



COHERENCE THEORY

Week 2

TRUTH:

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isn't true for you!

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John 18:37-38 Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

Amos 5:10 They hate him who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks the truth.

Recap From Week 1

History of Ideas

1. Pre-modern Era (precedes the 17th century)

- Belief in the supernatural
- Belief in realism
- Objective Reality outside of ones own perception
- World is Designed for a purpose (Teleology)
- Language Can convey truth and reality
- Creature/Creator Distinction
- God is the center of Truth
- Major Thinkers: Augustine (354 -430), Thomas aquinas (1225-1274)

2. Modern Era (Around 1789 French revolution time until fall of Berlin Wall 1989??)

- Started with Enlightenment
- Not complete rejection of pre-modern ideas
- Increasing Secularism
- Age of Reason, Scientific Discoveries
- Bible invalid if it can not stand up to the bar of reason
- The embracing of naturalism
- Human reason alone can bring knowledge and understanding of mankind
- Truth has to be proven with absolute certainty

- Skepticism
- Man is the center of truth
- Scientific Positivism, Logical Positivism
- Immanuel Kant (1724 - 1804) first major break away from enlightenment towards post modernism (Critique of pure reason)
- Major Thinkers: Renee Descartes (1596 - 1640), John Locke (1632 - 1704), Karl Marx (1818-1883), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

3. Post Modern Era (After WWII. Nietzsche was a forerunner in thought)

- Relativism
- Religion is a bad word
- Doctrine is bad
- Language cannot convey truth and meaning
- Spirituality is a good word
- No such thing as objective truth. Everything is subjective
- the deconstruction of language itself
- Major Thinkers: Martin Heidegger (1889- 1976), Jacques Derrida (1926 - 1984), Jean-Francois Lyotard (1924-1998)
- Postmodernism in art
- Postmodernism in movies
- Postmodernism in architecture

What is Postmodernism?

- Philosophy that affirms no objective truth or reality especially in regards to religion or spirituality.
- that may be true for you but not for me
- It is a rejection of modernism. It seeks to correct modernism by denying absolute truth
- PM has deep suspicions of meta narratives (grand stories). It is a world view that denies world views.
- Largest area PM has had influence in the area of language. Language according to PM cannot convey truth or meaning
- Truth and meaning pop into a page as someone reads
- Not interested in reality
- **Is PM New?? No....**
- Religious Pluralism. All religions are equally true and valid

Some Positive Elements of Postmodernism

- Recognizes that the ideologies of modernism have oppressed people
- Recognizes in spite of modernism optimistic view of humanity, individuals suffer from power, greed, etc..modernism taught people were by nature good.
- We don't have to be afraid of Plausibility and Probability

Some Negative Elements of Postmodernism

- rejection of worldviews so it is self defeating. Its the grand story that rejects all other grand stories.
- You can't know nature of realty. PMs deny you access and conceal for themselves what they deny for you. no one has access to ultimate realty

Postmodern and Oneism Correlation

- Rejection of truth ushers in interfaith movement. All religions become equally valid. Imagine all the people
- Because PM has shown atheism and rationalism to be bad, it helps usher in New forms of spirituality.
- Rationalism and PM have left a gap in any meaning to life which had helped usher in paganism and new spirituality
- PM says all claims to truth are power plays. Paganism is about removing imperialism.
- Both reject objective realty and truth
- Both emphasize experience even if that experience is fallible and relative to others experience
- Both would affirm that all paths in life are valid
- Doctrine is bad

Questions/Comments

1 Peter 1:24-25 For "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever."

Resources & Further Reading

- Explaining Postmodernism: Skepticism and Socialism from Rousseau to Foucault (Expanded Edition) by Stephen R. C. Hicks
- Pre modern, modern and Post modern (Ken Samples audio) -> <http://www.reasons.org/files/mc-cst/aworldofdifference.mp3downloads/part3.mp3>
- Dangers of Post modernism (gotquestions.com) -> <http://www.gotquestions.org/postmodernism-dangers.html>
- What is Post modernism (about.com) -> <http://christianity.about.com/od/glossary/a/Postmodernism.htm>
- Post Modern Christianity (gotquestions) -> <http://www.gotquestions.org/post-modern-Christianity.html>
- Philosophical Foundations for a Christian World View (especially part 2 on Theories of truth and post modernism) by J.P Moreland and William Lane Craig

My Notes: