Part 2: *The comedy of Secularization*

- New Testament Hope
    - The Early Christian Concept of Hope
        - Essentially governed by the OT.
        - Greek:
            - Elpis [Hope] (Idea of Hope)
                - Expectation, hope.
                - Acts 2:26: *Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope,*
                - https://biblehub.com/greek/1680.htm
            - Elpizo [to hope] (Action Hope)
                - To expect, to hope. (I hope, hope for, expect, trust.)
                - Matthew 12:21:"*In his name the nations will put their hope."*
                - https://biblehub.com/greek/1679.htm
            - Apelpizo [to despair] (the complete loss or absence of hope)
                - To despair of (I give up in despair, despair of; I hope to receive from or in return.)
                - Luke 6:35: "**35** *But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked."*
                - https://biblehub.com/greek/560.htm
            - Proelpizo [to be the first to hope]
                - To hope before. (I hope before, am the first to hope)
                - Ephesians 1:12: "***12*** *in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory."*
                - https://biblehub.com/greek/4276.htm
        - Only when the sphere is secular does the group denote (good) expectation.
            - (In english) only when the world is secular do they explain that hope is "good". Because in the faith it is implied that hope is good. It is not neutral.
            - They can have a selfish hope:
                - Lions win the Superbowl.
                    - I can "hope" that that happens, and I would love it if that happens. But my Salvation is not based on that hope. The hope of Salvation must be based on Christ alone.
                - Secular thought has removed the hope in God and replaced it with worldly things.
        - The OT element of trust is strong when the relation is to persons

        - Trust.
    - When fixed on God, hope embraces expectation, trust, and patient waiting. It is linked to faith.
        - Heb 11:1 "*Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.*"
        - Which stresses the certainty of what is divinely given.
        - Rom 8:24-25 "***24*** *For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?* ***25*** *But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.*"
        - Patient endurance is the main point of Rom 5:1-4; 1 Th 1:3; Heb 6:11.
            - Rom "perseverance, character; and character, hope."
            - 1 Th "**3** We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."
            - Heb "**11** We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized."
- The main difference from the OT is that the act of salvation has now been accomplished in Christ, so that hope itself is an eschatological blessing, and there is every reason for confidence such as Paul has in the Corinthians.
    - 2 Cor 1:12ff "***12*** *Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with integrity[a] and godly sincerity. We have done so, relying not on worldly wisdom but on God's grace.*"
- Hope rests on faith in the act of salvation
    - Rom 8:24-25 "***24*** *For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?* ***25*** *But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently*"
    - and is sustained by the Spirit (26-27) **26** *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.* ***27*** *And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God*."
    - and is an integral part of the Christian life. (Rom 15:13 "***13*** *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit*." &
    - 12:12 "***12*** *Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.*"
- Endurance may be stressed in this life (Rom 5:2, 4-5) but our waiting is confident, for we are saved by hope (Rom 8:24)
- How do we have the confidence that our Hope is real?
    - How can we trust the Scriptures?

- **Acts 2:26** Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in **hope**,
- **Acts 8:22** Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord in the **hope** that he may forgive you for having such a thought in your heart.
- **Acts 23:6** Then Paul, knowing that some of them were Sadducees and the others Pharisees, called out in the Sanhedrin, “My brothers, I am a Pharisee, descended from Pharisees. I stand on trial because of the **hope** of the resurrection of the dead.”
- **Acts 26:6** And now it is because of my **hope** in what God has promised our ancestors that I am on trial today.
- **Acts 26:7** This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. King Agrippa, it is because of this **hope** that these Jews are accusing me.
- **Romans 4:18** Against all **hope**, Abraham in **hope** believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”
- Romans 5 1-5 **5** Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we[b] boast in the hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only so, but we[c] also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; **4** perseverance, character; and character, hope. **5** And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.
- **Romans 15:4** For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have **hope**.
- **1 Corinthians 13:7** It always protects, always trusts, always **hope**s, always perseveres.
- **Galatians 5:5** For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we **hope**.

The comedy of Secularization

- Secularization: the action or process of converting something from religious to secular possession or use.
- Ex) Marriage.
  - Was given to us as a covenant between each other and God, but now it’s simply a “union” in the eyes of the world. They took it, and removed God from it.
- Ex) Schools (Moreover “higher education”)
  - A lot of the college profs and academics were, theisits. Now, most of them are atheists.

- Ex) Governmental care instead of Church care.
  - Alms fund.
  - Orphanages
- Key to understand Secularization:
  - The rise of the elite intellectual class skeptical of religious orthodoxies and influenced by the European Enlightenment tradition. They consciously sought to displace a Protestant establishment they saw as standing in their way.
  - **2008-2017**. Annual Gallup polls from 2008 through 2015 showed that the fraction of American who did not identify with any particular religion steadily rose from 14.6% in 2008 to 19.6% in 2015. At the same time, the fraction of Americans identifying as Christians sank from 80.1% to 75% during the same time.[22] This trend continued until 2017 when 21.3% of Americans declared no religious identity.[23] Given that non-Christian religions stayed roughly the same (at about 5% from 2008 to 2015) secularization seems to have affected primarily Christians.[22]

- "after the secularization of the monastery the choir stalls were sold"
- disassociation or separation from religious or spiritual concerns.
  - What are the two things we are told to not talk about with others, Politics and religion.
- "there has been a growing debate over whether the secularization of society will lead to a decrease in charitable giving"

They had it, but then they rejected it (Thus *The comedy of Secularization*)

Conclusion: Our American Society “had it”, at one point in time, many Americans were Christian. But, over time, they have been duped by the intellectual elites, and lead away from the faith and from the Hope. They had it, but then they rejected it for something else.