Cultural Conflict

Conflict

We are in conflict with a world that is cursed by sin[1]. Every part of our world from the physics that govern its natural world to the way we as human beings naturally think is in opposition to the message we bring. It is no wonder that we would be tempted to classify our battles as a culture war. The culture that naturally grows around us is guaranteed to run counter to our desired state of being. Its effect on us personally is undesired and its effect on those around us is horrifying to contemplate.

Sin

What is Sin exactly anyway? We define it as any action that is counter to God's will. Doing something that is against the Law of God is Sin. Sin is also the natural state of a cursed human being. You cannot and should not expect someone in that state to act in a way not in accordance with their nature. If you want them to act differently then you need to change their nature.

Sin has some immediate impacts. It impacts a person spiritually, inhibiting their ability to hear God. It impacts a person personally, causing mental or emotional pain. Sin has societal impact creating discord and strife. Sin also has eternal consequences. If left unchecked, it will doom a person to Hell[2]. For a Christian, sin inhibits their spiritual growth.

The True Opposition

Sin permeates the world's cultures by default. It is to be expected that we encounter it. How we deal with the people immersed in that sin is at the core of the perceived cultural conflict for the people of God. It is good to be reminded of what Paul said in Eph 6:12:[3]

> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Our war is not against people. It is not against governments. It is not against groups or institutions. Our war is against the curse of sin. Our war is against the spiritual forces that seek to keep hold of the people that God holds dear. It is not a culture war. It is a rescue mission.

We aren't God's shock troopers. Our job isn't to destroy the sinful around us and everything they have. A better analogy would be the special forces unit. We are dropped in behind enemy lines to rescue a people held hostage by the opposition. When we encounter someone who doesn't know God, our reaction should not be hostility. We should respond with love, assistance, and understanding because they are not our enemy. They are the hostage of our enemy.

I'll close with this thought: If this is a rescue mission, why do we insist on waging battle against the very people we are meant to rescue?

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[1] Gen 3
[2] Rom 6:23
[3] Eph 6:12