

***“The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good” Proverbs 15:3***

**Worldview:**

Definition:

1. The overall perspective from which one sees and interprets the world.
2. A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or a group. In both senses also called *Weltanschauung* (a comprehensive conception or image of the universe and of humanity's relation to it).

Every human being has a world view – a perspective about life, about God, about the universe, about our place in the universe.

**As Christians we are called to have a Christian world view based on God's revelation to us in Holy Scripture. This is called the Biblical worldview.**

In a world that is confused and in despair, we are called to know what we believe, to know Whom we have believed and to live transformed lives by the power of the Spirit.

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Romans 12:2*

We are called to have a Christian mind and a Christian worldview that we can share boldly and kindly to those who are lost in unbelief and ignorance.

We are called to have a clear understanding of:

1. Creation

The story of the Creation of Man is foundational to the Christian worldview. Man was created in God's image. The 'Godlikeness' of man is seen in the Creation story itself: he is a rational being, able to understand and respond to God's commands; he is a responsible being, able to exercise dominion of service and protection over nature; a social being with the capacity to love and be loved; and a spiritual being, able to know, communicate and worship the Creator.

2. The Fall

By his rebellion, Man has alienated himself from God. His life without God is meaningless and all his relationships reflect his separation from God. Spiritually dead in this life, his destiny is eternal death.

3. Redemption

God has taken it upon Himself to solve our sin problem. Through the birth, life, death, resurrection and exaltation of Christ, our redemption and restoration to the image of God is secured.

*'The true object of education is to restore the image of God in the soul'. Patriarchs and Prophets p 594*

4. The Second Coming

When this gospel of the kingdom is preached throughout the world **for a testimony**, Christ will come again in visible glory and power. Sin will be destroyed forever and a new heavens and a new earth created where righteousness reigns.

**The Nature of Reality**

Definition: "The world or the state of things as they actually exist rather than as they may appear or might be imagined... existence that is absolute, self-sufficient, or objective, and not subject to human decisions or conventions."

The Biblical Revelation of Reality:

**John 14:6** *"I am the Truth"...* 'I am He in whom the truth is summed up and found. I am the Reality.'

Christianity is a picture of reality. It is an account, or a description, or a depiction of the way things actually are, not how we perceive them to be. God is the primary Reality.

The reality is that there is an Infinite-Personal God who created the universe and creatures, including Man. He is infinitely separate from Man in His majesty, glory and power. And yet, He is deeply involved in the affairs and activity of the universe and Mankind. He is the Creator of nature and its laws. He is the Creator of Man, and when Man rebelled, God chose to become involved in redeeming and restoring Man to his original estate. He is able and willing to supernaturally intervene in nature and in Time.

## **Other Worldviews**

If we look at the world views prevalent during the history of the world, this is what we find (in general):

1. Belief in a God or gods.
2. Unbelief in a God or gods.

Throughout history, the majority of people have believed in some kind of God or gods. Examples are: Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hindus, the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans.

In contrast, there is a minority who do not believe in any God or gods. They are atheists, and in modern times, they call themselves by different names – humanists, Western materialists, secularists.

If we study those who believe in a God or gods, we find some different worldviews among them. Christians, Jews and followers of Islam believe in one God (monotheistic religions). While others such as Hindus, the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans believed in multiple gods (polytheistic religions).

### Differing beliefs about God or gods

There are 3 major concepts about God:

1. Pantheism – an impersonal god who exists in all matter.

Pantheism is the belief that god is everything and everyone, and that everything and everyone is god. It is very similar to polytheism in that it affirms many gods, but it goes a step further and claims that everything is god. In Pantheism, god permeates all things, connects to all things. He is found in all things and is contains all things. Pantheism claims that the world is god and god is the world. If the world did not exist, god would not exist.

Reality in Pantheism:

This worldview also affects their view of Reality. They believe that everything one can perceive with their senses is an illusion. The true reality is the impersonal god within that we can never perceive with our senses. We must deny matter ('mind over matter') and seek to become one with the divine spirit. Then one can say, "I am god" or 'I am the great soul". These are concepts found in Hinduism, the New Age cults and philosophies that arose out of the age of enlightenment in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

2. Deism - Deism is the belief in God, but a denial that God is involved in the world to any degree. It states that God created the world and then left it to the governing rules He has set in place and makes no attempt to involve Himself in the lives or actions of humans. Deists worship a completely impersonal Creator and exalt Logic and Reason above everything else. They do affirm one thing that Christians do – that God has provided proof of His existence in creation. But since knowledge about salvation cannot be found in the observation of creation, they deny God's personal redemptive work for Man.

Thomas Paine one of the most famous American Deists had this to say about Deism: *"The creation is the Bible of the Deist. He there reads, in the handwriting of the Creator himself the certainty of man's existence and the immutability*

*of man's power, and all other Bibles and Testaments are to him forgeries."* Deists view man as a rational being who is in charge of his own destiny, and they deny any special revelation from God. But this is what the Bible has to say:

*2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."*

*1 Corinthians 2:14 "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

*1 Corinthians 12:3 "Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaks in the Spirit of God ever says, 'Jesus is accursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except in the Holy Spirit."*

*Proverbs 20:24 "A person's steps are directed by the Lord. How then can anyone understand their own way?"*

*Isaiah 42:5 "This is what God the Lord says – the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it."*

### 3. As Infinite Personal God who is the Creator.

The Bible tells us of an infinite Personal God who is the Creator. He is separate from His creation and yet has a personal relationship with Man. Nature, created by Him, follows His laws, but He is able to supernaturally intervene in nature and in history. This is the Biblical world view.

*Psalms 139:7-8 "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there."*

*Genesis 1:1 "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth."*

*Nehemiah 9:6 "You alone are the Lord. You made the skies and the heavens and all the stars. You made the earth and the seas and everything in them. You preserve them all and the angels of heaven worship you."*

*Revelation 4:11 "Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created."*

*Isaiah 45:5 "I am the Lord, and there is no other, besides me there is no God; I equip you, though you do not know me."*

### **Leibniz's question**

**'Why is there something rather than nothing?'** This is the question Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) posed in regards to the origin of the universe as a part of his argument for the existence of God.

Here is a brief and simplified explanation of what has come to be known as the Leibniz Cosmological Argument (cosmology being the study of the origin of the cosmos, or universe).

The logic of the argument goes like this:

1. Everything that exists has an explanation of its existence.
2. If the universe has an explanation of its existence, that explanation is God.
3. The universe exists.
4. Therefore, the explanation of the universe's existence is God.

As with all such logical arguments, if the premises are true (points 1-3), then the conclusion must be true (point 4).

The Bible gives us the answers for all of the above.

The question, “Why is there something, rather than nothing?” within the context of Biblical revelation is answered quite simply. The answer is: *Because God, as an act of love, chose to create.*

### Unbelief in god or gods:

Secular Humanism and Naturalism - The worldview that sits at the heart of atheism and secular humanism is what we call *naturalism*. “The cosmos (universe) is all there is, all there ever was, and all there will be.” Underlying all forms of naturalism is the belief that “*nature, understood as mathematically describable laws and phenomena ruled by them, is all that is real*”.

For them, **reality** is found only in what they perceive with their senses and what is tangible and material. There is no other reality.

This is an outright denial of the Creator.

When man refuses to acknowledge his Creator, he will not worship Him.

*“You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created.” Revelation 4:11*

### The Problem of Evil

Modern **atheism** regards the problem of evil as an argument for atheism. The atheist contends that God and evil are incompatible, and given that evil clearly exists, God cannot exist.

**Dualism** is the belief that there are two equal and independent powers behind everything, one of them good and the other evil, and that this universe is the battlefield in which they fight out an endless war. It is a belief in two equally powerful, equally eternal opposing ultimate realities—one good and one evil.”

In ancient Chinese philosophy, these contrary forces can be complementary rather than eternal opposing powers (Ying and Yang).

### Human Morality

As men and women denied the very existence of God, they went further and declared that there were no universal absolute standards of right conduct. They had found a justification for doing ‘*what was right in their own eyes*’. This is the morality of relativism – everything is relative, there are no absolute standards. From this reasoning comes the morality of Utilitarianism ‘what serves society best is right’; the morality of situational ethics, the morality of the majority. The morality of Pantheism goes further than this - everything is equal in an impersonal world, so that ‘evil is equal to non-evil’.

### The Biblical Revelation:

The Bible recognises the problem of evil and informs us where it originated – in a created being, Lucifer the covering cherubim, whose heart was lifted up (Isaiah 14:12-15). The Bible tells us of the consequences and ultimate penalty of sin and informs us that God has intervened in history to solve the sin problem.

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14*

*For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3:8*

*For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 6:23*

### The Law of Love

The Bible reveals to us that God created us to live in relationships of love: love to God and love to Man. This is only possible as we recognise who God is and respond to His unconditional self-giving love...*'we love Him because He first loved us.'*

We are called to have a revelation of God, a response to God and responsibility to let His Word govern our conduct.

*"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart." Deuteronomy 6:4-6*

*"The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." Mark 12:29-31*

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34, 35*

### **Conclusion:**

In a world where men and women are full of despair and hopelessness, we who call ourselves the sons and daughters of God have been given a commission by Him.

*And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come. Matthew 24:14*

We are called to testify to the world that life is not meaningless; that we are created by a God who is Love and who has redeemed us from our rebellion and has plans to give us a future and a hope.

*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11*

We are called to extend the invitation to come to God for salvation.

*Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:12, 13*

*Come unto Me, all you who are burdened and heavy laden...I will give you rest for your souls. Matthew 11:28-30*

*And this is the record: God has given us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life. 1 John 5:11, 12*

Our lives must be a living witness to the God we worship.

*No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. John 1:18*

*No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. 1 John 4:12*

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:34, 35*

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