

## UNDERSTANDING AND RESPONDING TO OUR CURRENT CULTURAL CHAOS

*How did the West decline from its triumphal march to its present sickness? Have there been fatal turns and losses of direction in its development? It does not seem so. The West kept advancing socially in accordance with its proclaimed intentions, with the help of brilliant technological progress. And all of a sudden it found itself in its present state of weakness. This means that the mistake must be at the root, at the very basis of human thinking in the past centuries. I refer to the prevailing Western view of the world which was first born during the Renaissance and found its political expression from the period of the Enlightenment. It became the basis for government and social science and could be defined as rationalistic humanism or humanistic autonomy: the proclaimed and enforced autonomy of man from any higher force above him. It could also be called anthropocentricity, with man seen as the center of everything that exists.* —Alexander Solzhenitsyn, “A World Split Apart,” June 1978, Harvard University

### HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- **The Rejection of God, His Authority, and His Truth** (Gen. 3:1-7; Romans 1:18-32)

*Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?  
The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,  
Against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying,  
“Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.”* (Psalm 2:1-3)

- **The Exaltation of Humanity, Human Autonomy, and the Denial of Human Depravity**

“There is no original perversity in the human heart... Man is naturally good. ...It is by our institutions alone that men become wicked.”  
—Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78)

“It [Rousseau’s thinking] is the idea that I am free when I decide for myself what concerns me, rather than being shaped by external influences. ...Self-determining freedom demands that I break the hold of all such external impositions and decide for myself.”  
—Charles Taylor

- **The Destruction of All Human Institutions, Laws, Norms, and Groups Which Oppress Me**

“I wish to avenge myself against the One who rules above. ...Then will I wander godlike and victorious through the ruins of the world and, giving my words an active force, I will feel equal to the Creator.”  
—Karl Marx (1818-83)

“Man’s discovery that sexual (genital) love afforded him the strongest experiences of satisfaction...must have suggested to him that he should continue to seek the satisfaction of happiness in his life along the path of sexual relations and that he should make genital eroticism the central point of his life.”  
—Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

“To follow Rousseau is to make identity psychological. To follow Freud is to make psychology, and thus identity, sexual. To mesh this combination with Marx is to make identity—and therefore sex—political.”  
—Carl Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self*

Critical Theory is becoming “America’s new institutional orthodoxy.” It is built on the following premises:

- There are no universal truths or objective knowledge (i.e., “Traditional Theory”).
- Thus, all societal structures, laws, and norms are instituted by the people in power (oppressors).
- The “oppressed” are to critique all norms, confront all oppressors, and overthrow all structures.
- In our own nation, oppressors are typically white, male, heterosexual, cisgender, Christians.

## HOW IS THE CHURCH TO EQUIP ITS PEOPLE?

*<sup>27</sup> For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. <sup>28</sup> Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. <sup>29</sup> For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup> Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. <sup>31</sup> Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. <sup>32</sup> So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

—Apostle Paul, Acts 20:27-32

- Teach the whole counsel of God.
- Warn the sheep about false teachers and deception.
- Be salt and light within culture (preserving and serving).
- Live and speak the gospel of Christ.
- Stay unified as a body of believers.

## HOW IS THE INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER TO LIVE IN THIS PRESENT AGE?

*<sup>7</sup> The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. <sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup> Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. <sup>11</sup> If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

—Apostle Peter, 1 Peter 4:7-11

- **THINK!** Be alert. Be discerning. Don’t react. Renew your mind with truth.
- **PRAY!** Pray for our nation, our leaders, our church, and for those who need Christ.
- **LOVE!** Love God and love your neighbor. Pursue unity with believers. Share Christ with unbelievers.
- **OPEN!** Open your heart, your hands, and your home to others. Seek to do good to all people.
- **SERVE!** Use whatever opportunities and gifts you have to bless and serve others.
- **WORSHIP!** Keep your focus on Christ and rejoice in Him! Do all things for the glory of God!