

23-0827a Transcript

23-0827a - 2-The Rise of Homo Deus & Meo Christianity, Scott Reynolds

Bible Readers: Kevin Woosley and Roger Raines

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2-The Rise of Homo Deus & Meo Christianity

Transcript (0:03 - 32:50)

Scripture Readings

1st Reader: Kevin Woosley

Isaiah 14:12-14,

(0:03) Good morning. (0:06) I'll be reading out of the book of Isaiah, chapter 14, verses 12 through 14. (0:14) I'm reading out of the New King James Version.

(0:19) How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning, (0:25) how you are cut down to the ground, (0:30) you who weakened the nations. (0:33) For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven, (0:37) I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. (0:40) I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest side of the north. (0:46) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. (0:50) I will be like the Most High. (0:52)

2nd Reader: Roger Raines

Matthew 16:24,

(0:57) Good morning. (0:59) I will be reading from the book of Matthew, chapter 16, verse 24. (1:07) Matthew 16, verse 24.

(1:11) Then Jesus said to his disciples, (1:13) If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. (1:23) This concludes this reading. (1:24)

Transcript

Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(1:29) Thank you, Roger. (1:31) Okay. (1:34) If you've been a Christian for any length of time, and you, I don't know, (1:39) sometimes I think we get into a rut, tradition, and we do the same things over. (1:45) Being a good Christian is coming to all the services you can come to, (1:51) maybe partake in a service if you're asked. (1:56) You know, be attentive.

(1:58) Don't fall asleep on the preacher today, please. (2:05) And, you know, we've had some classes

here in Romans and Hebrews that I taught (2:11) and some that Jim have taught that are really, really thought-provoking. (2:17) But even still, there's something missing.

(2:21) And I'm really, really happy. (2:26) I came across Del Tackett, who's not in the Church of Christ, (2:31) but I saw a presentation of one of his works in the Church of Christ in South Carolina (2:42) when I was visiting, when Jean and I were visiting my brother-in-law and sister. (2:47) And they had one of the truth projects.

(2:50) They were showing one of the, as Del calls it, tours of the truth project. (2:58) And it was on a Wednesday night, and we only got to see not even a half hour. (3:05) They are all at least 54 minutes.

(3:09) And I was blown away. (3:12) It was, wow, this is really good stuff. (3:14) And based on that, I went and actually bought a set of the truth project (3:20) so that we could watch it, Jean and I. (3:23) And I was not disappointed.

(3:27) From beginning to end, it's just loaded with a wealth of information. (3:32) And the whole point was to build, help Christians build a biblical worldview. (3:39) And you might think, well, what does that mean? (3:40) Well, how do you make decisions in the world? (3:46) We come to church.

(3:47) We do our thing. (3:48) We check off, yeah, I was here. (3:51) I had communion.

(3:52) I'm doing good. (3:55) Then we go out in the world, and how do you live your life? (3:58) The people in the world tell that you're a Christian by the way you live your life (4:02) when you're not here. (4:04) So a worldview is how you base what you believe about the world.

(4:09) Do we believe as the world tells us that we've been around for billions of years? (4:16) A lot of Christians do based on scientific evidence, not on the Bible. (4:23) You won't get that idea from the Bible. (4:26) So I was really impressed that he showed and compared a biblical worldview to the world's view.

(4:37) And all of a sudden, things started to make sense. (4:42) Why in the world would a president of the United States a few terms ago be concerned (4:50) whether which bathroom, public bathroom you could go into? (4:56) Why was that decision-making at a presidential level? (5:04) Does that make sense? (5:05) So comparing a biblical worldview to the world's view was very helpful. (5:12) But like from my perspective, the Romans class and the Hebrews class, (5:18) that's a wealth of information that resides in me.

(5:23) And a worldview is what's in your head. (5:26) What you really believe is really real. (5:30) That's your worldview.

(5:33) So that's interesting information, how to come up with a worldview. (5:39) But since then, I found out that Dell has been progressing. (5:46) By the way, he did the—I'm going to have a whole sermon before my sermon.

(5:51) He did the Truth Project in 2005. (5:57) And you'll be blown away about how accurate it is to what's happening today. (6:04) What's happened in the last few years is mind-boggling.

(6:10) So since then, he's progressed to what he's called the Engagement Project. (6:17) And I haven't

actually looked at that material, but I've been on his website (6:21) and looked at—he has a wealth of articles that he's written about current events (6:26) and today and what's going on. (6:28) And he has a series called The Seven Threats of Our Time, (6:32) which I'll be doing—that's what I'm doing in the mornings.

(6:34) But I'll also be doing this evening another series that he has (6:41) that is called Neighborly Apologetics. (6:45) And he gets into, with The Seven Threats and the Engagement Project (6:51) and Neighborly Apologetics, what we can—we can actually do something. (7:00) And it's different from what we've been doing.

(7:04) We've been doing things like Search for Truth and the Fishers of Men, (7:12) where our answer is to turn each of us into a preacher. (7:18) And we go out and preach to people like we're doing now. (7:22) Do you know this is one of the least effective methods of conveying information (7:27) when I'm doing now a lecture? (7:30) It doesn't rate very well as far as actually imparting truth.

(7:35) When you go home—when I go home after listening to a sermon, (7:39) I can barely remember—I might be able to remember a few points. (7:45) But a week or two later, I couldn't even tell you what the sermon may have been, (7:51) unless a point or two actually made a huge impact. (7:55) It's not effective.

(7:58) So what he's proposing is different than what we're doing. (8:06) And so when that comes across, it's something I've been looking for that's been missing. (8:15) What do we do? (8:16) How do we make an impact in the world? (8:19) So I hope you'll be attentive this morning.

(8:23) And then this evening, the seven threats is addressed to Christians, non-Christians, (8:33) outsiders may benefit. (8:37) But this evening is definitely, which will be neighborly apologetics, is for the church. (8:47) That's why I put it in the evening instead of doing it in the morning to address the church.

(8:53) And this is what we can be doing. (8:55) It's only an intro tonight, so we really won't get many. (8:59) We'll get a glimpse of what we can be doing, but it's the beginning of that series.

(9:06) So with that said, we're going to go over a series of articles from Del Packett, (9:13) the author of The Truth Project, entitled The Seven Threats to America in Our Times. (9:21) And he begins the second threat by likening these threats to storm fronts. (9:28) He says, here are the storm fronts of the perfect storm that are confronting us today.

(9:36) And briefly, we'll mention them. (9:39) The first one was the rise of the scoffer and the depraved mind. (9:44) And we went over that last month, July 30th.

(9:48) The recording and notes are available from the education page of our website. (9:53) If you need to know how to get there, ask me. (9:55) I'll show you.

(9:57) Under the sermon and notes heading at the bottom of the page, (10:01) and the notes also have links to Del's original materials on his website. (10:07) The second threat we're going to look at today, the rise of homo deus and Meo-Christianity. (10:16) Number three is the loss of the noble male and rise of malevolent compassion.

(10:21) Four, the consolidation of massive earthly power. (10:26) Five, rise of a demonic worldview,

a national rift. (10:30) Six, the addiction and softness, the dependency and lostness of our culture.

(10:40) And number seven, the attack on the biblical family. (10:43) So last time, we talked about the two regressions that occur in scripture. (10:51) The first regression we see in Proverbs from the simple-minded to the fool to the scoffer.

(10:58) The simple say, I'm okay, you're okay, while they're following their own desires. (11:04) The fool says, I'm okay, but you're not. (11:07) And there is no God, and they call evil good and good evil.

(11:12) And the scoffer is the militant fool. (11:15) I'm okay, but if you believe in God, you'll be canceled, punished. (11:23) The scoffer sets a city aflame, Proverbs tells us in 29 verse 8. (11:31) Proverbs 1.22 also mentions all three.

(11:34) How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? (11:38) How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing, and the fool hates knowledge? (11:47) Then we talked about the regression in Romans. (11:51) We see that God's wrath is revealed from heaven to those who suppress the truth, though it is plain. (11:59) Do not glorify God nor thank him, and their thinking becomes futile, their hearts darken, and they become fools.

(12:07) Then there are the three successive, progressive. (12:16) Therefore, it says in Romans, God gave them over to sexual impurity. (12:24) This is the male-female impurity, and it was prevalent in the beginning of the 1900s.

(12:31) Then it says God gave them over to shameful lusts. (12:37) Following the 1960s, we see unnatural sexual impurity prominently emerging. (12:47) Finally, it says that God gave them over to a depraved mind.

(12:53) We found out the last time in our first lesson that that means that's talking about these people no longer. (13:02) Their minds no longer are logical or rational, and all of this was covered in our discussion of the first threat. (13:11) Let's now look at the second storm front, if you want to put it that way, that is aligning in our culture at this time.

(13:20) It's a storm front that Del calls the rise of homo deus and Meo-Christianity and the luxury of a culture. (13:31) Where even the lower economic classes live like kings compared to the world's poor. (13:38) We have become immensely spoiled.

(13:42) We are lavished with bins overflowing with fresh fruit and vegetables in the dead of winter. (13:48) Aisles full of choice cut meats. (13:51) Acres of shelves filled with more products than anyone could possibly want.

(13:56) Stores with racks of clothes and shoes of all types, style, and color. (14:04) Homes with heat in the winter and air conditioning in the summer. (14:07) Cars by the millions and transportation freedom to go anywhere and anytime we want.

(14:14) We have fast service food everywhere. (14:17) And thousands of channels and entertainment of any kind 24-7 at the push of a button. (14:24) We pay thousands of dollars for a bicycle and expensive tights.

(14:29) We pay almost as much for our tennis shoes. (14:34) Like the kings of old with wise men and counselors at their beckon, we have a waiting attendant named Alexa. (14:44) Who grants us access

to the storehouse of the world's knowledge by simply commanding her to speak.

(14:51) Yesterday, I raised my scepter and my demand was met with a delivery truck this afternoon. (15:00) We are lavishly wealthy and spoiled. (15:04) In all of this, it is easy to believe it is all about me.

(15:15) One of the first things that happens when a culture loses the larger story of God (15:20) is that there is only one story left. (15:24) Mine. (15:26) Couple this with the explosion of at-your-service entertainment and what's-your-pleasure technology (15:32) that incorporates sophisticated algorithms to tailor everything to your surfing wants and desires, (15:40) and it isn't hard to begin to think that the universe revolves around you.

(15:47) It gets complicated after this because just as Satan essentially whispered, (15:54) it's all about you, Eve. (15:57) I am convinced we are fighting a demonic battle here as well. (16:04) There are spiritual, material, and worldview forces combining today to whisper the same in our ears (16:12) every minute of every day.

(16:16) And just as Eve bought the lie and it led to devastating consequences, (16:24) so too swallowing that lie will do the same to us individually and to our culture. (16:33) The forces are gaining so much strength that we have raised all about me to the next satanic level. (16:42) You will be like God.

(16:47) This is Satan's modus operandi, his way of doing things to usurp God. (16:53) As Isaiah 14, 12-14 reads, and thank you, Kevin, for reading that, (17:00) and thank you for using the New King James Version, (17:04) because Del says, I'm using the New King James Version here (17:08) because it translates the Hebrew word for morning star with a name you might be familiar with. (17:16) Lucifer, how you have fallen from heaven.

(17:26) O Lucifer, son of the morning, how you are cut down to the ground, (17:33) you who weakened the nations, for you have said in your heart, (17:40) I will ascend to heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. (17:50) I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest side of the north. (17:56) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.

(18:00) I will be like the Most High. (18:07) You can see his MO as he applies it to Eve in Genesis 3, verses 4 and 5. (18:14) Then the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die, (18:19) for God knows that in the day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, (18:24) and you will be like God, knowing good and evil. (18:33) Increasingly, the human heart has become the voice of the human deity, Homo Deus.

(18:41) The individual heart becomes unassailable, speaking divine proclamations, (18:49) and if you disagree, it will be considered blasphemy, and you will be canceled, punished for it. (18:56) If I say, I am a girl, the world must now bow down to that as a divine proclamation. (19:07) A father in Canada was recently arrested because he refused to use the personal pronouns (19:14) demanded by his child, the school, and his government.

(19:19) He is considered a blasphemer. (19:24) We have been seduced by this for years with the follow your heart, be your true self mantra (19:33) that is founded upon the same sinister belief that there is something deeply divine about me. (19:41) And my ultimate quest is to get in touch with and set it free.

(19:47) That is almost a direct quote from Abraham Maslow, who taught us all, (19:54) or at least all of our psychiatrists, that our highest goal in life was not to glorify God, (20:02) but to self-actualize the last century's version of follow your heart. (20:11) Virtually every movie today plays the same theme over and over again. (20:17) Characters wrestle with their inner struggling selves until they find salvation (20:22) in becoming true to their own hearts, and then celebrate it, and we may be more accurate to say, worship it.

(20:31) Our culture has become truly blasphemous. (20:37) I am the way, the truth, and the life, they say. (20:41) Not Jesus, me.

(20:44) I am not God, me. (20:49) This is the rise of homo deus. (20:53) When a culture descends into such deep self-centeredness, it begins to collapse.

(21:03) A healthy culture is built upon selflessness, cooperation, trust, and goodwill. (21:12) When selfishness reigns, lawlessness and corruption soon follow. (21:17) Daniel Webster, no relation to Noah Webster of dictionary fame, famously prophesied, (21:23) when the public mind becomes spoiled or impaired and corrupt, (21:30) laws are a nullity or legally void, and constitutions are but waste paper.

(21:39) Homo deus will also lead to a greater and greater isolation. (21:45) Proverbs 18.1, a man who isolates himself seeks his own desire. (21:50) He rages against all wise judgment.

(21:54) And Proverbs 18.2, a fool has no delight in understanding, but in expressing his own heart. (22:04) When people believe their happiness and significance and pleasure is increasingly found in getting their own way, (22:12) pursuing their own will, they will progressively become manipulators of everyone around them. (22:19) When self rules everyone as an agenda, always, everyone becomes a salesman.

(22:28) Nothing destroys relationships more than when two people are maneuvering and manipulating according to their own agendas and scripts. (22:37) We become increasingly isolated, shrinking ever so slowly into our own all-about-me throne, (22:47) where we become secretly and pathologically lonely. (22:54) The desperate drive to control and fulfill our own will also leads to emotional turmoil.

(23:01) When we become invested in our own personal scripts, if my husband would jest, my wife would jest, (23:09) my parents, a cute boy or girl at school would jest, and after all, we are not God, (23:19) and we continually fail in controlling the events and people around us, (23:26) then we become possessed with negative emotions, anger, disappointment, impatience, worry, bitterness, (23:33) all of which can make us claw ever more desperately or give up and sink down into apathy and hopelessness and sometimes suicide. (23:46) These are the consequences of Satan's lie. (23:51) Ah, but it is here we should see the body of Christ shine, (23:58) for we are the earthly purveyors of what his true, selfless relationship should look like.

(24:05) We have been on the receiving end of God's steadfast, sacrificial, true, agape love. (24:12) As Paul cries out, Christ's love compels us. (24:18) But alas, the body of Christ is increasingly beset with the same lie.

(24:27) I call it, Del says, Meo-Christianity, (24:32) where we come wittingly or unwittingly to believe that the most important thing in Christianity is me. (24:42) I am God's endgame. (24:45) It's all about me, spiritually and piously speaking, of course.

(24:50) The music on Sunday, the fellowship, the teaching, the Christian albums, the movies, etc., etc. (24:56) are basically all about me and for me. (25:00) I am a Christian consumer who delights in my Christian consumption.

(25:05) We even turn our growth and sanctification into something that is all about me. (25:12) The most important thing for people to hear from me is my journey. (25:18) I write diligently all about it in my blogs and post on social media and hope everyone follows me.

(25:27) Isn't that a revealing word? (25:32) 2 Timothy 3, verses 2 through 5. (25:36) For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, (25:43) disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, (25:51) brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. (26:02) And listen to this. (26:03) Having a form of godliness, they think they're godly.

(26:10) Having a form of godliness, but denying its power. (26:16) And from such people, Paul tells Timothy, turn away. (26:23) It is hard to love our neighbors when we are primarily concerned with ourselves.

(26:29) The most critical element in true agape love is sacrifice. (26:36) Without it, there is no true agape love. (26:40) Without true agape love, Paul says, we are but a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal (26:46) that may make a big noise, but it simply fades quickly into nothing.

(26:52) No one sacrifices for another when they believe it is all about them. (27:02) This is the crux of the lie. (27:05) And this, my dear brothers and sisters, is a critical weather front and the perfect storm brewing about us.

(27:13) But what can we do about it? (27:15) When the world's ultimate goal is self-actualization, is it any wonder why Christianity is attacked? (27:26) Not just religion, Christianity specifically. (27:30) Listen and see if this helps explain why. (27:33) Matthew 16 verse 24.

(27:37) Then Jesus said to his disciples, if anyone desires to come after me, let him self-actualize, (27:50) look at my belly button, and contemplate. (27:56) If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross. (28:05) We don't see the impact of the cross today.

(28:10) That would be like saying today, and take up your electric chair, take up your firing squad, (28:18) take up your gallows, your guillotine, and follow me. (28:25) A cross was an implement of execution. (28:29) That's the significance of the cross, death.

(28:33) Take up your cross and follow me. (28:38) Philippians 2 verses 3 and 4. (28:41) Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind, (28:50) let each esteem others better than himself. (28:53) Let each of you do so for the interest of others.

(28:59) James 4 verse 3. (29:01) You ask and you do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. (29:09) 1 Corinthians 10 verse 24. (29:13) Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being.

(29:20) Does that fit with today's mantra? (29:24) Is it any wonder they're attacking Christianity, the thing that will interfere from them self-actualizing? (29:35) We must heed the words of Jesus and return to our first love, (29:39) and in so doing become ports in the storm for those around us (29:43) who are being swept away in its fierce and unrelenting turn. (29:49) Colossians 4 verses 5

and 6. (29:52) Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. (29:58) Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, (30:03) so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

(30:09) In the research book, and this was in the first lesson, and this is only a brief summary. (30:16) In the research book, I once was lost. (30:19) Over 2,000 students were interviewed that had come to Christ, (30:24) and each one progressed through the same five thresholds, (30:28) and we only looked at two last time.

(30:30) That's all we're going to briefly mention here. (30:33) In the first step, they entered into a trusted relationship with a Christian. (30:41) If people are going to change, there needs to be a trusted relationship with a Christian.

(30:50) And second, in that relationship, they began to ask sincere questions. (30:58) So how then, they'll ask, shall the remnant live? (31:02) We will engage with wisdom through trusted relationships in the context of diligent, (31:09) persistent prayer. (31:10) We will walk not as those without hope, (31:13) and we will meditate on the nature of God and his works, (31:18) and remind ourselves continually that the wicked will not prevail.

(31:23) We will stand firm for truth and righteousness, though the cost is great, (31:28) and we will still yield fruit in old age. (31:33) That's a promise from God that we won't be barren if we do his work. (31:39) Matthew 5, 16, (31:57) We're extending the invitation now to anyone who is subject to it.

(32:02) If you need to come, come while we stand and sing.