

## WAR OF THE WORLDVIEWS #29

### “What Is Man?”

#### Introduction

#### I. Introduction

##### A. Review

1. We are in a war. Our enemy is not flesh and blood. It is a spiritual battle for the hearts and minds of men. We call it a “War of the Worldviews”.

**“A worldview is the total of answers people give to the most important questions of life.”**  
**Dr. Ronald Nash**

2. And the question "What is man?" is so important that it's found 5 times in the Bible!

3. I want to take the next 2 weeks to find out how the biblical worldview answers this great question and how knowing the answer can equip us for life in an increasingly counter-Christian culture. So...

##### B. “What is Man?”

###### 1. Each person will answer that question according to their *worldview*:

- A rock group says man is just “Dust in the Wind”
- Evolutionists say man is just a highly evolved ape; before that, man was a protozoan part of the ocean; so man is just “slime + time”
- But then we have the Mormon Church believes that men are destined to become gods. (Mormons believe in many gods)

**“As man is now, God once was. As God is now, man may become.”**  
**Lorenzo Snow**

**5<sup>th</sup> President of the Mormon Church, 1814-1901**

2. But how does a Christian answer the question? Sad to say, the surveys show us that the average American churchgoer can't give a ready reply!

a. Which is why we're losing the war of the worldviews...

**“The biblical worldview is a minority position all around the globe, even in so-called “Christian” nations because not all self-professed Christians have a biblical worldview. When pollsters ask Americans what they believe, only a small percentage give answers that really agree with what the Bible teaches. M.L. Ward, Jr., Biblical Worldview: Creation, Fall, Redemption**

b. So what does the Bible teach about “man”? The question is so important it's found 5 times in the Bible.

3. The first of the 5 times we find the question is in the Book of Job, where Job asks it of God...

**What is man, that You should exalt him, that You should set Your heart on him?  
Job 7:17**

a. Job is amazed that so great a God would have any interest in him.

4. The next appearance of the question is in a Psalm 8, where the great King David is in a similar mood...

**When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars which you have set in place, what is mankind that You are mindful of them, of human beings that you care for them?  
Psalm 8:3-4**

**What is man that Thou art mindful of him...for You have made him a little lower than the *angels* (Hebrew: '*elohim*'='gods') and crowned him with glory and honor and given him dominion over the works of your hands.”  
Psalm 8:5-6**

5. The question in both cases is in a context of comparing the greatness of God with the littleness of man and why such a great God would care about him. And give him such a promotion!

6. Job calls man a “worm” (Job 25:6); David calls himself a “worm” (Psalm 22:6); God calls Jacob a “worm” in Isaiah 41:14; and yet God has “crowned man with glory and honor” and decreed that he have dominion over the earth! How so?

7. The biblical worldview of man is what we call a *paradox*.

**A paradox is a situation involving two or more facts or qualities which seem to contradict each other.  
CollinsDictionary.Com**

a. A biblical example is the doctrine of the Trinity: 1 God in 3 Persons; God is one, yet three...2 facts that seem to contradict. A paradox!

### **C. The Paradoxical Nature of Man**

1. Man is a paradox:

- On the one hand, man is capable of some of the most amazing acts of love and sacrifice; On the other hand, man is capable of committing evil and commit the most unspeakable crimes we can imagine
- Man can create new worlds of computers and technology to make life better; but still spend billions developing weapons designed to annihilate one another
- The human race can produce a Mother Teresa and an Adolf Hitler

**Oh, the grandeur and littleness, the excellence and the corruption, the majesty and meanness of man!  
Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)**

2. Who is not amazed at all the great things man has done; and who is not amazed at all the evil men have done? Man is a paradox:

**“Man is a tiny speck in a vast universe he can never fully explore or control and yet God is concerned about him. Man has a desire to rule; yet the paradox is that man cannot rule himself.”  
Derek Prince**

3. Man is great. But man is messed up. Why? What is the biblical worldview as to “What is Man?” We might call it...

## II. The Good, the Bad, And the Ugly: The Truth About Man

### A. The Good

1. Man, (male and female), is the crown of God's creation.

a. Genesis 1 & 2 contain the creation story

b. There is a logical upward progression: The heavens and the earth; light; land and sea; fish and birds; animals...then MAN. (Male and Female)

**“And God said, ‘let Us make man in our own image, after our own likeness, and let them have dominion...So God created man in His own image, after His own likeness, male and female created He them.’”**

**Genesis 1:26-27**

2. No wonder there will always be a war of the worldviews between the evolutionists and the Christians!

- Darwin: Man begins low; in the slime/but in the Bible Man begins high; so high that only God Himself is above him!
- Darwin: Man is just another animal/but in the Bible, Man is totally distinct from the animals; he is given dominion over them!

**“All thy creation hath not more wonder in it than one of us: other creatures Thou madest by a simple command; MAN, not without a divine consultation: others at once; man Thou didst form, then inspire: others in several shapes, like to none but themselves; man, after Thine own image: others with qualities fit for service; man, for dominion. Man had his name from Thee; they had their names from man. How should we be consecrated to Thee above all others, since Thou hast bestowed more cost on us than other! “**

**Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich**

**1574-1656**

3. In the secular worldview, man is made in the image of man; in the biblical worldview, man is made in the image of God; in the secular worldview man begins low and is ever evolving upward; in the biblical worldview man begins high; but something goes wrong; the good about man becomes...

### B. The Bad

1. The great goodness of man in Genesis 1 and 2 all falls down with the entrance of sin in Genesis 3.

2. Now man, made in the image and likeness of God, designed for dominion, becomes spiritually *separated* from God.

3. And this is the paradox: The image of God is not destroyed; man retains his uniqueness in the creation; he is still superior to all other creatures; but he becomes displaced from his paradise and disconnected from true Source of his greatness.

4. Man can still dream; imagine; create; he is still capable of great things; but a seed of corruption has been sown in his soul and will work itself through his entire being.

**“To be corrupt means to be subject to decay.”**

**Dictionary**

a. A fresh picked piece of fruit looks great-for a while. But a week later we it is all shriveled up. This is a picture of corruption.

b. Sin corrupted the soul of our first parents; this is why we grow old, shrivel up, and die

5. It is impossible to measure the height of the fall of man; his corruption was total.

### **C. Man is Totally Fallen and Corrupt**

1. God made man in His own “image and likeness”.

2. God is a triune Being; 3 in one. So man is “triune”; spirit, soul, and body.

**“A triune God created a triune man.” One person, 3 elements. The only accurate understanding of man is the Bible.”**

**Derek Prince**

3. Almost every worldview admits that man is more than flesh and blood; that he has another dimension. (Call it “soul” or “spirit” or any other metaphysical

term). **But the biblical worldview teaches us that man is composed of spirit, soul, and body.**

- a. The body-the “outer layer”-how we contact the world
- b. The soul-the mind, will, and emotions-how we contact ourselves
- c. The spirit-the “heart” of man, his essence, how we contact God

4. Sin affected our spirit; we were separated from God. It affected our soul, so that our minds are darkened, our emotions control us, and our will cannot do what we know we should. And sin affected our bodies, which is why we die.

- a. What is man in Genesis 1 & 2? The crown of creation, made in the image and likeness of God. What is man in Genesis 3? A fallen creature, totally corrupted by sin: spirit, soul and body.

5. Thank God the Bible doesn't end in Genesis 3! The bad news about man is that we are totally corrupted by sin. The Good News about man is that the rest of the Bible is the story about how God sets about to save man from his fallen condition.

#### **6. Simply put, the Bible is a “3 Act Play”:**

Act 1: Creation of Man  
Act 2: The Fall of Man  
Act 3: The Redemption of Man

7. 99 and 44/100% of the Bible is dedicated to the redemption of man!

- a. Sin enters in Genesis 3; is totally destroyed in Revelation 22; all the rest is a story of God's love for a fallen race and how He saves it through Christ.

**“The crown of creation was place on man's brow. Sin wrecked it, but the Son of man regained it.”**

**F.B. Meyer**

8. Man's fall was *total*; spirit, soul, and body; so our redemption in Christ must be total!

- a. Consider Paul's prayer in 1 Thessalonians 5:23...

**Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you *completely*; and may your whole *spirit, soul, and body* be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:23 NKJV**

### **III. Conclusion**

#### **A. Review:**

1. Worldviews answer the most important questions of life.
2. One of the most important questions is, “What is man?”
3. The Christian worldview is the biblical worldview: the Bible says man was created in the image and likeness of God, fallen away by sin, but redeemed by God in Christ.
4. The biblical worldview looks to scripture to answer the question, “What is man”, because...

#### **B. Only God Can Reveal Our True Condition**

**“All the answers the Holy Ghost gives concerning man, are to humble man: man is ready to flatter himself, and one man to flatter another, but God tells us plainly what we are...”**

**Joseph Caryl**

**(1602-1673), Westminster Divine and Puritan**

1. Man is a paradox: he can see and understand everything but himself.
2. There are parts of our bodies we can see; but there are parts of our bodies that we cannot see; that we will never see; unless we have a “mirror”. The New Testament tells us that the Bible is our “mirror”.
3. Our only hope of knowing “What is man” and who we really are is the Word of God...

**For the Word of God is alive and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. It penetrates even to the dividing of soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”**

## **Hebrews 4:12**

4. It is only by the Word of God that we know who we are; and it is only by the Word of God that we can understand the fallen nature of the world we live in.

5. In Part Two, we will take a deeper look at the fallen nature of man without God, and how it explains much of what's going on in our world today.

Closing Prayer and Communion

**Title Slide**