

Week 11

This lesson is about worldview—how you view the world. The way you view the world affects how you also view freedom and service.

START

God can change a lot in a little bit of time if you let him, trust him, and give your heart to him. There isn't some mystical light switch that turns on one day and suddenly the whole world makes sense.

It's a process.

Wherever you are on that journey--keep moving forward. Keep going, get into your Bible, get with Christians, and watch what God does.

You have your own story, and you don't need a pastor to give you advice.

Ever swim in a muddy lake before? I'm from Ohio, and they don't have sand in their lakes, they have mud. If you open your eyes underwater, all you see is brown water. A muddy lake is similar to how most people experience life. They can't see anything clearly because all the mud has stirred up around them.

Mud from culture.

Mud from relationships.

Mud from politics.

Mud from opinions.

As followers of Christ, we're trying to see the world with clarity. We want to see through the mud and we can only do so with the help of God's word.

There's this famous quote by Benjamin Franklin, it says, "In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." We're all going to die, and somebody's going to tax us. If you don't pay taxes, they're going to come to find you. Life has its certainties.

But Christians can rest assured that God also has certainties for your life and those can be found in the Bible. One of those certain things is worldview. How you view the world around you.

Colossians 2:8 (ESV) says, "*See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.*"

When I see this verse, I think of a muddy lake. Everything goes haywire when you listen to the world. Those empty philosophies are the deceit of the world. The world has millions of views about itself, none of which are correct.

What three things influence your view of the world around you the most?

We have to understand there's a danger of being captivated by the worldview of people who do not have a clear picture of the world. Every person has a unique worldview, but they are all not beneficial or valuable for you.

Think about a bag of apples. The apples have different perceptions. Some are bruised. Some are not. And some are more ripe than others. For some people, an apple is just an apple. But, if you're allergic, an apple is poison. If you're a grocer, an apple is a product. If you're starving, an apple is food. If you hate veggies and fruit, an apple is torment.

Life is like a bag of apples. The world is viewed in many different ways, and your personality affects not only the way to see the world, it also affects how you reflect Christ to the world.

Let's examine seven different types of people.

One is called a **fatalist**.

A fatalist is a person who sees doom in every opportunity. No matter what is happening, the worst will happen every time. For example, a person won't go to Mexico because they believe they will be kidnapped.

Fatalists see the apples as poison.

There's a type of person called a **cynic**.

The cynic mistrusts the motive in every opportunity. There are good opportunities, but a cynic mistrusts everybody. "I don't want to pay the government taxes, because they'll do something nefarious with it." "Cyle gave me this apple because he wants something from me."

They always question the motive behind every opportunity.

Cynics see the apple as a mirage.

The next person is a **pessimist**.

A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity. "Yes, it could be good, but here are all the problems that could arise." Pessimists are the glass-half-empty people. When they get the apple they say, "Oh great, now I have to get someone to eat it."

Pessimists see the apple as a burden.

Then we have a **realist**.

Realists see reality in every opportunity. They take a look at the apple and say, "It's mushy and overripe." Or, "It's tart and sweet." There's good and bad, but nothing to get overly excited about.

Realists see the apple as just an apple.

Then we have the **pragmatists**.

Pragmatists work to create opportunity from every difficulty. They'll try to overcome each difficulty and set up a system to overcome it. "I could probably turn the apple into applesauce. Yes, there's a difficulty. But we can make it into something delicious."

Pragmatists see the apple as applesauce or pie filling.

Then we have **optimists**.

Optimists are the glass-half-full people. They see opportunity in every difficulty. There's always something good around the corner.

A new bridge just opened in Gatlinburg, TN. There's a glass part where you can see to your death. I would not think there's an opportunity if that glass starts cracking, but an optimist would appreciate the unobstructed view.

Optimists see the apple as a blessing.

Finally, we have **idealists**.

Idealists see success in every opportunity. Everything will work out in the end. But they often don't expect or handle the difficulties that may come.

Idealists see the apple as the best apple ever.

Where are you on this list? Why are you there?

What about your spouse or parents? How do you know?

What about your children or friends? How do you know?

These are categories people fall in at different times in their lives. You know where you are on this list. Some people are just cynics or idealists. It's OK. But you need to understand where you currently are on the list, so you know how to become more like Christ.

There's one more category I want to add, but you have to choose to be in it. **Christian.** Christians see God's glory in every opportunity.

For Christians, the apple reveals the power of God's creation.

If you cut that apple down the middle, you can see the three parts of the apple. It shows the three parts in one, like the Trinity--the seed, pulp, and the skin.

When you think about the world, your job is to see the world through God's eyes. The Bible must inform your view of everything.

Not just when it's convenient.

For some Christians, unfortunately, the Bible is only the Bible when it's convenient for them. We don't want to be Christians who see the world through God's eyes only when it's desirable for us.

People are their own gods now. People rewrite history, and say things like, "We're so much more intelligent than the people of the past."

That's not the way it works. That's not what truth is. The world sees truth as a moving target, it's never solid. Truth is a moving target.

The problem with this view is, what do you aim for? And who is in charge of aiming the arrow? Culture, age, generation? How do you know what is truth?

If truth is relative, how do you aim?

Truth is truth. God's word is truth.

John 14:6 (ESV) says, "*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

There aren't multiple paths to truth. There's one truth--Jesus.

Do you fully except that God's word is truth? Why or why not?

Do you base your worldview on the Bible? Why or why not?

The Bible helps us to see the world through God's eyes. The Creator of the world gives us his word, to teach us the history of the world and our place in it. Scripture is a historical book that reveals how you can be restored into relationship with God so you can spend eternity with him.

You grow closer to Jesus when you read, apply, and learn God's word. That's why it's important to know the truth contained within the pages of the Bible, so you can see the world through God's eyes.

When we see the world through God's eyes, we can't help but love others.

We love God and love people, it's the great commandment. That's the truth. God's truth transforms us and allows us to see how to love others.

Romans 12:2 (NIV) says, *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."*

God has a will for your life. When you're lost in that muddy lake, you're not going to see his plan for your life. If you want to be renewed in your mind, you have to move away from the world. Get out of the muddy lake and embrace God's truth . . . maybe for the first time.

All paths don't lead to Heaven. The world may espouse that there's multiple ways to heaven, but God's word is clear--Jesus is the only way.

You know there is right and there is wrong. Don't allow the different truths all over the globe to pull you away from the universal truth of God's love and grace.

2 Timothy 2:22 (NIV) says, *"So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart."*

For us to embrace a Christian worldview, we have to understand how the world was created, and then where the world is going to end. Jesus was sent to save the world because it was lost and broken. One day Jesus Christ will return, he'll defeat the enemy, and you'll be taken to eternity.

The Bible was given to help us understand. If you want to have a pure heart, it comes from understanding the word, and through right living.

Philippians 4:8 (NIV) says, *"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."*

How do you live in this world, even though it's lost and broken? Look at these things. Think about things that are noble, true, right, pure, lovely, admirable, praiseworthy. We're supposed to think about the good stuff.

Do you focus on the good stuff? Or bad? Why?

There's a better way to live. The Bible tells us how to live in the world.

Micah 6:8 (NIV) says, *"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"*

That word walk can be translated as live. You're to be a just, merciful, and humble person.

If you started to think about the good things, would it change your entire day? YES NO

The Bible tells us how to think and live by understanding virtues.

Colossians 3:12-14 (NIV) says, *"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."*

This is how we're all supposed to treat each other. If you just took that verse and put it on your mirror, you'd be a better child, parent, spouse, coworker, employee, and friend. If you just did those every day. It would make the world so much better.

It would make churches better.

If you want to know how God wants you to live in the world, this is it. There is a way to love.

2 Peter 1:5-7 (ESV) says, *"For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love."*

That's our pact. For some of us, we need to supplement our faith with virtue. Choosing to be compassion, humble, and kind. We need to add knowledge of God's word. As we gain more knowledge, we have to have self-control. We have to control our behavior.

We need to be more like Christ in the way we act and think. Then we have to become steadfast. When the enemies attack, we can stand strong with our faith for our God, because we've built a solid foundation.

Once we're steadfast, now we're working toward godliness. Trying to be like our Creator. We're made in the image of God. We're supposed to apply those characteristics in our lives to love God and love people.

Where are you on that path in 1 Peter 1:5-7? _____

If you want to know where you are on the path, just plug yourself in there. Have you given your life to Christ? Are you virtuous, humble, patient?

That path takes you where you need to go. Having a view of the world, as the Creator does.

2 Peter 1:8 (ESV) says, *“For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

If you do these things, they protect you. You can understand truth and who God is. You must desire to be an effective believer.

A proper Christian worldview should impact your view on: immigration, environment, taxes, life, death, sin, politics.

Your worldview affects everything in the world. It should impact your view on everything. You shouldn't say, “This is my opinion. I don't know what the Bible says on it.” That's not a Christian response.

Your response is processed through the word. God has a view of life, death, sin, and politics. You should live that out.

What does this mean for you?

An incorrect worldview will sideline your relationship with Christ. It means you're not moving forward. If you're not doing those things, you've sidelined yourself. You'll be ineffective. I don't want to get to heaven and have God say, “Well, you loved me, but you were super ineffective.”

That's not what I want for my life. I want God to say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

It's time to get in the world and back in the game.

You might just need to open our Bibles. Get in the word. Understand God has a worldview he wants for you to have for the world.

“God so loved the world.” We're not supposed to hate the world. We are to love every single person, whether we agree with them politically or like their life choices. We're to love them because God loves them.

Are you ready to start?

We have to be unified as believers when it comes to the truth. We should have a shared worldview. If you're not participating in that journey, get back in the game. You love Jesus, but you may just be watching the game from the edge.