

Post-modernism

The history of the Western world, relative to thinking and behavior, can be divided into these three eras:

- Up to 1650 – pre-modern
- 1650 to 1960 – modern
- 1960 to ??? – post-modern

Modernism came from enlightenment thinking and from the industrial revolution. Thinking turned from God-centered to man-centered. Belief systems turned from God's revelation to man's reason. The industrial revolution brought mass production. Later developments gave us rapid transportation, communication, and modern medicine. Theology was modified and psychology was born to fit the modern world.

While modernism brought many comforts it also brought many challenges. Human beings were no longer dependent on God but were largely on their own to figure out their problems. Many of those problems were created by modernism. The power that made life easier could also make life dangerous. Nuclear energy can heat your home but can also destroy your world. Drugs that heal can also addict.

Some people concluded that modernism was not as useful as was expected. They concluded that the structure and science of modernism was not the answer to human problems. So, a new paradigm was needed – hence postmodernism. Consider some of the concepts of PM.

- Unity is more important than truth
 - Modernism emphasized facts, PM stresses togetherness
- Cooperation is more important than integrity
 - We all have to get along if we are going to save the planet (or the church)
- No truth – except as you make it true for your self
 - There is no objective truth – everything is relative
- No big story – individual stories are important
 - There is no big story to connect life's experiences together in a meaningful way
- No right or wrong – personal choice determines right or wrong
 - There is no plumb line to determine correct or incorrect behavior

- No structure – chaos is normal
 - There are no norms for family or society – terms are redefined by society
- Added dimension of spirituality and metaphysical reality
 - There is a spirituality that does not include the God of the Bible as exclusive
- Tolerance – allow all viewpoints and beliefs
 - Perceived lack of cooperation is the worst of all “sins” in PM

Tolerance is the key idea of PM – tolerance for anything except objective truth. If anyone claims to know or to have the truth, they will not be tolerated.

These concepts of PM are not really new. They are Satan’s tactics against God and His people in modern and postmodern times.

What is a Biblical response? Jesus said, “You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” What is the truth? “God’s Word is Truth.” Jesus said, “I am the way, the TRUTH, and the life.” “In Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” The answer to all of life is the Truth of Jesus as recorded in the Bible. Jesus and PM do not fit well together.

Truth with love is a theme all through the Bible. Truth presented with love is God’s plan. Truth and judgment on one side and mercy and love on the other side must be held together to arrive at God’s plan for life. Real love is love that hates the enemy of that love. If you love life you will hate cancer because it destroys life. The love of God hates sin and wrong.

Jesus requires a choice. You accept Him or you reject Him. He will not compromise and you cannot change Him to fit your mold. Jesus did “not come to bring peace but a sword.” He came “that you may have life ... more abundantly.” That life means rejection of what is false and harmful. It means separation from anything that would divide you and Jesus, hence the sword. The tolerance of PM is in direct contrast to and in conflict with Jesus.

Worldly philosophies find their way into life. Postmodernism can subtly creep into our lives and our churches. We must take care to **not** allow that to happen. Be alert to the concepts that undermine truth and minimize the power of God’s truth to set us free. We are living in the postmodern era but we do not have to live as post-moderns. Jesus calls us to live the life of love and truth that never changes and will indeed set us free.