

Why It's Time for Christians to Jump Off the Social Justice Bandwagon

Why are so many believers trading God's justice for mob justice?

Don Carson explains, "To preach moral duty without the underlying power of the gospel is moralism that is both pathetic and powerless."

It seems many Christians have fully swapped out morality rule books, trading the Bible for an ever-changing social justice manual. One was written by the very hand of God and will never be erased, edited or discredited. The other? The loudest and most influential voices win the right to determine the societal rules of the day. Of course, the rules change according to whatever their current agenda is, and most aren't privy to these rules until they are cancelled, or worse.

Of course, most people of God wouldn't admit to shelving the Word of God in favor of the word of the mob. Instead, they have been known to attempt an unholy morphing of the two manuscripts while most often favoring social justice issues. Biblical truths are forced to fit within manmade definitions of what is right and fair.

The truth is biblical justice and social justice are often, though not always, mutually exclusive. They are at odds.

"You must not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you are called to testify in a dispute, do not be swayed by the crowd to twist justice. And do not slant your testimony in favor of a person just because that person is poor" (Ex. 23:2-3, NLT).

The plumb-line of morality can never be the crowd. This is the

clearest way to express the concern with today's social justice movement. Does it mean the crowd is always wrong? No. Does it mean the crowd is imperfect in its ability to discern? Yes. For Christians, the litmus test of morality does not come from our ability to gauge unfairness or improprieties. The test is Scripture. We don't need a social justice movement that's tainted by the agendas, whims, politics and emotional reactions of the squeakiest wheels. We need a movement of God's justice on the earth as he is the only perfect judge. His justice is never wrong.

There are many distinctions between social justice and biblical justice. Here are just a few.

God Judges Fairly

Social justice promotes an often twisted version of fairness, demanding individuals, entire people groups or segments of society be punished, minimized or discredited for the sake of those the mob values. The agenda becomes the standard of fairness, though it's laughable to even consider using the word.

For believers, the standard is radically and entirely different than the one social justice advocates have adopted. The reality is that the fairness of God can be both comforting and terrifying.

Those who have been wronged and who are putting their full trust in God can rest knowing God is their advocate.

"Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' To the contrary, 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:19–21, ESV).

God's fairness should also strike us with fear. Those who promote social justice would do well to understand that outside of Christ we are all wretched, wicked and soaked in sin. Advocating for the disenfranchised without revealing they are literally living under the wrath of God will bring only the most temporary of relief. If it's fairness we are talking about, we need to grasp the reality that we all deserve the never-ending, horrifying, maddening and tormenting fires of Hell. This is fair and right judgment.

However, while the bad news of social justice cancels and defames any and all who have failed to support their cause or measure up to their humanistic standard, the Good News of the gospel reveals the wonder of God's love. God knew we could never measure up to the standard of holiness necessary to live with him forever. His passion for us (unlike the disdain seen in cancel culture) resulted in the greatest act of love the world has even known. Jesus died so we could live.

Forgiveness Versus Retribution

The spirit behind many social justice movements is one of punishment. The Spirit of God yearns to forgive all. The Bible tells us that God wants no man to perish. Social justice is so broken and limited in its ability to truly promote a societal fix that punishment and promotion become the only system available to them. Punish the oppressors and resisters as they promote the cause of the oppressed.

In today's social justice-driven cancel culture, the concept of forgiveness is laughable. I am so grieved at the amount of vitriol vomited across social media today. People are fueled by pure hatred and vengeance against those who stand in their way. I've seen it on both sides of the political aisle. In fact, it's often professing Christians exposing their fangs preparing to devour any who oppose their earthly mission.

What would happen if, instead of a "defund the police" social

justice movement, we saw masses of people holding signs that proclaimed, “forgive the police?”

In fact, what if we saw pro-lifers declaring, “I forgive the abortionists” as they prayed outside of the clinics?

“And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments” (Luke 23:34).

This humble and loving heart posture wouldn’t mean we can’t still contend for police reform or the ending of abortion. But it does flip the script by driving the conversation from a place of humility and deep love for the offenders. {eo}

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