

What Does the Bible Teach About Postmodernism?

**December 16, 2021 Indepth Bible Class
of the Trilacoochee church of Christ**

Postmodernism

- We wonder why it is so difficult to reach people with the Gospel these days.
- Isolationism is a common, contemporary hindrance to the Gospel, and it is a problem generated by Christians.
- Isolationism comes from us; postmodernism comes from culture.

Postmodernism

- Postmodernism is the term that describes contemporary philosophy toward religion and politics, characterized by:
 - A lack of conviction and concern for doctrine,
 - An attitude that everyone may determine right or wrong for themselves,
 - A social rule that others must keep their beliefs to themselves.

Postmodernism

- It is ironic that the two matters that should be discussed more than any other subject, religion and politics, are now the two things you do not talk about in polite company
- So instead we talk passionately about trivialities like sports, entertainment, shopping, and clothes, and then do all of our discussion of religion and politics in the social media that increases isolationism.
- If we're going to be able to promote the cause of Christ during our lifetime, we are going to have to understand and answer postmodern thinking.

Questions:

- What is postmodernism?
- How has postmodernism impacted religious expression and practice?
- Is postmodernism a threat to Christians?
- How does postmodernism hinder the Gospel?
- What do the Scriptures say about this matter?
- Are there any beneficial aspects of postmodernism?
- Will postmodernism outlast the word of God?

What Is Postmodernism?

- The term postmodernism seems odd; how can something come after modern?
- Postmodernism is a reaction to an earlier school of thought called modernism.
- Modernism is the term used to describe the patterns of thought from Descartes in the seventeenth through nineteenth century.

What Is Postmodernism?

- Modernism exalted the abilities of man to know his entire world and to change it to suit himself.
- It promoted absolutes and sought to determine the laws of existence without God's word.
- It glorified man and his ability to make a perfect world without the help of God.
- It promoted the concept of objective truth and sought to determine it for the rest of humanity.

What Is Postmodernism?

- Postmodernism is an over-reaction to these ideas.
 - It is marked by cynicism regarding mankind; man is basically a higher functioning animal, guided by instinct and appetites.
 - It rejects any concept of absolute truth, and considers all truth as subjective and situational.
 - It advocates that each person must establish his own guiding truth.

Postmodernism's Impact

- Promotion of atheism in public life
- Promotion of ecumenicalism in religion
- Promotion of moral relativism
- Promotion of relativism in speech

Problems With Postmodernism

- Postmodernism is a threat to the Christian's faith since it denies the existence of any absolute truth.
- We know that there is an absolute; God and what He says is absolute .
 - Gen. 1:1 - "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Problems With Postmodernism

- How do you prove the existence of God to those who deny the existence of absolutes?
 - Job 38-41
 - Isa. 55:8-11 - "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, 11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

Problems With Postmodernism

- Postmodernism denies the ability of man to know absolute truth
 - John 14:6 - “Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”
 - John 8:32 - “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Problems With Postmodernism

- Teaching the truth to such persons complicated by the fact that our confidence in the Scriptures is based on faith
 - Heb. 11:1, 6 - “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen... 6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

Problems With Postmodernism

- We must remember that postmodernists have chosen their faith in spite of what the word of God says and in spite of the evidences all around them.
 - Rom. 1:16-25, 28-31

Problems With Postmodernism

- Likewise, the religious world considers us strange and obsolete for placing such importance on believing the Bible as God revealed it, and charges us as being exclusive or cultic.
 - Gal. 1:6-9
 - 1Peter 3:12-17

Problems With Postmodernism

- The moral relativism in postmodernism leads many to do as they wish. Postmodernists object to the idea of conduct being described in terms of righteousness and sin.
- God is the only arbiter of right and wrong.
 - Gal. 5:19-23

Problems With Postmodernism

- How do you get someone to look to God for answers to moral questions?
 - By measuring the outcome of God's way versus the chaos of moral bankruptcy generated by the postmodern morally relative lifestyle.
 - Rom. 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Problems With Postmodernism

- Postmodernism suggests that we cannot really understand the Bible since:
 - We are not ancient Hebrews or Greeks and therefore cannot understand the cultural context fully,
 - We cannot have full confidence in what the Hebrew and Greek words mean in English,
 - We cannot be certain that our English words mean what we think they mean.

Problems With Postmodernism

- Hosea 6:3 - “Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter and former rain to the earth.”
- Psalm 119:160 - “The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.”
- John 17:17 - “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”

Beneficial Aspects Of Postmodernism

- Mankind cannot know everything.
- Not every matter in scripture is mandated in a particular way.
- Language does have some ambiguity.

Beneficial Aspects Of Postmodernism

- The best thing that can be said of any philosophy or wisdom of men is that it will go away.
 - Voltaire's rationalism is gone.
 - Descartes modernism is gone.
 - Alexander Pope's deism is gone.
- Philosophies come, and they go.
 - And, postmodernism will go with them, along with those who are enamored with it.
 - John 12:48 - "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day."

Beneficial Aspects Of Postmodernism

- And when postmodernism is just a footnote in the history books of the next century, God's word will still be here, unchanged, undimmed, and unconquered.
 - Mark 13:31 - "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

God's Word Will Still Be Here

- 2Tim. 3:16-17 - "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."
- 1Peter 1:23-25 - "Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the LORD endures forever. Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you."