



Myth Made Fact with Dr. Louis Markos

Lesson 1: Christ Over Culture

Outline:

We are committed to bringing Athens and Jerusalem together.

- What hath Athens to do with Jerusalem? Tertullian
- Athens and Jerusalem do belong together.
- A Christian can learn things of goodness, truth, and beauty from pagan (ancient Greek & Roman) literature.

What it means to believe that Christ is over culture:

- If you are a Christian, where do you go to find truth in its most absolute and perfect form?
 - You go to Christ himself. The most perfect source of truth is the incarnate Son of God.
 - The Bible points to Jesus. The center of our faith is a person.
 - If we understand that the ultimate source of truth is a person, then that truth can find its way to us in many different ways.
 - Only in the Bible do we get the perfect reliable word of God.
- All people yearn for God.
 - We are fallen; we are depraved.
 - We are still in the image of God.
 - He has written eternity in the hearts of men.
 - These yearnings find their way into Greek mythology.
- The Bible is not a textbook.
 - The Bible tells us everything we need to know for salvation in Christ and how to live a Godly Christian life.
 - The Bible is not intended to tell us everything we need to know for life.
 - It is not intended to be an encyclopedia.
 - God can teach us through a multitude of different ways.

One way to look at the relationship between Athens and Jerusalem or Christ and Culture (H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*).

- Two Extremes
 - **Christ against culture**
 - This is, in many ways, the Old Testament model.
 - We need to separate ourselves so we won't be contaminated from the world.
 - However, we are supposed to be salt and light in the world.
 - Be in the world but not of it.



- **Christ of culture**
 - This is a more theologically liberal view.
 - If the world is changing we need to change with it.
- In the middle:
 - **Christ over culture**
 - We can take culture up into Christianity.
 - We don't have to completely accept it or reject it.
 - We can find things in it that are redemptive.
 - Pagan wisdom can be baptized and taken up.

Three ways to read a link to Christianity in pagan myth:

- Christ against culture: That thing is a satanic deception to confuse Christians when they come later.
- Christ of culture: The liberal way of reading it is because Christianity is a myth.
- Christ over culture: Through this myth a little seed of truth is shining through and it can point the way to the fullness of Christ that is to come. It is a preparation for the coming of the good news.
 - God used some of the mythology to prepare the pagan heart for the coming of Christ.

What does total depravity mean?

- The belief that every part of our being has been subjected to the fall.
- There is no part of me that is safe from the fall.
- We cannot save ourselves, but total depravity does not mean utter depravity.

Natural Law

- We have a sense of right and wrong inside.