

# WHAT, THEN, SHOULD WE DO?

1 Cor 3:8-17; 1 Jn 2:15-17

## I. UNDERLYING CORINTHIAN/USA PROBLEMS (naturalism/secularism/worldliness)

- A. In Corinth, alleged *pneumatikos* actually *psuchitos*, indeed *sarkinoi* who are actually *sarkikoi*—not only flesh but fleshly—materialistic in both philosophy and daily life.
  - a. Atomists: Democritus (atoms-in-motion constitute reality)
  - b. Humanists: Protagoras (“man is the measure” and making him comfortable the end)
  - c. Hedonists: Epicurus (enjoy the moment, cultivate pleasures)
- B. In USA this-worldly worldviews pervasive
  - a. Atomists: Carl Sagan (“the cosmos is all . . .”)
  - b. Humanists: John Dewey (helped draft “Humanist Manifesto”)
  - c. Hedonists: Hugh Hefner (indulge yourself)

## II. ULTIMATE THEOLOGICAL ISSUE: LET GOD BE GOD, TRULY TRANSCENDENT/IMMANENT

- A. This-worldly idolatries abound
  - 1. Cosmic religions
    - a. Much of environmentalism, e.g. John Muir
    - b. Pantheistic religions, e.g. Matthew Fox
  - 2. Useful deities making life more comfortable—prosperity gospel, self-help programs
- B. Orthodox response: repudiate this-worldly Liberalism
  - 1. Karl Barth & Neo-Orthodoxy—*Church Dogmatics*
  - 2. Richard Niebuhr & critique of Liberalism: “a God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross.”
  - 3. J.G. Machen repudiates this-worldly Liberalism, providing scholarly resources for Fundamentalism

## III. CHRISTIAN CALLING: ASSIST (working & watering) in GOD’S KINGDOM-MAKING WORK

- A. Establishing a firm foundation: Christ Jesus the Lord
  - 1. **Kerygma:** Proclaiming message (value of Peter & Apollos *et al*)—missions, evangelism ever-at-the leading edge of the Church (Kenneth Scott Latourette’s *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*); Campus Crusade (now Crue), promotes Jesus film, with Nazarene & other missions support endeavors
  - 2. **Didache:** Grounding believers in Truth re Christ (time Paul spent in Corinth & Ephesus)—hundreds of cathedral schools, universities, liberal arts colleges, Bible colleges
- B. Erecting various sections of the superstructure on the foundation: gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, some of which have eternal worth
  - 1. Personal:
    - a. Constant devotions—Pietism; Puritanism; Evangelicalism
    - b. Persistent personal evangelism—Southern Baptist emphasis
    - c. Distinctive evidences:
      - 1. Dress—skirts & ties & jewelry & watches
      - 2. Hair—long & short, on display or under cover
      - 3. Language—profanity & by-words, WOKE & politically incorrect
      - 4. Behavior—theaters & dances & entertainment
      - 5. Holy days—Christmas & Easter & Halloween
      - 6. Diet—vegetarian & Keto, clean & unclean
      - 7. Symbols—Cross & fish & flag
  - 2. Public:
    - a. Theologies—Augustine; Aquinas (NB vision at end of life); Luther; Calvin; Schleiermacher; Barth
    - b. Liturgies—Old Latin Rite; contemporary/casual/seeker-friendly
    - c. Music—Gregorian chant & hymns & Southern Gospel & rock & roll
    - d. Monastic movements—Benedictines; Franciscans; Dominicans; Jesuits
    - e. Schools & universities—Oxford; Cambridge; Harvard; Princeton; USC; SMU; MNU
    - f. Hospitals—St Francis;
    - g. Reform movements—Cluniac Reforms; Oxford movement; America’s great awakenings; para-church organizations (Navigators; Prison Fellowship; Compassion et al.)
- C. Maintain God’s Temple
  - 1. Persons—sanctified holy by Holy Spirit
  - 2. Church—purified as living sacrifice, surrendered to God