is the meaning of human history?

...And a Bonus Question (#8)

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

“So I am adding the following question to flesh out the personal implications of the rather intellectual and abstract character of the first seven questions.”

*Source: James Sire, p. 23, The Universe Next Door, 5th Ed. (2009)*