

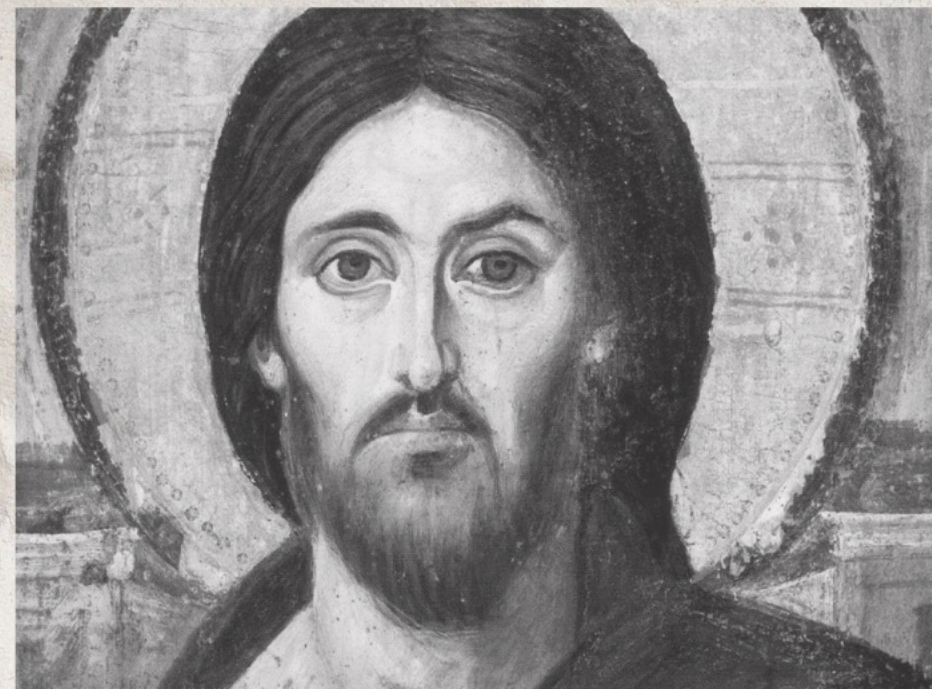
Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Fall 2022 Sermon Series

Christ & Culture

Following Jesus in a Fallen World

As followers of Jesus, we are called to embrace his teachings and example, proclaim the truth of the gospel, and engage the world around us by embodying the good news. What does that look like today? The Scriptures are a guide in helping us to faithfully navigate an idolatrous world as the people of God. As we read the Bible, we can see that it takes a mixed view of all human cultures. While many elements of culture can be affirmed, we must avoid uncritically





What is Culture?

Ken Myers (Christian cultural critic) said that culture is:

“What human beings make of the world – in both senses.”

- The things we make
- The meaning we make

Therefore, the culture of a people and place will ultimately reflect the dominant worldview, beliefs, values, etc.

–From “Culture Making” by Andy Crouch



Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Christ & Culture

The Christian & the World: Unhealthy Postures Toward Culture

- **Condemn** culture (withdraw or war against it)
- **Critique** culture (only discuss & debate ideas)
- **Copy** culture (offer cheap imitations & alternatives)
- **Consume** culture (mostly mindless conformity)



Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Christ & Culture

The Christian & the World: A Kingdom Approach to Culture

Disciples create culture and follow Jesus by:

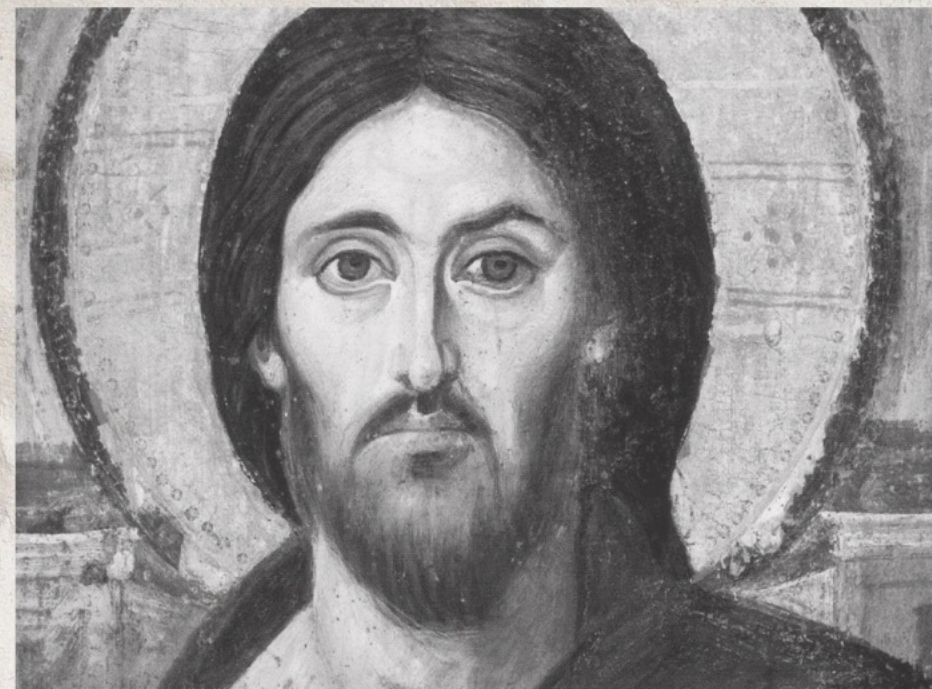
1. Entering the culture (affirming what we can)
2. Challenging the culture (confronting its idols & darkness)
3. Appealing to its listeners (offering a new story & vision)

—From "Center Church" by Tim Keller

Christ & Culture

Sharing the Gospel in American Culture (7 of 7)

As followers of Jesus, we are called to embrace his teachings and example, proclaim the truth of the gospel, and engage the world around us by embodying the good news. What does that look like today? The Scriptures are a guide in helping us to faithfully navigate an idolatrous world as the people of God. As we read the Bible, we can see that it takes a mixed view of all human cultures. While many elements of culture can be affirmed, we must avoid uncritically







Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Christ & Culture

Acts 17:16-34







Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Christ & Culture

Acts 17:16-34 – The Apostle Paul Shares the Gospel in Athens

Notice how Paul models a Kingdom approach to culture:



Acts 17:16-34 – The Apostle Paul Shares the Gospel in Athens

Notice how Paul models a Kingdom approach to culture:

1. Paul **enters culture and affirms** his listeners by saying, “I see that you are very religious...” (v.22) and shows his *cultural fluency*, “As some of your own poets have said...” (v.28); he doesn’t quote the Bible or shame them in anger.

Acts 17:16-34 – The Apostle Paul Shares the Gospel in Athens

Notice how Paul models a Kingdom approach to culture:

1. Paul **enters culture and affirms** his listeners by saying, “I see that you are very religious...” (v.22) and shows his *cultural fluency*, “As some of your own poets have said...” (v.28); he doesn’t quote the Bible or shame them in anger.
2. Paul **challenges their idols and darkness** by saying, “He is the God who made the world” and “we shouldn’t think of God as an idol made by humans” and “God commands everyone to repent of their sins” (vs. 24-27, 29-30).

Acts 17:16-34 – The Apostle Paul Shares the Gospel in Athens

Notice how Paul models a Kingdom approach to culture:

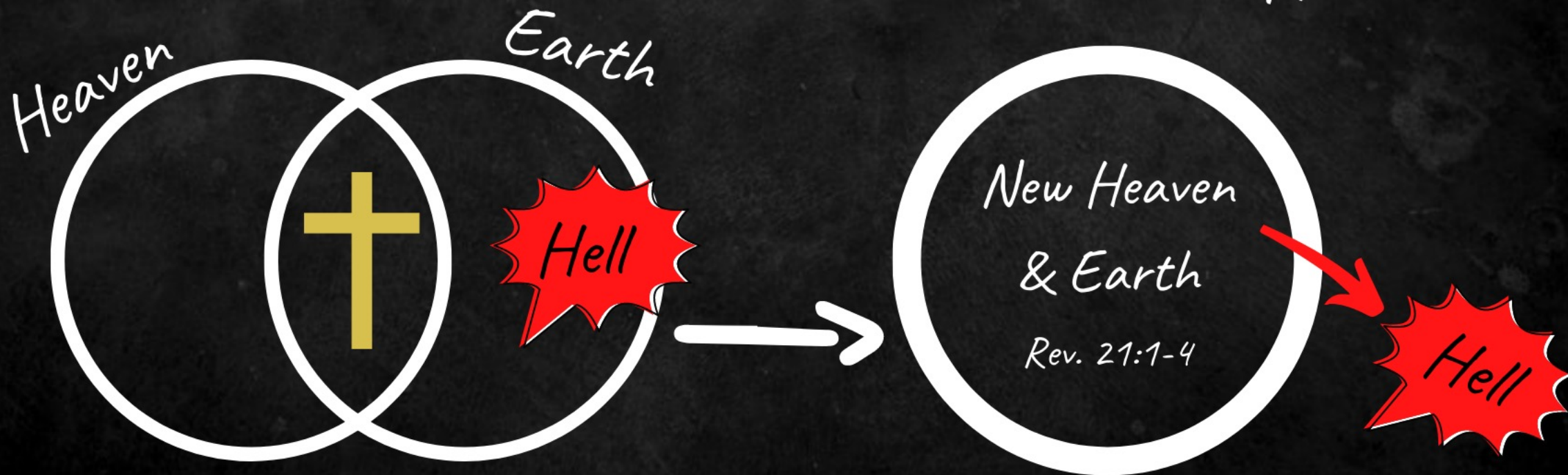
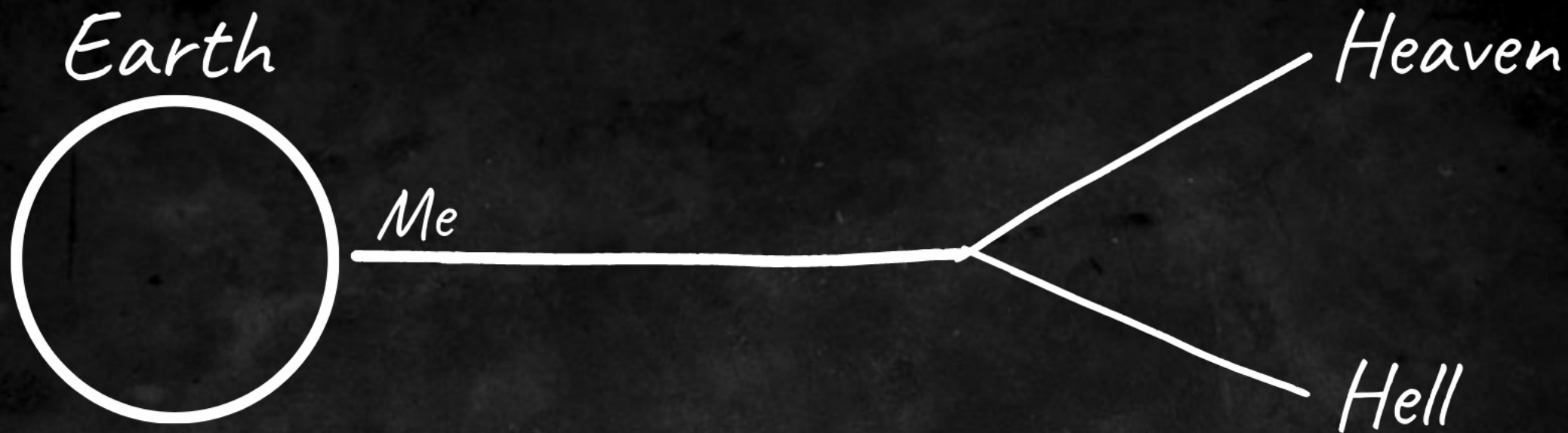
1. Paul **enters culture and affirms** his listeners by saying, “I see that you are very religious...” (v.22) and shows his *cultural fluency*, “As some of your own poets have said...” (v.28); he doesn’t quote the Bible or shame them in anger.
2. Paul **challenges their idols and darkness** by saying, “He is the God who made the world” and “we shouldn’t think of God as an idol made by humans” and “God commands everyone to repent of their sins” (vs. 24-27, 29-30).
3. Paul **appeals to his listeners** by sharing some of the gospel story and inviting them to reimagine God, themselves, the world, and the future (vs. 31-34).

What is the Good News?

The gospel *story* of how God has been at work in the world and is now redeeming it in Jesus Christ—who will one day return to bring the fullness of the Kingdom.

What is the Kingdom of God?

The reign and rule of God on the earth, which always looks like Jesus (e.g., loving others, healing, reconciling, sacrificing self, showing mercy, doing justice, etc.).



For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.

Paul, Romans 1:16 NIV

Sharing the Gospel in American Culture

If Paul came to an American city and shared the gospel in American culture, here are some “objects of worship” (idols) he might address:

- “I see that you are very **sexual** and seeking fulfillment”
- “I see that you’re all about **human autonomy and self-expression**”
- “I see that you are very concerned about **human rights** and justice”
- “I see that you create amazing **technology, art, entertainment, sports**, etc.”
- “I see that you long for a sense of **identity, self-worth, and purpose**”

These are access points to sharing the gospel today. It’s important to show how American culture’s answers are *self-defeating*; only Christ and the gospel can meet our needs and lead to freedom, wholeness, justice, etc.

Paul, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NLT

³ We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. ⁴ We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down **the strongholds of human reasoning** and to destroy **false arguments**. ⁵ We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We **capture their rebellious thoughts** and teach them to obey Christ.



Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Christ & Culture

Sharing the Gospel in American Culture

Questions for reflection and response:



Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Christ & Culture

Sharing the Gospel in American Culture

Questions for reflection and response:

1. As you look carefully at the “objects of worship” in American culture, how are you being moved to say or do something?



Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Christ & Culture

Sharing the Gospel in American Culture

Questions for reflection and response:

1. As you look carefully at the “objects of worship” in American culture, how are you being moved to say or do something?
2. Who is the Spirit bringing to your mind that does not know Christ? How can you affirm, challenge, and appeal to them?



Grantham
Church
BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Christ & Culture

Sharing the Gospel in American Culture

Questions for reflection and response:

1. As you look carefully at the “objects of worship” in American culture, how are you being moved to say or do something?
2. Who is the Spirit bringing to your mind that does not know Christ? How can you affirm, challenge, and appeal to them?
3. What is a major takeaway(s) for you from this series?

Christ & Culture

Subscribe to
Our Weekly
Sermon Podcast



APPLE
PODCASTS



GOOGLE
PODCASTS