

## Introduction

"Merchants have no country. The mere spot they stand on does not constitute so strong an attachment as that from which they draw their gains." Thomas Jefferson

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## 12 My Comments/News

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Our guest today is Dr. Gerald Lower. He's the author of Jefferson's Eyes. You can visit him at [www.jeffersonseyes.com](http://www.jeffersonseyes.com).

What would Jefferson say in a 2006 State of the Union Address?

What does Jefferson's Deism constitute?

You wrote, "Humanizing the Christ was part and parcel of the theology provided by Thomas Jefferson and America's Revolutionary fathers. For the first time since Rome bought into a dehumanized Christ, the Christ was able to set foot back on earth in Jefferson's America."

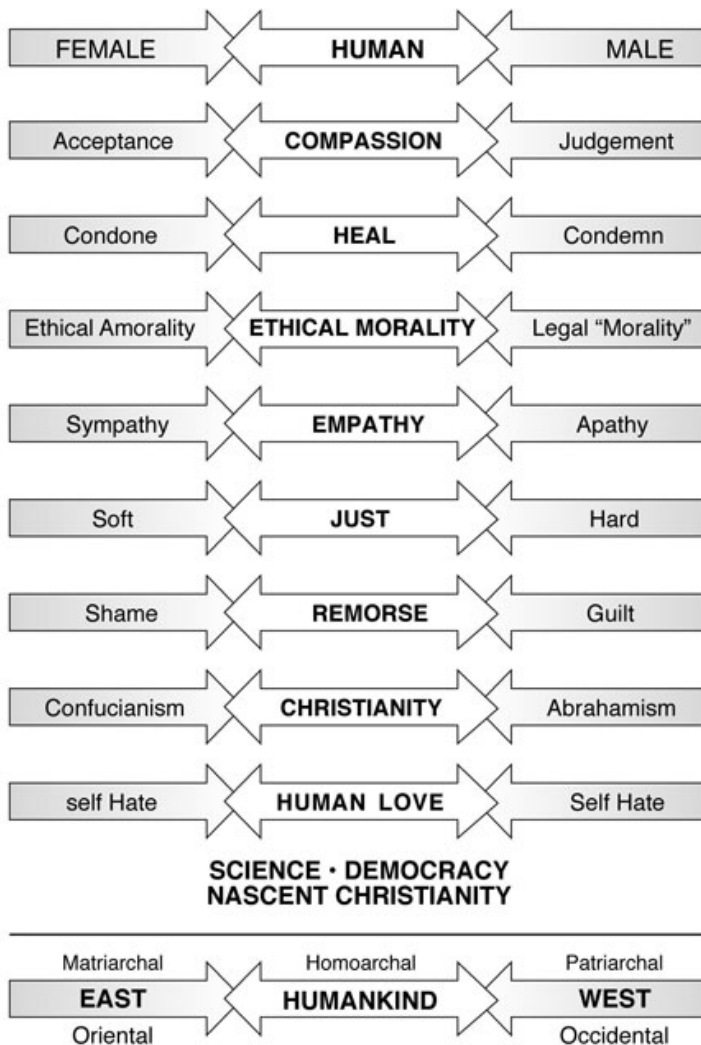
Why was it important for Jefferson to humanize Jesus Christ, and how did doing so play a role in American democracy?

What is The Jefferson Bible - The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth the story of?

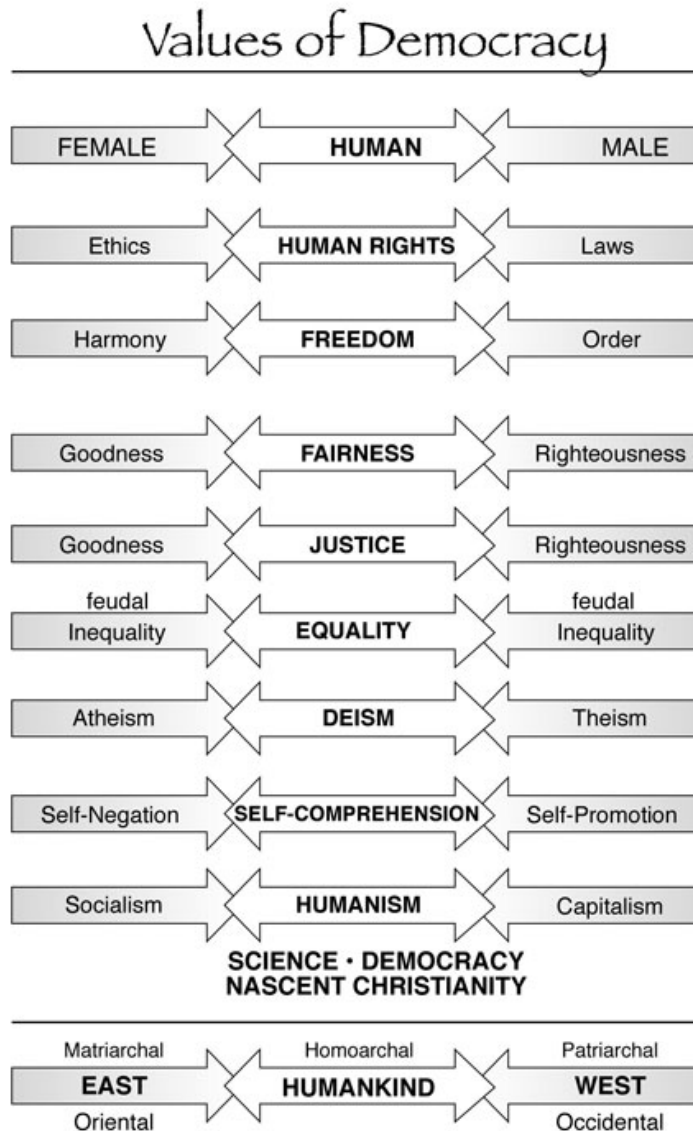
You call Christianity today Judeo Romanism, and you remark on how Jefferson rejected it. What is the history of Romanism that Jefferson would have wanted every American to know?

If you would, define some of the terms you commonly use for our listeners, specifically in what you mean by nascent Christianity, because it is something that to you clearly has little to nothing to do with Christianity the religion. And I'd you to define it relative to East and West. So, let's go one by one:

## Values of Nascent Christianity

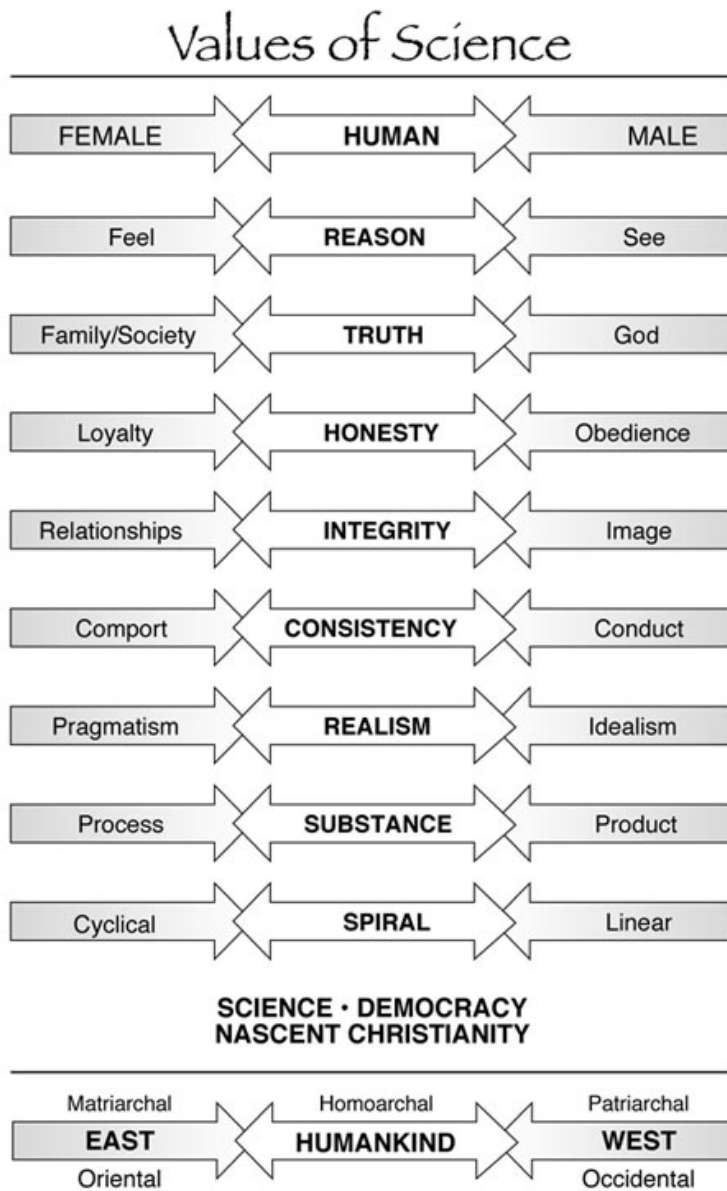


Now you equate nascent Christianity with democracy. What are those parallels?



You write: “Science, Natural Philosophy and their political philosophy, Democracy, have went hand in hand since their beginnings in ancient Greece. Given the evolutionary nature of science, it is only natural that natural philosophy and concepts of democracy have evolved right along with science and its grasp of material reality. In other words, every time democracy has emerged in public, it has followed an evolutionary (i.e., revolutionary) advance in science. To be sure, natural philosophy is evolutionary and the natural philosophy that we

can contemplate at the beginning of the 3rd millennium is a good deal more sophisticated than the natural philosophy of the Greeks and even the natural philosophy of the EuroAmerican Enlightenment that birthed American democracy.” So leaps in scientific knowledge parallel leaps in self-knowledge. For example, you mention Einstein’s discoveries foreshadowing the emergence of a global ethic. But most people don’t think of science in this larger historical time frame. Can you give us the larger picture of what science means for humanity?



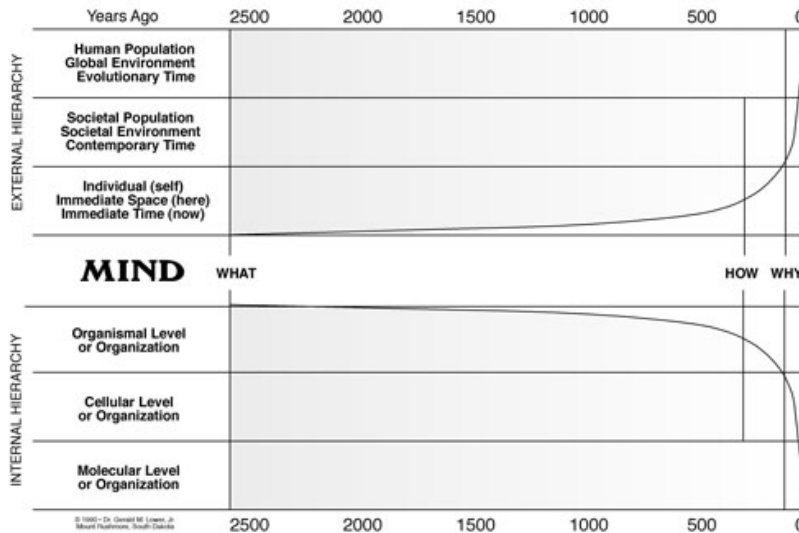
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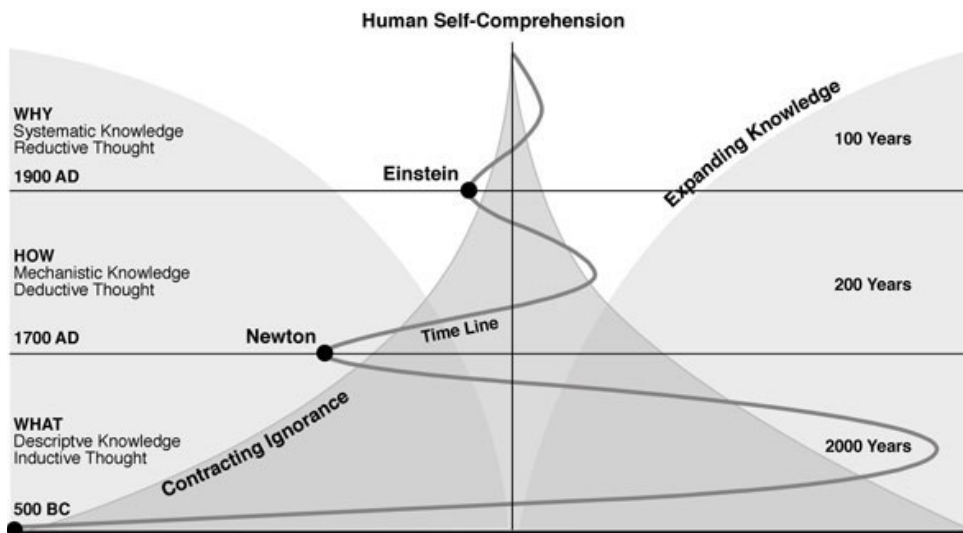
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You speak about the evolution of thought from what to how to why.

## Exponential Stages in Conceptual Evolution



## Conceptual Evolution



## THE EVOLUTION OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY

### 1) Greek Natural Philosophy - WHAT (ancient) post-Socrates

Inductive thought and Descriptive knowledge characterize the natural philosophy that catalyzed the ancient world's first formal democracy. The world was seen as a world of things, with names and definitions and definable relationships to other things. For the first time, spirituality became real in the quest for comprehension and control.

### 2) Euro American Natural Philosophy - HOW (modern) post-Newton

Deductive thought and Mechanistic knowledge characterize the natural philosophy that catalyzed the Euro American Enlightenment, the American Revolution and the modern world's first formal democracy. The world was seen as being comprised of interrelated processes (related events that comprise material mechanism).

### 3) Global Natural Philosophy - WHY (postmodern) post-Einstein

Reductive thought and Systematic knowledge characterize the natural philosophy that will catalyze a global human enlightenment, a global cultural revolution and the world's first direct democracy. The world is seen as a systematic whole, a unified human one world, one magnificent living system.

Some people who aren't overly educated, are going to ask what are you talking about? Others, who know what you are saying, are still going to ask how is that going to happen. And then there will be a few who know what and how, but will ask where and when.

You write: "This new why threatens the why of every known cultural "ism" and it threatens, therefore, the dominion of the few, the rich and the powerful who rule in their own interest and in the name of their cultural "ism." In other words, this third time around for natural philosophy will be its last time around because the postmodern knowledge base embraces theology."

What do you mean by last time around? We will enjoy the millennium and then that's it, end of the world?

Clearly you are no fan of capitalism. What to you is capitalism, and why is it bad? What would Jefferson think of today's corporatism?

You write: "Fundamentalist Roman religion justified Roman imperialism for over a millennium, it justified European colonialism for over three centuries, and it has justified American capitalism for the past half century. In truth, Roman religion has seldom acted on nascent Christian values. It has merely held those values aloft and used them to justify self-righteousness and belligerence in the name of conquest and control.

Constantine's corrupt "genius" was in realizing that Rome did not have to behave in a Christian manner. Rome only had to be a defender of those values. Rome only had to be a "Christian" soldier. That kept the doors open to Roman imperialism and self-righteousness."

Yet you believe that if anything, it is the "end time" for vengeance-based, self-righteous Western religion with its use of a transcendental justification for a greed-driven conquest and control of the human race with imperialism, colonialism, corporatism. Where does your optimism come from?

You write: "Before one can make one's own decisions, one must have self-knowledge, knowledge of how and why the world works. In the developmental sense, therefore, the primary human right is the right to self-knowledge. All other human rights follow from this right." You then talk about these human rights.

Can you comment on some of these, one by one?

LIFE: The Right to Self-Knowledge (always dependent on others)

All of life in the human world begins with values (as the most intimate form of self-knowledge) and self-knowledge. The right to self-knowledge guarantees the right to life, it guarantees being alive in the only way that differentiates the people from other living creatures, knowing where we come from, knowing who we are and knowing why we are here.

The right to self-knowledge is equivalent to the right to be human. That self-knowledge must begin with dialectic human values and human pan-cultural knowledge, not with the various ancient cultural mythologies. That self-knowledge must be personal, and it must be historical and evolutionary, because that is how the real world works.

LIBERTY: The Right to Self-Determination (always dependent on others)

There is little use for knowledge if it cannot be used in decision-making and doing (which is the primary purpose of knowledge). It follows, therefore, that a second human right is the right to self-determination, the right to liberty, the right to make one's own decisions in maintaining one's own path through life.

PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS: The Right to Self-Worth (always dependent on others)

You distinguish between nascent Christianity and Christianity. You call today's Christianity Judeo-Romanism or sometimes religious capitalism. You also feel that today's conflict is between democracy and the despotic isms of the Dark Ages, such as Judaism, Islamism, Confucianism, and of course corporate Christianity.

You write: "The ancient cultural "isms" that have held the human world together over the past few millennia, i.e., Judaism, Romanism, Islamism, Hinduism, Confucianism, were uniformly conceived in despotism and dominion of the few over the many. They produced a despotism of law unrelated to human knowledge in the west, and a despotism of ethics unrelated to human knowledge in the east. All ancient "isms" have returned to fundamentalism in response to globalism, the western "isms" calling for a prophetic end to it all.

Now that's for sure, but most people would not be worried about Confucianism. Talk about the dangers of what you call the politically correct Eastern ethical systems and how, in their own way, they undermine Jeffersonian democracy.

You write: "Allegiance to human rights (knowledgeable behavior) is taken as the only bottom line, not allegiance to laws (obedient behavior) and not allegiance to ethics (politically-correct behavior). The world does not need legal people or ethical people, it needs honest people with allegiances to human knowledge and the values of democracy. It is only from honest people that laws and ethics properly flow."

How do we get from a world of corruption to a world of honest people who don't seek life, liberty and happiness at the expense of others?

You write: "What the entire world is going to witness during the dawn of the 3rd millennium is the prophetic end of religious capitalism in the world. The need to unify the world at the tip of a western sword has been fulfilled over the past two millennia under the auspices of imperialism, colonialism and capitalism, in a journey from tribalism to nationalism to globalism."

So are you saying that in playing its hand fully, imperialism actually caused its own demise? Because you write "Within the frameworks of cultural evolution, that would be the sole purpose of the Bush administration and its neoconservative agenda of religious capitalism, i.e., to bring an end to the dominion of religion and capitalism so as to inadvertently open the doors to a global democracy."

Without knowing it, the Bush administration is providing a necessary role in the larger evolutionary scheme of things. Making the transition from despotism to democracy will not be easy, but once the transition has been made, the world will be, for the first time, truly human.

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You write: "If anything, the Bush-Blair embrace of religion demonstrates just how far away these two prominent world leaders have fallen from the values and viewpoints of the modern world's first formal democracy - in the name of a remarkably corrupt corporate aristocracy and an uncaring marketplace. Both men are unable to make a distinction between the values of corporate capitalism and the values of nascent Christianity and democracy.

Democracy, of course, is entirely dependent upon the separation of church and state. This principle guarantees both religious freedom and freedom from religious oppression. By bringing religion back into government, both Bush and Blair have broken a cardinal requirement for a sane and meaningful government of, by and for the people. Religious justifications are properly abandoned in government because they do not have a definable basis in human honesty or logic.

### Talk about Jefferson's role in creating a Separation of Church and State?

You write: "Jefferson saw that events in the cultural world (e.g., declarations of war, peace treaties) were the result of decisions made by a small number of rich and powerful people (and the people who follow and support them). These people, e.g., the 18th century British colonialists, employed religious arguments to justify their unfair, despotic rule over their colonies, typically in the name of the Christ and, of course, actually in the interest of the British throne.

"Jefferson therefore placed God in the head and heart of every person so that God's authority could be claimed by no one, only by everyone according to the values of democracy, human rights and human knowledge. This fundamental change in the location and nature of God followed naturally and logically."

Few consider the fact that Yahweh never heard of democracy. How appropriate is the worship of such a god in a democratic society?

If one removes god one removes the source of creativity from the western cultural world, right along with the source of laws, punishments, vengeance and self-righteousness. That creative source must be replaced and Jefferson replaced the will of a supernatural god with the "will of the people." That is what keeps you and me, as humans, in the theological equation.

So to Jefferson, America would be godless by the standards of Abrahamic religion, while the god would be the human inhabitants?

You comment on an incredible irony: "This is the enigma of western religion, that it could be so sure that it is doing the work of God on earth (by devoting nearly two millennia to conquest and dominion in the name of the Christ) only to turn around and call for an end to its own dominion in a prophetic "end of time." From their beginnings, all three branches of Abrahamic religion have predicted their own demise on this planet, ostensibly so that their believers might go to heaven."

They will say dominion is to spread the Word of God, and also that once the Word has spread, and everyone has been given the choice, the world is going to end, thus ending their worldly dominion.

You also write: "There is a clear need, then, for the people to consider how to prepare for the coming self-inflicted "end of time." This requires that we consider how the "end of time" might come to pass and how we ought think in order to recover from its aftermath, keeping in mind that the "end of time" will involve discrediting both religion and capitalism from the global political arena - forever - with a concomitant rebirth of democracy on the global stage - forever."

So how should one prepare for the coming end time of religion?

Bringing on the end of time would be the primary evolutionary purpose of post WWII religious capitalism and it would be remarkably easy to ensure, given that the Bush administration has already discredited itself and America in the eyes of the larger world. The only

requirement to initiate the "end of time" would be a single act or response to an act that would trigger multiple wars and social chaos among the fundamentalist nations of the Middle East.

Should the Bush administration choose to involve the American people in a directly causal way in the "end of time," e.g., a preemptory military strike on Iran's nuclear production facilities, any retaliatory response from Iran would likely be directed at Iran's perceived regional enemies, e.g., Israel. An attack on Judaism and capitalism would quickly bring hell to earth's surface with counterattacks on Islamism. The Abrahamic religions have been head to head in the Middle East for over a decade and they are well enough armed to be able to fulfill their own prophecies.

The only non-violent way to bring an end to religion-based capitalistic incompetence and corruption would be for those nations to whom the U.S. is in the depths of debt, e.g., China and the European Union, to simply call all U.S. loans back. The Bush administration has little real appreciation that beneath its military and imperial machinations is the requirement for money. Without money there is no machine, no military and no war. With no option but fiscal bankruptcy, the U.S. would have little choice but to listen, for the first time in over half a century, to the logic of human rights and democracy and the hopes and dreams of people all over the world.

You say that without religion and capitalism, the entire American right wing would be immediately lost for causes.

Making amends for America's failure to honor nascent Christian human rights is an effort that must come from outside the values of religion and capitalism. This will require a national return to the values of America's Revolutionary fathers, as embedded in Jefferson's Declaration. Following the "end of time," we will not only need but we will want to reformulate America's Constitution so that our operational policies are finally consistent with Declaration human rights, natural philosophy and the wisdom of the Christ that separated supernaturalism from reason (which is why Jefferson separated church from state).

The state of democracy in America is worse than ludicrous, especially with the emergence of the self-aggrandizing notion that the entire world could and should be like America, a corrupt, crony capitalistic regime, a "plantation" nation without knowledgeable or competent leadership.

Greed-driven corporate capitalism has destroyed American democracy beyond recognition. It has made a mockery of the concepts of fairness and equality, it has wasted our natural resources, it has littered our land, it has destroyed our family farms and ranches and rural communities, it has destroyed our relationships with our children, it has brought Americans a half a century of war and poverty amidst wealth and political mindlessness, it has snubbed our former allies, it has dumbed us down as a people and it has left us lost from ourselves.

Capitalism has led America into the depths of intellectual crime and corruption and robbed as many honest and talented and creative people of a meaningful existence as any despotic belief system before it, paying all its homage to the rich and powerful, rewarding mostly those who can stomach the greed and the game.

So then how do you expect this evolution to happen when the peoples' faculties are underdeveloped?

It would be an enormous undertaking to consider the number of deaths in human history that can be directly attributed to belief in western religion, i.e., Judaism, Old Testament Romanism and Islamism, the three vengeance-based, apocalyptic branches of Abrahamic religion.

As with the Abrahamic god beneath Judaism and Roman "Christianity," the Islamic version of god can only have worldly impact via the words and actions of its believers.

Obviously this god is just a figment of the imagination – a father figure to be used by authoritarians to control others. But when you've got even Eastern teachers borrowing the monotheistic terminology of God, how do you get around it?

You write on the mind's nature to see the whole.

The reason the mind makes effort to see things as a whole is because it is so much more efficient to do so. In order to comprehend the whole, it is not necessary to acknowledge all the details that comprise the whole, only the details that embrace and define the whole.

This is all part of the mind's natural efforts to comprehend things as a whole. It is the way the mind naturally works, always looking for ways to connect new found knowledge to everything else it knows. It is that inherent human capacity for absorbing knowledge and employing it in creative effort and synthesis, driven by human necessity and faith in a more intelligent tomorrow. It is the only source and the only seat of human deity.

Seeing things as a whole is the way the mind naturally works if it were not for the extremist influences of authoritarian ethical systems in the eastern world and authoritarian religious systems in the western world. Both make effort to restrict thought toward relative and absolute extremes, respectively, from political correctness to law and order.

Do people need to learn to do this, are there exercises, or perhaps they need to unlearn not to see the whole?

Wars are far more prone to stem from right wing, conservative interests. It was against these interests that the Revolutionary War was fought.

And yet, conservatives have a point in gun ownership, and removing standing armies, do they not?

People lived in horizontal communities where they needed each other in order to make their communities work - as opposed to working in a vertical corporate world (with Dick Cheney at the top) and not knowing the names of neighbors two houses down the street, and not caring to know.

I just bought land with the idea of creating a down up, horizontal community. Any suggestions?

Since Constantine's Roman perversion of nascent Christian values in the early 4th century, the values of religious chosenness and self-righteousness have been used to accomplish the impossible, i.e., conquer the western world in the name of Christian compassion. The religious Roman program has always been to preach Christian compassion and to be a defender of Christianity so as to justify forgetting Christian values in self-righteous conquest and control.

The chosenness and self-righteousness that goes with along with being a "Christian soldier" has justified and implemented western conquest from Roman imperialism to European colonialism to post-World War II American capitalism. Under this influence, the human population has moved from tribal to national to global levels of organization. That would be religion's primary role in western cultural evolution, i.e., human unification at the tip of a double-edged sword. As the need for further economic unification diminishes (in a global program nearly complete), the need for political unification increases.

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American democracy was birthed from natural philosophy, and natural philosophy provides a picture so big as to make religion a matter of choice and not a matter of imposed obedience and blind loyalty. It was the religious freedom guaranteed by the separation of church and state that made real miracles happen in America, a land where religious rivalries were meted out on Sunday afternoon softball fields instead of religion's killing fields.

How does a country educate its children to the degree that honesty and democracy, down up or horizontal distribution of power, is actually desired, to a point where no person in their right mind would willingly choose any of the religions now in power today?

America's Deist fathers made a clear and clean distinction between the values of nascent Christianity (compassion and human rights) and Old Testament religion (vengeance and law), seeing these value systems as being mutually-exclusive and not belonging together in the same book. The rewriting of western scriptures resulted in "Jefferson's Bible," intentionally devoid of religious superstition and supernaturalism, in honor of nascent Christian human rights.

Aren't nascent Christian values better ascribed to the Greek philosophers than Jesus? It is not as if the words of the Sermon on the Mount came from a cultural vacuum.

Under the Bush administration, America has crossed too many lines (e.g., the separation of church and state, the separation of civilian and military authority) that are critical to the success of our father's democracy. Returning to the values of democracy will require a return to the natural philosophy (updated, of course) that birthed American democracy in the first place. Because capitalism has survived at the expense of family and community economies, the re-instatement of democracy in America will require, as it did the first time, socioeconomic change of revolutionary proportions.

How big are we talking about here? And what would natural philosophy updated look like?

Making that return to natural philosophy and dialectic human values will require that religious capitalism continue to discredit itself on moral ground, in the name of the American people and in the eyes of the world. That end has been largely accomplished with Bush's unprovoked war on Iraq, a war immoral in compassion-based Christian eyes (do not hit first, do not hit back) and unjustifiable even in vengeance-based religious eyes (do not hit first, do hit back). The world has long since left behind the criminal "morality" of barbarianism (do hit first, do hit back).

But we can't say the just Bush is a barbarian, since tens of millions voted for him after he decided to commit war crimes. So again, how do we the people return to natural philosophy when people are at a point where they don't even know what natural philosophy is.

Pre-emption is the product of the Bush administration's religious capitalism, and the educated world sees it as a moral failure, no matter how big the Bush administration's picture of the world might be. America's inability to recognize this egregious departure from the values of nascent Christianity and democracy is part and parcel of what is meant by the "dumbing down" of America. All honest and intelligent thought begins with the values of human knowledge (science and natural philosophy), nascent Christianity and democracy, not at all with the values of religion and capitalism.

One argument I often hear against socialism is that people are lazy, since socialism requires a citizenry that finds joy in service. The obvious response to that is to propose down up socialism instead of up down socialism, and place more responsibility for self-government in the hands of the people, avoid centralized power, and make the connection between their work and what they universally receive more apparent. So, we can't poorly judge socialist ideals by the poor habits of human beings raised in a me-first consumer culture. Socialism assumes larger people. But then at the same time, how can we ever reach it when the larger people are practically no where to be found?

Since World War II and the political dominion of corporate America via an "influence for a fee" government, the US has emphasized the pursuit of profits while the European democracies have continued to honor "the people" and the values of democracy. As a result, the US is the only western democracy that does not guarantee medical care for its people, the only democracy abandoning Hippocratean ethics to practice an exclusionary medicine based on money. This is not a characteristic of a "great" nation.

How do you provide universal health care and avoid creating another centralized power that could then pervert the very function for which it was established?

All of this is related to America's own internal culture war between capitalism and democracy. Europeans see that Americans "live to work" while Europeans prefer to "work to live." The difference is an average paid vacation time of 6 weeks in Europe and 2 weeks in the U.S. The difference is going to European pubs to philosophize and pontificate and going to American bars to escape. Under capitalism, Americans find freedom in autonomy and the nuclear family. The more wealth one secures in America, the more independence and freedom under capitalism. Under democracy, Europeans find their freedom not in autonomy but in community. "It's about belonging, not belongings."

Democracies that take care of their people are a threat to the dominion of religious capitalism in America.

How is the European union a threat to us?

The real "big picture" is that the people on this earth are currently embedded in a cultural evolutionary program that is playing itself out, largely without their conscious awareness. We fail to see the "bigger picture," in which the Bush administration is an ideologically-corrupt pawn in a cultural program that was written millennia ago, a self-terminating program to be replaced by democracy's self-correcting program.

Let's say you're right. How can you be sure the end is coming soon. What if things can actually get much worse and stay that way for a long time?

As we stand on the edge of the western religious abyss, we stand on the threshold of an American dream, the real "American dream" of fairness and equality for the people. The amount of bloodshed in between will be determined by the people of America and the world and how long it takes them to recognize and stand up against cultural extremism, how long it takes them to opt for Jefferson's human way out of religion-based political violence by re-establishing democracy with a basis in nascent Christian human rights. That would be the "end of time" for religious despotism and the "second coming" for Christian human rights, would it not?

So the end time predicted by religions was actually the prediction of their own end?

The imagery of Old Testament religion typically has a counterpart in the real world. Consider, for example, the concept of heavenly "angels," as representatives of and messengers from God. In the real world of natural philosophy, there is an exact equivalent of angels, and they are ubiquitous and easily recognized. All real angels arrive on this earth with one characteristic in common, i.e., they poop their pants.

How quickly we make greedy devils of them, though. I suppose you don't care much for television?

You quote a scholar who writes this:

"Whether or not I personally accept authority, I may urge others to do so for reasons of personal aggrandizement. Each of us,, to a greater or lesser extent, wants to control others. I want to control you. How can I do so?

One of the first things each of us learn is the feebleness of naked power. If I tell you to do something, you instinctively ask "Why?" If I then say, "Because I say so," I make no progress in furthering my will to power.

But if I can first insinuate into your mind the idea that there exists a being or spirit who is always right - say the Zoroastrian god Mazda, to take a non-provocative example - and if I then say you should do thus and so because Mazda says so, I may then succeed in controlling you.

If I am successful, it is because I have succeeded in putting Mazda in the psychological locus formerly occupied by your parents (hence the term "father figure") without your catching on to the fact that Mazda is really me.

In general, the more distant in time and space, the less questionable authority is, hence the more authoritative. As an ambitious, aggressive individual, it is in my interest to maintain in you the illusion that authority exists."

### How is Bush doing this?

Sitting near the top of the curve for western capitalistic dominion, we can ask how long is the road to Bush's inevitable apocalypse? How long until the curve crashes to the ground in global disgrace? How long until the people will have their day of judgment against cultural world views that promote the rich and the self-righteous? How long until we realize, as did Abraham Lincoln, that all capital comes from labor, that economic systems start at the bottom with those who do the work? It all depends on when we, the people, decide to give up the Hamiltonian bill of goods sold to us after World War II and return to the Jeffersonian values from which we, as a people, emerged. If we give up the pursuit of money for pursuit of an honest family, community, national and spiritual life, we would quickly learn that, despite all of our current wealth, we have no where to go but up.

### Closing

Thank Dr. Lower

Thank Callers

Thank Listeners

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Write questions and comments, or let us know if you are interested in sponsoring The Nexus.

You can also find my retreat schedule. I'll be leading a course at the Omega Institute.

Every week, I ask what can be said in one hour, less actually, on the radio at 8 AM on Saturday morning that might make any difference in someone's life or in the world.

Perhaps making a difference is not the point, but I'd like to think it is because change at this juncture in time appears to be so crucial.

Now, I have no doubt that change will occur whether I or anyone else says a word or not. That's the nature of the world. But being an active and aware agent of change for the better is a daunting task when you consider the complexity of the modern world.

Take the issue of guns and gun control. I have no problem with my neighbor having guns so long as he is a responsible custodian of them and teaches his children how to responsibly handle guns.

In fact, I'd prefer an armed populace to a standing army. First off, armed populaces don't need to look for wars of choice. Armed populaces don't require billions of dollars in taxpayer money to fund an up down centralized socialist organization.

And perhaps most importantly, a political leader that wants to take over the country will think twice about it when the citizens are well armed. Even an army that is in the pocket of the corporations and president will hesitate before turning on an armed populace.

But then, we live in a society where the media fosters fear. I am not referring to violent movies or video games. As a kid, I played Dungeons and Dragons for years. It didn't create any violence in my personality. I've seen my share of violent movies. I go into the

theatre, and like everyone else I suspend my disbelief, assuming the movie is good enough to allow me that. I walk out, my critical faculties are turned back on, and suddenly the movie isn't as good as I thought it was. And I'm no more violent.

So when I say the media fosters fear, I guess I mean the corporatism that pumps us up with materialistic ambitions and the desire for fame. We are made to fear immigrants, atheists, liberals, minorities, gays, Muslims, the French, you name it.

So back to guns, would I want my neighbor to own a gun, fearing that he or his son might one day lose it and go on a shooting spree?

The natural response is: obviously not. But the conditions that would drive him to do such a thing are interestingly not at all foreign to the conditions under which a political leader might use a military or paramilitary organization to take over the country.

While you'd naturally think that you'd want your neighbor, and yourself, to have guns under one circumstance and not have a gun under another, the truth is that both horrible circumstances have at their root the same insidiousness.

What is it?

It's centralized power. It is centralized power that overreaches itself and seeks more and more dominion over others. It is centralized power that can insinuate the fear and whisper of promises of fame and wealth.

I don't believe in the existence of Satan anymore than I believe in the existence of Yahweh or any of the other hundred thousand gods humanity invented in the last ten thousand years. But if there is a concrete manifestation of human ignorance, it manifests as centralized power, to which millions of people are drawn, co-opting their reason and luring them to divorce their social power from their lives.

That's how it appears on the surface of things, anyway. On the inside, that centralized power, which is a figment of the imagination that

millions of people simply buy into, creates all manner of patterns of thought, grooves of awareness, and habits of conduct. It is there, in other words, psychologically and physiologically, that power is lost to each duped individual. That lost power directly results in a weakened intuitive faculty which results in a decrease in self-knowledge.

Self-knowledge has little to do with intellectual information. Usually, the more sound information, the less the odds for this loss of power to take place, but even a powerful intellect armed with knowledge can succumb to the wiles of centralized power.

Last week I mention that the worst part of my job is that I have to read the news. Every time I read it, I feel drained, as if a vampire is sucking the blood out of me. It isn't merely depressing or unfortunate, but what makes it worse is that you read the same thing over and over again. It's like Chinese torture, with a drop of water dropping on the same place again and again.

What do I see over and over? The narrow sense of self. A lack of self-knowledge. Everywhere you look, to whatever crime, whatever propaganda, whatever political speech, you see the narrow sense of self both at work and insinuating itself in the receptive minds – minds that were never taught how to question.

You could read the news and just write it off and so, oh Lord, people are stupid. But that doesn't really say much, and it's a pretty good attitude if you want to move in the direction of apathy.

But when you see what people really are: victims of their own decision to limit their self-knowledge, and you know that they would be far happier and wiser had they rejected endless materialism, frustration can seep in.

But yet, you have to get up every morning and swallow your dose of frustration.

So how is frustration side-stepped? Anybody got any ideas? Tireless service is the usual answer I arrive at. Stay so busy in service that you have no time to get frustrated. Work for the self-expansion of

yourself and others in the best way you know how, and never mind the roller coaster of events.

The kicker is that once you know the issue is humanity's self-knowledge, and that it was centralized power that stripped human beings of self-knowledge, you have another source of frustration in that history affords us examples of how to reverse the process. This information doubles the frustration, but this time it's frustration with oneself for not picking up the mantle of responsibility that others dropped.

Ironically, while centralized power strips us of self-knowledge, another form of centralized power gives it back to us.

Centralized power works because it implies the mimicry of those in power. We give them our power, yes, but the mechanics of doing that is simple: It's monkey see monkey do. We repeat the same talking points, we behave as the power wants us to behave, and we start mimicking each other as well.

It is no wonder that no one under the sway of centralized power ever produced a creative masterpiece. The mimicry of centralized power and the loss of self-knowledge strips us of individuality and uniqueness.

But there is another centralized figure that is worthy of mimicking, and when we mimic that figure, and give it our power, our power comes back to us.

Now, you might ask why mimic such a figure in the first place? The answer is simple: We have a habit of distancing our power from us, a habit of mimicking, and to break the habit it is much easier to mimic a self-sacrificing figure that will give us the power back rather than just go cold turkey.

The only obstacle left is to find such a figure. Gandhi was one, and Martin Luther King was another. They were both assassinated precisely because in mimicking them, people ceased to give their power to the political and religious centralized power.