

The Bible in 4 Words

Bottom Line: How you view the world will determine how you live in it

Scripture References:

Intro:

Have you ever wondered why is the world the way it is? Or maybe you've heard someone ask, "What's wrong with people?" You may have been in a world history class and started to see how messed up things have been, and then you look around and realize that things aren't much better today.

Maybe you've never noticed or had thoughts like that, but you've probably felt pain at some point in your life.

[TEACHER NOTE: Share a personal story of a painful moment in your life, like a broken bone or a teenage breakup story.]

When I was in the eleventh grade, I played on an amazing basketball team. We had three players who were over six and a half feet tall who made scoring look easy. We were so good that we not only won our conference championship, but we also went to the state tournament. This meant that the four top teams in the state competed to be the best in the state.

I went to school in Maryland, which is one of those states where you may or may not get a lot of snow in the winter. Well, that year, we got a lot of snow. Enough to cancel an entire week of school. This meant we couldn't have basketball practice either. That's not how you want to prepare for the state playoffs.

Eventually, my coach got fed up with the weather and scheduled a team practice on a snow day, the day before our game. Our team had a good workout, but ten minutes before practice ended, I sprained my ankle. I hit the ground in major pain. It wasn't a break, but it was bad enough that I couldn't put pressure on it. This meant I wouldn't be able to play in the state tournament.

I not only felt the pain in my foot, but I also felt it in my heart. I wanted to play so bad and now I couldn't.

Your story is probably different than mine, but we have all felt pain at some level. It could be as basic as a sports injury or something worse. It might

have been a broken bone or a broken heart. It may be an illness, a death in the family, or a bad breakup. Why does life hurt so bad? If we're honest with ourselves, somewhere deep inside, we know that this isn't how it's supposed to be. Or at least, that pain can't be what life is about.

Everyone has a view of why the world is the way it is. How we got here and what should be done about it. The term for these answers is called a worldview. A worldview is simply how we view the world or how we explain how and why the world works the way it does. This is a pretty philosophical concept, but everyone has a worldview, whether they realize it or not.

There are four basic questions that define a person's worldview:

1. How did we get here?
2. Who are we?
3. What's wrong with the world?
4. What's the solution?

Let's take a quick look at each of these.

Question number 1: How did we get here?

This worldview question has less to do with the awkward conversation about where babies come from and more to do with the origin and existence of the human race. Are we here by chance or on purpose?

Question number 2: Who are we?

This worldview question is about meaning and identity. What does it mean to be human? Do we possess intrinsic value just for being alive, or is our value determined by what we do?

Question number 3: What's wrong with the world?

As we started the message, you don't have to look very far to find pain and sadness in the world. This worldview question wants to know why the world is the way it is. Has it always been like this, and if not, how did it get like this?

Question number 4: What's the solution?

After assessing life and identifying the problem, this worldview question wants to know what should be done about the situation we find ourselves in. Something is wrong with the world, so there must be a solution.

Everyone has a worldview. You may or may not be aware of it, but everyone does. You could literally ask someone these four questions, but it's not just our verbal responses to reveal our worldview. Our actions put our worldview on display. Our beliefs influence our behavior.

There are a variety of worldviews. A few examples include deism, naturalism, and biblical.

A deistic worldview finds the answers to the four questions through reason over revelation. Basically, our existence, meaning, and solution originate from our minds instead of a message from God. Deists believe that a higher power set the universe into motion and then went on a personal vacation for eternity.

A naturalistic worldview looks for the answers to the four questions through science and what we can observe with our five senses. Naturalists are usually atheists because science is only interested in the natural world, and because God is a supernatural being, they discount His existence.

Deism and naturalism are just two examples of a bunch of different worldviews that seek to answer the questions related to how we got here, who we are, what's wrong with the world, and how we can fix it.

The final worldview that we'll explore today is the biblical worldview. The Bible provides very clear answers to all four questions. Throughout 66 books and 1,189 chapters, the writers of the Bible repeatedly explain where we came from, who we are, what's wrong with the world, and what will be done about it.

A biblical worldview summarizes the message of the Bible in four words:

1. Creation
2. Separation
3. Salvation
4. Restoration

Scripture Teaching Section.

The Bible was written by over 40 people on 3 continents over the span of 1,500 years. The Bible was written by real people, in real places, and in real-time, who were going through real stuff like you and me. The thing that

is most remarkable about the Bible is that there is one message from the first chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation. It's pretty incredible!

From beginning to end, the Bible is a unified story.

Part one is creation.

The very first sentence of the Bible answers the first worldview question: Where did we come from?

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Genesis 1:1 (NIV)

The Bible is not about us. It's about God, who He is, and what He's done. If you asked the writers of the Bible, where did we come from, they would say God. He's the creator, the universe, and everything in it—you and me—are His idea.

The creation story always brings up a question about science. Unfortunately, we don't have a lot of time to get into it, but I want to make two things clear:

1. You can follow Jesus and like science. They're not incompatible because...
2. The Bible is not a science book. It tells us who created everything. Science shows us how God did it.

Where did we come from? God.

Not only does God get the credit for creating the universe and everything in it, but He also defines our identity with value, identity, and purpose.

Listen to Genesis 1:26-27 (NIV). *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." So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

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Small Group Discussion Guide

Bottom Line: How you view the world will determine how you live in it.

Scripture References: Genesis 1:1, 26-27; Romans 3:23; 6:23; John 3:16-17; Revelation 21:3-5

Everyone has a worldview. A worldview is how a person makes sense of the world and how to exist in it. A worldview can be boiled down to four primary questions: 1) Where did we come from? 2) Who are we? 3) What is wrong with the world? 4) What is the solution to the problem? There are several different worldviews, but a biblical worldview can be summarized in four words: creation, separation, salvation, and restoration. How we view the world will determine how we live in it. **Create meaningful conversation. Adjust questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.**

1. What were your highs and lows from the week?
2. What stuck out to you from the message tonight?
3. How would describe what a worldview is in your own words?
4. Do you think everyone has a worldview? Why or why not?
5. Think about popular media (ex., shows, music, and social media); how does it answer the four worldview questions?
6. What are the four words to summarize the story of the Bible?
7. How does the biblical worldview differ from other worldviews?
8. How does our view of the world determine how we live in it?

Dive Deeper

Pick one of the readings below and evaluate their worldview based on the four worldview questions:

- The Rich Young Ruler: Mark 10:17-27
- Zacchaeus: Luke 19:1-10
- Nicodemus: John 3:1-21
- The Woman at the Well: John 4:1-26

What is your takeaway from our time together?

Prayer: Finish your time in prayer, praying for the group to understand and live by a biblical worldview in their everyday life.

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