

***Overcoming the leaven of  
Herod***

***(Government imposed religion  
and the unanchored mind)***

# ***In Christ we do find a life filled with purpose and identity!***

- What is *my purpose in life*? In what do I *find fulfillment and am passionate about*?
- The *first step* to a “anchored mind” is found how we view ourselves! **(Col 3:1-3)**

# ***In Christ we do find a life filled with purpose and identity!***

- Colossians 3:1-3 - If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

# ***In Christ we do find a life filled with purpose and identity!***

- We also have *a need to belong!* In our digital world we are bombarded with another purpose that offers fulfillment. Are we being pulled by the culture?
- Jesus knew *the influence that men of power* can have on people! (Lk 12:1-3; Lk 8:15)



# ***In Christ we do find a life filled with purpose and identity!***

- **Luke 12:1-3** - In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2 "For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.

***In Christ we do find a life filled with purpose  
and identity!***

- 3 "Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.

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- **Mark 8:15** - Then He charged them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

***In Christ we do find a life filled with purpose  
and identity!***

- The “the leaven of Herod” is deception from a political system of thinking.
- Today, in western societies, a philosophy called postmodernism is being taught.

# *Satan and the political culture of our times*

- Satan is *the accuser of our brethren!*  
(Rev 12:10)

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- **Revelation 12:10** - Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- He is filled with wrath and even *accuses us before God!* (Zach 3:1-4)

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- **Zechariah 3:1-4** - Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.  
...4 Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."



# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- Satan *did not anticipate forgiveness* through the sacrifice of Christ.
- Satan tried to destroy God's people *through accusations!* (Ezra 4:6)

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- Ezra 4:6 - In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- How does Satan use accusations? He uses them to destroy! (Jn 10:10)

# *Satan and the political culture of our times*

- John 10:10 - "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- Satan does not care if accusations are true, but he wants it to spread!
- How far does it spread? Wise men with integrity will not be fuel for such a fire.
- How were God's people instructed to respond? (Psa 109:2-4)

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- Psalm 109:2-4 - For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful Have opened against me; They have spoken against me with a lying tongue. 3 They have also surrounded me with words of hatred, And fought against me without a cause. 4 In return for my love they are my accusers, But I give myself to prayer.

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- Is it weakness to respond to accusations with love and prayer? NO!
- Satan tempts us to take on personal vengeance. (Rom 12:19-21; 1 Pt 2:23)

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- **Romans 12:19-21** - Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. ... 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.



# *Satan and the political culture of our times*

- 1 Peter 2:23 - who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- When we refuse to do this we *will become like our accusers.*
- When we *refuse mercy* we will be destroyed!  
This poison will enter into our very “body” and “bones.” (Psa 109:16-18; 1 Jn 3:15)

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- **Psalm 109:16-18** - Because he did not remember to show mercy, But persecuted the poor and needy man, That he might even slay the broken in heart. 17 As he loved cursing, so let it come to him; As he did not delight in blessing, so let it be far from him.

# *Satan and the political culture of our times*

- 18 As he clothed himself with cursing as with his garment, So let it enter his body like water, And like oil into his bones.

# ***Satan and the political culture of our times***

- **1 John 3:15** - Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

## *Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.*

- This is a philosophy that *at its core rejects reason* and, as a result, *denies that truth can be found*. Those who claim truth can be found are viewed as bullies.
- How do you describe a system of thought that *denies the ability of men to properly reason?*  
Trying to define this is very difficult.

## *Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.*

- Most who are strongly influenced by postmodernism will reject that they are “postmodernist.” In such a vague system I can see why denial is easy.
- Here is how secular scholars have described this. (Note - All quotes below from: Pluckrose, Helen; Lindsay, James A.. Cynical Theories)

## *Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.*

- What, though, is postmodernism? The online Encyclopedia Britannica defines postmodernism as a late 20th-century movement characterized by *broad skepticism*, *subjectivism*, or *relativism*; a *general suspicion of reason*; and an *acute sensitivity to the role of ideology in asserting and maintaining political and economic power*.



## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- For postmodernism, by contrast, reality is ultimately the product of our socialization and lived experiences, as constructed by systems of language.

## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- Over the decades, it has dramatically altered not only what and how we think but also how we think about thinking. Esoteric, academic, and seemingly removed from the realities of daily existence, this revolution has nevertheless had profound implications for how we interact with the world and with one another. At its heart is a radical worldview that came to be known as “postmodernism.”

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# *Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.*

- Postmodernism is difficult to define, perhaps by design.

## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- Ultimately, the Enlightenment that postmodernists rejected is defined by a belief in objective knowledge, universal truth, science (or evidence more broadly) as a method for obtaining objective knowledge, the power of reason, the ability to communicate straightforwardly via language, a universal human nature, and individualism.

## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- Thinking within a culture changes slowly. Over the last few decades I have noticed a change of emphasis among brethren in how we should view the Bible.
- 1. One of the common themes was to attack the past stands on how we reason from scriptures.  
(Mk 12:26)

## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- 2. Writers from college like Abilene Christian college and Pepperdine began to literally rewrite the history of the restoration movement.
- 3. Rather than debate how we should reason from scripture, they simply asserted that the approaches the men advocated and used were completely determined by the culture of that time.



## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- 4. They asserted to know the motivations and prejudices of these men and then discarded their arguments without even trying to answer them.  
(Prov 18:13)
- 5. They asserted that men were influenced solely by philosophers of that time such as John Bacon and John Locke.



## *Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.*

- 6. They then labeled those who took the position that we need positive authority from the scriptures in all that we teach and practice. They called them “propositional Baconians.” (Jn 12:48-50)

## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- 7. They attack the basis of how words and language communicates by attacking CENI (command, example and necessary conclusion) as a “church of Christ” man-made tradition. **(Jn 17:7-8, 20)**
- 8. When pressed to show how should we use the Bible many would appeal to general concepts such as “read the Bible as a story” (Ex. N.T. Wright – Play)

## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- 9. Great emphasis was given to how we cannot understand the Bible unless we have a deep understanding of the ancient culture in which it was first written.
- 10. Because some have claimed to have such a deep knowledge, they have rejected the role of women as a “social construct” or as a product of “culture.”

## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- 11. How can we know how to read scripture? Jesus showed all men how to reason from and thus to understand His word! (Jn 17:17-19)
- 12. In time, those that pushed these views have now rejected the very foundations of Bible authority and in turn rejected almost all doctrinal and moral standards that go against the present culture.

## ***Drinking from the wells of postmodernism.***

- 13. The closest system of religious thought to the progressive movement is atheism and agnosticism. The elements of postmodernism are found here.

***All justice and purpose must be rooted in  
the character of God***

- God's character *does not change!*  
(Mal 3:6; James 1:17; Heb 13:8)

***All justice and purpose must be rooted in  
the character of God***

- **Malachi 3:6** - "For I am the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.

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- **James 1:17** - Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.



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- Hebrews 13:8 - Jesus Christ is the same  
yesterday, today, and forever.

***All justice and purpose must be rooted in  
the character of God***

- The universal truths found from God's holiness is to be imitated by all men.
- Those that deny a universal standard of truth do not know God.

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the character of God***

- What does it *mean for God to be holy?*  
(1 Sam 2:2; Isa 40:25; Hosea 11:9)

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- 1 Samuel 2:2 - "No one is holy like the LORD,  
For there is none besides You, Nor is there  
any rock like our God.

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- **Isaiah 40:25** - " To whom then will you liken Me, Or to whom shall I be equal?" says the Holy One.

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- Hosea 11:9 - I will not execute the fierceness of My anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim. For I am God, and not man, The Holy One in your midst; And I will not come with terror.

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- God appealed to His holiness to teach His people how to have a relationship with Him.  
**(Lev 11:44-45; 19:2; 20:26)**

***All justice and purpose must be rooted in  
the character of God***

- **Leviticus 11:44-45** - 'For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy. Neither shall you defile yourselves with any creeping thing that creeps on the earth. 45 'For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy.



*All justice and purpose must be rooted in  
the character of God*

- Leviticus 19:2 - "Speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

***All justice and purpose must be rooted in  
the character of God***

- **Leviticus 20:26** - 'And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine.

# *All justice and purpose must be rooted in the character of God*

- Consider how you might begin a relationship with another. What must you learn?
- God wants us to know what He is like so that we might change!
- What is justice? Whatever God says that it is.  
**(Mic 6:8)**

***All justice and purpose must be rooted in  
the character of God***

- **Micah 6:8** - He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

# *How God's character teaches us about justice*

- What does it mean for God to be just?
- **Justice** - ... (3) as the standard by which judgments and evaluations are to be made right, justice (MT 12.18); (4) as the basis on which a judgment is made reason for a judgment (JN 3.19)

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- All of God's *ways are right* and thus is always based upon truth. **(Deut 32:3-4)**

# *How God's character teaches us about justice*

- Deuteronomy 32:3-4 - For I proclaim the name of the LORD: Ascribe greatness to our God. 4 He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- He will give others *what is their due.*  
**(Job 34:11-12, 6)**



## ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- **Job 34:11-12** - For He repays man according to his work, And makes man to find a reward according to his way. 12 Surely God will never do wickedly, Nor will the Almighty pervert justice.

# *How God's character teaches us about justice*

- The foundation of God's throne is justice.  
(Ps 89:14)

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- **Psalm 89:14** - Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face.

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- What does God teach us about accountability and justice? *What is really fair?*
- Justice begins with *individual responsibility*. I am not guilty for what others have done.  
**(Ezk 18:20-21; 2 Cor 5:10; Rom 14:11-12)**

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- **Ezekiel 18:20-21** - "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.

## ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- 21 " But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

# *How God's character teaches us about justice*

- Accountability demands evidence and a just process. God promises that all men will be judged individually in a righteous process.  
**(Rom 2:5-6)**

## ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- **Romans 2:5-6** - But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds":



# *How God's character teaches us about justice*

- Why do men love justice?
- Being created in the image of God we have in our nature a recognition of fairness and a hatred of those that cheat and steal. Children say: "That's not fair!"
- If we do not fear God, that desire can be perverted. (Acts 26:9-11; 23:1)

## ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- **Acts 26:9-11** - "Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 "This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them.

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- 11 "And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- A person who seeks to be just *must act on principle* (universal law) in all things.
- If he does not, Satan can take one's desire for justice and *emotionally turn them into instruments of great injustice*. (Grace can be used as a cover for injustice!)

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- A country will fall when *it turns it back on true justice.*
- Rome had just laws, but cowardly men *that denied justice.* (Acts 25:16; 8:33)

## ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- **Acts 25:16** - "To them I answered, 'It is not the custom of the Romans to deliver any man to destruction before the accused meets the accusers face to face, and has opportunity to answer for himself concerning the charge against him.'

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- **Acts 8:33** - In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth."



# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- God's law became powerless when it was not *enforced with justice*. (Hab 1:3-4)



# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- **Habakkuk 1:3-4** - Why do You show me iniquity, And cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me; There is strife, and contention arises. 4 Therefore the law is powerless, And justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous; Therefore perverse judgment proceeds.

# ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- Even though a righteous law may exist, if moral people are not *involved in the enforcement of it then it becomes powerless.*
- “Our Constitution was made for a moral and religious people; it is wholly inadequate for the government of any other.” - **John Adams**

## ***How God's character teaches us about justice***

- “But when religion loses its voice and the media worship success, when right and wrong become relativised and morality is condemned as “judgmental”, when people lose all sense of honour and shame and there is nothing they won't do if they can get away with it, no regulation will save us. ....

# *How God's character teaches us about justice*

- Markets ... depend on respect for the people affected by our decisions. Lose that and we lose not just money and jobs but something more significant still: freedom, trust and decency, the things that have a value, not a price.” - Jonathan Sacks

## ***How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church***

- We are currently seeing a series of dogmas that are being *force-fed by the power of government*. Resisting this teaching has denied many their jobs and much more.  
**(Rev 13:16-17, 11-13; 18:23; 19:20; 20:10)**

## *How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church*

- Revelation 13:16-17 - He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.



## *How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church*

- Revelation 13:11-13 - Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

## ***How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church***

- 13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.



## *How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church*

- Revelation 18:23 - "The light of a lamp shall not shine in you anymore, and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall not be heard in you anymore. For your merchants were the great men of the earth, for by your sorcery all the nations were deceived.

## *How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church*

- Revelation 19:20 - Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

## *How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church*

- Revelation 20:10 - The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

## ***How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church***

- The dogmas that are bred from this philosophy are used to accuse innocent people of both motives and behaviors without evidence or due process.
- If one wants a job or seeks a public education, they will be exposed to these teachings and through direct threats are expected to accept them.

## ***How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church***

- These teachings are *bred in cynicism and blossom into blind hatred.*
- Hateful attitudes towards *males in general and the role of men* are being promoted. We are seeing a collapse of male leadership both in schools and in the church. They face a hostile world simply because they were born a male!

## *How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church*

- Hateful attitudes towards local churches and their leaderships without evidence of wrongdoing or ever having ever approached brethren with their concerns is being promoted. Many cast off their brethren in bitterness.

## ***How our current “political leaven” is impacting the church***

- Hateful attitudes towards those that *carefully reason from the scriptures and with love,* stand upon that truth is being promoted.



# ***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- How did *the Apostles respond?* (Act 5:40-42)



## ***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- **Acts 5:40-42** - And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

## ***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

## ***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- We do not need to put our passions into politics but *into teaching the gospel!*
- It is crucial we do not take on that *which is in God's hands.* (Rev 2:27; 19:15)

## *How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?*

- **Revelation 2:27** - 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels' -- as I also have received from My Father;

## ***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- **Revelation 19:15** - Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

## ***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- In times of persecution, *genuine faith* is a bright light! (**Lev 19:18; Mt 22:37-40**)

## ***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- **Leviticus 19:18** - 'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.'

***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- Through Christ we will always be “more than conquerors!” (Rom 8:35-37)



## ***How should we respond to unjust accusations and persecution?***

- **Romans 8:35-37** - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.