

DML 811: Dr. Ron Reimer

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Family Voyage

**Part A:**

- One thing I liked, loved, and enjoyed about this family voyage project was having recollections of all the trips to Puerto Rico when I was a child and into the adult stage and they were bonding, connecting, sharing memories with the younger and older cousins which cultivated the beautiful family bonds.
- I experienced some emotional distress and learned about my elder cousin's anxiety and depression as a result of the dislike of some family members towards one another.

From a Christian perspective, to know what God says plays an important role in the life of an individual. How they interpret this has motivated them to make decisions that affected their past and that will have consequences in the future. Their biblical interpretation is associated with their way of thinking and acting; these activities are determined by how they perceive God, but also how they see themselves before God. Throughout history, misunderstandings, agreements, and decisions have been held based on ideas and opinions well or misinterpreted. Those interpretations have a foundation pre-established by the worldview, the culture, and the experience of the person, which influence human life.

Our vision of life is a historical, complex, and structured fact and relatively congruent with ideological systems. Our worldview provides a sense of purpose and meaning that allows us to interpret the problems of life. The dynamic change of the worldview has affected not only humans' understanding but also their way of living, hence, it has affected our perceptions of the world and our actions in the world, thus, the world has changed to the extent that the way of questioning what happens in nature has also changed. So, the current worldview is a result of humans' dynamic process of interaction with their social, cultural, spiritual, religious and ecological environment. Only in that context can one understand the differences among the peoples of whatever region in the world. The perceptions of the world and reality may differ greatly among peoples and cultures from their presuppositions of what is important and true. In addition,

those differences may be passed on, by way of explanation, because the shape of things is in the world including its theories of disease, death, and misfortunes and how afflictions and problems may be resolved. Worldview in its individual development has a process; it could be said that it is a human training open to all the weaknesses of human subjectivity; through that process they appropriate their worldview in stages and phases that correspond to the stages of development in their lives and function as truth for their supporters. In many cases they believe that their way of seeing the world is the only way possible to understand the world. However, people's willingness to understand the worldview must be open. In reality, the worldview becomes an obstacle, it hinders us from being truly open to God 's revelation. Some peoples have their cultural worldview well-articulated with their religious one. Consequently, their interpretation can be altered by the interference of their worldview paradigms. As such, it becomes weak, inconsistent, or unable to relate various beliefs or practices. Another counterproductive element is the struggle for the supremacy of some worldview such as the religious system including fewer formal systems such as a particular culture or personal system. In some cases, the Word of God may serve to describe the content of a person's worldview, which is what a person teaches, or it is what a person holds to be true as a member of a certain worldview. But this is not interpretation but adaptation of the Word of God to their worldview.

Which in my opinion is what I learned from a few family members is doing too much as follows?

The simple definition of culture includes beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a society in a place or time, this society has its own beliefs, way of life, of thinking, behaving, or working. Culture is a complex whole whose members develop abilities and habits that are passed on from one generation to another. These approaches denote a relationship between culture and worldview.

Culture and worldview are the basis for the elaboration of interpretation. The culture is influenced by the worldview which is a fundamental element in the construction of cultural life, therefore the union between worldview and culture determines, to a certain extent, the thought and behavior of the members of that society; it can be said that cultures offer their members a set of interpretations that they then use as filters to make sense of messages and experiences. Culture is a diffuse set of basic assumptions and

values, life orientations, beliefs, policies, procedures, and conventions that influence the behavior of each member and their interpretations.

Personal experience is a set of knowledge or skills acquired by observation, participation, or experience of an event from life, it is a knowledge that is elaborated collectively but that is valued individually.

Usually, personal experience allows the individual to reaffirm or reject personal or social beliefs or paradigms, establishing changes in thought or behavior, which at the same time will lead him/her to reevaluate our culture and worldview of life and above all allow him to interpret, not only the events but every event in his environment.

The human being is influenced (by some objective cases, and others subjective) by what scientists have called, worldview and culture. However, using only these elements as facilitators of the interpretation of the Scriptures would result in estrangement and misinterpretations of the Word of God. It is necessary that the one who is going to interpret the Word of God knows how to use the Word of Truth well (2 Timothy 2:15)!

God is the One who reveals His will, even among cultural contexts with ideas of different worldviews and He is the one who reveals its meaning to those who seek Him with an open heart in order to be instructed by His Holy Spirit.

People who want to know the Will of God and research the Scriptures must abandon all preconceptions, prejudices of any nature that they may have inherited. In addition, only those who are guided by the Holy Spirit of God understand the truth of the Word of God. Without the direction of the Holy Spirit, we will be constantly exposed to twisting the Scriptures or interpreting them wrongly.

In many cases people use the Bible as an excuse to support their ideas, and not those of God. Those preconceived ideas prevent the mind from receiving the truth.

Human reasoning and the imaginations of the human heart are undermining the inspiration of God's word, and what should be taken for granted is surrounded by a cloud of mysticism.

Only God, who revealed His Word can help us understand and interpret the Word of God properly, but purely human foundations can inevitably bring bad conclusions, therefore, bad decisions. The Scriptures do not need to be read in the tarnished light of human tradition or speculation.

It is an accepted truth that a person's interrelationship with his social environment is the basic channel to acquire and share ideas, thoughts, habits, customs, beliefs, etc. It can also be assumed that if a person has a permanent interrelationship with God they can receive the thoughts, ideas, and ways of life that God desires for the individual. We have the biblical example of Enoch who faithfully walked with God and pleased Him. This biblical statement implies that Enoch had a close relationship with God, therefore his way of seeing the world, his culture, and his way of interpreting what God wanted was in accordance with divine thoughts. His personal and close relationship with God caused significant and permanent changes. Enoch lived in a corrupt era, when moral contamination boiled around him; but he educated his mind for devotion, to love purity. His conversation referred to heavenly things. Evidently, it is not the only case, we also have the prophet Elijah's. They were different, because they sought divine ideals, because they learned to live according to God 's standards, according to God 's worldview, according to God's culture. Reaching the measure and stature of Christ implies thinking as He thought, having the intentions He had, living as He lived because he lived according to the will of God. Human beings cannot be taken with God if they do not reach the standard of living according to the divine norms implicit in His word.

The world view of God is not in the natural man. God's way of thinking is discerned from God's perspective. **God's thoughts, His way of seeing the world, and His culture transcend human ways stained with sin.** In the world there are only two different ways of seeing the world, culture, and interpretation, that is, the one that is directed by God and the one that is directed by the human being. In conclusion, worldview, culture, and personal experience, from the perspective of social science has an influence on any act of life including the interpretation of the Scriptures.

Is it important to know an ethnic group's and/or individual's worldview, culture and personal experience for therapeutic assistance and clinical practice? Yes, indeed, absolutely! It is imperative!

However, from the biblical perspective that does not ignore culture or the worldview, it invites man to approach God who revealed his Word and is the same one who can give human beings the ability to understand and interpret the Scriptures and vicissitudes of life.

As man approaches God sincerely by searching the Word of God, he will come into contact with the worldview and culture of God. His personal experience with God will help him interpret the Scriptures, not with his human criteria, but with the criteria that God himself reveals in his Word.

### **Part B:**

**I was surprised and shocked to also learn that some family members in Puerto Rico have been emotionally detached from our family and their children learned to repress their own emotions.** It was interesting to me to learn this through the interviews and had the opportunity to also evaluate and assess as a professional counselor. I found out that such family members have an unhealthy relationship with their children and are considered toxic or dysfunctional for a number of reasons. These patterns in such families include **impaired communication, a lack of closeness, excessive criticism, lack of empathy, powerlessness struggles, and excessive expectations. How some family members felt emotionally distant from their parents.** When parents are not able to express their emotions, empathy awareness towards their children creates a world of a challenging place. The thought of being hugged or hugging others will make them uncomfortable. I have learned an abundance of new information from my family that intertwines with my current work. Out of all of these interviews with my maternal family members that I have partaken, I was most engaged in learning about the secrets that have been such a hush hush. Everyone disclosed theirs in a unique way and it was fun interacting in the groups with my family. I found it formative, and the opportunity definitely molded my character, and even transformed me to a more comfortable position. I have actually built more strength in conversing more openly. I have gained a passion for competence in producing magnificent and amazing

works in the mental health field as a professional counselor and continue to move forward to fully exploring it. I continue to pray fervently to love and be in a jovial mood in the God of my salvation! The Sovereign Lord is my strength through the salvation of Jesus Christ. I pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and encounter the love of God now, the rest of this graduate year and always. Evaluating the course of my life drove me to reflect on my reason for being, resulting in a more personal healing and simply magnificent identification with identifying growth. I am pursuing and persisting in what God intends for me to do. Graduate school has been phenomenal this semester. Many times, I questioned myself. What am I doing? Am I in the right place? I felt that this rigorous program was burning me out at one point. The reality of it all is that I am an extension of continual education. As I developed learning about myself and aligning my personal interest and investing in this path as a great opportunity, it has been enriching and I will continue to stay open minded.

Academia is competitive but is more difficult when I compare myself to some of my family members, and not assessing my personal growth in a more meaningful way. Every family member has different dilemmas, and we all learn from each other. I have learned to be fair to myself of where I was in the past and where I am going ahead with my career. I can do well. Everyone has a timeline, and we all move at our own pace. It is all a big process and with all the information I have my own autonomy and social support. Is a blessing to learn from other family members. I have been very blessed that I have had a Heavenly Father, wonderful parents, sister, and a magnificent brother whom I love so much. Life does not stop regardless of the challenges one must encounter or endure. It is all about balancing, which is incredibly important for success and for my own sanity. I found a great time during my interviews with my aunt's cousins and to reflect on what has happened in this course and progress interacting and engaging with my family and God. I uncovered some family secrets that have left me totally flabbergasted. Previous generations in my family tended to be more discreet. I learned of many secrets that were hidden in the past and never spoken about. In our Hispanic family, my grandfathers were the

head of the family, and my grandmothers were responsible for the home. However, my grandmothers were really the ones to be the authoritative handled all financial responsibilities and life issues. Religion played an important role with all grandparents and raised their children in the love and admonition of the Lord. Mothers play an important role and are the heart of the family. It is with great pleasure to immerse myself in these interviews. I was in touch with my identity. Thereby not feeling uncomfortable with any of the topics. It was heartfelt. There were no triggers that made me feel uneasy. This was a beautiful experience, and I felt solace at the very sight of it. This experience uplifted me and made me smile, thinking about my parents. Privilege and grace adorn many facets. The fact that I was diagnosed with cancer three times and survived it by the grace of God transcended me. Fortunately, my parents were loving and created a foundation and avenue for me to grow on. Having parents of this quality taught me how to respect others regardless of race, color, and religion. As my education evolves, I have learned how grace can dismantle injustice of all forms of privilege. As a cultural individual and past life experiences have enabled me to identify characteristics with respect. Competencies throughout my childhood and adult taught me not to be prejudiced and see each person for who they are. This is a gift. This has caused me to delve into my personal beliefs, which I use each day while caring for the human spirit. For example, my grandchildren are interracial. We practice as a family to love each other unconditionally. This transcends our hearts and souls as they are together regardless of race, color, or creed. First and foremost, I am extraordinarily diversified and fully aware of my cultural diversity because I respect all various cultures due to exposure to multiple groups. I am culturally diverse, and my roots and historical awareness are combined with an Afrocentric aspect. I like to wear dashiki shirts, cornrows, and Afrocentric clothing. I am part of the African diaspora and Hispanic heritage. I have lived among a variety of cultures. I adhere to all aspects of the Afrocentric and Latina cultures and fully combine them. I am proud of myself and what I can offer to society. My mother and I came to the United States from Puerto Rico when I were a month old to reunite with my father, who was waiting for

us in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It played a significant role in our lives, my father was in the military, and my mother was a very substantial woman. She embraced her culture in terms of the type of food she cooked, the behavior, and the whole rhythm, and that's how she gives the resemblances of who she is. My father was diversified and very sophisticated and more academically involved than my mother, and much more worldly because he had traveled and was in the service. My parents taught us to respect all various cultures and we were exposed to multiple groups. Nonetheless, my mother was true to form as a Latina with a religious aspect keeping a code of ethics that had to do with being a good and decent woman. That was one reason she made me get married quickly when I was eighteen because she learned that I was sexually active with my first boyfriend. The whole idea of my innocence was no longer in tack because her ideology lent itself back to the old ways in terms of saying this is the way it is supposed to be. My father traveled and was more outgoing diplomatically and interacted in that sense of loyalty and responsibility. My mother is more family-oriented to a great degree and more intact with that and of a quiet nature she espouses traditional marital viewpoints in terms of sexual activity. This has been a generational system influenced by religious and ethnic beliefs.

My religious affiliation is who I am because everything I do is in the name of the word and my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I do not ever limit God in any situation. Everything I do is with the introspection that it is within goodness. I am very much involved and conscious of it being on the right hand and right side in God's blessings. I am very prayerful and mindful of how I treat others. In 1985 I enrolled in a Bible class called Power for Abundant Living. This particular class changed my life dramatically, and it has been a beautiful experience and transformation. I learned to establish a beautiful relationship with my almighty God and Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I am obedient, loyal, joyous, and thankful to God.

What has impacted me personally and professionally is the fact that there is another group of family members that feel uncomfortable around them. But they commit themselves to every person and every family, acknowledging that every family is unique and has a singular project. I evaluate it as a way of

independence. Because in psychotherapy, it is a process called interpersonal and individuation which is healthy. I see it as one side being nervous and feeling less confident around those relatives. It's a sense of losing confidence and control.

In addition, they have a strategic plan that promotes a policy of support to families from a standpoint centered on the family.

Their holistic view of the family has also impacted me and their purpose in meeting the diverse exigencies and the how of providing those supports.

### **Part C:**

- I discovered that the family deficits are lack of spirituality, self-control, humility, anger and pride the cause of any sinner. Pride for the sake of being proud there is no temperance, be angry and do not sin. They become **Puma's, Jaguars, and Cougars** they will become combative. Now I can say I know my keenness very well. The cause of

The positive note is that regardless of all their deficits and defects, I like to say something very positive: they are all very loving, understanding, united and they overcome their differences and come together again. Staying together united tidy neet is their main goal.

I was impacted when the family members that I had the opportunity to interview wanted me to teach them about the resurrection, because it was before Easter.

What do you think is the most critical Doctrine in Christianity? / What is the most fundamental and essential belief for the Christian faith?

I trust your answer will be: the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In my paper I will set out to answer the question: How do we know that Christ's Resurrection is true and why is that important? My main sources will be the Bible and the corresponding chapter 16 in Grudem.

Following, we will see the biblical evidence for its authenticity, how it is the foundation and Cornerstone of the Christian faith and the importance it has to the Christian's standing, state, and future. Its centrality to Christianity is shown by the fact that believing Jesus rose from the dead is essential for salvation

Romans 10:9: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord" and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. And 1 Corinthians 15: 12 - 21.

Do Christians have good reasons for believing that the Resurrection was a real event in history?

When we start from God's Word, there is absolutely no legitimate way to deny the angel's words to the women who came to the tomb on that glorious morning: "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here but has risen!" (Luke 24: 5 - 6). The Bible repeatedly affirms the bodily Resurrection of Jesus Christ, even stating that He demonstrated it "by many infallible proofs"(Acts 1: 3).

In the "prologue" to the book of Acts, Luke told Theophilus that Jesus "presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3).

So, what are these infallible proofs of the Resurrection? Before answering that question, consider what it would take to convince you that someone was alive again after dying. Of course, the best evidence would be an opportunity to spend time with that person again -you could see him walk and talk, and you could eat with him. That is precisely what Luke is referring to here. After being crucified, Jesus showed Himself alive by appearing to the disciples on several occasions. He walked with them, talked with them, and ate with them.

Combining the data from various New Testament books, we know that Jesus appeared to some of His followers on at least ten occasions before ascending to heaven: Mary Magdalene (John 20: 11 - 18), the other Mary, Salome, Joanna and at least one other woman (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24: 10), Peter (Luke 24:34; 1st Corinthians 15: 5), Cleopas and another disciple on road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 13 - 35), the eleven disciples minus Thomas (Luke 24: 36 - 43; John 20:19 - 25), the eleven disciples (John 20: 26 - 29), seven disciples at the Sea of Tiberias (John 21: 1 - 23), disciples at a mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28: 16 - 17), James (1st Corinthians 15: 7), disciples, possibly in Jerusalem before he led them to the Mount of Olives gave the Great Commission and ascended into heaven (Luke 24:49 - 53; Acts 1:3 - 11). In most instances Jesus did more than just appear before people. Christ's words in John 20:17 seem to imply that Mary Magdalene clung to Him, indicating that He could be touched. The other women

worshiped Him and held Him by the feet (Matthew 28:9). He broke bread in front of Cleopas and an unnamed follower (Luke 24: 30). He showed His scars in His hands, feet and side and then ate fish and a honeycomb before the gathering of disciples without Thomas (Luke 24: 40 - 43; John 20: 20). Later, with Thomas present, Jesus invited Thomas to touch His hands and His side (John 20: 26 - 27). At the Sea of Tiberias, He performed a miracle, allowing the disciples to catch 153 large fish (John 20: 6 - 11). He also cooked and ate some food (John 20: 9, 15). Paul claimed that Jesus had appeared to over 500 people at one time (1st Corinthians 15:6). This may be an additional appearance, or it may be the same event as the one on the hillside in Galilee (Matthew 28: 16 - 17).

In 1st Corinthians 15 Paul claimed that he was writing what he had received. It could have been given to him directly by Jesus (Galatians 1:12), although here he was probably referring to his meetings with Peter and James in Jerusalem within five years of the Crucifixion and Resurrection (Galatians 1: 18 - 19). Paul wrote that he went to "see Peter" (v. 18). So, Paul told the Galatians that he had not only received his message from Jesus, but also had it confirmed by Peter and James. Paul cites a bunch of eyewitnesses "most of whom [were] still alive" (1st Corinthians 15:6).

So, are the appearances truly "infallible proofs" of the Resurrection? According to Luke they were, and he wasn't alone. Paul told the Greek philosophers who gathered in the Areopagus in Athens that God had "furnished proof to all men by raising [Jesus] from the dead"(Acts 17: 31).

Jesus said on multiple occasions that His death and Resurrection would be the one sign He would give to an unbelieving and wicked generation. When asked by the Jews to perform a sign. He predicted His Resurrection by saying, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19 - 22). Later, some scribes and Pharisees asked Him for a sign, and Jesus replied, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth " (Matthew 12: 39 - 40). He gave a similar response to such a request in Matthew 16: 1 - 4 as well.

In one of His debates with the Pharisees, Jesus said, "It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true" (John 8:17). This oft-repeated concept refers back to Deuteronomy 19:15 - "by the mouth of two or three Witnesses the matter shall be established". This same idea is at the heart of the American judicial system. Witnesses appear in trials to help establish the truth of the matter. Prior to the use of modern forensic experts and recording devices, reliable eyewitnesses were essential. People believe in the historicity of many past events because of eyewitness testimony without ever seeing photographic evidence for those events.

Multiple reliable witnesses testified that Jesus was alive after being dead and buried. Some of these eyewitness accounts have been preserved for us in the Bible, and because this is the inspired and inerrant Word of God, Scripture is another infallible proof of the Christ's Resurrection.

Christians can have the utmost confidence in the death, burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ since God's word accurately tells us about these historical events. The essential truths of the Christian faith were also witnessed by hundreds of people. Jesus was publicly executed on a Cross, buried in Joseph's tomb (Mark 15:42 - 47), and seen alive again by more than 500 people at the same time. The post-Resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ are infallible proof that He conquered death and God's Word the infallible proof of the event in our world today. It blessed my heart tremendously to have had the opportunity to teach them the truth about Jesus Christ and fellowship with them.

My family were all raised Catholic, and my brother and I went to Catholic school until the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade. For both, my brother and I started doing Biblical research at the ages of 20 and 21 years old. Christianity for me is having a personal relationship with God. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior at the age of 7 years old. I have found no greater joy than knowing the Lord (Yeshua) and the experience of being electrified with manifesting the Holy Spirit. I continue to have a thirst and hunger for God and his word. It is a privilege and an honor to walk with God and not ever limit him in any situation. I have had and continue to have the opportunity to watch God with His miraculous works, promises and healing touch. Is only by

His Grace and Mercy that I survived cancer three times as I beseech Him for my life. I believe God has called me to share His life with my family, friends, neighbors and co-workers a love that is forever patient, compassionate, reciprocal and kind... a love that will cause others to deeply desire drastic change, a love that will heal your deepest hurts. People will break promises every day, but God will never break our promises. He is the same yesterday, today and forever.