



# gracefellowship

Series: Filter  
Date: September 18, 2022

Title: Imago Dei  
Passage: Genesis 1:26-27

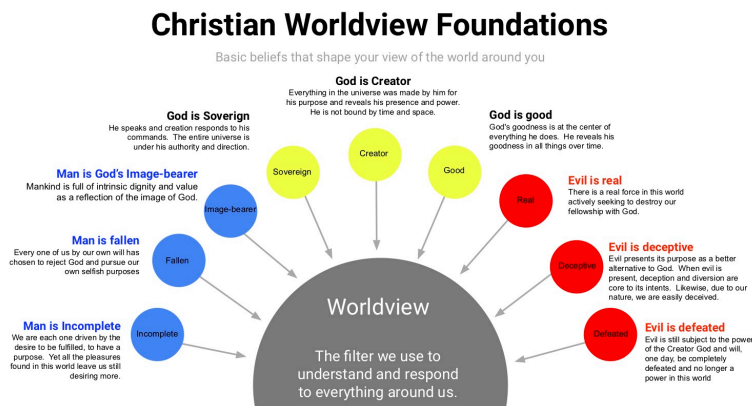
Scripture Reading: Psalm 139

Last week we began a teaching series looking at what it means to have a Biblical Worldview. As you go through life I want to encourage you not to check your brains at the door! Humanity has been asking the same basic questions for most of our existence. Here is what is really interesting: over time those with secular worldviews keep changing their postures and answers to the foundational questions of our existence. However, those with a Biblical worldview have had the same basic answers for thousands of years. And if you check back in another thousand years, the answers will still be the same. Our evidence over time may change, but the answers do not.

**A worldview is the lens through which we view the world and make decisions about how we will live.**

- **The filter we use to understand and respond to everything around us.**

I want to put a diagram on the screens for you to see that gives a basic framework for a Christian Worldview. I'm going to briefly introduce this to you today and then in a couple weeks you're going to look at it more in-depth when you get to hear from Rick Hasty, who has forgotten more about Christian Worldview and apologetics than I ever knew to begin with! This diagram shows us the 9 things we should really understand as Christians about life as followers of Jesus.



(Give a basic overview of the Worldview Diagram)

Here's what we take away from this diagram:

As Christians, we need to allow Scripture to shape our understanding of who God is, who man is and who/what evil is. When we have a proper understanding of these three things we can address anything that comes at us in life through the filter of life in relationship with a loving heavenly Father.

A Christian worldview leads us to believe in moral absolutes, miracles, human dignity and the possibility of redemption to overcome evil.

*Where does your worldview take you?*

- Does your worldview permit that there are absolute truths that remain true for all people, everywhere, for all time?
- Does your worldview permit for miracles- the supernatural, outside the physical universe that you can't observe, measure or explain?
- Does your worldview believe that all people have dignity and intrinsic value?
- Does your worldview believe that redemption is possible and eternal, spiritual life exists after physical death?

We are going to do our best to discuss with you in the next few weeks how Christians answer the most basic questions humans have been asking on planet earth for thousands of years!

Here are the basic questions a worldview attempts to answer: (Whether you are an atheist, agnostic, secularist, naturalist, Christian, whatever...these are the questions that are begging to be answered.)

- 1. Where did we come from/ Why are we here?**
- 2. What is wrong with the world?**
- 3. How can the world be fixed?**

This morning I want us to mainly look at that first question from a biblical perspective. Where did we come from? / Why are we here?

Have you ever asked yourself why that is such a big question? It gets answered in all kinds of different ways.

- We are a cosmic accident and the result of random chance
- An alien race with intelligent life planted us here
- Over millions or even billions of years, a simple single celled organism mutated and evolved into complex life, making all different types of species that populates our planet.

The Bible tells us this is an important question because of something Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 3:11

**:: Ecclesiastes 3:11**

**11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.**

God has put eternity in our hearts- there is a longing inside each one of us to understand where we fit in the scope of the universe and what our purpose is. God puts a yearning for eternity in our hearts. We are all on a search for significance.

And that is what the Biblical Worldview explains next- our significance comes from the reality we are created by God.

In fact, *Fred Hoyle*, an atheist who spent his life studying physics, astronomy and cosmology, said this:

**“ A common sense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology, and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature. The numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me so overwhelming as to put this conclusion almost beyond question.”**

Illustration: Our location in the Universe perfectly allows life to exist. If the sun were any larger or smaller we wouldn't be able to sustain life on this planet. If we were any closer or farther away from the sun life would not be possible on earth- the planet would either be too hot or too cold. If earth were anywhere else in the Milky Way galaxy the planet would not be able to sustain life. In all of the universe our planet is perfectly placed in an interstellar position to allow life to exist.

A biblical worldview tells us that is not an accident! We have a Creator who designed our planet for life. So...

Where did we come from? Why are we here? Let's jump into the first few chapters of Genesis together and answer that question.

**:: Genesis 1:26-27**

**26 Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”**

**27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.**

**:: Genesis 2:7**

**7 Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.**

**:: Genesis 5:1-2**

**1 This is the written account of Adam's family line. When God created mankind, he made them in the likeness of God.**

**2 He created them male and female and blessed them. And he named them "Mankind" when they were created.**

**We are the Imago Dei- the image of God.**

That means we are in the "image" or "likeness" of God. We are similar to, or representative of God, not identical to Him. Being made in God's image doesn't mean we look like God. God is Spirit; He does not have a physical body. But we share certain attributes and characteristics of God. Mankind was the final thing God created- the pinnacle of His creation- to be His imagers, or representatives on earth. We are the ultimate stewards of all God created.

The answer to the question, "Where did we come from?" is this:

**We are the purposeful creation of a good, Sovereign God.**

As image bearers we understand we have purpose, value and dignity. We are not a cosmic accident or the result of random chance. Because God created you, you have infinite worth!

- All life is precious from the unborn to the aged.

This is why we fight for the dignity of human life. What happens when you don't see life as valuable with a created purpose and dignity?

- You can abort babies in unwanted pregnancies for any reason up until the moment of birth.
- You can assist the elderly in suicide (BTW, it's not just the elderly; there are debates going on in the USA right now about helping "mature minors" take their life through assisted suicide for any reason they deem necessary.)
- You can eradicate people groups based on skin color, tribal association, birth defects...

A biblical worldview gives us the filter to look at life as being precious- designed by God for a purpose. And because we are created by Him, we are loved by Him!

**:: Psalm 139:13-16**

**13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.**

**14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.**

**15 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.**

**16 Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.**

Science is telling us what the Bible has affirmed for centuries- life begins at conception and the baby in the womb is fully human and fully alive the moment an egg is fertilized by a sperm.

*American College of Pediatricians – March 2017*

**ABSTRACT: The predominance of human biological research confirms that human life begins at conception—fertilization. At fertilization, the human being emerges as a whole, genetically distinct, individuated zygotic living human organism, a member of the species Homo sapiens, needing only the proper environment in order to grow and develop. The difference between the individual in its adult stage and in its zygotic stage is one of form, not nature. This statement focuses on the scientific evidence of when an individual human life begins.**

Professor Hymie Gordon, Mayo Clinic: “By all the criteria of modern molecular biology, life is present from the moment of conception.”

Professor Micheline Matthews-Roth, Harvard University Medical School: “It is incorrect to say that biological data cannot be decisive.... It is scientifically correct to say that an individual human life begins at conception.... Our laws, one function of which is to help preserve the lives of our people, should be based on accurate scientific data.”

Dr. Watson A. Bowes, University of Colorado Medical School: “The beginning of a single human life is from a biological point of view a simple and straightforward matter—the beginning is conception. This straightforward biological fact should not be distorted to serve sociological, political, or economic goals.”

Then we see in Scripture the answer to the question of why we are here.

When God formed mankind in His image He tells us the purpose of our existence. We read that already this morning in Genesis 1:26-27, but look at it again with me.

:: Genesis 1:26-28

26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

God made us to have dominion over all He made. We are to subdue the earth. For better or worse we do that. When mankind is living this out well, the earth flourishes. We have the ability to create and bring growth that is helpful to the whole population. When we subdue the earth poorly, we destroy habitats and environments and we ruin the natural beauty that exists for selfish purposes.

The second thing God told us to do is be fruitful and increase in number- fill the earth. We are to create other image bearers. How? Through the marriage of a man and a woman.

After God created Adam, He said it wasn't good for Adam to be alone. Genesis 2 tells us that God put Adam into a deep sleep, took one of his ribs and fashioned woman out of the rib. God made a perfectly matched help-mate for Adam and brought the two together. Then God united them as husband and wife. The world's first institution is marriage. God created us as male and female to become one. In marital union, by God's design, we get pleasure and the ability to procreate. God designed and created male and female as sexual beings to come together and be able to multiply the species- to fill the earth and subdue it.

There is one final answer to the question: Why are we here?

We were made by God to know Him and worship Him.

In the book of Acts, Paul visits the city of Athens and goes to the synagogue, where he talks and reasons with people. Athens is a city full of idol worship. Every god under the sun is worshiped. They even have an alter with an inscription on it that says, "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD." Just in case they missed anyone, they left an open alter for the worship of a god they didn't know. That's when Paul begins to tell them about the God they know nothing about.

:: **Acts 17:22-34**

**22 Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious.**

**23 For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.**

**24 “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands.**

**25 And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.**

**26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.**

**27 God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us.**

**28 ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’**

**29 “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill.**

**30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.**

**31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”**

**32 When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.”**

**33 At that, Paul left the Council.**

**34 Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed.**

Talking Points:

1. God created the world and everything in it.
2. God is involved on a macro level- determining that mankind would obey Him and inhabit the whole earth.
3. God is also involved on the micro level- he appointed the times in history people would live and the boundaries they would live within.
  - a. Why? So they would seek Him and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though He is not far from any one of us.
  - b. It’s not an accident you live right here, right now. God knew that by placing you here this would be your best chance to know Him.

Jesus told us that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all our heart, mind and strength. Then the second greatest is to love your neighbor as

yourself. A relationship you find with God is not meant to be transactional. A relationship with God is meant to be transformative.

4. Paul would go on to discuss some things we are going to talk about in more detail the next two weeks- God's love offers us redemption from our sins, but any who reject that face judgment. He gives proof of His power to judge by raising Jesus from the dead.

When the people heard Paul talking about God becoming a man, dying to pay for our sins and then coming back to life in victory, there were three responses:

- a. Some sneered at Paul. They mocked him and dismissed him as crazy.
- b. Some said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." They didn't commit, but they were open to hearing more and seeing if the worldview Paul was espousing had any truth to it.
- c. Some became followers of Paul- they embraced Jesus and believed in the God that had been hidden from them.

These same responses are going to happen as you hear this message today.

- Some of you will write me off as crazy and reject a Biblical worldview.
- Some of you are not convinced, entirely, but you're willing to follow the evidence and listen more.
- Some of you are ready to begin following Jesus today.

A biblical worldview says that from this moment forward you commit your life to Jesus, growing in love and obedience to Him. He is the only hope for your redemption. Salvation is not a matter of saying a prayer, it's a matter of placing your faith in Jesus for your salvation and surrendering to Him, putting Him as the ultimate authority in your life and trusting that He will bring you to be with Him after a lifetime of following Him.

- Prayer of commitment

Life Group Guide

Ice Breaker: Either have someone in your group prepare ahead of time to share their personal faith journey or ask one of the following questions:

"Describe a time you were absolutely sure of something then found out you were wrong."

"What is your favorite attribute of God? Why?"

Read: Genesis 1:26-28 // Genesis 2:7; 18-25 // Genesis 5:1-2 // Psalm 139

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you learn about God from these passages? What traits about God are seen here?
2. What do we learn about mankind in these passages?



3. We are talking about Biblical Worldview; how do these passages help answer the questions “Where did we come from” and “Why are we here?”
4. What kinds of answers do we find from culture and other worldviews about where we came from and why we are here?
5. How does a Biblical Worldview inform the value we have as humans?
6. What might the results be of not having a Biblical Worldview concerning where we come from and why we are here?
7. Why is it important for us to answer the questions of where we came from and why we are here from a Biblical perspective as Christians?
8. What do you need to do this week in response to something the Holy Spirit has revealed to you tonight?

Pray together as a group for God to continue to open your eyes to a worldview that is based on Scripture and helpful for your continued transformation in Christlikeness and obedience to God.