



Partial explanations

1. A response to the severity of human depravity.
2. An expression of a gradual disclosure of the divine nature.
3. Shared part of ancient culture.
4. An example of accommodation to human nature and development.
5. A part of the bigger story of human redemption.

Why are some of these explanations so hard for us to accept?

A popular misconception #1
The N.T. God is distinct from the O.T. God.

A popular misconception #2
Biblical words picture God as a “diabolical, insecure, bully.”

A popular misconception #3
Everything in the Bible is written to us and about us.

A popular misconception #4
Our cultural perspective is superior to all other cultural perspectives.

1 Corinthians 13:12

“For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.”

“The Bible tells us that God made man in His image. Ever since the creation man has been trying to return the favor.”

“The idea of god was nothing more than a symbolic representation of the collective values of the society that worships (itself through) him, she, or it.”

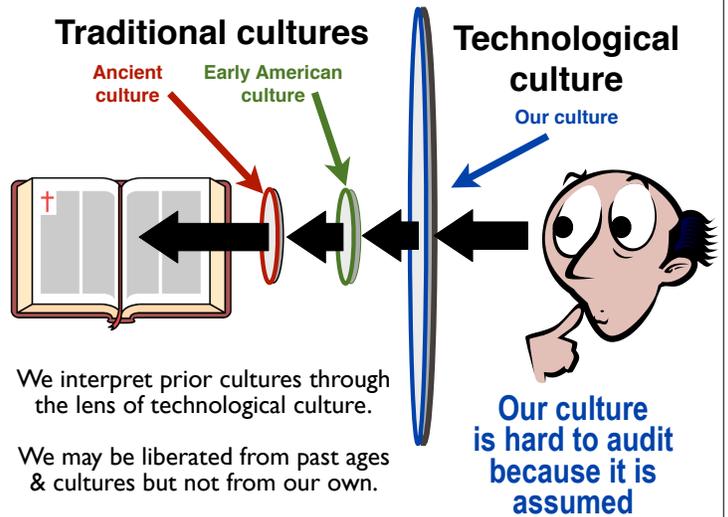
Emile Durkheim

1858-1917



Learning to identify our “sacred cows”

<i>Traditional culture</i>	<i>Technological culture</i>
Religious Traditional	Secular Scientific
Compartmental reasoning	Hierarchical reasoning
Relational community	Individual autonomy
Meditation “To become”	Production “To accomplish”



Some examples of shifting perspectives.

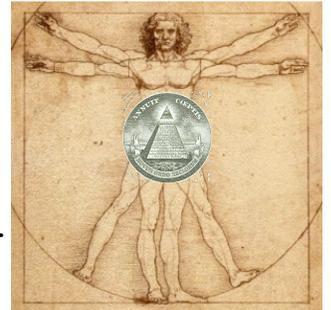


- “Onward Christian Soldiers”
- Science and the Bible
- Capital punishment for blasphemy
- Corporal punishment of children
- Human rights expectations

Understanding the roots of technological culture.

The Enlightenment

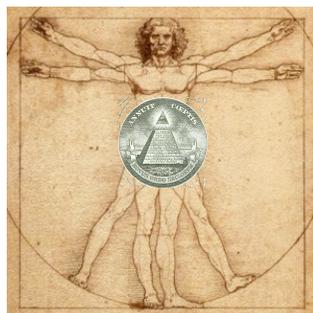
- **Empirical Reason** - over tradition, religion, and superstition.
- **Philosophical Materialism** - Reality is nothing but space, time, energy, and matter.
- **Individual Freedom** - Question all external authority. Roles & value are based on achievements.



Secular Humanism

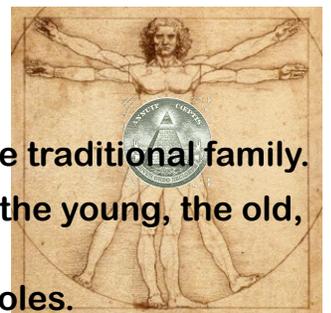
Defining reality and making decisions as though God did not exist or did not matter.

- Total **Temporality**
- Radical **Relativity**
- Absolute **Autonomy**
- Egocentric **Entitlement**
- Metaphysical **Materialism**
- Comprehensive **Contingency**



Some of the challenges of a technological society

- Deterioration of the traditional family.
- Marginalization of the young, the old, the infirmed.
- Confused gender roles.
- Productivity over character.
- **Psychological challenges** - personal insecurity, guilt, lack of self-discipline, stress, lack of community experience.

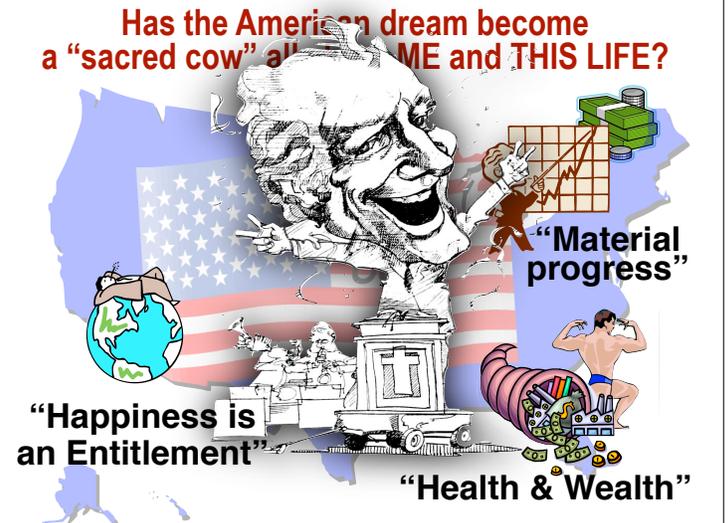


The Fruit of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,
goodness, faithfulness, gentleness,
self-control, etc.

We find our significance in
what we accomplish
not in who we become.



Matthew 4:4

“But He answered and said, ‘It is written, ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

There are some things
more important than
temporal physical life.

Matthew 10:28

“Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

Our sense of ethics reflects
a temporal-material assumption
about reality.

Cultural considerations

1. Do we respect the fact that **Biblical literature** is written within traditional cultures.
2. Are **eternity and community** a major part of our identity and ethics?
3. Are our roles and positions **ascribed** more than achieved?
4. Are logical **inconsistencies** accepted out of respect for a God centered universe?

“It’s not what I don’t understand about Jesus that bothers me; it’s what I do understand that bothers me”

Mark Twain

“Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them”

E. Paul Harvey