

The World's Values or God's Values (Go To Meeting)

Lindsay Stephens—August 26, 2023

As we are getting closer to the Holy Days, I want to start off with a few questions. We're approaching the time of the Feast of Trumpets, which is when we come with Christ and intervene with world affairs.

This reminds me a sermon I heard over 40 years ago

- Is Babylon all that bad?
- Do we really need the return of Jesus Christ?
- Can't we just sit on our laurels and just be 'good Christians' and make sure that we don't interfere with any government or anything like that so that they don't notice us?
- Can't we just let time pass by and wait for the return of Christ?

It doesn't work that way!

I want to emphasize that there's a big difference between the way the world thinks and the way God thinks. To simplify it, we can call it values. Call it the world's values or God's values. I'll start off with what a value is:

principles or standards of behavior, one's judgment of what is important in life

The world had counterfeit values, and the world is under Satan the devil. The mainstream does not recognize God in any of these at all. There are seven categories I just want to mention with these values.

1. the tolerance movement

This is widely promoted and gives the assumption that all belief systems and lifestyles and equal merit. In other words no prejudice with any of the opinions. Of course, they do assume that God is not in the picture.

This opens the door for all sorts of things, all sorts of behavior without judgment. For example, the LBGQA+ movement; there's public acceptance of all behavior without judgment. They come up with quotations like 'love is love,' and anything that disagrees with that, they would accuse us as being nasty, mean and prejudice.

I want to see what God thinks about this sort of thing; What does God think about tolerance?

Colossians 3:13 "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if anyone has a complaint

against another; **even as Christ forgave you, so also you should forgive**" (vs 13-14).

That doesn't mean agree with everything or every one, but we accept them for the fact that they are made in the image of God, and sooner or later they will be called.

Verse 14: "And above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."

Ephesians 4:2: "With all humility and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love."

Through true tolerance versus our shortcomings and we are to change not accepting everything in this world as right, because obviously, it isn't! But to have harmony in relationships. How are we to do this?

1 Peter 3:15: "But sanctify the Lord God in your own hearts, and always be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you the reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and reverence; having a good conscience, that, whereas they may speak against you as evil doers, those who are reviling your good way of life in Christ may be ashamed" (vs 15-16).

So, we looking here at it's a way of life, different to the way world thinks and tends to judge. We're not judge them, but we are assess what is right from God's point of view.

2. social justice

In this world today, there is a continual cry for social justice, for their social causes. Of course, this I leaving God out again, which open the door for all their causes:

- abortion rights
 - BLM
 - ANTIFA
 - same sex marriage
- and in Australia we have*
- the voice

There's a referendum coming up in a couple of months, and the government has been pushing this so strongly without giving us much information about it. The way that look at anyone who opposes it as being racist!

There is a misconception about this social justice. We think of things that have happened in

history and it can get right out of control. They can turn the tables on anyone to make them the oppressed or the ones who are the oppressor.

How bad can this be when they turn the tables. We can think of the French Revolution as an example of that. From September 1793 to July 1794 seventeen thousand people were executed during what is called 'The Age/Reign of Terror.' And an estimated 10,000 people died in prison, and probably awaiting the guillotine. The slogan in the French Revolution was liberty, equality and fraternity! How well did that work?

What is true social justice? Based on the Laws of God, rather than the grievances.

1 Corinthians 13:5: "Love does not behave disgracefully, does not seek its own things, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil."

In other words, the average person wakes up in the morning and harbors some grievance about something, and if we love God and love God's way we don't think evil. We think of the good. How do we demonstrate this?

Matthew 5:44: "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

That's not an easy thing to do. That doesn't mean that you have to agree with them!

Some examples of true justice in the Old Testament; and we can think of this for the time of the Millennium.

Amos 5:24: "But let judgment roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream." *We can think of water as symbolic of the Holy Spirit!*

Isaiah 61:8: "For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them."

We know that God's Word is the Truth (John 17:17).

Isaiah 30:18: "And therefore, will the LORD wait, that He may be gracious unto you. And therefore, He will be exalted..."

We know that during the Millennium Jesus Christ will be exalted and everyone on earth will know Him.

"...that He may have mercy upon you, for the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for Him" (v 18).

Zechariah 7:9: "Thus speaks the LORD of hosts, saying, 'Judge true judgment, and show mercy

and compassion every man to his brother.'"

That's the way we should be, and it will be that way during the Millennium for everyone!

Another way of the world's values, which is in opposition to the way that God thinks is:

3. human wisdom and reasoning

This takes the world down the wrong path! It leads to confusion, delusion and hopelessness, because God's not in the picture. They have no understanding of God's Plan, what His purpose is and where it's all going to lead at God's direction.

We have (inaudible) leaders, who say that humanity must solve it's own problems, without God, and where does that lead.

1-Corinthians 3:19: "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God for it is written, 'He entraps the wise in their own craftiness.'" Well, they have no idea what they're doing!

Isaiah 5:21: Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! That's putting everybody down obviously!

Everyone's own opinion and doing what they want. Follow that up, we go back to Romans:

Romans 1:21: "Because when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but they became vain in their own reasonings, and their foolish hearts were darkened.... [everyone's own opinion, and getting further away from God] ...While professing themselves to be the wise ones, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four-footed creatures, and creeping things" (vs 21-23).

Leading into idolatry, going further away from God all the time.

1-Corinthians 1:19—Paul writes: "For it is written, 'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and I will nullify the understanding of those who understand.'"

That's referring to the educated and the elite of this world, and God is going to confound them.

1-Corinthians 2:6: "Now we speak wisdom among the spiritually mature; however, it is not the wisdom of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, who are coming to nothing." *There's an end result of all this!*

Jeremiah 9:23: "Thus says the LORD, 'Do not let the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor let the mighty man glory in his might; do not let the rich

man glory in his riches... [pride comes before destruction (Prov. 16:18); what is the alternative to this?]: ...**but let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising loving kindness, justice, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these I delight,**' says the LORD" (vs 23-24).

4. self-assertiveness

What does self-assertiveness do? It encourages people to speak their mind! People pride themselves on their opinion, to become bold, forthright and outspoken. For example: political controls, who have no qualms of jumping in when they hear an opinion. They have no qualms with dissenting views. They can bring it up online with social media and blast a person online and try to humiliate them to exercise that they are so-called in the right.

This emphasized in schools; students are encouraged to be very pushy in discussions; they are rude, aggressive and dominate others. That's on the one hand, but on the other hand they tend to have a hard time to be able to listen and carry on polite dialog with different opinions.

In the job market, in which I've had my own experience. For instance, in group discussions or group interviews, the ones most likely to take the jobs are the ones who do the most talking, most dominate and are highly opinionated, high self-esteem and high and often unrealistic ambitions.

The harm in this, of course, is what they have achieved and what they have done and why they're better than anyone else for the job. ***Is God in any of this?***

Jeremiah 9:24: "**But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising loving kindness, justice, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these I delight,**' says the LORD."

This is what God says about those who want to promote themselves in interviews:

Psalms 75:4: "I said to the arrogant, 'Do not boast'; and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up the horn do not lift up your horn on high; nor speak with a stiff neck'" (vs 4-5). ***So, how do we get promoted?***

Verse 6: "For promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is Judge; He puts down one and sets up another" (vs 6-7).

Having the right attitude is all important to God. To back this up, come to:

Isaiah 66:2:"For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,' says the LORD. 'But to this one I will look, **to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word.**"

James 4:6: "But He gives greater grace. This is the reason it says, 'God sets Himself against the proud, but He gives grace to the humble.'"

The humble know that they need God. We know that we need God in our lives. Unfortunately, the self-assertive people do not!

5. self-ambition

- Is it right to be ambitious?
- Is it a good thing to be ambitious?

Obviously, it does depend!

Unfortunately, in this world in contemporary society, it's selfish ambition and it's the pursuit of power, prestige at any cost by things like:

- cheating
- dishonesty
- manipulation
- backstabbing
- ruthless competition

We know that that's certainly not right!

How far can this go? Look at history in the days of Noah it was so bad that everyone's thoughts were evil continually! Also, we think about the time of the Tower of Babel after the Flood, when it started to get out of and again. God said that nothing would be impossible for them unless He intervenes.

But in contemporary society today we certainly have ambition in the world leaders. I think of the United Nations in which we have the Secretary General Antonio Guterres, he has got ambitions.

There was one meeting there with a former prime minister who made this statement: 'We are at war with anyone who opposes us.' At the end of her speech, she received a standing ovation from the assembly. So, they're all for her!

We look at one of the branches of the UN, which is the World Health Organization, the Director General of the WHO is Tedros Ghebreyesus, he was originally a terrorist in his native country of Ethiopia where many people died as a result of the terrorist group.

He has very ambitious goals of full sovereignty of all the world's nations in all health decisions. For instance, if anything happened like a planned pandemic—which might involve forced

locked-downs and forced injections; that sort of thing might happen. So he has very strong ambitions. Are these Godly ambitions? Obviously not!

Acts 17:26: “And He made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth, having determined beforehand their appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling; in order that they might seek the Lord, if perhaps they might feel after Him and might find Him; though truly, He is not far from each one of us” (vs 26-27).

He’s not far from each of us in the sense that He created us. He’s certainly a long way from men who do not want Him, who do not want to see Him.

Another branch of the UN is the World Economic Forum (WEF). We have a person there who also has radical ambitions: Yuval Noah Harari I second in charge and he has the opinion that human beings are a waste of space. They’re consumers rather than producers; they’re a waste of space. Harari sees no need for them. He thinks in terms of A.I. replacing it through transhumanism. How far can that go? God would have to intervene!

We need God’s intervention for this sort of thing. Harari’s idea is de-population on a large scale. That’s not what God said, because we are meant to multiply.

2-Corinthians 12:20—*Paul says*: “But I fear that when I come, perhaps I may find you in a state such as I do not wish, and I may be found by you such as you do not wish; that there may be strifes, jealousies, indignations, contentions, evil speakings, whisperings, puffings up, commotions.” *We need to get away from that!*

Ephesians 2:3: “Among whom also we all once had our conduct in the lusts of our flesh, doing the things willed by the flesh and by the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as the rest of the world.”

We don’t want to be like the rest of the world. This is what human reasoning is. Self-ambition sabotages relationship and physical health and discontent. We tend to lose focus with selfish-ambition and feel threatened by the success of others.

How ambitious should we be? In the right direction, we should certainly be ambitious toward going God’s way and overcoming and growing!

Philippians 2:3: “Let nothing be done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself.”

We aren’t doing anything for what we can get out of it.

Verse 4: “Let each one look not only after his own things, but let each one also consider the things of others. **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus**” (vs 4-5).

We are to strive to have the mind of Christ, the way He thinks, the way He thought in every circumstance and situation.

The qualities of ambition are not for what we can get out of it; these qualities include:

- impatience
- rudeness
- envy
- no regard for others
- having their own interests
- lack of humility

James 3:13: “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him demonstrate his works through good conduct in the meekness of wisdom.”

6. **materialism**

The pursuit of materialism in today’s world has reached epidemic proportions. This is mostly through advertising; advertising for every person, everyone to desire and lust after more; having more and having slogans on what’s new, which is ‘the key to happiness.’

To many young people, getting rich is the major goal in life. This pursuit of materialism can be hard on families. For instance, families can be so desirous of ‘keeping up with the Jones’; it’s more riches that is more important than relationships, family relationships.

Some parents may think in terms of getting away with this by buying expensive gifts for their children so that that justifies spending so much time away from them.

Unfortunately, that gives them the attitude of selfishness, entitlement saying that ‘this person got this, why can’t I have this?’ It’s very selfish!

While it’s quite nice to have material things, we need to have the right perspective of what it’s all about.

Matthew 6:19: “**Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth**, where moth and rust spoil, and where thieves break through and steal... [the physical] **...but store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust spoils, and where thieves do not break through nor steal**” (vs 19-20).

If you’re storing up treasures spiritually, no matter what thieves do—breaking into houses, or

things like that—it's not going to change that.

The world doesn't know what has external value. What does have external value is a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ! Building character in preparation for what God wants us to do in His Kingdom!

1-Timothy 6:9: "For those who desire to become rich fall into temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which cause men to sink into destruction and perdition."

Doing things like gambling, drugs, sex, alcohol, those sorts of things!

Verse 10: "For the love of money is a root of all evils; by which some, while striving after riches, were seduced from the faith, and have impaled themselves with many sorrows"

Verse 17: "Charge those who are rich in this present age not to be high-minded, nor to put their hope in the uncertainty of riches... [it's all going to collapse anyway] ...but to put their hope in the living God, Who abundantly gives us all things for our enjoyment."

Proverbs 11:4: "Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way, but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness" (vs 4-5).

When we think of the currency these days, central banks printing it—which devalues or makes it worthless—and the alternative is a digital economy. There's no real future in it.

Proverbs 23:4 "Do not weary yourself to be rich; cease from your own wisdom. When your eyes look upon it, it is gone! For surely riches make wings for themselves, and they fly into heaven like an eagle" (vs 4-5).

That's what I meant by the comments I made about the currency becoming worthless.

Ecclesiastes 5:10: "He who loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver, and he who loves abundance shall not be satisfied with gain. This is also vanity.... [Solomon understood that] ...When goods increase, those who eat them increase; then what profit is it to its owners, except to see them with their eyes? The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not allow him to sleep" (vs 10-12).

They think about it so much, riches are so much on their mind that they can't settle down.

Matthew 6:33: "But as for you, seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all

these things shall be added to you." *That's a promise from God!*

7. externalism

in today's society there is an avalanche of what mainstream media offers us, whether it's through:

- websites
- TV
- movies
- all ranges of magazines

We are bombarded with images of models, entertainers and all these people with seemingly perfect faces and extravagant personalities. The tendency might be, 'If only I can be like this person or that person! Then all my problems will be solved!'

We have slogans and catchy phrases like 'you owe it to yourself' to promote one's self! We know that Satan is the 'prince of the power of the air,' (Eph. 2:2).

What does the Apostle Peter say about externalism? *What is in our heart is far better than physical appearance!* With physical appearance we will age, get older (Ecc. 12); the eyes get dim and all sorts of things wear out with our bodies. What good is externalism going to be at that time?

The emphasis is that what is on the inside is far more important than what's on the outside! The inside of our mind is that we are to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and to overcome, which takes a lifetime.

These are the counterfeit values that the world has:

- tolerance movement
- social justice
- human wisdom
- self-assertiveness
- ambition
- materialism
- externalism

These are all temporary! It's going to end! The whole system is going to be put down.

We have to prepare our lives for what lies beyond that, the Millennium and beyond in the God's Kingdom as spirit beings.

Jeremiah 29:11: "'For I know the purposes, which I am purposing for you,' says the LORD; **'purposes of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.** Then you shall call on Me, and you shall go and pray to Me, and I will hearken to you. And **you shall seek Me and find Me, when**

you search for Me with all your heart” (vs 11-13).

That’s what the whole world needs to do! That’s what we need to do! Seek God with all our heart!

Proverbs 16:3: “Commit your works unto the LORD, and your thoughts shall be established.... [it will be naturally a way of life for us] ...The LORD has made all for His own purpose; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil” (vs 3-4).

There’s an end in sight for them! It is the choices we make that are so important! What we live by is very important to God. We have to be spiritually prepared for what lies ahead. I have a definition for that:

Develop faith so powerful that we can face the tests of life upon which everything for us in eternity depends.

Romans 12:2: “Do not conform yourselves to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what is well-pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God.**”

We need to have the virtues that please God. For instance, having the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23); there are nine of them that we need to apply in our lives, beginning with love! The love of God and love toward one another.

All of Rev. 18 talks about the fall of Babylon, because this world’s system on which all of (inaudible) are based is Babylon that controls the whole world.

Revelation 18:4: “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **‘Come out of her, My people... [it’s command for us that we come out of this system] ...so that you do not take part in her sins, and that you do not receive of her plagues.’**”

The last two verses of this chapter is all about the fall of Babylon; which is not based on the Rock: Christ. It’s based on Satan the devil, on the sand. The whole system is going to fall and great will be the fall of it!

Verse 23: “And never again shall the light of a lamp shine in you; and never again shall the voices of bridegroom and bride be heard in you; **for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and by your sorcery all nations were deceived. And in her the blood of prophets and saints...** [all down through history] **...was found,** and the blood of all those who were slain on the earth” (vs 23-24).

That will include the saints who will be martyred. But there is an end result to this!

Isaiah 41:10: “**Do not fear; for I am with you; be not dismayed; for I am your God. I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness.**”

That is a promise providing that we look to God’s values:

- His Law
- His Commandments
- His Truth

Look in that direction! Resist all forces of the values of this world, which is under Satan the devil! **IF** we go God’s way, choose what is right, **THEN** we have a glorious future with one another and will be in perfect relationship and fellowship!

Scriptural References:

- 1) Colossians 3:13-14
- 2) Ephesians 4:2
- 3) 1 Peter 3:15-16
- 4) 1 Corinthians 13:5
- 5) Matthew 5:44
- 6) Amos 5:24
- 7) Isaiah 61:8
- 8) Isaiah 30:18
- 9) Zechariah 7:9
- 10) 1 Corinthians 3:19
- 11) Isaiah 5:21
- 12) Romans 1:21-23
- 13) 1 Corinthians 1:19
- 14) 1 Corinthians 2:6
- 15) Jeremiah 9:23-24
- 16) Psalms 75:4-7
- 17) Isaiah 66:2
- 18) James 4:6
- 19) Acts 17:26-27
- 20) 2 Corinthians 12:20
- 21) Ephesians 2:3
- 22) Philippians 2:3-5
- 23) James 3:13
- 24) Matthew 6:19-20
- 25) 1 Timothy 6:9-10, 17
- 26) Proverbs 11:4-5
- 27) Proverbs 23:4-5
- 28) Ecclesiastes 5:10-12
- 29) Matthew 6:33
- 30) Jeremiah 29:11-13
- 31) Proverbs 16:3-4
- 32) Romans 12:2
- 33) Revelation 18:4, 23-24
- 34) Isaiah 41:10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 17:17
- Proverbs 16:18
- Ephesians 2:2
- Ecclesiastes 12
- Galatians 5:22-23

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Transcribed: 9/15/23

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