

Self Made King – Understanding the Chaos in Contemporary Culture

Western culture has undergone rapid and dramatic change in a way that few people anticipated. Focus has shifted from truth about reality to a race towards radical self-expression that trumps and silence all other concerns. How do we live as disciples of Christ in such a culture – and how can we respond to the world around us?

Stefan Gustavsson is the director for Apologia – Centre for Christian Apologetics and makes his home in Stockholm. He was the founding General Secretary for the Swedish Evangelical Alliance. Stefan travels widely with apologetic teaching and training and is often involved in university evangelism and public debates. He is the author of several books on Christian apologetics and the Christian mind. Stefan is married to Ingrid and they have three grown children.

Introduction

From Monty Python to International Women's Day 8th of March 2022

Sex – a new state religion

Why is this happening? Two Big Ideas: Secular – Self-Expression

1. Secular: The SELF-MADE king

The Christian Faith Rejected

Secular Humanism Affirmed

The Contrast

“Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save.” Psalm 146:3

“No deity will save us; we must save ourselves.” Humanist Manifesto II

2. Self-Expression: The SELF made king

From Descartes to Sartre: “Existence precedes Essence”

Ideas enhanced by

- Technology: Mobility and Virtual Reality
- Commercialization: New Products Define Identity
- Politics: A World without Borders

The Result

- A New Authority: The Inner Self
- A New Ethical Scale: Pleasure and Pain
- A New Source for Meaning and Identity: Sex

A Perfect Storm:

No God – The Self at the Centre of the Universe – Sexuality the Centre of Self

- A New Society Coming? Confident Pluralism or Totalitarian Culture?

3. There is another KING

Different Responses from Christians (Michael F Bird)

Stockholm Syndrome: If you can't beat them, join them

The Benedict Option: Withdrawal to Virtuous Communities

Hope for a Great Christian Prince: Cultural Reset by Strong Leadership

The Thessalonian Strategy: Acts 17:6-7

“These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, and Jason has received them, and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus.”

Resisting the System under Caesar

Proclaiming Jesus as King

Apologetics:

“he reasoned with them from the Scriptures explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah” Acts 17:2-3

Conclusion

Looking for the Trajectory from the New Testament

The Early Church Turned the Roman World Upside Down