

## INTRODUCTION TO "WORLD VIEWS"

Written by Calvin Fox

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Who am I? What is my nature, task and purpose as a human being? Where am I? What is the nature of the world and universe I live in?

What is wrong? What keeps me from fulfillment as a human being?

What is the Remedy? How is it possible to overcome this hindrance? These are Worldview Questions

**WHAT IS A WORLD VIEW?** based on the book Creation Regained by Al Wolters

**Definition-** A World View is “the comprehensive framework of one’s basic beliefs about things (the way they hang together)” p.3

**Framework-** a comprehensive, inclusive system, a pattern

**Basic-** ultimate, profound, fundamental, matters of principle

**Beliefs-** certainty, conviction, knowledge which can be argued

**Things-** anything, everything about which one can have beliefs

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Everyone has a worldview- everyone acts & reacts, makes decisions, interprets & evaluates based on their view of the world. It shapes how we interpret what we see or hear in the world at large- gives us a sense of up & down, right & wrong. It functions as a guide to life- it orients us in the world, determining how we act or react to our daily experiences. It is a map, a guiding perspective, the decisive factor in determining our decisions and behavior

Another definition: "...a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of the world"- *James Sire, The Universe Next Door* p.17 (1<sup>st</sup> edition)

Sire says the Basic Questions are: What is prime reality? Who is Man? What happens to Man at death? What is the basis of morality? What is the meaning of human history (life)?

p.19

### World Views and Religion are not the same

Dictionary definitions of Religion include

1. Belief in and reverence for a supernatural power or powers regarded as creator and governor of the universe.

2. A personal or institutionalized system grounded in such belief and worship.

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### WHERE DO PERSONAL WORLD VIEWS COME FROM?

For most people World Views are usually articulated, even unconscious. They are usually absorb (or learned) from the ways, attitudes, values of the people/world around us (from our Culture)

We are also conditioned by our experiences- what we go through, life-lessons learned, what we find "works" or makes sense for us

The foundations or roots of World Views are pre-scientific, shared, every day, inescapable human experience (Walters p. 9)

World Views are not same as Philosophy or Theology-----these are academic disciplines to be learned formally. However, World Views incorporate and are great shaped by philosophical and theological concepts, "schools" and systems.

### TYPES OF WORLD VIEWS

Over the course of history, people have adopted or developed a variety of World Views. There are several (maybe 6 or 8) basic comprehensive frameworks, patterns or sets of beliefs that guide people:

Theism, Deism, Naturalism (includes Secular Humanism and Marxism), Nihilism, Existentialism, Pantheistic Monism, New Age Consciousness. James Sire discusses these and the different types of each in *Universe Next Door*. In

the 1988 edition, Sire adds Naturalism.

Postmodernism should also be added, but the dominant Philosophy today is Philosophical and Scientific Naturalism.

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People consciously searching for answers to the "Big Questions of Life" explore one or more of these World Views. Th

The common subjective and pragmatic test is to find one that works for them (that is the measure of whether it is "true" or not).

Ideally, three characteristics of a satisfying worldview are

1. Inner intellectual coherence- it must be logically consistent
  
2. Comprehends, incorporates all available data of life experiences gathered from all sources
  
3. Must account for and explain real life experiences

Not everyone requires all three characteristics, especially #1

## SCRIPTURE AND WORLD VIEWS

For a Christian, there is a forth and most important characteristic of a worldview- it must be Scriptural. A Christian must allow Scripture to test and shape his Worldview. This is meant literally-----Scripture is meant to determine the entirety

of our life maps, to give us

**"the comprehensive framework of one's basic beliefs about things"**

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all things!

Not just (spiritual) things about God, Salvation, Church

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We bring our pre-faith answers to the Big Questions: What we believe about who we are, what makes the world the way it is, what hurts us in this world and what helps us in this world. Our old, perhaps unexamined, answers to these Questions must be examined, one by one, in light of the Word and reshaped by it. What does the Word tell us the answers to the Questions are? This results in a Biblical Worldview.

Notice that a "Biblical Worldview" is not a collection of Doctrines or Christian Values or a purported Biblical Teaching about some major cultural issue of our day.

*[continued in the post below]*