## This is an excerpt from the book “Universal Theology” by Arthur D’Adamo

## Regressives and Progressives

A stereotype is defined as an unfair, untrue belief about a class of people. Stereotypes are often rooted in bigotry and xenophobia. The author believes the following observations are fair, often true, and rooted in experience, but leaves the verdict to the reader. It appears that Old Theology addresses the regressive while New Theology addresses the progressive.

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| **Intuitive, Mythical, Regressive** |  | **Empirical, Rational, Progressive** |
| Fantasy view of past (Garden of Eden, Worldwide flood, all languages originating in one place), based on unchangeable scriptures immune to addition or correction. | The past | Evidence-based. Accepts Big Bang Theory as current best explanation of origins of universe, but will update beliefs if good contrary evidence is discovered. |
| The present is a degraded version of the past (Ex, original sin). The ideal earthy epoch has passed. | The present | The present is an improved version of the past, at least, from the purely human view: less hunger, better shelters, longer life span, etc. |
| The Earth and, indeed, the entire universe may not exist much longer when a "second coming" brings the universe to a close. | The future | As far as we can tell, the Earth and the universe will exist for another billions of years. |
| Ideal earthly epoch is in the past, when person could have personally listened to a sermon of Jesus, walked with Buddha, met Mohammed | Ideal epoch | We are continuingly progressing towards a better understanding and control of our environment. The ideal earthly epoch for humanity, if it ever occurs, lies in the future. |
| Small, comfortable. The Earth is merely thousands of years old. Nothing of real significance occurred which is not in scripture. | Mental Universe | Vast, challenging. We live in an incredibly old, unimaginably vast universe, and there is much to be discovered. |
| Desires absolutely true answers, preferably directly from God. Finds uncertainty uncomfortable. Often refuses to seek or consider disconfirming evidence. | Knowledge | Can tolerate uncertainty and not knowing. Satisfied with best explanation of the evidence. Often willing to consider the other side of an argument and will consider disconfirming evidence. |
| Apparent contradictions to belief are threatening, and to be ignored | Anomalies | Apparent contradictions to belief motivate the search for a revised, improved understanding |
| Necessary but should not be overdone, especially if it leads to doubt and uncertainty about religion. | Education | Education and knowledge are inherently valuable, as well as useful. |
| Gullible. Believes peers, famous people, and Internet memes; distrusts experts and science. | Expertise | Skeptical. Generally trusts those whose background, education, and/or expertise seems to merit trust. Trusts science. |
| Just as God is above the angels who are above us, some people are financially above other people. The world is filled with evil people, who just want to free-load off the rest of us, so they can watch T.V. and do drugs and sex all day. There is nothing wrong with a society consisting of a few extremely wealthy people among a generally poor, uneducated populace. | Economics | All people are worthy. When people whose creations or invention improve our lives are rewarded, it's a win-win situation. But the economic "floor" should be high enough that everyone has decent food, clothing, shelter, and medical services. If wealthy, probably philanthropic. |
| Generally backward looking; believes things were better in the "good old days" when people "knew their place" | Politics | Forward looking; believes existing institutions should be improved or replaced to better serve humanity |
| Sex only between man and woman; ideally sex should occur only when conception is possible. The main purpose of sex is procreation. | Sexuality | Within the bounds of a balanced, sane sexuality, sex is for expression of love and intimacy. Procreation is its secondary purpose, especially in light of overpopulation. |
| People are either good or evil. Evil people should be punished. The condition of prisons is of little importance, because it pales next to what they will suffer in hell. | Punishment | People sometimes do good and sometimes do bad things. As far as possible, prisons should be places that salvage lives, not destroy lives. |
| Because there are so many evil people in the world, people who differ from us are to be avoided; they are probably evil or inferior to us. Just as God is above the angels, and the angels are above us, we are above people of a certain gender, race, or ethnic group. | Racism and Xenophobia | Celebrates the world's smorgasbord of cultures, ideas and cultures. We all have more in common than not. |
| Leaders often enjoy extraordinary, even supernatural, status. The pope is the representative of Christ on Earth. God has ordained our political leader. Kings derive their authority from God and rule by “divine right.” Opposing leaders are evil, even Satanic. | Leaders | Leaders are human beings, no more. Some leaders are good; some not. But none are anything more than a man or woman in a position of leadership. Leaders derive their authority from the people, who can vote someone into office, or out of office. |
| Often accepts various superstitions such as belief in witches, demons, etc. | Superstition | Usually rejects superstition for lack of evidence. |
| Amygdala (emotions - the amygdala is the part of the brain which experiences emotions, in particular, fear and anger. It’s responsible for the “fight or flight” response) | Dominant Lobe | Cerebral Cortex (higher thought - The cerebral cortex supports higher-level reasoning and intelligence) |

The amygdala is the part of the brain which experiences emotions, in particular, fear and anger. It’s responsible for the “fight or flight” response. The cerebral cortex supports higher-level reasoning and intelligence. It has been speculated that the regressive has an overactive amygdala and an underdeveloped cerebral cortex, while the progressive has a better developed cerebral cortex. Relative to their overall size, humans have the largest cerebral cortex of all mammals. So, it might be argued that people with an overdeveloped amygdala and an underdeveloped cerebral cortex are people who are failing to realize their human potential.