

28A MYTHBUSTERS AND ISMS

MYTHBUSTERS

Over the course of the previous chapters, we have examined, and, hopefully, put to rest, a number of myths concerning engineering and faith:

- Scientists produce all of our technology: robots, cell phones, pacemakers, computers,...
- Faith is a blind leap, without any evidence.
- Faith is always opposed to reason.
- We are primarily held guilty for Adam's sin.
- Jesus never claimed to be God.
- All religions are fundamentally the same.
- Our good deeds cancel out our bad deeds.
- People are made right with God by doing (enough) good works.
- Everything in life falls into a category of sacred or secular.
- "Sacred" activities are always more pleasing to God than secular activities.
- Only (pulpit) ministry, missions, (and martyrdom) are spiritual.
- Work is only secular.
- Work is part of the Fall and the curse.
- This present world is not valuable.
- We should not enjoy anything in this present world.
- Science is always opposed to religion.
- Christianity held back science and the progress of Western Civilization.
- Science can explain everything that exists.
- Material prosperity will always yield personal happiness.
- Productivity and efficiency are important life values.
- Ethics must presuppose a secular foundation.
- Only Christians can act ethically.
- Science can address our deepest problems.
- Entropy began at the fall.
- Technology is perfectly neutral.
- Technology can solve our social problems.
- Poverty is only about inequality.
- The earth is ours to do with as we please.
- Something other than God and His provision can fulfill us.
- The workplace is valuable only as a place for evangelism.
- Education primarily exists to make us good citizens.
- The Great Commission is only for missionaries.
- Missionaries are super-spiritual people.

ISMS TO AVOID (Simplified)

Naturalism – only the physical world exists

Pantheism – an impersonal supernatural inhabits everything

Atheism –there is no God

Humanism – humans are the source of meaning, values, and ethics

Secularism – deliberate removal of God from public discourse

Nihilism –the world is without meaning

Paganism – nature worship, gods in trees, plants, animals, earth

Rationalism –only reason matters

Fideism – blind faith is necessary; reason is deceptive

Gnosticism – all spirit is good, and matter is evil (a classic Greek philosophy)

Dualism – splits all of life into sacred and secular categories

Pre-modernism –kings and church leaders had knowledge and authority

Modernism –science and reason provide all we need (Enlightenment thought)

Postmodernism –distrust of reason and science; truth becomes subjective

Postmodernism –reason is fruitless; decisions are made by emotions

Scientism –science can explain and apply to everything

Reductionism –everything can be reduced to physical parts

Dataism – everything in the world can be reduced to 1's and 0's

Technicism – technology will solve all our problems

Instrumentalism –technology is strictly a tool to be used for our purposes

Marxism –dialectical materialism; constant struggle between workers and owners

Physicalism (consciousness)- matter produces the mind

Posthumanism – future humans will far transcend current human beings

Transhumanism –focuses on modifying the human species through genetics or computing

AVOIDING FALSE EXTREMES

FIDEISM-----RATIONALISM

It is reasonable to trust in God based on all that He has made and done.

ALL IS SPIRIT -----ALL IS MATTER

God is Spirit. Earth is matter, created by a loving God.

SACRED-----SECULAR

Everything should be done for God's glory.

THIS LIFE IS ALL THAT MATTERS-----HEAVEN IS ALL THAT MATTERS

Live fully in life and look forward to a new heavens and earth.

SOCIALISM-----IT ALL BELONGS TO ME

It all belongs to God. We are stewards who need to share.

PACIFISM-----ARMED OPPOSITION

A nation has a right to defend its citizens, and we have a command to love our enemies.

WE MUST NOT ALTER -----WE ARE FREE TO TAMPER

THE ENVIRONMENT

WITH THE ENVIRONMENT AS WE WISH

We are given "dominion" over the earth but must use it as wise stewards.

TECHNOPHOBIA -----TECHNOPHILIA

Technology is a gift from God and must be used wisely.

WORK MEANS NOTHING -----WORK MEANS EVERYTHING

Our work matters to God and should be done to His glory.