

WINNING THE GAME



LIFE GROUP CURRICULUM

INTRODUCTION TO WORLDVIEW

What is a Worldview?

A Worldview is as basic as it seems. It is the way you look at everything around you. Whether we admit it or not, realize it or not, accept or deny it, we all have a way of explaining the life we find ourselves living. The way we explain life gives us an outlook on certain big questions, whose answers affect what we believe and how we act. The five big questions we will be focusing our Worldview study around are: (1) What is Ultimate Reality? (2) What is a human being? (3) How do we know right from wrong? (4) What happens when we die? (5) What is the meaning of history?

These questions and their answers make up your Worldview. They allow us to make sense of our experiences. We may take them for granted and spend little time reflecting on them, but make no mistake; how you answer these questions shapes your life. James Sire says there are two conclusions once Worldview awareness has been raised: (1) "Our choices need not be blind. There are ways to bring light to paths from which we choose." (2) "Whatever choice we make, if we are not going to be hypocritical, we are committed to live by it."

Sire's charge serves as a good lead-in to Winning The Game, the ball is in your court. **It's your move.**

Difference Between Worldview and Culture

"To a person who has no knowledge of the game of chess, the players seem at first to be moving the strangely shaped pieces at random. With time the observer begins to see that there's an order and pattern for every piece, and finally they see that there is an overall strategy by the players. Culture may be likened to the total game, while Worldview is the unseen set of rules that determine how the game is played." – David Burnett, Clash of Worlds

Why is Worldview Important?

One Life's mission is to help people far from God experience Jesus. How can we do this if we are talking about baseball when they are playing cricket? Sure there are several points of reference between the two: innings, runs, bats, balls, umpires...but the rules and standards are so far apart that the discussion will get confused along the way. There will be an inevitable divide because the two games are not played the same way. And without understanding how the game is played, we will never have a chance of winning the game.

To take it a step further, what if we were trying to explain to someone how to play cricket if we didn't know the rules ourselves? Barna Research has found that **9%** of all American adults hold a Biblical Worldview, and more troubling, only **19%** who claim to have a personal commitment to Jesus Christ.

This is the double challenge facing Christians today; building a Biblical Worldview, while understanding and respecting other Worldviews so that we can intelligibly speak into real people's lives in ways that are meaningful and reveal Christ.

Winning The Game will take us a little deeper into the topic of Worldview. It is our hope that armed with knowledge and understanding of how others view the world around them, we will be better equipped to show them the love and compassion of Jesus.

? **Where do your friends that are far from God turn for truth in their lives?**

? **Reread Sire's Quote (under What is a Worldview?). Discuss. How might this Worldview insight have bearing on Christians being perceived as hypocritical by outsiders or the unchurched?**

? **Make a list of "-isms" you have heard about or know (e.g. materialism, modernism, consumerism, etc.). How do these represent a Worldview, or outlook, on life? Can you connect these philosophies to real people you know in your life?**

Introductory Group Exercise:

1 **Get a large white poster board or white erase board. Draw a bullseye on it.**

2 **Get some sticky dots and have group members put their initials and number 1-5 on each one.**

example – 

3 **Read off the following list of "beliefs", and have them fire that belief at the bullseye. The closer to the center they place their dot, the more passionately they hold that belief, with the very center being a belief they would pour out their life for.**

- PC or Mac?
- Favorite sports team
- That the church should care for orphans, widows and sojourners
- Your preferred toothpaste brand
- Republican or Democrat?

"Not every belief reveals your Worldview, but your Worldview shapes all of your beliefs."

? **How does your stance on these questions and statements bring to light your outlook on life?**

? **How do the five Worldview topic questions listed in the introduction (What is Ultimate Reality? What is a human being?, etc.) affect your bullseye?**

? **Should the Bible come into play in all your beliefs? How and in what ways? Or should it stop at a certain ring on the bullseye?**

WHAT IS ULTIMATE REALITY?

Playing The Game...

Playing The Game. There are only three rules to The Game: **(1)** Everyone in the world is playing The Game **(2)** Whenever you think about The Game, you lose **(3)** Losses must be announced to at least one person.

? **Do you think “Everyone is playing The Game whether they know it or not” can be a true statement?**

? **How does verbalizing losses change the dynamic of The Game? How does it advance The Game?**

What if you changed “playing The Game” to “Knowing God” and “lose/losses” to “win/wins”?

? **How might your life change if ‘The Game’ (revised edition) was indeed reality?**

Building a Biblical Worldview...

Ultimate Reality according to the Bible is that an infinite, all powerful, all knowing personal God made the Universe in order to have a loving relationship with us.

Big Story of Scripture: **Psalms 102:25-27; Deuteronomy 4:32-38**

? **What are some of the other Worldview perspectives on Ultimate Reality?**

? **How does the Biblical Worldview explain/allow/differentiate these other perspectives?**

? **How might our cultural understanding of God get in the way of the Biblical Worldview of God?**

Watch DVD

Prayer Passage: **Ephesians 1:16-19**

Winning The Game...

POINTS

- 1** Have 100% of your group report that they ‘Thought about God’ during work, and announced the win to someone.
- 2** Have 50% of your group affirm they read Genesis chapters 1-2 through the week.
- 3** As a Life Group, clean up God’s creation.

WHAT IS A HUMAN BEING?

Playing The Game...

Of course there are exceptions, but players are unique in that games cannot be played without them, yet they are not the purpose of the games themselves. Without players, games would not function and the creation of them would be pointless. Yet without a game to play, there would be no players...

- ? **How do players define the game they are playing? How does the game define the players?**
- ? **When playing different games, interaction with other players changes dramatically based on the game being played. Discuss some examples.**
- ? **What separates created mankind from the created objects of games? What if those objects were given human traits (e.g. reason, choice, emotions)? How might they react to their created design?**

Building a Biblical Worldview...

The Biblical view of the world is that human beings are created in God's image. Therefore all have dignity, worth and value.

Big Story of Scripture: **Jeremiah 31:31-34**

- ? **As a group: discuss together what our culture tells us human beings are.**
- ? **How does the Biblical Worldview redeem the picture/definition?**
- ? **How should the Biblical Worldview apply to our lives and how we interact with people? Think specifically of people or groups you have trouble interacting with, that you might even call your "enemy".**

Watch DVD

Prayer Passage: **1 Thessalonians 3:12**

Winning The Game...

POINTS

- 1 Have at least 50% of your group members read an article or part of a book that answers this Worldview question from a different perspective.**
- 2 Go attend a high school sports event together. (Can substitute some other community event...as long as its a game!).
Bonus Point: Discuss the analogy of players and the Worldview question while in attendance.**
- 3 As a group, serve some human beings that are Far From God or in physical need.**

HOW DO WE KNOW RIGHT FROM WRONG?

Playing The Game...

Three umpires are having lunch, discussing their profession. The first umpire says, "There are balls and there are strikes, and I call them as they are." The second umpire responds with a shrug, "Well I just call 'em as I see 'em." The third umpire leans big in his chair with a big smile and says, "Boys, they ain't nothing until we call 'em."

- ? Which umpire do you see yourself lining up with?
- ? If you were the batter or pitcher, which umpire would you want behind the plate?
- ? Search through and discuss the truth in each of these viewpoints. Can you come up with a single idea that ties them all together?

Building a Biblical Worldview...

The Biblical view of the world is that God has established principles and commands in life, communicated in His word and in our consciences, which serve to guide us into a relationship with Him and others and infuse our lives with meaning.

Big Story of Scripture: **John 17:19-23**

- ? Do you remember a time you or a team you played on was "wronged" in a sporting event or game? Why do you think this memory has stuck so strongly with you?
- ? Have an open discussion about where people turn for truth. What do they base right and wrong on?
- ? How does understanding right and wrong build relationship with God?

Watch DVD

Prayer Passage: **Colossians 1:9-13**

Winning The Game...

POINTS

- 1 Without peeking...as a group name all of the 10 commandments.
- 2 Have 50% of your group confirm that they read Psalm 119 through the week.
- 3 Get your group members partnered up (not with a spouse!) and exchange contact info. Have each person come up with 3 positive changes they are going to make during the next week. If everyone in the group sent their partner this message at least once, "I'm praying for your positive changes today," then you get all three points!

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?

Playing The Game...

Jim Morrison said, "All games contain the idea of death..."

Play one or two rounds of Spoons with your group. After playing Spoons, divide up into two groups and play a quick game of Charades (5-6 rounds).

- ? **Why do all games have an ending? What is the significance of the end of a game?**
- ? **How did you feel when you were eliminated from Spoons? How about the losing team in Charades? Why are our emotions tied to outcomes?**
- ? **Discuss the differences between how you played the two games and how that process affects the end of the game. What are the different emotions and feelings at the end?**

Building a Biblical Worldview...

The Biblical View of the world is that when people die there is a judgment to face. Those who have received the grace offered in the cross of Christ will have eternal life. Those who do not will die in their sins and suffer everlasting punishment.

Big Story of Scripture: **Genesis 3:1-7; Romans 5:12-19**

What is your response to these statements by the Apostle Paul?

- ? **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. – 2 Timothy 4:7**
- ? **For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. – Philippians 1:21**
- ? **Do you not know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. – 1 Corinthians 9:24**

Can you say these statements about your life?

Watch DVD

Prayer Passage: **Philippians 1:9-11**

Winning The Game...

POINTS

- 1 **As a group, compile a list of other Worldview perspectives on what happens after we die.**
- 2 **Assign one verse from Jude 17-23 (will need seven volunteers) and have them memorize their verse through the week. A group recital of Jude 17-23 gets you these two points.**
- 3 **Send off an 'action pack' for a persecuted family. Find more info at Voice of the Martyrs. www.persecution.com**

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF HISTORY?

Playing The Game...

"Mao is like the game of life, you learn as you go." Now go play a game of Mao!
*Will need at least two decks of cards.

- ? How did you figure out the game? What methods did you use to discern the rules?
- ? Did you have a moment when everything clicked or was it more slow and gradual?
- ? Did you ever just want to give up? Why didn't you?
- ? What different emotions did you feel toward the Mao Master during the course of the game?

Building a Biblical Worldview...

The Biblical view of the world is that history is playing out like a story, or a race where God's purposes are being and will be fulfilled – It is something meaningful and purposeful in which all have a meaningful role.

Big Story of Scripture: **Revelation 7:9-17**

- ? What is your role in the game? How does the Biblical view of the meaning of history help you understand your role?
- ? In several places the Bible states that we can experience the Kingdom of God now. How should this affect the way we live? The way we die?
- ! Being washed in the blood of the Lamb, the end of the game for the Church is eternity in the presence of God. Discuss the awesomeness.

Watch DVD

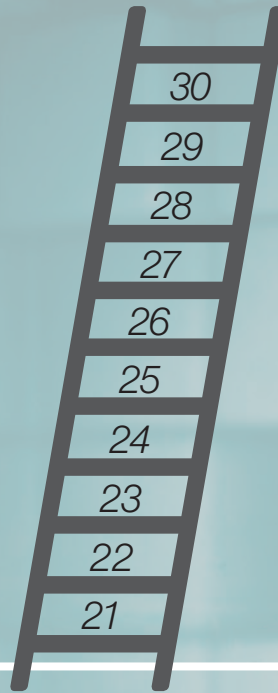
Prayer Passage: **2 Thessalonians 1:11-12**

Winning The Game...

POINTS

- 1 Come up with a unique purpose statement for your group.
- 2 Have 50% of your group confirm that they read **Romans** chapter 8.
- 3 Do an inventory of where your group members serve. If you can get all of your group members on a team or signed up to serve before your next meeting, you get all three points.

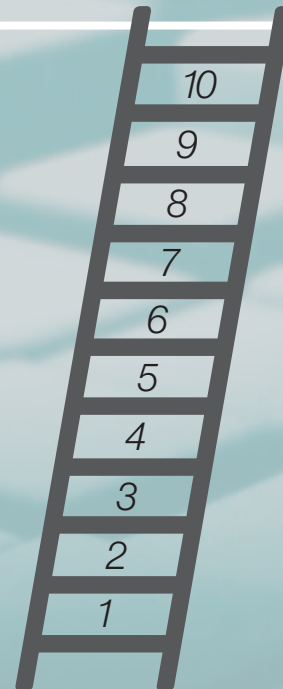
30
POINTS



20
POINTS



10
POINTS



GAME BOARD

For each “**Winning The Game**” point completed, cross off a number and climb to the top.