

Prepared to Give an Answer

Developing a Biblical BIAS (Worldview)

*“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. **Always be prepared to give an answer** to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,”*

1 Peter 3:15 NIV

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NOTE: We use the 1984 edition of the NIV and do NOT recommend the newer editions since they have introduced some inaccurate gender-neutral language.

This book was written because of the continual encouragement of my children and my wonderful bride Wendi. Thanks for your love and patience.

Preface

This book records my efforts to organize the basics of a biblical worldview so that I can pass it along to my family. I pray that it will be helpful to them, and that it will encourage them to live their lives in light of God's truth. To be His ambassadors we need to know how to answer life's big questions according to His Word.

In this outline I show why faith in God is reasonable and logical, but reason alone won't convince people of the truth of God's Word. God says:

"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14)

A man's reason cannot give him faith or an understanding of God's Word. A man must be given faith *by* God before he is able to understand the things *of* God. If this book is helpful to you, all thanks are due to God who alone can give us true wisdom.

To God be the glory,

Timothy V. Sanders
July, 2011

Beginnings – ORIGIN *(Where did we come from?)*

- **Only Two Choices**
- **Realize the Significance**
- **Is it Faith or Science?**
 - LAB - Lookable, Accessible, Breakable
- **Guess at the Evidence**
- **Inspect the Evidence**
 - Universe = "Decay"
 - Age of the Earth = "Can't Say"
 - Origin of Life by Chance = "No Way"
 - Evolution of Species and Man = "Lacks Genes and Tweens"
- **No Compromise**

DON'T - Death, Orders of Creation, Names in genealogies, Ten Commandments refer to seven-day week

Intent of Life – LIFE *(Why are we here?)*

- **Love - GOD and MAN**
- **Increase - GROW**
- **Faithfulness - Time, Talent, Treasure**
- **Eternity – Past, Present, Future**

Authority – POWER *(Who's in charge?)* A God Who is:

- **Personal and Loving**
- **Omnipotent**
- **Wise and All-Knowing**
- **Everywhere and Eternal**
- **Righteous and Reliable**

Standards – RULES *(What are the rules?)* God's rules are:

- **Revealed supernaturally, not derived by reason**
- **Universal and apply to everyone, everywhere, all the time**
- **Loving**
- **Enforced**
- **Steadfast**

Who, Me? Biased?

“Bias: a mental leaning or inclination; partiality; prejudice; bent” (Webster’s)

If you think being biased is a bad thing, take a deep breath and hold it before you read the next sentence.....

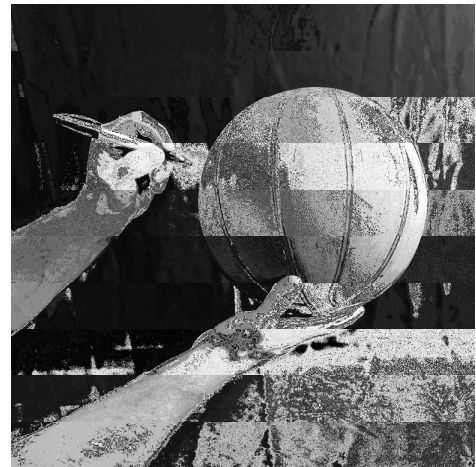
You are biased. So am I. So is everyone in the world.

(You can breathe now - the hard part is over.)

In the movie “The Pistol,” Pete Maravich’s father holds up a basketball and a pen to illustrate to his team why they need to listen to him. “This ball represents everything there is to know about the great game of basketball.” He draws a small circle on the ball. “That’s everything I know about basketball”. He then makes a dot. “That’s everything you know about basketball.”

Great illustration.

It’s also a great illustration about life and the worldview each of us has. “This ball represents everything there is to know about everything in life for all of the past, present, and future. How big a circle should I draw to represent the knowledge of the smartest person you know? How big a circle should I draw for you?”



None of us knows everything. Most of us are honest enough to admit that relative to “all knowledge from all time” our little dot couldn’t even be seen on the ball. Yet that doesn’t keep us from having opinions about the whole ball. As humans there are certain questions we can’t help but ask about our lives. Here are four “whole ball” questions for which we each have an opinion:

1. **Where did we come from?**
2. **Why are we here?**
3. **Who’s in charge?**
4. **What are the rules?**

Sources of Our Opinions

How do we each come up with our answers? There's really only three sources for any opinions and answers we have:

1. **Personal experience and observations**

If we have personal experience with an area of knowledge then we have a first-hand basis for our opinion. We all know about gravity because we experience it daily (especially as we get older). But in the few years we have on earth we don't have enough time to know much by personal experience.

2. **Experiences/observations of other people**

Learning from the experiences of others lets us draw from a much broader pool of knowledge. Our education, reading, and listening brings us much second-hand (or third-hand, fourth-hand, etc.) knowledge that is filtered from the first-hand experiences of others. When someone we like or respect tells us their opinion based on their experience with a subject, we often adopt their opinion as our own. This is easier than having no opinion on subjects for which we have no first-hand knowledge. This is a very useful source but still leaves us with a very small dot on the ball.

3. **Our Personal Bias about the rest of the ball**

Our bias (you can substitute the word "worldview" if it sounds better) is how we arrive at opinions about the rest of the ball of knowledge that we can't cover with first-hand or second-hand knowledge. And, for even the most educated and intelligent of us, our bias is the basis for our opinions on 99.99+ percent of the ball. Don't believe it? Look at the four questions above and think about who has first-hand knowledge to answer any of them.

That's why it is necessary for each of us to be biased. If I don't have a bias I have no way to form opinions about most of life and the world around me. My "mental leaning or inclination" (as Webster puts it) gives me a basis for having opinions about things I can't personally verify by experience. If we were earthworms we might not need a bias since we might not have any opinions about anything - we care only about the dirt we live in and experience. But we are human beings with minds that seek answers to things above and beyond our "dirt."

The "Best" Bias

Since your bias (worldview) is so important, how do you know if you have the best one or the "right" one? How do you even know if there is a right one?

This seems like a hard question to answer, but our choices are pretty limited (as in two). Either my answers to life's big questions are based on my Reasoning ("truth" as determined by my intellect), or they are based on Revelation (truth as revealed to me by One who knows the truth) :

1. **Based on Reasoning**

If the only source of answers is my evaluation of input from my experiences and from other biased people, all biases are equally valid and none is better or more right than any other. If you choose to believe this answer then it doesn't really matter which bias you choose. It would also be wrong of you to ever tell anyone else that his/her worldview was "wrong." Some opinions may be more educated and well-reasoned than others, but they are all based on imperfect knowledge. In this choice you are saying that your Reason and Intellect are your highest authority, and you use them to judge all ideas and to determine "Truth" (even though you know almost nothing of the ball).

2. **Based on Revelation**

If there is One who does know everything (the whole ball), basing my bias on His knowledge would be the best and only rational choice. This option is easier to accept once you admit that you personally don't have all the knowledge needed to be sure of most things. In this choice I'm saying that the only things I know for sure are those things that are Revealed to me. But if there is no one who knows the whole ball I'm stuck with option one.

You have probably already figured out what I believe. I believe there is One who knows everything about everything past, present, and future. He claims to have provided us with some of His first-hand knowledge in the Bible. If you and I accept His testimony then we should base our worldview bias on what He says. If we don't accept His testimony then we're stuck with our own imperfect guesses.

Therefore this book uses a "presuppositional" approach to answering life's big questions. I "presuppose" that the best source of truthful answers is the One who knows all answers and has given us some of that knowledge in the Bible. I still use the reasoning ability He has given me, but if my reason doesn't understand something He says, I'm going to assume He's right. He's the one that knows the whole ball – my "reasoning" tells me that it's illogical to make MY knowledge be the final judge of truth.