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## MODULE ONE

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# STUDENTS IN **ACTION**

## BUILDING PRO-LIFE LEADERS

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## WHY WORLDVIEW MATTERS

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[ “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Romans 12:02

The goal of this program is to help you understand the Christian worldview and how it applies to life. By that I mean how your Christian faith shapes your view about the value of human life and the importance of sharing this pro-life perspective. It is an example of how your faith as a Christ follower is *meant* to impact not just how you think about life, but also how you live.

/// ***“Christians often talk about what we are saved **FROM**, things like sin and death and judgment. But what are we saved **FOR**?”***

Far too many in our culture treat Christian faith as an add-on. It is part of their family tradition. Or, they may have made a decision to follow Christ, but it’s not something that guides their life. The Bible is clear that our faith is to be believed and LIVED. How to live? Well, the book *A Practical Guide to Culture* by John Stonestreet and Brett Kunkle includes a list of challenging and powerful questions for each of us to ask every day as we look to live our lives as disciples for Christ:

- o What good can we celebrate, protect, promote, and preserve?
- o What is missing that we can contribute?
- o What evil can we stop?
- o What brokenness can we restore?

Looking deeply at our life and how we live, we’re confronted with this explosive question from their book: ***“Christians often talk about what we are saved **FROM**, things like sin and death and judgment. But what are we saved **FOR**?”***

Being part of the *Students in Action: Building Pro-Life Leaders*, you’ve chosen to be part of saving lives. Look back at those questions. At the end of this course, you are going to be able to answer all of them in a powerful way for Christ.

We'll start with a critical foundational phrase followers of Christ must embrace: the imago Dei. That's Latin for the "image of God". All human beings are made in the image of God. How do we know this? Well, very quickly in Genesis, we see God creating man and woman.

**[** *"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." Genesis 1:27*

Man and woman are to rule over the rest of creation, as good stewards. As we read in Psalm 8:05, *"Yet You have made him a little lower than God, and You crown him with glory and majesty!"* We have a special relationship with God, our Creator.

In this study we won't delve into the "hows" of creation. Our focus is that humanity is not only made in God's image, but we are in a special relationship with God. We are to look at **all** people as fellow image bearers of God.

Now, there are plenty of examples when God's followers have NOT lived by this core belief. Sin is why we have not lived up to this core belief. One repercussion of the fall, sin, is that since the very beginning people have abused power and treated their fellow men and women as anything but fellow image bearers. We only have to see the horrible stain of slavery in this country to see that dehumanization carried out, sometimes by those citing Scripture.

As we see in the Old Testament, God's chosen people continually sinned against Him. They treated others unfairly. They worshiped idols. They didn't love Him. Despite all that, God remained faithful. His plan was to bring Christ into the world to save it. He promised that and, of course, He fulfilled His promise.

Christ came without sin into this world to save you and me. He, the sinless One, was crucified with our sins so that we can be righteous before God. Is THAT not love? Is that not proof of how special we—all of humanity—are to God?

Later in this program you will learn some ways to explain and defend the faith as it relates to the pro-life issue. That's what is called apologetics. First I want you to understand our role as God's image bearers and how that ties into one of the most contentious issues of the day: Abortion.

It's really easy to take for granted the fact that we are here right now. It's actually an amazingly complex process by which we very special beings are created. One of the unique aspects of humans is our ability to reason and think logically. So, we will look at how to step back and see how our faith makes sense of everything around us. But first, let's take a look at how you and I got here.

[Video: Animation of creation in utero](#)

What you just saw is factual—it is the truth. It is an animation of the development of a human being from the time an egg is fertilized until birth. What this means to you depends on your worldview. By that I mean everyone who has the ability to reason, to think about things, will look at a child in the womb in unique ways depending on what they believe about people and life.

Think of it this way: Your worldview is like a pair of glasses. The lens through which you see and make sense of the world. Your beliefs form your worldview. Here's a more formal definition from Dr. George Barna, one of the nation's experts on faith and culture:

***“A worldview is something that everybody has. Most people don’t even realize it, but essentially it’s just the decision-making filter that we use. It’s the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual filter that helps us to understand and interpret and respond to every reality that we experience.”***

So, let's look at what we just saw through the lenses of competing worldviews. If you believe that humans are here as a result of random chance after millions of years of macro evolution, with no creator or God, it will frame how you view life. Since according to this worldview there is no God, YOU determine right, wrong and the best way to live. Ultimately, you are in charge of the focus of your life.

If the only responsibility is for you to do what you believe is best for you, then what you saw represents an exciting opportunity to have a child. Or, a burden of having a child. Or, at the very beginning, unrecognizable cells with no value that can be treated any way that you think is best for you. That's a worldview determining how to look at a pregnancy.

If you believe that man and woman are created from creator God, in God's image, then what we saw represented in that video is one more image bearer of God with ultimate value.

So, let's dive a little deeper to look at worldviews. We've mentioned faith. Christianity is a religion or belief system. It's also a worldview, based on the authority of Scripture. Those beliefs that align with God's revelation to us through Scripture form the lens through which we look and make sense of the world. We can spend hours on the philosophies of worldviews, but I've found that to determine someone's worldview is helpful to see how they answer these four big questions. It's also a critical element when it comes to understanding more about life and the very big topic of abortion.

#### **THE FOUR BIG QUESTIONS:**


- ***How did we get here?***
- ***What's wrong with the world?***
- ***How do we fix it?***
- ***What's our purpose in life?***

Take a minute and slowly think through and answer each question. Those answers are providing the foundation for understanding life. Using the lens of your worldview determines how you view every issue that you will ever face!

There are lots of worldviews. For the sake of this exercise, we'll compare two. One is Christianity. Remember, it's a faith or religion, but also a worldview. The other is secular humanism. This is a worldview that permeates so much of our culture today. Here is a definition of secular humanism: *It embraces reason and personal experience while rejecting faith in God as the basis of morality and ethics.* In other words, the material world is all that exists.

**Here is how those with each of the worldviews answers the Four Big Questions:**

<b><u>SECULAR HUMANISM</u></b>	<b><u>CHRISTIANITY</u></b>
<b>How did we get here?</b> <i>Random chance/macro evolution</i>	<i>Created by God in His image</i>
<b>What's wrong with the world?</b> <i>Unjust Social Structures (policies, bigotry, economic systems)</i>	<i>Sin</i>
<b>How do we fix it?</b> <i>Build Just Social Structures (policies, programs, laws)</i>	<i>Christ-based answers</i>
<b>What's our purpose in life?</b> <i>Do what you think best, soon die</i>	<i>Do all things for the glory of God</i>


***“Christian worldview is a biblically grounded set of beliefs about all of life, from work, recreation, and finances to God, life after death, and morality.”***  
**- J.P. Moreland/Theologian and Philosopher**

How we THINK as Christians is directly related to how we ACT as Christians. So, as we answer these Four Big Questions, we see life as coming from God. He was the creator. An interesting note as you think about “How we got here?”: It was about 100 years ago that scientists confirmed that the universe began with a “Big Bang”. This was horrible news to the secular humanists because instead of a universe always being here, there was a beginning. Well, if you have a beginning, you must have a beginner. (Or, if you have a Big Bang, you must have a Big Banger!) That fits the Christian worldview perfectly: God as the Creator.

In a similar fashion, those who follow Christ believe in sin, a separation from God. It is the heart of what's wrong. If you don't believe in God, there can be no sin. So, you look around for programs

or policies that just aren't working. Similarly, that's the answer when you look at how to fix what's wrong with the world. Is it Jesus Christ, or a *better* program or policy? Finally, of course, is the quest for purpose. Are we called to something bigger, or simply here to live out our lives, then be gone?



***A disciple: “Someone who lives like Jesus because they think like Jesus.”***

**- Dr. George Barna**

This is not an exhaustive look at philosophy and worldviews. So, you could be left with the idea that, for example, the Christian answer for the problems is just to believe. Well, as we've already seen, our faith is to lead to action; a new life, fulfilling Christ's call. So, does this mean Christians aren't in favor of programs to help people? Not at all—that question is a way to see what a person thinks is the *root problem* of any evil. For the Christian, Christ is at the center of all we do, including how we help solve the most pressing problems. Here's one perfect example: Who started hospitals? Was it secular humanists? No, in the fourth century, Christians realized there were those who didn't know how to help themselves or family members to get well. They formed the first hospitals to more efficiently heal those in their communities. This came from their belief that all men and women were made in God's image. Therefore, as followers of Christ, they had an obligation to do what is best.

At the heart of the abortion debate: The value of human life. Now, you will meet a lot of very nice secular humanists! In fact, you may know some very moral secular humanists. They don't believe in God. Rather than God creating man, they believe man created gods to worship. They believe only what the senses “tell” them. So here's the big question to these moral secular humanists: On what do you base your morality? Why do you treat people with respect? Why do you not steal my car? Why do you believe it's wrong to discriminate against people of a different race? Why don't you think it's OK to push an elderly lady in front of a bus?

She'll say, “Well, that's obvious. It's not RIGHT.” The thing is, you have to ask, “Who says?” Is morality simply someone's opinion, or is it based on foundational beliefs? So a worldview really matters. It's the foundation of our individual, and cultural, beliefs. Do you see that how we view the value of the unborn child is based upon how we view humanity? Is that unborn child made in the image of God, or is she simply a clump of cells?

The Christian worldview, determined by faith built upon the Scriptures with Christ at the center, should drive all followers of Christ when it comes to how we live. We don't steal what isn't ours. We don't treat anyone as if they are less of a human. We don't ignore the humanity of an unborn child because he doesn't yet look like one of us.

### **KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION QUESTION**

**How you view and make sense of life is determined by your worldview.  
Explain how looking at the homeless problem from the Christian worldview lens would determine the best way to help.**