

Lord of the Rings Actor Sounds Off on Christian Persecution

"We have lost our moral compass completely, and, unless we find it, we're going to lose our civilization."

The impassioned statement above could very well belong in one of the most beloved epics of all time, *The Lord of the Rings*, but in fact, it was spoken not by one of the film's characters, but by one of its actors.

John Rhys-Davies, who played an axe-wielding dwarf warrior named Gimli in the *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy, spoke candidly on Adam Carolla's podcast last week on the ever-compelling and ever-arguable subject of good and evil.

"There is an extraordinary silence in the West," said the Welsh actor on Carolla's podcast last Monday night. "Basically, Christianity in the Middle East and in Africa is being wiped out—I mean not just ideologically but physically, and people are being enslaved and killed because they are Christians. And your country and my country are doing nothing about it."

"Why is it so evolved not to judge?" replied Carolla, citing political correctness as the culprit. "This notion that we've evolved into a species that's incapable of judging other groups and what they are doing, especially when it's beheading people or setting people on fire or throwing acid in the face of schoolgirls ... I like that kind of judging. That's evolved!"

Carolla added that the U.S. "crushing Hitler" in World War II was a "good thing" that would be impossible today because Bill Maher would be "screaming" about tolerance.

"This is a unique age. We don't want to be judgmental," said Rhys-Davies. "Every other age that has come before us has believed exactly the opposite. I mean, T.S. Eliot referred to 'the common pursuit of true judgment.' Yes. That's what it's about. Getting our judgments right."

As Christians, we believe what the Bible has to say about judging others, namely this oft-quoted verse in the Gospel of Matthew: "Judge not, that you be not judged" (Matt. 7:1). Many people, in the name of tolerance and moral relativism, use this Scripture or similar aphorisms to shame Christians from speaking publicly about or warning against particular lifestyles and behaviors. However, what Jesus wants for us is to first get right with God by confessing our sins and accepting Jesus Christ's free gift of forgiveness so that we can be filled with His Holy Spirit and then can judge righteously from His point of view.

Jesus' command to refrain from judging others does not mean there should be no mechanism for approaching and dealing with sin. There is an entire Old Testament book, after all, that is titled Judges. (The judges in the Old Testament were raised up by God Himself, according to Judges 2:18.) The modern judicial system, including its judges, is a necessary part of society. In saying, "Do not judge," Jesus was not advocating an "anything goes" worldview.

Elsewhere in the Gospels, Jesus gives a direct command to judge: "Do not judge according to appearance, but practice righteous judgment" (John 7:24). Therefore, we see that there is indeed a type of judging that is acceptable and beneficial. Believers are not to judge unlovingly, unmercifully or unfairly. On the contrary, we are to be discerning, considerate of the whole counsel of God, and are to gently confront those who err, and speak the truth in love (Colossians 1:9, 1 Thess. 5:21; Acts 20:27; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 4:15).

"It's an age where politicians don't actually say what they believe," said Rhys-Davies. "They are afraid of being judged as being partisan. Heaven forbid that we should criticize people who, after all, share a different value system. 'But it's all relevant. It's all equally relative. We're all the same. And God and the devil, they're the same, aren't they, really? Right and wrong? It's really just two faces of the same coin,'" he said facetiously.

We at Movieguide® applaud Mr. Rhys-Davies for his boldness in addressing the pitfalls of political correctness and its ominous implications for the future of our nation and the world. The church must continue to stand tall, speak out and shine bright as a city on a hill lest the diabolical evil we see at work gain more ground in our lives and the lives of our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ in nations around the world.

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a basket, but on a candlestick. And it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16).

Editor's note: Rhys-Davies was a guest on Carolla's popular podcast to promote the DVD release of Return to the Hiding Place, a film about Jews in Holland during World War II.

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