

Christian Education Class – Following Jesus on Campus

Class 2: Developing a Biblical worldview (part 3) – Building a biblical worldview

Review:

-Last time we were reminded that a “Worldview” = a way of looking at the world; a way of understanding/making sense of what’s going on in the world

-...and that a worldview is grounded on a set of basic assumptions, which impact we person think about different issues and shape our thoughts and actions

-...and that seeing and acting in the world with the assumption that God exists and that His Word is true will often put us at odds with people and situations around us, even within Christian circles – so called ‘going against the grain’

-We looked at biblical examples of what it means to have a biblical, or a God-centred worldview (Caleb & Joshua, and Peter & John)

→ Caleb/Joshua: determined to not be afraid of man nor strongholds, but that the Lord is faithful

→ Peter/John: could not stop speaking of what they had “...seen and heard”

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You’re out at bubble tea with a group of friends after fellowship. One of them, James, has recently started going to a new church. “You should really come check it out,” he says. “They’ve got really awesome worship music and the preacher is cool... he relates to you, you know?... plus, he’s totally helping me to see the Bible in a new light – I’m seeing things I never used to see growing up in my dad’s old, stuffy church.” James is one of your best friends – you’ve known him for years and know that his parents divorced when he was young. It’s a miracle itself that James continued going to church.

“Give me an example,” you ask. James responds thoughtfully, “ok, so the Bible talks about sin, right? And also that God hates sin. But you know this whole thing about sending sinners who don’t know Jesus to hell? Well – our pastor has helped me see that none of that is literal... sure God hates sin, but He loves the sinner right? So if He loves them, He’d never do anything as horrible as send them to hell. He wouldn’t be a God of love then...”

You sit there puzzled not knowing what to think. There must be a reason the Bible mentions sin and hell so much, but how would you go about beginning to figure out whether James’ pastor’s view of hell is biblical? In the immediate situation, what would you say to or ask James, and why?

What would the implications be if what James’ pastor was saying was true? E.g. For Christians and non-believers? On the gospel message? For people of other faiths? In your own life day-to-day?

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-Living according to the Bible means living a God-centred life, but it doesn’t happen overnight; in fact, it is a lifelong journey as our minds as Christians are slowly molded by God into conformity to the Bible

-Ian McClary last Friday spoke on the emerging church movement, and the deep problems that the church faces (you and I face) when we begin to see our 'faith foundation' through the lens or worldview of the secular world

- Emergent theology among other things re-defines sin, judgment and hell
- Particularly tries to dilute down the biblical teachings of these so that Christianity is more palatable and conforms better to what the world wants to hear – that God will not judge unrepentant sinners to hell because He is a God of love

Building a biblical worldview

I. Prayer: Acts 4:23-31; Colossians 1:9-10

Acts 4:23-31

-What is the context of this passage?

- Peter & John have just been released from prison and visit their friends, who immediately turn to God in (not to take them in and have a feast, etc.!)
 - Perhaps they are confused as to how and why their two friend are out so soon, and perhaps they are amazed that this has happened

-What did Peter and John's friends do when they see them? From this, what do we see are the main things that mattered the most to these Christians?

- Acknowledgement of who God is ("Sovereign Lord..) and all that He has done, His magnificent power
- Affirm that God had spoke through David, that God's enemies would act in vain, and this was an example of this
- Through prayer, they remind themselves of God's promises, and this shapes their view of the situation and and purpose of what has happened
- They pray not for deliverance, but for the courage to continue speaking

-What were the consequences of their prayer?

- place was shaken
- Holy Spirit worked in each one and their prayers were fulfilled
- confirmation that this was the reality

Prayer both affirms God's character and promises in Scripture and ultimately helps us see our circumstances in light of all of this

Colossians 1:9-10

-What is Paul here praying for?

- Praying that God would continually give the church the "knowledge of His will" through "wisdom and understanding" from the Holy Spirit... so that they may "**live a life worthy of the Lord**"
- "worthy of the Lord"... a life that is worthwhile for the sake of Christ
- The secular world has its own set of values, and own set of causes and ideologies that it believes is of great worth... sometimes even of ultimate worth
- And this goes back to the definition of a worldview – a set of assumptions (what is good and bad, important and not, worthy or not, etc.) that shapes the way we think and act

- It is possible for Christians to live lives un-worthy of the Lord for periods of time, possibly due to ignorance of how God actually wants them to live; this is why through prayer, we can and do seek after wisdom and understanding that helps us discern how to view the world biblically (in a way worthy of Christ) so that we can live this out

II. Knowing and Obeying God's Word: Joshua 1:5-8, 3:7-10, 6:1-5

-Joshua 1:5-8. What is the context here?

- great patriarch Moses has just passed away; now God Himself has chosen Joshua to be his successor

-On what basis would Joshua be able to obey God's command and would God protect Joshua?

- To obey God's law very carefully, to not 'turn from it to the left or to the right'

God's command to Joshua to carefully examine, know and obey His Word would give Joshua eyes of faith to do great things despite the odds and circumstances against Him. Not only would God deliver Joshua through humanly impossible circumstances, God's very presence would be with Joshua. What examples of this do we see from these passages? (Joshua 3:7-10; 6:1-5)

-Joshua 3:7-10

- verse 9: "Joshua said to the Israelites, 'Come here and listen to the words of the Lord your God.'"
- God delivered Israel through the river Jordan through impossible circumstances (they crossed dry ground!)

-Joshua 6:1-5

- the contrast between verses 1 and 2 are amazing: the city was barred and secure (v1), yet God has delivered Jericho into Joshua's hands!

-What does the psalmist say about the power of God's Word in a believer and in shaping how they should think and live? (Read and briefly discuss Psalm 119: 1-2, 24, 29, 37)

-Digging deep into God's Word inevitably helps you get into the heart of God; as you read, His thoughts and priorities become yours and His passions become your passions

-If you don't know the Bible, how are you ever going to know how to view the world through what the Bible says?

-You receive a love letter from your boyfriend or girlfriend... if you like them, what will you do with the letter? You'll pore over it over and over again, trying to get their nuances, what they're thinking / feeling / going through, how they see things going, etc.

III. Live according to the Holy Spirit: John 6:12-15, 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:6, 11-13

The Bible tells us that at the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in the life of the new believer (Acts 2:38, Romans 8:9). He is there among many other things to guide and counsel us (John 14:16, 26), and as a guarantee of salvation through Jesus (Eph 1:13). The Spirit enables us to live with the right perspective and gives us spiritual eyes to see the world and the things that are truly

important in the world. What insights do the two passages below give us about the Holy Spirit and His role in shaping a worldview that is based on God's Word?

-John 6:12-15, 17:17

- Holy Spirit guides us into all truth – i.e. gives us clarity of mind to know God's truth and how to view the world accordingly
- Jesus says that God's Word is truth and that it sanctifies us – makes us increasingly holy
- If you want to live with a biblical worldview – one that is based on God's Word – then you need to live being reminded every moment that the Spirit of Christ dwells in you and He alone can and will guide you to do so

-1 Corinthians 2:6, 11-13

- Contrast between wisdom from God (v.5) vs. the "...wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing."
- A biblical worldview is one that stems from godly wisdom
- The "wisdom" of this age Paul refers to is the pattern of thinking of the world (its values, assumptions, assessment of worth, etc.)
- But we've received the Spirit of God so that we may know what truly matters to Him and how He desires that we should think about everything and in every situation

Developing a worldview that is biblical and "worthy of the Lord" is absolutely critical to following Jesus and being His disciple as a student on campus and in no matter what life stage we're in.

Knowing this, will you commit yourself to prayer to the Lord both for wisdom and also as a reminder to you of His promises, to intently studying and meditating on His Word, and living according to the Holy Spirit, who is alive indwelling you and at work to guide your thoughts and deeds unto what pleases God?