Culture War Sermon 7/1/12 by Dcn Tom Abbott, Ch. of the Messiah

Introduction

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| * My background is that I am a Historian & a retired intelligence officer
* “Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it” [George Santayana](http://thinkexist.com/quotes/george_santayana/)
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**Psalm 33:12 (NIV)**
12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD …

Today, I’ll be talking about competing world views.

* First, a definition. By “world-view,” I mean the overall perspective or the framework of ideas and beliefs through which an individual interprets the world, events, history, government, economics, religion – EVERYTHING – and which, therefore, shapes how he interacts with those things. [Example: colored glasses change the way you see everything]
* There are many MANY world views operating around us every day, but I think that I can make a case that there are three KEY world views that are in serious competition for the heart and soul of America. No - Beyond serious competition --- AT WAR. A Cultural War.
* ONE of these world views is likely to emerge as the dominant one, and that will influence our lives and the lives of our children, grandchildren … generations yet to come.
* Disclaimer: This is not about political parties, left or right, liberal or conservative, haves vs. have-nots, etc. This struggle has been going on for a century under administrations and politicions of every type. This is about the underlying system of beliefs – as such, it is a spiritual issue.

Define and describe these key world-views: First, there is something that I will call the “Biblical World View (BWV). By BWV, I mean that set of ideas and beliefs that were held by the founders of this nation that THEY derived from their study of scripture and other 18th century cultural influences that came from scripture. They incorporated this world view into the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights

* Just as we need to have an individual relationship with God through Jesus, and that comes with certain responsibilities TO God, the BWV is focused on the individual. Individual rights and responsibilities
	+ There is a God – a creator – who is the source of these rights
	+ There are moral absolutes – RIGHT and WRONG – that are the basis of all law
	+ The purpose of government is to protect and preserve rights given by God
	+ Fundamentally a Christian nation based on Biblical principles
* Alexis de Tocqueville: “Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power.”
* Key World View #2 – Secular Humanism
	+ Like a mythical beast with many heads, it shows itself many different ways
	+ Theologically: Atheists = no God Deists = a god who created the world, then left it to us. He does not get involved. Pantheists = all gods are OK, no god is OK, nature can be god, etc.
	+ No God or Absent Landlord God or “everything is OK” God – it means there are no moral absolutes, WE are all there is. We are the ultimate arbiters of right and wrong. We determine morals of the moment. Morality is relative.

The Conflict

* Where the BWV is focused on the individual (rights, freedoms, property, etc.) Secular Humanism is focused on the “collective” – the “group” “the people” or “society”. Individual rights can be trampled for their “perception” of the greater good of society. (e.g. the “contraception mandate”)
* When the Biblical WV speaks of “justice” it means justice as measured by a yardstick with absolute right and wrong. When Secular Humanism speaks of justice it means something called “social justice” – where right and wrong are relative based on (again) their perception of how it applies to society
	+ e.g. A poor man steals. Biblical WV may have sympathy for him, but what he did was wrong and there may be consequences under the law, he is responsible for his actions – that’s justice. Secular Humanism says he was under-privileged, never had a chance, and treated unfairly. He is not responsible, society is to blame. So at society’s expense he is “rehabilitated” in a job training program and given a job where law-abiding citizens cannot find one – that’s social justice
* Economics: Eccl. 5:18-19 speaks of it being good and proper for a man to find satisfaction in his work and to enjoy wealth and possessions as a gift from God. Deut 8:18 says God gives us the ability to ***create*** wealth. Secular Humanism says wealth cannot be created, it can only be *distributed*. It is a “zero sum” deal. If one man has wealth, it is because somehow he took it from others – so it is “fair” to take from the wealthy to give it to others who did not work for it. Communism, socialism, some call it a New American Socialism – Humanists say it’s just spreading around the wealth & that the government needs to take a “fair share” from the wealthy. [Robin Hood used to steal from the rich and give to the poor – but at least he admitted that it was stealing. Bumper Sticker: “Your Fair Share is NOT in MY wallet”]
* Government: According to Secular Humanism, government is the source of rights – Rights that can be granted can also be taken away. Govt. must control the sources of wealth and power, must apply the principles of social justice to regulate all aspects of life. And govt. should be led by superior, enlightened individuals who will decide for the “masses” what is best, and will use regulation and power to coerce individuals to comply. Three of 4 gospels (Matt 20:25-26, Mark 10:42-43 & Luke 22:25-26) record Jesus saying, “The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them (Luke adds “they call themselves benefactors”). Not so with you. Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant.”

Key World View #3 is just beginning to have a voice in America – but it’s being heard loud and clear in most of the rest of the world – it is Islam. Having lived in the Middle East for three years, I’ve seen Islam up close and personal.

* The stated goal of Islam is world conquest. Yes – ***conquest***. They are willing to wait a few more generations to do it. They will tell you openly that this is a “Jihad” – a *Holy War*
* You may feel uncomfortable with me speaking this way – but it is the truth that radical Islam is incredibly dangerous. There is ample evidence to back all this up.
* An Islamic proverb states that, “The enemy of my enemy is my friend.” There is an unholy alliance between Secular Humanism and Islam. Together, they recognize that Christianity and its Biblical World View is their biggest threat. Proponents of these two world views are cooperating to defeat the culture that Christianity spawned.

**Psalm 33:12 (NIV)**
12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD …

At the start of our republic, there were many quotes like this one from John Adams: “*Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate for the government of any other.”*

In 1892, after a century of operating as a constitutional republic, there was a case in the Supreme Court (Church of the Holy Trinity vs. US) that examined the role of religion. Having poured over a century of court rulings and legal precedents, the Supreme Court – by a unanimous decision – handed down a ruling which stated in part:

“Our laws and institutions must necessarily be based upon the teachings of the Redeemer of mankind. It is impossible that it should be otherwise; and in this sense and to this extent our civilization and our institutions are em­phatically Christian .... This is historically true. From the discovery of this continent to the present hour, there is a single voice making this affirma­tion ... that this is a Christian nation. We are founded to legislate, propagate, and secure Christianity.”

55 years later, in 1947. [In *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947)], the Supreme Court was asked to interpret a law regarding religion. The justices found, "In the words of Jefferson," the First Amendment "was intended to erect "a wall of separation between church and State … [that] must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach."

[amplify. “Separation of church and state” is a phrase found not in the founding documents or in the law, but in a private letter from Jefferson. If taken in context – especially as clarified in his 2nd inaugural address – is was clear that Jefferson meant the “wall” separates the Federal government from the “church and state.” He felt that religion was a matter for state governments, not federal.]

Somehow, a corner was turned – a road was taken – and “Freedom of Religion” was turned into “Freedom FROM religion”

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE ONE GENERATION BETWEEN THESE TWO QUOTES?

* WW I & the rise of Secular Humanism. SH (wearing its Communist mask) took over in Russia, and nearly took over in Germany. In England and the USA, SH was placated and given a place at the table.
* Prohibition was supposed to be a victory for BWV, but the unintended consequence was a rise in crime and debauchery (Roaring Twenties). Christians who campaigned for prohibition became disillusioned.
* The Great Depression
* “Satanic Propaganda.” Destructive ideas that became popular in the church.
	+ “Politics is a dirty business, so Christians should stay out of politics”
	+ “The entertainment industry is sinful and lacking purity, so Christians should stay out of the entertainment industry”
	+ Christians should vote only for candidates who exemplify “perfect” Christian virtues. “None of these candidates are perfect, so I won’t vote.”
	+ War, abounding sin (1920s) and economic collapse (1930s) are signs of the “End of Days” Jesus is coming for us soon, so why build cathedrals or struggle for anything?

In the 1920s and 30s, at the same time that Secular Humanists were becoming well organized and well-funded to put forward their agenda, Christianity left the battlefield. We forfeited the game.

Within two decades, an activist Supreme Court found this mythical separation between church and government.

In another two decades, prayer in schools was banned.

In another two decades, municipalities were being told by judges that they could not have Christmas displays.

Step by step – incrementally, God has been marginalized, until today when it seems like every week or two you hear another story like the kid in Indiana who was expelled because he carried a Bible to school. He didn’t DO anything with it – he just carried it.

Let’s take a historical example from the Roman Empire. Christian persecution from the Roman perspective wasn’t about the Christians’ beliefs, it was about the fact that Christians refused to participate in many aspects of Roman society, they refused to sacrifice to the emperor as a god (hence, were suspected of disloyalty). As the outsiders, they were blamed for all bad things. Nero, under pressure because Rome burned, blamed the Christians – so persecution was a campaign to root out domestic terrorism. If persecution comes to America, it will be because we refuse to obey some Secular Humanist regulation (like the Roman Catholics’ opposition to the contreception insurance mandate).

We outnumber the Secular Humanists – but for a hundred years, we have forfeited the game.

Do you know that of the roughly 60 million voting age Christians in America, about half – 30 million – are not even registered to vote? Think of the number of close elections in the past decade or two – how many could have been changed with another 30 million votes?

According to a recent George Barna poll, 14% of American adults think they are registered, but they really are not. That’s 33 million who are mistaken, of which 8 or 9 million are Christian. Couldn’t you swing an election with 9 million votes?

Are you registered? Find out on [www.AreYouRegistered.org](http://www.AreYouRegistered.org)

How about your neighbor or brother-in-law? Find out on [www.RegisterOne.org](http://www.RegisterOne.org)

I am not saying that if we elect the “right” candidates in November, that all things will be put right. The flow of history has been against us for a century – we won’t fix it in one election. We CAN, however, start to change the course of the historical flow.

We can’t just put our hope in politicians. Psalm 146:3,4 “Put not you trust in princes, in a son of man in whom there is no help. When his breath departs, he returns to the earth, on that very day his plans perish…”

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5 ( KJV )**
“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:  (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)  Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God …”

Our hope is in the Lord.

This week, we’ll celebrate the “Main event” that occurred in July 1776. Few people are aware of another event that occurred the previous year, July 20 1775. Battles with the British broke out in Lexington and Concord a few weeks before the Continental Congress called for July 20th to be observed as a day of “public humiliation, fasting and prayer.” Individual colonial governors had declared days of fasting and prayer before, but the first time that the 13 colonies acted together as one, it was to fall on their knees and plead for God’s blessing. I am convinced that if there had been no national fasting and prayer in July 1775, we wouldn’t have got to Independence Day in July 1776.

Centuries ago, it was a custom in the church to fast every week Friday. Here’s what I am going to do. Every Friday between now and the election, (including July 20th – the anniversary of that first national fast) I will fast and pray for God’s mercy on America. I invite you to join me.

**2 Chronicles 7:14 ( NIV )** If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

* I’m going to plagiarize Abraham Lincoln (with just a bit of Thomas Jefferson thrown in)

***Eleven score and seven years* ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. – *and that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights.* Now we are engaged in a great *cultural* war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and dedicated, can endure. … It is for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.**