

East versus West

- Methods of approaching life have been divided into general categories of Eastern thought versus Western thought. However, both categories encompass several ways of thinking.
 - The usual intention of the one invoking this dichotomy is to contrast “What does this tell me about God?” versus “What does this tell me about me?”
 - Eastern philosophy includes several major religions, none of which really focus on God: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism. The last two are atheistic.
 - Western philosophy covers a tremendous range: Christianity, dialectic materialism, Machiavellianism. Christianity, in its wide variety of manifestations, could be in either camp. The other two are atheistic.
- A better way to compare styles of thinking is philosophical consistency versus immediate physical gratification.
 - Jesus is the epitome of philosophical consistency, which is the theme of the Sermon on the Mount. The writers of both the New and Old Testament books also made frequent appeals to consistency.
 - Immediate physical gratification arises from a lack of confidence that someone else (in this case, God) has a better idea.
- How do people miss philosophical consistency?
 - The Good News does not sound good.
 - Evidence is omitted.
 - God’s objective is stated badly or inaccurately.
 - Illogic abounds.
- Examples in the Bible of groups who missed the point:
 - Pharisees
 - Sadducees
 - Idolators
 - And many more
- Examples of those today who miss the point:
 - Doctrinal sin
 - Essential versus expedient
 - Lack of family
 - Authority
 - Lack of liberty
 - Low expectations of followers
- How do we overcome these barriers?