



Justice & Our Culture



Pastor Jerome Gay Jr.

Missional Posture

MISSIONAL POSTURE

Every Believer sent by Christ...

Gospel Message

To Culture

Missional Living

In Community

...for His glory



Social Icons



Values of American Culture

- Self Expression
- Success
- Sexual Freedom
- Selfish Pursuit
- Spiritual Tolerance (Inclusion)
- **Social Justice**

John MacArthur on Social Justice

- John MacArthur “Social justice” (in the world’s usage of that term) entails political ideas that are deemed sophisticated—namely, identity politics, critical race theory, the redistribution of wealth, and other radical or socialist policies. Those ideas were first popularized and propagated in the secular academy, where they are now regarded as received wisdom and have become a dominating part of popular culture. **Evangelicals who are chasing the culture are latecomers to the party of those who advocate “social justice.”**
- MacArthur has allowed no room for nuance in his definition

Evangelical Divide

- **Social Justice Warriors/Social Justicians** a term used by those who think Christian's who engage in social justice are lost and have given to leftist ideologies
- **Social Inacticians/Social Inactivist** those who think ignoring injustice is biblically faithful
- Both sides lack humility and compassion

Keep the Adjective or Not?

- The argument, in part of those that oppose Christian's engaging in social justice is the term, 'social' justice
- Justice doesn't require an adjective, it's just, justice
- There's a lot of argument over terminology
- Opponents of 'social' justice also oppose the term 'woke'

Acts 17:28

- 28 For in him we live and move and have our being, **as even some of your own poets have said**, 'For we are also his offspring.'
- Scripture was useless in the Athenian mind, so, Paul used a quote from a pagan philosopher.
- Paul coopted a phrase and applied it to one true God

Christian Wokeness

- **Spiritual** (Ephesians 5:14)
- **Personal** (Ephesians 5:15)
- **Relational** (Matthew 25:35-40)
- **Social** (Isa. 1:17, Zech. 7:10, and Acts 7:34)
- **Eschatological** (1 Thess. 5:6-10)

Matthew 23:23

- 23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You pay a tenth of mint, dill, and cumin, and **yet you have neglected the more important matters of the law — justice, mercy, and faithfulness**. These things should have been done without neglecting the others.
- The focus is on semantics more than people

Human Identity & Dignity

Gen. 1:26

²⁶ Then God said, "Let Us make man **in Our image**, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth."

Intrinsic Value

- Created **by** God
- Created **for** God
- Valuable **to** God
- Used **by** God
- Defined **by** God

Where does human dignity start?

**Human dignity starts at
creation, NOT salvation!**

The Fall (Genesis 3)

- Broken Relationship
 - a. With God
 - b. With Others
 - c. With Self

Exodus 1:9-10

- 9 And he said to his people, “Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. ¹⁰ Come, **let us deal shrewdly with them**, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land.”

Pharaoh's Sociology

- They're (the Jews) a threat numerically and structurally.
- They will overtake us, **so we must oppress them.**
- We (Egyptians) must see them as a threat (socially and economically) to justify our oppressive acts.
- They're not worthy to be treated as humans, they're a commodity.
- Goal: **Control and Domination.**

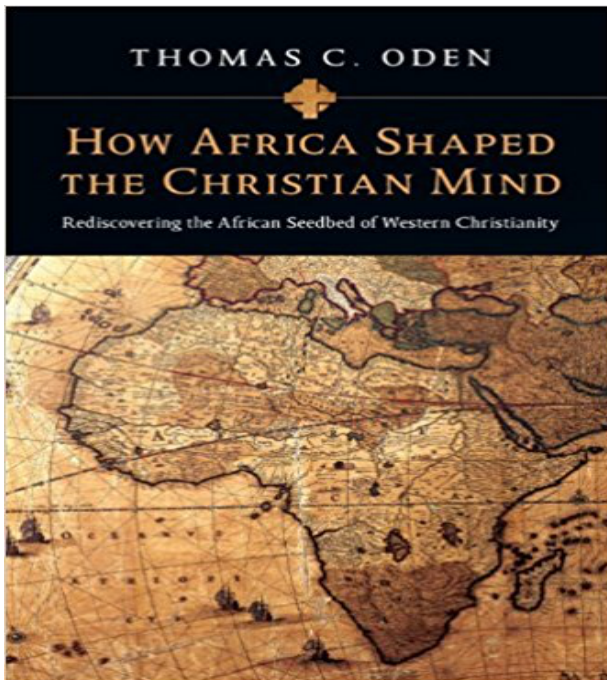
What is Racism?

- Racism is the **oppression** of one group of people for the **preservation** of the **perceived** dominant group of people primarily based on race.
- It is the **sin of partiality** (James 2:9).

Curse of Ham Myth

- Because Ham was the father of black people, and because he and his descendants were cursed to be slaves because of his sin against Noah, some Christians said, "Africans and their descendants are destined to be servants, and should accept their status as slaves in fulfillment of biblical prophecy." - C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch

How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind



Major participants in Euro-American theology seem to have thus missed entirely the literary richness of the distinctive African Christian imprint on proto-Europe and the formation of the Christian mind. **These mistakes passed on through the graduate studies programs that have formed scholars of all continents subliminally.**

Tom Skinner – How Black is the Gospel?



Virginia law stated that “the conferring of baptism does not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freedom.”

Calvin Lockhart

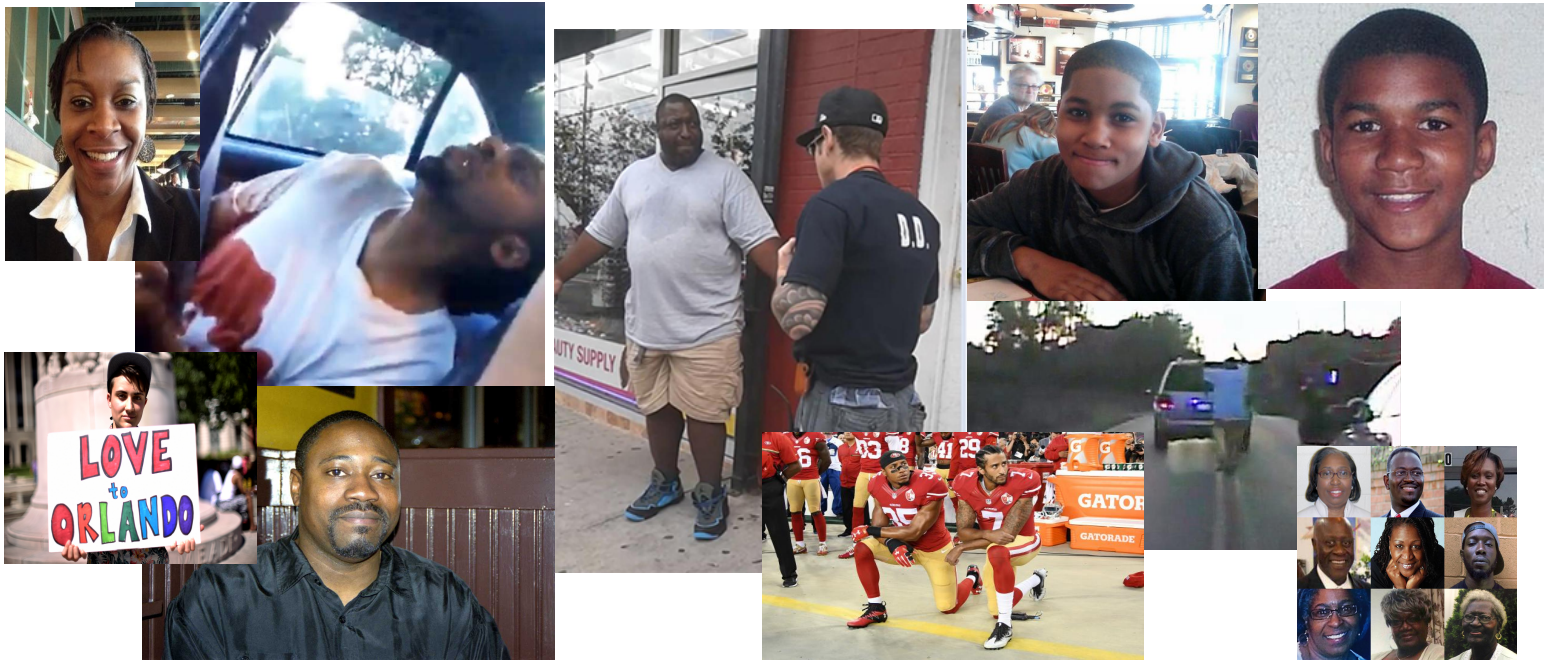
“...one of the major **psychological** problems of the Black man outside the parent continent of Africa is that while he can always say, I have a country, he cannot really say, **I have a home.**”

Gospel > Nationalism

EMAN THE JE CCE TEST 4SDUCY



Unarmed and Dangerous



Breonna Taylor



David Dorn



Tony Timpa



Evangelical Silence

- Frederick Douglass
- Francis Grimke
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- Martin Luther King Jr.

Evangelical Silence

1787



1865



1968



2013



No Excuse

- The main problem wasn't that many 19th century Christians didn't have a Bible, but that they had capitulated to racist culture.

Evangelical Response

- More Conservative than Christian
- Conflating Christian with Republican
- Theologically Hypocritical (Law > Gospel)
- Pro-birth NOT authentically Pro-Life
- Lacking compassion, empathy and love
- Labelled liberal and/ or Marxist
- Sees justice exclusively as an 'end times' occurrence

Matthew 6:10

10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done **on earth** as it is in heaven.

Jesus said...

- **Moses** – 613 (Genesis – Deuteronomy)
- **Isaiah** – 15
- **David** – 11 (Psalm 15)
- **Micah** – 3 (Micah 6:6-8)
- **Jesus** – 2 (Mark 12:28-31)
- **Mark 12:28-31** 28 One of the scribes approached. When he heard them debating and saw that Jesus answered them well, he asked him, “Which command is the most important of all?” 29 Jesus answered, “The most important is Listen, Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. 31 The second is, **Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other command greater than these.**”

Non-Prophet Organization

- We've lost our prophetic voice
- No longer seen as a credible voice to address societal issues
- Pastor's are seen as pimps rather than voices of hope and empowerment
- The church is seen as aloof and/or silent
- Churches are more conservative than biblical

Black Lives Matter

Opal Tometi



Alicia Garza



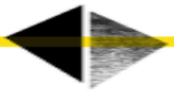
Patrisse Khan-Cullors



BLM Core Values

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

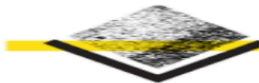


DIVERSITY

GLOBALISM



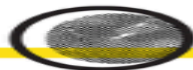
QUEER AFFIRMING



UNAPOLOGETICALLY BLACK*



COLLECTIVE VALUE



EMPATHY



LOVING ENGAGEMENT



TRANSGENDER AFFIRMING



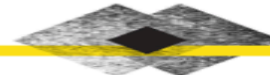
BLACK VILLAGES



BLACK WOMEN



BLACK FAMILIES



INTERGENERATIONAL



Christian Response to BLM

- Agree with the sentiment, NOT every aspect of the organization.
- If all lives truly matter, then black lives are included within the 'ALL'
- Affirm black dignity and value, but don't deify it.
- Focus on the **Imago Dei** as the impetus for your engagement!

What is Justice?

- Doing the right thing accordingly to God's standard of rightness.
- *Mishpat* means more than just the punishment of wrongdoing.
- *Tzadeqah*, and it refers to a life of right relationships.
- **Rectifying justice** is *mishpat*. Primary justice, or *tzadeqah*, is behavior that, if it was prevalent in the world, would render rectifying justice unnecessary, because everyone would be living in right relationship to everyone else. Therefore, though *tzadeqah* is primarily about being in a right relationship with God, the righteous life that results is profoundly social. – Tim Keller

What is Biblical Justice?

- Starts with spiritual regeneration
- Gospel-rooted human flourishing
- Gospel-rooted meaning it's motivated by being saved. NOT a social gospel!
- Cares about the human condition from life to death to eternity!
- Justice disconnected from spiritual regeneration is futile.

Doxy, Praxy & Pathy

- Faith and works **MUST** comingle
- **Orthodoxy** is believing the right thing and **orthopraxy** is living out what we believe
- Orthodoxy – right belief
- Orthopraxy – right action
- Orthopathy – right emotions

God Loves Justice

- The Rock — his work is perfect; all his ways are **just**. A faithful God, without bias, he is righteous and true. -- **Deuteronomy 32:4**
- 5 The righteous Lord is in her; he does no wrong. He applies his **justice** morning by morning; he does not fail at dawn, yet the one who does wrong knows no shame. -- **Zephaniah 3:5**
- What should I bring before the Lord when I come to bow before God on high? Should I come before him with burnt offerings, with year-old calves? 7 Would the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousand streams of oil? Should I give my firstborn for my transgression, the offspring of my body for my own sin? 8 Mankind, he has told each of you what is good and what it is the Lord requires of you: to **act justly**, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God. -- **Micah 6:6-8**

God Loves Justice

- **Deuteronomy 10:18** He executes **justice** for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the resident alien, giving him food and clothing.

Acts 16:35-39

- 35 But when it was day, the **magistrates** sent the police, saying, "Let those men go." 36 And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, "The **magistrates** have sent to let you go. Therefore come out now and go in peace." 37 But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and do they now throw us out secretly? No! Let them come themselves and take us out." 38 The **police** reported these words to the **magistrates**, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens. 39 So they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.

Why was Paul beaten

- **Seeking Justice** – slave girl set free, Magistrates (officers) and the crowd beat Paul (Acts 16:19-22)
- **Disrupting an unjust system** – girl's owners were allowed to own her (Acts 16:20)
- **Not being seen as a citizen** – Paul had dual citizenship (Acts 22:28)
- **The Gospel**
- **Justice may not need an adjective, but it does require action**

Greatest form of Justice

- Gospel
- Gospel-centered social consciousness
- Social engagement is NOT a social gospel
- God loves justice (Amos 5:21-24, Psalm 33:5, Isa. 1:16-17)
- **Discipleship** is the greatest form of justice

Isaiah 1:11-16

11 “What are all your sacrifices to me?” asks the Lord. “I have had enough of burnt offerings and rams and the fat of well-fed cattle; I have no desire for the blood of bulls, lambs, or male goats. 12 When you come to appear before me, who requires this from you —this trampling of my courts? 13 Stop bringing useless offerings. Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons and Sabbaths, and the calling of solemn assemblies —I cannot stand iniquity with a festival. 14 I hate your New Moons and prescribed festivals. They have become a burden to me; I am tired of putting up with them. 15 When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will refuse to look at you; even if you offer countless prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are covered with blood. 16 “Wash yourselves. Cleanse yourselves. Remove your evil deeds from my sight. Stop doing evil. 17 Learn to do what is good. **Pursue justice. Correct the oppressor. Defend the rights of the fatherless. Plead the widow’s cause.**

Seek Justice

- Black children make up 18% of preschool population, but represent half of all out-school suspensions and this is not solely due to behavior
- Black youth are 18 times more likely to be tried as adults than white children for the same crime.
- People with black sounding names have to send out 50% more resumes just to get a call back.
- If a black person kills a white person they're twice as likely to receive the death sentence than if a white person kills a black person

Seek Justice

- Social justice comes from salvation, it doesn't replace it.
- Social engagement doesn't make you liberal theologically, it makes you loving.
- Social justice is a charitable apologetic primarily for millennials and beyond.

Specific Outreach

- Poor
- Prisoner
- Single-Parent
- Unborn

Church's Response

- Connect justice to regeneration
- Don't shy away from societal issues and present the gospel as the answer
- Know the social mores of our culture
- Be informed before you engage
- Engage
- Affirm dignity and value in ALL people
- See justice as an apologetic

Do Justice

- **Micah 6:8** 8 Mankind, he has told each of you what is good and what it is the Lord requires of you: **to act justly**, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Do Justice

- **Micah 6:6-7** 6 What should I bring before the Lord when I come to bow before God on high? Should I come before him with burnt offerings, with year-old calves? 7 Would the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousand streams of oil? **Should I give my firstborn for my transgression, the offspring of my body for my own sin?**