

# Message Notes

## The History Narrative

**Introduction** – *More learning and filtering!*

This week's message:  
*The History Narrative:*  
*Don't be on the wrong side of it!*

**Understanding the History Narrative**

**Four Assumptions about being on**

**"The Wrong Side of History:**

1. History is Progressive and Linear
2. We are headed toward a better future
3. The Majority/Power decide the right side
4. Morality is decided by history

**Learning & Filtering the History Narrative**

*The Four Assumptions revisited*

**The Biblical idea of being on the right side of history**

*God is completely sovereign over human history and always has been*

Isaiah 46:9-11

*God appoints places, times, and geography*  
Acts 17:24-28

*Is History going to get better?*  
Matthew 24:12, John 16:33, 2 Thess. 2:9-10

*God declares what is Good and Not Good*  
Genesis 1:31

Genesis 2:15-17

Genesis 2:18

*When Humans take the role of defining morality*  
Genesis 3:6-7

*The Right Side of History!*  
Revelation 4 and 5

**Gospel Application** – *"Are you on the right side of history? Are you ok with being judged as though you weren't?"*

# Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

**Isaiah 46:9-11**

<sup>9</sup>"Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. <sup>10</sup>I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.' <sup>11</sup>From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do."

**Acts 17:24-28**

<sup>24</sup>"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. <sup>25</sup>And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. <sup>26</sup>From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. <sup>27</sup>God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. <sup>28</sup>'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.'

**2 Thessalonians 2:9-10**

<sup>9</sup>The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, <sup>10</sup>and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing.

**Genesis 1:31**

<sup>31</sup>God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

**Genesis 2:15-17**


<sup>15</sup>The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup>but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

**Genesis 2:18**

<sup>18</sup>The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

**Genesis 3:6-7**

<sup>6</sup>When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

An aerial photograph of a river with white-water rapids. A large, dark rock is partially submerged in the water, creating a focal point for the text. The water is a mix of deep blue and white foam.

The  
Waters  
in which we  
Swim

Cultural Dogmas &  
Gospel Responses

# How do we “interact” with culture (the world)?



1. Don't be OF the world

**ISOLATION**

How do we “interact”  
with culture (the world)?

**KILL OR BE EATEN**

2. Attack the world

**FIGHT**



How do we “interact”  
with culture (the world)?



3. We are IN the world

**SIMULATE**



How do we “interact”  
with culture (the world)?

4. IN but not OF

LEARN AND FILTER



This week's message:

**The History Narrative:**

*"You are on the wrong side of it."*

# The Narrative:

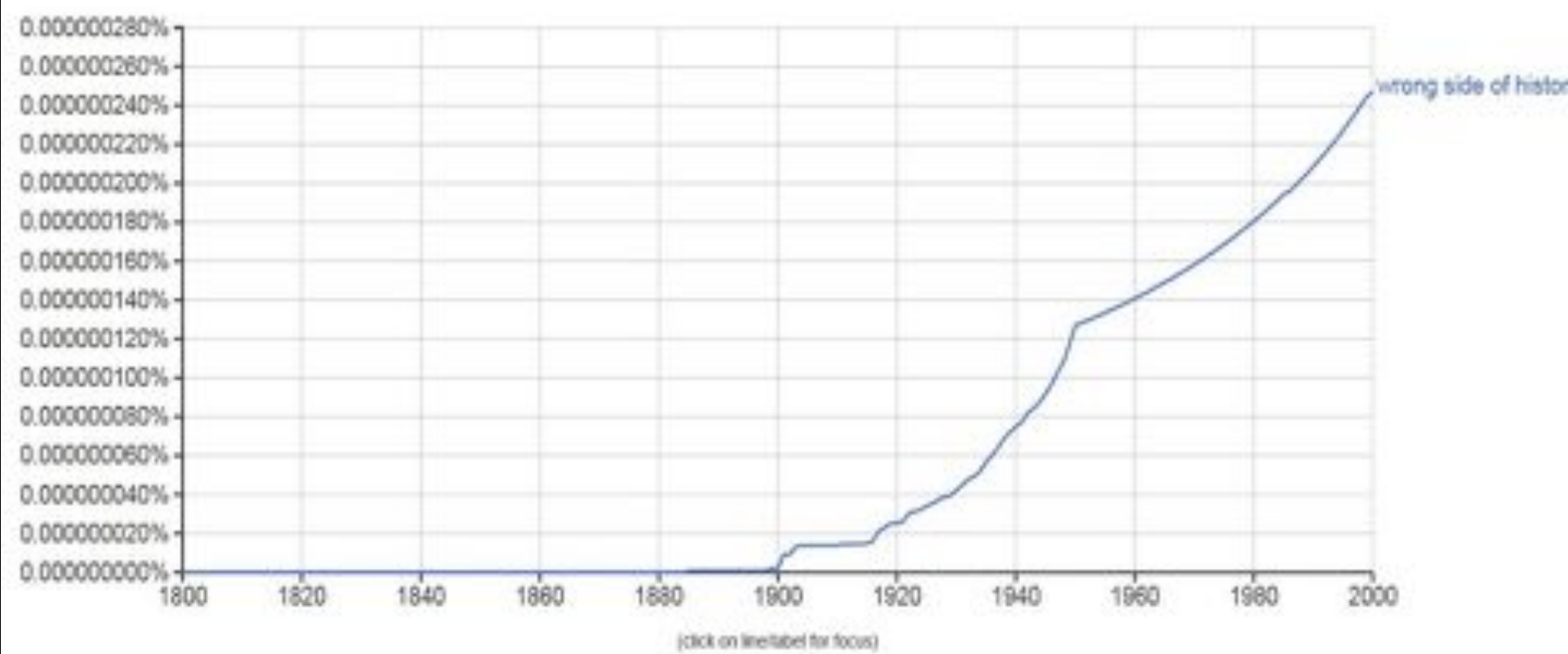
*We are progressing as a culture. You  
Christians are way behind the times.  
History will prove you wrong.*



# Understanding The Narrative:

Graph these comma-separated phrases: wrong side of history -  case-insensitive


between 1800 and 2000 from the corpus English with smoothing of 50 [Search lots of books](#)











**"the arc of the  
moral universe is  
long, but it bends  
toward justice."**

Martin Luther King Jr.

*Four Assumptions about*

*The Wrong Side of  
History*



*Assumption #1*

*History is  
Progressive and Linear*

*Assumption #2*

*We are headed toward  
a better world than we  
once had*

### *Assumption #3*

*The guiding force of  
history is what the  
majority/power believes*

*Assumption #4*

*Therefore, morality is  
not subjective, but  
determined by history.*



I'M ON THE  
RIGHT SIDE  
of  
HISTORY

# Learning and Filtering the History Narrative

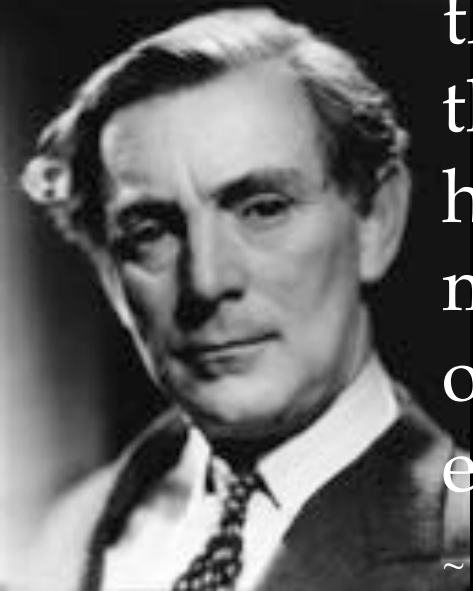


*Assumption #1*

*History is  
Progressive and Linear*



History is all things to all men. She is at the service of good causes and bad. In other words she is a harlot and a hireling, and for this reason she best serves those who suspect her most. Therefore, we must beware even of saying, "History says [...]" or "History proves [...]", as though she herself were the oracle; as though indeed history, once she spoken, had put the matter beyond the range of mere human inquiry. Rather we must say to ourselves: "She will lie to us till the very end of the last cross-examination."



~ Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History*, 1931, pages 131-132.

*Assumption #2*

*We are headed toward  
a better world than we  
once had*



# Black and White Inequality in All 50 States

By Michael B. Sauter August 18, 2017 4:00 pm EST

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Source: Thinkstock

## 2. Minnesota

- > African American population: 5.7% (22nd smallest)
- > Median household income: \$30,306 (black), \$66,979 (white)
- > Unemployment rate: 8.8% (black), 3.0% (white)
- > Homeownership rate: 21.7% (black), 76.0% (white)
- > Incarceration rate (per 100,000): 1,219 (black), 111 (white)



Black and White Inequality in All

50

By Michael B.

Print

Share

LOCAL



# Black household income plunges in one year in Minnesota

Dramatic one-year drop puts state behind Mississippi for median black household earnings.

By John Reinan and MaryJo Webster Star Tribune | SEPTEMBER 17, 2015 — 2:15PM

The median black household in Minnesota is now worse off than its counterpart in Mississippi. Among the 50 states, along with Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., Minnesota ranked 45th in median black household income. Mississippi ranked 44th.



10

“And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history – money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery – the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy.

~ C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*



### *Assumption #3*

*The guiding force of  
history is what the  
majority/power believes*

A stylized illustration of a man in a military-style helmet and uniform, looking upwards. A large swastika symbol is visible in the background. The overall color palette is dominated by reds, browns, and yellows.

# STATE OF DECEPTION

THE POWER OF  
NAZI PROPAGANDA



*Assumption #4*

*Therefore, morality is  
not subjective, but  
determined by history.*



**What is the Biblical idea of being on “The Right Side of History”?**



# God is completely sovereign over human history and always has been

Isaiah 46:9-11

<sup>9</sup>“Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. <sup>10</sup>I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, ‘My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.’ <sup>11</sup>From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that I will bring about; what I have planned, that I will do.”

# God appoints places, times, and geography

## Acts 17:24-28

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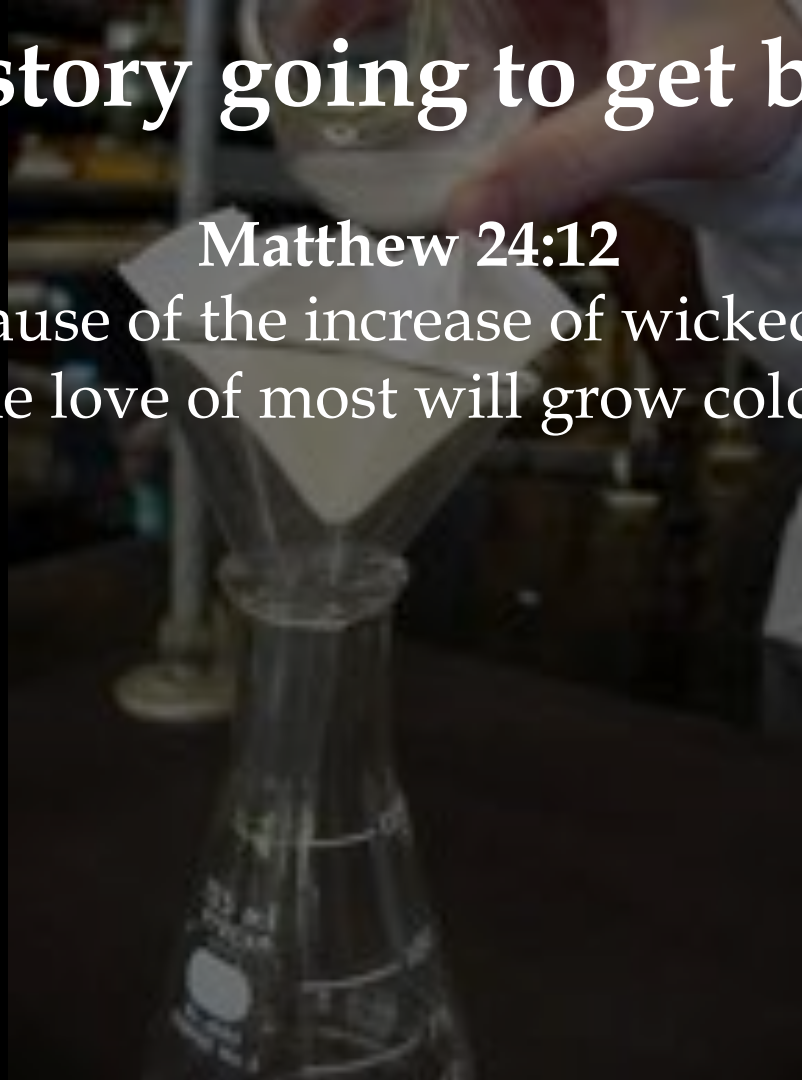
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# Is History going to get better?

Matthew 24:12

“Because of the increase of wickedness,  
the love of most will grow cold.”



# Is History going to get better?

**Matthew 24:12**

“Because of the increase of wickedness,  
the love of most will grow cold.”

**John 16:33**

“I have told you these things,  
so that in me you may have peace.  
In this world you will have trouble.  
But take heart! I have overcome the world.”



# Is History going to get better?

## 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

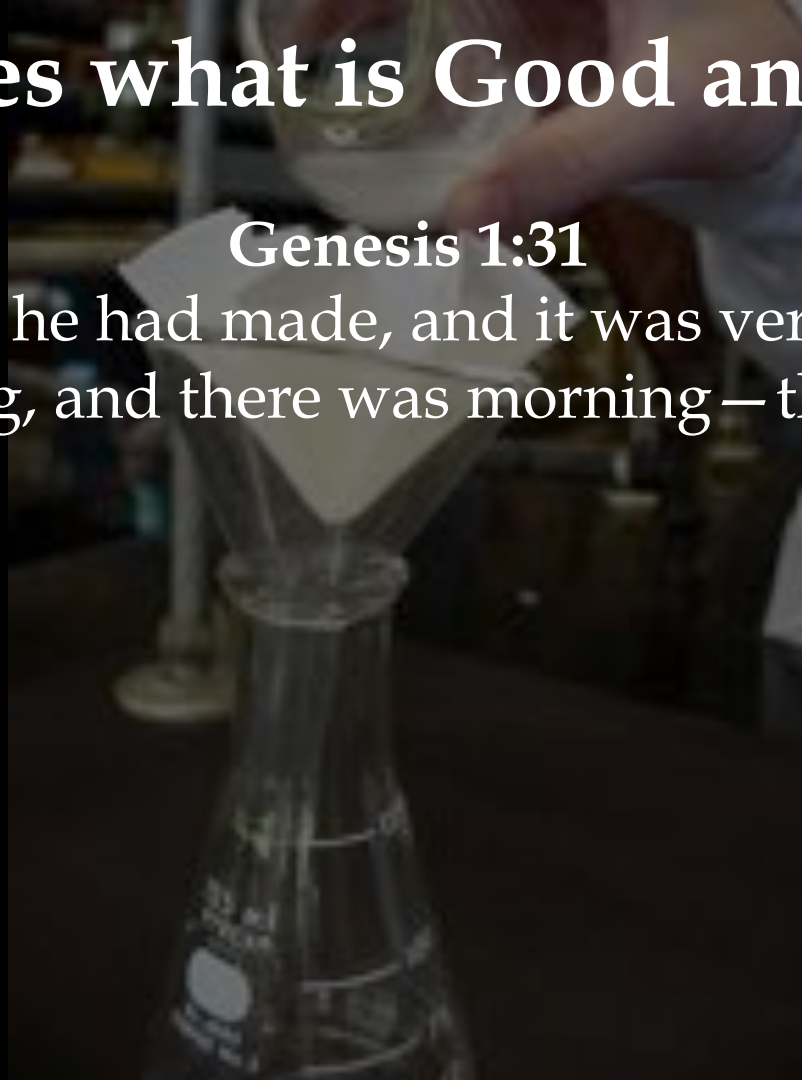
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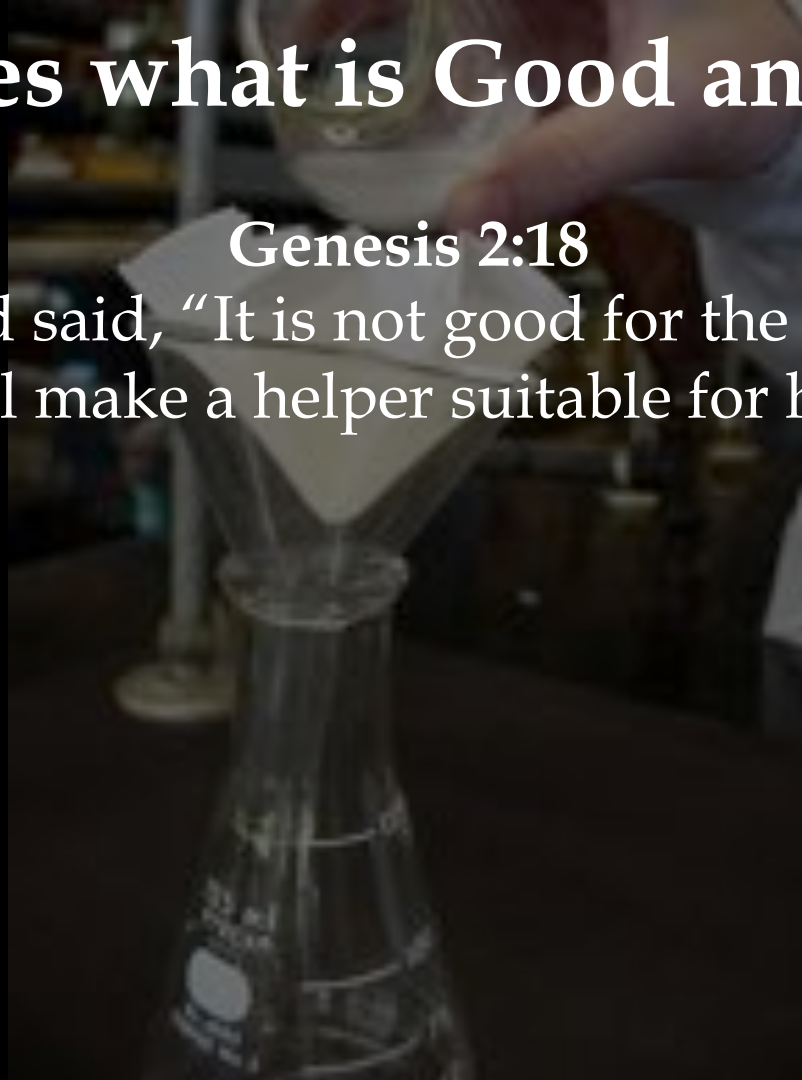
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# When Humans take the role of defining morality

Genesis 3:6-7

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THE RIGHT  
SIDE OF  
HISTORY

**PAY NO ATTENTION**

**TO THE MAN BEHIND THE  
CURTAIN**



“Behind the Curtain of human history”

# “Behind the Curtain”

## *Setting the Stage - Revelation 4*

<sup>1</sup>After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.” <sup>2</sup>At once I was in the Spirit...,



# “Behind the Curtain”

## *Setting the Stage - Revelation 4*

<sup>2</sup>At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. <sup>3</sup>And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. <sup>4</sup>Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. <sup>5</sup>From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God.

# “Behind the Curtain”

## *Setting the Stage - Revelation 4*

<sup>6</sup>Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and behind.

<sup>7</sup>The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like an ox, the third had a face like a man, the fourth was like a flying eagle.

<sup>8</sup>Each of the four living creatures had six wings and was covered with eyes all around, even under his wings. Day and night they never stop saying: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.”

# “Behind the Curtain”

## *Setting the Stage - Revelation 4*

<sup>9</sup>Whenever the living creatures give glory, honor and thanks to him who sits on the throne and who lives for ever and ever, <sup>10</sup>the twenty-four elders fall down before him who sits on the throne, and worship him who lives for ever and ever. They lay their crowns before the throne and say:

<sup>11</sup>“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

# “Behind the Curtain”

*The problem - Revelation 5:1-4*

<sup>1</sup>Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals.



# “Behind the Curtain”

*The problem - Revelation 5:1-4*

<sup>2</sup>And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice,

“Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?”

<sup>3</sup>But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. <sup>4</sup>I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside.

# “Behind the Curtain”

*The one who is worthy - Revelation 5:5-14*

<sup>5</sup>Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.” <sup>6</sup>Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. <sup>7</sup>He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. <sup>8</sup>And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

# “Behind the Curtain”

*The one who is worthy - Revelation 5:5-14*

<sup>9</sup>And they sang a new song:

“You are worthy to take the scroll  
and to open its seals,  
because you were slain,  
and with your blood you purchased men for God  
from every tribe and language and people and nation.

<sup>10</sup>You have made them to be a kingdom  
and priests to serve our God,  
and they will reign on the earth.”



# “Behind the Curtain”

*The one who is worthy - Revelation 5:5-14*

<sup>11</sup>Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels,  
numbering thousands upon thousands,  
and ten thousand times ten thousand.

They encircled the throne and the living creatures  
and the elders. <sup>12</sup>In a loud voice they sang:

“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,  
to receive power and wealth and wisdom  
and strength and honor  
and glory and praise!”

# “Behind the Curtain”

*The one who is worthy - Revelation 5:5-14*

<sup>13</sup>Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!”

<sup>14</sup>The four living creatures said, “Amen”, and the elders fell down and worshipped.

Christianity is at the same time both far more pessimistic about history and the human race than any other worldview and far more optimistic about the material world's future than any other worldview. Our future is a renewed material universe with resurrected bodies – but of course resurrection always comes after death and destruction. There is no reason for Christians to believe that every decade and stage in history will be better than the stage before, but we believe that all is being brought infallibly to a glorious end.

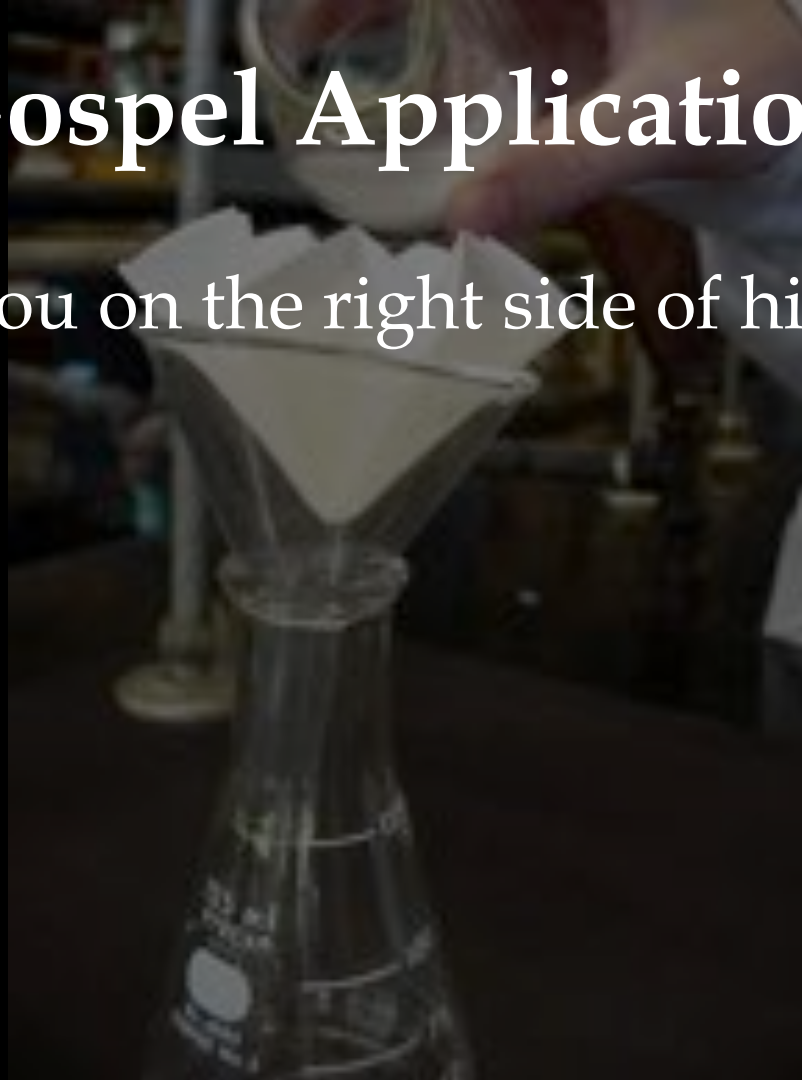
~ Tim Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism* (pp. 153-154).

# Gospel Application:



# Gospel Application:

Are you on the right side of history?



# Gospel Application:

*Are you on the right side of history?*

*Are you ok with being judged as if you weren't?*

