

# Dr. Gary Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 7, What is a Worldview

## Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

### 1. Abstract of Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 7, What is a Worldview, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

This lecture by Dr. Gary Meadors introduces the concept of a **biblical worldview** and its foundational assumptions. It begins by establishing the **biblical narrative** of creation, the fall, and redemption as crucial for understanding this perspective. The lecture highlights the **impact of the fall** on humanity's ability to know God and the necessity of God's provision through His Word. Furthermore, it examines the components of a worldview, including **ontology, epistemology, and axiology**, emphasizing the need for constant validation against Scripture. The session concludes by setting up the subsequent lecture on **values** and their derivation from one's worldview.

**2. 22 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 7 – Double  
click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the  
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link  
there (Theology → Knowing the Will of God).**



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on07.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 7, What is a Worldview

#### Briefing Document: Knowing God's Will - Session 7: What is a Worldview

##### Overview:

This session by Dr. Gary Meadors focuses on defining and explaining the concept of a **worldview**, particularly within a Christian context of "knowing God's will" and transforming the mind into a biblical framework. Meadors emphasizes that understanding worldview is foundational for comprehending values and applying biblical principles to all areas of life. The lecture builds upon previous sessions, revisiting key themes like the biblical story and the impact of the Fall. He stresses the importance of a **biblical epistemology**, grounded in creation, the Fall, and God's provision of revelation through Scripture. Meadors defines worldview as a "conceptual system" or "lens" through which we interpret ourselves and the world, encompassing ontology (who am I?), epistemology (what do I know?), and axiology (what should I do/value?). He cautions against subjective interpretations and emphasizes the need to constantly validate our worldview and values against God's Word.

##### Main Themes and Important Ideas:

1. **Repetition for Learning and Focus on Worldview:** Meadors explicitly states that this session and the next will delve deeper into worldview and values, building on previous discussions. He emphasizes that "repetition again is the key to learning." This session specifically focuses on answering "what is a worldview?"
2. **Worldview and Epistemology in Knowing God's Will:** Meadors argues that discussing "knowing God's will" immediately places us in the realm of epistemology – the nature, source, and validity of knowledge. He asserts that in this context, the Bible is the primary source of knowledge.
  - "When we say knowing God's will; we're immediately in the category of epistemology. This technology has to do with the source's nature and validity of knowledge. We come to the Bible, particularly in this lecture on this score now."
1. **The Foundational Biblical Narrative:** The lecture reiterates the core biblical story: a perfect creation, the Fall of Adam and Eve through disobedience, the resulting distortion of humanity and the world, God's redemptive plan culminating in Jesus Christ, and the eventual consummation.

- "There's an eternal God who entered time by creating the world and Adam and Eve were there and everything was great But they failed In terms of being obedient to God and the fall happened the fall becomes the major key in the rest of human history and Sets the fall God has been about Redeeming a people for his name...and then eventually the consummation."
1. **The Noetic Effect of the Fall:** Meadors highlights that the Fall not only distorted the physical world but also our minds ("noetic effect"). This distortion makes it impossible for humanity to naturally know God.
    - "Not only is the world distorted physically, but we are also distorted in our minds. There's a noetic effect of the fall that theologians talk about. So, humanity is not able to know God Because of the fall distortion."
  1. **God's Provision for Knowing Him: Revelation and Scripture:** Because of the Fall, God has provided a way for us to know Him through His Word, the Bible. This is presented as God's "epistemological provision."
    - "We need help, and you know again that help comes by God providing us his word...God overcame the distortion by giving a scripture."
    - "It was the Holy Spirit's work in the lives of prophets and apostles. Who encoded God's? Revelation so that we have it That doesn't happen with us That happened with them The Apostles and the prophets we have the product We in some ways are more blessed because we have the whole product."
  1. **Three Foundational Assumptions for a Biblical Worldview:**
    - **Creation in the Image of God (Imago Dei):** Humans are created as God's "visible corporal representative" in a "personal and moral Repertory representation." This means reflecting God's holiness and being His representatives on earth.
    - "Mankind is the quote, the visible corporal representative, not representation...We're a personal and moral Repertory representation. Be holy, for I am holy is a call to demonstrate that we are in the image of God."
    - "We are his reflection on this works, and we are that reflection best when we have Participated in his plan of salvation when we reflect the image of Christ."
    - **The Fall:** The Fall resulted in sin being the inherent human condition from birth, distorting our ability to know and obey God.

- "We are sinners at birth We are prone to go against God. We do not naturally know God. We do not naturally obey God."
  - "Psalm 51:5 behold I was Born and said I was shapen in an equity now in the womb...that person is Forensically...legally declared Sinners."
  - **God's Epistemological Provision (Revelation):** God has provided Scripture as a means to overcome the distortion of the Fall and know Him. This revelation was given through human authors inspired by the Holy Spirit.
  - "God's Epistemological provision is revelation God overcame the distortion by giving a scripture He gave it to us in a very natural way through Human beings...it was a Holy Spirit's work in the lives of prophets and apostles. Who encoded God's? Revelation so that we have it."
1. **Definition of Worldview as a Conceptual System/Lens:** Meadors defines worldview as a "conceptual System," "a lens," and a "mental framework" that influences how we interpret the world and ourselves. He notes that even Christians have different "lenses" or interpretations, which God has decreed for reasons we don't fully understand.
    - "Well, a Worldview is a conceptual System. It's a conceptual system. It's a lens. These glasses are lenses...a worldview is our lens. It's a mental framework a conceptual system."
    - "It is the presuppositions and convictions that we own that we recognize and apply in our lives. They are basically our worldview."
  1. **Components of a Worldview:** Meadors outlines three key components that a worldview answers:
    - **Ontology (Who am I?):** Defined by being created in the image of God as His representative, called to holiness and obedience.
    - **Epistemology (What do I know?):** Grounded in God's Word, which requires lifelong study and unpacking.
    - **Axiology (What should I do/value?):** Determined by obeying God and fulfilling Scripture, with love being a key aspect.
    - "Worldview Answers who am I? This is called ontology...What do I know? Epistemology...what should I do? So ontology? epistemology axiology... Actually,

axiology is what I should do. What do I value and live to perform? How do I obey God?"

1. **Transformation as a Rational Process Based on Biblical Teaching:** Meadors emphasizes that the transformation described in Romans 12:1-2 (renewing of the mind) is a "rational process" that relies on incorporating and developing a biblical worldview and value system.
  - "Transformation is a rational process, and I'm going to emphasize that transformation is a rational process based on biblical teaching."
  - "Transformation by Romans 12 1 & 2 is a rational process be transformed by of changing your mind by incorporating and developing that worldview and value system."
1. **Caution Against Subjectivism in Devotions:** While acknowledging the value of devotional life, Meadors warns against subjectivism and the idea that personal feelings or interpretations without grounding in Scripture are sufficient. He encourages diligent study of the Bible and the use of resources like Bible dictionaries to ensure accurate understanding.
  - "The subjectivism of devotions has gotten a lot of people in trouble because their imagination is their only limitation out of that devotional moment...and they have bypassed the process of thinking about God's Word and what God's Word expects of us and how we Obey it. That's extremely crucial."
1. **Worldview Influences All Areas of Life:** Meadors illustrates how worldview impacts decisions in areas like education and politics, emphasizing that Christians must adjudicate these issues through the lens of their biblical worldview and values.
  - "Your worldview makes decisions about education, health care, and so forth...Christians come to that. How do we vote for a president? Well, Christians will say I'll vote for the president who's against abortion on demand well, that's a value that many of us as Christians have, but You've got to ask more questions than that..."
1. **The Example of Abraham and Lot:** The contrasting lives of Abraham and Lot are presented as an example of how adherence to or violation of God's values (informed by their understanding of God's will) leads to different outcomes. Lot's knowing what was right but choosing wrongly led to a "horrible life."

- "How to live a horrible life, how do you live a horrible life by having knowing what's right and doing wrong Having values but ignoring them denying them."
  - "He knew what was right But didn't do it That's a That's a horrible place to be..."
1. **The Necessity of Validating Worldview and Values by God's Word:** Meadors cautions that our own understanding is not authoritative and must always be checked against Scripture, a process involving the entire church community.
    - "Caution: Our worldview and values always need to be validated by God's Word. We are not Authorities in and of ourselves about these things But we have to validate them through Scripture, and that's the work of the entire church."
  1. **The Example of Paul's Transformation:** Paul's persecution of Christians, driven by his deeply held but incorrect worldview, highlights the need for adjustment and transformation when our worldview clashes with God's truth.
    - "Consider Paul when he persecuted Christians in the book of Acts...He was being obedient to his worldview. He felt good about incarcerating Christians, Even seeing them die...His worldview and values weren't correct prior to Jesus, But now it needed an adjustment."
  1. **The Importance of Knowing Oneself in Light of God's Word:** Meadors concludes by emphasizing the need for self-examination to ensure our worldview and values align with God's Word, leading to decisions that conform to His will.
    - "We must all be diligent in maintaining our awareness that our worldview and values conform to God's Word So that the decisions that we make in life will be in conformity to his will."

### **Next Steps:**

The following session (GM 8) will focus specifically on **values** and how they operate based on our worldview.

## 4. Study Guide: Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 7, What is a Worldview

### Knowing God's Will: Understanding Worldview

#### Quiz

1. According to the lecture, what is a worldview? Describe it briefly using the metaphor provided.
2. Why is understanding the biblical story crucial when discussing knowing God's will and worldview?
3. Explain the "noetic effect of the fall." How does it impact humanity's ability to know God?
4. What is the significance of Romans 12:1-2 in the context of developing a biblical worldview and values system?
5. Define "imago Dei" and explain what it means for humanity according to the lecture.
6. What were the implications of Adam and Eve eating from the "tree of knowledge of good and evil"?
7. What are the three foundational assumptions for a biblical epistemology discussed in the lecture?
8. Explain God's "epistemological provision" for a fallen world, referencing the scripture mentioned.
9. According to the lecture, what are the three components that a worldview answers? Briefly define each.
10. How did the example of King James translation of 1 Thessalonians illustrate the importance of a proper worldview and interpretation?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. A worldview is a conceptual system, a mental framework, or a lens through which we see and interpret the world and ourselves. Similar to how eyeglasses shape our vision, our worldview shapes our understanding.

2. The biblical story provides the foundational narrative of creation, the fall, redemption, and consummation. This story establishes the context for understanding humanity's relationship with God and the nature of reality, which are central to a biblical worldview.
3. The "noetic effect of the fall" refers to the distortion of our minds and understanding as a result of Adam and Eve's sin. This distortion impairs our natural ability to know God and to discern truth.
4. Romans 12:1-2 calls believers to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. This transformation is essential for creating a biblical worldview and the values that stem from it, moving away from fallen perspectives.
5. "Imago Dei" is Latin for "image of God." It signifies that mankind was created as God's visible, corporal representative in the world, reflecting His personal and moral attributes. It calls us to be holy as He is holy.
6. Eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil was an act of rebellion, a desire to usurp God's status and be the source of knowledge. This act brought about the fall and its consequences for humanity and creation.
7. The three foundational assumptions are: (1) humanity is created in the image of God, (2) the reality of the fall and its effects on humanity and creation, and (3) God's epistemological provision (revelation through Scripture) for a fallen world.
8. God's epistemological provision is revelation, specifically His Word (Scripture) given through the Holy Spirit's work in prophets and apostles (1 Corinthians 2:6-16). This revelation overcomes the distortion caused by the fall, providing us with truth.
9. The three components are: (1) Ontology (Who am I?), which addresses our identity as created in God's image and His representatives. (2) Epistemology (What do I know?), which concerns the source and validity of our knowledge, primarily God's Word. (3) Axiology (What should I do?/What do I value?), which deals with our values and how we should live in obedience to God.
10. The King James translation of "avoid all appearance of evil" was often misconstrued to promote guilt by association. Better translations clarifying it as "avoid every kind of evil" demonstrate how a faulty understanding (influenced by a non-biblical worldview) can lead to misinterpretations and applications of scripture.

## Essay Format Questions

1. Discuss the interconnectedness between understanding the biblical narrative of creation, fall, and redemption and the development of a comprehensive biblical worldview. How does each element inform the others?
2. Analyze the implications of the "noetic effect of the fall" on various aspects of human life, including our understanding of ourselves, others, and the world around us. How does God's revelation address these implications?
3. Explore the concept of humanity as God's representative ("imago Dei"). What are the responsibilities and implications of this calling in the contemporary world? How does the example of Jesus Christ inform our understanding of this representation?
4. Critically evaluate the role of both rational understanding and personal devotion in the process of transforming one's mind to align with a biblical worldview, drawing on the insights from the lecture.
5. Using the example of Lot, discuss the relationship between knowing what is right (having biblical values) and consistently doing what is right. What factors can hinder this alignment, and what strategies can Christians employ to cultivate moral development?

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Worldview:** A conceptual system, a lens, or a mental framework comprising our fundamental beliefs and assumptions about reality, ourselves, and the world around us, which shapes our interpretation and response to life.
- **Epistemology:** The branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and scope of knowledge, its sources, justification, and validity. In this context, it refers to how we know what we know, particularly in relation to God.
- **Noetic Effect of the Fall:** The negative impact of Adam and Eve's sin on the human mind and intellect, leading to a distortion in our ability to understand and know God and truth.
- **Imago Dei:** Latin for "image of God," referring to the biblical concept that humanity was created in God's likeness, possessing qualities that reflect His nature and representing Him in creation.
- **Ontology:** The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of being or existence. In this context, it relates to understanding our fundamental identity and nature as human beings created by God.
- **Axiology:** The branch of philosophy concerned with the study of values, including ethics and aesthetics. In this context, it refers to our system of values and how we determine what is right, good, and desirable based on our worldview.
- **Revelation:** God's act of disclosing Himself and His will to humanity. In this lecture, it primarily refers to the Bible as God's written Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit.
- **Transformation (Romans 12:1-2):** The process of being changed and renewed in our minds through the incorporation of a biblical worldview and values system, leading to conformity with God's will.
- **Conversion:** The act of turning away from sin and submitting to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, marking the beginning of a personal relationship with God and the process of transformation.
- **Paradigm:** A typical example or pattern of something; a model. In this context, it refers to the framework or perspective we use to understand and interpret information and experiences.

## 5. FAQs on Meadors, Knowing the Will of God, Session 7, What is a Worldview, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions: Understanding Worldview and Values

#### 1. What is a worldview and why is it important for understanding God's will?

A worldview is a conceptual system, a mental framework or lens through which we interpret ourselves and the world around us. It encompasses our presuppositions and convictions about fundamental questions like "Who am I?" and "What do I know?"

Understanding our worldview is crucial for knowing God's will because it acts as the foundation for our values and decision-making. As fallen human beings with distorted minds (due to the noetic effect of the Fall), our natural worldview is flawed and needs to be transformed into a biblical worldview to align with God's truth.

#### 2. What are the three foundational assumptions of a biblical epistemology in relation to worldview?

The three foundational assumptions are:

- **Creation in the Image of God (Imago Dei):** Humans are created as God's visible, corporal representatives, reflecting His personal and moral attributes. This means we are thinking, feeling, and choosing beings with a high calling to holiness and obedience, reflecting Christ as the perfect representative of God.
- **The Fall:** Adam and Eve's disobedience resulted in sin entering the world, distorting not only the physical realm but also human minds, making us prone to go against God and unable to naturally know or obey Him. This condition of sinfulness is inherent from birth.
- **God's Epistemological Provision (Revelation):** To overcome the distortion caused by the Fall, God has provided His Word, the Bible, as a means of revelation. Through the Holy Spirit's work in prophets and apostles, God's truth was encoded in Scripture, offering us the knowledge necessary for transformation and understanding His will.

### **3. How does the Fall impact our ability to know God and His will?**

The Fall has a "noetic effect," meaning it has distorted our minds and our ability to reason rightly. As a result of this distortion, humanity is not naturally able to know God or His will. We are born as sinners, inclined towards rebellion against God. Therefore, we need God's intervention and His revealed Word (the Bible) to overcome this distortion and gain true knowledge of Him.

### **4. What is the role of transformation (Romans 12:1-2) in developing a biblical worldview and values system?**

Romans 12:1-2 is central to the process of developing a biblical worldview and values system. Because of our fallen nature, we need to be "transformed by the renewing of our minds." This transformation is not automatic but requires a conscious effort to incorporate and develop a biblical worldview and the values that stem from it. It's a continuous process of aligning our thinking with God's Word, moving away from our natural, distorted perspectives.

### **5. What are the key components of a worldview?**

A worldview essentially answers three fundamental questions:

- **Ontology (Who am I?):** This addresses our identity and nature. From a biblical perspective, we are created in the image of God, called to holiness and obedience, and tasked with fulfilling His will in the world as His representatives.
- **Epistemology (What do I know?):** This deals with the nature and sources of knowledge. Biblically, our foundational knowledge comes from God's revelation in Scripture, which we spend our lives unpacking and understanding.
- **Axiology (What should I do? What do I value?):** This concerns our values and how we should live. Our actions and values should be rooted in obedience to God and His Word, fulfilling the Scriptures.

## **6. How should a Christian approach diverse interpretations and varying Christian worldviews?**

While all Christians share a core worldview based on fundamental biblical truths, there can be diversity in interpretations and specific aspects of their worldview. This diversity is, to some extent, decreed by God. When encountering different interpretations, it's crucial to discipline ourselves to understand the various lenses and presuppositions involved. The goal should be to get back to what the text of Scripture actually says, in its original context, before applying it to our lives. Lifelong learning and curiosity about the Bible are essential in navigating these differences.

## **7. Why is it crucial to continuously validate our worldview and values through God's Word?**

Our own understanding and perspectives are fallible and can be influenced by non-biblical sources. Therefore, it is essential to continuously validate our worldview and values against the absolute truth of God's Word. We are not the ultimate authorities on these matters. This validation is an ongoing process for individual believers and the church community as a whole, as we strive to obey God more fully.

## **8. What is the relationship between knowing God's Word and our devotional life?**

While devotional practices are valuable, they are most effective when grounded in an accurate understanding of Scripture. Our devotions should flow from a worldview and values system that is informed by what the Bible actually teaches. Simply reading the Bible without understanding its meaning and implications can lead to subjective interpretations and potentially inaccurate applications. A deeper understanding of God's Word, gained through diligent study, enriches our devotional life and helps us align our hearts and actions with God's will.