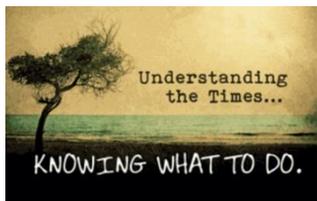


Understanding the Times
1 Chronicles 12:32; Acts 17:22-34



There are two opposing spiritual ideas vying for the American mind today: Biblical Christianity, on the one hand, and Secular Humanism on the other. *Secular* in that it focuses on the moment, and *humanism* in that it exalts man above everything else. There are those who want to build on the

Judeo-Christian heritage that was the foundation of this great nation, and there are those who want to abandon those principles in favor of the shifting sands of pluralism and liberalism. I think we can best understand the times if we see the battlefield on four areas.

I. The conflict between the belief in the _____ and _____.

A. The Christian worldview is based on a belief in the _____.

1. We believe there is a God who is Creator and that he _____ is to be worshiped.
2. We believe that God has revealed himself in the person of Jesus Christ and that he alone is _____.

B. The humanists _____ the supernatural altogether.

1. Humanism begins with a premise that there is no _____, or if there is he can't be _____ and he's irrelevant.

C. The humanist teaches that we are not here by divine creation, but we are here by a series of cosmic _____.

D. Humanists believe we are evolving into _____ beings and that we will eventually be able to resolve all our problems on our own.

E. Naturalism rejects the idea that the Bible is the _____ Word of God.

F. Atheists are not the only ones who reject the basic premises of Christianity, _____ theologians are doing the same.

II. The conflict between the spirit of _____ and _____.

A. The Christian worldview is that God had a _____ in the establishing of nations.

B. God _____ us and _____ us through the history of nations.

C. Multiculturalism is the breaking down of national barriers and the exalting of a _____ of cultures.

D. According to the humanist, the hope for the future is a _____ government where man is able to redeem himself.

E. It's no accident that so many of our national heroes are _____ these days.

F. Cultural _____ are underscored.

G. Western civilization is constantly _____ these days because it represents Christianity and because there has been a strong patriotic feeling in America.

H. The result of multicultural emphasis is twofold:

1. There is little or no sense of _____.

2. There is little sense of _____.

III. The conflict between a respect for _____ verses _____.

A. The Christian worldview is that God has established _____ for behavior for our benefit.

- B. It is extremely important that we reestablish a standard for the _____ and _____ realm.
- C. The humanist is seeking to abolish any absolute standards, so truth is determined by a _____ opinion, or by personal _____, or by the latest _____ evidence.
- D. If we come to a place in society where, just because we _____ like doing something that gives us license to do it, it's going to be _____.
- E. The adversary is encroaching on Christian territory and it's time to get in the _____ and to take a _____.

IV. The conflict between the _____ verses the _____.

- A. The Christian believes there is _____ beyond the grave.
- B. The humanist still _____ at the idea of life after death.
- C. We believe that God is our Creator – He alone is worthy of _____.
- D. We believe Jesus is our Savior – He alone can forgive our _____ and conquer the _____.
- E. We believe that God has established absolute guidelines for our benefit and they are communicated accurately in the Bible – and it alone is the infallible _____ of _____.
- F. We believe every day has meaning because it is just the _____ to eternity.

1 Chronicles 12:32 (NIV84)

³² men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do—200 chiefs, with all their relatives under their command...

Acts 17:22–34 (NIV84)

²² Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴ “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. ²⁷ God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. ²⁸ ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

²⁹ “Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man’s design and skill. ³⁰ In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”

³² When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, “We want to hear you again on this subject.” ³³ At that, Paul left the Council. ³⁴ A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.