

# ISMs

## Our Biblical Worldview—part 9

November 1, 2020

We've spent eight weeks digging in to what the bible says about important matters: truth, human nature, government, globalism, the sanctity of life, marriage, gender, and how work, economics and government relate. In each study we've tried to contrast the biblical worldview with the current, cultural worldview. This week we'll look at some of the major "ISM's" that threaten our Judeo-Christian worldview.

### **DAY 1: An overview**

1. When Benjamin Franklin exited the Constitutional Convention a woman asked him, "Sir, what have you given us?" Franklin's replied, "A republic, ma'am, if you can keep it."

2, Both parts of his reply were remarkable, wise and deep!

*Psalms 14:1 The **fool** says in his **heart**, "**There is no God.**" They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good. <sup>2</sup> The LORD looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. <sup>3</sup> All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.*

3. In the past four hundred years mankind has chased after answers and meaning everywhere but in God. Here are the big philosophies man has chased. Some of them are still undercurrents that seek to run our civilization.

Modern philosophy – (1600+) The search for certainty about how to live beginning, not with God, but with reason only.

Enlightenment – (1650-1800) Social radicalism. Confidence in man's reason over church beliefs, superstition, and tyranny. Man, "the measure of all things."

Romanticism (1800-1850) Emphasizing emotions, the imagination. Exalting the common man, nature, a sense of the melancholy, idealism.

Utilitarianism (early 1800s) The greatest happiness for the greatest number.

Pragmatism (late 1800s) Whatever is useful is true.

Nihilism (1850-1900) There is no ultimate meaning because there is no god. The only meaning you can find is a gathering of like-minded people committed to common values.

Existentialism (1930+) We live in an absurd universe. Yet, everyone must take responsibility for his own free will even though we cannot know certainly the difference between good and bad.

Postmodernism (1960+) There is no reality except what is physical. Resist outside control. Focus on your own life and story.

4. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## **DAY 2: Post-modernism and Marxism**

*Psalms 14:4 Will evildoers never learn-- those who devour my people as men eat bread and who do not call on the LORD? <sup>5</sup> There they are, overwhelmed with dread, for God is present in the company of the righteous. <sup>6</sup> You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor, but the LORD is their refuge.*

### **Post-modernism**

1. Yesterday, we looked at the foolish heart that refuses to love and obey God. We looked at the last four hundred years of man's continued and futile attempts to make sense of the world without taking God into account.
2. How do today's verses depict rebellious man's attempts to dismiss God from life's equation?
3. What do post-moderns believe? What is their worldview?
  - a. All truth is subjective
  - b. They reject the idea of people, as individuals made in the image of God.
  - c. All sex differences are socially constructed, not obvious at birth.
  - d. They believe all hate speech must be abolished. Freedom of speech does not include "Hate speech," which should be regulated.
  - e. They see the Judeo-Christian ethic as oppressive of minorities, people of color, and all people who have been marginalized (Not allowed to do what *they* want to do because of the Judeo-Christian ethic).

### **Marxism:**

1. Much of the current ISM's have roots in Marxist ideology. Karl Mark (1818-1883) was a German philosopher. His economic and atheistic beliefs gave rise to socialism and communism.
2. Marx's view of the world was a titanic class struggle between the greedy barons of capitalism and the poor working class. He believed that eventually the poor working class would rise up in revolt against the unfairness of capitalism.
3. Marx considered God "the opiate of the people". Removing the Judeo-Christian morality and worldview was a top priority.
4. However, his beliefs had devastating long-term effects on the Russia, China, Cuba, Viet Nam, Cambodia and Venezuela. In addition to virtual economic collapse, these nations turned to authoritarian dictatorships. In the twentieth century about one hundred million people were killed *by their own government!*
5. These core values of Marxism still drive some of the more recent ISM's today.
  - a. God must be eradicated from public life.
  - b. The Judeo-Christian worldview must be replaced.
  - c. Capitalism and free markets are evil and must be dismantled.
6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

### DAY 3: The newest ISM: Critical Race Theory beliefs #1-3.

*Psalms 2:1 Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain?*

*<sup>2</sup> The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against his Anointed One. <sup>3</sup> "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters."*

1. The fallen history of man through the ages is depicted in these verses. What strikes you about these verses?

2. A **worldview** is the combination of ideas answering the great questions of life in such a way to create a **metanarrative** (storyline) for living. Does God exist? Who are we? What's wrong with man? What are the solutions? What is our purpose? What is right and wrong? What is our duty?

3. Whereas postmodernism, Marxism, existentialism, nihilism and the like all have terrible, foolish, and evil underpinnings, the newest "kid on the block" is a movement called "**critical race theory**." (The name is misleading as this movement is about much more than race).

4. The ideology of the other ISMs we've looked at have been terribly destructive to nations and people. But even strong *ideologies* don't hold a candle to strong *narratives*, and that's what critical race theory is—a powerful (and destructive) narrative that builds on faulty ideology that leads people to destructive choices, both for themselves, for others, and society.

5. What are the beliefs of critical race theory? We'll look at six, three today, three tomorrow.

**a. Your fundamental identity is equated with your group identity.**

Groups include race, ethnic background, sexuality, gender, etc. Whatever group you identify with, the most important identity of all of them is "minority."

**b. You are either an oppressor or in an oppressed group. Oppression takes place because the oppressor group has power.**

"We are the oppressed because the oppressors 'right the rules'. They impose their values, norms, ethics and morality on the rest of us."

**c. Their fundamental moral duty is to free groups from the oppressors.**

The final effort is to tear down "the system," which means things like the Judeo-Christian morality and ethic, democracy, our judicial system, abolishing the police and ICE, and the U.S. constitution.

6. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## **DAY 4: Critical race theory, continued: beliefs # 4-6.**

*Psalm 2:4 The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs at them.*

<sup>5</sup> *Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath, saying,*

<sup>6</sup> *"I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill."* <sup>7</sup> *I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."*

1. No matter what ISM has arisen in human history, God's story continues to grow even through the worst of national evils and individual evils. (You may need to reread Psalm 2:1-3 from yesterday). What strikes you from these verses?

2. We continue with the foundational beliefs of critical race theory.

### **d. In understanding the history of oppression someone's lived experience is far more important than objective evidence.**

Objectivity is inadequate to understand oppression because it is a "Western and masculine way of thinking."

### **e. Oppressor groups continue to oppress under the claim of objectivity.**

You cannot trust people in the oppressor group to be objective.

### **f. People who are in more than one oppressed group get the loudest voice.**

For example if you are a woman (oppressed group), who is black (oppressed group) who is a single mother (oppressed because she is not in a nuclear family), she is more oppressed than someone in only one oppressed group.

3. Three things we must remember when talking to people.

a. Oppression is a part of human history. Evil does exist, both at a personal level, in institutions and nations because human beings are fallen.

b. Horrific national evils have been codified into law. (Worldwide slavery, the "final solution" in Germany, apartheid, etc.)

c. Hegemonic power does exist that extends the narrative.

Perhaps this may be clearer to see from this perspective. Think about how pervasive and wide Hollywood and the media have been in promoting images of feminine beauty, particularly as sex objects. It is a challenge to fight this when you are raising a daughter who is surrounded by these images and "messages."





4. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## DAY 5: Comparing the metanarratives

*Psalm 2:8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. <sup>9</sup> You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery." <sup>10</sup> Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. <sup>11</sup> Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. <sup>12</sup> Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.*

1. Christianity is not just an ideology, moral and ethical law. It is also a metanarrative that answers the great questions of life. Here is a great overview of the major differences in the Christian worldview and the critical theory worldview.

## Christianity and critical theory are competing worldviews

<b>Christianity</b>				
	CREATION	FALL	REDEMPTION	RESTORATION
<b>Critical theory</b>	----	Patriarchy White supremacy Heteronormativity Toxic masculinity <b>OPPRESSION</b> Capitalism Ageism Ableism Cisgenderism	Protest Resistance <b>ACTIVISM</b> Education Awareness	Equality Power reversal <b>LIBERATION</b> Justice Diversity

2. Critical race theory is intent on dividing people (into groups). The biblical worldview does not divide people into groups. Instead all people share key common distinctions that should **unite** us!

- In **creation**, we are all made in the image of God (young and old, black, white and brown, rich and poor, and all nationalities, etc.)
- In **the fall**, we are all sinners by nature
- In **redemption**, Jesus died for sinners. The opportunity for redemption is possible for everyone.

3. A fourth distinction has the power to unite people—a future home together in heaven.

*Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every **tribe** and **language** and **people** and **nation**." <sup>10</sup> You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."*

4. We have a certain hope of a glorious future in heaven, not divided into opposing groups, but united in heart and soul.

5. What strikes you from today's devotional?