



WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL
Volume 18 Number 41
November 1, 2022

The Discipleship Mirage - Part 7
Using a Worldview Paradigm in Discipleship Training

By Freddy Davis

Since discipleship training, by its very nature, tends to be, relatively speaking, the most time and effort intensive component of a church's programming, it automatically becomes the most difficult kind of programming to incorporate into its schedule. It requires a process of knowledge and skills acquisition. That means learning opportunities must be set up, and people must be willing to participate. Traditionally, churches have tried to implement these kinds of opportunities using several different strategies, with each one having its own strengths and weaknesses.

Probably the most common strategy is for the pastor to try to incorporate this kind of knowledge into his sermons. This is certainly an important thing to do, but if that is the only way it is done, there are serious limitations that also come into play. The most weighty one is that the teaching of the essential training knowledge and skills done this way are, by necessity, sporadic. Some things need to be learned in a more in-depth and systematic manner, and doing it only in sermons is a difficult way to go.

A second common approach is to attempt some type of ongoing training opportunity. If this can be pulled off, it is a good way to go, but it is the rare church that has the ability to make it work over the long term. This approach provides the means for sharing in-depth training, but the downside is that using this method generally results in quite low participation. There will typically be a faithful handful who are excited enough about this kind of opportunity that they will faithfully participate, but

the great majority of church members, for one reason or another, will not.

Another possibility is to provide periodic in-depth training opportunities. The fact that these are occasional special events makes better participation more likely, but generally the large majority of church members will still not participate.

What we are suggesting here is to use a combination approach based on a worldview paradigm. This methodology begins with an orientation that all church members will participate in. It is relatively short and can be done multiple times to allow everyone an opportunity to participate at a time that works best for them. Once the orientation is completed, the church can incorporate the worldview methodology into the already established programs of the church. Having this worldview background knowledge will put church members into a common frame of mind that is focused on the essential core elements of their Christian faith, as well as provide a common frame of reference that puts everyone on the same page. And for those who wish to dive deeper into discipleship training, this will become a foundation for implementing other periodic specialized classes and outside reading.

The Pastor Must Buy In

Obviously, a church that does not have a pastor can use this methodology. And even situations where the pastor does not fully participate can show some positive results if he at least allows and supports the methodology. But it will never achieve its highest potential without the pastor being fully on board.

Permission to Reprint

If you wish to reprint this article in your own print or electronic newsletter, please include the following text:

*Reprinted from **Worldview Made Practical**; a free e-zine produced by **MarketFaith Ministries** featuring practical teaching and life tools to help Christians become more effective in their faith life. Discover **MarketFaith Ministries** at www.marketfaith.org.*

Speaking Schedule

If you are interested in having Freddy Davis or Tal Davis present one of our **Worldview Seminars** or to share about worldview and its practical implications at your church or organization, please contact **MarketFaith Ministries** to schedule your event. All contact information is at the bottom of this e-zine.

Worldview Resources

It is one of the primary purposes of **MarketFaith Ministries** to provide resources to help Christians understand the practical implications of worldview. You can find many free resources that will help you in your quest at <http://www.marketfaith.org>.

We need to be clear though, this does not mean that a pastor must change anything about his style or approach to preaching or ministry in general. The methodology is not about style or overall content, but about worldview awareness.

What is necessary for the pastor is to personally become aware of the worldview implications in what he teaches, and simply make sure that those he is teaching see it clearly. As we will see shortly, the initial orientation into this process will give the entire church body the ability to understand the concepts. With this foundation, when the pastor points them out, church members will know exactly what he is talking about and be able to actively and consciously absorb the discipleship training elements.

The Worldview Discipleship Training Methodology

While the pastor will be the visionary leader in this process, he cannot do it alone. For this methodology to work, the church membership at large must also get on board. This "getting on board," though, is not simply a matter of acquiring some kind of special training. There will, of course, be some training involved, but that truly is the smaller part of this process. The more important thing is attitude. People who truly desire to grow in their faith life must begin with an attitude that they are determined to learn the knowledge and skills that allow it to happen.

The Orientation

This worldview discipleship methodology is a very simple process, but there is a starting point that must be engaged – and that involves an orientation. When implementing it in a church, it is necessary to create an opportunity for the church members to learn the process. This orientation class is

not complicated as we will see in a moment. But it is a different way of approaching the discipleship training process than the way it is traditionally done. This initial class should be provided several times at the beginning to allow everyone to get in on it. After that, what is learned in the class simply needs to be applied in the various teaching venues the church already has established – pastor's sermons, Bible study lessons, and other special teaching opportunities.

After committing to the methodology, this orientation should also be offered periodically as appropriate for any new members who come into the church.

The Method

The method is actually quite simple. The essential core of a worldview system, including that of our own Christian faith, relates to its belief about God, man, and salvation. To get at this set of core beliefs, we only need answer the three essential worldview questions:

1. Who is God?
2. What is a human being?
3. What is salvation?

As Christians, we answer these questions by discovering how the Bible answers them. We use the Bible because it is our ultimate authority source – God's revelation of Himself and His ways to man.

The Implementation

The last element we must address is how to take this method and make use of it in the church environment. This is also quite a simple process, and is one that doesn't require a change in any of the programs already existing in the church. It can be overlaid on what already exists.

Since the method is to see how the Bible answers the three essential worldview questions above, the first order of business is to discover all of the church's programs that use the

Subscription Information SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE:

A subscription to *Worldview Made Practical* is complementary for anyone interested in receiving it. If you received this email as a forward from a family member or a friend and wish to subscribe for yourself, you may do so at www.marketfaith.org. If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, simply follow the instructions found at the bottom of each edition.

Contact Information

If you wish to contact us directly, you may do so by the following methods:

321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312

E-mail:

info@marketfaith.org

Phone: 850-383-9756 (Tallahassee, Florida)

Fax: 850-514-4571

You can order our products and examine our services at <http://www.marketfaith.org>.

This issue of *Worldview Made Practical* is a production of **MarketFaith Ministries**, © 2023. All rights reserved.

Bible as a foundational element of its implementation. The most obvious, and for most churches the most prominent, will be in worship settings and the Bible study program. Depending on the church, there may be other programs, as well, but these two are generally the most prominent.

Once the programs are identified, the leaders of these programs must also be identified. It is these leaders who will make sure the implementation happens.

Of course, the first leader, as was addressed above, must be the pastor. The pastor's role in this process is twofold. First, this approach will probably not even happen if he is not behind it. And second he must specifically point out the answers to the three essential worldview questions above as he opens the Scripture in his sermons. This does not require that he alter his approach to preaching in the least. It only requires that he point out these answers as he comes across them in his preaching.

After the pastor, all of the Bible study teachers must learn how to evaluate the Scripture passages they teach week after week, and identify the answers to the three questions that happen to be in them. Then, as they teach, they can point this out to the class. Again, this does not require that they change materials or teaching style. It is simply an add on to what they are already doing.

This very same thing can be done with any other program the church has that uses the Bible. It is simply a matter of the leaders of those programs identifying how the Scripture they are teaching answers the essential worldview questions, then sharing that with the participants.

While the teachers and leaders end up having the most responsibility for identifying and pointing out these

particular biblical truths, it does not let the rest of the church members off the hook. There is a reason all of them need to participate in the orientation process. When the biblical worldview truths are identified by the leaders, sharing that knowledge will not be nearly as effective if those who are being led do not also have this worldview understanding. When the truths are identified and pointed out, all of those on the receiving end need to be able to grasp the implications of what is being shared. This puts everyone in the entire church on a course of receiving profound discipleship training in the process of simply doing church.

Final Words

This methodology may not appear to be that profound on a surface level, but let me assure you, it can be revolutionary. The revolutionary element occurs because it puts the focus of the entire church on the essential core elements of the Christian faith and keeps it there. That is the place where discipleship training has its foundation. This does not eliminate the possibility of additional study in other areas, but everything else is based on this essential foundation.

Discipleship training is not merely some program to add on to what the church is already doing. It is certainly possible to implement additional new programs aimed at helping believers grow in their faith, but the programs, in and of themselves, can do nothing. The goal of discipleship training is to help believers become better disciples of Jesus Christ as they live out their faith in the world. It is based on who we become, not on what we do. A profound focus on the faith essentials is the necessary starting point.

The very purpose of discipleship training is to help believers become equipped to fulfill their calling to share Christ with the world. Using a worldview perspective to get at this

goal is powerful because it puts the focus of the entire effort on the essential core of God's purpose, and gives a methodology for implementing a believer's calling. It is my hope and prayer that this vision will become your vision, and that God will use you to accomplish His purpose through your life.

Would You Consider Supporting Us?

Would you consider financial support for **MarketFaith Ministries**? I feel confident that what we are doing is consistent with your beliefs about spreading the gospel and equipping the saints for ministry. Would you let us be one element of your hands and feet in this process? **MarketFaith Ministries** is a 501 (c) (3) not for profit corporation, so your contributions are tax deductible. If you would consider this we would be very grateful. Also, if you would like to know more about the ministry, it would be my pleasure to share with you personally what we are working on and how you can plug in. I can be reached at 850-383-9756 or by e-mail at Freddy@marketfaith.org. As for any donations, they may be sent directly to **MarketFaith Ministries** at 321 Anton Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32312, or you can contribute through our secure website at www.marketfaith.org. Simply click on the "Donate" button at the bottom of the homepage. We are deeply grateful for your support of this ministry.

And, as always, if you have any thoughts, opinions or suggestions about how **MarketFaith Ministries** can help you, please feel free, at any time, to call (850-383-9756) or e-mail (info@marketfaith.org). We are here to serve you.