

A Biblical Foundation for a Biblical Worldview

Various

Intro: Last Sunday, David preached a sermon, “Can You Handle the Truth?”, that contained some statistics that really disturbed me. He presented eight fundamental truths that outline a biblical worldview according to Christian pollster George Barna and the poll results of church-goers’ belief in those truths.

Barna asked the respondents two basic questions that defined a general biblically based worldview, and then six additional specific beliefs.

The results are appalling:

- Only 7% of all Protestants held to this Biblical worldview

- Only 9% of those who claimed to be Born Again believed it

- Only 51% of Protestant Pastors

- Highest – 71% Among SBC Pastors

- Lowest – 27% Among Methodist Pastors

- Older pastors with Seminary Degrees Less Likely

- 6 out of 7 Congregants do not share the Pastor’s Biblical Worldview

I want to say the same thing the pastor said on Sunday. I believe each one of the eight statements 100%.

I can’t talk to all of our congregation, but I wanted to do my part with my little part of the congregation. I want to take those eight statements and simply present a clear biblical foundation for them so that while you may or may not choose to believe them, you will at least have been faced with the fact that they are absolutely biblical.

What Does a Biblical Worldview Look Like?

"Worldview" is a term used to describe the belief system by which a person understands or makes decisions about the world.

I’ll begin by admitting that using the Bible to build this foundation has one key flaw: If you don’t believe the Bible, it is all meaningless. But if you don’t believe the Bible then you don’t hold to this Biblical Worldview (see #8) anyway, and I cannot convince you of the faith decision to believe the Bible as the absolute authority on these matters.

In my opinion, making the decision whether or not to accept the Bible as absolutely authoritative is nearly as important as accepting Jesus as your Savior.

Another note: I am not a philosopher nor the son of a philosopher. But many of these points are in fact philosophical matters as much as they are biblical. I will simply do my best to provide the biblical response to the philosophical questions.

Absolute moral truths exist.

John 14:6 Jesus *said to him, “I am the way, and the **truth**, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.

John 8:32 and **you shall know the truth**, and the truth shall make you free.”

By the way, if you ever have anyone tell you there is no such thing as absolute moral truth, they have a problem, because they have just asserted an absolute moral truth.

Such truth is defined by the Bible.

2 Pe 1:19-21 ¹⁹And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. ²⁰But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, ²¹for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Ps 19:7-9 ⁷The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. ⁸The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. ⁹The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; **The judgments of the LORD are true**; they are righteous altogether.

Ps 18:30 As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the LORD is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.

Ps 111:7 The works of His hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure.

2 Tim 3:16-17 ¹⁶All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Those two truths put together are the foundation of a biblical worldview.

Now let’s look at six specific religious beliefs that would constitute a biblical worldview:

Jesus Christ lived a sinless life.

This is a very basic Christian belief, and one that is necessary for the atonement.

Heb 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, **yet without sin.**

Heb 7:26 For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

Isa 53:9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth.

2Co 5:21 He made **Him who knew no sin** to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1Pe 2:21-22 ²¹For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, ²²**WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH;**

1Jo 3:5 And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and **in Him there is no sin.**

I don't think that most Christians have an issue with this one.

God is the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe and stills rules it today.

Here is a statement (actually a combination of four different beliefs) that most Christians have been taught since they were in the church nursery.

Mt 19:26 And looking upon them Jesus said to them, "With men this is impossible, but **with God all things are possible.**"

Heb 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but **all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him** with whom we have to do.

1Jo 3:20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart, and **knows all things.**

Ge 1:1 **In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.**

Ex 20:11 "For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

Is. 40:28-31 ²⁸Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the **Creator** of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. ²⁹He gives strength to the weary, And to him who lacks might He increases power. ³⁰Though youths grow weary and tired, And vigorous young men stumble badly, ³¹Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.

Acts 17:24-29 ²⁴"The **God who made the world and all things in it**, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵neither is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all life and breath and all things; ²⁶and He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation, ²⁷that they should seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though **He is not far from each one of us;** ²⁸for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His offspring.' ²⁹"Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.

Here's where it gets a little trickier. While these are truly elementary Christian ideas, are they beliefs that most Christians actually hold today? And even for those who say we believe them, do we practice it?

God's omnipotence _____

God's omniscience _____

God as the creator of the universe _____

God as personal _____

Salvation is a gift from God and cannot be earned.

Interesting that this statement is nearly a direct quote from Scripture, but there are many denominations, most, in fact, that do not practice it, or even believe it.

Eph 2:8-9 ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the **gift** of God; ⁹**not as a result of works**, that no one should boast.

This statement is certainly one that more than a few would not agree to.

Satan is real.

... and is running for president. Ha!

The entertainment industry has put enough effort into making our culture laugh at this idea.

4:1-11 ¹Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ²And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. ³And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” ⁴But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.’” ⁵Then the devil *took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶and *said to Him, “If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘HE WILL GIVE HIS ANGELS CHARGE CONCERNING YOU’; and ‘ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, LEST YOU STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.’” ⁷Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.’” ⁸Again, the devil *took Him to a very high mountain, and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; ⁹and he said to Him, “All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰Then Jesus *said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’” ¹¹Then the devil *left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

Eph. 6:11-12 ¹¹Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

1Pe 5:8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

I suspect that quite a few Christians would practically, if not theologically, disagree with this one.

A Christian has a responsibility to share their faith in Christ with other people.

Here is another idea that most Christians have been taught since their earliest years.

Matt 28:19-20 ¹⁹“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

This is another one that most today would still claim as a belief, but I wonder how many could actually honestly claim to live it out in their lives.

The Bible is accurate in all of its teachings.

One of the greatest items of disagreement, and possibly the one central issue of the conservative / liberal battleground would be the matter of the infallibility of Scripture.

2 Pe 1:19-21 ¹⁹And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. ²⁰But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, ²¹for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Ps 19:7-9 ⁷The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. ⁸The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. ⁹The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.

If you don’t hold to this truth, what are the potential ramifications?

Conclusion: Do you have a biblical worldview?

Ask: After hearing the list of statements that constitute a biblical worldview and their biblical foundations, would you say you believe all of them?

What are the implications of not having a biblical worldview?

Can you still be a believer?

Can you still be a Baptist?

What difference does it make?

What about your children?

Do you want them to have a biblical worldview?

What will it take for that to happen?

Not Just Any Worldview (From: <http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdate&BarnaUpdateID=154>)

The research indicated that everyone has a worldview, but relatively few people have a biblical worldview - even among devoutly religious people. The survey discovered that only 9% of born again Christians have such a perspective on life. The numbers were even lower among other religious classifications: Protestants (7%), adults who attend mainline Protestant churches (2%) and Catholics (less than one-half of 1%). The denominations that produced the highest proportions of adults with a biblical worldview were non-denominational Protestant churches (13%), Pentecostal churches (10%) and Baptist churches (8%).

Among the most prevalent alternative worldviews was postmodernism, which seemed to be the dominant perspective among the two youngest generations (i.e., the Busters and Mosaics).

For the purposes of the research, a biblical worldview was defined as believing that absolute moral truths exist; that such truth is defined by the Bible; and firm belief in six specific religious views. Those views were that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life; God is the all-powerful and all-knowing Creator of the universe and He stills rules it today; salvation is a gift from God and cannot be earned; Satan is real; a Christian has a responsibility to share their faith in Christ with other people; and the Bible is accurate in all of its teachings.

The Difference a Biblical Worldview Makes

One of the most striking insights from the research was the influence of such a way of thinking upon people's behavior. Adults with a biblical worldview possessed radically different views on morality, held divergent religious beliefs, and demonstrated vastly different lifestyle choices.

People's views on morally acceptable behavior are deeply impacted by their worldview. Upon comparing the perspectives of those who have a biblical worldview with those who do not, the former group were 31 times less likely to accept cohabitation (2% versus 62%, respectively); 18 times less likely to endorse drunkenness (2% versus 36%); 15 times less likely to condone gay sex (2% versus 31%); 12 times less likely to accept profanity (3% versus 37%); and 11 times less likely to describe adultery as morally acceptable (4% versus 44%). In addition, less than one-half of one percent of those with a biblical worldview said voluntary exposure to pornography was morally acceptable (compared to 39% of other adults), and a similarly miniscule proportion endorsed abortion (compared to 46% of adults who lack a biblical worldview).

Among the more intriguing lifestyle differences were the lesser propensity for those with a biblical worldview to gamble (they were eight times less likely to buy lottery tickets and 17 times less likely to place bets); to get drunk (three times less likely); and to view pornography (two times less common). They were also twice as likely to have discussed spiritual matters with other people in the past month and twice as likely to have fasted for religious reasons during the preceding month. While one out of every eight adults who lack a biblical worldview had sexual relations with someone other than their spouse during the prior month, less than one out of every 100 individuals who have such a worldview had done so.

Some Groups Are More Likely to Have a Biblical Worldview

Adults who have a biblical worldview possessed a somewhat different demographic profile than those who did not. For instance, individuals who attended college were much more likely than those who did not to have this perspective (6% versus 2%, respectively). Married adults were more than twice as likely as adults who had never been wed to hold such a worldview (5% versus 2%). Whites (5%) were slightly more likely than either blacks (3%) or Hispanics (3%) to hold this ideology. One of the largest gaps was between Republicans (10% of whom had a biblical worldview), Independents (2%) and Democrats (1%).

Residents of Texas and North Carolina were more likely than people in other states to have a biblical worldview. Among the states in which such a worldview was least common were Louisiana and the six states in New England. The nation's largest state - California - was average (i.e., 4% of its residents had a biblical worldview).

Attributes such as gender, age and household income showed no statistical relationship to the possession of a biblical worldview.

Some Churches Are Helping People

The research found that one of the most effective methods of enabling people to develop a biblical worldview is by addressing seven critical questions that consistently lead to beliefs and behaviors that are in tune with biblical teaching. Outlining that process in a new book he has written as an outgrowth of the research, entitled ***Think Like Jesus***, Barna also noted that many churches are already helping their congregants to implement such a way of addressing daily challenges and opportunities.

"The emphasis of these churches is to not only teach biblical perspectives," according to Barna, "but also to help people connect the dots of the core principles taught. Rather than simply provide people with good material and hope they figure out what to do with it, these are churches whose services, programs, events and relationships are geared to weaving a limited number of foundational biblical principles into a way of responding to every life situation. The goal is to facilitate a means of interpreting and responding to every life situation that is consistent with God's expectations. These are not perfect people, but once they catch on to the critical principles found in the Bible and train their minds to incorporate those views into their thinking, their behavior varies noticeably from the norm."

Research Source and Methodology

The data described above are from telephone interviews with a nationwide random sample of 2033 adults conducted during September through November 2003. The maximum margin of sampling error associated with the aggregate sample is ± 2.2 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. All of the interviews were conducted from the Barna Research Group telephone interviewing facility in Ventura, CA. Adults in the 48 continental states were eligible to be interviewed and the distribution of respondents coincided with the geographic dispersion of the U.S. adult population. Multiple callbacks were used to increase the probability of including a reliable distribution of adults.

The data from the 2003 survey was compared with figures on worldview possession compiled from Barna Research Group surveys conducted in 2002 in order to assess the reliability of the new data. The 2002 surveys also showed that just 4% of the aggregate population and 9% of the born again segment had a biblical worldview. Other repeated measures were compared, producing virtually identical results to the current measures.

"Born again Christians" were defined in these surveys as people who said they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today and who also indicated they believe that when they die they will go to Heaven because they had confessed their sins and had accepted Jesus Christ as their savior. Respondents were **not** asked to describe themselves as "born again." Being "born again" is not dependent upon any church or denominational affiliation or involvement.

The Barna Research Group, Ltd. is an independent marketing research company located in southern California. Since 1984, it has been studying cultural trends related to values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. If you would like to receive regular e-mailings of a brief overview of each new bi-weekly update on the latest research findings from the Barna Research Group, you may subscribe to this free service at the Barna Research web site (www.barna.org).

Senior Protestant pastors who hold a biblical worldview: (From: <http://www.religioustolerance.org/wvconsc.htm>)

The Barna Group surveyed the beliefs of a randomly selected sample of 601 senior protestants in the U.S. during November and December, 2003. They found that a biblical worldview was far from universal:

Overall, 51% of pastors have a biblical worldview. This is about 13 times the rate of all American adults, and about 7 times the average of their own members.

The following percentage of pastors have this worldview:

- 71% of Southern Baptist ministers.
- 57% ministers from other Baptist churches.
- 51% from non-denominational -- probably Fundamentalist -- churches.
- 51% of male pastors.
- 44% from charismatic or Pentecostal churches.
- 35% of African-American churches.
- 28% of mainline and liberal churches.
- 27% from United Methodist Church congregations.
- 15% of female pastors.