

Worldview: What It Is and Why It Matters

Defining The Issue

Do you ever struggle to explain your Christian beliefs and values?

Do you want to be a better Ambassador of the gospel among the people you care about? You can improve your ability to have conversations with people about their worldview and the view you hold as a follower of Jesus the Christ.

A worldview is your understanding of what the world is and how it works. It is your view of reality. Everyone has a worldview. Your opinions on God, the Bible, heaven and hell, social and moral issues, the economy, arts and culture, etc. are based on the way you see the world - this is called your worldview.

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In large part, your worldview is shaped by your experiences, opinions and what you believe to be true. Worldviews, like icebergs, have more unseen than seen. Often conflicts between people are really conflicts between differing worldviews. This is why if we want to talk to others about our faith, we need to understand both our worldview and their worldview.

Charles Colson states in his book, *How Now Shall We Live*,

“ A debilitating weakness in modern evangelicalism is that we have been fighting cultural skirmishes on all sides without knowing what the war itself is about... The real war is a cosmic struggle between worldviews—between the Christian worldview and the various secular and spiritual worldviews arrayed against it. This is what we must understand if we are going to be effective both in evangelizing our world today and in transforming it to reflect the wisdom of the Creator.”

The World has multiple world views that are different from the Christian worldview. How do we better reflect Christ when our worldviews clash with each other?



In tight-knit communities, individual worldviews have more overlap; in loose-knit communities it is possible for there to be no overlap at all. The World has multiple world views that are different from the Christian worldview. How do we better reflect Christ when our worldviews clash with each other?

For several decades, people's understanding of truth have been changing. There is now a battle between 'my truth', 'your truth' and 'the truth'. In this post-truth world people are prone to question whether there are absolute truths. With no absolute truth, everyone's beliefs and actions are morally equal.

There are those in the church who downplay the need for "absolute truth" considering it an intellectual exercise devoid of practical

implications and application to one's daily life. These appear to be more focused on sustaining relationships, fearful of discussing theological arguments grounded in the truth of God's Word.

But when you consider that truth, properly understood, is merely a correct understanding of reality, you begin to see how important truth is.

Truth, like a working GPS system, will help you navigate through your world.

How you perceive truth will be determined by your personal worldview. It will drive your thoughts, emotions, decisions and actions in life.

We believe Christianity, rooted in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, is the truest reality. The best way then to view the world is to view it through the lens of Jesus because He is the way, the truth and the life! (John 14:6) But there is a problem when "the best way" is challenged.

Unfortunately, a 2017 Barna Group survey, concluded less than 20 per cent of Christians hold to a Christian Worldview. The research confirmed that, "among practicing Christians:

- 61% agree with ideas rooted in New Spiritualities
- 54% resonate with postmodernist views that deny objective truth
- 36% accept ideas associated with Marxism
- 29% believe ideas based on secularism."



Non-Christian worldviews are not stored away in libraries to be stumbled upon. We are awash in them every day through a variety of voices including media forms like - newspapers, social media, television, movies, radio, music, and advertising. These ideas so saturate our minds that we adopt them unconsciously.

Scripture Speaks

The Scriptures are the inspired Word of God. As Christians, it is our starting point for truth, because it is God's absolute truth revealed to us.

The Bible is God's revelation to us. As followers of Christ we must adopt God's worldview relying on the Spirit of God to help us think and live in alignment with His revealed truth.



Because God has made it all and it all belongs to Him, everything finds its meaning and purpose in Him.

- To the Lord your God belong the heavens... the earth and everything in it. Deuteronomy 10:14, NIV
- Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. John 1:3, NIV
- By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command. Hebrews 11:3, NIV

God has given us the scriptures as our "truth anchor" and the Holy Spirit as our "teacher" so we can see the world from His perspective. As individuals we carry responsibility for studying His Word and resisting the squeeze of the world into its mold by conforming to the good, pleasing and perfect will of God (Romans 12:1-2).

Christians have always believed in an absolute truth which originates with God.

- God the Father is "the God of truth" (Psalm 31:5, NIV)
- Jesus Christ is "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14, NIV)
- In fact, He is "the truth" (John 14:6, NIV)
- The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth" (John 14:17, NIV)
- Paul calls Scripture "the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15, NIV)
- Jesus prayed, "Your word is truth" (John 17:17, NIV)

Everything about God is true. The Bible strongly warns us, "Don't let anyone fool you by using senseless arguments. These arguments may sound wise, but they are only human teachings. They come from the powers of this world and not from Christ." Colossians 2:8, CEV

These truth statements form the basis of how we, the EMCC, think about worldview. In the EMCC, what we believe is put forth in our Articles of Faith which consists of 6 points. These 6 points cover what we believe about the Bible, God, humanity, salvation, the Church and the future.

For the full Articles of Faith, visit emcc.ca/articlesoffaith.

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Engage with People

So how should we approach a world where our claims to truth are met with resistance?

It can be tempting for followers of Christ to isolate ourselves from those living with a different worldview than ours, or to drift into a "post-truth" way of thinking and living. Neither is the way of Jesus. Jesus expects us to be in the world having conversations with people who are confused and spiritually blinded to the truth of Jesus.

Instead:

Begin with God's Word rather than our assumptions. We must not use the scriptures as a proof text for what we already believe. Our predetermined beliefs can be a roadblock to truth.

Though we begin with scripture, we must be aware that most in Canadian culture do not accept scripture as true. This means in conversation, we may have to first spend the time explaining to others what truth is, why truth matters, and why the Bible is true, before we can get them to acknowledge the truth of the Christian message.

Pray and ask God to open our hearts and minds to what He actually says and interpret scripture in the light of scripture.

Pursue a deeper relationship with God. When we know God, we cannot ignore His truths.

Study current events and issues using the lens of Scripture as our guide. If we understand and trust God's worldview, we will be able to make intelligent decisions regarding what is right and what to do about it. In the end, our decisions and actions will reveal what we truly believe.

As an ambassador of the gospel, we must do more than rage at destructive and dehumanizing philosophies. We must become familiar with secular and opposing religious worldviews and learn to relate the gospel to people in ways they understand. Then we can point them to the life giving worldview Christianity offers.

Resources

Books

- Murray, Abdu. *Saving Truth*. Zondervan 2018
- Copan, Paul. *True for You But Not True For Me*. Bethany House 2009
- McDowell, Josh. *The New Evidence That Demands A Verdict*. Thomas Nelson 1999
- Briscoe, Pete. *Belief Matters*. Harvest House 2009
- Noebel, David A. *The Battle for Truth*. Harvest House 2001
- Colson, Charles. *How Now Shall We Live?* Tyndale 1999
- Koukl, Greg. *The Story of Reality*. 2017

Online

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| EMCC website | emcc.ca/who-we-are/our-beliefs |
| Breakpoint | breakpoint.org |
| Summit Ministries | summit.org |
| Faith Beyond Belief | faithbeyondbelief.ca |
| Stand to Reason | str.org/about/mission-values |
| EEFC | evangelicalfellowship.ca |

Barna Group. *Competing Worldviews Influence Today's Christians*. www.barna.com/research/competing-worldviews-influence-todays-christians, Accessed September 5, 2019.

Wallace, J. Warner. *The Case for Truth*. www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSHVAKrH7CM