



Racial Reconciliation

SUNDAY

“For he is our peace, who made both groups one and tore down the dividing wall of hostility. In his flesh, he made of no effect the law consisting of commands and expressed in regulations, so that he might create in himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace. He did this so that he might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross by which he put the hostility to death.”

EPHESIANS 2:14-16, CSB

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Why Christians Must Pursue Biblically Defined Justice

BY JASON THACKER

The concept of social justice has at times been hijacked by the wider culture to stand for causes or to justify actions contrary to the biblical message of human dignity and the reality of sin. Christians rightly decry how the term has been overly politicized and has been taken up to promote causes that degrade true human flourishing and the common good in our society. Some calls for social justice reduce all of human existence to power dynamics or push radical social agendas that are designed to normalize hyper individualism and complete moral autonomy. But we also must be honest that the gospel message has likewise been hijacked by some—especially in the past—to support or even promote the horrors of slavery, segregation, and the continuation of unjust policies that seek to define someone’s value and dignity based on their skin color or background. Injustice is an affront to God and his character no matter where it is found.

The Christian moral tradition clearly illustrates that the gospel message is the good news that Jesus Christ lived the life we were created to live and died the death we deserved to die in order to give us everlasting life in relationship to God for eternity. It also makes clear that this message of new life in Christ contains wide-reaching and life-altering social implications for all of society which is rooted in the God-given dignity of all people (Gen. 1:26-28). The personal aspects of the biblical ethic directly inform the social aspects because we are individuals living in community with one another. We each bear immense responsibility for pursuing truth and upholding justice in our society.

As new creations in Christ, we are to model for a watching world what Jesus meant when he called his people to “love our neighbor as ourselves” (2 Cor. 5:17; Matt. 22:37-39). Overlooking our neighbors or passively allowing injustices to be perpetrated is completely contrary to this command by God to stand for the vulnerable and downtrodden in our communities as we seek to biblically defined justice wherever injustice is found.

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