

Worldview Questions

Although a personal worldview is more like a story than a series of propositions, it is possible to discover a person's worldview in the answers given to a number of fundamental questions.

Questions (some sets to choose from)

Set 1

- Is there a god and what is he like?
- What is the nature and origin of the universe?
- What is the nature and origin of man?
- What happens to man after death?
- Where does knowledge come from?
- What is the basis of ethics and morality?
- What is the meaning of human history?

<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/faith/christian-worldview/whats-a-christian-worldview/whats-your-worldview>

Set 2

1. **Who am I?** What is the nature and task of human beings?
2. **Where am I?** What is the nature of the world and the universe that I live in? Do I see the world and universe as personal, ordered and controlled; or chaotic, ordered and random?
3. **What's wrong?** Why is it that my world appears to be *not the way it's supposed to be*? How do I make sense of evil?
4. **What is the solution?** Where do I find hope for something better?

Simon Smart, *A Spectator's Guide to World Views*, p.8.

Set 3

1. What is real?
2. What are the nature and limits of knowledge?
3. Who is well-off? What is the good life?
4. Who is a really good person?
5. How does one become a really good person?

J. P. Moreland, *Kingdom Triangle* p. 34

Set 4

Leslie Stevenson and David L Haberman 'delineate four elements that they discovered as a common structure in a wide variety of philosophical systems and religions'. They are:

1. A background theory of the universe.
2. A theory about the nature of man.
3. A diagnosis of what is wrong.
4. A prescription for putting it right.

See Leslie Stevenson and David L Haberman, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, referred to in Ravi Zacharias, ed., *Beyond Opinion: Living the Faith We Defend*, p. 261.

Set 5

1. **What is prime reality – the really real?** To this we might answer: God, or the gods, or the material cosmos. Our answer here is the most fundamental. It sets the boundaries for the answers that can consistently be given to the other six questions. This will become clear as we move from worldview to worldview in the chapters that follow.
2. **What is the nature of external reality, that is, the world around us?** Here our answers point to whether we see the world as created or autonomous, as chaotic or orderly, as matter or spirit; or whether we emphasize our subjective, personal relationship to the world or its objectivity apart from us.
3. **What is a human being?** To this we might answer: a highly complex machine, a sleeping god, a person made in the image of God, a naked ape.
4. **What happens to a person at death?** Here we might reply: personal extinction, or transformation to a higher state, or reincarnation, or departure to a shadowy existence on "the other side."
5. **Why is it possible to know anything at all?** Sample answers include the idea that we are made in the image of an all-knowing God or that consciousness and rationality developed under the contingencies of survival in a long process of evolution.
6. **How do we know what is right and wrong?** Again, perhaps we are made in the image of a God whose character is good, or right and wrong are determined by human choice alone or what feels good, or the notions simply developed under an impetus toward cultural or physical survival.
7. **What is the meaning of human history?** To this we might answer: to realize the purposes of God or the gods, to make a paradise on earth, to prepare a people for a life in community with a loving and holy God, and so forth.
8. **What personal, life-orienting core commitments are consistent with this worldview?** Within any given worldview, core commitments may vary widely. For example, a Christian might say, to fulfil the will of God, or to seek first the kingdom of God, or to obey God and enjoy him forever, or to be devoted to knowing God or loving God. Each will lead to a somewhat different specific grasp of the Christian worldview. A naturalist might say to realize their personal potential for experiencing life, or to do as much good as they can for others, or to live in a world of inner peace in a world of social diversity and conflict.

James Sire, <http://www.christianity.com/theology/other-religions-beliefs/8-questions-every-worldview-must-answer.html?p=0>

Set 6

‘Every worldview can be analysed by the way it answers three basic questions: Where did we come from, and who are we (*creation*)? What has gone wrong with the world (*fall*)? And what can we do to fix it (*redemption*)?’

Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?*, p.14