

Dearly Friends in Christ,

The real battle is the battle for the dictionary. Whoever gets to define the terms will win. Fighting for words and with words is Biblical. How did the devil tempt Adam? By manipulating the Word. How did the devil tempt Jesus? He actually quoted the Bible and twisted it, and Christ fought back by quoting the Bible. Fighting for words isn't trivial; it's a fight for Christ. **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made" (Jn 1:1, 3).** When people manipulate words, they are in fact manipulating the Word, Jesus Christ.

And so it is with social justice. The problem is on the surface it appears to be a good thing. God is social, and He created us to be social with Him and others. Justice is a godly thing and God demands justice (the word justice appears 138 times in the Bible).

But the world has manipulated both words. First, they changed the definition of social. Being social is rooted in God, who gives that trait to us. God is Triune. The Father loves the Son who loves the Father. But the world changed where socialness is found - they got rid of God, and rooted socialness in humanity. Instead of being created in the image of God, the world says we were created in the image of a monkey.

I've been really trying to hammer this point home - if we're not created in the image of God, who's to say that humans have intrinsic worth? This is what's baffling and scary about social justice; it's not rooted in God, but rather it's rooted in the whims and emotions of man and woman (whatever that is). This is why the aims of social justice are always changing. What was acceptable 10 years ago is what the kids would call today "cringe." Remember - in 2004, Obama opposed same-sex marriage. These things rapidly change because they're not rooted in anything (or if they are rooted in anything, it's in sinful man, which is even more terrifying).

Second, the definition of justice has changed. Justice has to be based on a standard. Real justice is based on God's standards. The 10 Commandments spell out the right way to live. God throughout the Old Testament tells His people how to live justly. The definition of justice has changed because the standard of justice has changed. Instead of being based on God's Word, justice is now based on what a majority of the population thinks.

This is why the rhetoric behind the word democracy has ramped up recently. Candidates are saying they're fighting for the soul of democracy. The thought is, "Anything is good, as long as a majority of people agree on it." That is a terrifying thought. Using this logic, if 50.1% of German residents in the 1930s agreed with Hitler's ideology, then it must've been good. If more than 50% of people in America support abortion, then it must be good. Democracy can be good or it can be bad; if you vote for things that align with God's standard, that's good. We can disagree on

tax policy and can say the majority will decide it. But we can't let a majority decide what a woman is. God decides that. One biblical example to drive the point home - how many of the 12 spies thought taking over Canaan was not a good idea even though God promised them the land? 10 did. That's a super majority. The super majority was wrong.

In America, you can really see this change expressed by Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. (1841-1935). He said that law is "the majority vote of that nation that could lick all others." For Holmes, law and justice was something that could drastically change based on the whims of a population.

So social justice isn't social or justice. Nevertheless, Christians must be social (we must love humans) and we must be about justice. **"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world" (Js 1:27).** James tells us that true religion is caring for others, but that we should keep ourselves "unstained from the world." We could say it like this - we need to do justice but we can't do justice in a worldly way.

After all, that's what God did. He saw all of the injustice happening in the world, and He sent His Son in the flesh to justify it. Jesus gave up everything, even His life, so that He could clothe and feed the orphans and the widows.

Well that's it for social justice. What other problems could we solve in this newsletter? Maybe next month we'll try to ban members of Congress from doing insider trading. That might be too ambitious, though.

In Christ,  
Pastor