

V. Does a Christian Have a Responsibility to Attempt to Stop or Slow Down the Secularization of His or Her Culture and Society?

A. What is the meaning of "culture" in this context?

By "culture" is meant everything in the environment that is man-made. This includes man-made structures, machines, clothing, processed food, all media of communication, including music and the arts, man-made concepts, systems of thought and belief, and techniques. Culture is the way of life of a society; and it is transmitted primarily through language.

To a large extent it would appear that Western culture is being heavily influenced by secular, humanistic concepts and values. The basic principles of Secular Humanism have permeated almost every institution of education and almost every discipline of thought in Western culture. Secular Humanism threatens to wipe out all absolutes in Western culture, particularly in the realms of reality, truth, and value; and to open the door for the development of an atheistic, materialistic, agnostic, and hedonistic culture.

By "Western culture" is meant the culture of all those societies that have been heavily influenced by the basic principles of the Bible. This includes European societies, most of the societies of North and South America, a few societies in Africa and the Middle East, and those of Australia and New Zealand. This does not include the societies of Asia (with some notable exceptions). Thus the term "Western culture" seems appropriate, since this breakdown of societies is into West and East, Occident and Orient. (Taken together, the population of those societies dominated by Western culture numbers about 2 billion, whereas the population of those societies not dominated by Western culture numbers about 2.7 billion. This does not mean that people claiming religious affiliation with either Christianity or Judaism number 2 billion (actually those claiming such affiliation number 1 billion, 45 million worldwide; and the category of "Christianity" in these statistics includes Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant, as well as some other groups); it simply means that the population of those societies that have been heavily influenced by the basic principles of the Bible number 2 billion.

B. What biblical principles have influenced Western culture?

Among others which could be mentioned, seven such principles seem basic:

1. Belief in God -- a personal, supernatural Being who is the Creator, Savior, and Judge of the world
2. Belief in the reality of the material world -- a non-personal, natural system of finite things, dependent on and subject to God
3. Belief in man as a rational, moral, and spiritual being, distinct from other living things, yet also dependent on God
4. Belief in the reality of truth, and the possibility of knowing truth
5. Belief in absolute moral values, in an absolute distinction between moral good and moral evil