

Are You Being Deceived by the 'False Gospel of Nice'?

Over and over again, I'm reading about how youth are leaving the church as soon as they turn 18. I see study after study highlighting how Christian conservative values are turning off millennials who prefer **social justice** to **culture wars**.

I guess I'm not the only one who's noticed it. I came across an op-ed in CNN by Daniel Darling, vice president of communications for the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, that demanded my attention. The headline? "Millennials and the False 'Gospel of Nice.'"

In it, Darling points out the same trends I've been seeing during my duties as news editor for *Charisma* magazine. It seems some in the younger generation are willing to water down the truth in God's Word even as they stay busy fulfilling His command to feed the hungry. It seems some in the younger generation would rather allow a gay worship leader to take his place on the platform than stand **for traditional marriage** in the public square. Oh, and when more mature believers point back to what the Bible says about morality, they are labeled religious.

I believe in social justice. I believe we need to feed the hungry, clothe the poor and care for the widows and orphans. This is part of the pure, undefiled religion that James notes in his epistle (James 1:27). I don't think we have to choose between social justice and the culture wars to be nice Christians. And I think any who suggest we do are propagating what Darling labels the "false gospel of nice."

Darling, for one, is not buying the hype around the lost generation or betting the "false gospel of nice" will win in the end. He doesn't believe a conservative Christianity that

stands against **gay marriage** or **abortion** is the problem. I don't either.

"Church history doesn't bear out evidence that a mushy, heterodox movement is the cure for stagnation," Darling says. "What's more, there is anecdotal evidence that seems to indicate a robustly orthodox evangelicalism is growing among the young."

Even if we're wrong, Jesus is still right. Jesus isn't bending His standards for any generation, and if people choose to desert the faith to fit in with the crowd or because the truth is too hard to bear, it would grieve Him, but He still won't change His mind.

When Jesus taught that He was the bread come down from heaven and said, "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:54), many deserted Him. The Bible says, "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you also want to go away?'" (vv. 66-67).

Even if the 12 had left His side, Jesus would still not compromise the truth. We can't compromise the truth either. Ultimately, it won't serve youth, millennials or any generation to cave on 2,000 years of Christian orthodoxy. Especially not now. We're in the last days. All signs point to a soon return of the Lord.

I'm all **for social justice**. Let's consider Luke 18, the story of the persistent widow who petitioned the unjust judge for justice. She was passionate about her cause and finally got her way. The judge delivered justice. But the story doesn't end there:

"Then the Lord said, 'Hear what the unjust judge said. And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He

will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?’” (vv. 6-8).

Jesus is all about justice, but not at the expense of truth. Jesus wants us to care for those who cannot take care of themselves, but not while turning a blind eye to societal issues that are deceiving people into hell. Jesus wants us to love one another, but love isn’t always without confrontation. The bottom line is this: When Jesus returns, will He really find faith on the earth—or just a bunch of people who believed in the “false gospel of nice”?

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor at Charisma. She is also the author of several books, including *The Making of a Prophet*. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website [here](#). You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.