

MY PERSONAL WORLDVIEW

A Worldview Paper

Submitted to

Dr. Brian K. Moulton

Southern California Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for

PH-505 Apologetics and Christian Worldview

By

Michael K. Martin

April 14, 2013

Box Online Student

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from The New King James Version (NKJV), copyright © by Thomas Nelson, 1984.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
My Personal Worldview Statement	1
The Impact of My World View on the Homeless.....	5
Conclusion	6
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	7

MY PERSONAL WORLDVIEW

Introduction

Unlike popular apologists like Josh McDowell or Lee Strobel, I do not recall a time for me when God did not exist. I remember being taught about God in Vacation Bible School when I was four or five years old. When I was in junior high, I began to form my own beliefs concerning God through what He revealed to me. By examining His Word, His creation, and His Son I formed my own view of the world. Now, I will briefly describe my personal worldview which was formulated through evaluation of the above evidence, and then discuss the impact of my worldview concerning the homeless.

My Personal Worldview Statement

Six months after I was born, doctors confirmed that I was congenitally legally blind. So, one of my five senses used to assess the world was compromised. I soon learned to talk asking my parents lots of questions. I believe my inquisitive nature grew out of the need to learn about the world, and since I couldn't take in enough information visually, I had to question others. Looking back on that I realized that in order for me to know God, he would have to reveal Himself. Dan Story confirms this, "If we are to know truth about God at all, God Himself must reveal it to us."¹ Like most Christians, I believe one way that God reveals Himself is through the Bible.

¹ Dan Story, *Christianity on the Offense: Responding to the Beliefs and Assumptions of Spiritual Seekers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1998), 39.

I believe that the Bible is God's only written revealed truth. Whenever I would ask my mother a religious or spiritual question, she would respond by saying that it is in the Bible. When I would ask my unbelieving father a question about a scientific matter, he would usually respond by having my brother read from the Book of Knowledge, which was a type of encyclopedia. So I learned that I couldn't just explain or prove something through my imagination. For spiritual concerns that proof came from the Bible, and for scientific concerns that proof came from the encyclopedia. This faith verses science dichotomy would be one of my presuppositions for how I viewed the world into my early forties.

In my teen-age years, the only pluralism I knew was different religious beliefs held by friends and family who were Jewish, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Christian and Mormon. It appeared that all believed in the Bible, but it seemed as though only the clergy could quote it accurately and interpret it for their congregations. So in junior high school, I began to study the Bible for myself as Paul admonished Timothy to do in Second Timothy 2:15. As I began to diligently study the Bible, The Holy Spirit convicted me to make my mother's faith my own and become a follower of Jesus Christ.

As I matured in the Christian faith, I learned that the Bible was written by God through inspiration. Second Timothy 3:16-17 reveals, "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" (NKJV). Josh and Sean McDowell state that since God superintended the writing of His revealed truth it has power and

weight behind it. So, the Bible is our authority.² Additionally, the Bible is without error, complete, historically accurate, and we can interpret it through sound hermeneutical principles.

In short, the Bible is my source for answering life's basic questions concerning origin, purpose and life after death. Much of this is summed up in Hebrews 1:1-2 which says, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds" (NKJV). As this passage reveals, God created the world and concluded His revelation through His Son, Jesus Christ. But nagging questions plagued me throughout my Christian journey, what about those who have not been exposed to God's Word like the Pigmy in New Guiney or the naturalist who does not believe in God (like my father)?

As the postmodern culture moves farther away from the truth of God, many people do not believe that the Bible is relevant. A couple of years after I learned how to effectively evangelize, I discovered many who did not believe that the Bible was true. This prompted me to learn various techniques for pre-evangelism. Learning to ask open-ended questions first exposed me to the idea that people have a worldview based on certain false assumptions. Sadly, none of the people I spoke with were able to explain these invalid presuppositions. Perhaps other extra biblical evidence will point me to God.

As a theist, I believe that God not only revealed Himself through His Word, but that he has also revealed Himself through his creation. According to Kendell Easley, all of the Christian

² Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell, *The Bible Handbook of Difficult Verses* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013), 11.

worldview elements are taught in the Psalms.³ Specifically, Psalms 19:1-2 declares, "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge" (NKJV). Thus, God's creation imparts knowledge to mankind. Clearly then mankind has a duty to make some kind of decision or to take some action as a result of this revelation. Paul further explains, in Romans 1:18-21 "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened" (NKJV).

Theologians refer to these proofs as general revelation. But as also seen, mankind scoffs at God by ignoring or rejecting His revelations of the Bible and creation. God also revealed Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ. The postmodern culture collides with the truths proclaimed by Christ and Christianity. In the Gospel of Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus taught that we are to love God whole-heartedly and we are to love our neighbor unselfishly. Jesus also taught in the Gospel of John 14:6 that he is the way the truth and the life. As a Christ follower, I believe that the truth is that which corresponds to reality, and that it is impossible for contradicting truth claims to exist. Unfortunately, the postmodern idea of tolerance attempts to force people into trying to meld competing truth claims.

³ Kendell H. Easley, *Holman QuickSource Guide to Understanding the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Holman, 2002), 118.

The Impact of My World View on the Homeless

I believe that living out Christ's teachings will show the postmodern culture that Christianity is God's great proposal for unifying the world. Additionally, just as Christ showed His skeptics that he was the Son of God through his works, I must live out my faith based on Christ's teachings. In James 1:22, the Apostle James exhorts, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (NKJV). Then in Verse 27, James says, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (NKJV). After studying this passage, I believe that ministering to orphans and widows is just an example of a much larger list of concerns that Christ followers should endeavor to positively impact.

As our small group began studying the Epistle of James, we were moved to consider what God wanted us to do to serve our community outside the walls of our church. The above passage made us realize that the homeless population in Escondido was every bit as needy as the orphans and widows of James 1:27. We began making sack lunches every other Saturday to serve the homeless in Grape Day Park. Through this ongoing experience God is showing us the true plight of the homeless in our community. One group member explains as she's giving a homeless woman a lunch that the same hands that made me also made you. Clearly, this is a practical way in which being made in God's image is being lived out. God has also connected us to other believers in the community who are serving the homeless. Sadly, local governmental agencies are trying to discourage feeding of the homeless and are using various means to make them unwelcome in our community.

Conclusion

In order for us to know God, He had to reveal Himself. The author of Hebrews, reminds us that God spoke or revealed Himself to us in various times and ways. The ways we examined were God's Word, His creation, and His Son. Through the teachings of God's Son, I know God's purpose for me is to impact the postmodern culture by living out my faith. One way that I am doing this is by ministering to the homeless, for we are all made in God's image.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Easley, Kendell H. *Holman QuickSource Guide to Understanding the Bible*. Nashville, TN: Holman, 2002.

McDowell, Josh and Sean McDowell. *The Bible Handbook of Difficult Verses*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013.

Story, Dan. *Christianity on the Offense: Responding to the Beliefs and Assumptions of Spiritual Seekers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1998.