



# Christian Citizenship

**"You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world" (Mt. 5:13-16). One way to be salty and let our light shine is by being good citizens on earth. Our vocation as citizens of both the secular kingdom and God's kingdom gives us the responsibility to proclaim God's Word and care for our neighbors. We are called to engage the "public square" with our message of Christ's mercy for all. Please pray for God's will to be done... in Jesus' name.**

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## Critical Race Theory

Christians have been "caught off guard" by the "tsunami of accusations about America's 'systemic racism' and 'white privilege.'" This "mayhem isn't really about racism per se," writes Jonathan Noyes, "but about something much larger—indeed, an entire worldview ... known as Critical Theory and it's actually been around a long time."

Noyes explains: "Critical Theory divides the world into two groups: the oppressors and the oppressed. Those groups are made up of smaller cultural groups defined by race, sex, sexual preference, gender identity, etc. When this world focuses on race, it's called Critical Race Theory (CRT). CRT divides people into groups by race, the white oppressors and the oppressed non-whites."

The "fundamental problem with America," according to CRT, "is its 'whiteness,' its caste system based on skin color. The lighter your skin, the closer you are to the top of the system." Because it "was founded by white men," CRT asserts that "racism has been woven into the tapestry of the American experiment from the beginning, and it continues to corrupt every aspect of American life. Our 'original sin,' then, according to CRT, is whiteness."

According to CRT, "a culture's 'salvation' from that fall begins when the oppressors become 'woke'—when they see and repent from their own sins as oppressors and begin to dismantle the inherently oppressive structures of their culture." Only when the world is seen through the lens of CRT "will racial equality be possible. For CRT, then, salvation comes through law, not grace. Forgiveness only comes after complete and ongoing capitulation."

Noyes writes, "Ultimately, CRT is rooted in a blend of two worldviews: Marxism (the oppressor/oppressed element) and secular humanism (the belief that humanity is capable of self-fulfillment and rescue by self-effort apart from God). However, once God is removed, so is any objective standard defining what it means to live a fulfilled, moral life. Without that anchor, we quickly drift into subjectivism and relativism—feelings rule, in other words."

That being the case, a "problem" arises for the Critical Race theorist. "CRT's whole framework is ethical. Oppression is wrong. But why is oppression wrong? Why does every black life matter? In a world without God, these 'ethics' are nothing more than personal preferences, mere opinions."

CRT, writes Noyes, "is incompatible with Christianity. This isn't to say racism and oppression don't exist. They do. Bigotry abounds among fallen people of every race, and multitudes are really hurting. As Christians, we fight for both justice and mercy." Micah reminds us, *What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?* (Excerpted from "Thinking Critically About Critical Race Theory" by Jonathan Noyes in *The Stream*, 9-12-20. Originally published at Stand to Reason, [www.str.org](http://www.str.org))

**What can we do?** We can bring some clarity to the social chaos. "There is no need," Noyes says, "to yoke ourselves to any Marxist, man-centered philosophy to find the answers." We find our answer in the Word Jesus Christ. "Christianity says our fundamental problem is sin. True original sin places all humanity on equal footing. No one is exempt. *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Ro. 3:23). We can agree that "sin includes racism, discrimination and bigotry, but it includes much more ... oppressors are sinners, but so are the oppressed, in their own ways." Instead of dividing people by race as CRT does, "Christianity unifies people—we are all fallen image-bearers, and we can all be equal in Christ." St. Paul says, *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus* (Gal.

3:28). "Christianity provides the best reasons to believe that oppression is wrong" because *God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them* (Gen. 1:27). With confidence, we can say, "It's not the color of our skin or any other physical characteristic that gives people value, worth and dignity. Rather, being made in the image of God is the great equalizer where racial unity must begin."

**Please pray** for unity as people made in the image of God... in Jesus' name.

### **Distortion of Past Imperils the Future**

Recently, rioting British protesters demanded the destruction of Egypt's Giza Pyramids because they were built with slave labor. Some call this tearing down of historical markers a "chronological snobbery," writes Lawrence W. Reed. But the "more clinical label is 'presentism.' It's a fallacious perspective that distorts historical realities by removing them from their context. In sports, we call it 'Monday morning quarterbacking.'"

Reed says, "Just imagine if we could bring the Wright Brothers back to life for an hour so the critic could berate them. He would say, 'You dummies! You two made this rickety flying machine and didn't even install seat belts and tray tables, let alone in-flight movies. What good were you?'" The most radical presentism, says Reed, "is the banning of books and flushing of entire generations down the Orwellian memory hole—all tactics employed shamelessly by history's worst totalitarian regimes and now by many protesters and their presentist professors."

Presentism "takes the form of judging people of the past by current standards" but is "a failure to consider them in the context of their time and culture." Reed explains that "presentism is fraught with arrogance. It presumes that present-day attitudes didn't evolve from earlier ones but popped fully formed from nowhere into our superior heads. To a presentist, our forebears constantly fail to measure up, so they must be disdained or expunged. As one writer put it, 'They feel that their light will shine brighter if they blow out the candles of others.'" (Excerpted from "Presentism Imperils Our Future by Distorting Our Past"

by Lawrence W. Reed in *The Epoch Times*, September 9-15, 2020; originally published on FEE.org.)

**What can we do?** We do well, says Reed, to remember that "our ancestors were each a part of the era in which they lived, not ours. History should be something we learn from, not run from; if we analyze it through a presentist prism, we will miss much of the nuanced milieu in which our ancestors thought and acted." Reed believes that a "profoundly good historian restrains his preconceptions, biases, and political agenda and seeks to understand the whole of a past event or person. He doesn't erase them." Reed quotes Paul Bartow: "The task of the historian, or the modern university student for that matter, is not to descend from on high and mete out judgment." Instead, we can encourage one another to study historical figures, understand the times in which they were living, learn from them, and even let them challenge our present-day perspective and worldview.

**Please pray** for understanding of the past and its lessons for the present... in Jesus' name.

### **Weaken the People**

The 45 goals of Communism were first published in the 8<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Naked Communist* in March 1961. They were gleaned from testimony given to Congress by various scholars and from the writings of current or former Communists. The general thrust of the 45 goals was to attack the Judeo-Christian underpinnings that had long prospered and protected freedom. The U.S. could not be taken militarily but it could be overcome by patiently "weakening the people." Goals included: Control schools; foment riots and protests; infiltrate the press; gain control of key positions in radio, TV and pictures; present homosexuality, degeneracy and promiscuity as "normal, natural, and healthy;" discredit the family; infiltrate the churches and replace revealed religion with "social" religion. (*The Naked Communist* by W. Cleon Skousen, 297-398. [www.wcleonskousen.com](http://www.wcleonskousen.com))

**What can we do?** Be in Word and fellowship, catechize, and live life ready for the Lord's return.

**Please pray** for mercy... in Jesus' name.

