

Video of Monty Hall and Let's Make a Deal

Let's Make a Deal was one of my favorite shows growing up. I always thought it would be fun to dress up, fill a bag with things Monty is looking for and most importantly to choose what's behind the curtain that the lovely Carol Merrill was standing next to.

I bet you were like me; you could pick the right curtain to win a car or know to avoid the box and keep the money because behind the box was a lama! Well, ok, occasionally I made a bad choice and would end up with a year's supply of Spam.

Life is full of choices. Some are simple, some are more difficult. Some lead to a new car while others leave you wondering what to do with 12 bags of cow manure.

The choices we have seem to be expanding exponentially. I remember when the dial on the TV had numbers like 2-13; now we have numbers into the hundreds and we're still saying, 'There's nothing to watch on TV!'

We live a world of exploding choices! Listen to this:

- In 2010, the average American supermarket carried 48,750 items, more than five times the number of items in 1975.
- Britain's multinational superstore Tesco stocks 91 different shampoos, 93 varieties of toothpaste, and 115 household cleaners.
- Tropicana turns out more than twenty varieties of freshly pulped juice.
- Wal-Mart and other "big box" retailers provide a smorgasbord of over 100,000 different types of consumer goods.
- Netflix allows access to over 100,000 DVD's and Amazon offers over 24 million book titles.

While some of these choices have improved our lives, researchers also argue that the availability of too many choices causes anxiety, stress, and overload. Matt Woodley, Managing Editor, PreachingToday.com; sources: "The Tyranny of Choice," The Economist (12-16-10); Sheena Iyengar, The Art of Choosing (Twelve, 2011)

Making choices between what's behind the curtain or what's in the box sitting in front of you; all the while knowing you are just a contestant on a game show is easy. After all what difference does it make if you choose a new car or a bale of hay; it's just a game.

But our choices in the game of life are crucial, life-changing, and sometimes those choices aren't just about you; they can affect others.

So how do you make the right choice? How do we learn to discern the outcome before we take the first step? How do we live in this world of ever expanding choices without making the wrong choice?

The answer begins by understanding that everyone makes decisions based on their worldview. Look at your neighbor and ask them, 'What's your worldview?'

Chances are pretty good that you are looking at each other with puzzled looks on your face. You are probably asking, 'What's a worldview?'

The truth is most people never think about their worldview, let alone know how to articulate a worldview; but just because you can't articulate it or know what your worldview is doesn't mean that you don't have one. Everyone has a worldview and it's your worldview that influences the choices that you make in life.

Let me just help you get an idea what your worldview is. Your worldview governs *how* you see things; what you *do*; what you *say*; and how you *live*.

A worldview is the framework from which we view reality and make sense of life and the world.

Your personal worldview is a combination of all you believe to be true, and what you believe becomes the driving force behind every emotion, decision and action. Therefore, it affects your response to every area of life: from philosophy to science, theology and anthropology to economics, law, politics, art and social order — everything.

Let me give you a few examples:

If you believe in God, that God has revealed himself in the Bible and that the Bible is our standard for how to live; then your daily choices should be driven by a biblical worldview.

If you don't believe in God, that we exist as a result of random chance and that there is no objective standard from which to judge right and wrong; then your choices are driven by a selfish worldview.

Do you get the idea? Your worldview governs how you see things; what you do; what you say; and how you live. Your worldview influences the choices that you make in life. [now ask your neighbor about your worldview]

What I would like to challenge you to consider today is 'What is your worldview really?' You see, I think many of us here would consider that we have a biblical worldview. But if we asked the people who live with us, who work alongside of us and the people who know us best; what would their assessment of our choices- how we see things, what we do, what we say and how we live- what would they say our worldview really is?

I want to take a brief look at two passages of scripture this morning and challenge you to go home and think through this idea of what is my worldview. And at the end of the message I'll give you a way that you can assess your worldview this week.

The first passage takes us to the wisdom of Solomon in Proverbs. In the prologue of Proverbs, chapter 1 verses 2-7; the intent of the Proverbs is laid out. The book of Proverbs is all about 'gaining wisdom and instruction;' 'receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair.' Solomon intends the Proverbs to be instrumental in helping us to develop a godly, biblical worldview so that our choices lead to pleasant outcomes.

Throughout Proverbs, Solomon contrasts two worldviews; one represented by the adulteress luring the simple to make foolish choices that lead to destruction and the other worldview represented by wisdom which leads to life-giving choices.

Now my question is simple; which path are you following when you are making decisions? Are you allowing yourself to be lured by the adulteress into selfish choices that lead to destruction; or are you heading the words of wisdom?

Listen to wisdom which is God's voice in Proverbs 8:10-11

Choose my instruction instead of silver,
knowledge rather than choice gold,
for wisdom is more precious than rubies,
and nothing you desire can compare with her.

You see, the wisdom of God, what we find in Proverbs and throughout the Bible, provides us knowledge and wisdom to make choices that lead to greater worth than gold and rubies.

Often people are asking me how to make a choice that comes up in their life. My insight is often as simple as 'What does God have to say about it?' You see, the wisdom of God can help us to make godly choices- choices that lead us away from destruction.

But you will not know that answer unless you are reading the Bible on a regular basis. You see the knowledge that we put into our hearts and minds, the wisdom that we seek and take into our lives; will determine our worldview and in turn the choices that we make.

That leads me to the second scripture I wanted to look at briefly. Colossians 2:8

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

There is a battle going on around you all the time to influence your worldview which influences your choices.

Do you remember how Monty Hall would talk to a person as they were mulling over the choice of the money in his hand or the box Carol Merrill was standing next to? (\$100, \$200, \$300, \$500)

People were often distracted by the dollars waving under their noses. But the same thing happens to us every day. We want to make choices that are in keeping with the biblical worldview Jesus Christ has taught us to follow; but then the hollow and deceptive philosophies of the world steal our attention. The shiny, temporary and selfish lead us to choices that are the opposite of godly wisdom.

It is easy to be taken captive by other worldviews unless we are regularly filling our minds with the wisdom of God's word.

[Parents, I want to drive something home as I close today. Kids are forming their worldview from the earliest days of their life right up and through adolescence into their 20's. And who do you think is the number one influencer on the worldview that your child is developing? (That's right, it is you the parent.)

Now let me ask you a question, "If you want your child to develop a biblical worldview; ask yourself what you are teaching your child?" Every choice you make as a parent influences your child's worldview.

So when your child sees you choose to read your Bible and pray that is going to make an impact on his/her worldview.

When your child sees you serving others in the community; they will see the world doesn't revolve around them.

When your child sees you make a commitment to be a part of a group of disciples; they will understand the importance of belonging to a group.

When your child sees you place other things over and above your commitment to Jesus Christ and the church; don't ask why they don't want to come to church.]

I said earlier that I want to challenge you to examine your worldview and see if it is what you think it is or if in some way you've been taken captive by the human traditions of this world. So how can you do that?

Let me offer you a few ideas:

1. Ask several wise and discerning people around you to tell you what they see in your choices. Do they see you making choices based on godly wisdom or what feels right at the time?
2. Look at your choices. We've said before that 2 ways to see what you value begin with your bank account and your calendar. What do those 2 things about your worldview?
3. Re-examine what Jesus says about how we live and the choices we make. The simplest way to do that is to open your Bible to Matthew the first book of the New Testament. Read matthew chapters 5-7, that is the Sermon on the Mount. Many people believe that this is the most concise definition of Jesus worldview. As disciples of Jesus, if we can get these three chapters right, then we are well on our way to a biblical worldview.

The choices you are going to make in your life will be greatly influenced by your worldview. With a proper biblical context you will be able to make choices that will strengthen your faith.

As you think about your worldview this week, I want to challenge you to get involved in the upcoming **What On Earth Am I Here For** series. This series is going to help you immeasurably in forming and informing your worldview. The weekly messages, the daily readings and especially participating in one of the book discussion groups will help you to examine and discuss the influences on your worldview. And those groups are a wonderful place to talk-out and work-out your worldview. So look around, talk to your friends and make the choice to get

together in a book discussion group. If you have questions about how to go about that contact Adam or note it on your Response Card.

So to recap what you need to do when you leave here... [top of page]

And be sure to take part in the upcoming series, **What On Earth Am I Here For?**

Now let me pray with you...