

Who is Mankind?
Our Biblical Worldview—part 2
September 13, 2020

DAY 1: What does it mean to be human? (Our biblical worldview)

1. Six different views are circulating through western civilization of what it means to be human:
 - a. Man is basically good, and is evolving,
 - b. Man is primarily a global citizen, a part of the global community.
 - c. Man is only material. He is a collection of chemicals, randomly thrown together. His actions and reactions are simply reactions to stimuli.
 - d. One's predominant identity is part of a class, a race, an ethnicity, a sexual orientation, etc.
 - e. Man is shaped by social forces and institutions. Either you are an oppressor or a victim. Change only comes by changing the "system." Revolution is needed.
 - f. **Biblical view:** We are made in the image of God and he is marred. (He has dignity and depravity in his nature)
2. These view of what makes a person a person is played out in TV shows, in riots and violence, in movies, on news casts, and the majority of university classrooms. These views affect how we see all of life including government, military, police, education, morals, and marriage.

IMAGE OF GOD

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Psalms 8:5 (RSV) Yet thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor.

3. Man is a created being and was originally created innocent. He is the crown of creation. No other animal shares the image of God.
4. What do you think it means to be made in the image of God?

5. Being made in the image of God includes at least all of the following.

We are purposeful, personal, relational, rational, volitional, emotional, and aspirational. We have a moral conscience, a free will, and have longings for relationship, significance, and love. We are hungry and thirsty people.

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 2: Our Great Mandate

1. God's Great Mandate was given to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28. This mandate sets humanity up as the stewards of the earth.

*Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "**Be fruitful** and increase in number; fill the earth and **subdue** it. **Rule** over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."*

2. A steward is responsible to manage someone else's things.

3. No matter our human differences, this is something we all share, a common charge. It is a shared responsibility.

4. Here are some of the big pieces:

a. We bring animals into order.

b. We set ourselves up in order.

c. Order requires leadership structures.

d. Institutions are meant to bring order. It takes order to get things done well.

5. The bible lays out four foundational area of human stewardship.

1. Self—I am accountable to God for my thoughts, actions, decisions, etc.

2. Family—each member of the family has a role.

3. Church—Pastors, elders, members. Stewardship, privilege, accountability, privilege.

4. Civil Government—accountable to God for its stewardship.

6. Stewardship gives us a purpose beyond ourselves and our own self-interests. It gives us meaning. Man are accountable to God for our areas of stewardship.

DUALISTIC:

7. Man is both body and spirit. We are a material person and a spiritual person.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

DAY 3: Man is fallen and in need of redemption

1. Sin is the fundamental root problem with each person.

Genesis 6:5 (RSV) The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned--

2. Sin is "...a psychology of hatred toward God that creates a bias in the mind against God. In this state we WANT to push God out of the way." –R.C. Sproul
3. The nature of sin in our human nature mars our lives in some of these ways:
- Image-bearing nature, in every respect. (Our rationality, reason, decision-making, morality, communication, relationships. Our faculties are all skewed toward self-interest).
 - Understanding of our purpose. Cultural mandate can be skewed. Not taking care of the earth or advancing the cause of an animal over humans for example.
 - Treatment of our stewardships. (We will want to turn away from our responsibilities in some of our stewardships but grab and expect the rewards of our stewardship).

Man's need? Redemption

4. Think of all the things man tries to bring about change in his character, actions, and relationships: trying harder, will power, "turning over a new leaf," New Year's resolutions, accountability, being religious, acts of service, "being kind," be more responsible, set realistic goals, etc.

5. How does Man overcome this sinful nature in him? There is only one way that is powerful enough to actually bring about a change *in our nature!*

Ephesians 2:8 (RSV) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God --⁹ not because of works, lest any man should boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

6. How is someone saved?

7. Who ultimately provides the power for change?

8. What is the relationship to be between God and man?

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

Note: DAYS 4 and 5 will deal with the secular worldview of man.

Day 4: Goo Man

1. Naturalistic philosophy teaches that there is no god. There is no “outside” authority that tells us what to do. We are left to do as we want.
2. Dr. William Provine laid out what this means at a debate at Stanford Univ. against Dr. Phillip Johnson.
 - No gods or purposive forces
 - We have no ultimate foundation for ethics
 - Man does not have free will
 - There is no life after death
 - There is no ultimate meaning to life
 - We are machines, only chemicals responding to stimuli

“The cosmos is all that is, or ever was, or ever will be.” – Carl Sagan

Monistic

3. Man is material only. Because that is true, all material has the same value. There is nothing outside us that gives human beings any more value than any animal or anything in nature.

“A rat is a pig is a dog is a boy.” – Ingrid Newkirk, President of PETA

“While the death of young men in war is unfortunate, it is no more serious than the touching of mountains and wilderness areas by humankind.” – David Brown, former head of the Sierra Club

“Man is basically good.”

4. Evolutionary philosophy, the belief that man is evolving better and better began with Darwin in the 19th century. That theory about man is running out of steam due to the horrors of the 20th century, the most violent and horrific century in history.
5. How do these folks explain the presence of human evil? INCREDIBLE DOSES OF DENIAL

“As far as I know we just don’t have any intrinsic instincts for evil.” - Maslow

“I don’t find that evil is inherent in human nature.” – Carl Rogers

Romans 8:13 (RSV) ...for if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live.

6. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

DAY 5: What is man's greatest need? "Self-actualization"

1. There is probably no more well-known example of this world view than Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. *Basic* needs are at the bottom of the pyramid. Your objective in this world view is to make it to the top of his pyramid.

Self-actualization: following your inner desires

Esteem: self-respect, autonomy, status

Social: affection, belonging, acceptance, friendship

Safety: Security, protection from harm

Physiological: hunger, thirst, shelter, sex

"Instincts at least at the outset are all good....Careful study of those instincts will provide the values we need by which better societies can evolve." - Maslow

2. This pernicious lie continues to seep into Western Civilization. It is seen in more and more movies and TV shows, is paraded across the airwaves as if this is true. Is it any wonder that the suicide rate and opioid addiction rate continues to rise?

3. This may be one of the greatest expressions of Satan's deadly and cruel lie to people. Jesus says that when you make your life the top thing, you'll lose the very thing you think you'll get.

4. Jesus warns us that ultimate pursuit of self as the highest value is exactly the wrong path!

Matthew 7:13 (RSV) "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.

¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

³⁵ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

Francis Bacon: "It is a poor center of a man's life—himself."

4. What strikes you from today's devotional?