
AN INTRODUCTION

The Bible and Ancient Thought Part I

World Views of the Western World



WORLD VIEWS

An Introduction

KEY MOMENTS — KEY PEOPLE — KEY IDEAS

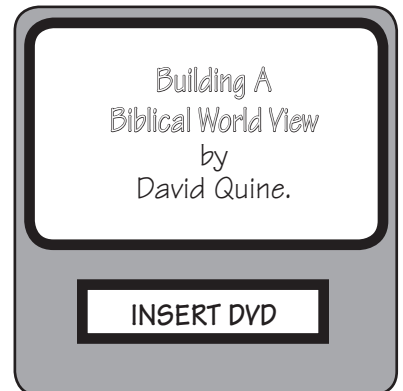
Understanding the “key moments” of the past gives us understanding of our present. Understanding our present gives us wisdom for making decisions which may influence the future. While other history programs detail such key moments, this study goes one step further. In order to understand world views it is necessary to associate the key moments with the thinking, that is, the thoughts and ideas, the world views of the people who shaped and directed those moments. It is not enough to know the important dates and events of history. We must always be drawing our understanding back to the basic way of looking at life — the world view — held by those men and women who shaped our past if we are to truly understand our present and have any hope of making wise decisions involving our future. It is with this perspective that we attempt to understand World Views of the Western World.

BUILDING A BIBLICAL WORLD VIEW

I. What is a World View?

II. Why Should We Look At Life from a World View Perspective.?

Watch **Building a Biblical World View** by David Quine.



Without looking at a map:

- Draw the outline of the continental United States ...
- Draw your birth state ...
- Draw several states around your birth state ...
- Draw the Mississippi River.
- Draw several states on each side of the Mississippi River.

Each of us has an overall way of looking at the world, which influences what we do day by day. This is what we call a 'world view'. And all of us have a world view, whether we realize it or not. We act in accordance with our world view, and our world view rests on what to us is the ultimate truth.

Dr. Francis Schaeffer

Refer to
Builders of World Views
located in The Cornerstone
Catalog. The arrows indicate
ideas penetrating the
various disciplines like ripples
in a pond.

In our study we will see how ideas determine events. Decisions that lead to events are never made in a vacuum. To understand the direction culture is moving it is necessary to understand what world view the people of the culture hold to be true. You may be asking what is meant by a world view? According to Dr. Francis Schaeffer **world view** means a particular way of looking at life.

IDEAS HAVE CONSEQUENCES

There is a flow to history and culture. In the course of this study the thoughts and ideas, the world view, will be traced from century to century through the various disciplines. Ideas move from the minds of men to effect the various disciplines of life. Yes, ideas have consequences. It is our attempt to trace the effect back to its original cause, that is, to try to determine the world view of those people who have significantly shaped Western society. The various disciplines will be seen to be interrelated on the basis of what is considered to be ultimate truth.

7 VITAL QUESTION FOR 7 GROUPS OF PEOPLE

In this study the predominant world views of Western civilization and their impact upon the various disciplines will be correlated. To understand the world view a person holds to be true, we must know the answer to several important questions.

- Is there a God or gods? If so, what is He (or they) like?
- What is the nature of the universe — its origin and structure?
- What is the essential nature of man?
- What is the basis of morality and ethics?
- What is the cause of evil and suffering?
- What happens to man at death?
- What is the meaning of history?

These are the important questions we answer as we build our own personal world view. These are also the questions we ask as we evaluate the ideas of others. What a person believes regarding the answers to these basic questions of life will determine the direction of his thinking and therefore his expression in the particular discipline in which he undertakes to influence. During this study keep these 7 Vital Questions in mind.

What does this...

Author ...

Composer ...

Painter ...

Scientist ...

Politician ...

Economist ...

Philosopher/ Theologian ...

Believe regarding the 7 Vital Questions?

Deciding how we ought to live our lives and relate to others is dependent upon our answers to these and other similar questions. While most people on a day-to-day basis never get into discussions about the answers to many of these questions, their life decisions are certainly shaped and directed by how they have answered them.

As you drive up to someone's home what do you notice? Perhaps, the trellis of rose bushes or the steep sloped roof line. As you walk into their home what do you see? Do you notice the pictures of family or flower arrangements? Of course, there are many things that might draw your attention. As you step into the home you might begin your conversation commenting on one or more of these items. During the course of your time together you talk about many things. However, you probably never talked about the type of foundation the home was setting upon. You most likely didn't even notice. And yet, the safety and security of the home is based upon the foundation. In Dallas, Texas many older homes have foundation problems due to the type of soil in the area. The only time foundations are discussed is when you see a crack on the wall or when a family is considering the purchase of a home. It is then that the answers to foundation questions are sought. After you repair the foundation or are assured of its integrity, then you usually never think or talk about it again.

World views are our foundations. Although they are the basis for our lives, they are rarely discussed; and yet, everything hangs upon its integrity. Dr. Schaeffer explains that "most people catch their world view from their family and surrounding society the way a child catches measles. But people with more understanding realize that their presuppositions should be chosen after a careful consideration of what world view is true."

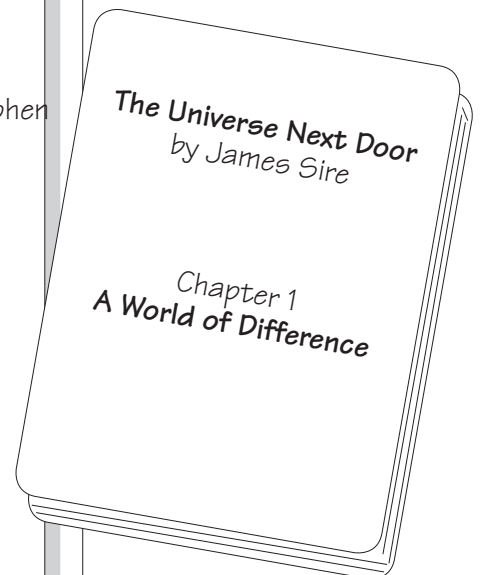
In our study we will deliberately raise these questions of authors, painters, composers, economist, and others. We will be looking for cracks. Even if they do not specifically talk about the answers to these questions, the integrity of their world view can be seen in their works. Jesus said you could know a person by his fruits.

A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE The Universe Next Door Chapter 1 by James Sire

I. Introduction

Compare and contrast the passages of Matthew Arnold, Stephen Crane, the Psalmist, and Alfred Tennyson.

Read Chapter 1 from **The Universe Next Door**.



II. What is a World View?

III. Questions

Possible Answers

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS

The Key to Knowing the Thoughts & Ideas

For several generations now educators have been passing on **their** thoughts and ideas about those who have shaped Western culture. Though it is easier to read someone else's interpretation of history this secondary source approach leaves you to the mercy of textbook writers.

World Views of the Western World uses both original documents and secondary source materials. Using original documents means that you will read the works of poets, politicians, or philosophers, observe museum quality art reproductions, or perhaps listen to symphony recordings of the world's greatest composers. This is **living learning!** You will return to the original sources to discover for yourself the thoughts and ideas of those people who have influenced Western culture. However,

using original source documents means that you will not only read the significant works of the Western world, but also interpret their meaning from a world view perspective. You may have heard or read, for example, that John Locke was a deist, not a Christian. What ideas did he have about God, man, and the involvement of God in the affairs of men? The answers Locke gives to these questions will allow you to know what world view he held to be true. After reading his book *The Reasonableness of Christianity* you will be able to decide for yourself.

To provide a guide through the Western world you will use several secondary sources. However, instead of using a traditional textbook you will use such books as *How Should We Then Live?* by Dr. Francis Schaeffer. Through his works he will be constantly relating the particular events and people of history to the overall flow of thought. This coupling of original source documents to such secondary sources will provide the necessary guidance for such a large undertaking as understanding the World Views of the Western World.

Windows into World Views

Art and music allow us to see and hear “the flow of history and culture” that Dr. Schaeffer describes. Like a magnificent tapestry interwoven with gold, scarlet, and lavender strands of thread, Western culture creates a wonderful picture or design revealing shifts toward or away from the Biblical world view. All woven fabrics consist of horizontal threads, which form the weft, and vertical threads, which make up the warp. In an ordinary woven fabric the weft and warp can both be seen. But in a tapestry, the horizontal threads completely conceal the vertical ones. History is like a tapestry. The horizontal threads of history are the interweaving of art, music, philosophy, theology, science, government, literature, and economics. The warp, real though not normally seen, is the spiritual dimension of reality in which there is great conflict between good and evil.

According to C.S. Lewis there are only two alternatives to the Judeo-Christian world view — the naturalistic philosophy of the West and the pantheist philosophy of the East. Historically in the West, the Christian world view and the naturalistic world view have been in conflict. Phillip E. Johnson in his book, *Reason in the Balance*, explains that **“From a naturalistic standpoint ... the Creator God of the Bible is every bit as unreal as the gods of Olympias, and the commands of an unreal deity are in reality only the commands of an ancient priesthood.”** This conflict has been intensified as we approach the end of the 20th century. There is an attempt to combine parts of the naturalistic philosophy of the West with parts of the pantheistic philosophy of the East into a new all encompassing world view set against the Judeo-Christian world view. Is it possible to picture, to see, the consequences of this conflict?

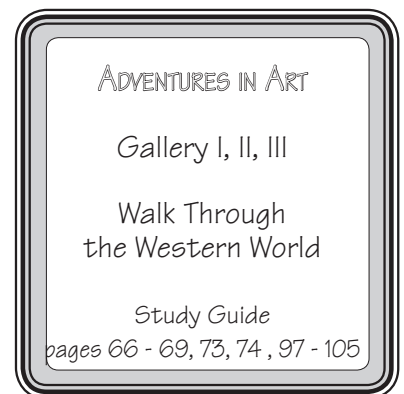
When taken as a whole art and music provide a unique panorama of the west — allowing us to see the effect of ideas upon culture. Artists and composers have taken the thoughts and ideas, the world views, of philosophers and theologians and reflected them into the culture.

There is a flow to history and culture. This flow is rooted and has its wellspring in the thoughts of people. Most people catch their [world view] from their family and surrounding society the way a child catches measles. But people with more understanding realize that their presuppositions should be chosen after a careful consideration of what world view is true.

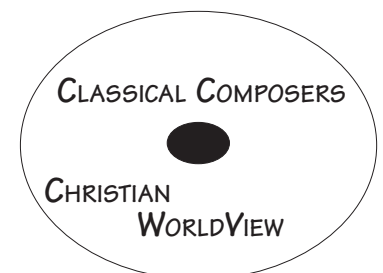
Dr. Schaeffer.

If **Adventures in Art and Classical Composers** is available in your school, then complete the following activities:

- To see the flow of history and culture use



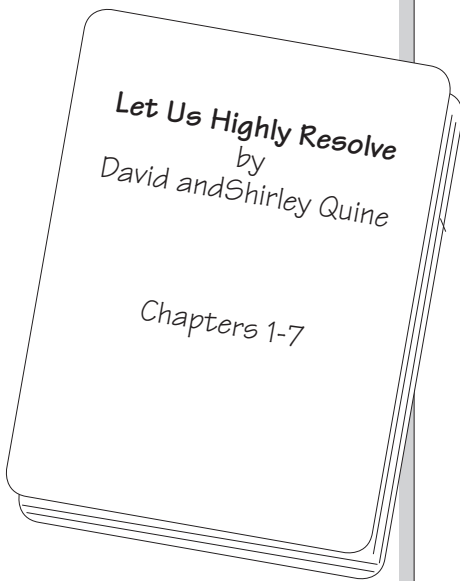
- To hear the flow of history and culture listen to ...



Study Guide
Pages 77-97

TO RESOLVE means to be determined in purpose or having a fixed purpose.
What have you set as your priorities? Consider these seven resolves for your own life's purpose.

Read **Let Us Highly Resolve** together with your parents during the next two weeks.



Summarize what each resolve means to you and your family...

LET US HIGHLY RESOLVE

- I. To Build Our Family Upon the Biblical World View
- II. To Establish Our Children's Lives Upon Truth and Absolutes
- III. To Equip Our Children to Reason
- IV. To Enter Into True Spirituality
- V. To Be 'By Faith' Families
- VI. To Prepare Our Children As A 'Letter of Christ' To The Culture
- VII. To Challenge Our Culture With The Truth Of Christianity And The Life Of Christ

Analyzing the Parts While Maintaining the Whole

It is easy to lose the whole of history because of the complexity of the parts. Too many details will cause us to lose our perspective. Not enough detail will not allow us to develop the whole. It is easier to put together a jig-saw puzzle if you know the picture you are working toward. The joy comes from discovering how the parts fit together. However, if all the pieces were numbered and all you had to do was to fit number 2 into number 1, and number 3 into number 2 until all the individual pieces are fitted together, the challenge and excitement would be lost.

We must keep the whole and parts in perspective. Making a time line of history allows us to keep the key events, significant people, and the thoughts and ideas of those people in perspective.

THE BOOK OF THE AGES TIME LINE

Instructions on how to make this time line...

- Use continuous computer paper.

The first three pages are for the 3 views of origins.

Along the bottom write the dates beginning with 1500 BC and ending with 2000 AD.

Place the Key People - Key Moments - Key Ideas on the time line.

My Book of the Ages	Beginnings	Biblical View	Greek View	Modern View	Philosophers/Theologians	1500 BC	1400 BC	1300 BC
					Painters			
					Composers			
	Scientists							
	Politicians							
	Economists							
	Writers							

World View Notes

- Keeping a record of your thoughts is important. Charts and answers to questions should be written in this **World View Notebook**. Questions will follow the readings, as well as the audio and video recordings. Write out a complete answer to each question. If you are working through this study in a group setting, answer the questions before coming together. Then discuss your thoughts together. Add to or modify any of your answers based upon this discussion.

Measuring and the Necessity of an Absolute Standard “What time is it?” — “How long is this?” — “How cold is it?”

The answer to any such question involves two things: (1) a number and (2) a unit. If someone said that a box was **5 long** what would be meant? If someone said the box was **5 cubits long**, would you know how long the box was? Probably not. Though a cubit was a unit of measurement used many years ago, today we are not exactly sure the size of that unit. To have any real meaning these questions requires an agreement upon an absolute standard.

How long is an inch? A foot, of course, is equal to 12 inches, but what is an inch? It is an agreed upon length. Every ruler to be accurate and useful requires that everyone follow that agreed upon standard.

As you read any selection or listen to any audio or video recording, always be asking:

- **What does that mean?**
- **How could I say that in my own words?**
- **What evidence is given to support that idea?**
- **Is this idea new to me?**
- **Do I need to change or modify my thinking?**
- **If the idea is false, what would be my argument against it?**

As we consider thoughts and ideas, just as in measurement, there must be a reference point, a starting place, a standard on which to judge both the accuracy and usefulness of the statement. Different cultures have certainly held to different systems or standards of what was considered to be ultimate truth. Though it sounds contradictory some cultures have even tried to build upon a changing or relative standard. You can certainly see how difficult a relative standard would be in the area of measurement. How much more difficult in the area of ideas.

In Western civilization from the fall of Rome until approximately the later half of the 1800's the starting point or standard had been the Bible. In our study we will also use the Bible as the standard by which to judge the thoughts and ideas of those men and women shaping our culture. As Gladys Hunt explains, "The Bible will be the gauge against which we measure our thoughts and ideas."

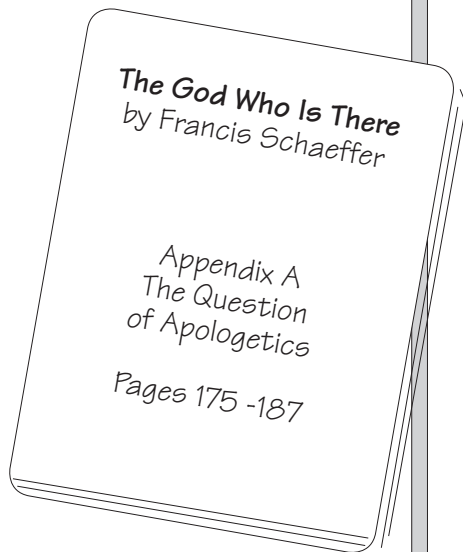
Communicating Christianity with our Culture

It is hoped that this study will enable you to communicate with those in the 21st Century. There are good, adequate, and sufficient answers to man's basic questions. This is because there is a "God who is there" explains Dr. Schaeffer. There is, therefore, a sound basis for our Judeo-Christian faith. We are not talking about some "blind leap of faith" or some "hope in hope". He tells us that our conversation with those of our culture will touch on the reality of the universe —its existence and form; second, the reality of the uniqueness of man; and third, the openness of Christianity to historical verification.

- The Universe and its Form • The Uniqueness of Man • Historical Verification

These ideas touch all peoples lives. However, because all people are not coming from the same set of ideas, we must find the appropriate starting point for different people as we talk with them.

☐ Read The Question of Apologetics from **The God Who Is There** by Dr. Schaeffer



THE QUESTION OF APOLOGETICS

by Dr. Schaeffer

I. Apologetics

Definitions:

METAPHYSICS	—	MORALS	—	EPISTEMOLOGY
being or existence		right and wrong		how we know

Define **Rationalism** ...

Dr. Schaeffer explains that there are three types of non-Christians.
Describe each type and explain how you would talk with each.

The First Kind Of Person Is ...

I Would Talk With Him About ...

The Second Kind Of Person Is ...

I Would Talk With Him About ...

The Third Kind Of Person Is ...

I Would Talk With Him About ...

☆ Dr. Schaeffer explains that God shuts us up to the reality of existence. What does he mean by this statement?

☆ If a person does not believe there is right and wrong, if he does not believe there is a God, and if he does not believe there is an absolute, then he would probably not think of himself as a sinner. How, therefore, could you begin a conversation with this person about Christianity?

☆ Describe the two different kinds of faith. Which represents true Christian faith?

☆ Why does Dr. Schaeffer say that the Christian answers are both **sufficient** and **necessary**? Is the knowledge of these answers enough to become a Christian?

☆ Describe the difference between **rationalism** and **rationality**. What is the Christian view of each?

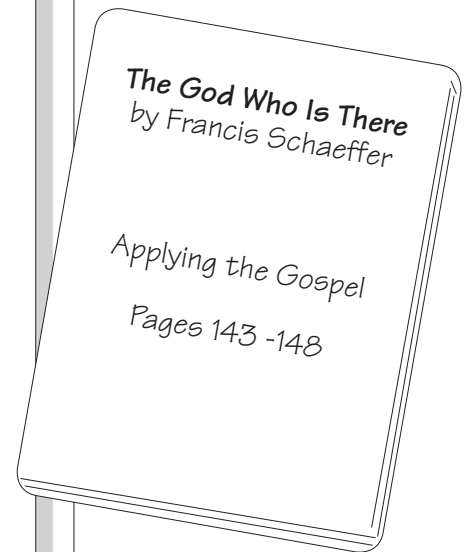
☆ What is meant by antithesis?

APPLYING THE GOSPEL

I. How Dare We Do It?

II. Faith in the Biblical Sense

Read Applying the Gospel from **The God Who Is There** by Francis Schaeffer.



☆ If a person believes one thing about the world or about man that is not the way things really are, and if he begins to be uncomfortable about his beliefs, then what is he likely to do? Dr. Schaeffer refers to this as ...? Is this idea new to you? Draw Dr. Schaeffer's diagram illustrating this idea.

☆ When does a non-Christian begin to experience this **point of tension**?

☆ What should be your attitude toward a non-Christian as you talk?

☆ List the names of several people that you would like to talk to about Christianity.

What is to be the first thing you consider as you begin talking with a non-Christian?

☆ Listen to the people with whom you are talking to see if you can discern their **point of tension**.

☆ When should you stop talking about presuppositions?

☆ Do you agree that “Knowledge precedes faith”? Why must truth come first? What evidence does Dr. Schaeffer give to support this idea? Do you agree or disagree with his idea?

☆ What must a person understand before he is ready to become a Christian? What is the essential content that must be known or understood? Do you agree or disagree with Dr. Schaeffer?

☆ Dr. Schaeffer explains evangelism in another way. He talks about **taking off the roof**. What does he mean by this statement? Explain this idea in your own words to someone who has not read these selections.

☆ Most students are not sure why they are learning the things they are being taught. What is your goal for high school? Write a single statement describing your goal.

ANCIENT ROME

To help us follow the flow of thought through time we will keep a record of the key moments and the associated ideas of the builders of world views on a time line. Place these people, events and works in your Book of the Ages. They will provide the setting for understanding the flow of history.

To begin our study we will start with Rome. We start with Rome because it is the direct ancestor of the modern west. The outline for the first episode of **How Should We Then Live?** has three main parts.

THE ROMAN AGE

I. Rome: The Empire Triumphant

II. Rome: Cultural Analysis

III. Rome: Eventual Decline and Fall

Add the following information to
The Book of the Ages:

The Babylonian Empire —
625-538 B.C.

The Persian Empire —
538-333 B.C.

The Greek Empire —
333 B.C. - 63 B.C.

The Roman Empire —
63 B.C. - 483 A.D.

Julius Caesar:
100? B.C. - 44 B.C.

Augustus Caesar (Octavian):

63 B.C. - A.D. 14

Jesus Christ: 6? - A.D. 27
Emperor Constantine declares Christianity legal in 313 - the official religion of the Roman Empire in 383.

Rome falls
410 AD

St. Augustine
354 - 430 A.D.

Locate maps of the four empires showing their geographical reach. Transfer them to the time line on the pages showing their influence.

Watch **Episode One: - How Should We Then Live?**

The
Roman Age

INSERT DVD

After watching the video answer these questions...

A. Describe the Roman Empire.

☆ What did they base their lives and culture on?

☆ What affect did the thinking of Greece have on Rome?

☆ Describe the gods of Greece and Rome.
Would you say they are “Fairy-tale gods” or demonic beings?

☆ Many people blamed Christianity for the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.
What would you say to this claim?

☆ In one section of the video Dr. Schaeffer was standing on a Roman bridge.
What analogy did he give and what did it mean?

☆ Dr. Schaeffer makes two statements that seem to contradict one another — “History does not repeat itself.” and “The parallels between the history of Rome and the twentieth-century West are many and obvious.” How may these statements be reconciled?

☆ What does the Bible have to say about the Roman Empire if anything?

The Book of Daniel was written approximately B.C. 537. God reveals to Daniel the four great gentile empires. How are they described?

The _____ of Gold — The Babylonian Empire.
The _____ of Silver — Persian Empire
The _____ of Bronze — The Greek Empire.
_____ of Iron and _____ of Iron and Clay — The Roman Empire

THE JUDEO-CHRISTIAN WORLD VIEW — AND THE GRECO-ROMAN WORLD VIEW

At the time of the fall of Rome there were many cross-currents of thought. Divergent opinions were ripping through the culture. Many of the ideas of the Roman Empire were an extension of the ideas of the Greek Empire. This time period is often referred to as the Greco-Roman world. Christianity, of course, was born during the Roman Empire. Despite the intense persecution it was thriving. The ideas of Christianity were an extension of Judaism. To properly understand the Roman Empire, therefore, we must understand the thoughts and ideas of the Greeks and Hebrews. This is best accomplished by reading their predominant literature. To understand the Greco-Roman world view we will study the poets and philosophers. To understand the Judeo-Christian world view we will study the Bible.

JUDEO-CHRISTIAN WORLD VIEW

The Bible, the single most important work of history, details who God is, what He does in the world, and what He expects from and promises to all mankind. The Bible is the most widely read book in Western history, and has been the most influential work ever to have been written. More copies of the Bible have been printed and distributed than of any other book. Although it actually contains 66 books, written in three different languages, on three different continents, over a period of approximately 1,500 years, by more than 40 authors from a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds, there exists a complete unity of thought.

GRECO - ROMAN WORLD VIEW

THE POETS

Homer
Virgil

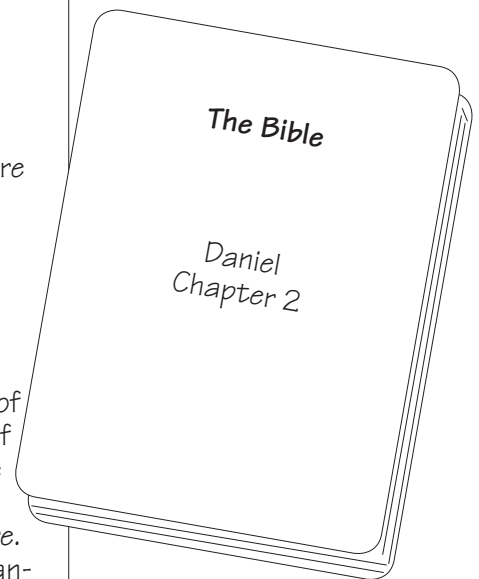
To understand the world view of the Greco-Roman world we will read two works of the Greek poet Homer, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, and one work by the Roman poet Virgil, *The Aeneid*. These three books are among the greatest literary works of western thought. They form a trilogy of thought expressing the Greco-Roman world view from the poets perspective.

THE PHILOSOPHERS

Socrates
Plato
Aristotle

The Golden Age of Greek culture included the drama, historical literature, and philosophical literature. The giants of Greek philosophy were Aristotle whose teacher was Plato whose teacher was Socrates. These three men were among the most important thinkers in the history of Western culture. Their influence reaches even into the 20th century.

- Read Daniel Chapter 2.



- Sketch the statue of Nebuchadnezzar's dream on your time line during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

THE BIBLE AND THE HOMERIC POEMS are considered the most influential books in Western culture. Bruce Metzger observes:

Of all the literary compositions by the Greek people, the Homeric poems are the best suited for comparison with the Bible ... In the entire range of ancient Greek and Latin literature, the **Iliad** ranks next to the New Testament in possessing the greatest amount of manuscript testimony.

[1] In antiquity men memorized Homer as later they were to memorize the Scriptures.

[2] Each was held in the highest esteem and quoted in defense of arguments pertaining to heaven, earth, and Hades.

[3] Homer and the Bible served as primers from which different generations of school boys were taught to read.

[4] Around both there grew up a mass of scholia and commentaries.

[5] They were provided with glossaries.

[6] Both fell into the hands of allegorists.

[7] Both were imitated and supplemented - one with Homeric Hymns and writings such as the *Batrachomyomachia*, and the other with apocryphal books.

[8] Homer was made available in prose analyses; the Gospel of John was turned into epic hexameters by Nonnus of Panopolis.

[9] The manuscripts of both Homer and the Bible were illustrated.

[10] Homeric scenes appeared in Pompeian murals; Christian basilicas were decorated with mosaics and frescoes of Biblical episode.

This completes the Introduction to World Views of the Western World.

The remainder of the study is in two sections:

The Biblical World View and The Greco-Roman World View.

The Biblical World View study is in the front section of the syllabus.

The Greco-Roman World View is in the last half of the syllabus.

Refer to the **General Overview** for proper pages to use for the week-by-week study.