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IS IT “NEW CULTURE”? OR IS IT “NO CULTURE”?

By Stephen L. Bakke  May 14, 2017



We hear a lot about the “culture wars” being fought in this country. That conflict is often described as the struggle between those whose deepest commitments were to God vs. those humans who believed their own value systems evolved through what some describe as “steady enlightenment.” These folks conclude that for most issues the “culture war” is receding. For example, public opinion about gay marriage has shifted dramatically. While that is true, I think this crowd misses the boat on some other issues.

Some believe that the question “Who are we?” was at one time about how we defined ourselves morally. Many now seem to favor a different answer that emphasizes how we define ourselves ethnically, racially and linguistically. What a change that is – and for me it’s counter-intuitive as well. This new theory says that we should emphasize our differences rather than searching for those things we have in common. For example, the civil rights movement at one time told us we should be “blind to racial differences,” but now we are told that attempting to ignore differences is actually racist – micro-aggression is the new term.

Does this mean some Americans celebrate a theory that seems to relegate the concept of “morality” to a low priority level? Is the concept of “morality” too old fashioned to be relevant? Has the concept of having moral absolutes been set aside in favor of making personal decisions? Recall Barack Obama’s explanation of “sinfulness” when asked about his religious and moral foundation. He clearly answered that a sin was something that he considered to be wrong. Apparently he was making a personal decision with no moral absolute as a basis.

Let’s apply this apparent shift in morality standards to the recent Presidential campaign. Was a de-emphasis on moral standards somehow reflected in the selection of candidates? Many would answer yes to that. Most voter complaints related to feelings that the candidates had ethical and character issues. Were these two candidates delivered to us because much of the country is becoming more comfortable with ignoring moral standards? Would an emphasis on traditional moral standards have generated better conduct by the candidates and better choices for the voters? Think about it!

I believe that a true culture requires some level of philosophical consistency and moral and ethical absolutes? Some seem to celebrate standing in the way of developing or maintaining what I consider important – a unique American culture. Many radical progressive elements in our society even contradict the otherwise liberal notion that we are moving from an old culture to a new one? I believe that some of their goals and actions actually suggest that we are moving from the “old” culture to a condition of “NO” culture!