

Intro

At a youth conference a speaker once gave an alarming statistic about youth students. Only four percent of students age 12-18 have what is called a biblical worldview. A **worldview** is just what it sounds like, **it is the lens through which you see the world**. Worldview is the thing that **drives your decisions and shapes our opinions** about the world around you.

Realistically, I don't think it is just youth who struggle in this area. If anything it only gets harder and more convoluted to develop a biblical worldview as you get older. Your life experience has now begun to play a huge role in how you interact with the world. Each of you, either consciously or not, has a worldview. You look at the world around you and you make choices and form opinions. Unfortunately, for a lot of us, that worldview has been twisted and manipulated. This results in poor decisions and a life that feels like an uphill battle, one that is saturated discouragement, judgement, and oftentimes loneliness. **When a worldview isn't grounded in biblical truth it becomes a breeding ground for sin** and to quote Pastor Phil "stinkin thinkin".

So what can we do about it? How can we make four percent turn to forty percent? **How can we make sure that not only are we training up the next generation but we are challenging ourselves?** What can we do to make our worldview a little more biblical and a little less well worldly?

Proverbs

We will be looking at the book of Proverbs today. I had a professor in Bible college tell us "a proverb a day keeps the devil away" and as pithy as that is I think there is a lot of truth to that. Proverbs is known to be the book of wisdom. The writer calls us to constantly seek out wisdom. **Proverbs 1:7 says that a fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge and a fool despises wisdom**. I know that I am not willing to be seen as a fool. In fact, one thing that I pride myself on most is my knowledge. I don't ever like feeling "dumb", I want to be one of the smarter people in the room. It is both my most and least desirable trait I think. So I take real caution when I read these words in Proverbs. My desire for knowledge and wisdom coupled with my love for Christ has drastically shaped my worldview. **The more we seek wisdom the more we see our worldview take shape**.

That same professor would challenge us each month to read one proverb every morning. There are thirty-one of them, so if you do the math, most months you will get through the whole book. I challenge you to do the same. Dig in little by little and unfold the wisdom God has laid out for you.

Breakdown

So let's break the verse down, it starts with fear. It says "fear of the Lord". This term is used over and over in the Bible, "fear of the Lord", and it is a different type of fear than we are used to. You've heard a lot about fear lately with this whole pandemic and COVID crisis, but the Bible doesn't call us to that type of fear, in fact it rebukes it. No, our fear of God isn't meant to be rooted in terror, God isn't meant to scare us. Rather, this is meant to be a healthy fear, think of it more as a respect or honor. Fear of the Lord results in a reverence for him, his word, and his authority in our lives. So when we start our worldview on the basis of respect and honor for God we are already off to a good start.

Fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge. When you honor something, you want to do all you can to immerse yourself in it, you learn about it, you ask questions, you spend a considerable amount of time pondering it. Same is with God. When you are living with a healthy fear of the Lord, or respect, you will naturally find ways to learn more about him, or his word. You will gain new insights and your mind will be changed slowly but surely.

Now, what happens if we choose not to explore this knowledge? Well Proverbs lays that out for us too. It says "fools despise wisdom". That means that when we choose to ignore the opportunity to gain wisdom and knowledge we aren't just missing a chance to grow closer with God our Father, we are quite literally being fools! No one takes a fool seriously or goes to a fool for help and guidance. Fools are unreliable and at times childish. Fools don't have the ability to think about the bigger picture or make a positive long-term impact on those around them.

When we choose to ignore wisdom and a biblical worldview we miss out on the chance to impact those around us positively and more importantly, eternally. So make a choice. Take baby steps towards shaping your mind to one that is filled with wisdom and biblical truth.

I think in this time more than ever God is looking to change and reshape our way of thinking. He is calling us to be different in this season. In a meeting with our church leaders it has been brought up on several occasions now that until we can pinpoint how God is trying to stir a new in us we need to continue digging in and asking how we can be better at the other end of this.

When we take small steps in inviting God into our daily lives we will see when your worldview becomes more biblical. **You will notice differences in your compassion for others. You won't seek to judge or condemn, rather you'll seek to love and gently correct.** More importantly, those around you will begin to notice a change and ask what is different.

The bottom line is, the more wisdom you gain the easier it is to shape a biblical worldview. So start gaining wisdom and knowledge.

Application

I know that there are times where this seems hard for me and I have seen how hard it can be for people who have been doing this Jesus thing even longer than I have. Sometimes we think that our life isn't in well enough order or that if we could just figure out this one area it would make this all a lot easier for us, but Proverbs 1:4 says "These proverbs will give insight to the simple, knowledge and discernment to the young." That is good news! **God doesn't shield any of us from the chance to seek wisdom and shape our worldview.** The more of us who are willing to do so the more impact there will be on the world. That means that young, old, mature, and those who are just trying to figure things out; each of us has the chance to connect with God and absorb his wisdom and let it change us.

In fact in **2 Timothy 1:13** Paul encourages a young man, not much older than some of our students, when it comes to wisdom and knowledge saying **"Hold on to the pattern of wholesome teaching you learned from me - a pattern shaped by faith and love that you have in Christ Jesus."** This "wholesome teaching" that Timothy learned and the "pattern" that Paul is referring to would be Timothy's worldview. Granted at the time they were probably unaware that it was a "biblical worldview", but nonetheless it shaped Timothy's ministry and life as a Christ follower. He **clung to knowledge, faith, and wisdom** and was able to influence the world and Christ-followers that came long before us.

I have told my students “Be like Timothy. Be a young person who cares about wisdom and knowledge.” But I charge you with the same thing. **Be a human being who cares about Godly wisdom and biblical knowledge.** Make a choice to make your worldview a little more biblical. **Then ask yourself how a biblical worldview would respond to what is happening in our world right now.** How would a biblical worldview respond to secular media, poverty, or injustice? Or how does a biblical worldview change who we choose to spend our time with and what we do with that time? God may surprise you when you begin asking these questions.