

## **"BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW" SERIES**

### **#2: The Conflict in Which We Live"**

#### **INTRO:**

Last Lord's Day I spoke about "The Biblical Worldview" and how we who believe the Bible is the Word of God view life and this world from a whole different perspective than those who do not accept the Bible as the word of God.

Today, I want to address the CONFLICT this creates for us. When the majority of church members and the vast majority of our fellow Americans do not have a biblical worldview, and when the vast majority of the world's population has a different worldview, we find ourselves living in a constant dilemma.

Keep in mind what a worldview is: the framework of beliefs or presuppositions by which one views his life, society, and the world around him; a combination of ideology, philosophy, and theology that forms the basis of how one lives and deals with the issues of life.

Keep in mind that a "biblical" worldview is one that is based on the belief that the Bible is the Word of God and that it should be the foundation of how life and the world should be viewed.

First of all, note that

#### ***THIS CONFLICT BEGAN A LONG TIME AGO AND HAS CONTINUED THROUGHOUT HISTORY.***

Genesis 3:1-7 tells us that it began in the garden when the serpent, who spoke as Satan, confronted Eve with the rationale that began: "***Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'***" You see, he misstates the command. God didn't forbid them from eating from *all* the trees – just the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tree in the middle of the garden. He twisted God's words to make the command seem totally unreasonable. We tend to overlook this "planting of a seed of doubt" in Eve's mind.

Then Eve said: "***We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'***" To that, the serpent said, "***You will not surely die,***" which was an out and out

lie. And then he fed her the heart of the ungodly rationale: "***For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.***" The key words are, "***...you will be like God.***"

And then note what happened: ***When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they realized they were naked; so, they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.***

In the beginning, God provided his creation all that it needed to live forever. He was the source for the needs and wants of every living thing. Man, however, who was made only "***a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned...with glory and honor***" (Psalm 8:5), once he had sinned and tasted the forbidden fruit, was no longer satisfied to have only what God provided. And that was the beginning of ungodly worldviews.

From that time on, people of the world had different worldviews. Some saw themselves and their lives, the society in which they lived, and the world, from a *godly* point of view, but their numbers were small. Most viewed the world and life in it from an *ungodly* point of view, resulting in most people doing what was right *in their own eyes* rather than what was right *in the eyes of God*. In fact, at one point only one family had the proper worldview, so God caused a flood that destroyed all but that one family, which was the family of Noah.

Even after the earth was repopulated through Noah's sons and their wives, some of the people lived by a *godly* worldview and some of them lived by an *ungodly* worldview.

When God chose a people for himself through Abraham, He gave them every opportunity to see life and the world from His point of view, but even they failed to be faithful to Him and live godly lives. Of course, the rest of the world followed an ungodly worldview and made life as difficult as they could for God's chosen people.

Time and time again, God used the ungodly, the pagans, as a "***rod of (His) anger***" (Isaiah 10:5) to chastise His own people for their unfaithfulness, until the time was right to send a promised Messiah: His own Son, Jesus Christ.

Through Christ, atonement for sins was made, and the church was established as a godly earthly kingdom, but the early members of that kingdom lived in constant conflict with the Roman Empire, because the Roman rulers had an ungodly worldview and those of Christ's kingdom had a godly one.

In time, the Roman Empire was not as much a problem, but the followers of Mohammad, who had a different worldview than the Christians, began to cause even more conflict than the Romans had. Then came the time when Christians seemed to have gained an upper hand, but the predominant form of Christianity was militant and oppressive. Biblical Christians found themselves in conflict with the dominant religious power.

And even today, we biblical Christians live in conflict with those of humanistic, ungodly, or cultic worldviews. We live in a world that is, by and large, in conflict with Christianity, as Muslims, who, as I've said, have a different worldview, outnumber Christians by a really large number. Even here in America, where Christians used to clearly be in the majority, where our founding fathers were, by and large, driven by their belief in the God of the Bible, and where our laws had their foundation in Judeo-Christian Scriptures and beliefs, we are now living in conflict with most of the population.

Second, please note that

***WORLDVIEW IS AT THE HEART AND CORE OF OUR CONFLICT.***

While it may seem that our differences, as Americans, are over "issues," such as the role of government, morality, and rights, the root of the conflict is actually different worldviews.

Most Americans, even many who claim to believe in God and the Bible, do not really have a biblical world-view. They don't see the teachings of Scripture as the basis on which to determine their positions on today's social, moral, or political issues.

I believe God's will, as revealed in the Bible, should prevail in every issue. Therefore, I believe that the teachings of the Scriptures must guide me in determining what I believe about any moral, social, or political issue. For example, when it comes to homosexuality or same sex marriage, I must believe what the Scriptures say about these things, and the same applies to abortion. I must form my beliefs by what the Bible says.

So, the conflict continues...

Third, note that

***WE WHO HAVE A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW CANNOT BE NEUTRAL, NOR CAN WE COMPROMISE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES.***

Diplomats and politicians thrive on neutrality and compromise, but we Christians cannot. We may compromise when it comes to opinions. We may compromise when we're dealing with traditions and methodology. But when the issues involve the truth of God, which we believe to be absolute, and the clear teaching of Scripture, neither compromise nor neutrality can be a consideration.

Some people seem to have the idea that what we Christians believe is, in a large part, arbitrary, and some denominations do compromise their stands on various issues. Some don't believe the Bible is the Word of God. They believe it "contains" the Word of God – that some of it is from God and some of it is the product of mere men. Some believe the Bible is out of date or out of sync with our modern culture, so they have "adjusted" it to fit our times. Still others reason that since the church existed before the canon of Scripture we have did, it is the rulings of "the church" (meaning the clergy) that determine what is God's will and what is not.

Some Christians try to compartmentalize their lives in an attempt to keep their faith-based views separate from their social, legal, and political views. That's faulty logic. That's serving two masters. We can't do that.

Of course, this is where occupying a government office or pledging loyalty to a political party becomes problematic. As I was working on this message, a news item caught my attention. The governor of Louisiana has signed a bill making abortion illegal, once the heartbeat of the unborn child is detected. He's a pro-life Democrat. Well, many of his fellow Democrats are condemning him for his action. A news report said, "While the party once tolerated both pro-life and pro-choice Democrats inside the tent, those with pro-life views are being told they aren't welcome anymore." Kirsten Gillibrand, a New York Democrat senator who is running for president in 2020, recently said, "As a party, we should be 100 percent pro-choice, and it should be non-negotiable." In other words, they want the Democrat Party to be "the abortion party."

If I were a Democrat (I am not pledged to any political party.), I would be in serious conflict.

What I believe, that is based on the teaching of Scripture, is not arbitrary or negotiable. I believe that the Bible as it has been preserved

through the centuries is the inerrant Word of God. I believe as Paul wrote in his 2<sup>nd</sup> letter to Timothy, **"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."** In other words, the Bible provides the standard by which all teaching must be measured, and I intend to discern all issues of life on the basis of biblical principles.

Even after Jesus arrived on earth to begin His work, which would culminate in reconciling people to God through His death, burial and resurrection, Satan, who began his deceptive work in the Garden of Eden, continued to try to thwart God's purpose for creation. Even though Christ's death and victory over the grave sealed his defeat, he continues to try to keep people from their fellowship with God. He is certainly the one behind today's ungodly worldviews.

The apostle Paul warned of this and encouraged us, especially in his letter to the Ephesian church, where he wrote: **"...be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can tak your stand against the devil's schemes. . . Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God..."** (6:10-17).

Jesus made it clear that there is no middle ground in the conflict between godly and ungodly worldviews when He said, **"He who is not with me is against me..."** (Luke 11:23).

## **CONCLUSION:**

So, what are we to do? I can speak only for myself. I have a biblical worldview. Am I to take my life and my beliefs and hide somewhere? Go underground? Form a commune? No! Jesus urged us to live *in* the world but to *not* be worldly. He urged us to let our lights shine before men – to live our lives of faith and obedience openly. He urged us to testify of Him and the good news of the gospel.

I know that there are those among us who are wondering how someone who has a biblical worldview can even participate in governmental affairs when it requires working alongside and for those who have ungodly worldviews. How can a Christian serve in a public/political office when it

requires serving people of all persuasions and beliefs? Are we to avoid such public service? Many Christians do serve in public office. Many believe that more Christians ought to run for public office. I cannot disagree with that.

There are those, however, who ask how we can even participate in a process, such as an election, when our choices often do not include those who share our faith and worldview? Do we choose between "the lesser of two evils," or do we simply abstain?

I can't answer these questions for you. I have not found definitive answers in God's Word. I can only say what I choose to do.

Realizing that even my own "biblical" worldview is not perfect, because I'm still growing in my relationship with God and in my understanding of the Word of God, and realizing that everyone is "in process" regarding his or her worldview, I have decided that, rather than abstain from participation, I will participate in the political process by choosing the candidate who is most qualified and most closely sees life and this world as I see it. That's the best I can do at this time.

It is my prayer that you will adopt a biblical worldview, if you haven't already done so, and that you will live your life in this world according to it.