While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean." (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.) Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else. From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. 'For in him we live and move and have our being.' As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring.' Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone-- an image made by man's design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead." When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some of them sneered, but others said, "We want to hear you again on this subject." At that, Paul left the Council. A few men became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.

Introduction

As we wrap up our 2011 Summer Retreat on Apologetics I want to preach a sermon from Acts 17 – one of the great examples in the Bible of someone doing apologetics. I hope this weekend has been helpful. My prayer for myself and for our church is that we would so enjoy the gospel together that we can’t help but proclaim it. Proclaiming the gospel can take many different forms but often involves some type of apologetics, especially in our city context. The gospel is the what; apologetics is the why.
– why would I believe that? We use apologetics not to win arguments but in order to really love our neighbors by engaging them.

I’ve entitled this sermon ‘Apologetics and Culture’. I think a large part of apologetics entails being aware of the culture(s) around us. Now, when Christians talk about culture there are generally two traps they can fall into.

One is to become enamored with the culture around them and begin to imbibe its ethos and accommodate Christianity to it. This misses the antithesis that Abby talked about, overlooks the sinfulness of every culture, and fails to let the Word of God be the ultimate lens through which reality is viewed.

The other is to become a separatist, to stick one’s head in the sand – a self-protective isolationism. This misses the reality of common grace, overlooks the image of God in every human, and is not compatible with the love of God manifest in the gospel.

So in our apologetics how should we think about culture? There’s some great stuff for us from Acts 17 and Paul in Athens on this topic. In short, what we’ll see there is just this: **Christians must confront culture by engaging culture**. We can’t blend right in without challenging culture and yet we can’t run away and hide in cave. We **must confront culture by engaging culture**.

*Let’s pray…*

**Culture is Fallen**

This visit to Athens comes during what’s called Paul’s second missionary journey. Paul and his companions have been in the region of Macedonia. They left Luke behind in Philippi and went to Thessalonica and then Berea. And in a hasty departure Paul left Silas and Timothy behind in Berea and went on to Athens by himself, with the intention that Silas and Timothy would join him momentarily there. With today’s text Paul completes the 200 mile trip and arrives in Athens. Athens, you’ve got to understand, was the symbolic intellectual capital of the ancient world – home to the likes of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Zeno. This was a highly influential city and a hub of cultural diffusion.

While he’s there waiting for Silas and Timothy (who actually never arrive), Paul starts to wander around, see the town. How many of you have been to ancient Athens? It’s a marvelous city, fairly well preserved. It’s not hard to imaginatively reconstruct its former glory – massive structures impeccably designed and constructed, intricate designs etched into columns, white marble glimmering in the Mediterranean sun, the impressive Parthenon high atop the Acropolis towering over everything. Paul was a tourist to Athens but what struck him most was not the storied halls of learning or the striking feats of architecture, impressive as they may be, but that behind it all was a web of idolatry. The Parthenon was a temple of Athena, the public art was tied in with the Greek pantheon. Get this: the population of Athens at that time was about 10,000 but roughly 30,000 statues of gods lined the streets, many of Hermes.

Now I’m sure Paul recognized the architectural and aesthetic beauty of the city. There is something of human creativity, symmetry, order, and awe-inspiring grandness displayed there. But it can’t be forgotten that the culture that produced it was thoroughly idolatrous. Worship of false gods lay behind every Doric column and Ionic frieze. The text says that Paul was “greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols” (v. 16).
The word translated “greatly distressed” connotes a deep revulsion and disturbance. He was saddened and angered. Saddened that so many people were so lost and so blind and “were slaves to those [gods] who by nature are not gods” (Gal. 4:8). And yet angered with a divine jealousy that burned to see God’s glory going to another – Is. 42:8 says, “I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols.” Those who’s hearts beat with the heart of God are “greatly distressed” to see others worshipping idols.

Yes, African art is interesting to study and beautiful in its own way, but behind it lays animism and superstition. Sure, Hindu ceremonies and temples have elements of wonder, but demons are worshipped in them. Yeah, I liked to look at the magnificent Bahá’í temple up in Wilmette, but ultimately it makes me sad because it’s based on such a lie. The West has become more aware of other cultures over the past decades and Bishop Stephen Neill has commented that “as these ‘treasures of darkness’ penetrated the consciousness of educated men and women, something of a gasp of astonishment arose. Surprise was followed by appreciation and even admiration.” The pluralism that is such a part of our postmodern culture has no place for being “greatly distressed” at other religions. Christianity believes that there is but one God and he is the God revealed in the Bible. He alone is worthy of worship. All other gods are false gods.

Cambridge educated Henry Martyn left for India at the end of the 18th century to do missionary work there. He left us many great examples in the realm of missionary work, but listen to his Paul-like heart as he describes the culture he found himself in. He writes of a Hindu procession he once saw – “Before the stumps of images, for they were not better, some of the people prostrated themselves, striking the ground twice with their foreheads… This excited more horror in me than I can well express.” In another place he said, “I could not endure existence if Jesus was not glorified; it would be hell to me, if he were to be always…dishonoured.” Does it make you “greatly distressed” to see Jesus not honored?

Now here’s the thing I want you to get – this doesn’t just apply to Bahá’í temples and statues of Buddha… every culture and every part of culture is depraved. You go to Cambridge, MA, and walk around the hallowed halls of Harvard where any kind of religious piety is a relic of the far past and you still see idols everywhere – those soaking in the fading evening sun of the Enlightenment who deify Rationality and Reason or those awash in the recent tide of relativity and deconstruction who deny Truth and worship a false god of tolerance and subjective experience. You go to New York City and visit the venerable institutions of finance along Wall Street and you see the idol of Mammon prominently displayed. Go to Hollywood and you see a plethora of idols – narcissism, power, sex, fame, youth and many more which are infused into the entertainment that is bowed down to at temples all over the country called Cineplexes and the household idols called televisions. Walk down Michigan Avenue, look in the windows, at the people, the advertisements, the books at Borders… Do you recognize the idols all around you?

As a result of the Fall human culture is depraved. Idols are everywhere, bombarding the senses. Sin has permeated culture. The world system and institutions are evil and therefore the apostle John can say to Christians in 1 John 2:15, “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the
boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world.” This should make us as Christians heartbroken, outraged, cautious, and… confrontational.

**Fallen Culture Needs to be Confronted**

A culture that is at such odds with the kingdom and cause of Christ cannot be merely tolerated or acquiesced to. We can’t simply let it be or unabashedly indulge in it. Paul saw the obvious depravity of Athens and was “deeply distressed,” “so [therefore, ou=n] he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks [what he’s always been doing], as well as in the marketplace [the agora] day by day with those who happened to be there” (v. 17). As we see other places in Acts, Paul’s missional impulse took him to where the people were who would be open to the message of Christ. That’s been the synagogue, the place of prayer, and now as he ventures further away from Jerusalem he gets more creative and adventurous in his endeavors. He goes to the agora.

The *agora* (the marketplace) in ancient Athens was a little different than Jewel or Dominick’s today. The Athenian *agora* was the place where Socrates went some 400 years earlier to reason and debate and teach with whomever he met. That wasn’t out of the ordinary or an anomaly in this town. It was a part of the ethos of Athens. Luke tells us very plainly in v. 21 that “all the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.” All intellectually stimulating discussions were fair game and welcomed – the perfect place for missional activity! “The equivalent of the agora will vary in different parts of the world [today],” John Stott remarks. “It may be a park, city square or street corner, a shopping mall or market-place, a ‘pub’, neighborhood bar, café, discothèque or student cafeteria, wherever people meet when they are at leisure [and open to discuss deep ideas].”

Paul doesn’t hole himself up in a hotel room all day. He goes out into the city with all its idols and fashionable philosophies that presented different understandings of life and meaning than the Christian one. Two such popular worldviews of the day were the Epicureans and the Stoics. The Epicureans were naturalistic and hedonistic. They viewed the gods (if they existed at all) as disconnected and disinterested with this world and found meaning in life in pleasure-seeking. A philosophy very much alive and well among our culture today. The Stoics were pantheistic and ascetic. They saw god as in everything and oneness with him was seen as learning to live calm, cool, and collected with whatever life threw at you – this was seen as the only way to make sense out of life which is outside of one’s control. Such understandings were clearly wrong and destructive and so Paul felt compelled to confront them with the truth of Christ and the resurrection; with the reality of a transcendent God made eminently immanent in the person of Christ and the hope of eternal life offered through him.

While open inquiry and intellectual freedom were held dear, in theory, these “strange ideas” of Paul’s were treated as ramblings of a simpleton and intellectual pretender. They call him a “babbler” or as one person has translated it, “birdbrain.” At the end of Paul’s apologetic speech we read that “some of them sneered” (v. 32). As is the case today, the cherished open-minded pursuit of truth and knowledge is nothing more than a narrow and prejudiced elitism that has no room for the “foolishness” of Christianity (cf. 1Cor. 1:18ff). Sir William Ramsay states, “The Athenian University was the home of dilettantism and of the cool, cultivated, critical intellect, which had tried all
things and found all wanting; and in it there were few hearers and no open door for new teaching.” They wanted “intellectual titillation” but didn’t really want to be confronted with Truth. Sound familiar?

Well, they were still sizing up Paul and they humored him and brought him before the official gathering of the Greek intelligentsia – the Areopagus, or Mars Hill as it is sometimes called. And Paul begins to make his case for Christianity and in his speech before the Areopagus, Paul continues to confront the culture with the truth of the gospel. He confronts the naturalism or deism of the Epicureans and the “God = creation” pantheism of the Stoics by affirming that God “made the world and everything in it” (v. 24). God, not gods, thus he confronted the popular polytheism of Greek culture. He attacked the whole temple cult – “the Lord of heaven and earth… does not live in temples built by hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all men life and breath and everything else” (v. 25). God is self-sufficient and cannot be helped or bargained with, by our sacrifices or our obedience.

This one-true Creator God is sovereign, “determin[ing] the times set for [people] and the exact places where they should live” (v. 26). He is in control. Paul also defied the very idea of idols saying, “We should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone – an image made by man’s design and skill” (v. 29). These manufactured deities are worthless and ridiculous. Finally, get this: Paul called on people to repent. That’s pretty brazen and not very politically correct! “In the past,” Paul says, “God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent” (v. 30), for this God who came to redeem the world in the person of Jesus Christ will judge the world through him. He is the Judge. Before, God, in his good and wise Providence, left the Greeks alone to live and die apart from this God and Christ and to be judged by their own limited knowledge and conscience (cf. Rom. 2:12-16). But now the mystery of Christ, “hidden for long ages past” (Rom. 16:25), the mystery that God intended both Jews and Gentiles to be redeemed together, has been revealed. Christ must be preached to all nations and part of that preaching is a call to repentance. That’s confrontational!

And yet it’s exactly what Paul gives to the depraved and idolatrous culture he finds in Athens. He exposes it. He unapologetically proclaims a counter-cultural message that steps on toes and offends and rebukes and tells it like it is and calls people to repent. You can’t just listen to this as a nice idea. You can’t add it into your eclectic mix of spirituality. You can’t say you believe it and call yourself a Christian and continue to participate fully in the fallen culture. You have to repent and change your ways. This is so important in understanding how we relate to culture. If your Christianity does not find itself at odds with your culture something’s wrong. If a church doesn’t present the gospel as a clash with and critique of culture (be it modern culture or postmodern culture, Western culture or African culture, high-brow culture or low-brow culture) it has probably lost its saltiness and “is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men” (Mt. 5:13); that’s not Christianity. Christianity is always counter-cultural. Apologetics is not just trying to show the world that Christianity is cool!
Confrontation through Engagement

But that’s not all there is to it. Keep listening. If I ended the sermon here or if you ran out of attention span now, that would be really sad because I would have presented a woefully deficient picture of Christianity and the good stuff is still to come. In his fabulous book, *Above All Earthly Pow’rs: Christ in a Postmodern World*, David Wells puts it this way, “Confrontation is always at the heart of the relation between Christ and culture because that relation is one of light in its relation to darkness, truth to false belief, and holiness to what is fallen. But it is a confrontation that can take place only if the Church is engaged with culture.”

Paul confronts culture by engaging it! He doesn’t soft-pedal the hard stuff or shrink back from calling for repentance or get embarrassed in front of the *philosophes* and sophisticates. But he doesn’t intentionally set any unnecessary stumbling blocks in people’s way of coming to faith. He doesn’t hammer people over the head with the Bible or talk with obscure Christian jargon. He contextualizes his message and enters into their culture. In doing this, Paul validates a full-fledged cultural engagement.

First of all, notice that he uses tact. We know he’s “greatly distressed” about the idols everywhere in the city, but how does he start off his address at the Areopagus? “Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious” (v. 22). He’s courteous, conciliatory, and complimentary even while being provocative. Instead of focusing immediately on the negative aspect of their religiosity – that it’s based upon idols – he finds the positive and praises them for it – they have an incurable, insatiable, innate desire to worship, to know something beyond themselves. It’s like someone coming to America today and saying, “I see that you’re a very spiritual society. You have God on your money and TV shows like *Joan of Arcadia* and movies like *The Truman Show*.”

Paul studied the culture to find points of contact. He saw that among the thousands of idols and monuments in the city there was “an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD” (v. 23). He pointed out to them that even amidst such a religious society and culture abounding in philosophical schools, there was still this implicit acknowledgment that something was missing, that there was something more, something that they didn’t know. There was a vague awareness of a supreme God embedded in the depths of their psyches and scattered throughout their cultural artifacts. Their human culture displayed a yearning for God in some sense and Paul studied the culture closely enough to spot those areas and after drawing attention to them declared, “Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you” (v. 23). That type of awareness doesn’t come about by living in a proverbial cave.

In walking around the neighborhood by my house a few years ago, with my eyes and ears open I found this beautiful, ornate building reflecting the Eastern European flavor that once dominated Pilsen. It was Thalia Hall, which now has Restorante al Teatro. It had fallen into disrepair, but was beginning to be restored and the info in the window said that inside is a large theater patterned after the old opera house in Prague. The theater, the apartments, the store-fronts in Thalia Hall are all being painstakingly restored to former glory. And there was artwork covering the windows and among them was this inscription of sorts – “Thalia Hall will be a little light that illuminates paths for free spirits dissolving shadows that obscure intellectual growth and creativity.” Another announced the first phase of restoration – the opening of a coffee-shop. It said, “The opening of Thalia Caffe will be the prelude to the full revival of Thalia Hall as a unique
entity where the free man’s artistic creativity will be represented by all means of expression. Therefore, Thalia Caffe will function not only as a restaurant and lounge, but mainly as a cultural naissance where art and beauty will be promoted.”

And then there was a placard with this prayer, “We pray to our muses to inspire us with their divine forces to represent art. Art as a timeless significance of essences, expressed in harmonies of forms and colors that may plant an invisible seed of spiritual growth inside whomever will perceive the sense of beauty.” Paul would have had a heyday with that! Artists have a unique sensitivity to something that’s there, something metaphysical, something called beauty. They’re on to something, something profound. But they need someone who can pinpoint that longing and proclaim to them the God of creativity and creation who is the essence of beauty and from whom all true beauty emanates. Do you see how this works? The worship of art is kind of like the worship of that unknown God in Athens. Are you walking through the neighborhood and life with an eye to these things?

Wait, it gets even better. There’s a lot going on here that I don’t have time to go into – the way Paul is speaking the language of the Epicureans and Stoics and other schools of thought of his day and how in the process of confronting their mistakes he’s affirming certain aspects of their thinking where they’re on the right track. But I want you to notice that Paul here quotes from two different pagan, secular authors. Do you see the quotation marks in v. 28? “For in him we live and move and have our being” is a quote from a poem by Epimenides. The line – “we are his offspring” – is from the opening lines of Aratus’ *Phainomena*. Paul read Greek poets like Epimenides and Aratus! How about that?

Christians can and should read non-Christian works of literature or poetry or history. I was listening to NPR one time and they had a guy on who was giving a recommended summer reading list. Books like *Philosophy Made Simple: A Novel* by Robert Hellenga (a story that attempts to give the meaning of life in an Epicurean sort of way), *The Lighthouse* by P.D. James (a book about murder, manners, and morals), *The Week You Weren’t Here* by Charles Blackstone (a “postmodern” stream of consciousness novel) were on the list. That would be great reading for Christians. I’m sure they’re great novels/well-told stories that you can lose yourself in. And it would help you get inside the mind of our culture and find points of contact. But, if I understand Paul correctly, there would also be truth in those books. All culture is fallen, depraved, and twisted, but because of God’s common grace and general revelation there are elements of truth to be found in all cultures. All truth is God’s truth, no matter where you find it – in Epimenides, Aratus, Dickinson, Keats, Jack Keruoac, Samuel Beckett, or… Stephen Spielberg, Sam Mendes, or the Cohen brothers.

Modern film provides a great application to this text. More of you I realize are going to watch movies rather than read books or poets. And I’m sure that if Paul were alive today he would go to the movie theater. There would probably be some movies that he could tell from the trailer were not for him and that he wouldn’t see. But he would most definitely be there watching, enjoying the plot and character development as a reflection of the mind of his God who wrote the greatest script ever – the script of salvation history. He’d also be learning – what does this tell me about the human experience, myself, does this help me understand the gospel more clearly?... stuff like that. How can I see people “seek[ing] [God] and perhaps reach[ing] out for him” (v. 27)?
How does this show the image of God, marred and scarred though it may be, in man (cf. v. 29)? How can this help me understand my co-workers a little better and explain the truth about God in language and with illustrations they can understand?

But he’d also be critical. This is where a lot of Christians who feel freed from the constraints of fundamentalism to embrace culture go astray. They open themselves up to compromise and syncretism by checking their mind at the door of the theater or clicking off their brain when they click on the television. We can never do that, because the world’s influence is insidious and relentless. We always have to have our minds engaged, soaked in Scripture, thinking critically, locating the falsehood and reminding ourselves of the truth. You cannot accept anything uncritically. You’ve got to work hard to separate the wheat from the chaff and to do that you have to have a solid biblical grid to sift stuff through. Your level of cultural engagement needs to be controlled by your level of spiritual maturity and discernment and biblical knowledge.

Yes, culture is fallen. Yes, it needs to be confronted. But this is not a reason for pulling out of culture, abandoning it, and sticking our heads in the sand. It must be a winsome confrontation. We should enjoy what can be enjoyed of culture and we should study it critically and know it well so we can engage it with the truth. And this, I dare say, calls for many Christians to be involved first hand in making culture. Be an insider in cultural forging institutions and trades. John Stott puts it very clearly, “There is an urgent need for more Christian thinkers who will dedicate their minds to Christ, not only as lecturers, but also as authors, journalists, dramatists and broadcasters, as television script-writers, producers and personalities, and as artists and actors who use a variety of art forms in which to communicate the gospel.”

Conclusion

I really believe that in our apologetic task as city-center dwellers in Chicago, we are going to have to be engaged in culture and involved in culture making. Many peoples objections to Christianity are a reaction to a separatist fundamentalism that seems arrogant, out-of-touch, old-fashioned, fuddy-duddy, ignorant, obscurantist, and backwards simply trying to impose morality on others. That’s not what Christianity is! We must show that.

However, I also do believe that many have found Christianity irrelevant that tries so hard to be relevant. They see a people that have just completely capitulated to capitalistic, consumeristic, imperialistic, individualistic ideologies and don’t really present anything different.

We must confront culture by engaging culture. I pray that this weekend has been helpful, that your confidence in the truth of God’s Word has been strengthened. That you see the superior beauty of the gospel, its coherence and consistency, and it’s ability to make sense out of other realities. I pray that we would be a people firmly rooted in God’s Word as God’s revelation of himself to us. That we would love him passionately and remain faithful to him in this world, hating sin, being stirred and provoked by the idolatry around us, but because of God’s grace, filled with his love, seek to engage our neighbors winsomely and wisely. May God work through us to see many more people come to Christ.
Benediction
May you have the full measure of Christ’s joy within you. May you stay rooted in God’s Word even when the world hates you for it, for you are not of the world any more than Jesus was of the world. May you not be taken out of the world but be protected from the evil one. May you be sanctified by the truth; God’s Word is truth. As the Father sent the Son into the world, so he has sent you into the world. May you go being confrontational yet engaging. (cf. John 17:13-18)

This sermon was addressed originally to the people at Immanuel Baptist Church, Chicago, Illinois, by Pastor Nathan Carter on Sunday morning, July 17, 2011, at the Summer Retreat in Streator, IL. It is not meant to be a polished essay or substitute for personal Bible study. The mission of Immanuel Baptist Church is to be a multiplying community that enjoys and proclaims the Good News of Christ in the great city of Chicago.

End notes:

4 Constance E. Padwick, Henry Martyn: Confessor of the Faith (InterVarsity, 1953), 146.
7 W.M. Ramsay as quoted by W.M. Smith, Therefore Stand (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1945, 260.
9 David F. Wells, Above All Earthly Pow’rs: Christ in a Postmodern World (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 164.
10 Stott, 281.
Acts 17:16-34 New International Version (NIV). In Athens. 16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with both Jews and God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. 18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" 19 At that, Paul left the Council. 20 Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others. Footnotes: Acts 17:28 From the Cretan philosopher Epimenides. Acts 17:28 From the Cilician Stoic philosopher Aratus.

1. 17:16-17--The story is situated: Paul became very upset when he noticed the many idols in the city and while he was waiting for his colleagues to pitch up, he used the opportunity to talk to various groups of people, at different venues, about Jesus and the resurrection.

2. 17:18-20--The reaction of the non-Jewish group on the message of the resurrection is disparaging and aggressive.

Acts 17 Apologetics. 10 July 2018. Although German leaders assured us that their new "hate speech" law would not be used to curb freedom of expression, the law is being used to suppress criticism of Islam. Angela Merkel's Germany is thus enforcing Sharia blasphemy laws, because Muhammad must not be mocked. Although German leaders assured us that their new "hate speech" law would not be used to curb freedom of expression, the law is being used to suppress critic. youtube.com. Germany Enforces Sharia Blasphemy Laws. Although German leaders assured us that their new &