

Values

Rural Values

Extended family living close by. Perceptual space is my town and surrounding countryside

Example:

The preacher's wife helps the preacher with church work. To run a farm, it takes a whole family. Having two homes is about as sinful as having 2 wives.

Simple life. Stay at home.

A man's good word and a handshake is all you need.

Urban values

Extended family living wherever they can find a satisfying job. Perceptual space may be the county, the state, the nation, the planet.

Example:

The preacher's wife may work at another job. In the city, it takes two incomes to live. The spouse may be serving God in another career.

Get out and do things.

Hours spent in traffic

"Theater and music are the only places in school where you learn what it means to be human".

Family values

Whatever protects the nuclear family

Blue collar values

Family is most important for happiness

Hard work leads to pride and the respect of others.

Sin means sins of the flesh

White collar values

Career is most important for happiness

Success leads to pride and the respect of others.

Higher education leads to happiness

Sin means sins of the spirit

Conservative values that hold on to the good

Right sexual behavior and protection of individual life. Personal responsibility

Examples:

In sex education, give only the information that promotes abstinence, any other information is harmful. The less info the better.

In history education, give only the information needed to promote pride in our country, any other information is harmful. The less info the better. Right belief is more important than facts.

In religion, salvation means going to heaven after death.

Progressive values that reach out for the better

Care for the poor and the earth. Protection of communal life. Civil responsibility

Examples:

In sex education, in addition to information that promotes abstinence, give information that explains birth control. The more information the better in making healthy choices.

In history education, in addition to the information that leads to pride in our country, give information that has shown our shame and mistakes. The more information the better in making healthy choices. Accurate facts are more important than belief.

In religion, salvation means living in God's kingdom now.

The American Dream

Work hard and keep your nose clean and you will be successful.

American Values

- Justice:

Don't start a war

All accused are due a trial

We do not torture

- Be a moral example to the rest of the world. Support just regimes.

unhealthy American values:

we can have weapons of mass destruction but others can't

we can torture but others can't

we can start a preemptive war but others can't

Americans are due a fair trial but others are not

Support regimes that get us what we want

These perversions are based on the belief that whatever we do is righteous because the basis for our righteousness is not fairness but survival.

Christian values

The great themes of the Bible: creation, freedom from bondage, redemption, God with us in Christ, the Kingdom of God.

The good of holding to values means we proclaim and work for positive virtues. The danger of holding to values is replacing Christian values with one of these other lists.

The mistake is choosing one of these other lists and calling it Christian values.

Why do we make this mistake? It is easier to understand the other list. It is not so complicated, so abstract, as the Biblical values.

Values show the cultures we live in: rural or urban culture, lower, middle, or upper class American cultures, blue collar or white collar, liberal or conservative, etc. Faith in Christ is not another culture, it is the standard by which we measure the cultures we are in. We don't replace our culture with Christian faith, we judge our culture by Christian faith. Thus we determine the strengths and weaknesses of our culture and know what to use and what to undo in our culture. Faith in Christ protects us from the temptation to judge others by our cultural values. When we see as Christ sees, without the log in our own eye, we see that there is good and bad in each culture, including our own. People in another culture are valuable because they are created in God's image and loved by God, not because they act like people in my culture.

Rural values people see urbans as moving too fast. They go too often. They are “fast folk” like gerbils in a cage. They leave the kids to go places. They should stay home.

Urbans see rurals as too slow, too parochial and too dull. They should get out more.

Some towns die because people don't want change and so don't want new people. My brother got an apartment in a small town in Kansas once. One of the local groups was putting on a ham and bean supper, and he went. When he went in, one guy said to him “who the hell are you?” He didn't feel wanted.

God's Country

Those who believe that only rural values are Godly, believe God is in rural America, fostering rural values. If God is in cities, it is to fix and correct, not to nourish and foster their way of life. The country, only, is God's.