

## The 21st Century's Cultural Impasse

by David Orton

<http://lifemessenger.org/the-21st-century-s-cultural-impasse/>

**Welcome to Lifemessenger.**

This ministry is dedicated to this end: that the West - church and culture - will rediscover the genius of its Christian heritage.

On the Menu above you will find four **Teaching Streams** that contain all our materials:

- God's Communication -how God speaks.
- God's Purpose -where God is going.
- God's Ways -how God is getting there.
- God's Community -who's on the journey with him.

In this first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century our culture has found itself at an impasse.

Having embraced **Enlightenment Humanism** in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, its ideas flowed through into the messianic **statist experiments** of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - Marxist, Fascist, and now secular Humanist - with its rejection of God in Christ as the genius of the Western cultural heritage.

**The 20<sup>th</sup> century: the bloodiest in human history**

Tragically it has reaped a harvest of death:

- **203 million** deaths from state sponsored mass-murder (genocide, war-time blanket bombing of civilians etc.),
- **35 million** military deaths, and an estimated
- **58 million** deaths from abortion since 1973 in the USA alone!

**How is this so? Because ideas have consequences.**

The 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the **death of God** and the 20<sup>th</sup> century the **death of man**--the former, intellectually, and the latter, politically.

Having lost its absolute found only in God, Western culture replaced it with a new absolute in autonomous man.

Western man, reiterating humankind's original fall, now operated independently of the creator-God and his revealed will, by default, setting itself up as a *would-be* god. Man was now self-made--created in his own image, determining his own reality.

Hence, its source of knowing was cut off, including its transcendent ethic, and thus, no longer made in God's own image, humankind has been devalued. Human worth now being determined by its convenience or usefulness, resulting in policies of death: state sponsored mass-murder and the wilful termination of life through abortion and euthanasia.

Not to mention the lesser, but all the same, tyrannous culture of political correctness that now dominates the Western mind and its institutions.

A society made in the image of autonomous man is inevitably totalitarian.

The utter folly of Humanism - 'man as his own measure' - is now nakedly stark for any who pause to consider. It has proven to be false.

### To what then shall we turn?

The choice is narrow: Monotheism or Humanism; the latter including atheism, pantheism, and scientism (belief in a materialistic closed system).

As to the three monotheistic religions - Islam and Judeo-Christian traditions - it is Christian-theism that has developed the West's high culture: political freedoms, the arts, universities, and scientific advancement, producing its historically unparalleled and unprecedented prosperity.

Here is the impasse and the irony. *Humanism* is manifestly impotent to address the *human* dilemma. Rather than delivering humankind, it has devalued it. Human lives have instead become a commodity for ideological ends, both political and social. They are expendable.

And yet we refuse to change.

The choice is clear: we either repeat history - the atrocities of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - or we mend our ways.

I am reminded of the apostle Peter's response to Jesus when he challenged the disciples as to whether they too would turn back from following him:

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.

John 6:68-69

Likewise, the West has historically known that Jesus has "the words of eternal life"—that ultimate meaning, and hence human significance, is found only in him.

This ministry is dedicated to this end: that the West - church and culture - will rediscover the genius of its Christian heritage.

But additionally, that it will realise its destiny among the nations as a purveyor of the gospel—of the good news that God's government of justice and peace has come to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. This is to be modelled first in the redeemed community and then overflow to the larger culture and to the nations.

### God has a plan for planet earth.

It is revealed in his verbal propositional communication to humankind in the Scriptures.

It is to spiritually regenerate the individual through whom families, communities, and gradually whole cultures and nations are renewed. The "new heavens and the new earth" have already been inaugurated in Christ!

We are dedicated to articulating the message of the gospel in a way that is prophetically pertinent to 21<sup>st</sup> century church and culture.

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We trust you will enjoy exploring the site to discover more about this ministry and its resources.

May our modest offering be beneficial to you and to the cause of Christ in the earth!

Sincerely