**IDEAS HAVE CONSEQUENCES**

Do you know what an ideology is? Look carefully at the word itself. Break it down. It is a combination of the words “idea” and “ology.” This means it is the study or science of ideas. It is often used as a specific doctrine or teaching that has been formed over time. A person’s ideology is his studied conclusion about some topic, whether it is political, social or spiritual. We all have it. Sometimes we call it our worldview.

For instance, my ideology regarding how the world came into existence is Creationism. “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*” is the foundation of my moral ideology. Creationism determines my worldview spiritually. I am God’s creation and I will therefore be answerable to Him at Judgment. That will determine my moral behavior. To lie, steal, commit fornication, show prejudice, or hurt my neighbor has eternal consequences. My point is this - ideas have consequences. Ideas affect behavior.

I’ve been reading the old literary classic by James Allen called *As A Man Thinketh*. Penned in 1903 it became a best-seller and continues to be one of the best self-help books ever published. It is only 15 pages long and can be read in half an hour. You can download it for free on the internet. The hardback form was given to me while I was in high school (Ok, I know some kids think I am old enough to have helped Moses carry the stone tablets down Mt. Sinai – but that’s not true; of course I did march with Joshua around Jericho – now that was a sight to see!). The title to the book was taken from Proverbs 23:7 which says, “*As a man thinks in his heart, so is he*.”

Solomon was on to something when he wrote that proverb. It was his way of stating that ideas (thoughts) have consequences. You become what you think. Our character is formed by the thoughts we think. Jesus perfectly described it in Matthew 12:35-37,

*“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”*

Paul endorsed Solomon’s and Jesus’ point when he wrote in Romans 12:2, “*Do not be conformed to this world, but transformed, by the renewing of your mind*…” The way we can transform our life is by thinking different thoughts which lead to different actions. Paul illustrated that ideology in I Corinthians 6:9-11. Read and see how a moral or spiritual ideology works:

*“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”*

Do you see how the acts of Fornication and Adultery come from thinking lustful thoughts. Jesus confirms that: *“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart”* (Matt. 5:27-28).

The acts of Homosexuality and Sodomy come from futile thinking. Paul confirms that in Romans 1:18-32 by saying such actions are from those who: “*suppress the truth in unrighteousness … became futile in their thoughts … God gave them up to uncleanness in the lusts of their hearts to dishonor their bodies … they exchanged the truth of God for the lie … God gave them up to vile passions … they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind to do those things which are not fitting*…” In other words, our actions follow our thoughts. Ideas have consequences.

The Mexican Aztec tribe believed the sun was a living god that required human blood for its food. They believed if they didn’t sacrifice humans for the Sun god to drink then it would soon die, the world would go dark, and life would soon perish. That false idea had dire consequences, leading to between 20,000 to 50,000 young boys and girls, and many virgins, being horribly sacrificed each year! This led the Aztecs to becoming a warrior people to capture thousands of other Mexican and Central American people to satisfy the voracious blood-appetite of this “god.” Ideas have consequences.

Adolph Hitler, sitting in prison in 1923, wrote his grand plan for the future of Germany with his book *Mein Kampf* (“My Struggle”). His ideology was based on Darwin’s theory of survival of the fittest. Hitler believed the Aryan race was superior to other races and that people like the Jews, who he hated, were subhuman and must be exterminated. To give one of the greatest understatements in history, his idea had consequences. Over 50,000,000 people died during his reign of terror, including 40% of Europe’s entire Jewish race. Nazi racism led to genocide. Again, ideas have consequences.

But Nazism pales in comparison to the number of innocent lives that have come from the idea that babies are subhuman. In America alone those who promote the ideology that a fetus (Latin for “little one”) is only an appendage (like an appendix or tonsils) and that abortion is only a medical procedure led to the 1973 Supreme Court landmark decision in Roe v. Wade which made abortion legal. This idea had consequences. Since that ruling there have been 62,088,908 as of today, July 13, 2020. Worldwide since 1980 there have been 1,581,352,888 (yes, that’s 1 ½ ***B***illion babies). The website USAbortionClock.org gives a running tally if you care to see the gruesome statistics.

When an ideology or worldview comes from Secular Humanism, not Biblical Creationism, the results lead to genocides, infanticides, homicides and suicides. Where all human life is not honored as “*made in the image of God*” (Gen. 1:26), and where people are not seen as “*fearfully and wonderfully made*” (Psa. 139:13-16), there will be lethal consequences. Whether we are talking about the Aztecs, Nazis (short for National Socialists), or Abortionists, we can see that: ***Ideas***. ***Have***. ***Consequences***.

“*As a man thinks, so is he*” (Prov. 23:7). Dieticians and Nutritionist say, “you are what you eat.” Solomon, via the Lord, said “you are what you think.” What you put in your mouth can be either good or bad, leading to health or disease. But, what you put in your mind and heart can be either your salvation or damnation.

Until tomorrow… make this your ideology: *“Commit your works to the LORD, and your thoughts will be established.”* (Prov. 16:3)

I love you. Rick