

Teaching Worldview

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2

Teaching worldview is essential in order for us to recognize what the pattern of this world is and analyze competing worldviews wherever we encounter them by holding them up to God's word. A dizzying number of Christian kids are leaving their faith behind when they leave their homes. One way we can help turn this statistic around is by equipping our children with strong Christian worldviews so that their minds are renewed and they can see the world as a Christians instead of separating "the world" and their "faith". They need to both know and love God.

Love is just as important as understanding and both are essential for training up our children in the way they should go. I chose the "understanding" portion to discuss because I think that's where I struggle most as a parent.

Worldview impacts every area of our lives. History is shaped by the worldviews of leaders, the development of law is influenced by worldview and even movies, music and television all have strong worldviews that have the power to influence the development of our children's thinking. We'll either end up with children who will be impacted by their culture or children who will have an impact. There is no neutral.

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. Colossians 2:8

Our culture is changing and our kids are taking in more information than ever before. Online networking, websites, TV, music, and movies all have something to teach our children. Most of our kids will have spent over 14,000 hours being disciplined through their schools by the time they finish grade 12. Then we add in soccer and ballet and music lessons. It's hard for us as parents to find the time to be the biggest influence in our children's lives – and yet it's never been more important for us to do so.

Our children's worldviews are being shaped by the culture around them. We need to approach Biblical training diligently. Begin by going back to the Bible and reading about what God commands parents to do. Then spend some time praying about how to approach the Biblical education of your children. Then it's time to start a plan of action.

Here are some verses to get you started:

- Ephesians 6:4, Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Isaiah 54:13, James 3:13-18, Psalms 119:97-104

Here are two ways in which Biblical worldview training can take place. They are both are equally important.

- 1) Formal training in worldview.
 - a) Our kids need to understand that everyone has a worldview.
 - b) They need to know how worldviews are developed.
 - c) They need to know what the competing worldviews are and how they can recognize them.
 - d) They need to know what makes up a Christian worldview.

- 2) Informal training in worldview.
- a) Education – come alongside your child as he learns about the world and impress a Christian perspective through his school studies. Does your child think like a Christian? Does he write like a Christian? If the class handed essays in would the teacher be able to identify your child’s essay by the worldview communicated in it? What makes your child’s thinking distinct (salt)?
 - b) Intentional discipleship in the home – the responsibility falls to parents to disciple our children. Youth groups and Sunday school should reinforce what is already being taught in the home but they cannot replace Biblical training at home. Intentional discipleship can be done through Bible reading, Bible studies, devotionals, scripture memorization, etc.
 - c) Informal discipleship in the home – prayer, spontaneous discussions, relationships, how you spend your time, etc.
 - d) Relationships – dealing with conflict Biblically.
 - e) Media – identify the worldview in the movies and TV shows you watch, identify the worldview in the lyrics of the songs you listen to and the books that you read.

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5

Resources for building Biblical Relationships:

- Making Brothers and Sisters Best Friends: How to Fight the Good Fight at Home by Sarah Mally, Stephen Mally, and Grace Mally – this book, written by three siblings is a fantastic resource to emphasize Godly relationships within the home.
- The Young Peace Maker by Corlette Sande – helps children learn to handle conflict Biblically.

Resources for discerning the message in media:

- Discerning the Spirits of Secularism in the Media by Cory McKenna – Mp3 download of his talk is available through www.bcconvention.ca (click on “Recordings” to order).
- www.pluggedinonline.com – for movie reviews from a Christian perspective.
- Hollywood Worldviews: Watching Films with Wisdom and Discernment by Brian Godawa.

Resources for addressing worldview head on

- The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalogue by James W. Sire.
- Worldview studies by Summit Ministries (www.summit.org) They have various programs available depending on the age of the child. Lightbearer’s is for middle school students, they also have Understanding the Times for high school. Summit also offers a program that would lend itself well to a parent and teen small group – Thinking Like a Christian (DVD and book).
- <http://www.allaboutworldview.org/teaching-christian-worldview.htm> - article on teaching worldview from Summit Ministries.
- <http://www.breakpoint.org/listingarticle.asp?ID=11794> – an article on helping students “get it.”
- <http://www.thechristianeducator.org/content/view/42/28/> - Pastor Greg Bitgood, from Kelowna Christian Center, has a podcast series on Christian Worldview. You can also request a free copy of his book, Discipling this Generation for a Digital World – a must-read for parents and teens who want to find out what kind of implications our worldviews could have in the future.

Coming Alongside our Child's Education

The Bible places the responsibility for discipling and teaching children in the parent's hands. However we decide to use the resources that are available to us (whether it's school or youth group, etc.) we are still accountable for our children's instruction and training.

It's important to understand what is being taught to your child in school and to reinforce that teaching with a Christian perspective at home. Sometimes kids can get the idea that the "real world" is being discussed in school and that "church stuff" only applies to Sundays. We need to be able to bridge that gap and show our children that all knowledge begins with the fear of the Lord, that God created our universe, that relationships go smoother when we approach them Biblically, and that God is the major force in all facets of our lives.

I've created a list of one or two things that are part of the curriculum for the grade levels listed. Then I've offered a few ideas to get you started with how to approach these topics Biblically.

Kindergarten

- Families
 - o Get out the Bible story books and start with Genesis. Talk about Adam and Eve and God's plan for families on Earth. As you read through the Bible stories, point out the families God uses for his purposes and how people are blessed when they obey God.
 - o Be aware of some of the Ministry of Education's recommendations for early elementary – [ABC A Family Alphabet Book](#) is a book about gay and lesbian parenting and is a MOE recommended resource for K to 2. [Old Turtle](#) is a beautiful picture book, but the message, "there is not just one truth, but truths all around us and within us," is dangerous and leads to a moral relativist worldview.
 - o Find out what is being taught in your child's classroom and be prepared to take it back to scripture and discuss it (as age appropriately as possible) with your child.

Grade 1

- Similarities and differences among families
 - o Continue reading through Bible stories and talk about God's perfect design for families
 - o Be aware of the types of resources your teacher will be using to teach about families
- Roles, rights, and responsibilities within the school and the class
 - o Memorize the 10 Commandments
 - o Talk about God's plan for us and our roles, rights, and responsibilities within God's family
 - o Emphasize God's command to obey parents as the first commandment with a promise
 - o Sunday school teachers could teach about the children's roles, rights, and responsibilities at church.

Grade 2

- Ways individuals contribute to the community
 - o Look at individuals within the church and see how they contribute to our community in West Kelowna and how they reach out to people across the world. Read about Emmanuel's missionary families and how they are blessing communities overseas. Discuss how the church

opens its doors to bless the community by providing spaces for elections, blood donor clinics, etc.

- Purpose of money
 - o Talk about how all resources really belong to God and discuss how to use our money to further God's kingdom.
 - o 2 Corinthians 9:7, Ephesians 4:28, Luke 12:34, Proverbs 3:9

Recommended Resources for grades K through 2

- A good Bible story book. I like The Jesus Story Bible (all stories point towards Jesus) or The Child's Story Bible by Catherine F. Vos (first published in 1943).
- Truth and Grace Memory books – these will help you to teach Biblical truths to your children in an orderly way. The only drawback is that a few of the questions are from a reformed perspective. I just changed those questions so that they made sense to us.
- Leading Little Ones to God: A Child's Book of Bible Teachings by Marian Schoolland
- Big Truths for Little Kids: Teaching Your Children to Live for God by Susan and Ritchie Hunt

Grade 3

- Importance of community
 - o Emphasize the importance of belonging to a community of believers. Discuss the benefits and challenges of belonging to a community of believers.
 - o Acts 2:42-47, Galatians 3:28-29, James 5:13-20, Proverbs 13:20
- Cultural similarities and differences
 - o What makes a Christian distinct? What does it mean to be the salt and the light? How would someone who doesn't know you very well tell that you are a Christian?
 - o Matthew 5:13-16, Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Grade 4

- Aboriginal respect for the environment (a spirit runs through everything; trees, rocks, people, etc.)
 - o This is a really important time to discuss Christian stewardship. Go back to Genesis and read about God's plan for man and the environment.
 - o Genesis 1, Ezekiel 34:2-4, Hebrews 13:9

Grade 5

- Significant individuals in BC and Canada
 - o This may sound obvious, but choose someone whose faith had an impact on Canada and talk about how God worked through this individual to bring about something amazing.
- Analyze how the Aboriginal concept of interconnectedness of the environment is reflected in responsibility for and caretaking of resources (again, the "interconnectedness" is a spiritual thing)
 - o Like the grade 4 topic, this is a good time to discuss Christian stewardship. If it seems as though there is a strong message about "interconnectedness" (ie. Everything has the same spirit running through it) then I'd probably address this clearly with my children and talk about how people were the only part of creation that was "God breathed".
 - o Genesis 1, Ezekiel 34:2-4

Recommended Resources for grades 3 to 5:

- DK Illustrated Family Story Bible – great for reading aloud. This also has information and photos to give a cultural context.
- The Victor Journey Through the Bible – fantastic photographs, maps, and information about what life was like. This will enrich your understanding of the geography, culture, and events happening throughout history when events in the Bible were taking place.
- What the Bible is All About for Young Explorers by Frances Blankenbaker
- Truth and Grace Memory Books - these will help you to teach Biblical truths to your children in an orderly way. The only drawback is that a few of the questions are from a reformed perspective. I just changed those questions so that they made sense to us. These include scripture memory, catechism questions, Bible readings, hymns and more. These go through to grade 12 and I think it would be fantastic to continue doing them with older students as well. They really help students to define and articulate the reason for the hope within them.

Grade 6

- In social studies kids are learning about Canada and the world. This is a wonderful time to begin a study on one of Emmanuel's missionary families. Look at the country they're ministering in and compare it to Canada. What kinds of resources are there? What is the government like? What is the quality of life like for people? What percentage of the population is Christian? What challenges do Christians face there? Pray for the missionaries and the people in that country. Think about sending the missionaries a care package or even a letter letting them know about your study. Share your study with your class at school.
 - o Matthew 28:18-20, James 1:27

Recommended Resource for Grade 6

- Window on the World: When We Pray, God Works by Daphne Spraggette – this is an amazing resource. It walks you through different countries in the world and talks about how God is working in each of them and what the prayer needs are.
- Christian Heroes Then and Now – this is a missionary biography series published by YWAM. My kids have loved reading stories about missionaries and how they've lived out their faith. These are actually a great addition to a wide range of ages and grade levels.

Grade 7

- Ancient Civilizations! This is one of my favourite studies. Grab your Old Testament and get ready for some amazing history lessons. Remind your kids that all those people in the Old Testament were actual people who lived during the times they're studying in school. When the kids study Ancient Egypt talk about the Israelites. They may identify with the fact that many Israelites wanted to turn back to Egypt after wandering around in the desert for so long – the Egyptians had good food! Get a Bible atlas (or look in the back of your Bible, there may be some maps there) and look at the journey the Israelites took from Egypt.
- When they study Mesopotamia they'll be able to find out more about what Abraham's life was like in Ur.
- Find some great resources and tackle Ancient Civilizations from a Christian perspective – you'll be amazed at what you find.

Recommended Resources for Grade 7

- Mystery of History Volume 1 by Linda Hobar – this can be purchased either as a book to read together or in audio CDs to listen to. www.themysteryofhistory.com They cover ancient history from a Biblical perspective.
- Ancient Civilizations and the Bible by Diana Waring – you could just get the audio CDs or you could get a full curriculum. Check out their website for full descriptions: <http://www.dianawaring.com/ancientciv/index.html>
- Tirzah by Lucille Travis – historical fiction detailing the life of a Hebrew slave girl who serves under the Egyptians until she escapes with the Israelite. The story also follows her as she wanders through the desert.
- God King by Joanne Williamson – historical fiction set in Egypt during the reign of Hezekiah, one of the few kings who was loyal to God. This book strongly portrays the relationship between Egypt and the Bible.
- Victory on the Walls: A Story of Nehemiah by Frieda Clark Hyman – historical fiction detailing 445 B.C. when Nehemiah seeks to reestablish the Promised Land.

Grade 8

- The Middle Ages! Again, this can be so much fun and it's fascinating to approach it from a Biblical worldview.
- Get a good Church history resource and work through that as you study the Middle Ages.

Recommended Resources

- The Church in History by B.K. Kuiper - great as an additional reading assignment or to read as a family
- Trial and Triumph: Stories from Church History by Richard M. Hannula – very engaging. Even younger kids will enjoy listening to this being read aloud.
- Mystery of History Volume 2 by Linda Hobar – www.themysteryofhistory.com

Grade 9

- They will be studying reproduction, including emerging reproductive technologies.
 - This is very important to address from a Christian worldview. Depending on exactly what they end up discussing in class, there could be serious ethical implications and students need to be reminded that our code of ethics comes from God and includes a “right” and a “wrong”.
- They will also look at the Aboriginal perspective of the celestial bodies to the Earth
 - Bring in the Christian perspective on how the celestial bodies were created
 - Psalm 8: 3, 4, Genesis 1:14

Recommended Resources for Grade 9

- Signs and Seasons (www.classicalastronomy.com) -“ *Follow the cycles of the Sun, Moon, and stars, discover how to find the planets in the night sky, learn the astronomical basis for our calendar -- all from a Biblical perspective*”. This would be a great book to work through as a family over the summer – especially if you love the night sky.

- Fearfully and Wonderfully Made by Dr. David Menton – “This illustrated lecture reveals the truth of Psalm 139:13-16, which says that God weaves us together in the womb. Reveals the complex design of the womb, fertilization, implantation, embryonic development, and birth.” DVD

Grade 10 – 12

Students in grades 10 through 12 have an amazing opportunity to take online classes from a Christian perspective for credit on their transcripts and at no cost to them. While all courses have a strong Biblical integration, there are two, Advanced Placement English Literature and Christian Studies 12, that specifically address and analyze competing worldviews. Students attending public high school can take as many online Christian courses as they'd like. www.bconlineschool.ca

Analyzing Literature from a Christian perspective

Every book has a message and asking just a few questions will help your child discern the message and analyze it from a Christian perspective. This would be helpful to do whenever they have a novel study at school or for any of their free reading. These questions could also be asked of movies, TV shows or song lyrics.

- What did the author believe? (Political affiliations, religious belief, etc.) What did the author believe to be the driving force behind human events? (Chance? Fate? Man's free will? God?)
- What does the story say about human nature? (Are humans different from animals? Do they have souls? Do they exist for a purpose?)
- What is the purpose of life in the story? (How is success defined? Does personal fulfillment come from the world or from God? What is valued in the story?)
- Does the story reveal the consequences of the author's views?
- Do the story's answers to these questions tell the truth?

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. Colossians 2:6-7

I encourage you to continue the diligent act of discipling your children with love and knowledge which will give them deep roots and a strong faith able to stand against deceptive philosophies. I pray that our children will be of a generation that goes out and makes a radical impact on our culture for the glory of God.