

Seeing Higher Education Through A Biblical Worldview

By

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We have beliefs and convictions that determine how we perceive the world and interact within it. Therefore, we all have a worldview. According to Tackett (2006), a worldview is the framework for understanding reality and making sense of our world. Whether we are aware of it or not, we presuppose things to be real and true based on this framework (Van der Walt, 2017). Our worldview is our way of seeing life, our rationalization about the universe, and our daily preferences for thinking and responding (Van der Walt, 2017). A biblical worldview, however, extends beyond our personal ideology about the world. As Christians, we have a prescribed ethical way of believing and behaving, pertinent to who we are based on the inspired, infallible, and inerrant word of God. In this paper, I will convey what is meant by a biblical worldview, share aspects of a Christian philosophy of education and examine how such beliefs impact educational practices.

Biblical Worldview

God has engaged with us throughout history. In 1 Peter 5:7, we learn that God is always thinking about us and watching everything that concerns us. What an awesome reality that the omnipotent and omnipresent true God is mindful of us? Yet to know that God is and has always been and will always be, leads us to conceive his plan for his creation. This knowledge allows us to recognize that we are moral beings created by God, experienced the Fall, was rescued by Jesus Christ and restored through salvation to partake in eternal life if we accept this gift. For, it is such an understanding that fosters a biblical worldview. Colossians 1:15-18, affirms the scope of how all true knowledge flows from our Creator to His creation. Therefore, a biblical worldview

is seeing the world, its beginning, its people, its problems, its governments, its church, its issues, its solutions, and its future through God's Word (Netland, 2015). A biblical worldview necessitates that we know what Scripture teaches and be prepared to reflect those biblical messages in what we say and do.

Christian Philosophy of Education

Jesus, the Master Teacher, used a variety of effective methods and materials in his teachings. It is difficult to imagine a Christian philosophy of education that did not recognize the techniques established by Jesus for us to follow. As Christians, a major component of education is to direct the process of our students' development toward God's purpose for them which includes godliness in character and action. This is increasingly more challenging as we must educate a diverse group of students with many different worldviews. Nevertheless, according to Netland (2015) that awareness should not deter us from adhering to our Christian philosophy. In II Timothy 3:17, we are encouraged to be equipped for good works. As Christian educators we must still focus of the educational process, with respect for the fact that each student is a unique person created for a specific purpose in God's plan. Furthermore, we know that biblical principles are foundational to a wide variety of educational methods and components.

While there are many best practices and pedagogical processes that involve content, interaction and assessment, methodology is only one aspect of successful teaching among those who share a Christian worldview. Particular methods are usually selected for their efficiency in achieving designated goals in education, especially academic learning (Bartlett, 2017).

However, a Christian philosophy of education recognizes that God's components are the most effective in teaching students to find their purpose and do good works. Bartlett (2017) asserts

that a Christian philosophy must reject any components conflicting with the principles of Scripture.

Implications for Educational Practices

A biblical worldview has serious implications for educational practices because it guides the purpose and goals of education, expectations of the students, role of the instructors, methods of instruction, curriculum and quality of teaching and learning (Eckel, 2015). Educators' perspectives influence the design of curriculum and course content, the scope of the learning contexts, which can include guided independent study, project-based learning, collaborative learning, and experimentation (Esqueda, 2014). Eckel (2015) maintains that educators' points of view affect how they solicit and use feedback, assess learning outcomes and whether students have well-adapted learning environments and appropriate student support services.

Christian higher educators have a unique opportunity to impact the lives of students while preparing them for life beyond the university (Eckel, 2015). A biblical worldview can help educators to provide students with a sense of God's plan and purpose for their lives. Since we know that students' identities are molded by their worldview, educators must no longer only share academic content knowledge, if they are to maximize students' abilities to fulfill their purpose in life. Life offers many challenges and struggles for students, a Christian worldview can help to provide them with hope and direction (Eckel, 2015).

Conclusion

Developing a biblical worldview is an ongoing process for us in which Christian convictions more and more shape our worldview. This methodical, spirited, and unending process offers a way of thinking, seeing, and doing, based on the Bible and our personal relationship with the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our biblical worldview is one

of the most essential aspects about us that demonstrate to the world who we are and who our God is. As Christians in higher education we must focus holistically on preparing courageous students who understand the importance of sharing their biblical worldview with family, friends, community and all of society. Finally, it is important to consider curriculum and instruction in a context that offers ethical thinking and practices according to the message.

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