

“Northview University” Class: “Learning to Love God with Your Worldview”

Northview Church – Carmel, Indiana (www.nvcl.org)
Thursday Evenings @ 6:30 (April 14 – May 19, 2011)

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Note: All sessions will be multimedia in nature, using slides and audio/video clips to help illustrate ideas and make connections to contemporary culture. A binder with notes will also be provided.

Session 1 (April 14): “Digesting God’s Call to a Christian Worldview”

This session will provide an introduction to the idea of a “worldview” and a discussion of biblical texts that call disciples of Jesus to develop a Christian mind. One objective is to show that a “worldview” is more than a set of beliefs; a worldview is the “core” of who we are in our thoughts, attitudes, speech, behavior, and deepest desires. Specifically, the notion of a biblical worldview will be connected to “the greatest commandment” as expressed in Mark 12:30: “to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.” In this sense, the greatest commandment is for us to love God with our worldview.

Background Bible passages: Mark 12:28-34; Deut. 6:1-5; Rom. 12:1-2; Col. 2:1-8; 2 Cor. 10:1-6; Rom. 8:1-9; Eph. 6:10-17.

Session 2 (April 21): “Digging Deeper into the Nature of a Christian Worldview”

This session will emphasize the importance of developing a biblical worldview and what it means to live it with integrity. It will expose some disturbing statistics on American religious life; explain key ideas that make Christian belief unique; describe and critique how some Christian organizations have attempted to identify one’s worldview; and challenge Christian believers to live their worldview more consistently in their personal lives, their relationships, and their involvement with culture.

Background Bible passages: Matt. 6:1-4, 19-24; Rom. 8:5-14; 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 10:3-7; Col. 3:5-10; Eph. 4:11-32; Gal. 5:16-26; Heb. 5:11-14; 6:1-3; James 4:1-8, 13-17.

Session 3 (April 28): “Detecting Worldviews in the Bible and in Our World” (Part 1)

Our world has many different religions and philosophies (i.e., worldviews). But different worldviews have been around a long time. The Bible itself presents a variety of worldviews that are “raised up against the knowledge of God” (2 Cor. 10:5). This session will survey some worldviews in scripture and some significant worldviews that accept a “god” of some sort. Drawing contrasts to Christianity, the worldviews of Deism, Pantheism, and New Age will be discussed and illustrated.

Background Bible passages: Genesis 1:1-31; 3:1-13; Ex. 2:1-14; 3:10-20; 12:3-13; 1 Kings 18:20-40; Daniel 1:1-21; Acts 17:16-34; Titus 1:10-16; 1 John 4:1-4.

Session 4 (May 5): “Detecting Worldviews in the Bible and in Our World” (Part 2)

This session will examine and illustrate ancient and modern worldviews that reject belief in God. It will survey the perspectives of Secular Humanism, Nihilism, Existentialism, and Postmodernism. These influential worldviews will be connected to biblical references and to examples in popular culture.

Background Bible passages: Luke 12:13-34; Phil. 3:17-20; 1 Tim. 6:3-11; Jude 1-7; Ecclesiastes 1-2; 3:18-22; 5:10-20; 12:9-14.

Session 5 (May 12): “Discerning Deficiencies in Other Worldviews”

This session will provide general strategies for how to engage those who have non-Christian worldviews. If the biblical worldview is true, then other incompatible worldviews must be fundamentally false. This does not mean that everything in other worldviews is false, but it does mean that they are deficient in significant ways. How can we understand and expose some of those deficiencies in a critical but compassionate way? This session will help answer that question.

Background Bible passages: Rom. 1:18-32; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; 1 Tim. 4:1-5.

Session 6 (May 19): “Defending the Truth of the Christian Worldview”

This session will offer some key considerations for why anyone should accept the Christian worldview as true—why it is the best and most livable explanation of our universe and our human condition. Topics discussed will include the origin of the universe, the origin of life, and questions about creationism and evolution. Attention will also be given to the claims about Christ and the reliability of scripture.

Background Bible passages: 1 Pet. 1:16-21; 3:13-17; John 20:30-31; 21:24-25; Rom. 1:18-25; Ps. 8:1-9; 19:1-2; 1 Tim. 6:12-21; 2 Tim. 2:14-18, 23-26; 4:1-5; 1 John 1:1-4.