

Strange New World

Prometheus Unbound

Learning Objectives

- Understand the historical, philosophical, and technological factors driving identity politics today.
- Gain a Biblical Perspective on Personhood
- Learn how to engage the culture which is often hostile to Christian beliefs

Why Is This Seminar Important?

- **1 Chronicles 12:32, Christians should understand the times**
- **1 John 4:1, with wisdom test every worldview and**
- **Romans 12:2. avoid conformity to the world's thinking**

Review (BIG Idea)

Western culture has shifted from an **external** understanding of identity (defined by God) to an **internal** understanding (defined by feelings)

Scripture References: Week 3

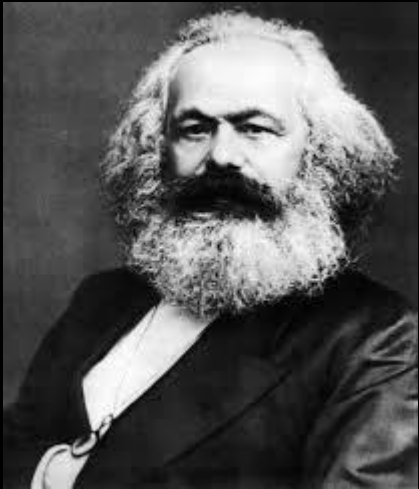
- Psalm 37:1
- Colossians 3:23-24
- Isaiah 24:4-5
- Revelation 21:4
- Revelation 4
- Psalm 145:13
- Galatians 5:13
- 1 Peter 2:16

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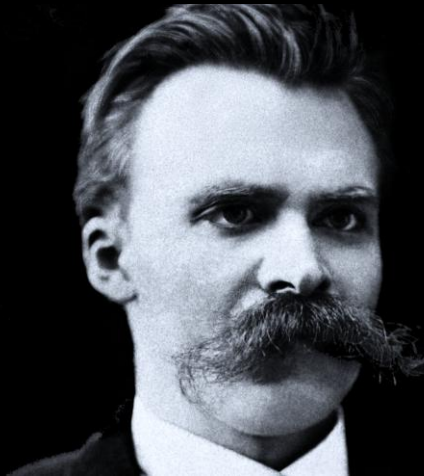
How did Western Society come to reject moral structure?

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Karl Marx



Frederick Nietzsche



Oscar Wilde



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- Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) – German Philosopher
- Marx rejected God and viewed morality and religion as oppressive.
- He believed human nature changes with economic conditions.
- He taught that workers could overthrow the bourgeoisie and create a utopian society.
- The key flaw is that fallen human nature remains the same, even when power changes hands.
- Lenin's example shows that dictators do not willingly surrender power, often with devastating human cost.

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- Friedrich Nietzsche - (1844-1900)
- If God is rejected, ideas dependent on God lose authority.
- The highest human achievement becomes self-creation.
- Christianity is viewed as a crutch for the weak and as promoting weakness over strength.
- Morality becomes unstable and subject to change.
- Self-expression replaces objective beauty or truth.

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- Oscar Wilde- (1854-1900)
- Main idea: Wilde popularized the view that true identity is found in expressing inner desires, while society's moral expectations are oppressive when they restrict that expression.
- Trueman highlights four themes:
 - The self as art: life becomes something to craft and express.
 - Authenticity over convention: suppressing desire is seen as denying the true self.
 - Sexuality as identity: desires increasingly define who a person is.
 - Psychology over authority: inward feelings replace religion, tradition

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- Unifying Theme: The thread connecting Rousseau, the Romantics, Marx, Nietzsche, and Wilde is not that they all agree politically. Each of these thinkers contributed to relocating moral authority from an objective order outside the individual to the individual's inner life. Each thinker advances one step in the same broad movement:
 - Rousseau "discovers" the authentic self.
 - The Romantics celebrate expressing the authentic self.
 - Marx seeks to remove social structures that frustrate the authentic self.
 - Nietzsche empowers the self to create its own values.
 - Wilde transforms self-expression into an aesthetic ideal, treating one's life as a work of art.

Strange New World: Next Week

“Guest Speaker” Video Discussion Freud

Sexual Psychology and Politicizing Sex