

# Understanding Worldviews

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
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## Overview

- Worldview defined
- Discussion of key issues
- The nature and character of God
- The nature of the universe
- The nature of man and his relationship to God and creation
- The nature of history
- Obtaining and keeping a Christian worldview

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## Worldview Defined

- James Sire defines worldviews:  
  
[Worldviews are] universes fashioned by word and concepts that work together to provide a more or less coherent frame of reference for all thought and action.

*The Universe Next Door* p.16

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**Worldview Defined**

- James Sire defines worldviews:  
“A worldview is a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of our world.”

*The Universe Next Door p.17*

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**Key Issues**

- Not everyone has a well defined philosophy or theology, but all people have worldviews.
- The basic assumptions that make up a worldview are rarely questioned by those holding them.
- Paganism is the default worldview
- Biblical ignorance of many Christians causes them to think like pagans

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**Social factors and worldviews**

- How worldviews influence us
- How social issues affect worldviews
- Plausibility Structures

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**Worldview Questions**

- The nature and character of God
- The nature of the universe
- The nature of man and his relationship to God and the rest of creation
- The nature of history

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**The nature and character of God**

- God is personal
- God is transcendent
- God is eternal and non-contingent
- God is immanent
- God is omnipotent
- God is sovereign
- God is omniscient
- God is triune
- God is infinitely good and holy

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**The nature of the universe**

- God created the universe *ex nihilo*
- God created the universe with uniformity of cause and effect in an open system
- God's providence rules all created things
- The universe itself is impersonal
- There is a distinction between the infinite, eternal Creator and the finite, non-eternal universe

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**The nature of man and his relationship to God and the creation**

- Man is created in the image of God
- Man is personal and self-conscious
- Man can make decisions according to his nature
- Man is a moral being
- Man is capable of being creative within what is already created
- Man has been given authority over and priority to all other creatures
- It is good that man multiplies on the earth

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**The nature of man and his relationship to God and the creation**

- Creation in God's image was followed by a fall into sin
- God speaks to man through special revelation
- Man is capable of knowing by general revelation
- God's moral will is revealed in Scripture
- Man is a responsible moral agent, answerable to God
- God provided the means for redemption of man in Christ who came into history and died for sins
- At death man will face God in judgment

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**The nature of history**

- History is linear
- History is teleological
- God's providential will is revealed in history
- Key events mark history's progress (salvation history)
- History begins with creation and ends with judgment
- History is neither cyclic nor spiral

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Obtaining and maintaining a Christian worldview

- The surrounding culture is pagan and is constantly pressuring or seeking to influence us to think like pagans
- The teachings of the Bible influence us to think like Christians
- Children must be trained in a Christian worldview so that they can keep their faith
- Churches that fail to fully teach and preach the Bible eventually find the pagan worldview creeping into the minds of their people

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