



GLC  PRESENTS

APOLOGETICS

SESSION 2: UNDERSTANDING WORLDVIEWS

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Understanding Worldviews

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

1. Identify characteristics of several worldviews.
2. Understand some ways that worldviews shape our thinking and behavior, even as Christians.
3. See how observing a person's worldview can help us connect more effectively in sharing Christ with someone.

GROUP ACTIVITY 1

Form groups of 4-5 people, then discuss the following:

Imagine your child (or close relative's child) suddenly became sick.
What would you do?

What is a Worldview?

A worldview is the sum of the consciously or subconsciously held beliefs and assumptions about the nature of ourselves and the world around us that helps us live and find meaning.

Why Understand Worldviews?

- Helps us connect with those we are trying to reach
- Helps us know ourselves better
- Helps us to be better disciples and disciplers

How do they work?

- Consciously or subconsciously
- Usually operate at the level of assumptions
- Makes communication across worldviews difficult

What are the main Worldviews?

Western

- Christian Theism
- Deism
- Naturalism
- Nihilism/Existentialism
- Postmodernism

Eastern

- Animism
- Monism
- New Age

Christian Theism

Core beliefs

- God is “omni-_____,” holy, good, personal and triune
- Created all, including scientific laws – but the universe is an “open system”
- Time is linear and leads to final judgement

Deism

- God is “Prime Mover”
- Derived rationally, not through revelation
- Created all, including natural laws – but left creation to run on its own
- Ethics up to reasonable people to determine
- Future destiny is indeterminate

Naturalism / Modernism

- If God is out of the picture, why assume there is a god at all?
- Science and reason are the basis for all knowledge and ethics
- Material world is all there is – no need for God
- “Supernatural” can be explained by science
- Although science asserts upward evolution, it has no basis

Nihilism/Existentialism

- If matter is all there is, life is absurd
- Nihilist: so you may as well admit it and die
- Existentialist: so you can just create meaning for yourself
- It is up to the individual to create meaning – leap of faith

Postmodernism

- Meaning is determined by the community
- Rejection of meta-narrative
- Suspicion of power, authority
- Popular – interconnectedness, global youth culture, political correctness, tolerance

GROUP ACTIVITY 2

Which of these worldviews do you see most prevalent in the Philippines today?

What about among youth?

How about online and in social media?

Animism

- “Pre-modernism” – traditional societies
- God is distant and inaccessible
- Animism – nature is imbued with spiritual power
- Spirits have power over our lives
- We must appease the spirit world

Monism

- Pantheism – everything is God
- Distinction is illusion
- Goal is release or samsara, release from reincarnation, karma
- Various means – meditation, moksha (devotion), rituals, knowledge

New Age

- Experience of supernatural yet within pseudo-scientific framework
- Spiritual enlightenment, new consciousness
- Various means – occult, drugs, meditation

Syncretism

- Holding various worldviews or elements of different worldviews simultaneously
- With or without acknowledging or reconciling conflicts
- Compartmentalizing life

GROUP ACTIVITY 3

Case study of Bong and Aroon

Your friend Bong is an engineer who was recently transferred to Bangkok as part of his work for a multinational company. He has been a Christian for several years, and wants to share his faith in Christ with his coworkers.

During his first week on the job he meets a fellow-engineer named Aroon. Bong begins to get to know Aroon, and Aroon invites him to visit his home. During their visit, Bong learns some interesting things:

Aroon is a 28-year-old engineering graduate from Bangkok. Still single, he lives at home with his parents. Each day his parents offer flowers and incense at the family altar where pictures of his great-grandparents are displayed. In front of his house is a spirit house where the family offers sacrifices to gain favor with the local spirits.

Aroon has worked as an engineer for several years. At night he is fond of going out dancing and drinking with his friends. Aroon is not very religious, but participates in some of the activities of the Buddhist temple on religious holidays and once, when he was much younger, his parents almost placed him in a monastery to become a monk.

Bong would like to share Christ with Aroon. When he sees a picture of you on Facebook in Apologetics class at CCF, he messages you and asks for your expert advice about what to say to Aroon.

Upcoming Topics for Apologetics

2016

Creation vs. Evolution (October 13 - Thursday)

Conversational Apologetics (October 20 & 27 - Thursday)

2017

Reliability and Authority of the Bible

Deity of Christ

Pain and Suffering

Other religions and cults

God's design (of human beings)

Ethics

