

## Responding to Key Misconceptions in a Secularized Global Youth Culture

The current global culture is largely influenced by one predominant worldview: secular humanism. God is dead and we are at the centre. In this relativistic culture we are god, and consumerism is our religion. This is a generation that does not look to the church for answers, as it believes it to be a dead and empty tradition of the past. Either there is no God, or if He is there, He doesn't really interfere with our lives.

In this session we will address four key false assumptions predominant in the global youth culture:

1. We can only be sure of what we see
2. We are here by accident
3. Everything is going to be ok
4. To find God you have to be "religious"

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### I. Introduction: What Do We Mean by Global Youth Culture?

#### A. Globalism

1. The urban connected generation shares a global culture
2. This affects everyone

#### B. Consumerism

1. Consumerism has affected us in many ways:
  - a. Identity crisis
  - b. Relationship crises

#### C. Secular Humanism

1. Scientific and philosophical background:
  - a. Francis Schaeffer's "line of despair"

### II. Four Key Misconceptions

#### A. We Can Only Be Sure of What We See

1. But what do we do with this uncertainty?
  - a. Lily Allen: “I don't know what's right and what's real anymore And I don't know how I'm meant to feel anymore. When do you think it will all become clear ‘cause I'm being taken over by the fear.”
2. Don't we miss the things that money can't buy?
3. Do we not all sense a spiritual or existential hunger?
  - a. Florence and the Machine: “We never found the answer but we knew one thing: we all have a hunger”

#### B. We Are Here by Accident

Terry Eagleton: “A meaning to life put there by God, and one conjured up by ourselves, may not be the only possibilities. . . . Meaning is also an endlessly unfinished process, a shuffling from one sign to another without fear or hope of closure”.

1. But what do we do with the despair?
  - a. Lil Peep: “They gon' miss me when I'm dead, I lay my head and rest in peace. I'm praying to the sky and I don't even know why”
2. Where does our sense of purpose and inner need for meaning come from?
  - a. C.S. Lewis: “If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.”

#### C. Everything Is Going to Be OK

1. But if we're just supposed to live our lives and try to be happy and to love others, why do we always seem to fail?
2. How do we explain pain and injustice in the world? Are we not part of this broken world?
  - a. Bring Me The Horizon: “I got a hole in my soul growing deeper... The loneliness is haunting me and the weight of the world is getting harder to hold up... Who will fix me now, save me from myself, don't let me drown.”

#### D. To Find God You Have to Be Religious

1. Why is this an issue?
  - a. Religion is increasingly viewed as immoral

- b. “I’m not religious”
2. The very moral concepts that secular culture uses to criticize Christianity are intrinsically Christian.
  - a. Tom Holland: “That human beings have rights; that they are born equal; that they are owed sustenance, and shelter, and refuge from persecution: these were never self-evident truths.” ... “That all men had been created equal and endowed with an inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, were not remotely self-evident truths. That most Americans believed they were owed less to philosophy than to the Bible. ... The truest and ultimate seedbed of the American republic ... was the book of Genesis.”
3. Jesus is for everyone – becoming all things to all men in our current culture.

### III. Responding

- A. There is more to life than this. There is a God who cares about you.
- B. You are not an accident. You were made by a loving God, for a purpose.
- C. Everything is not ok, and it’s not going to be ok, unless we find God.
- D. You don’t have to be “religious” - Jesus makes God accessible to all people.

#### ***Suggested Readings:***

Luke Greenwood, *Global Youth Culture: The Spiritual Hunger of the Largest Unreached Culture Today* (Steiger International, 2019)

Tom Holland, *Dominion: The Making of the Western Mind* (London: Little, Brown, 2019)

Terry Eagleton, *The Meaning of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007 )

Francis A. Schaeffer, *The God Who Is There* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1968)

Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God* (New York: Viking, 2008)