



Hidden Worldviews: Eight Cultural Stories That Shape Our Lives

By Steve Wilkens, Mark L. Sanford

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Why do we buy what we buy, vote the way we vote, eat what we eat and say what we say? Why do we have the friends we have, and work and play as we do? It's our choice? Yes, but there are forces, often unseen, that shape every decision we make and every action we take. These hidden, life-shaping values and ideas are not promoted through organized religions or rival philosophies but fostered by cultural habits, lifestyles and the institutional structures of society. Steve Wilkens and Mark Sanford shine a spotlight on the profound challenges to Christianity and faithful Christian living that come from worldviews that comprise the cultural soup we swim in. The authors show how to detect the individualism, consumerism, nationalism, moral relativism, scientific naturalism, New Age thinking, postmodern tribalism and salvation as therapy that fly under our radar. Building on the work of worldview thinkers like James Sire, this book helps those committed to the gospel story recognize those rival cultural stories that compete for our hearts and minds.

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Editorial Review

Review

"*Hidden Worldviews* is a well-written and helpful book. Preachers will find a wealth of information that will aid them in identifying and understanding the worldviews of the people sitting in their pews on Sunday mornings. The book will also give insight into how these 'hidden' worldviews can be confronted with the gospel of Christ." (Joseph R. Buchanan, *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society*, March 2011)

"A timely call for the integration of confessional beliefs and values with actions makes this book well worth the read." (Ewen Butler, *Religious Studies Review*, December 2010)

"Wilkens and Sanford briefly yet comprehensively explain each worldview's core beliefs. These chapters can be useful as discussion starters about core biblical beliefs and as a tool to learn to critique cultural values." (Rachael Eggebeen, *Youth Worker Journal*, (www.youthworkerjournal.com), January/February 2010)

"It is wise occasionally to step back and examine the worldviews on offer around us. Especially the ones that tend to quietly stay in the background, mostly out of sight, hardly ever attracting notice. That is what Steve Wilkens and Mark Sanford have done in *Hidden Worldviews*." (Denis Haack, *Critique*, Issue 5, 2009)

"By explaining and exposing 'isms' like consumerism, relativism, nationalism, and post-modern tribalism, Wilkens and Sanford deftly demonstrate how we too often live according to 'cultural stories' that compete with the gospel." (Trevin Wax, *Christianity Today*, May 2010)

"Within our worldviews are heart-orienting, mind-structuring commitments that govern each person's life. Often we pay so little attention to these commitments that they lie hidden from us. Some of these commitments clash with and corrupt our ability to live a faithful life for Christ. Wilkens and Sanford identify and unmask eight of these, showing how they affect our commitment to Christ. This work will serve as an excellent complement to my own *The Universe Next Door*." (James W. Sire, author with Carl Peraino of *Deepest Differences*)

"Like undetected germs that make us sick, there are also a variety of worldview stories that are infecting the thought and lifestyles of Christians today, yet often without their awareness. It is essentially a form of 'heart' disease caused by several lived perspectives to which the Christian community is surreptitiously but effectively exposed in the contagion of the surrounding culture. Wilkens and Sanford, as if they were physicians, analyze these 'hidden' worldviews that are causing so much affliction, and offer the remedy of a robust Christian one. This book is good medicine for a serious illness that is plaguing many in the church today." (David Naugle, author of *Worldview: The History of a Concept*, and professor of philosophy, Dallas Baptist University)

"This is an unusual book in two regards that commend it for the beginner in worldview thinking. First, it is not about theistic apologetics in the traditional sense, nor about worldviews philosophically developed, but about worldviews as ways of experiencing life. Eight hidden worldviews have infiltrated contemporary culture, reshaping human experience and our perceptions of life's purpose. The authors uncover the tacit assumptions, and take stock of the actual proposals in the light of insights from a variety of disciplines. They conclude by inviting the reader to develop a theistic worldview that integrates every aspect of life into a consistent whole, under the guidance of the Wesleyan quadrilateral (this is the book's second unusual

regard): Scripture, tradition, reason and experience." (Arthur F. Holmes, Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, Wheaton College)

About the Author

Steve Wilkens (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) is professor of philosophy and ethics at Azusa Pacific University. His books include *Hidden Worldviews*, *Faith and Reason: Three Views*, *Christianity & Western Thought* (volumes 2 and 3) and *Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics*. He has also taught as an adjunct faculty member at Mount San Antonio College, Glendale Community College, Fuller Theological Seminary and Azusa Pacific University's C. P. Haggard Graduate School of Theology.

Mark L. Sanford (M.Div., Nazarene Theological Seminary) is instructor in practical theology and facilitator of discipleship groups at Azusa Pacific University in Azusa, California. He previously served as relationship ministries pastor at Pasadena Church of the Nazarene, chaplain of Eastern Nazarene College and singles pastor at First Church of the Nazarene in Pasadena, CA.

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