

# Insights to help you . . .

October 2008

## An African Christian Worldview ~

*"See to it that no one*

*takes you captive  
through hollow and  
deceptive philosophy  
which depends on  
human tradition and  
the basic principles  
of the world*

*rather than on Christ."*

- Colossians 2:8 [NIV]

An important outcome of African theological approaches is that they make reference to the need of developing a coherent Christian understanding and interpretation of Christianity and the Holy Scriptures in Africa. Reformed philosophers have called for the development of a comprehensive "Christian worldview" for Africa.

The Christian worldview approach seeks to emphasize a Christian way of seeing, understanding, interpreting and approaching the totality of human life from the perspective of Christian history and Biblical principles and values. It is an attempt at developing a definite understanding of what Christianity and the Bible says and teaches about all human activity and endeavours in life. In short, it is relating the Christian faith and life to real life situations and to all human learning and art. This faith should be Biblically grounded and rooted. Christian faith is dynamic and not just a depository of propositional truths. The contingencies of human life do challenge the Christian faith, which can be deepened or weakened. The Holy Scriptures are the constant sources from which a Christian worldview can be developed and formulated. A Christian faith can also be formed, strengthened, renewed, motivated and challenged. Christian faith and worldview must be rooted and grounded in the Holy Scriptures, although this process does come under cultural influences in most cases.

We understand our world and life in general from the perspectives of our worldview and standpoint. We see, understand, interpret and apply things through the eye-glasses of our worldview. In Christianity, the Holy Scriptures shape, mould and condition our Christian worldview. Our cultures and religions also receive their light and guidance from the Holy Scriptures. African religions, traditions and cultures become the indigenous straw with which to develop and formulate a Christian worldview under the guiding light of the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit. An African Christian worldview can only be credible and authentic if done under the authority of the Holy Scriptures and the guiding light of the Holy Spirit. This method and process should be culturally well informed. The Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit and the historical experience of the church, is the "measure" of any theology or worldview produced in Africa.

Christianity in Africa has "come of age," it is no longer foreign, but indeed an African religion. However, for Christianity to be authentic in Africa, there are many questions, regarding its Biblical foundations, relevance and effectiveness in the midst of so many socio-cultural-political problems facing Africa. The determining factor for Christianity and its continued and increased influence upon the continent of Africa depends very much upon its ability to address adequately and effectively the African situation. The challenge for Christianity in Africa in the light of so many crises: economic, political, ethnic, racial, tribal, social, cultural, religious and educational; is its relevance and ability to address them adequately. The task requires that we develop a comprehensive Christian worldview...a holistic theology that deals with all areas of life.

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J. Paul Landrey  
International Director  
**TOPIC (Trainers of Pastors  
International Coalition), Inc.**  
P. O. Box 965  
Elkhorn, NE 68022 USA  
Website: [www.topic.us](http://www.topic.us)  
Email: [topic@topic.us](mailto:topic@topic.us)