



The Kingdom Perspective

Cornel West and the Free Exchange of Ideas

Hello, this is Pastor Don of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

Cornel West is well-known for his outspoken views on politics, race and economics. Politically and otherwise, he is left-leaning, to put it mildly. He is not a fan of Western capitalism and has severe critiques of the history of racism in the West and its lingering effects.

Whether you agree with Cornel's political views or not, one thing you have to appreciate is his congenial manner and absolute commitment to the free exchange of ideas. Cornel is a big believer in freedom of speech and is concerned about its loss, particularly in places of higher education.

Sadly, by his own estimation, such confidence in the free exchange of ideas is waning dramatically, especially among his fellow liberal colleagues.

As Christians, though, we need not be afraid of the free exchange of ideas. The Truth is never afraid of being vulnerable. The Truth is never afraid of being rejected. The Truth is never obsessed with controlling others. The Truth is never insecure. Rather, the Truth of the gospel demonstrates its strength by giving itself away, even for those that hate it (John 3:19-21; 19:1-11) and even for those that seek to suppress it (Romans 1:18). The Truth always operates in courageous love.

As Cornel West puts it: "Most people are afraid of freedom.... [But] There is no freedom without unbelievable, unprecedented, unstoppable courage."

I'd like to add: there is no courage without Truth. It's Truth that gives us backbone—that allows us to enter the free exchange of ideas. Truth is afraid of nothing.

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

John 18 (ESV)

³³ So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" ³⁴ Jesus answered, "Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?" ³⁵ Pilate answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?" ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world." ³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice." ³⁸ Pilate said to him, "What is truth?"

John 19 (ESV)

¹ Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged him. ² And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him in a purple robe. ³ They came up to him, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" and struck him with their hands. ⁴ Pilate went out again and said to them, "See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him." ⁵ So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!" ⁶ When the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in him." ⁷ The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to that law he ought to die because he has made himself the Son of God." ⁸ When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. ⁹ He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no answer. ¹⁰ So Pilate said to him, "You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?" ¹¹ Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore, he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin."

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