

## THE CULTURE IS WACK

Survey says: The culture is wack because of technology and social media, self-centeredness, polarization, moral relativism, and antagonism towards Christianity.

One of you wrote: Too many of us do not positively engage to change the culture for the better instead of being negative critics from the sidelines.

Will we be content with cursing the darkness?  
Or will we find a way to light a candle?

**2 Timothy 3.1-5:** You must understand that in the last days there will come times of much trouble. People will love themselves and money. They will be full of pride and tell of all the things they have done. They will speak against God. Children and young people will not obey their parents. People will not be thankful, and they will not be holy. They will not love each other. No one can get along with them. They will tell lies about others. They will not be able to keep from doing things they know they should not do. They will be wild and want to beat and hurt those who are good. They will not stay true to their friends. They will act without thinking. They will think too much of themselves. They will love pleasure instead of loving God. They will have the appearance of godliness, but they will not have its power.

**“The last days” can have two meanings.**

- (1) The time immediately before Christ returns to earth.
- (2) The entire time between the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus and his second coming.

**Hebrews 1.1-2:** In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but **in these last days** he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

Most commentators conclude what Paul is describing as the cultural reality of his time will continue and will \_\_\_\_\_ as the return of Christ comes closer.

So, we shouldn't be surprised that our culture is the way it is.

Barring a miracle, the trajectory is that traditional, Bible-believing Christians in the U.S. are going to find themselves more and more objects of \_\_\_\_\_, discrimination and possibly persecution.

### HOW ARE WE TO RESPOND?

**1. Know the \_\_\_\_\_.**

**2 Timothy 3.14-17:** But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is

useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Before we can do anything to help our culture, we better be grounded and rooted in the truth that is revealed in the Scriptures.

There is going to be immense \_\_\_\_\_ on Christians to go along with the culture. It will try to confuse you about what's true;  
it will attempt to influence you to accept what it values;  
it will make every effort to intimidate you to compromise what you believe  
so that you are a cultural Christian rather than a biblical Christian.

A cultural Christian is someone who believes in Jesus but \_\_\_\_\_ like the world.

So, the first and most important thing you can do is \_\_\_\_\_ and get the word into you.

The Scriptures will teach you what is right and true, how to see the world and its values, and what is essential for the followers of Jesus to hold onto.

## 2. Do Not Become \_\_\_\_\_.

**2 Timothy 2.23-26:** Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

When has someone argued you into changing your views?

So why do you think that getting angry and triggered and arguing about all kinds of nonessential issues will change someone who disagree with you?

Instead of being quarrelsome or resentful Paul says we should be kind and \_\_\_\_\_.

**James 1.19-20:** My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

When people disagree with you and your views, the right response is to \_\_\_\_\_.

Listening shows that I respect you and your thinking and I think you are worthy of my time.

We listen first of all simply to \_\_\_\_\_ what the other person is thinking.

We are not going to out-argue, outsmart, or out-shout people into the kingdom.

We are going to \_\_\_\_\_ people into the kingdom.

People want to be respected and they want to be heard.

If you're the person who listens to them and respects them, it's likely they will continue their conversation with you.

**2 Timothy 2.23:** Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels.

Stick to what's most important and stay focused on the essentials.

Don't focus on winning the argument or convincing someone that his or her lifestyle is wrong.

Focus on developing a \_\_\_\_\_ and caring for the other person.

### **3. Realize We are on a \_\_\_\_\_ Field.**

You are not just a man on a mission – you are a man on a mission field.

On a mission field you do not expect people to think or act like Christians – and it doesn't bother you that they don't.

You are on a mission field right here in the good ol' USA.

More and more people have never been in a church.

They've never heard enough about Jesus to accept him or reject him.

Of course, they don't live like Christians.

Rather than anger, we should feel \_\_\_\_\_ for them.

#### **From “Lost in a Lost World” by Mike Pinder**

I woke today, I was crying Lost in a lost world

So many people are dying Lost in a lost world

Some of them are living an illusion

Bounded by the darkness of their minds

Thinking only of themselves

They shun the light

They think they're right

Living in their empty shells

Everywhere you go you see them searching

Everywhere you turn you feel the pain

Everyone is looking for the answers

Well, look again; come on, my friend

Love will find us in the end

Come on, my friend

We've got to bend

Down on our knees and say a prayer

Oh, can you see the world is pining?

Pining for someone who really cares enough to share his love

With all of us so we can be

An ever-loving family

Have we forgotten who loves who?

**2 Timothy 2.24-26:** The Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

You are on a mission field and the people who bother you need Jesus.  
And the right response is not anger or revulsion, but compassion and concern.

#### **4. \_\_\_\_\_ Your Faith.**

**2 Timothy 2.22:** Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

The ultimate apologetic and the most convincing way of promoting the faith and changing the culture is people seeing that there is a \_\_\_\_\_ because of the life they see you living.

People can disbelieve your arguments, but they can't \_\_\_\_\_ with your life.

So, live a life of righteousness, faith, love and peace – that's what people are looking for.

We are not against people – even those who have bought into the culture.

We are for people because \_\_\_\_\_ is.