

UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES SERIES

UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES[®]

A SURVEY OF
COMPETING
WORLDVIEWS

SAMPLER

UNIT 1

TEACHER MANUAL | STUDENT MANUAL | TEXTBOOK

UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES SERIES

UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES[®]

A SURVEY OF
COMPETING
WORLDVIEWS

TEACHER MANUAL

Samples reduced; not actual size

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USING UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES CURRICULUM

Curriculum Overview

Our world revolves around *ideas*. Politicians, military leaders, CEOs, media moguls, and academics may think they are in charge of world affairs, but what they think—the ideas in their heads—actually control them. Ideas are the guiding force behind every twist and turn in public opinion. They determine what we accept or reject in the arts, media, business, science, education, politics, family, church, and the list goes on endlessly.

We cannot understand what's going on in the world until we look below the surface at the ideas that influence our beliefs and behaviors. These ideas can be grouped into six major worldviews.

This curriculum is about the *ideas* that construct our *worldviews*. Everyone has a worldview, which helps them interpret what is happening around them. Christianity has an explanation for reality, but so does Islam, Secularism, Marxism, New Spirituality, and Postmodernism. Each of these worldviews is founded upon a pattern of interconnected ideas. These worldviews dictate (consciously or unconsciously) how we interpret and respond to issues like stem-cell research, abortion, transgenderism, human rights, poverty, technology, etc.

Make no mistake, these worldviews are at war. This curriculum will open your eyes to the factions competing for your heart and mind. The stakes couldn't be higher. Because all humans are sinners (Romans 6:23), the worldviews developed apart from God will be sinful and flawed. But with the Christian worldview, we get God's perspective on the challenges we face and how best to deal with them.

Curriculum Sections

Before beginning this curriculum, it will be helpful to understand its structure and components.

1. **Syllabus:** What occurs each day and when assignments are due.

[The standard schedule for this course assumes your class meets 5 days per week for 36 weeks. However, the following alternative schedules can be found online:

- 5 days per week for 36 weeks
- 4 days per week for 36 weeks
- 3 days per week for 36 weeks
- 2 days per week for 36 weeks
- 1 day per week for 36 weeks
- 5 days per week for 18 weeks
- 4 days per week for 18 weeks
- 3 days per week for 18 weeks
- 2 days per week for 18 weeks
- 1 day per week for 18 weeks]

2. **Objectives:** Main learning goals for each chapter.

3. **Chapter Discussion Questions:** A review of the material read in each chapter.

4. **Classroom Activities:** Activities designed to reinforce content from each chapter.
5. **Readings:** Primary source materials, sometimes from non-Christian sources.
6. **Reading Discussion Questions:** A review of the material from the primary source readings.
7. **Reading Quizzes:** Multiple-choice and true/false questions for each primary source reading.
[Student copies can be found online. Website and passcode are at the back of this manual.]
8. **Videos:** Lectures from experts, which dive deeper into key subjects.
9. **Video Outlines:** Notes from each video.
10. **Video Discussion Questions:** A review of the material covered in each video.
11. **Video Quizzes:** Multiple-choice and true/false questions for each video.
[Student copies can be found online. Website and passcode are at the back of this manual.]
12. **Key Points:** Includes key questions, terms, verses, players, and works from each chapter reading.
13. **Writing Assignments:** Essay questions to answer at the end of each chapter.
14. **Tests:** A mixture of questions (matching, multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay) taken from each chapter's content.
[Student copies can be found online. Website and passcode are at the back of this manual.]

Wheatstone Training Videos

Summit has partnered with Wheatstone Ministries to provide you with training on how to lead a fruitful conversation in class. Visit summit.org/wheatstone and use the code SMWS1617 to access these short videos.

Reflect

A weekly blog that connects the worldviews and ideas you are discussing in class with pop culture illustrations. We've also included helpful resources for further enrichment in each post. Visit summit.org/reflect-signup to sign up for notifications or summit.org/reflect-archive to access current entries.

College Credit

If you are interested in learning more about college credit for this course, please take visit summit.org/college-credit for more information.

Summit Alumni Network

This is a fabric of Christian thinkers and doers woven together by Summit Ministries' conference and curriculum grads. We gather—online and in-person—for ongoing study, strengthening community, and serving the cities in which we live. Join the network at summit.org/alumni.

TEACHING UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES CURRICULUM

Course Overview

Understanding the Times is an introduction to six dominant worldviews of our age with specific focus given to 10 key academic disciplines. By the end of the course, students will recognize the patterns of ideas and see how Christian thought stands out among all the competing voices.

In addition to the six worldviews and 10 disciplines, students will be introduced to over 60 major concepts and ideas as they work through the curriculum. These key worldviews, disciplines, and ideas appear neatly in the worldview chart:

	 SECULARISM	 MARXISM	 POSTMODERNISM	 NEW SPIRITUALITY	 ISLAM	 CHRISTIANITY
 THEOLOGY	Atheism	Atheism	Theological Suspicion	Pantheism	Monotheism	Trititarian Monotheism
 PHILOSOPHY	Materialism & Naturalism	Dialectical Materialism	Anti-Realism	Spiritual Monism	Dualism	Dualism
 ETHICS	Moral Relativism or Utilitarianism	Proletariat Morality	Cultural Relativism	Karma	Divine Command Theory	Agape
 BIOLOGY	Neo-Darwinism	Punctuated Equilibrium	Anti-Essentialism	Spiritual Evolution	Special Creation	Special Creation
 PSYCHOLOGY	Mind/Body Monism (Self-Actualization)	Mind/Body Monism (Classical Conditioning)	Decentered Self	Mind/Body Monism (Fourth Force)	Mind/Body Dualism (Uddifala)	Mind/Body Dualism (Yidala)
 SOCIOLOGY	Personal Autonomy	Proletariat Society	Social Constructionism	Collective Consciousness	Ummah	Sphere Sovereignty
 LAW	Legal Positivism	Proletariat Law	Critical Legal Studies	Self-Law	Shariah Law	Natural Law
 POLITICS	Progressivism	Statism	Political Pessimism or Liberalism	Autarchy	Islamic Theocracy	Subsidiarity
 ECONOMICS	Economic Interventionism	Socialism	Economic Interventionism	Universal Enlightened Production	Shariah Economics	Biblical Stewardship
 HISTORY	Social Progress	Historical Materialism	Historical Revisionism	Evolutionary Godhood	Pan-Islam	Redemptive Narrative

Understanding the Times begins with an introduction to worldview studies then introduces each of the six worldviews, walks the students through how those worldviews work themselves out in 10 key disciplines, and concludes with a comprehensive review. This follows the worldview chart by moving across the top row and then down the left column.

Within the textbook, each of the 18 chapters drills down on the material under these four categories:

1. Introduction

- Chapter 1: The Battle of Ideas

2. Overview of the 6 Worldviews

- Chapter 2: Christianity
- Chapter 3: Islam
- Chapter 4: Secularism
- Chapter 5: Marxism
- Chapter 6: New Spirituality
- Chapter 7: Postmodernism

3. Overview of the 10 Disciplines

- Chapter 8: Theology
- Chapter 9: Philosophy
- Chapter 10: Ethics
- Chapter 11: Biology
- Chapter 12: Psychology
- Chapter 13: Sociology
- Chapter 14: Law
- Chapter 15: Politics
- Chapter 16: Economics
- Chapter 17: History

4. Comprehensive Review

- Chapter 18: Conclusion

Course Structure

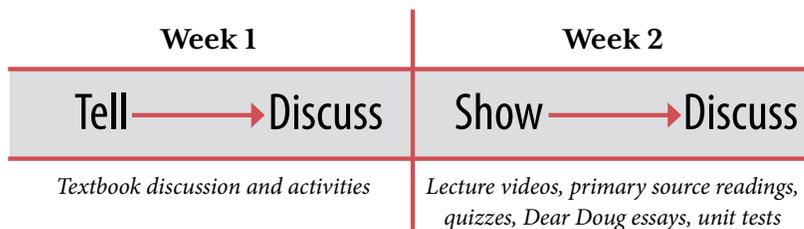
Understanding the Times can be used effectively over a one- or two-semester period. The course will look a little different depending on which syllabus you choose, so we suggest reading over this content before selecting your syllabus.

In the traditional classroom model, the teacher lectures during class time and students complete outside work at home. In this course, the idea is for students to read the textbook, watch lectures, and read other sources prior to class time. When students come to class, they will discuss those ideas in the context of relationship under the guidance of a teacher. It is in this sense that we have “flipped” the classroom.

Two-Semester (180-Day) Course

Because content flows through relationships, we structure the course so that there is adequate space for both meaningful relationships and meaningful content. There are 18 chapters in the textbook, and we allocate 2 weeks per chapter.

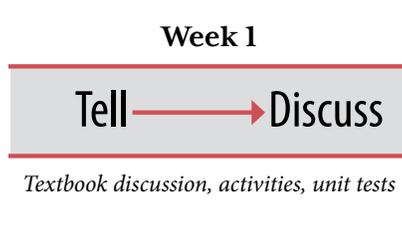
To make this happen, we offer a “tell and show” model. The first week, we tell the students about the patterns of ideas and their consequences; the second week, we show them where these ideas are being discussed and practiced in the real world.



We don’t want students to believe what we’re saying simply because we’re saying it. We want students to hear claims being made by the textbook and then see those ideas played out in real life. The first week is spent in the textbook and the second week is spent looking at “outside materials,” that is, non-textbook readings and videos that cover the same themes as the textbook. Usually these outside materials consist of primary source readings, videos from other worldview perspectives, and video lectures. Each outside reading and video will have accompanying discussion questions to help students evaluate what they have just read or watched. At the end of the second week, students will turn in a Dear Doug essay and take a unit test.

One Semester (90-Day) Course

The one-semester (90-day) course is going to look a little different from the two-semester course. Because we have half the time, this schedule will cover only the textbook reading (or “tell” side) of the curriculum. As such, we will not be allotting time for extra outside readings or videos. To keep the students from having to test every week, we recommend administering two tests every two weeks.



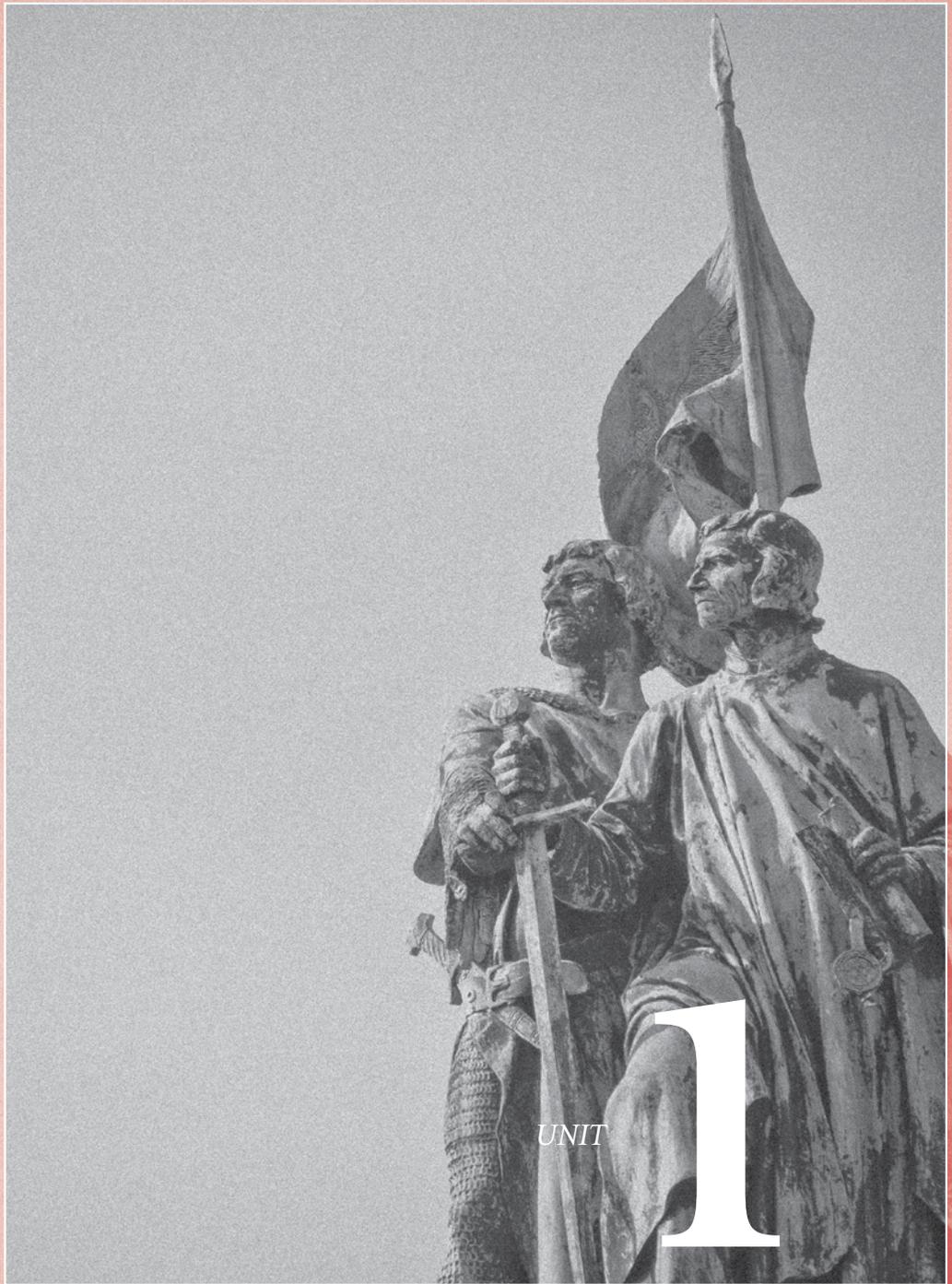
Assessments and Grading

Every school and teacher has a different grading system. Since this is your course, we want you to do whatever works best for you. We have included a grading scale below to give you an idea of how to get started. Please note that it is only a suggestion. If it doesn't work for you, don't feel the need to use it.

- **Participation:** You may want to give your students some form of incentive for participating in class discussion. (Note: This does not apply to the homeschool version since it is self-paced).
- **Quizzes:** We have included 5-question quizzes for every outside reading and video lecture. The quizzes are true/false or multiple choice.
- **Unit Tests:** At the end of every chapter, students will take a test. The tests are a mix of question styles (Matching, multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer).
- **Dear Doug Essays:** At the end of every chapter, students will write a letter/essay to a fictional college student named Doug. Usually, his letters will contain four specific questions for the students to answer.

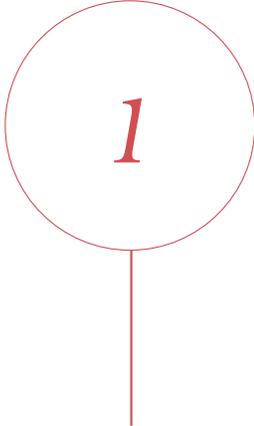
- **Final Exam:** The final exam consists of 100 mixed style questions (Multiple choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank). Since chapter 18 is a comprehensive review, this will also be the unit test for that chapter.

Assessment	% of Grade
Participation	10%
Quizzes	15%
Unit Tests	35%
Essays	35%
Final Exam	5%
TOTAL	100%



UNIT

1



1

THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

CHAPTER 1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. articulate why patterns are an important key to understanding the world. [1.1]
2. name two keys to successfully navigate through life. [1.2]
3. explain why David Noebel felt called to write this textbook. [1.3]
4. articulate why spotting patterns can sometimes be difficult. [1.4]
5. define a worldview. [1.5]
6. list reasons why it is important for Christians to study worldviews. [1.6]
7. explain why Christian worldviews come under attack. [1.7]
8. identify how worldviews spread and how to guard against adopting counterfeit worldviews. [1.8]
9. name and explain the six dominant worldviews of Western culture. [1.9]
10. explain how these disciplines guide how they look at the world. [1.10]
11. explain how Christianity addresses the ten academic disciplines. [1.11]
12. apply the four criteria for testing the truth of a worldview. [1.12]
13. respond to the parable of the elephant. [1.13]
14. state why every worldview cannot be correct. [1.14]

CHAPTER 1 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What can we learn from sports like tennis and games like chess about how the world works? [1.1–1.2]

Sports and games illustrate two truths that can help us understand our world and make it a better place:

1. We live in a rule-governed universe. Our world is governed by rules and principles. We need to learn them and obey them if we want to “win” at the game of life.
2. When the rules are followed—or ignored—patterns emerge. Pattern recognition is a key to shaping what we believe and how we behave.

Chapter 1.1 Activity
THE SECRET TO UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD OF IDEAS

Objective: Students will study a series of numbers and figure out the pattern in the sequence of numbers.

Preparation:

- Materials Needed: paper and pencil
- Time Required: 10 minutes

Procedure:

1. Write this sequence of numbers on the board: 1, 9, 36, 100, 225. Allow 2–5 minutes for the students to study the numbers and figure out the pattern.
2. Congratulate any students who recognized the pattern achieved by taking the cube of each number and adding it to the previous number. On the board demonstrate the steps to solving the pattern: after 1 the number 2 is cubed to be 8 and 1 is added to 8 to make the sum of 9; 3 cubed is $27 + 9 = 36$; 4 cubed is $64 + 36 = 100$; 5 cubed is $125 + 100 = 225$.
3. Now that students know the pattern, have them complete the next five numbers in the pattern.
4. Give students two minutes to create a pattern of their own using numbers, alphabet letters, or shapes. Have them trade papers with a classmate and try to figure out each other's pattern.
5. After about two minutes, inquire about the students' success in figuring out the patterns. Discuss what clues and strategies they used to help them recognize the pattern. Challenge students to watch for patterns throughout the day and record any clues that alerted them to the patterns.

The concepts of rules and patterns also apply to the world we inhabit. It is governed by a discernable set of rules and our ideas about this world can be arranged and cataloged into discernable patterns (i.e., a **worldview**), which in turn will enable us to find purpose and meaning in life, avoid mistakes and define success.

Another lesson we can learn is “practice makes better.” (No one is perfect.) Remember the 10,000-hour rule. It takes years to develop proficiency and skill, to train the eye what to look for and the body how to respond. The same is true in the world of ideas. We must train ourselves to see the ideas that influence the world and how they affect us.

Finally, a good coach or mentor can speed up the learning process and help us become better than we ever could on our own. We need to find wise people who study ideas and pay attention to what they pay attention to.

2. Do the patterns we see around us every day suggest answers to some of life’s bigger questions? What are some of those questions? [1.1–1.2]

- Where do we come from?
- Where are we going?
- How do we live a good life?
- What happens when we die?
- How can we tell what’s good and bad, true or false, just or unjust?
- What can we do to make the world a better place?

3. You’ve never seen, touched or smelled an idea but you’ve had plenty of them. What are ideas and how do they influence us? [1.4]

An idea is “a thought or suggestion as to a possible course of action.” What we think and believe, along with our general impressions about the world, are always based on *something*. If they are not based on an accurate understanding of truth, we’ll always be disoriented, unable to distinguish between genuine clues and background noise.

4. Our ideas inform our beliefs and influence our behavior. Think of some bad ideas humans have had and what happened as a result. Now do the same with some good ideas.

Bad ideas:

- Atheism
- Materialism
- Nazism
- Communism
- Slavery
- Facebook

Good ideas:

- Humans made in the image of God
- The Golden Rule
- Freedom
- Justice
- Equal rights
- Facebook

5. Ideas flow together into complex patterns. Does the amount of information available to us today make it easier or harder to see and understand patterns? [1.4]

Much harder! Thanks to the Internet, people have more information about everything than ever before, including religion. But not all this information is true. Even utterly wrong ideas can be promoted on cool websites and made to look credible. Anyone can spout their opinions and share their experiences. There has never been a greater need for discernment in filtering information to find knowledge that can lead to wisdom.

6. Where does the New Testament tell Christians to see the world differently from other people? Why is this shift in perspective so important? [1.5]

In Romans 12:2, the apostle Paul writes, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

The pattern of the natural world doesn’t conform to God’s will. This is why Christians must be able to recognize and refute the world’s pattern. We are to be transformed by renewing our minds. Then we will be able to understand how God created the world and what his purpose is for us.

7. Everyone has a way of seeing the world—a worldview—even if he or she doesn’t realize it. What is a “worldview” and how does it influence the way we live? [1.5]

A worldview is a pattern of ideas, beliefs, convictions and habits that help make sense of God, the world and our relationship to both. A worldview is like a map or a GPS program that tells us where we are, where we need to go and the best route to get there.

Our worldview not only influences how we see and respond to things around us, it gives us a sense of what the world should be like. It not only describes reality, it prescribes how we should behave in every situation, despite our circumstances. It informs our beliefs and influences our behavior.

Chapter 1.5 Activity**THE SECRET TO UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD OF IDEAS**

Objective: Students will identify the people who influence them.

Preparation:

- Materials Needed: computer or paper, pencil, and highlighter
- Time Required: 15 minutes

Procedure:

1. Point out that students might never meet or talk with some of the people who influence them. Often different people will influence them in different areas or stages of their lives.
2. Have the students make an extensive list of their influencers and their area of influence. For example, my cousin influences my sense of fashion because she is a model in New York.
3. After a few minutes, mention that our families are often influenced by the same people, but there can also be different influencers. Direct everyone to take his or her list and circle the names of people that also influence their parents. Let them explain what they noticed about the influencers they have in common with their parents and why some people are not influencers of their parents.
4. Discuss how communities often have influencers who are popular or have a strong influence. Next, have the students read through their lists again and underline the names of anyone they think influences the teachers and administration at your Christian school. Have them compare and see what they notice about their markings.
5. Explain that, although they do not personally know their favorite actors or singers, there are some clues about who might influence these celebrities. Have the class put a checkmark beside the names of anyone they think might influence their favorite actors or singers. Ask what pattern they see in the markings.
6. Mention the fact that just because people say they are Christians does not insure they get their worldview from the Bible. Tell the class to review their list one last time and use a yellow highlighter to mark the influencers they believe to be Christians. Ask them if they noticed anything surprising about the number of names highlighted and names not highlighted.
7. Inquire if students notice any patterns among the results of their lists and in comparison to the lists of other students. Challenge them to pay attention to who they are allowing to influence them and make any alterations necessary to assure they are accepting good influences.

8. Most of us rely on GPS programs. (When was the last time you looked at a paper map?) How many ways can you think of that a worldview and a GPS program are alike?

- Both can help us find our way in unfamiliar territory.
- Both can put our immediate location in perspective by placing it in a larger context.
- Both can analyze multiple routes and recommend the best one.
- You can choose to use or ignore the information they provide.
- Neither is influenced by subjective opinions.

9. What are some of the fundamental questions a worldview seeks to answer? [1.5]

- Why are we here?
- What does it mean to be human?
- What is the meaning and purpose of life?
- Is there a difference between right and wrong?
- Is there a God? If so, what is God like?

10. Do intangible ideas have tangible results? Do ideas have consequences? If so, in what ways? [1.6]

Ideas aren't neutral: they inform our beliefs and behaviors; they shape our convictions and cultures. They are at the heart of our worldview, which is how we make sense of the world. History has shown over and over again that good ideas lead to healthy societies while bad ideas lead to decay and destruction.

11. Can you give some examples from history where bad ideas had devastating consequences? [1.6]

Nazism was directly responsible for the deaths of more than twenty-one million people, in addition to the tens of millions who died as a result of World War II.

Communist regimes slaughtered well over one hundred million people in the twentieth century and many still suffer and die under its influence today.

12. What is the risk if you defend a Christian worldview and question the worldviews of others? [1.7]

You can expect to be attacked and belittled, especially by those in the academic and scientific communities. Your faith may be mocked and your intelligence called into question. You should not respond in the same manner but should address the criticisms with reasonable arguments. This book will help equip you for the challenge.

Chapter 1.6 Activity**WHY SHOULD WE CARE?**

Objective: Students will research and share an example of a bad belief that caused someone else serious pain.

Preparation:

- Materials Needed: computer or newspaper
- Time Required: 15–30 minutes

Procedure:

1. Divide the class into pairs. Make sure each pair has a computer or newspaper to use.
2. Direct students to conduct an Internet search or scan the local newspaper to find a current example of a bad idea that caused someone else serious pain. For example, a young man believed that drinking excessively was a good way to celebrate a recent victory on the football field, but while driving home he lost control of his car and accidentally took the life of a young mother. Encourage students to work together to discern each bad idea and the negative consequences that followed.
3. Allow time for each pair to present their example to the class and explain what belief impacted others in a negative way. Ask them to suggest a different action based on a different belief that could have altered the situation.

- 13. Can you recall a time when you shared your Christian worldview or questioned the worldview of a teacher or other adult who disagreed with you? What was the response?**

[Answers will vary.]

- 14. In what ways are ideas like viruses? [1.8]**

Both are spread by contact and can move quickly from person to person. Both can grow exponentially and “go viral,” affecting whole cultures. Both need the right conditions to thrive and both can be slowed down or stopped by appropriate measures.

Some ideas are good and others are bad but both kinds are spread in the same way.

15. How can we protect ourselves against bad ideas? [1.8]

As the body with viruses and the mind with ideas, there are ways to promote health and fight disease. Here are six possible approaches to dealing with ideas:

- No preparation
- Reinforcement of previous preparation
- Warning of attack
- Inoculation
- Inoculation plus refutation
- Inoculation plus refutation plus preparation

The most effective strategy is the last one: inoculation plus refutation plus preparation. The least effective strategy is reinforcement of previous preparation. Repeating a message over and over again—even with increasing fervency and emotion is actually counter-productive, worse than no preparation at all.

Inoculation involves telling the truth, exposing the lies that deceive people, showing them how to refute those lies and preparing them with the thinking skills necessary to resist and refute falsehoods. The starting point for all this is an understanding of the dominant worldviews of our day.

16. Can you name the six dominant worldviews outlined in this chapter and summarize each in a few sentences? [1.9]

The six dominant worldviews are Christianity, Islam, New Spirituality Secularism, Marxism and Postmodernism.

Christianity is founded on Jesus Christ, the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament and God incarnated as a human being. Christians believe that God has revealed himself in the Bible as well as in nature, but especially in the person of Jesus Christ.

Islam Is founded on the teachings of an Arabian trader named Muhammad. His submission to God gave the religion its name; Islam means “submission.” The holy book of Islam is the Quran, believed by Muslims to be God’s full and final revelation.

New Spirituality is a mix of Eastern religions, paganism, and pseudoscience. It teaches that the world is spiritual but not governed by a personal, all-powerful God. This spirituality is a “consciousness” we all can experience and learn to control.

Secularism believes humans are the center of reality and rejects the relevance of God, the afterlife, and anything beyond what we can examine with our senses. Although claiming to be nonreligious, Secularists do have beliefs about the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe.

Marxism was invented by Karl Marx, who defined history as a struggle between the haves (the owners) and the have-nots (the workers). The utopian state he thought mankind could achieve through class struggle is called communism.

Postmodernism is a reaction against modernism, the idea that science and human reason can solve humankind's problems. Postmodernists question everything—even the idea that we can ever know reality itself.

Chapter 1.9 Activity

THE SIX WORLD VIEWS

Objective: Students will write three questions they would like answered about each of the six worldviews.

Preparation:

- Materials Needed: computer or paper and pencil
- Time Required: 10 minutes

Procedure:

1. Point out that although some basic knowledge has been presented about the six worldviews, volumes of information still exist about each worldview. Have your students write three legitimate questions for each worldview they would like answered.
2. Let students find a partner and compare their lists of questions. Invite pairs to share any questions they both had in common. Note the types of questions students have in common.
3. Direct students to set these questions aside and periodically refer to them and write the answer when/if it gets answered.
4. Make a point at the end of this volume to have them check to see if their questions were answered and compare the results they found with others. Use this as a way to encourage students that their knowledge base has increased as a result of studying this textbook

17. Of the six worldviews, which ones would be considered theistic and which ones would be called secular? [1.9]

It should be noted that any worldview addressing the question of God's existence is religious. Thus every major worldview is religious. Of the six worldviews surveyed in

this course, three affirm the existence of a supernatural deity while the other three are either skeptical or atheistic.

Theistic	Secular
Christianity	Secularism
Islam	Marxism
New Spirituality	Postmodernism

18. An advanced education is comprised of basic disciplines or areas of study. This book explores how ten basic academic disciplines are understood in the six worldviews being studied. Can you name and define all ten? [1.10]

The basic disciplines are theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, economics, law, politics, and history.

Theology is the study of God. It seeks to answer questions like: Does God exist? If God exists, what is God like? How did I, and everything else, get here?

Philosophy means “love of wisdom.” It’s the study of knowledge, truth, reality, and how we know what we know. It wants to understand the ultimate nature of things.

Ethics comes from ethos, the Greek word for “goodness.” Ethics is interested in the moral conduct, values, and duties that lead to “the good life.”

Biology deals with the question “What does it mean to be alive?” Biology is the study of life and living organisms in the natural world, from their origins to their extinction.

Psychology is the study of the soul and is concerned with what makes us human. It tries to understand how people act and why we do what we do.

Sociology is the study of human societies and how we live in community. It delves into various cultures, languages, and beliefs and seeks to answer the questions: How do societies compare? How do we best live together?

Law has to do with how we govern ourselves in order to coexist peacefully as citizens. It deals with what the basis for law is and what constitutes just and orderly governance.

Politics means “the rule of a city.” It studies the best ways to organize community, which includes neighborhoods, cities, counties, states, and nations.

Economics means “the art of running a household.” It’s the study of how to best use and manage resources in order to be optimally productive.

History is the discipline focused on how people thought and lived in the past. What happened then can help us better understand the present and prepare for the future.

Chapter 1.10 Activity

TEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE WORLD

Objective: Students will rank the 10 disciplines in order of importance in their lives and explain how these disciplines guide how they look at the world.

Preparation:

- Materials Needed: computer or paper and pencil.
- Time Required: 15–30 minutes

Procedure:

1. Explain that the 10 disciplines mentioned relate to academia and not all students may feel compelled to attend university and study these disciplines. God has created each student with unique gifts and interests. Help students recognize that not everyone is called to pursue these disciplines, but it is important that all students understand these areas and the effect they have on how people view the world.
2. Have students rank these 10 disciplines in order of importance to their life and their future studies.
3. Engage students in a discussion of how they chose the ranking of their top three choices and how these disciplines affect how they look at their world. Ask students to explain what other disciplines they would add to the list of 10 and why.
4. Challenge students to put a star by the three disciplines they want to learn more about and to write the names of people who are involved in those disciplines and could be a source of information for them.
5. Lead a discussion about people in your school, church, or community who are good resources for any students who want to begin pursuing more knowledge in these disciplines.

19. What does the text say is the Christian perspective on the ten disciplines that make up a worldview? [1.11]

Theology: A designed universe and a world prepared for human life point toward a personal and intelligent Creator who we believe also reveals himself in the Bible. Atheism (belief in no god), polytheism (belief in many gods), or pantheism (belief in god as the universe) don't explain who we are and how we got here nearly as well.

Philosophy: The biblical notion of mind preceding matter is superior to the atheistic idea of matter preceding mind. Christianity teaches we can know things because they have been ordered in a way our senses can perceive by Jesus Christ, who is the “Logos [revealed knowledge] of God” (John 1:1). Christianity opposes any philosophy that denies objective reality or that limits the world to either matter (i.e., naturalism) or the immaterial (i.e., non-naturalism).

Ethics: Christianity teaches that right and wrong are based on the nature and character of a personal, loving God. This approach to morality is superior to any ethical theory based upon evolution, moral relativism, pragmatism, or other human schemes. Jesus Christ is the perfect example of how we should live. He is “the true light” (John 1:9; 3:19–20).

Biology: The existence of a personal, intelligent creator who designed the universe—and us—for a specific purpose fits the evidence better than blind chance, spontaneous generation, or macroevolution. God’s plan can be seen from the beginning when he organizes each creature “according to its kind” (Gen. 1:21). Human beings are unique among God’s creation in that we bear his image and are much more than highly evolved animals.

Psychology: Christians believe that God designed human beings as material and spiritual creatures, comprised of body and soul. Understanding this plus the idea that humans are sinful, imperfect, and in need of being changed or “redeemed,” makes more sense of our behavior than seeing people as guilt-free moral agents in complete control of their actions.

Sociology: Historical evidence shows that society functions best when the family, church, and state exercise their proper authority within their God-ordained spheres. At its most basic level, society flourishes when built upon strong families composed of father, mother, and children, as hinted at in Genesis 1.

Law: Christians believe that human beings flourish best in societies that promote justice and order based on an understanding of God’s nature and character as revealed in the created order and in Scripture. God is a just God. This truth provides a firm foundation for the laws governing human behavior.

Politics: The Christian belief that rights are a gift from God and secured by government is more logically persuasive, morally appealing, and politically sound than any atheistic theory that maintains human rights are derived from the state or that rights evolve to meet the needs of human communities.

Economics: Christians believe in the concepts of private property and the responsible stewardship of resources, which leads to greater human flourishing and dignity. They oppose coercive government policies that destroy individual responsibility and incentives to work and reject economic theories that abolish private property or arbitrarily redistribute wealth.

History: Christians view the history of this world as having a beginning and a culmination. The Bible promises a future kingdom ushered in by Jesus Christ in which the promise of all things being made new is more hopeful than nihilism or the limited utopian schemes of mortal humans.

In every discipline, we believe the Christian worldview is more realistic, more scientific, and more defensible. It does a better job of explaining our place in the universe.

20. It's not enough to say the Christian worldview is true and that it accurately represents reality. The book *Making Sense of Your World* suggests four tests for determining whether or not a worldview is true. Can you name and describe each in one sentence? [1.12]

1. Test of reason: Can it be stated and defended logically?
2. Test of the outer world: Is there some external evidence to support it?
3. Test of the inner world: Does it adequately address personal experience?
4. Test of the real world: Does it lead to positive or negative consequences?

21. In your opinion, how does the Christian worldview hold up when these tests are applied to it?

- Can Christianity be stated and defended logically?
- Is there external evidence to support Christianity?
- Does Christianity adequately address personal experience?
- Does Christianity lead to positive or negative consequences?

[Encourage free and open discussion. You're not looking for right or wrong answers so much as discovering where the students are at in their understanding of worldviews in general and Christianity in particular.]

22. Retell the parable of the elephant in your own words. How does each blind man experience and describe the elephant? Are their descriptions true or false? [1.13]

Three blind men encounter an elephant. They don't have an objective experience of seeing the elephant but they have a subjective experience of touching it. The first touches the tail and says the elephant is like a rope. The second feels a leg and describes the elephant as a tree. The third grabs the tusk and believes the animal is similar to a spear.

The descriptions are true perceptions based on limited subjective experience but they are objectively false because they don't match the total reality of the elephant in the real world.

23. The story of the blind men and the elephant is sometimes used to illustrate how different worldviews can all be true. When used like this, what's the moral of the story? [1.13]

The moral of the parable is that different worldviews are valid interpretations of reality. No single worldview has the whole picture. Each is correct in its own way, based on its limited knowledge.

Because of this, it is said, we should not make exclusive claims about "our" worldview being better or truer than other worldviews. Since every worldview can only see part of reality, no worldview should make generalizations about the whole.

24. What's the problem with this interpretation of the parable? [1.13]

When it comes to worldviews, they can't all be true because they make competing and contradictory claims. Each one is limited to a small portion of the "elephant" of the universe. The parable (1) assumes that no one can have a bird's eye view of the entire elephant but (2) contains this elusive and unique bird's eye view of the entire elephant.

The only way to understand the moral of this parable is to see all of the parts of the elephant simultaneously. Yet the parable states that everyone is limited to only a small part of the elephant. Here's where the analogy breaks down. Christians believe it is possible for someone to see the entire elephant (i.e., the world as it is), because God has given us unique knowledge of himself and his creation.

25. Why can't all worldviews be true? [1.14]

In a nutshell, they have contradictory beliefs that can't all be true. According to the law of non-contradiction, two contradictory propositions cannot both be true at the same time and in the same sense. For example, New Spirituality contends that God is impersonal, while Christianity contends that God is personal. Marxism claims God doesn't exist, while Islam insists he does. Postmodernism asserts that God is unknowable, while Christianity teaches that we can know him. Everyone can't be right.

26. Christians recognize that God has communicated through his creation as well as Scripture, so it's no surprise to find elements of truth in non-Christian worldviews. Can you give some examples? [1.14]

Totally different patterns (worldviews) may still contain common threads (ideas):

Both Marxism and Secularism recognize the power of science to be applied for the betterment of humanity.

New Spirituality and Islam both talk about God, though their understanding of God could not be more incompatible.

Postmodernism and Christianity agree that science and human reason can't solve humankind's problems but they have radically different views of what those problems are and how they can be addressed.

Most worldviews recognize there's something wrong with human beings that has to be understood, controlled, and eventually fixed.

Most worldviews have a concept of justice, a sense that things are not as they ought to be in the world.

Chapter 1.14 Activity

IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES

Objective: Students will create a song, poster, slide presentation, or poem to communicate to teens that every worldview cannot be correct.

Preparation:

- Materials Needed: various art supplies including papers and poster boards, pencils and markers, computers with presentation software
- Time Required: 60–80 minutes (two full class periods or work done at home)

Procedure:

1. Discuss the Barna results which show that 63% of teens believe that all religions use different names for the same god. Take a poll of your students and compare it to the Barna poll.
2. Ask students why they think teens believe this way and what might change their attitudes.
3. Have the students work alone or in small groups of their choosing to create a musical presentation, piece of artwork, or slide presentation to show teens that all religions are not paths to the one, true God. Announce the two class periods you will make available for work or the date they are to bring their completed projects for presentation to the class.

27. What's the major dividing line between Christian and non-Christian worldviews? [1.13–1.14]

The major dividing line is the person of Jesus Christ. Christians view Jesus as savior, lord, and king. He is “the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6). Other worldviews reject these claims; some even deny the existence of Jesus altogether. Christians maintain that without the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the salvation of the human

race, all is lost. As Paul points out, “if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain” (1 Cor. 15:14).

The teachings of the Bible don’t blend well with the non-Christian claims that the universe is a product of time and chance and that human beings are smart enough and good enough to save themselves.

“PLATO’S CAVE” READING

Plato (427–347 B.C.) was one of the most famous and influential philosophers of all time. Many of his writings are dialogues with his mentor, Socrates, as the speaker. *The Allegory of the Cave* found in Book VII of *The Republic* is a discussion between Socrates and Glaucon. It illustrates many of Plato’s philosophical assumptions, including:

- The physical world isn’t the real world but only a poor copy
- The real world can only be grasped intellectually
- The universe is ultimately good and beautiful
- Enlightened people have an obligation to enlighten others
- The good society is one in which the truly wise are the rulers

PLATO’S CAVE

Except from Plato’s *Republic*, Book VII

[Socrates:] Imagine human beings living in an underground, cavelike dwelling, with an entrance a long way up, which is both open to the light and as wide as the cave itself. They’ve been there since childhood, fixed in the same place, with their necks and legs fettered, able to see only in front of them, because their bonds prevent them from turning their heads around. Light is provided by a fire burning far above and behind them. Also behind them, but on higher ground, there is a path stretching between them and the fire. Imagine that along this path a low wall has been built, like the screen in front of puppeteers above which they show their puppets.

[Gloucon:] I’m imagining it.

[Socrates:] Then also imagine that there are people along the wall, carrying all kinds of artifacts that project above it—statues of people and other animals, made out of stone, wood, and every material. And, as you’d expect, some of the carriers are talking, and some are silent.

[**Gloucon:**] It's a strange image you're describing, and strange prisoners.

[**Socrates:**] They're like us. Do you suppose, first of all, that these prisoners see anything of themselves and one another besides the shadows that the fire casts on the wall in front of them? How could they, if they have to keep their heads motionless throughout life? What about the things being carried along the wall? Isn't the same true of them?

[**Gloucon:**] Of course.

[**Socrates:**] And if they could talk to one another, don't you think they'd suppose that the names they used applied to the things they see passing before them?

[**Gloucon:**] They'd have to.

[**Socrates:**] And what if their prison also had an echo from the wall facing them? Don't you think they'd believe that the shadows passing in front of them were talking whenever one of the carriers passing along the wall was doing so?

[**Gloucon:**] I certainly do.

[**Socrates:**] Then the prisoners would in every way believe that the truth is nothing other than the shadows of those artifacts.

[**Gloucon:**] They must surely believe that.

[**Socrates:**] Consider, then, what being released from their bonds and cured of their ignorance would naturally be like if something like this came to pass. When one of them was freed and suddenly compelled to stand up, turn his head, walk, and look up toward the light, he'd be pained and dazzled and unable to see the things whose shadows he'd seen before. What do you think he'd say, if we told him that what he'd seen before was inconsequential, but that now—because he is a bit closer to the things that are and is turned toward things that are more—he sees more correctly? Or, to put it another way if we pointed to each of the things passing by, asked him what each of them and compelled him to answer, don't you think he'd be at a loss and that he'd believe that the things he saw earlier were truer than the ones he was now being shown?

[**Gloucon:**] Much truer.

[**Socrates:**] And if someone compelled him to look at the light itself, wouldn't his eyes hurt, and wouldn't he turn around and flee towards the things he's able to see, believing that they're really clearer than the ones he's being shown?

[**Gloucon:**] He would.

[Socrates:] And if someone dragged him away from there by force, up the rough, steep path, and didn't let him go until he had dragged him into the sunlight, wouldn't he be pained and irritated at being treated that way? And when he came into the light, with the sun filling his eyes, wouldn't he be unable to see a single one of the things now said to be true?

[Gloucon:] He would be unable to see them, at least at first.

[Socrates:] I suppose, then, that he'd need time to get adjusted before he could see things in the world above. At first, he'd see shadows most easily, then images of men and other things in water, then the things themselves. Of these, he'd be able to study the things in the sky and the sky itself more easily at night, looking at the light of the stars and the moon, than during the day, looking at the sun and the light of the sun.

[Gloucon:] Of course.

[Socrates:] Finally, I suppose, he'd be able to see the sun, not images of it in water or some alien place, but the sun itself, in its own place, and be able to study it.

[Gloucon:] Necessarily so.

[Socrates:] And at this point he would infer and conclude that the sun provides the seasons and the years, governs everything in the visible world, and is in some way the cause of all the things that he used to see.

[Gloucon:] It's clear that would be his next step.

[Socrates:] What about when he reminds himself of his first dwelling place, his fellow prisoners, and what passed for wisdom there? Don't you think that he'd count himself happy for the change and pity the others?

[Gloucon:] Certainly.

[Socrates:] And if there had been any honors, praises, or prizes among them for the one who was sharpest at identifying the shadows as they passed by and who best remembered which usually came earlier, which later, and which simultaneously, and who could thus best divine the future, do you think that our man would desire these rewards or envy those among the prisoners who were honored and held power? Instead, wouldn't he feel, with Homer, that he'd much prefer to "work the earth as a serf to another, one without possessions," and go through any sufferings, rather than share their opinions and live as they do?

[Gloucon:] I suppose he would rather suffer anything than live like that.

[Socrates:] Consider this too. If this man went down into the cave again and sat down in his same seat, wouldn't his eyes—coming suddenly out of the sun like that—be filled with darkness?

[**Gloucon:**] They certainly would.

[**Socrates:**] And before his eyes had recovered—and the adjustment would not be quick—while his vision was still dim, if he had to compete again with the perpetual prisoners in recognizing the shadows, wouldn't he invite ridicule? Wouldn't it be said of him that he'd returned from his upward journey with his eyesight ruined and that it isn't worthwhile even to try to travel upward? And, as for anyone who tried to free them and lead them upward, if they could somehow get their hands on him, wouldn't they kill him?

[**Gloucon:**] They certainly would.

[**Socrates:**] This whole image, Glaucon, must be fitted together with what we said before. The visible realm should be likened to the prison dwelling, and the light of the fire inside it to the power of the sun. And if you interpret the upward journey and the study of things above as the upward journey of the soul to the intelligible realm, you'll grasp what I hope to convey, since that is what you wanted to hear about. Whether it's true or not, only the god knows. But this is how I see it: In the knowable realm, the form of the good is the last thing to be seen, and it is reached only with difficulty. Once one has seen it, however, one must conclude that it is the cause of all that is correct and beautiful in anything, that it produces both light and its source in the visible realm, and that in the intelligible realm it controls and provides truth and understanding, so that anyone who is to act sensibly in private or public must see it.

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“PLATO’S CAVE” DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you summarize Plato’s parable of the cave in your own words?

Prisoners from birth, a group of people are forced to live deep underground in a cave. Their legs and necks have been securely chained, forcing them to face a wall in front of them. A bright fire shines above and behind, providing the only source of light. Behind them, their captors lift up various objects. The light from the fire casts shadows of these objects upon the wall. Unable to turn their heads, the prisoners see these shadows as the real objects of the world.

Then one day a prisoner is freed. Able to move around, he sees the objects causing the shadows he had come to accept as real. He struggles to comprehend the distinction between the objects casting shadows and the shadows themselves. He leaves the cave and encounters the sun. At first, he is blinded, but as his sight adjusts, he realizes that this sun is responsible for giving light to the world. By this light he eventually learns to see the trees, grass, and flowers as they really are. He goes back to his old friends only to find out that he no longer sees as they see, and he decides he no longer desires their company because of their differing views.

2. Who do the prisoners represent? What do the shadows represent?

The prisoners represent unenlightened humanity—a picture of everyone who hasn’t come to see the world as it truly is. (For Plato, this would include anyone who hadn’t adopted his unique philosophical form of idealism.)

The shadows represent the distortions of reality that we have come to accept in place of the truth. Although similar in form, these shadows are merely misrepresentations of the truth. Their appearances are very similar to the objects from which they emanate, but they are still illusions nonetheless.

3. Why was the light painful for the newly freed man? What was Plato’s point in this detail?

Anyone who has been awakened from a deep sleep by a bright light can attest that light is sometimes painful. After an entire lifetime in darkness, the prisoner’s sight was suddenly overwhelmed with the brightness of truth. Frightened and confused, at first the man retreated back to the darkness he had always known. But as he learned to understand that he had been misled by the darkness and shadows, he resolved to endure the pain and accept what was revealed by the light.

The point Plato seems to be making is that it is difficult and painful to reorient our understanding of reality. It takes time for old views to be replaced with newer ones. When we are first introduced to this light, it can be so scary that we are often tempted to ignore what we have just seen and return to the lie we used to believe. As we adjust our understanding, we struggle, but Plato wanted to show that the journey is worth it because he believed that discovering truth and living by it is the noblest pursuit of man.

4. What does the sun represent?

The sun is the last element perceived by the freed man. Once he was enlightened, he first saw the objects themselves. But when he looked up, he saw the origin of all light, which illuminates the world and allowed him to see the objects as they truly are. (For Plato, the highest and purest form of reality is the Good. All other elements of reality become clear by the light of this Good, which is the origin and sustainer of all other things.)

5. Why did the freed prisoner not wish to go back to his former life?

Although at first it might be difficult to accept the truth, once we've understood it, it is even more difficult to ignore. Even if it were in our own best interest, there is just something about the way we were made that makes it virtually impossible to believe what we know to be a lie. After discovering the sun, its light, and the objects that cast the shadows, the former prisoner couldn't return to a world he knew was false. He could no longer talk about the shadows as though they were real, and he couldn't make himself care about mere shadows of real things. The former prisoner preferred to live the rest of his life alone with the truth rather than go back to living in the dark with his friends.

6. Why would the prisoners try to kill anyone attempting to show them the light?

When the freed man returned, he could no longer see the shadows as his companions saw them. Because his friends knew nothing of his journey to the light or what he found there, they could only assume that the journey harmed his vision instead of correcting it. The former prisoner no longer saw the world as his friends did, and because their way of seeing was all they'd ever known, they believed his new worldview to be harmful. This made the prisoners upset with the man. They feared that anyone who saw this light would eventually return as blind as their lost friend.

7. What is the point of Plato's parable of the cave?

Plato wanted to help his audience begin to ask questions about their beliefs, showing that the true nature of reality might be different from what we've always believed or assumed. He encouraged his readers to question, to ask if there is more to reality than what meets the eye. Though sometimes this kind of learning is painful, and a person might have to change his or her life to match these new experiences, Plato believed the truth is worth the struggle.

8. What insights can we glean about worldviews from a parable written more than 2,000 years ago?

People have been thinking about worldview questions for a very long time. It's important to realize that these questions have been asked and answered in many different ways for as long as human beings have existed. Learning about how ancient philosophers have thought can help us understand our roots and answer these questions better for ourselves.

▶ “AN INTRODUCTION TO WORLDVIEWS” VIDEO

Eric Smith defines a worldview as “a pattern of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits that help us make sense of God, the world, and our relationship to God and the world.” Worldviews answers life big questions: Why are we here? Does life have meaning and purpose? Is there right and wrong? Is there a God? Who am I?

In deciding which worldview is true, we can apply four tests of truth:

1. Test of reason: Is it reasonable? Is it consistent and not self-refuting?
2. Test of the outer world: Is there some external, self-corroborating evidence to support it?
3. Test of the inner world: Does it adequately match what we experience in our world?
4. Test of the real world: Are its consequences good or bad when applied in any given cultural context?



To access this video, go to www.summitu.com/utt and enter the passcode found in the back of your manual.

 **“AN INTRODUCTION TO WORLDVIEWS” VIDEO OUTLINE**

A worldview helps us make sense of the world we live in. We live in a world of ideas about what is right and wrong, how we should live, and so on. We don't have to memorize every grouping of ideas. We can look for patterns. Everything can be categorized into worldviews and we can see the world that way.

What is a worldview?

A pattern of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits that help us make sense of God, the world, and our relationship to God and the world.

What does a worldview do?

It answers life's big questions:

- Why are we here?
- Does life have meaning and purpose?
- Is there right and wrong?
- Is there a God ?
- Who am I?

Ideas can be collected into six different worldviews. These worldviews shape our ideas, habits, and identity. Habits, the things we do on a regular basis, shape and reinforce who we are. They reinforce the ideas we believe in.

Which worldview is true?

Four tests of truth:

1. Test of reason : Is it reasonable? Can it be logically stated and defended? Is it consistent and not self-refuting?
2. Test of the outer world: Is there some external, self-corroborating evidence to support it? Worldviews that claim to have roots in history, such as Christianity and Islam, must be corroborated by external evidence.
3. Test of the inner world: Does it adequately match what we experience in our world? How does something line up with what we think and feel?
4. Test of the real world: Are its consequences good or bad when applied in any given cultural context? History is full of negative examples such as Marxism and Islam.

▶ “AN INTRODUCTION TO WORLDVIEWS” DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is a worldview?

A worldview is a pattern of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits that help us make sense of God, the world, and our relationship to God and the world. We live in a world of ideas about what is right and wrong, how we should live, and so on.

We don't have to memorize every grouping of ideas. We can look for patterns. Everything can be categorized into worldviews and we can see the world that way. Ideas can be collected into six major worldviews. These worldviews shape our ideas, habits, and identity.

2. What does a worldview do?

A worldview answers life's big questions:

- Why are we here?
- Does life have meaning and purpose?
- Is there right and wrong?
- Is there a God?
- Who am I?

Every worldview answers these questions differently based on the ideas and presuppositions that underpin them. We must not only look at the roots (ideas and beliefs) of a worldview but of the fruit it produces. What kind of people and societies does it produce when lived out in the real world?

3. Which worldview is true?

Truth can be understood in two ways: with our minds (Romans 12:2) and with our hearts (Hebrews 4:12). We believe truth can be tested in at least four ways. These tests can be applied to worldviews to determine their truthfulness:

1. Test of reason: Is it reasonable? Can it be logically stated and defended? Is it consistent and not self-refuting?
2. Test of the outer world: Is there some external, self-corroborating evidence to support it? Worldviews that claim to have roots in history must be corroborated by external evidence.
3. Test of the inner world: Does it adequately match what we experience in our world? How does something line up with what we think and feel?
4. Test of the real world: Are its consequences good or bad when applied in any given cultural context?

4. How does the “test of the outer world” apply to worldviews and religions?

If a worldview or religion claims to have its roots in history like Judaism, Christianity, Islam, or Mormonism, the events upon which they are based must be corroborated by external evidence. Is there objective extrabiblical evidence for things like the exodus, the giving of the law to Moses, the resurrection of Jesus, the dealings of Mohammad, and American history as described by Mormonism?

Some worldviews like Secularism or Postmodernism aren't concerned with history or factual events. They are more focused on belief systems and subjective attitudes.

5. How does the “test of the real world” apply to worldviews?

The test of the real world looks at what happens when a worldview is lived out. What kind of people or society does it produce and does the fruit match what the worldview promises? Are its consequences good or bad when a worldview is applied in any given cultural context?

In the twentieth century, several worldviews were lived out on a national or international scale. Did Marxism in Russia, China, Cuba, or the other countries where it was tried produce the utopia promised by Marx in *The Communist Manifesto*? Has Secularism has a positive or negative impact on American culture? Has New Spirituality brought higher consciousness and world peace?

Jesus said, “By their fruits you shall know them” (Matthew 7:20, NKJV). This is a great test to apply evenhandedly to all worldviews, including the one you personally hold. Nothing human will be perfect, but which worldview most closely produces what it promises to deliver?

Chapter 1 Key Points

Key Questions:

1. What is a worldview?
2. Why is it important to study worldviews?

Key Verses:

1. Roman 12:2
2. 1 Peter 3:15

Key Terms:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Biology | 7. Politics |
| 2. Economics | 8. Psychology |
| 3. Ethics | 9. Religion |
| 4. History | 10. Sociology |
| 5. Law | 11. Theology |
| 6. Philosophy | 12. Worldview* |

**Short answer or essay question on the exam*

CHAPTER 1 ASSIGNMENT

Hello!

Well, I'm finally settled into my dorm room. You wouldn't think that it would take so long to move into a room the size of a closet, but when you're sharing that space with a roommate, you have to be creative.

My roommate, Nathan, is really interesting. After noticing my Bible, he mentioned that he is taking a World Religions class this semester. It sounded like a fascinating class, so I signed up too! My course load this semester is fairly light since it is my first semester and all. In addition to World Religions, I am taking English Composition, Art History, Economics, and Basket Weaving. (Don't laugh!)

Yesterday was the first day of classes. I was really nervous, but I got through it. My World Religions professor is hilarious. He dresses like a hippie and even brought a ukulele to class. It will probably be my most fun course this term. When he began his lecture, he asked each of us to say what religion, if any, we believe in. Many of the students said they believed in Christianity, but a number of them held to Islam, Judaism, and even atheism. Nathan said he was "into spirituality," but I have no idea what he meant by that. I'll have to ask him sometime.

Anyway, back to the lecture. The professor gave a brief rundown of what he called the major "worldviews." Despite my confusion, everyone seemed to understand what that meant, so I didn't ask since I didn't want to look ignorant. He proceeded to say that by the end of the semester, most of the professed Christians would believe something different. Needless to say, I was shocked. After class, I asked the professor why he expected that to happen. We talked for a while before the professor asked me if I thought Christianity was the only way to God. I answered yes, since Christianity is the only religion that acknowledges Jesus as both God and Savior. The professor proposed a different view. He thought that all religions ultimately lead to God. He argued that ultimately religions are just different paths to the same destination. I stammered out a short reply, saying that not all religions believe in Jesus, but it didn't seem to satisfy him. He asked what I knew about other religions, and I admitted that I did not know much. The last thing he said has really had me thinking the last few days. He said, "If you don't know what other religions believe, then how do you know that other religions don't lead to God as well?" I didn't know what to say.

I'd like to be able to defend my faith to him, but the questions he asked made me wonder if I've thought through my beliefs carefully. My professor said he's open to talking about Christianity, but I don't think I know just how to explain it to him. Can you help me figure out what to say? **What is a worldview?** Can you also explain to me **why should we study worldviews?** I mean, I know I should since he pointed out how little I know, but I don't know if I could really say why. He's interested in learning about my beliefs, but **what does it mean to have a Christian worldview?**

Well, it's already past midnight, so I'd better get some sleep. I have a class at 8 a.m. tomorrow and can't skip breakfast if I want to have my brain awake that early!

One last thing . . . **do you know why you are a Christian?** I know I am, but after my conversation with the professor, I am not sure I know *why* I am. Just curious.

—Doug

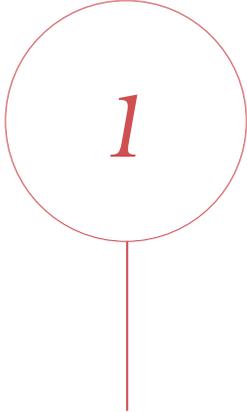
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1

THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

CHAPTER 1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

1. articulate why patterns are an important key to understanding the world. [1.1]
2. name two keys to successfully navigate through life. [1.2]
3. explain why David Noebel felt called to write this textbook. [1.3]
4. articulate why spotting patterns can sometimes be difficult. [1.4]
5. define a worldview. [1.5]
6. list reasons why it is important for Christians to study worldviews. [1.6]
7. explain why Christian worldviews come under attack. [1.7]
8. identify how worldviews spread and how to guard against adopting counterfeit worldviews. [1.8]
9. name and explain the six dominant worldviews of Western culture. [1.9]
10. explain how these disciplines guide how they look at the world. [1.10]
11. explain how Christianity addresses the ten academic disciplines. [1.11]
12. apply the four criteria for testing the truth of a worldview. [1.12]
13. respond to the parable of the elephant. [1.13]
14. state why every worldview cannot be correct. [1.14]

CHAPTER 1 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What can we learn from sports like tennis and games like chess about how the world works? [1.1–1.2]
2. Do the patterns we see around us every day suggest answers to some of life's bigger questions? What are some of those questions? [1.1–1.2]
3. You've never seen, touched or smelled an idea but you've had plenty of them. What are ideas and how do they influence us? [1.4]
4. Our ideas inform our beliefs and influence our behavior. Think of some bad ideas humans have had and what happened as a result. Now do the same with some good ideas.

13. Can you recall a time when you shared your Christian worldview or questioned the worldview of a teacher or other adult who disagreed with you? What was the response?

14. In what ways are ideas like viruses? [1.8]

15. How can we protect ourselves against bad ideas? [1.8]

16. Can you name the six dominant worldviews outlined in this chapter and summarize each in a few sentences? [1.9]

17. Of the six worldviews, which ones would be considered theistic and which ones would be called secular? [1.9]
18. An advanced education is comprised of basic disciplines or areas of study. This book explores how ten basic academic disciplines are understood in the six worldviews being studied. Can you name and define all ten? [1.10]
19. What does the text say is the Christian perspective on the ten disciplines that make up a worldview? [1.11]
20. It's not enough to say the Christian worldview is true and that it accurately represents reality. The book *Making Sense of Your World* suggests four tests for determining whether or not a worldview is true. Can you name and describe each in one sentence? [1.12]

21. In your opinion, how does the Christian worldview hold up when these tests are applied to it?
22. Retell the parable of the elephant in your own words. How does each blind man experience and describe the elephant? Are their descriptions true or false? [1.13]
23. The story of the blind men and the elephant is sometimes used to illustrate how different worldviews can all be true. When used like this, what's the moral of the story? [1.13]
24. What's the problem with this interpretation of the parable? [1.13]

25. Why can't all worldviews be true? [1.14]

26. Christians recognize that God has communicated through his creation as well as Scripture, so it's no surprise to find elements of truth in non-Christian worldviews. Can you give some examples? [1.14]

27. What's the major dividing line between Christian and non-Christian worldviews? [1.13-1.14]

“PLATO’S CAVE” READING

Plato (427–347 B.C.) was one of the most famous and influential philosophers of all time. Many of his writings are dialogues with his mentor, Socrates, as the speaker. *The Allegory of the Cave* found in Book VII of *The Republic* is a discussion between Socrates and Glaucon. It illustrates many of Plato’s philosophical assumptions, including:

- The physical world isn’t the real world but only a poor copy
- The real world can only be grasped intellectually
- The universe is ultimately good and beautiful
- Enlightened people have an obligation to enlighten others
- The good society is one in which the truly wise are the rulers

PLATO’S CAVE

Except from Plato’s *Republic*, Book VII

[Socrates:] Imagine human beings living in an underground, cavelike dwelling, with an entrance a long way up, which is both open to the light and as wide as the cave itself. They’ve been there since childhood, fixed in the same place, with their necks and legs fettered, able to see only in front of them, because their bonds prevent them from turning their heads around. Light is provided by a fire burning far above and behind them. Also behind them, but on higher ground, there is a path stretching between them and the fire. Imagine that along this path a low wall has been built, like the screen in front of puppeteers above which they show their puppets.

[Gloucon:] I’m imagining it.

[Socrates:] Then also imagine that there are people along the wall, carrying all kinds of artifacts that project above it—statues of people and other animals, made out of stone, wood, and every material. And, as you’d expect, some of the carriers are talking, and some are silent.

[Gloucon:] It’s a strange image you’re describing, and strange prisoners.

[Socrates:] They’re like us. Do you suppose, first of all, that these prisoners see anything of themselves and one another besides the shadows that the fire casts on the wall in front of them? How could they, if they have to keep their heads motionless throughout life? What about the things being carried along the wall? Isn’t the same true of them?

[Gloucon:] Of course.

[Socrates:] And if they could talk to one another, don't you think they'd suppose that the names they used applied to the things they see passing before them?

[Gloucon:] They'd have to.

[Socrates:] And what if their prison also had an echo from the wall facing them? Don't you think they'd believe that the shadows passing in front of them were talking whenever one of the carriers passing along the wall was doing so?

[Gloucon:] I certainly do.

[Socrates:] Then the prisoners would in every way believe that the truth is nothing other than the shadows of those artifacts.

[Gloucon:] They must surely believe that.

[Socrates:] Consider, then, what being released from their bonds and cured of their ignorance would naturally be like if something like this came to pass. When one of them was freed and suddenly compelled to stand up, turn his head, walk, and look up toward the light, he'd be pained and dazzled and unable to see the things whose shadows he'd seen before. What do you think he'd say, if we told him that what he'd seen before was inconsequential, but that now—because he is a bit closer to the things that are and is turned toward things that are more—he sees more correctly? Or, to put it another way if we pointed to each of the things passing by, asked him what each of them and compelled him to answer, don't you think he'd be at a loss and that he'd believe that the things he saw earlier were truer than the ones he was now being shown?

[Gloucon:] Much truer.

[Socrates:] And if someone compelled him to look at the light itself, wouldn't his eyes hurt, and wouldn't he turn around and flee towards the things he's able to see, believing that they're really clearer than the ones he's being shown?

[Gloucon:] He would.

[Socrates:] And if someone dragged him away from there by force, up the rough, steep path, and didn't let him go until he had dragged him into the sunlight, wouldn't he be pained and irritated at being treated that way? And when he came into the light, with the sun filling his eyes, wouldn't he be unable to see a single one of the things now said to be true?

[Gloucon:] He would be unable to see them, at least at first.

[Socrates:] I suppose, then, that he'd need time to get adjusted before he could see things in the world above. At first, he'd see shadows most easily, then images of men and other things in water, then the things themselves. Of these, he'd be able to study the things in the sky and the sky itself more easily at night, looking at the light of the stars and the moon, than during the day, looking at the sun and the light of the sun.

[Gloucon:] Of course.

[Socrates:] Finally, I suppose, he'd be able to see the sun, not images of it in water or some alien place, but the sun itself, in its own place, and be able to study it.

[Gloucon:] Necessarily so.

[Socrates:] And at this point he would infer and conclude that the sun provides the seasons and the years, governs everything in the visible world, and is in some way the cause of all the things that he used to see.

[Gloucon:] It's clear that would be his next step.

[Socrates:] What about when he reminds himself of his first dwelling place, his fellow prisoners, and what passed for wisdom there? Don't you think that he'd count himself happy for the change and pity the others?

[Gloucon:] Certainly.

[Socrates:] And if there had been any honors, praises, or prizes among them for the one who was sharpest at identifying the shadows as they passed by and who best remembered which usually came earlier, which later, and which simultaneously, and who could thus best divine the future, do you think that our man would desire these rewards or envy those among the prisoners who were honored and held power? Instead, wouldn't he feel, with Homer, that he'd much prefer to "work the earth as a serf to another, one without possessions," and go through any sufferings, rather than share their opinions and live as they do?

[Gloucon:] I suppose he would rather suffer anything than live like that.

[Socrates:] Consider this too. If this man went down into the cave again and sat down in his same seat, wouldn't his eyes—coming suddenly out of the sun like that—be filled with darkness?

[Gloucon:] They certainly would.

[Socrates:] And before his eyes had recovered—and the adjustment would not be quick—while his vision was still dim, if he had to compete again with the perpetual prisoners in recognizing the shadows, wouldn't he invite ridicule? Wouldn't it be said of him that he'd returned from his upward journey with his eyesight ruined and that it isn't worthwhile even to try to travel upward? And, as for anyone who tried to free them and lead them upward, if they could somehow get their hands on him, wouldn't they kill him?

[Gloucon:] They certainly would.

[Socrates:] This whole image, Glaucon, must be fitted together with what we said before. The visible realm should be likened to the prison dwelling, and the light of the fire inside it to the power of the sun. And if you interpret the upward journey and the study

of things above as the upward journey of the soul to the intelligible realm, you'll grasp what I hope to convey, since that is what you wanted to hear about. Whether it's true or not, only the god knows. But this is how I see it: In the knowable realm, the form of the good is the last thing to be seen, and it is reached only with difficulty. Once one has seen it, however, one must conclude that it is the cause of all that is correct and beautiful in anything, that it produces both light and its source in the visible realm, and that in the intelligible realm it controls and provides truth and understanding, so that anyone who is to act sensibly in private or public must see it.

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"PLATO'S CAVE" DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Can you summarize Plato's parable of the cave in your own words?
2. Who do the prisoners represent? What do the shadows represent?
3. Why was the light painful for the newly freed man? What was Plato's point in this detail?
4. What does the sun represent?

"PLATO'S CAVE" DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

5. Why did the freed prisoner not wish to go back to his former life?
6. Why would the prisoners try to kill anyone attempting to show them the light?
7. What is the point of Plato's parable of the cave?
8. What insights can we glean about worldviews from a parable written more than 2,000 years ago?

"AN INTRODUCTION TO WORLDVIEWS" VIDEO

Eric Smith defines a worldview as "a pattern of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits that help us make sense of God, the world, and our relationship to God and the world." Worldviews answers life big questions: Why are we here? Does life have meaning and purpose? Is there right and wrong? Is there a God? Who am I?

In deciding which worldview is true, we can apply four tests of truth:

1. Test of reason: Is it reasonable? Is it consistent and not self-refuting?
2. Test of the outer world: Is there some external, self-corroborating evidence to support it?
3. Test of the inner world: Does it adequately match what we experience in our world?
4. Test of the real world: Are its consequences good or bad when applied in any given cultural context?



To access this video, go to www.summitu.com/utt and enter the passcode found in the back of your manual.

▶ "AN INTRODUCTION TO WORLDVIEWS" VIDEO OUTLINE

A _____ helps us make sense of the world we live in. We live in a world of ideas about what is right and wrong, how we should live, and so on. We don't have to memorize every grouping of ideas. We can look for patterns. Everything can be categorized into worldviews and we can see the world that way.

What is a worldview?

A _____ of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits that help us make sense of God, the world, and our relationship to God and the world.

What does a worldview do?

It answers life's big questions:

- Why are we here?
- Does _____ have meaning and purpose?
- Is there right and wrong?
- Is there a _____?
- Who am I?

Ideas can be collected into six different worldviews. These worldviews shape our ideas, habits, and identity. Habits, the things we do on a regular basis, shape and reinforce who we are. They reinforce the ideas we believe in.

Which worldview is true?

Four tests of truth:

1. Test of _____: Is it reasonable? Can it be logically stated and defended? Is it consistent and not self-refuting?
2. Test of the _____ world: Is there some external, self-corroborating evidence to support it? Worldviews that claim to have roots in history, such as Christianity and Islam, must be corroborated by external evidence.
3. Test of the _____ world: Does it adequately match what we experience in our world? How does something line up with what we think and feel?
4. Test of the _____ world: Are its consequences good or bad when applied in any given cultural context? History is full of negative examples such as Marxism and Islam.

▶ "AN INTRODUCTION TO WORLDVIEWS" DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is a worldview?
2. What does a worldview do?
3. Which worldview is true?
4. How does the "test of the outer world" apply to worldviews and religions?
5. How does the "test of the real world" apply to worldviews?

Chapter 1 Key Points

Key Questions:

1. What is a worldview?
2. Why is it important to study worldviews?

Key Verses:

1. Roman 12:2
2. 1 Peter 3:15

Key Terms:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Biology | 7. Politics |
| 2. Economics | 8. Psychology |
| 3. Ethics | 9. Religion |
| 4. History | 10. Sociology |
| 5. Law | 11. Theology |
| 6. Philosophy | 12. Worldview* |

*Short answer or essay question on the exam

CHAPTER 1 ASSIGNMENT

Hello!

Well, I'm finally settled into my dorm room. You wouldn't think that it would take so long to move into a room the size of a closet, but when you're sharing that space with a roommate, you have to be creative.

My roommate, Nathan, is really interesting. After noticing my Bible, he mentioned that he is taking a World Religions class this semester. It sounded like a fascinating class, so I signed up too! My course load this semester is fairly light since it is my first semester and all. In addition to World Religions, I am taking English Composition, Art History, Economics, and Basket Weaving. (Don't laugh!)

Yesterday was the first day of classes. I was really nervous, but I got through it. My World Religions professor is hilarious. He dresses like a hippie and even brought a ukulele to class. It will probably be my most fun course this term. When he began his lecture, he asked each of us to say what religion, if any, we believe in. Many of the students said they believed in Christianity, but a number of them held to Islam, Judaism, and even atheism. Nathan said he was "into spirituality," but I have no idea what he meant by that. I'll have to ask him sometime.

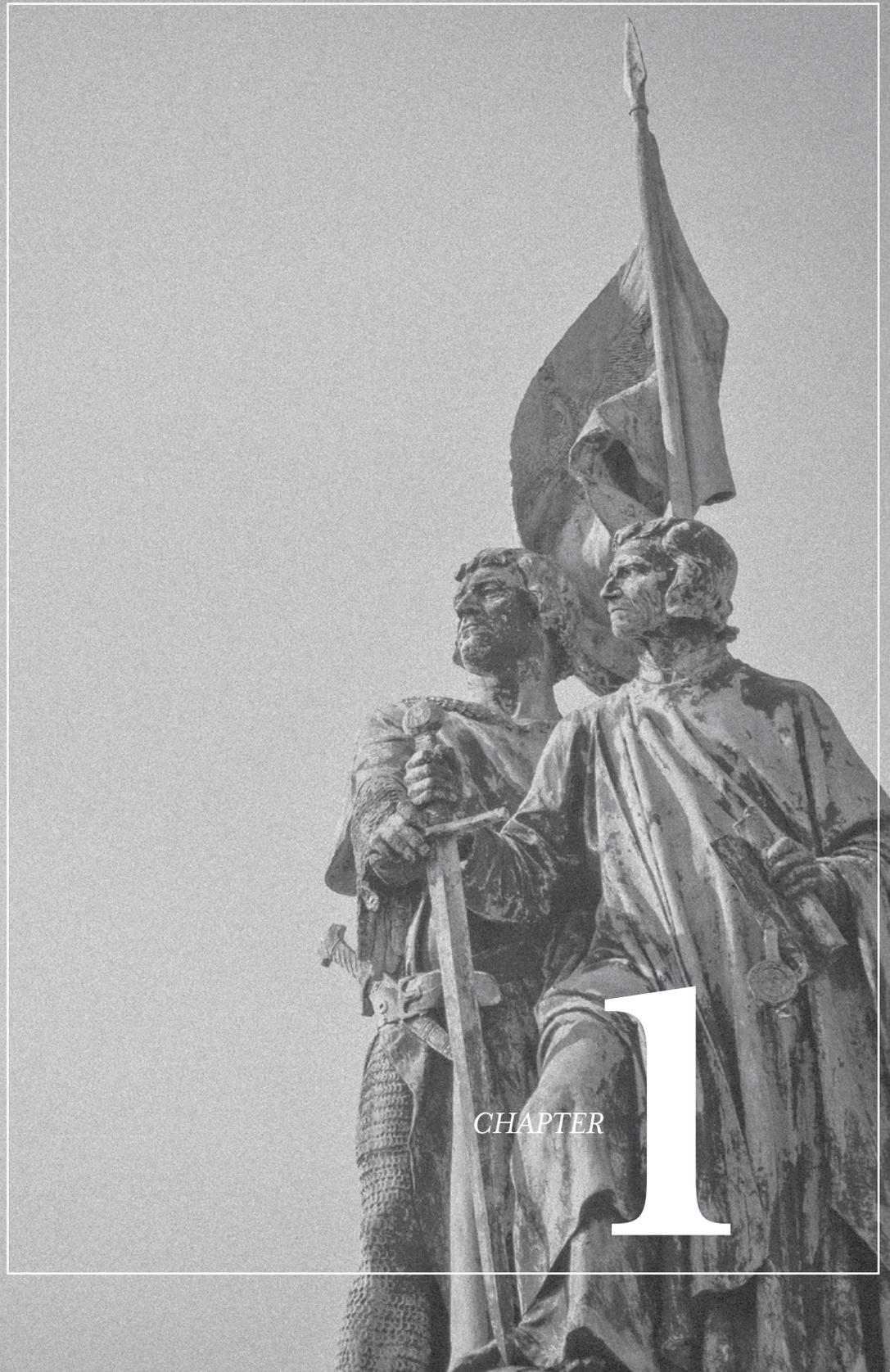
Anyway, back to the lecture. The professor gave a brief rundown of what he called the major "worldviews." Despite my confusion, everyone seemed to understand what that meant, so I didn't ask since I didn't want to look ignorant. He proceeded to say that by the end of the semester, most of the professed Christians would believe something different. Needless to say, I was shocked. After class, I asked the professor why he expected that to happen. We talked for a while before the professor asked me if I thought Christianity was the only way to God. I answered yes, since Christianity is the only religion that acknowledges Jesus as both God and Savior. The professor proposed a different view. He thought that all religions ultimately lead to God. He argued that ultimately religions are just different paths to the same destination. I stammered out a short reply, saying that not all religions believe in Jesus, but it didn't seem to satisfy him. He asked what I knew about other religions, and I admitted that I did not know much. The last thing he said has really had me thinking the last few days. He said, "If you don't know what other religions believe, then how do you know that other religions don't lead to God as well?" I didn't know what to say.

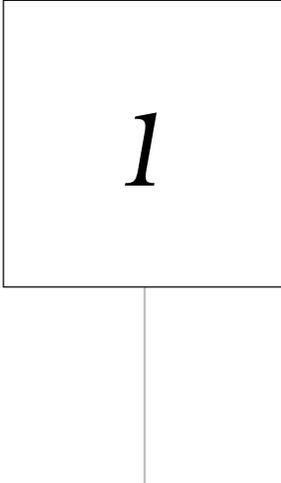
I'd like to be able to defend my faith to him, but the questions he asked made me wonder if I've thought through my beliefs carefully. My professor said he's open to talking about Christianity, but I don't think I know just how to explain it to him. Can you help me figure out what to say? **What is a worldview?** Can you also explain to me **why should we study worldviews?** I mean, I know I should since he pointed out how little I know, but I don't know if I could really say why. He's interested in learning about my beliefs, but **what does it mean to have a Christian worldview?**

Well, it's already past midnight, so I'll better get some sleep. I have a class at 8 a.m. tomorrow and can't skip breakfast if I want to have my brain awake that early!

One last thing... **do you know why you are a Christian?** I know I am, but after my conversation with the professor, I am not sure I know why I am. Just curious.

-Doug





1

THE BATTLE OF IDEAS

1. THE SECRET TO UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD OF IDEAS

To understand the world of ideas, we must figure out how tennis champs return opponents' blazing fast serves and how chess masters memorize the position of every piece on the board.

If you've ever been on a tennis team, your coach probably told you to "keep your eye on the ball." But that's not good enough if you have to return a 150-mile-per-hour serve from former world-champion tennis player Andy Roddick. By the time you react to the serve, the ball is already past you. Yet those who played Roddick regularly returned such serves. How could they possibly do this?

To understand the world of ideas, we must figure out how tennis champs return opponents' blazing fast serves and how chess masters memorize the position of every piece on the board.

Now think about how chess grand masters read the chess board. After just briefly seeing the board of a partially played chess game, they are able to remember the exact placement of the pieces. Do they have photographic memories?

Maybe tennis and chess champions are just made differently from the rest of us. Maybe they're more gifted. It would be somewhat of a relief if this were true, because we'd be off the hook for having to figure out their secrets and apply them to our own lives. But it's not that simple.

2. CHAMPIONS SUCCEED BY MASTERING THE WORLD'S PATTERNS

Champions have learned to see things differently. This gives them a level of success the rest of us find amazing. Understanding how they do it is the key to successfully navigating our complicated, confusing, and contentious world. There are two keys to unlocking the mystery.

Key No. 1: We live in a rule-governed universe. Andy Roddick can't serve the ball anywhere he likes. He has to make it land in a certain square on the court, or it doesn't count. Similarly, pieces on a chess board cannot be moved wherever the player wishes. There are rules about what each piece can do. Life is like that too. There are rules. If we can understand and live by them, we can find purpose and learn how to make the world a better place.

Key No. 2: When the rules are followed or ignored, patterns emerge. Our friend David Wheaton played against Andy Roddick a few times and described his serve as "unbelievably enormous." David said, "If Roddick hits a 150 mile-per-hour serve in the corner, there's no way to touch it unless you've accurately guessed where it is going to hit." Most of us would just stand there while the ball whizzed past. Experienced players don't do this, obviously. They study the patterns of tennis serves. David told us,

Good returners "absorb" several things about a big server so they can learn or get a sense of where the serve might be going: they notice where the ball toss is, they notice where the server likes to serve on big points and where he's been going on previous points, and maybe they even notice where the server looks before he serves.... Just a lot of little things that give the returner an idea of where the ball might go.¹

In other words, tennis serves reveal patterns. If you can observe and respond to those patterns, you have a shot at winning, or at least not getting completely crushed.

But what about the chess players? The myth of the photographic memory of chess grand masters evaporated when researchers ran a test in which they *randomly* placed the pieces on the board in a way they would never appear during an actual game. Under these conditions, the memories of the baffled grand masters were almost as poor as the control group of non-chess players.²

It turns out that chess experts use their experience regarding how chess pieces move to make sense of the patterns of play. They divide the board into chunks and remember the position of the pieces in each chunk, which enables them to reproduce with incredible accuracy the position of all the pieces on the board. But they can do this only when the pieces are

placed as they would be during an actual game. These chess grand masters aren't memorizing the entire board; they are making sense of the patterns that emerge when the game is played according to the rules.

Of course, it takes a lot of practice to recognize patterns, whether in tennis or chess or anything else. Malcolm Gladwell refers to what he calls the "10,000-hour rule," the number of hours of intensive concentration and practice it takes to master a subject. If you worked at it eight hours a day, it would take you three and a half years to get that kind of experience.³ There is no real shortcut to this rule, at least individually. However, if you have a wise mentor, someone who guides you, builds on your successes, and coaches you in avoiding mistakes, you can become an expert more quickly than other people, though it will still take concentrated effort.⁴

Rules. Patterns. It doesn't matter whether we're playing a sport or a board game or shopping or just navigating through the streets to a friend's house. We are constantly trying our hand at pattern recognition on the assumption that the world is a rule-based place.

Here's a big question, though: Are there patterns that extend to life's big questions? If so, is it possible to discern patterns that reveal where we come from, what the good life looks like, how we should treat others, and what happens when we die? If there are patterns for such things, is it possible to figure out which patterns are good or bad, true or false, just or unjust?

Here's an even bigger question if all of the above is possible: Given the sheer volume of ideas in the world today, is it even possible to accomplish such a massive feat as figuring out the rules and patterns that answer life's ultimate questions? This volume is designed to set you on the course to finding answers to these questions.

This chapter introduces a way of thinking about the world we think you will find compelling and helpful. We'll discuss how ideas become persuasive and how to identify patterns of ideas so you can understand the world around you. We'll also examine six worldviews that influence just about everyone in the world today, and we'll see how that influence manifests itself in the key academic disciplines operating in America's institutions of higher learning.

So now that you know where we're coming from, let's look at the history of the ideas on which this book is based.

3. WHERE UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES COMES FROM

The book you are reading has a history stretching back more than fifty years. As a student at Hope College in Holland, Michigan, David Noebel attended a chapel service addressing the topic of communism. The speaker, an Australian medical doctor named Fred Schwarz, said communism was fast growing and persuasive because it was *religious*. It answered life's ultimate questions, inspired ardor and devotion, and gave meaning to people's lives. It had a means of winning and discipling converts, as well as a vision of spreading to the whole world.

Something clicked for Noebel. Maybe the battles of our age are not first and foremost military battles but battles of *ideas*. And these ideas are compelling because they are religious. As a Christian preparing for ministry, Noebel thought Christians ought to understand the world of ideas in order to not be taken captive by deceptive philosophies (Col. 2:8).⁵ With these thoughts in mind, Noebel approached the speaker to ask a few questions. The college president noted Noebel's interest and invited him to form a study group about communism.

Noebel took up this challenge and came to see communism as a direct competitor to Christianity. Millions were being misled, and millions of lives hung in the balance. And communism wasn't the only counterfeit worldview, he realized; many ideas were battling for the hearts and minds of people, nations, and cultures.

Years later, in 1991, Noebel compiled his extensive knowledge about worldviews into a nine-hundred-page book called *Understanding the Times*, one of the bestselling worldview texts of all time. All together, there are more than six hundred thousand copies in print. If you've heard the term *worldview*, you've likely been influenced by Noebel or someone he influenced.

Soon after the publication of *Understanding the Times*, Noebel asked Jeff Myers to develop an accompanying curriculum featuring videos of Christian thinkers and in-depth reading. More than one hundred thousand people have studied this curriculum. *Understanding the Times* has been periodically revised and expanded to keep up with the emergence of new ideas and the repackaging of old ones. You are holding the latest version, which updates the language, examples, sources, and organization of the original while maintaining its core structure.⁶

But let's go back to the concept of patterns. Do ideas, as well as tennis serves and chess moves, flow in patterns? If so, is it possible to tell whether they are consistent with or different from God's pattern?

4. IDEAS FLOW IN COMPLEX PATTERNS

Imagine walking around a crowded room and then being asked to describe whom and what you saw. You might remember a few details, but a trained investigator or spy would remember much more. He could describe the room with astounding detail. Why? Because he's trained in a *way of seeing*. He knows what to pay attention to and what to ignore. In the movies and on television, such a person always looks like a genius who possesses a supernatural awareness. In reality, understanding comes from discipline and training. In his book *Cold-Case Christianity*, J. Warner Wallace, a highly regarded cold-case detective, demonstrates how detectives identify the details they see and go through a mental checklist to figure out which details are clues and which are background noise.⁷

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines an *idea* as "a thought or suggestion as to a possible course of action."⁸ What we conceive, what we believe, and our general impressions about the world are always based on *something*. If they are not based on an accurate understanding of truth, we'll always be disoriented, unable to distinguish between genuine clues and background noise. This is why it is important, as the sixteenth-century scientist Johannes Kepler phrased it, to "[think] God's thoughts after him." God made the rules. To bear his image well, we should try to understand them, discern the patterns they create, and live differently as a result.

But it's harder to pick out patterns when we have lots of information as opposed to when our choices are simple. Let's say you open the cupboard and find nothing to eat except a packet of seafood-flavored noodles and a packet of chicken-flavored noodles. *Noodles are noodles*, you tell yourself. *Just pick one*. If you're at the Public Market in Emeryville, California, though, there are seventeen different food stalls offering cuisine from all over the world. Each of these restaurants offers about ten choices. It takes more thoughtfulness to decide when you have 170 choices as opposed to 2.

The same is true with religion. Today, largely because of the Internet, people have more information about religion—and everything else—than ever before. In 2011, according to Domo, a company that helps other companies make sense of the Internet, *every passing minute* 204,166,667 email messages were sent, YouTube users uploaded forty-eight hours of new video, Twitter users sent more than one hundred thousand tweets, and Instagram users shared thirty-six hundred new photos.⁹ By the time you read this, the numbers will be even higher.¹⁰ There is literally so much information on the Internet that it distracts people from doing what they ought to do. The *New York Times* reports that the cost of interruptions to people's workdays—looking at the latest video they've been forwarded or checking out someone's Twitter feed—is around \$650 billion dollars a year in lost productivity.¹¹

Today, largely because of the Internet, people have more information about religion—and everything else—than ever before.

Some people try to manage the accelerating growth of information by multitasking. Ironically, those who constantly switch between tasks are actually less productive because each activity has its own rules, and it takes time for the mind to switch from one set of rules to another.¹² In the case of driving and texting, this literally kills people. The more than three thousand texting-while-driving deaths each year prove that our capacity is not fast enough to switch between tasks.¹³

In this world of ballooning information, if you are curious about some obscure religion, you can get answers in two or three mouse clicks. No matter how remote the area in which they live, people from all over the world can access all of the world's ideas and do it with their smartphones while walking down the street. The problem is, of course, that the more information we have, the harder it is to figure out what to do with it all. Even utterly wrong ideas can boast a cool website, making them appear credible. Information growth is exponential; wisdom's demise is precipitous.

In this world of ballooning information, if you are curious about some obscure religion, you can get answers in two or three mouse clicks.

So who can make their way in a world like this? Those capable of quickly figuring out the rules and recognizing the patterns of ideas. It's true with tennis and chess, and it's true with life's ultimate questions. People with discernment can see the relationship between all of the pieces of information they are trying to process at any given moment. If they are thoughtful about spiritual things, this capacity will enable them to better understand God, the world, and their relationship to God and the world.

5. THE WORLD'S PATTERNS ARE DIFFERENT FROM GOD'S PATTERN

What we understand about God and the world affects what we believe about everything else, including what kinds of arguments we find persuasive and how we justify our intended actions. That's why the apostle Paul said in Romans 12:2, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." To understand what God wants from

us, we must identify the world's patterns, refuse to conform to them, and be transformed to embrace a God-pleasing pattern of living.

We call a pattern of ideas a **worldview**. A worldview answers such fundamental questions as *Why are we here? What is the meaning and purpose of life? Is there a difference between right and wrong? Is there a God?* We all develop ideas

Worldview: a pattern of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits that help us make sense of God, the world, and our relationship to God and the world.

in our attempt to answer these questions, and our ideas naturally give rise to a system of belief that becomes the basis for our decisions and actions. Our worldview is like a map. It helps us know where we are, where we need to go, and the best route to get there.

Our worldview does not merely reflect what we think the world *is* like; it directs what we think the world *should be* like. In other words, our worldview

not only *describes* reality; it *prescribes* how we should act and respond to every aspect of life. Because our ideas *do* determine how we behave, the bottom line is that our ideas *do* have consequences.

This doesn't mean that everyone is aware of his or her deeply held ideas. If we were to ask a person on the street about her philosophy of life, we would probably get a blank stare. But if we asked how life began, she would probably offer some sort of answer, even if the answer was not completely coherent. Still, her belief would impact the way she lives her life. It's also often the case that people are unaware of where their deeply held beliefs come from. If we were to continue our street conversation by asking *why* this woman believes what she claims to believe, she might shrug and reply, "I don't know; I just believe it." Often people

Often people pick up their beliefs like they catch colds—by being around other people!

pick up their beliefs like they catch colds—by being around other people! And since ideas are everywhere—on television, in books and magazines, at the movies, and in conversation with friends and family—it's easy to pick them up without considering whether they're worth believing.

Regardless of where they come from, the ideas we embrace about the nature of reality lead to a set of core beliefs, which in turn form convictions about how we should live meaningfully. This beefs up our definition of *worldview*. A worldview is a "pattern of ideas," but it's also a "pattern of beliefs, convictions, and habits that help us make sense of God, the world, and our relationship to God and the world."

Of course, some Christians don't act Christianly. There are also Muslims and Secularists whose lifestyles are inconsistent with what they believe. The Christian idea of the sinful nature predicts this. Human *actions* fall short of human *aspirations*. For example, if a person embraces the idea of sexuality as an expression of love between a married man and woman, he or she will probably believe in abstaining from sexual activity outside of marriage, which reflects a value of sexual purity and a conviction to safeguard it. This does not mean, however, that the person will never indulge in pornography in a moment of weakness. Such indulgence does not invalidate the person's ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits, but it will produce guilt because the person knows pornography is harmful. On the other hand, a person with

no existing beliefs about love and marriage will still feel guilty but may not understand why. People who continue to indulge in pornography may end up in a habitual pattern shaped by the culture's permissive stance rather than what God wants.

Ideas have consequences. They form our beliefs, shape our convictions, and solidify into habits.

There are hundreds of different worldviews. Is it possible to know which of them, if any, is actually true? If you look in the religion section of a bookstore, you'll see books not only on Christianity and Islam, of course, but also on Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Vedantism, Jainism, Shintoism, and many other religions. Each **religion** attempts to explain what the world is like and how we should live. You'll also notice books on Secularism and atheism in the religion section. This might seem odd, but when you think about it, even atheists have a set of beliefs about the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe. They're religious.¹⁴ Even people who don't care about any of this are religious; their religion says the ultimate questions don't matter. All worldviews are religious.

If everyone is religious we would expect their beliefs to lead to certain actions. C. S. Lewis put it this way:

We are now getting to the point at which different beliefs about the universe lead to different behavior.... Religion involves a series of statements about facts, which must be either true or false. If they are true, one set of conclusions will follow about the right sailing of the human fleet[;] if they are false, quite another set.¹⁵

Here's where we are so far. All people try to make sense of the rules of the world by developing ideas. These ideas flow in patterns, which we call worldviews. People's worldviews lead them to value certain things, which leads to particular convictions governing their behavior. These convictions solidify into habits that affect the way people live.

6. WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

As people try to figure out the rules and patterns of the world, they diagnose what is wrong with the world and suggest prescriptions. As in medicine, a wrong diagnosis could lead to mistreating a disease or leave a serious illness untreated. If everyone lived in isolated caves, the consequences of our actions wouldn't affect others. But we aren't isolated. We live in families, communities, cities, and countries. The consequences of bad beliefs can cause serious pain. Some ideas in history have led to death for millions. Nazism systematically exterminated approximately 21 million people, not counting the tens of millions who died in battles initiated by the Nazi regime.¹⁶ Communist regimes slaughtered well over 100 million people in the twentieth century. As we will see in the chapter on Marxism in this volume, the slaughter continues to this day.

Religion: a system of belief that attempts to define the nature of God and how human beings can understand and interact with the divine; any system of belief that prescribes certain responses to the existence (or nonexistence) of the divine.

Ideas have consequences. They form our beliefs, shape our convictions, and solidify into habits.

Every one of these deaths was in the service of an idea. Ideas have consequences, sometimes unspeakably tragic ones. Like a wildfire, these ideas began with a single flame and rapidly spread before a stunned and unprepared populace, engulfing millions. People thought Adolf Hitler was a pompous fool early in his career. Who could have predicted he would actually amass enough power to slaughter millions? Similarly, who could have imagined that a radical writer named Karl Marx, a man deeply unpopular even with his friends, would be capable of unleashing an idea—communism—that would destroy more people than any other idea in history?

Is it possible to understand ideas and their consequences? More important, is it possible to identify bad ideas in time to stop them before they can lay waste to the lives, hopes, and dreams of countless people? Fortunately, the answer is yes. To grasp the world of ideas, we don't need to know everything about everything. In the following pages, we'll take an in-depth look at the pattern of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits that makes up the Christian worldview. We'll suggest that understanding Christianity as a worldview will help us make sense of the world. Understanding other worldviews—other patterns—will confirm the essential truths of Christianity.

Here's a sports analogy: Let's say you play against a team that has sixty completely different plays. It would be hard to prepare for such a complex strategy. But if you know the team actually has six basic plays, each with ten variations, then by figuring out the six plays, you can make better guesses about each variation and know how to counteract it.

In this book we'll discover the six plays and the ten variations that worldview "teams" are running these days. Based on this information, we'll form a mental model from which we can make more accurate guesses about how people all over the world see things. We will examine six dominant worldviews: Christianity, Islam, Secularism, Marxism, New Spirituality, and Postmodernism. Each of these six worldviews claims to present the truth. Then we'll examine each worldview as expressed in ten key academic disciplines to see whether they are, in fact, true.

7. BUT FIRST, A WARNING

Before we analyze the six dominant worldviews, though, a warning is in order: Proponents of many worldviews don't like it when you start poking their nests. This is especially true of academics. Questioning professors and authorities can anger them and make them want to attack. At Summit, we've been called every name in the book: "intolerant," "bigoted," "idiotic," "fanatical," "conspiracy minded," and, our favorite, "bloviating motormouths."

Not all professors have chips on their shoulders. Still, if you embrace a Christian worldview, you should understand that you might be in someone's gun sights. For example, atheist philosopher Richard Rorty, one of the most famous professors of the twentieth century, once proclaimed,

The fundamentalist [by which he meant Christian] parents of our fundamentalist students think that the entire "American liberal Establishment" is engaged in a conspiracy.... These parents have a point.... When we American college teachers encounter religious fundamentalists, we do not consider the possibility of reformulating our own practices of justification so as to give more weight to the authority of the Christian

scriptures. Instead, we do our best to convince these students of the benefits of secularization.... Rather, I think those students are lucky to find themselves under the benevolent *Herrschaft* [teaching] of people like me, and to have escaped the grip of their frightening, vicious, dangerous parents.¹⁷

Rorty was not condemning abusive parents; he was condemning *Christian* parents who, by raising their kids according to a Christian worldview, are “frightening, vicious, [and] dangerous.”

Nowhere are the attacks more vicious than in the sciences. Several years ago Richard Sternberg, a Smithsonian scientist with two PhDs in evolutionary biology, was fired as editor of a Smithsonian science journal for publishing an article written by Cambridge-educated scientist Stephen Meyer. The reason? Meyer’s article defended *intelligent design*, a scientific movement that suggests natural processes cannot in and of themselves explain the great complexity we encounter in the universe.

“[The senior Smithsonian scientists] were saying I accepted money under the table, that I was a crypto-priest, that I was a sleeper cell operative for the creationists,” said Sternberg, who at the time was a Smithsonian research associate. “I was basically run out of there.”¹⁸

A *Washington Post* investigation revealed that Sternberg, who is *not* a creationist, was dismissed because of an orchestrated campaign by the National Center for Science Education (NCSE), a lobbying group fighting to keep criticism of naturalistic evolution out of public schools. In other words, the article Sternberg published was not attacked because its arguments were poor but because these scientific elites had already decided that *no questioning of naturalistic evolution was to be allowed*.¹⁹

Apparently, refusing to believe that everything that exists evolved through random-chance processes, as naturalistic evolutionists believe and teach in schools, is like refusing to wear clothes; it automatically disqualifies a person from appearing in public. Sternberg’s firing led to a chilling, and even a freezing, of free speech among scientists. We have spoken with dozens of scientists who keep their reservations about evolution to themselves because speaking out might damage their careers.

If you live as we are suggesting in this book, you will probably come under attack as well. We’re going to prepare you to respond, not with name calling or sarcasm, but with reasonable arguments. People who make their livings mocking Christianity are actually barring access to a skeleton-filled closet of disastrous ideas. But if you crack that closet door, they’re going to be ticked. Why? Because they have become so accustomed to the ideas they’ve picked up that they cannot imagine the world being any other way. Ideas persist in the thought stream just as viruses enter the bloodstream. When we said earlier that people pick up ideas the way they catch colds, the research shows that this is not far from the truth.

Apparently, refusing to believe that everything that exists evolved through random-chance processes, as naturalistic evolutionists believe and teach in schools, is like refusing to wear clothes; it automatically disqualifies a person from appearing in public.

8. IDEAS SPREAD LIKE VIRUSES

In the 1950s a professor at Yale University named William McGuire developed a theory about how people come to embrace the ideas they find compelling. His insights can help us understand how we might come to adopt good ideas and oppose bad ones.

McGuire theorized that ideas are actually very much like viruses, spreading from person to person. In our fallen and increasingly indiscriminate culture, bad ideas lamentably take root more easily than good ones. Thus, effective leaders must play a dangerous game: they must engage not only in building up good ideas but also in rooting out bad ones. How is it possible to do this without being incurably infected by the very ideas they hope to stand against?

Medical research in the mid-twentieth century demonstrated that a human body can develop immunity to a disease through the process of inoculation, which introduces to the body a weakened form of a disease to give the body's natural defense mechanism time to develop immunity to it.

Professor McGuire wondered whether the same theory would hold true for resisting bad ideas.²⁰ To test his inoculation theory, McGuire exposed subjects to widely accepted claims, such as "People should brush their teeth daily." He then exposed them to counter-claims (e.g., "Brushing your teeth is bad for you") after preparing test groups with varying levels of defense:

- **No preparation** ("Here's an argument—see what you think.")
- **Reinforcement of previous preparation** ("You know that brushing your teeth is good, right?")
- **Warning of attack** ("You will be exposed to a persuasive argument that brushing your teeth is bad.")
- **Inoculation** ("You will hear an argument stating that brushing your teeth wipes away saliva, which is the tooth's natural protective agent.")
- **Inoculation plus refutation** ("When you hear the argument that brushing your teeth is bad because it wipes away saliva, keep in mind that saliva cannot dislodge prepared foods from the teeth—only a brush can consistently do that.")
- **Inoculation plus refutation plus preparation** ("You now know one argument you'll hear to persuade you that brushing your teeth is bad, but you'll be presented with several arguments, and it will be up to you to think them through and refute them.")²¹

In the end, the most effective strategy for resisting counterpersuasion, as you might guess, was the last one: inoculation plus refutation plus preparation. The *least* effective strategy was reinforcement of previous preparation. In fact, more people in this test condition believed the false argument than those in the "no preparation" condition.

That people who have been equipped with the truth could so easily fall for falsehoods is a stunning result. To the extent this research applies to social and political beliefs, we can conclude the following: For people to believe a claim, they must be prepared to defend it

against its challengers. Merely repeating a message over and over again—even with increasing fervency, emotion, and clever staging—is actually *counterproductive*, worse than no preparation at all.

The antidote to indoctrination is to tell the truth, expose people to the lies that would deceive them, show them how to refute those lies, and prepare them with the thinking skills necessary to continue resisting falsehoods. This begins by understanding the worldviews—the patterns of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits—that rule the world today. Again, there are six: Christianity, Islam, Secularism, Marxism, New Spirituality, and Postmodernism. Let's dig in.

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9. THE SIX WORLDVIEWS

As we noted earlier, a *worldview* is a “pattern of ideas, beliefs, convictions, and habits that help us make sense of God, the world, and our relationship to God and the world.” If you know a worldview's assumptions, you can more accurately guess what its adherents believe and why.

There may be hundreds of worldviews operating today. Even some well-known ones, such as Judaism, have relatively few (around thirteen million) followers worldwide. But many bizarre and even humorous worldviews have attracted followers. As the London *Telegraph* reported, 176,632 people in a 2012 national census of England and Wales considered their religious affiliation to be the “Jedi Knights.”²² Another 6,242 said they worshipped heavy-metal music.²³ Obviously we can't cover every worldview that has attracted followers, so we're going to look at the six worldviews that make up the vast majority of the world's population and are evangelistic (inviting everyone else to join them).

1. Christianity. More than 2 billion people in the world claim to be Christians, nearly one-third of the world's population. What they mean by “Christian,” of course, varies widely—some people claim to be Christians because their parents were Christian or because they live in a predominantly Christian country. Still, no one doubts that Christianity is a dominant influence in the world. Christianity goes back to the teachings of Jesus Christ, the Messiah prophesied for centuries among the Israelites in the Old Testament. Christians believe that God has revealed himself in the Bible as well as in nature, but especially in the person of Jesus Christ. Because Jesus Christ was God incarnate (as a human being), his life is at the center of the human story.

The Christian worldview offers a narrative of all history. This narrative starts with God's special creation of human beings, delves into the consequences of their fall from grace, and promises redemption through the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross and his subsequent resurrection.

Christianity has had a profound influence on the world. French philosopher Luc Ferry, a nonbeliever, claims that Christianity alone established the idea that because we are made in the image of the Creator, all human persons have rights.²⁴ Famed British atheist Bertrand Russell said something similar: “What the world

needs is Christian love, or compassion.”²⁵ Whether or not Russell acknowledged it, such love and compassion result directly from following in the footsteps of Christ himself, the epitome of love and compassion.

The Christian worldview offers a narrative of all history. This narrative starts with God’s special creation of human beings, delves into the consequences of their fall from grace, and promises redemption through the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross and his subsequent resurrection.

2. Islam. Islam began September 24 in AD 622, when seventy *muhajirun* pledged loyalty to an Arabian trader from Mecca who had fled to Medina and began receiving special revelations from Allah. The trader’s name: Muhammad. His submission to God gave his religion its name; *Islam* means “submission.” Those who submit to Allah and his prophet Muhammad are called Muslims. Islam is based on a creed prayed aloud five times a day: “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet.”

Muslims believe that their holy book, the Quran, is God’s full and final revelation. The Quran specifies five things a person must do to become a Muslim:

1. Repeat “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet.”
2. Pray the salat (ritual prayer)²⁶ five times a day.
3. Fast during the month of Ramadan.
4. Give one-fortieth of one’s income to the needy.
5. If able, make a pilgrimage to Mecca.²⁷

According to Serge Trifkovic, “Islam is not a ‘mere’ religion; it is a complete way of life, an all-embracing social, political, and legal system that breeds a worldview peculiar to itself.”²⁸ Islam has grown rapidly in the last few decades; 1.6 billion people in the world now claim to be adherents.

3. New Spirituality. What we term New Spirituality is perhaps the most difficult worldview to precisely define. You don’t have to sign, recite, or proclaim anything in particular to join, nor must you attend a church. While unofficial in its dogma, the New Age culture contains an extensive set of beliefs that, once understood, predict what people with those beliefs will value and how they will act.

New Spirituality is a free-flowing combination of Eastern religions, paganism, and pseudoscience that pops up in odd places. Some of the bestselling books of all time—by authors such as Deepak Chopra, Rhonda Byrne, Marilyn Ferguson, and Shakti Gawain—describe a world spiritual in nature but not governed by a personal, all-powerful God. Rather, the spirituality in the world is “consciousness,” an energy in which we all participate and can even learn to control. Talk-show host Oprah Winfrey has admitted to holding many of these beliefs.

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We will study New Spirituality not because it is deeply philosophical or consistent but because some of its associated beliefs—karma, Gaia, being “one” with the environment, reincarnation, meditation, holistic health, and so

forth—are a daily part of life for millions of Americans and have influenced such academic areas as psychology and medicine.

4. Secularism. Secularism comes from the Latin word *saecularis*, roughly meaning “of men,” “of this world,” or “of this time.” Secularists believe humans are the center of reality. They disdain the influence of those who believe in ideas of gods, an afterlife, or anything beyond what we can sense. The primary identifying characteristic of Secularism is its *nonbelief* in other worldviews. Ironically, though, Secularists do generally have an agreed-upon set of beliefs about the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe. So even though they view their beliefs as the *opposite* of religion, they are actually quite religious.

Interestingly, in the twentieth century, several fairly well-known philosophers, such as John Dewey and Julian Huxley, and later Paul Kurtz and Corliss Lamont, combined the term *secular* (“we are for the world”) and the term *humanism* (“we are for humans”) and developed a philosophy of Secular Humanism. Their manifesto, published in 1933 and updated in 1973 and 2000, led thousands of like-minded individuals to form a club called the American Humanist Association (AHA), whose motto is “Good without a god.” With no apparent sense of irony, the AHA operates as a tax-exempt organization based on the IRS section 501(c)(3) *religious* nonprofit exemption. Though its founders have passed away, the AHA still recruits members. Their dues support a publishing company and a monthly publication.

We’ll discuss Secularism and the Secular Humanist movement more in coming chapters, but it is sufficient for now to recognize Secularism as an umbrella term for a set of beliefs the vast majority of academics today accept unquestioningly. We use the term *Secularism* as a prediction, not a label: if someone accepts a Secularist viewpoint on such disciplines as theology, philosophy, and ethics, we can predict fairly accurately what they believe about biology, psychology, and so forth.

5. Marxism. Some religious worldviews develop over hundreds or thousands of years, but others are made up whole cloth in a very short period of time. Such is the case with Marxism and its offshoots Leninism, Maoism, Trotskyism, Fabian socialism, and the various socialist organizations that operate in the United States and around the world. Marxism was invented by Karl Marx, a scholar determined to demonstrate that ownership of private property, the basis for capitalism, was the root of the world’s evils.

To Marx, history could be defined as a struggle between the haves (the owners) and the have-nots (the workers). If only the workers would rise up to overthrow the owners, they could form a workers’ paradise in which all wrongs are righted, all possessions are shared, and all injustices are brought to an end. The utopian state at the end of this long and bloody struggle is called *communism*. People who strive to bring about this state are called *communists*, and their Bible is *The Communist Manifesto*, Marx’s most famous and enduring work. Other such manifestos are still in print today, including the teachings

Some say it’s pointless to include Marxism as a dominant worldview in this volume, but we disagree. Despite the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which dominated what is now called Russia, around 20 percent of the world’s population still lives under the rule of communists.

of Chinese communist leader Mao Tse-tung and a book published by Harvard University Press called *Empire*.

Some say it's pointless to include Marxism as a dominant worldview in this volume, but we disagree. Despite the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which dominated what is now called Russia, around 20 percent of the world's population still lives under the rule of communists. The largest communist country in the world today is China. In spite of its growing industry, China's communist rulers are still very much in control. And when we also consider countries operating on the principles Marx taught but not using the label *communist*, we are talking about a *majority* of the world's population living every day with the consequences of Marx's philosophies. As we will see, despite its clearly atheistic philosophy, Marxism has also made many inroads into the church. Some evangelicals involved in the so-called Christian Left have embraced key tenets of Marxism.

6. Postmodernism.²⁹ People talk about postmodern art, postmodern architecture, and even postmodern ways of doing church, and yet they don't realize that Postmodernism is a well-thought-out and deep philosophical worldview. The father of Postmodernism, German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, had many disciples, including Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Martin Heidegger, Jean-François Lyotard, and Richard Rorty. All are now dead, but their teachings strongly influence higher education to this day.

We will learn more about the complexities of Postmodernism throughout this volume. In short, though, we can say Postmodernism began as a reaction against modernism, the idea that science and human reason can solve humankind's most pressing problems. While science can be used for great good, Postmodernists understand it to be hopelessly corrupted by the quest for power. It was scientific "progress," for example, that enabled the creation of weapons of mass destruction.

According to Postmodernists, the modern story of science and technology is one of many attempts to formulate what's called a *metanarrative*, or grand story of reality that claims universally valid, "God's-eye"-view, pristine knowledge of the world. Postmodernists say metanarratives become so compelling that people stop questioning them, and it's precisely then that they become destructive and oppressive. Postmodernists are generally suspicious of all modern metanarratives because they are so often used as tools of oppression. Many Postmodernists engage in a process of examining exactly what causes people to fall under the spell of various metanarratives. This is called *deconstruction*. The way deconstruction works on metanarratives is similar to someone revealing how a magic trick is done: in the revealing, people stop being deceived. Postmodernists believe "deconstructing" dominant metanarratives causes them to lose their stranglehold on people's minds.

We'll see, though, that Postmodernists have been carried away by their own ideas, calling everything into question—even the idea that we can know reality itself!

So there you have it. **Christianity, Islam, New Spirituality, Secularism, Marxism, and Postmodernism.** By understanding these six worldviews, we'll see how people come to grips with the rules of the world and form patterns they hope will answer life's ultimate questions.

10. TEN WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE WORLD

“What do you want to major in?” is probably the first question asked of any student on his or her way to college. For some, this strikes fear into the heart: “Am I supposed to know that already?” For others, it doesn’t matter—they just want a diploma so they can more easily qualify for a job. But one thing most people never consider is this: The various academic departments aren’t just places where professors stash what they know. They’re actually different ways of thinking about the ultimate questions of life.

In an ideal world, the academic departments—philosophy, psychology, law, and so forth—would combine their insights to form a *uni* (meaning “whole”) *versity* (meaning “body”) in which the parts come together to closely resemble the truth. In reality, though, various academic departments usually keep to themselves, using introductory and general education courses to persuade potential “majors” to study with their faculty for the remainder of their academic careers.

Some academic departments—the *applied* sciences, for example—focus on what you can do with the knowledge developed by the *pure* sciences. Applied sciences include engineering, medicine, business, and education. Many people say the applied sciences are most important because they’re most needed in society, and hence most likely to lead to a paying job. Certainly we want young adults to be gainfully employed and to work hard toward the greater good. But it is unwise to rush into a career without first trying to understand the various ways of knowing; before you learn how to do, it’s wise to learn how to know! Otherwise you might be stuck making a living without any sense of how to make a life.

In this study we will focus on ten basic disciplines, the seeds from which most things in academia grow: theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, law, politics, economics, and history. Here’s a brief overview of each:

1. Theology. An *-ology* means “study of.” *Theos* means “God.” Theology is the study of God. Theology seeks to answer the question, “How did I and everything else *get* here?” When people see something beautiful and are asked, “How do you *know* it is beautiful?” they might point out a few details, but often they will say, “I don’t know. It just is.” How is it that they really know? The theologian says knowing about God’s nature and character is the key to figuring out what is most important in life.

2. Philosophy. *Philo* means “love”—that has to do with the nature of companionship. It is the root word for the name of the city of Philadelphia, which is nicknamed “the city of brotherly love.” *Sophia* is the Greek word for “wisdom,” so when you put *philo* and *sophia* together, you get “love of wisdom.” The philosopher seeks to be wisdom’s companion by answering questions like “What is real?” and “How do I *know* anything?” To the philosopher, the good life consists of figuring out what the nature of reality is, how we know what we know, and how to accurately know about reality and knowledge.

3. Ethics. *Ethos* is the Greek word for “goodness.” Ethicists are not merely searching for a life that *feels* good but searching for “the good life”—a life that actually *is* good. So ethics is the study that seeks to answer questions like “How should I live?” “What does it mean to live a good life?” and “If *everyone* lived the way I’m living, would it be good for us all?” Ethicists seek to understand the various ways people act based on what they believe, and then how those actions enable them to pursue the good life.

4. Biology. *Bios* means “life.” Biology is the study of life. Biology seeks to answer the question “What does it *mean* to be alive?” When we see something alive, we know it is alive. But *how* do we know? Ask a group of children sometime, “If you had a robot, what would you have to change to bring it to life?” They might say, “It would have to have a heart.” If you asked why, they might respond, “To pump blood.” To which you might say, “But there are lots of creatures that are alive that don’t have hearts.” Pressing the issue further with the children would probably be cruel, but you get the point. Biologists study living things to assist us in understanding the natural world and making predictions about it. If we see our predictions coming true, we can claim to know true things about the world. Biology is at the heart of the sciences because if we can figure out what makes something alive, then we can perhaps better understand our own aliveness.

5. Psychology. *Psyche* is the Greek word for “soul.” Psychology seeks to answer the question “What makes me *human*?” Most people see human beings as different from other creatures, but what makes us unique? From observation we know most creatures are unreflective; that is, they don’t contemplate or communicate about their plans for the future, nor do they appear to feel regret or shame over their past actions. Human beings do all these things and more. Is it possible to understand why people do what they do? Psychologists study the way animals and humans act in order to see if they can figure out something about human nature to help struggling people find a path to a better life.

6. Sociology. *Socios* is the Greek word from which we get our word *society*. Whereas psychologists study the individual self and its relationship to other selves, sociologists suspect life will be better if we can answer the question “How do we live in community with one another?” The differences between people, after all, are vast. To really understand how we can live together in community, we ought to have some insight into our various cultures, languages, religious beliefs, and historical challenges. These differences are complex and go back generations, sometimes even millennia. At the end of the day, sociologists hope that by understanding how societies develop, grow, and relate to one another, we might learn to live in greater harmony.

7. Law. The word *law* comes from an Old English word *lagu*, which refers to the rules or ordinances by which we are governed.³⁰ It’s the same word from which we get our words *legislate* and *legislature*. The study of law revolves around the question “What constitutes *just*

and *orderly* governance?” In order to live together in an orderly way, we need laws we all agree to follow. If even a few people were to decide not to stop at red lights, it would create uncertainty and chaos for everyone. To keep society from breaking down, then, we must have rules and a means of making people obey them. A society’s philosophy of law determines its level of thriving. Lawmakers and legal scholars must consider whether the law is punishing evildoing sufficiently while not harming the freedoms of the just and hardworking. And how, they must ask, does the law ensure fairness without being

What is liberty without wisdom, and without virtue? It is the greatest of all possible evils; for it is folly, vice, and madness, without tuition or restraint.

— Edmund Burke

unfair to one group or another? Figure out the answers to these questions, legal scholars say, and we'll all be better off.

8. Politics. *Polis* means “city.” *Politics* means “the rule of a city.” When people think of politics, political commercials or people with big, fake smiles wearing suits and kissing babies often come to mind, and they dismiss politics as being silly or pompous. But the study of politics really does matter. Politics answers the question “What is the best way to *organize* community?” Everyone in the world lives in multiple political jurisdictions: neighborhoods, cities, counties, states, nations. By living where you live, you agree to abide by the rules governing those jurisdictions. But who makes these rules? Who gets to pick the rule makers? Properly conceived, politics offers a platform from which to encourage virtue, and virtue is at the heart of good government. To those who think it is *only* about liberty, the great British statesman Edmund Burke said, “What is liberty without wisdom, and without virtue? It is the greatest of all possible evils; for it is folly, vice, and madness, without tuition or restraint.”³¹

9. Economics. In Latin, the word for “economics” means “the art of running a household.” Economics answers the question “How can individuals and the community be optimally *productive*?” Let’s say you have a lawnmower, some gas, and a willingness to mow other people’s lawns. One of your customers might say, “If you mow my lawn, I’ll give you some fresh eggs from my chickens.” That’s fine, but what if you don’t *want* eggs? To make it possible for your customer to get what she wants while giving you what you want, you can use a means of exchange called money, based on people’s agreement about the relative value of things compared to other things. Economics becomes infinitely more complex, though, when people want to *borrow* money to acquire very expensive things, or to capitalize a large enterprise. How are these loans made? What rules govern complex transactions such as these? What, if anything, should the various levels of government have to say about all this? Economists try to make sense of this complexity so people can get what they want, which will help them live better lives.

10. History. The study of history seeks to answer the question “How did people in the past think and act on theology, philosophy, ethics, biology, psychology, sociology, politics, law, and economics? What happened in the past could help us understand what we should do now. How can we repeat the good decisions and avoid repeating the bad ones? What *counts* as a good or bad decision? But the historian’s task actually goes beyond these questions, because there are too many facts to write about, and someone must decide which facts are important and which ones aren’t, as well as which facts are included in the account and which facts are left out. People who think America’s founders were bad people who mistreated others will tend to choose confirming facts—such as the fact that some founders’ owned slaves—in order to persuade others that America ought to abandon its founding principles. Should our agendas drive our study of history? Is it possible to select and interpret facts objectively? These are important questions, because if history is told inaccurately, it might lead people to make bad decisions—which in turn could hinder human flourishing.

As you can see, each academic discipline approaches knowledge differently, but with the same goal: to understand how to live meaningful lives, both individually and together. Many more academic disciplines exist, of course, but we believe these ten to be properly basic. By understanding something about these ten, we’ll be able to figure out what to do with the rest.

Before we go any further, though, we need to make an admission, without which the rest of this book will not make any sense: we are biased.

II. OUR BIAS: THE CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW EXPLAINS THINGS BEST

In this book we hope to show a multitude of ways the Christian worldview best explains the existence of the universe and all things related to it. In a systematic analysis of how each worldview approaches the ten disciplines presented in the previous section, Christianity claims that an acknowledgment of God's nature and character, and the life and work of Christ, will reveal capital *T* Truth (as opposed to isolated cultural or personal truths). As we will see, a robust Christian perspective of each of the disciplines is clear and compelling.

1. Theology. The evidence compels us to believe in the existence of a personal and holy God, a designed universe, and an earth prepared for human life. This evidence together outweighs any argument for atheism (belief in no god), polytheism (belief in many gods), or pantheism (belief in god *as* the universe). Theology begins with verse one of the Bible: "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). According to John 1, God's creation was through the person of Jesus Christ, whom the apostle Paul referred to as "the fulness of the Godhead" (Col. 2:9 κJV).

2. Philosophy. We will present evidence that the notion of mind (*logos*) preceding matter is superior to the atheistic stance of matter preceding mind. From the very first book of the Bible, we understand that God created not only the world but the entire universe. Further, he made it possible for us to observe something of his revelation and to know that our observations are meaningful. Other creatures know things in a manner of speaking, but humans *know that we know*. We have a capacity to contemplate what our knowing revealer shows us. Christianity says we can know things because they have been ordered in such a way that our senses can perceive them, and this is because of Jesus Christ, who is the Logos [revealed knowledge] of God (John 1:1).

3. Ethics. The concept that right and wrong can be objectively known based on the nature and character of a personal, loving God is, we believe, superior both theoretically and practically to any concept of moral relativism or pragmatism. The gospel of John says that Jesus Christ is "the true light" (John 1:9; see also 3:19–20). That is, he is the source of what is truly good. In his light we can see what spiritual darkness previously hid from our view.

4. Biology. We argue that the concept of a living God creating life fits the evidence better than spontaneous generation and macroevolution. We see the scientific side of God in the beginning when he organized every creature "according to their kinds" (Gen. 1:21). Interestingly, Jesus Christ is described throughout the New Testament of the Bible as "the life" (John 1:4; 11:25; see also Col. 1:16).³² When it comes to understanding life—physical as well as spiritual—we believe the Christian worldview offers superior insight.

5. Psychology. Understanding human beings as possessing both bodies and souls, even though we are sinful, imperfect, and in need of a savior, far outweighs expecting humans, as many contemporary psychologists argue, to be guilt free and in control of their behavior. Human life is different from other forms of life (Gen. 2:7).³³ We intuitively understand that something is wrong with us. What will make it right? A savior. And who, according to Christianity, is that savior? Jesus Christ (Luke 1:46–47; Titus 2:13).³⁴

6. Sociology. The evidence demonstrates that society functions best when the institutions of family, church, and state exercise their proper authority within their God-ordained spheres. At its most basic level, society flourishes when it is built on strong families composed of a father, mother, and children. Sociology is hinted at in Genesis 1. God said to Adam and Eve, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (v. 28)³⁵ and in Genesis 2, when the man and woman became “one flesh” (v. 24). Of all the ways God could have revealed himself to the world, he chose to do it through the one means all human beings could understand: he sent his Son, Jesus Christ (Isa. 9:6; Luke 1:30–31).³⁶

7. Law. God hates the perversion of justice. This truth provides a firmer foundation than legal theories that prey on the innocent and let the guilty go free. In Genesis, God laid down rules to form the optimal conditions for human flourishing. When God rescued a culture of slaves even before he provided a permanent home for them, he gave them a law—the laws of Moses, the Torah. This fledgling nation came to be with *law*, not with *land*. Throughout Scripture, the Messiah, whom Christians believe is Jesus Christ, is characterized as a lawgiver (Gen. 49:10; Isa. 9:7).³⁷

8. Politics. Christians believe the idea that rights are a gift from God secured by government is more logically persuasive, morally appealing, and politically sound than any atheistic theory that maintains human rights are derived from the state. We see the beginning of political authority several places in Genesis, notably in Genesis 9:6,³⁸ when cities were formed around the principle of preventing human bloodshed. Interestingly, among the names given to Jesus Christ throughout the Bible was a political title King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Isa. 9:6; Luke 1:33; 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 19:16).³⁹

9. Economics. We will show that the concept of private property and using resources responsibly to glorify God is nobler than coercive government policies that destroy individual responsibility and incentives to work. God put Adam in the garden to work it and keep it. That’s economics. Throughout all of Scripture, the Messiah, Jesus Christ, is described as the owner of all things (Ps. 24:1; 50:10–12; 1 Cor. 10:26),⁴⁰ which says something about the principles of stewardship that undergird economic reality.

10. History. The Bible’s promise of a future kingdom ushered in by Jesus Christ is far more hopeful than utopian schemes dreamed up by sinful, mortal humans. Genesis 3:15⁴¹ describes an ongoing battle between good and evil, a battle won when the offspring of the woman (often thought of as the coming Messiah) crushes the work of the Evil One. Correspondingly, Jesus is described as the “the Alpha and the Omega” (Rev. 1:8), the beginning and the end of history. History has a direction and a goal.

Christians view these ten disciplines as sacred, not secular. They are imprinted in the created order. All ten disciplines are addressed in just the first few chapters of the Bible; they manifest and accent certain aspects of the

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created order. Further, God shows himself in the person of Jesus Christ in such a way as to underline the significance of each discipline. The integration of these various categories into society has come to be known as Western civilization.⁴²

In every discipline, we think the Christian worldview shines brighter than any other worldview. It better explains our place in the universe and is more realistic, more scientific, more intellectually satisfying, and more defensible. Best of all, it is faithful to the one person with the greatest influence in heaven and on earth—Jesus Christ. But can we actually know Christianity is true?

12. HOW CAN WE UNDERSTAND WHAT IS ACTUALLY TRUE?

We think the Christian worldview is true, but to make this claim, we must have some concept of truth. Truth has two parts: understanding what is true with our *minds* (Rom. 12:2)⁴³ as well as our *hearts* (Heb. 4:12).⁴⁴ The authors of *Making Sense of Your World* suggest four tests for evaluating whether or not a worldview is true at a mind and heart level:

1. **The test of reason:** Is it reasonable? Can it be logically stated and defended?
2. **The test of the outer world:** Is there some external, corroborating evidence to support it?
3. **The test of the inner world:** Does it adequately address the “victories, disappointments, blessings, crises, and relationships of our everyday world”?
4. **The test of the real world:** Are its consequences good or bad when applied in any given cultural context?⁴⁵

To say the Christian worldview is true is to say that it best describes the contours of the world *as it actually exists*. We’re not asking you to take our word for it: follow *God*, not *us*. If at any point you are confused, prayerfully search God’s Word under the guidance of wise counselors with a determination to understand and obey every good thing you need to do God’s will.

Understanding the truth, though, is only the first step. We must also learn to communicate truth, “always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you ... with gentleness and respect” (1 Pet. 3:15). Critics say Christianity is irrational, unhistorical, and unscientific. Christianity is more than equal to these criticisms, but we must be trained to articulate how and why.

13. CAN’T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?

In questioning the truth or falsehood of various worldviews, we risk a great deal. Whether we accept Christianity, Islam, Secularism, Marxism, New Spirituality, or Postmodernism, we accept a worldview that describes the others as hopelessly distorted. They cannot all depict things as they really are; their competing claims cannot all be true.

Some people in history have tried to get around the differences between worldviews by telling a parable. Perhaps you’ve heard it: Six blind men come into contact with an elephant. One handles the tail and exclaims that an elephant is like a rope. Another grasps a leg and describes the elephant as a tree trunk. A third feels the tusk and says the animal is similar to

a spear, and so on. Since each feels only a small portion of the whole elephant, all six men give correspondingly different descriptions of their experience.

So no one is really right or wrong, you see. We're all correct in our own way, with our limited knowledge—or so it seems at first glance. *But how do we know the blind men are all touching the same elephant?* The parable assumes that (1) each man can discern only part of the truth about the nature of the elephant, and (2) *we* know something the blind men don't—everyone is touching a real elephant.

The first assumption says no one possesses complete knowledge; the second assumption says we *know* no one possesses complete knowledge because *we* know what the elephant (or reality) is *really* like. But there's a contradiction here. On the one hand, the story claims that we—the blind men—have only limited knowledge. But if everyone is blind, no one can know the ultimate shape of the elephant. We need someone who is not blind, someone who knows all truth and communicates it accurately to us.

We will not claim in this book that non-Christian worldviews are completely false. We can find grains of truth in each. Secularism, for example, does not deny the existence of the physical universe and our ability to know it. Marxism accepts the significance and relevance of science. Postmodernism acknowledges the importance of texts and words. Islam acknowledges a created universe. New Spiritualists teach there is more to reality than matter. And all five non-Christian worldviews, to one extent or another, understand the importance of “saving” the human race.

However, a major dividing line separates non-Christian worldviews from Christianity: What do you do with Jesus Christ? Christianity views Jesus Christ as the true and living way.⁴⁶ He is the key to reality itself.⁴⁷ Early Christians were known as members of the Way.⁴⁸ All other major worldviews reject Jesus Christ as savior, lord, and king. Some deny that he ever existed.

This is too big of a difference to overlook. Who is Jesus? Did he live on this earth two thousand years ago? Was he God in the flesh (God incarnate)? Did he come to the earth to reveal God's will for us and save the human race from sin? These are important questions. As the apostle Paul pointed out, Christianity lives or dies on the answers: “If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain” (1 Cor. 15:14).

14. IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES

If Postmodernists, for example, are correct in their belief that no metanarrative can describe reality, then Christianity is doomed. Christianity depends on understanding real universal truths, such as all people have sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23);⁴⁹ God loves the whole human race (John 3:16);⁵⁰ and Christ died for our sins (1 John 2:2).⁵¹ If these universal claims are false, then Christianity is implausible.

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According to a George Barna survey, 63 percent of teenagers agreed that “Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Jews, and all other people pray to the same god, even though they use different names for their god.”

If the assumptions of Secularism and Marxism are correct, anyone proclaiming the existence of the supernatural is potentially dangerous. Secularists and Marxists understand this quite clearly. For instance, Marx viewed all religion as a drug that deluded its adherents—an “opiate of the masses.” Some Secularists even portray Christians as mentally imbalanced. James J. D. Luce, the assistant executive director of Fundamentalists Anonymous, said, “The fundamentalist experience can be a serious mental health hazard to perhaps millions of people.”⁵² His organization works to “heal” Christians of their “mental disorder”—their Christian worldview. Harvard’s Edward O. Wilson takes this a step further, contrasting liberal theology with aggressive “fundamentalist religion,” which he describes as “one of the unmitigated evils of the world.”⁵³

On the other end of the spectrum, New Spiritualists reject the personal God of the Bible as a dangerous myth separating people into religious factions. They seek instead a “higher consciousness.” Bestselling New Spiritualist author Neale Donald Walsch claims that God revealed to him personally that “no path to God is more direct than any other path. No religion is the ‘one true religion.’”⁵⁴ In an interview with Bill Moyers, filmmaker George Lucas said, “The conclusion I’ve come to is that all the religions are true.”⁵⁵ Lucas’s and Walsch’s convictions are shared in the wider population, even among many Christians. According to a George Barna survey, 63 percent of teenagers agreed that “Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Jews, and all other people pray to the same god, even though they use different names for their god.”⁵⁶ So, the claim continues, if we don’t have peace on Earth yet, it is only because some wrongly persist in their exclusionist beliefs.

Either Christians correctly describe reality when they speak of a loving, wise, just, personal, creative God, or they are talking nonsense. The basic tenets of the Bible cannot blend well with the non-Christian claim that we are good enough to save ourselves. We say only one view fits the facts: Christianity. God, the creator of the universe, saw its importance, loved it, loved *us*, so he sent his Son to redeem it—and *us*.

Clearly, adherents of other worldviews strongly disagree with our conclusion that only Christianity fits the facts. Some of them are prepared to attempt to dismantle our arguments. So the battle for truth is on. What case can each worldview make for itself? That’s what we’ll discover next.

ENDNOTES

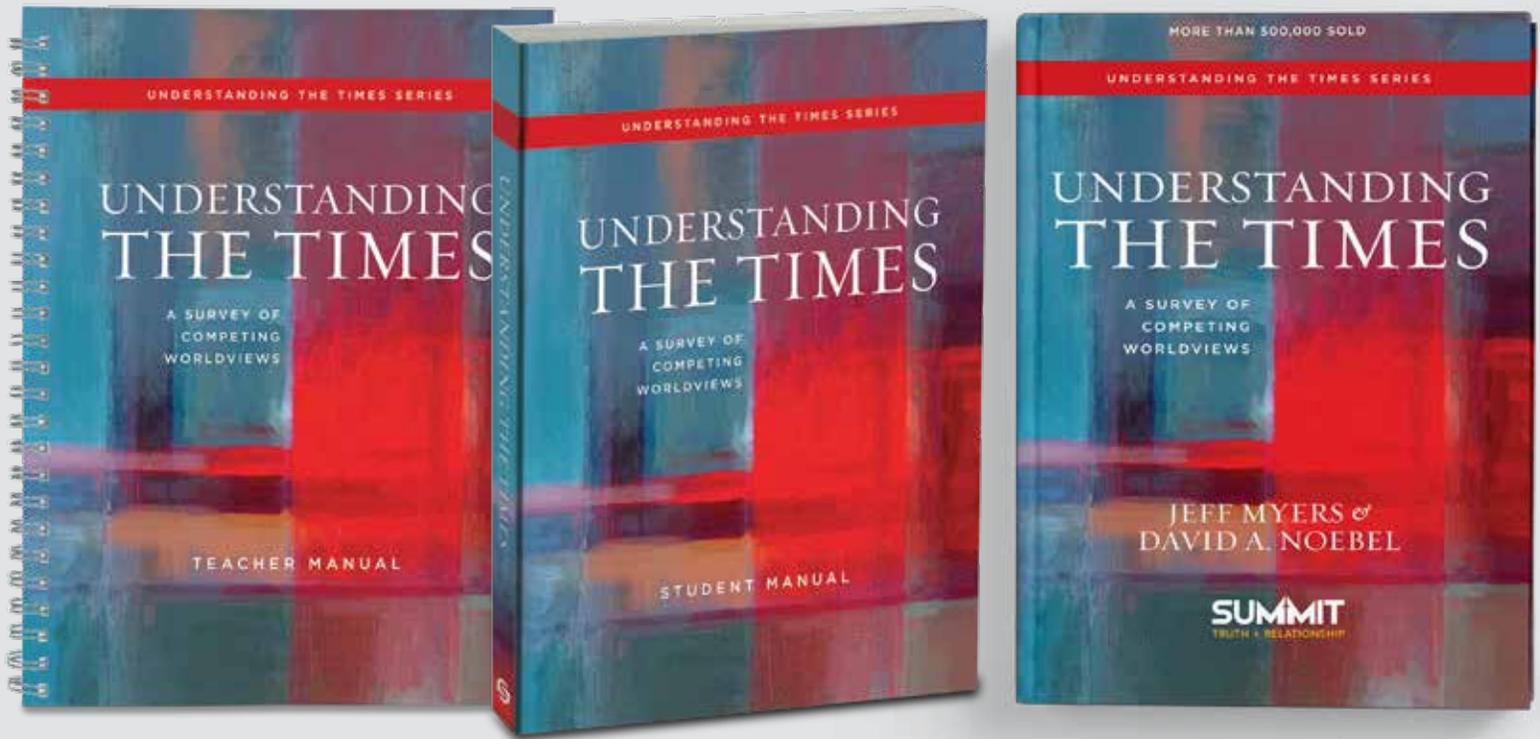
1. Personal email correspondence between David Wheaton and Jeff Myers, January 14–15, 2013.
2. K. Anders Ericsson and Neil Charness, “Expert Performance: Its Structure and Acquisition,” *American Psychologist* 49, no. 8 (August 1994): 725–47.
3. For more information see Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2008).
4. See, for example, Dorothy Leonard and Walter Swap, “Expertise: Developing and Expressing Deep Smarts” and “Recreating Deep Smarts through Guided Experience,” in *Deep Smarts: How to Cultivate and Transfer Enduring Business Wisdom* (Boston: Harvard Business School, 2005), chaps. 3 and 8.
5. Colossians 2:8: “See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.”
6. First published in 1991, *Understanding the Times* covered the biblical Christian worldview, the Marxist-Leninist worldview, and the Secular Humanist worldview. An appendix briefly surveyed an emerging worldview called Cosmic Humanism. A later edition added Postmodernism and Islam to its consideration. The current edition

examines the same six worldviews with the names slightly altered in some cases (such as with Secularism) to reflect the changes in terminology used by the proponents of those views. The biggest change is from Cosmic Humanism to New Spirituality. The term *Cosmic Humanism* was intended to be a more academic approach to what was then called the New Age movement. The term never really gained traction. We use the term *New Spirituality* in this edition because we feel it better reflects both the content and the methods people use who are searching for “higher consciousness” today, especially in the ways they incorporate insights from Eastern religions, such as Buddhism and Hinduism.

7. J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013).
8. *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “idea,” www.oxforddictionaries.com.
9. For more statistics and references, see the info-graph compiled from multiple sources at “Data Never Sleeps,” Domo, 2010–2011, accessed January 29, 2016, <http://visual.ly/data-never-sleeps>.
10. How big is the Internet? If each byte of data (the size of one letter or number) were the size of the largest bacteria (0.5 mm), the amount of data YouTube users upload each day would be about twenty-one terabytes, enough to wrap around the sun three times. See “How Much Data Is on the Internet?,” Doug Camplejohn, *Fliptop* (blog), accessed January 29, 2016, <http://blog.fliptop.com/blog/2011/05/18/how-much-data-is-on-the-internet/>.
11. Cited in Steve Lohr, “Is Information Overload a \$650 Billion Drag on the Economy?,” *Bits* (blog), *New York Times*, December 20, 2007.
12. Joshua Rubinstein, David E. Meyer, and Jeffrey E. Evans, “Executive Control of Cognitive Processes in Task Switching,” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance* 27, no. 4 (2001): 763–97.
13. Cited in James R. Healey, “Feds: Phoning, Texting Killed 3,092 in Car Crashes Last Year,” *USA Today*, December 8, 2011, <http://content.usatoday.com/communities/driveon/post/2011/12/nhtsa-cell-phones-killed-3092-car-crashes-1#UUsnoldnF8E>.
14. John Dewey, the father of modern education, helped organize a group of philosophies into what he hoped would be a new worldview that replaced Christianity. He called it *Secular Humanism*. The word *secular* means “that which pertains to worldly things rather than religious things.” And yet Dewey was forthright about the fact that his new philosophy was, in fact, religious: “Here are all of the elements for a religious faith.... Such a faith has always been implicitly the common faith of mankind.” John Dewey, *A Common Faith* (1934; repr., New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1962), 87.
15. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 58.
16. R. J. Rummel, “Democide: Nazi Genocide and Mass Murder” (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1992), chap. 1.
17. Quoted in Robert B. Brandom, ed., *Rorty and His Critics* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 21–22.
18. Quoted in Michael Powell, “Editor Explains Reasons for ‘Intelligent Design’ Article,” *Washington Post*, August 19, 2005, www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/08/18/AR2005081801680.html.
19. Naturalistic evolution, as we will see in the “Biology” chapter of this volume, says nature is all there is, and the complexity of all of life evolved through random-chance processes starting from nothing. In the view of George Gaylord Simpson, a respected paleontologist, “Man is the result of a purposeless and natural process that did not have him in mind. He was not planned. He is a state of matter, a form of life, a sort of animal, and a species of the Order Primates, akin nearly or remotely to all of life and indeed to all that is material.” George Gaylord Simpson, *The Meaning of Evolution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971), 345.
20. See, for example, William J. McGuire and Demetrios Papageorgis, “Effectiveness of Forewarning in Developing Resistance to Persuasion,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 26, no. 1 (Spring 1962): 24–34.
21. Cited in Em Griffin, *The Mind Changers: The Art of Christian Persuasion* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1982).
22. Cited in Henry Taylor, “‘Jedi’ Religion Most Popular Alternative Faith,” *Telegraph*, December 11, 2012, www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/9737886/Jedi-religion-most-popular-alternative-faith.html.
23. Taylor, “Alternative Faith.”
24. Luc Ferry, *A Brief History of Thought* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2011), 60.
25. Bertrand Russell, *Human Society in Ethics and Politics* (New York: Mentor, 1962), viii.
26. The call to prayer, the *shahada*, is an integral part of the salat: “*Allahu Akbar; Ashadu anna la ilaha illa Allah; Ashadu anna Muhammadan rasul Allah; Haiya ‘ala al-salat; Haiya ‘ala al-falah; Al-salat khayrun min al-nawm; Allahu Akbar; La ilaha illa Allah.*” The English translation is “God is most great; I bear witness there is no God but God; I bear witness Muhammad is the prophet of God; Come to prayer; Come to well-being; Prayer is better than sleep; God is most great; There is no God but God.” See more at “Salat: Muslim Prayer,” ReligionFacts.com, November 10, 2015, accessed March 26, 2016, www.religionfacts.com/islam/practices/salat-prayer.htm#sthash.U8xtC709.dpuf.
27. Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 368–69.
28. Serge Trifkovic, *The Sword of the Prophet* (Boston: Regina Orthodox, 2002), 55.

29. Since we will be speaking of Postmodernism as an identifiable pattern of ideas, we will capitalize all references to the term as a worldview.
30. The online etymology website www.etymonline.com says this about the word *law*: law (n.), Old English *lagu* (plural *laga*, comb. form *lah-*) “law, ordinance, rule, regulation; district governed by the same laws,” from Old Norse **lagu* “law,” collective plural of *lag* “layer, measure, stroke,” literally “something laid down or fixed,” from Proto-Germanic **lagan* “put, lay” (see *lay* [v.]). Replaced Old English *æ* and *gesetnes*, which had the same sense development as *law*. Cf. also *statute*, from Latin *statuere*; German *Gesetz* “law,” from Old High German *gisatzida*; Lithuanian *istatymas*, from *istatyti* “set up, establish.” In physics, from 1660s. *Law and order* have been coupled since 1796.
31. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (New York: Library of Liberal Arts, 1955), 288.
32. John 1:4: “In [Christ] was life, and the life was the light of men”; John 11:25: “Jesus said ... ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live’”; Colossians 1:16: “By [Christ] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.”
33. Genesis 2:7: “The LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.”
34. Luke 1:46–47: “Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior’”; Titus 2:13: “[We are] waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”
35. Genesis 1:28: “God blessed [Adam and Eve]. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”
36. Isaiah 9:6: “To us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”; Luke 1:30–31: “The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.’”
37. Genesis 49:10: “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples”; Isaiah 9:7: “Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”
38. Genesis 9:6: “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.”
39. Isaiah 9:6: “To us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace”; Luke 1:33: “He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end”; 1 Timothy 6:15: “[God] will display [Christ’s appearance] at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords”; Revelation 19:16: “On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.”
40. Psalm 24:1: “The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein”; Psalm 50:10–12: “Every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine”; 1 Corinthians 10:26: “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.”
41. Genesis 3:15: “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”
42. See Alvin J. Schmidt, *How Christianity Changed the World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004).
43. Romans 12:2: “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”
44. Hebrews 4:12: “The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”
45. W. Gary Phillips, William E. Brown, and John Stonestreet, *Making Sense of Your World: A Biblical Worldview* (Salem, WI: Sheffield, 2008), chap. 3.
46. John 14:6: “Jesus said to [Thomas], ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’”
47. Colossians 1:16: “By [Christ] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him”; Hebrews 1:1–3: “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high”; John 1:1–3: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

48. Acts 9:2: “[Saul] asked [the high priest] for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.”
49. Romans 3:23: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”
50. John 3:16: “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”
51. First John 2:2: “He is the propitiation for our sins [turning away God’s wrath], and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”
52. James J. D. Luce, “The Fundamentalists Anonymous Movement,” *Humanist* 46, no. 1 (January/February 1986).
53. Edward O. Wilson, “The Relation of Science to Theology,” *Zygon* 15, no. 4 (December 1980); 433.
54. Neale Donald Walsch, *The New Revelations: A Conversation with God* (New York: Atria Books, 2002), 97.
55. Quoted in Bill Moyers, “Of Myth and Men: A Conversation between Bill Moyers and George Lucas on the Meaning of the Force and the True Theology of *Star Wars*,” *Time*, April 26, 1999, 92.
56. George Barna, *Third Millennium Teens* (Ventura, CA: Barna Research Group, 1999), 48. It should be noted that of the teenagers surveyed, 70 percent were active in a church youth group, and 82 percent identified themselves as Christians.



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