

CULTURAL INFLUENCES **(“ISMS” in Our Current Culture)**

- POSTMODERNISM . . .** Rejects all forms of authoritative truth including the absolute authority of the Holy Scriptures. Espouses tolerance without Biblical moral appraisal.
- HUMANISTIC-SECULARISM . . .** Morality based on the well-being of an individual and mankind and not on a religious system.
- PRAGMATISM . . .** Without an absolute moral authoritative compass to gauge direction, “Does it work?” has replaced “Is it right?”
- INDIVIDUALISM . . .** A psychological turn inward expressed in independence and a freedom from commitment and responsibility to others - an “I owe it to myself” mindset.
- PLURALISM . . .** A tolerance for a multiple world-view espousing multiple religions and multiple ways to achieve spiritual and secular gain.
- RELATIVISM . . .** What is deemed important and acceptable is relative to one’s personal point of view or current circumstances.
- MATERIALISM . . .** An all-consuming pursuit of money, possessions and power. Time, energy and resources are often quickly swallowed up leaving people harried, dissatisfied and unfulfilled - sometimes living from day to day.
- HEDONISM . . .** Seeks fulfillment or escape from disappointment in a whirlwind of “Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die.”

“ME-ISM”

**All these “isms” could be summarized as “me-ism”
“Meet my needs on my timetable by my standards”**

AN ANTIDOTE FOR THE CURRENT CULTURE

Self-centeredness, the common denominator of our worldly current culture, is as old as sin. Its antidote is a life of Christian stewardship which emphasizes living for God rather than self. Defined, **“Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God’s family, the Church, in managing all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes.”** Christian stewardship is a lifestyle, not a random event. Its promotion should be a priority for every pastor, congregation and individual Christian to offset the “me-ism” of our current culture.

APPLYING THE ANTIDOTE

Conversion to Christ will enable a person to turn from worldly cultural pursuits to a lifestyle of God glorifying stewardship. The motto of the SELC District is **Show Everyone Life in Christ**. Individual Christians should be encouraged to personally witness Christ. A personal rededication to **Search the Word -Share the Faith - Fund the Mission** is imperative. Culture should not shape the Church. The Church should shape culture for a life of Christian stewardship. An important priority of pastoral ministry is equipping the saints to share the Gospel both personally in their daily lives and collectively through congregational, district and synodical programs.

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