

Biblical Christian World View: What Does It Mean?

by James D. Nickel

Having named this website Biblical Christian World View, what do I mean by these words? Although we can understand World View as one word, worldview, I am separating worldview into its two components. With this proviso, let us unpack each word of this phrase in turn.

- ✓ Biblical
 - ✓ Christian
 - ✓ World
 - ✓ View

Biblical

The starting point, the ground, for all sound thinking is the revelation of God the Father through His Incarnate Son Jesus Christ in the Spirit. The purpose of Scripture is to point us to this revelation; i.e., to Jesus Christ who is the Word (*logos*) of God the Father Almighty, the God-man by whom all things are made, consist, and redeemed. In support of this revelation of God the Father in Jesus Christ, Scripture, through human agency, is trustworthy because it is God-breathed, i.e., Spirit inspired.

The Word of God, therefore, is the ultimately Jesus Christ. He will stand forever. He will judge every human being on the last day. Scripture, consisting of the Old Testament (39 books) and New Testament (27 books), is the final and unchangeable written canon that reveals the truth of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Spirit. In directing us to this God, the One in Three and the Three in One, the words of Scripture are the one rule for faith and practice (Romans 3:4; I Corinthians 2:5, 12-13; Matthew 4:4; II Timothy 3:16-17).

While Scripture is oriented to man, speaking to man's need of redemption from sin, it is *not* man-centered. Scripture proclaims *first* the Triune being, the glory of the mutual indwelling of the Father, Son, and Spirit, and His eternal purpose of the adoption of humanity into His circle of fellowship (Ephesians 1:3-5), a purpose that includes humanity because it transcends humanity. The Triune God, while being above us (transcendent) is *for us* (immanent). Scripture reveals the Triune God as Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, along with all points in between. Scripture throbs with the message of the preeminence of the Triune God (Isaiah 44:6, Revelation 1:8, Revelation 22:13, Colossians 1:18).

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Christian

Christian means “follower of Christ, the Messiah.”¹ The word is only used two times in the New Testament (Acts 26:28; I Peter 4:16). In each context, the enemies of “The Way” (Acts 29:23; cf. John 14:6) used “Christian” in a derogatory manner, as a pejorative.

Scripture directs us to God the Father through Jesus Christ by His Spirit. To God the Father, Christ the Son is *beloved*, and the Spirit of God *glorifies* Christ the Son who, in turn, reveals the Father (Matthew 11:25-30; Luke 10:21-22). The Christian, the follower of “The Way,” being a Christo-centric Trinitarian, will face opposition to the Light of Truth.

The Lord Jesus Christ said, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6).²

This verse indicates that Jesus is the Way to the Father. Ephesians 2:18 states, “for through Him [Jesus] we both [Jew and Gentile] have our access in one Spirit to the Father.” No man “*pros ton patera*” (comes to the Father) but by Jesus. The Greek preposition *pros* means “face to face,” in a fellowship that is transparent, of unfeigned completeness and acceptance. *Pros* is the same preposition the Apostle John uses, in John 1:1, to proclaim that the Word who was in the beginning was “with God (*pros ton theon*).”

The Son Incarnate, the Word who became flesh in Jesus (John 1:14), is the pathway that we walk into the presence of the Father by the Spirit. Every human being has chosen a path in opposition to this “way of holiness” (Isaiah 35), a way that leads to the precipice of perdition. The Triune God does not desire that man perish in this false way (John 3:16; II Peter 3:9). The Gospel is the declaration to crooked man, walking on the wrong path, that Jesus is the Way to the circle of the face-to-face fellowship He knows with His Father by the Spirit. Jesus is the way to man’s true home, his true abiding place (John 14-16). Therefore, God commands crooked man walking on the false path to repent, to change his mind (*metanoia*³), to straighten up in the Way that is Jesus.⁴ Following Jesus in the Way is to abide in the way He walks, in His fellowship with His Father. The person of His Spirit, poured out on all flesh (Acts 2:16f), is *the ethical energy, the fruit of His redemptive work, that enables us to walk in His way*. Christ is also the way to wisdom (Colossians 2:3). Philosophy means “love of wisdom.” Since Christ is wisdom and knowledge personified, then a true philosopher is a lover of Christ by the Spirit.

¹ Messiah, or Christ, is a title. The Son of God was named Jesus, meaning “the savior from sin,” at His birth. Lord represents is the Son of God’s royal authority over all things, heaven and earth, because He has created all things, sustains all things, and is the reconciliation of all things.

² The grammar of the Greek indicates that the way is both the truth and life. The Greek word *kai* translated “and” indicates a cumulative force; i.e., Jesus is the way which is the truth which is the life.

³ *Metanoia* means to change the mind.

⁴ We can straighten up in the Way because Jesus, in His vicarious humanity, has straightened man by taking crooked man to death and raising him to new life in His bodily resurrection.

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The Way of Jesus is the true (*aletheia*) way. All other pathways are false. Man's problem is not just a matter of ethics; it is also epistemological.⁵ He does not understand the nature of Truth. He has a wrong vision of God. Jesus, as the truth, enlightens every man that comes into the world (John 1:1-4). This enlightenment means that Christ bestows upon all men the ability to know what they know. *It is light in the person of Christ that makes any knowledge possible.* Jesus said, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you will know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32). The truth that is in Jesus the Way brings ethical and epistemological freedom to humanity.

The way of Jesus is the way of life (*zoe*). *Zoe* is the dynamism of life in its truth; it is not biological life (from *bios*). In Jesus, we know the Father which is *aeonios zoe*, eternal life (John 17:3), a quality of life before it is a duration of life. Through Jesus, the true *logos*, all things, including all humanity, were made (Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-3). And, it is in the *logos* of God that all things consist (Colossians 1:17), and it is the word (*rhema*⁶) of His power (*dunamis*⁷) that upholds all things (Hebrews 1:3). A personal *logos* made the world and all humanity, giving *zoe* to all things (John 1:3-4). Not only has the *logos* made the world, He also entered the world taking on the fallen human flesh of every man (Romans 8:3), as the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father. The *logos* tabernacled in the flesh of man⁸ *to save man and the cosmos* (John 1:14, John 3:16-17, II Corinthians 5:11-6:3).

In philosophy, metaphysics is the study of the nature of reality. Scripture reveals Jesus the Word as the true reality, the ground of all being and existence. Scripture unfolds a transcendent *logos*, an eternal, yet personal Creator and a created order that reflects a pervasive rationality, the way wisdom in the person of Christ, the ultimate rationality, made it (Proverbs 8:12-36).

The phrase *Biblical Christian* is, therefore, a necessary one, full of rich meaning. Some people call themselves Christians while rejecting what Scripture says about Jesus who is authoritative, the Lord of every area of thought and life. A Biblical Christian who, in the power (*dunamis*) of the Spirit of God (Acts 1:8), submits to the Word of God who is Jesus Christ, as unfolded by the entirety of Scripture. A Biblical Christian believes in the Incarnate Son of God, Jesus, by whom the Father created all things and who sustains all things, and who, thereby, speaks to the entirety of life, both time and eternity.

World

In Scripture, world (*kosmos*) has multiple meanings. Based upon the context, world can refer to (1) the *kosmos* or universe; i.e., the created order, including all humanity within it

⁵ Epistemology is the study of the nature of knowledge.

⁶ *Rhema* means the express statements or utterance of a living voice.

⁷ *Dunamis* means power that is inherent, power that is the nature of the person it describes.

⁸ "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among (*en*) us" (John 1:14a) can be translated "The Word became flesh and dwelt in us." The Greek preposition *en* means "in," not "among."

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(Acts 17:24, John 3:16), or (2) the system of ethical rebellion. Regarding ethics, the writers of the New Testament use *kosmos* as the attitude, outlook, and conduct that is in rebellion against the Triune God (I John 2:15-17, James 4:4). The redemption of God the Father in Christ by His Holy Spirit delivers us from the *kosmos* that is grounded in ethical rebellion. The one who, by the unmerited grace of the person of Jesus Christ, participates in this redemption, therefore, sees the same *kosmos* through different eyes (Acts 26:18). *The Biblical Christian sees the kosmos in rebellion as a kosmos Christ came to save* (John 3:16-17, 4:42, I John 4:14).⁹

By being reconciled to God in Christ, the Biblical Christian rejects ethical rebellion and seeks to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (II Corinthians 10:5). By doing so, the Church of Jesus Christ, as a body of believers, are salt and light, indeed, redeeming influences in the structures of society (Matthew 5:13-16). Note carefully: darkness is the absence of light, but light is *not* the absence of darkness. The darkness that envelops an entire room disappears when one lamp is lit! Power flows from Biblical Christians lighting the *kosmos* of dark rebellion, salting it thereby.

Since all things were created in and by Christ, then every aspect of the created order belongs to the Creator (Psalm 24:1, Acts 17:24-28). The Biblical Christian is one who sees *all things* in a comprehensive, reoriented way, a way that serves the purposes of the Triune God in Christ (Colossians 1:15-18). By rejecting the ethical rebellion of the *kosmos*, the Faith that the Biblical Christian embraces is truly *kosmos* affirming.

There is consummative finality to the redemptive activity of God in this world. In the words of Dr. Glenn R. Martin (1935-2004) long-time professor of history at Indiana Wesleyan University, “The Biblical Christian also knows that subsequent to creation there was a Fall; and on this side of the Fall there is abnormality, not normality. But Biblical Christians are not caught in a flux of perpetual abnormality; they know that what currently exists has not always been and will not always be. Biblical Christians know that God in Christ will return to consummate history and implement the Kingdom of God in its full power over all that exists. Hence, they look forward in hope to the Second Advent even as they look back in faith to the First Advent.”

View

View means perspective, vision, framework, plausibility structure, or interpretation. The Biblical Christian World View denotes how a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ sees his or her experience of the physical world, a world that the Triune God has made and the world that the Triune God is redeeming by the power (*dunamis*) of the Gospel (Romans 1:17).

Everyone has a view of the world. Everyone interprets day-to-day experiences in light of a given vision, a given plausibility structure. One’s view of God and the world is like putting on

⁹ It is the intent purpose of God in Christ to rescue, redeem, and restore the entire created order, in the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth (Romans 8:19-22; Ephesians 1:10) resulting in a vast number of human beings participating in His Triune life for eternity (Revelation 5:9-10; 7:9).

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a pair of glasses. Everyone sees and interprets his or her world, i.e., the way things are in God's world, through these glasses. Because of the historic space-time Fall, a person entrapped in darkness cements the "false God" glasses over the way he or she sees things.¹⁰ Fallen man sees the world through the glasses of the angst of his darkness. This view of the world, grounded in darkness, *does not alter Truth-Reality*. Just because we see things with false glasses does not change the way things really are. *Therefore, it is imperative that one has the right pair of glasses, i.e., the Biblical Christian World View grounded in the revelation of the Father through His Son in the Holy Spirit, that truly enables us to see what is really there.*

¹⁰ These cemented glasses can only be removed through the dissolving solution of God's unmerited and unconditional grace revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who gives the believer, by His Spirit engendering repentance, His mind, His eyesight (I Corinthians 2).

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