THE EQUIP INSTITUTE Theme: Christian Engagement Topic: Foundations of a Biblical Worldview 4th Semester / Spring 2025 Introduction The Equip Institute exists to equip members of Taylors First Baptist Church to think rightly about God and His Word for the sake of living rightly before God in His world. The topic this week is foundations of a biblical worldview. Conforming Our Worldviews to Scripture Our goal as Christians should be to conform our individual worldviews to the worldview we find in Scripture rather than simply defaulting to the various communal worldviews that shape us. This is not something that happens naturally. In fact, it begins supernaturally when we are born again. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. (Ezek. 36:26-27) Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (2 Cor. 5:17) Regeneration is the beginning of our worldview re-set. But sanctification is the context of our worldview maturation. 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. (Rom. 12:2) And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased



to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. (Col. 1:9-10)

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. (2 Cor. 3:18)

Worldview formation is part of our spiritual formation. Intellectual discipleship is part of our apprenticeship to Jesus. Part of what it means to think rightly about God and His world is to cultivate a worldview that increasingly thinks God's thoughts after Him.

What is the Best Term?

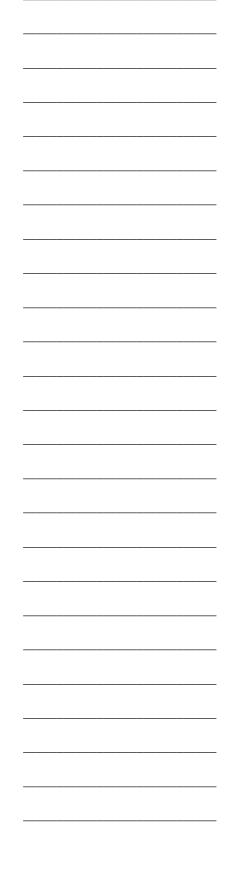
The terms **Christian worldview** and **biblical worldview** are synonyms. Biblical worldview is the preferably term for two reasons. First, sometimes people hear the phrase "Christian worldview" and they assume it simply means what a Christian thinks about the world.

Second, whatever a Christian worldview is, it ought to be driven by Scripture. The Bible alone is our ultimate authority for faith and practice. A Christian worldview should stick as close as possible to the texts and concepts of Scripture. We want to be crystal clear that all faithful Christian thinking is rooted in the Bible.

The Grand Biblical Narrative

The Bible is a collection of 66 books, written over a period of about 1500 years, by dozens of men, written originally in at least three different languages. However, it is also a single book that tells a unified story. This story has been called "the true story of the whole world" because it is a universal story about the one true God and his purposes for his creation—including his human creatures. This biblical story is sometimes called the **Grand Biblical Narrative**. It is a unified plot that moves from creation to new creation.

The main character in the Grand Biblical Narrative is the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The climax is the saving work of the eternal Son, who was born Jesus of Nazareth, fully God and fully man. Our own individual stories only fully make sense when we understand them in light of the true story of the whole world. This process





begins when we are born again, by grace, and enter into a covenant relationship with God through faith in Jesus.

- Creation
- Fall
- Promise
- Israel
- Christ
- Church
- Mission
- New Creation

Not only are these the plot points of the Grand Biblical Narrative, but you can see how redemptive history and later church history overlaps with each part of the story.

- Creation, fall, and promise are the prologue we find in Genesis 1-3
- The story of Israel is the major focus of most of the Old Testament
- Christ is the culmination of the plot, and is also the focus of the Gospels
- The book of Acts and the various New Testament epistles deal with the development of the early church
- An important part of the early church's development was its mission to proclaim the gospel and make disciples of all nations—which continues past the apostolic era and to the present day
- Mission will ultimately culminate in the conclusion of the Grand Biblical Narrative: the restoration of all things in the new creation

When moving from the Grand Biblical Narrative to the biblical worldview, we collapse these plot points even further into three key terms: **creation, fall,** and **redemption**. These terms summarize the Grand Biblical Narrative and represent the core components of a biblical worldview. Together, they inform our "philosophy of life" that inform both our beliefs about what is true and how to apply those beliefs faithfully.

The Right Story and the Right Facts

A biblical worldview addresses two interrelated concepts at the same time. First, it offers us the **right story** to reframe our understanding of who we are and our place in the world. Second, within that story we find the **right facts**



to reframe our thinking about everything under the sun. The story comes before the facts. Individual truths can be misunderstood when they are divorced from their context. For example, you can believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, died on a cross, and was resurrected from the dead—but have no idea why any of that matters! The story makes sense of the facts. And the facts keep us accountable to tell the whole story truthfully.

Every rival worldview gets both these concepts wrong. They are either telling the wrong story about the world or they are getting at least parts of the story wrong. They misunderstand the world and our place in it. They also do not get the facts straight, so at least some of their truth claims are false. Their claims do not align with reality.

What about the Heart?

Some worldview writers argue that this whole discussion is too intellectual. They say that you can have all the right answers and still not live Christianly because the problem is not the mind, but the **heart**. We are driven by our **desires** more than we are motivated by our convictions.

The idea that humans are first and foremost creatures of desire is deeply rooted in Christian history. It has been an emphasis in the teaching of Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Jonathan Edwards, John Wesley, and Tim Keller. It is a fundamentally true insight. Sin is about disordered loves, and part of sanctification is increasingly loving the right things in the right way for the right reasons. This is a heart change, not a mind change.

But we do not want to overcorrect. We need to be reminded that there is more to Christian maturity than aligning our thinking with Scripture. But the two are closely connected. The Holy Spirit is at work to transform both our hearts and our minds. We want to think God's thoughts after Him and we want our desires to be conformed to His character. Faith and practice. Doctrine and ethics. Confession and character. Beliefs and habits.

Our affirmations have implications that lead to applications, but we won't connect the dots correctly without a heart inclined to love God and love our neighbors. Worldview formation and character formation are both part of our ongoing spiritual formation, and maturation in both areas is evidence of our sanctification.

