

Wolves in Sheep's Clothing
Message #1 – Social Justice Confusion
Galatians 2:11-21

The characteristics of biblical justice

The justice revealed in scripture is true justice. Dr. Anthony Wood has an excellent outline of biblical justice which I have added to.

➤ **Biblical justice is rooted in the nature of God.**

Isaiah 30:18, “For the LORD is a God of justice.”

Justice is an objective concept such as the Ten Commandments.

➤ **Biblical justice is retributive.**

Psalms 9:16, “The LORD is known by the judgment He executes; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.”

Retributive justice is being replaced by **distributive** justice, reapportioning privilege.

➤ **Biblical justice is impartial.**

Romans 2:11, “For there is no partiality with God.”

God will judge according to His Word.

➤ **Biblical justice is inescapable.**

Romans 3:23, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Every person will stand before God.

➤ **Biblical justice is solvable.**

Romans 3:24, “being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” This is the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. God's justice was satisfied in Jesus on the cross. Jesus paid the debt we owe to God for our sin. Romans 3:22, “the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ.” People are clamoring for justice as if this is a new concept.

The introduction of Social Justice Ideology into the church breeds division and confusion.

The key tenants of the current social justice movement are Critical Race Theory and Intersectionality. The foundation of the current social justice movement reveals that racial and social unity is not their goal. Their goal is to deconstruct society and Christianity in particular.

➤ **Social justice at its core is blatant racism.**

Ashley Shackleford, “all white people are racist.” Chanequa Walker-Barnes in her book *A Rhythm of Prayer: A Collection of Meditations for Renewal*, “Dear God, please help me to hate white people or at least to want to hate them.” Social Justice Ideology is antithetical to the Gospel. The error that many Evangelical pastors are falling prey to is not soteriological (the doctrine of salvation) but ecclesiological (the doctrine of the church). The spread of the Gospel, making disciples, and founding churches is the primary mission of the church.

Satan has always sought to divide Christians from the beginning of the church.

In Acts 6 a problem arose between the Hellenists, Greek speaking Jews and the Hebrews, the Judean Jews. The Apostles confronted the issue and dealt with it. The Gospel going to the Gentiles created new issues in the church at that time. Paul's confrontation of Peter in Galatians 2:11-21 reveals the depth of that divide. False teachers known as Judiaziers were coming into the churches of Galatia and spreading a false Gospel.

➤ **The rebuke (11-12)**

In Acts 10 Peter was instructed by the Holy Spirit to go to the home of a Gentile named Cornelius. As Peter preached the Gospel Cornelius and his household were saved. At some point Peter came to the Church at Antioch the first primarily Gentile church. Peter at first freely ate and fellowshiped with the Gentiles. But when some Jews came from the church in Jerusalem Peter began to withdraw from them. Paul rebuked Peter publically to his face.

▪ **Jesus plus a social or racial standard distorts the Gospel.**

Peter was giving preference to one group to the detriment of another. The Gospel reveals that there are not certain groups of people better or worse than others, Galatians 3:28.

➤ **The result (13)**

Paul labels Peter's actions as hypocrisy. The result was that the other Jews in the church even Barnabas began doing the same thing. This reveals the influence and impact of church leaders.

▪ **External standards always breed division in the body of Christ.**

Jesus prayed “Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be **one** as We are”, John 17:11. The church was in danger of splitting over social and racial markers. Would there be a Gentile Church and Jewish Church?

➤ **The resolution (14-21)**

Paul understood that this was no peripheral matter but the very Gospel was at stake. Some are teaching that racial reconciliation is a component of the Gospel. The answer to legalism is the doctrine of justification which Paul defines (15-16) and then defends (17-21). Justification refers to God declaring a sinner to be guiltless on the basis of faith in Jesus. The word “we” refers to Jewish Christians. Sinful actions come out of a depraved heart. Jesus clearly taught this, Matthew 15:19. Paul was reminding Peter what he knew. (20-21).

▪ **The only thing powerful enough to change the racism in a person's heart is the Gospel.**

Ibram Kendi, “How to Be an Antiracist, “The only remedy to racist discrimination is *antiracist* discrimination.”

How should we as believers respond to this godless ideology that is spreading through our culture? 2 Timothy 2:23-26, “But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife...”

We must not deviate from the preaching of the Gospel.