

A Bible Study

How has culture gotten to where it is now
and what can we do about it?

A Clash of Worldviews



Christian Theism



Secular Humanism

Christian Theism

There is one God, the Maker of Heaven & Earth (Gen. 1:1; 14:19-20).

The universe is a creation (Gen. 1:1 – 2:2).

Human beings are created in the image of God, male & female (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:22-24; 5:1; 9:6).

Secular Humanism

There is no God & no reality beyond material existence.

The universe *just is*. Either it is eternal, or it sprang from absolutely nothing.

Human beings are the end-product of unguided natural selection over time (evolution).

Christian Theism

From the above affirmations, it follows that the universe & humanity are *teleological*: there is design, order, purpose, & meaning inherent in the universe & humanity that reflect the character & purpose of their Creator.

Secular Humanism

From the above affirmations, it follows that the universe & humanity are *ateleological*: there is no design, order, purpose, or meaning inherent in the universe or humanity. Order, purpose, & meaning must be created by humans and imposed upon nature and the world.

Christian Theism

Marriage is a relationship created by God between one man and one woman, for life (Gen. 1:26-27; Mt. 19:4-6).

The purposes of marriage are joy in intimacy, mutual help, establishing of family, and stewardship of God's creation (Gen. 1:28; 2:23-24; Mal. 2:15; Song of Songs).

Marriage is a reflection & echo of Christ's union with the Church (Eph. 5:32; Rev. 19:6-8).

Secular Humanism

Marriage is a human social - cultural construction, with no divine pattern or sanction.

The purposes of marriage are companionship & individual fulfillment.

Marriage has no significance beyond its human usage.

Christian Theism

Human beings are sinful, fallen from original goodness (Gen. 3:1-24).

Human history is providentially superintended by God toward the end of human redemption from sin, death, & damnation (Gen. 12 – Rev. 22:21).

Human destiny after death is heaven or hell (Rev. 20:4-6, 11-15).

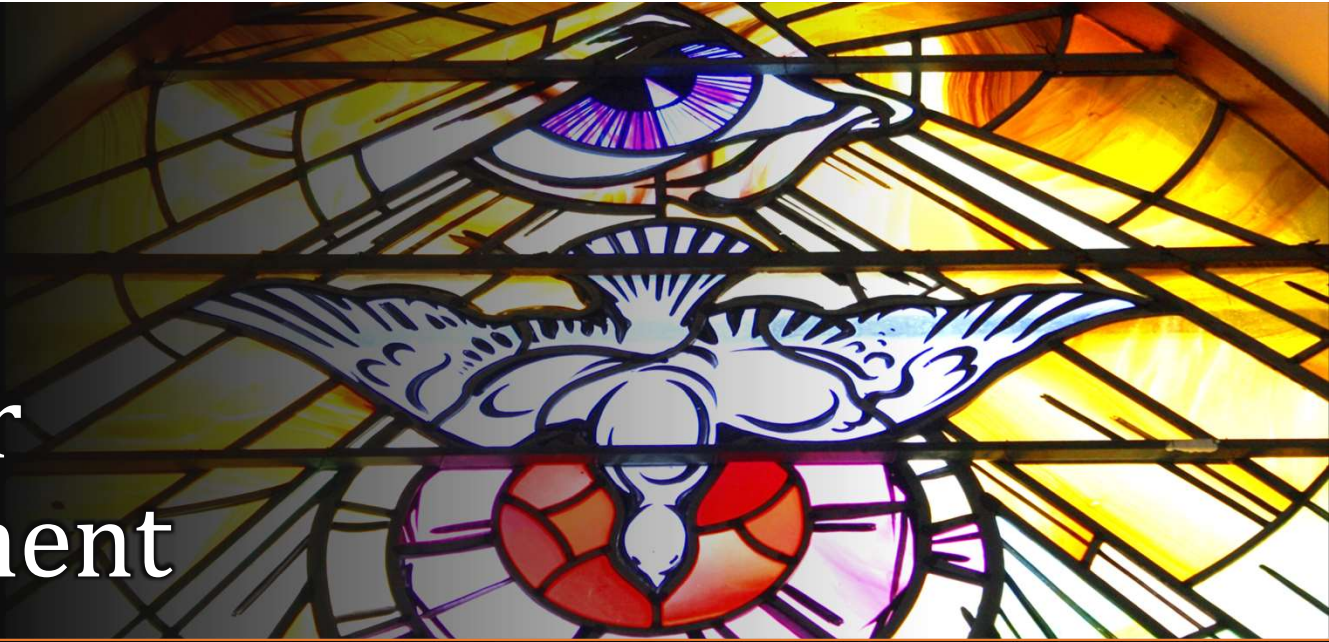
Secular Humanism

Human beings are essentially good, and perfectible.

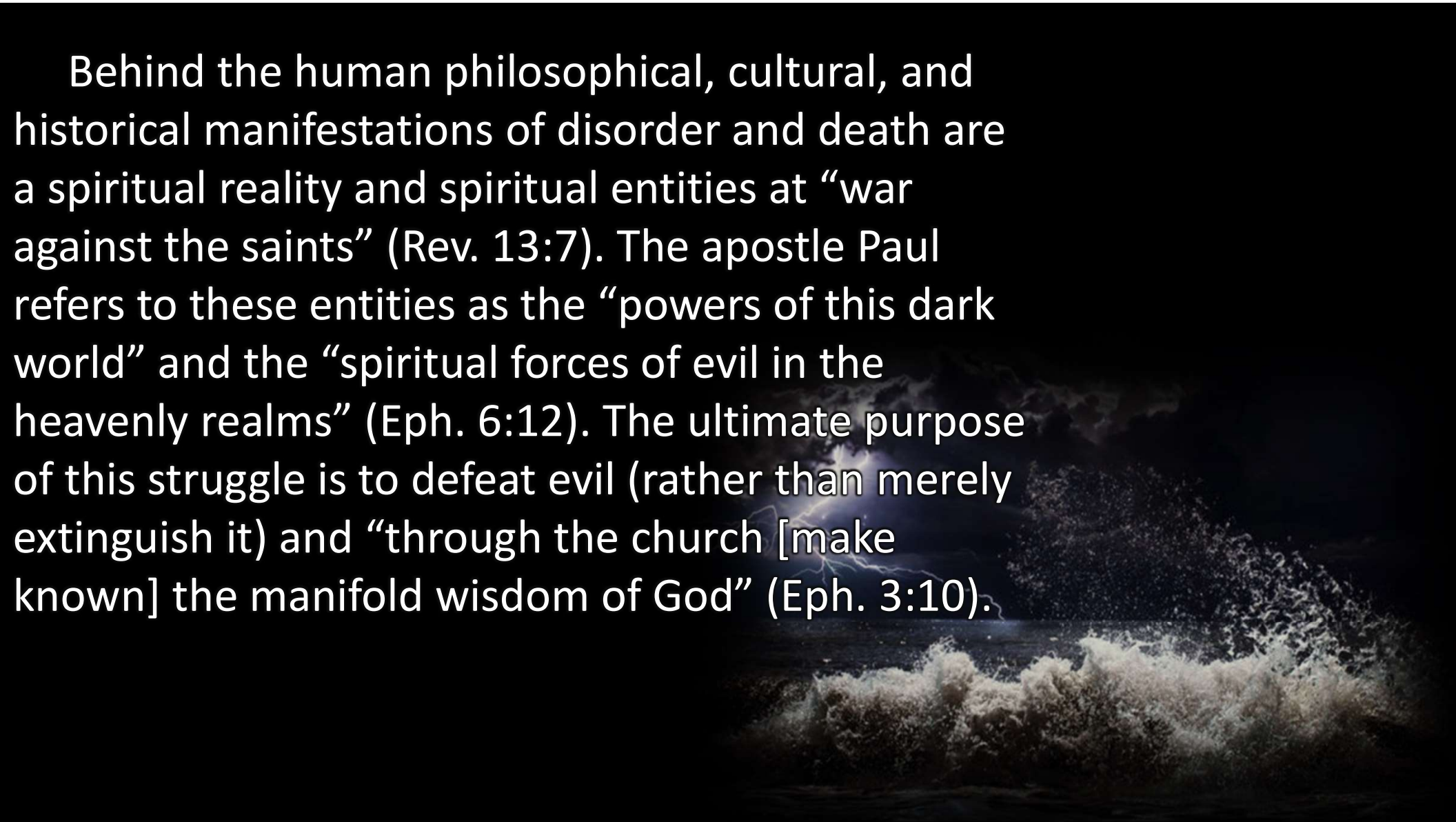
Human history is within the control of human beings, who can bend it toward the end of a material utopia.

Human destiny after death is extinction & oblivion.

The Spiritual Reality of Our Cultural Moment



Behind the human philosophical, cultural, and historical manifestations of disorder and death are a spiritual reality and spiritual entities at “war against the saints” (Rev. 13:7). The apostle Paul refers to these entities as the “powers of this dark world” and the “spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Eph. 6:12). The ultimate purpose of this struggle is to defeat evil (rather than merely extinguish it) and “through the church [make known] the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. 3:10).

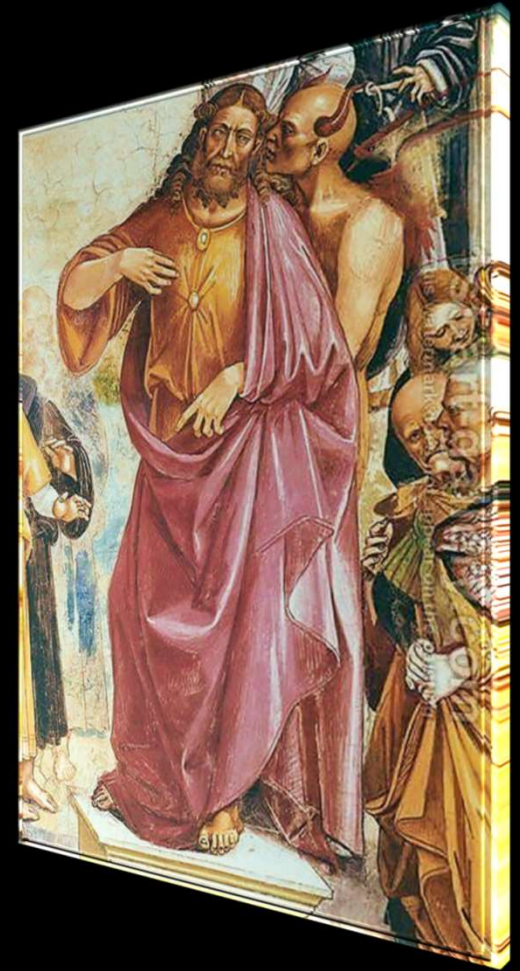


In Romans 1:18-32, the apostle Paul describes the spiritual state of humanity under the wrath and judgement of God for *idolatry*—worshipping created things rather than their Creator. The judgment for this idolatry, Paul writes, is that God “gave them over” to sin. Paul singles out sexual sin and depravity as particularly emblematic of humanity’s refusal to worship God.

In 2 Thess. 2:10–12, Paul writes that, in the last days, the coming of the “lawless one” will be accompanied by “powerful delusion” for those who have refused to “love the truth.” In Eph. 2:1-2, he tells us that the spirit of Satan is even “now at work in those who are disobedient.”



While there will be a final anti-Christ, the apostle John warns that “even now many antichrists have come” (1 Jn. 2:18) and the “spirit of antichrist ... even now is in the world” (1 Jn. 4:3). This does not mean we should be trying to identify specific individuals who might be representatives of evil, but that we need to be prepared to recognize and defend truth and to stand firm in our faith.



Standing Firm



In our struggle against the “spiritual forces of evil,” the apostle Paul exhorts us in his well-known metaphor to put on the “full armor of God” (Eph. 6:10-18). The armor items he lists are truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation, the Spirit, and the Word of God. With these we will be able to “stand firm.” The action he counsels is prayer.

The exhortation to stand firm—in faith, in the Lord, in the Spirit—is repeated about 20 times in the New Testament.

