

Exposing Enemies Within the Church: A Seven-Session Bible Study Series
“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them” (Eph. 5:11).

Participants’ Guide

Debriefing for Session 1: Social Justice Versus Biblical Justice, Part 1

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**Session 7: The power of forgiveness advances the true
gospel and exposes the counterfeit “gospel” of social justice.**

The online resource page for this debriefing is available at
<https://www.discoverbedrocktruth.org/dbrp07/>.

To turn away from the lifeless preachers and publishers of the day—may involve a real cross. Your motives will be misconstrued, your words perverted, and your actions misinterpreted. The sharp arrows of false report will be directed against you. You will be called proud and self-righteous, because you refuse to fellowship empty professors. You will be termed censorious and bitter—if you condemn in plain speech—the subtle delusions of Satan. You will be dubbed narrow-minded and uncharitable, because you refuse to join in singing the praises of the “great” and “popular” men of the day. More and more, you will be made to painfully realize—that the path which leads unto eternal life is “narrow” and that FEW there are who find it. May the Lord be pleased to grant unto each of us—the hearing ear and obedient heart! “Take heed what you hear” and read!

—Arthur W. Pink¹ (1886-1952)—

In Genesis 3, soon after God created the world and everything in it, the members of His highest creation, Adam and Eve, disobeyed Him and ate of the fruit of the tree from which He had instructed

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them not to eat (see Gen. 2:15-17). Immediately their fellowship with God was broken. They first tried to hide, and then each one tried to blame another. Here’s how it went down:

³1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”

²2 And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ “

⁴4 Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

⁸8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

⁹9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?”

¹⁰10 So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

¹¹11 And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

¹²12 Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

¹³13 And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

¹⁴14 So the LORD God said to the serpent:

“Because you have done this,
You are cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your belly you shall go,
And you shall eat dust
All the days of your life.

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¹⁵ And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel” (Gen. 3:1-15).

God’s Rescue Operation

Once humanity fell into sin — and by that I mean that both the man and the woman acted in direct disobedience to God — we see relationship after relationship crack and separate. Anguish and tension mount. Guilt enters the picture — guilt that is genuine and that weighs heavily on the soul. Shame enters the picture as well, along with futile attempts to overcome it and rise above it.

In *The Story of Reality: How the World Began, How It Ends, And Everything Important That Happens In Between*, Stand to Reason’s Greg Koukl² describes what happened and the consequences that inevitably arose: After listening to the serpent’s pitch and gazing intently at the fruit on the tree, “[m]an hesitates. He toys with the temptation. He considers the lie. Then he gives in to the deception, first Eve, then Adam.”³ The focus here, emphasizes Koukl, isn’t just on the fact that a rule was broken, although that certainly was important. The more important issue involved the man’s and the woman’s relationships to God and how they changed when the two disobeyed their Creator: “This is a test of trust. It is a test of fealty [loyalty] to a Sovereign, a test of love for a father, a test of faithfulness to a friend.”⁴

→ *What does distrust do in and to a relationship? Do you agree that Adam’s and Eve’s disobedience was their ultimate expression of distrust in God? Explain your answer.*

Koukl continues, pointing out,

This one decision — this single act of disobedience, this solitary act of sedition, this lone betrayal — changes everything. Adam and Eve, enticed by the promise of personal autonomy — the allure of the sovereign self — turn against their Lord. The Kingdom is torn by revolt. Rebellion does not bring freedom, though. Instead, it brings brokenness, disgrace, guilt, slavery, and struggle.

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→ *Describe how intensely and thoroughly the quest for personal autonomy is today for many people. What are the risks of such a quest? In other words, what do people stand to lose if they gain absolute personal autonomy? What do they think they'll gain? Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25 declare, “There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.” What might you say to warn someone who is on a quest for absolute personal autonomy?*

Adam and Eve struggle against each other, their harmony shattered, each shifting blame, man to woman, woman to tempter. Man struggles with the ground he was meant to govern and now seeks to govern him. Work becomes toil as the earth fights back with briars and thorns. Woman struggles to bear children in labor and pain, and clashes with the man who now rules her. And in the end — after a lifetime of anguish, suffering, trials, and tears — all will lose the battle when each breathes his last and man's physical form turns to dust. Then he is broken yet again when his soul is torn from his body in death, his self violently split in two.⁵

But there is more than one kind of dying. Adam and Eve are also dead toward God, cut off from the spiritual life that only friendship with God can give. Encounter with the King, once peaceful joy, is now painful shame. No longer fit for Paradise, the traitors are expelled from the garden and banished from his presence.

Death spreads like plague through all mankind. Brother slays brother in cold blood and calm arrogance. Men, proud of their violence, boast of their killings. With each generation, man's rebellion becomes more dramatic. The darkness spreads. One thoughtless act of sin and self-will has changed the world forever.⁶

A Problem Only God Could Solve

Because God is holy and cannot abide sin, and because man has become a sinner and is undeniably guilty, fellowship between God and humanity now is impossible, unless man's sin is removed. But how can that happen? Sin brings a death sentence, as we already have noted (see Rom. 6:23). God, who is bound by His holy character, is a God who hates and must punish sin. “God's wrath,” Greg Koukl admits, “is not his most popular quality, but it will do us no good to give it the short-shrift. Too much is at stake.”⁷

The situation for humanity is beyond dire. Just as a person cannot “unring a bell,” he or she cannot undo his or her own freely chosen disobedience to God. The penalty must be paid, either by the

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guilty party or by an innocent party; and since every member of the human race is guilty (see Ps:14:2-3; Rom. 3:23), it would appear that all of us are doomed!

The Story could have ended here, since God owes no man a pardon. But this is not the end of the Story. It is the beginning. In the dark, there is a ray of light, a veiled promise. Satan has inflicted damage, but the woman’s seed will strike the fatal blow. With man lost and helpless and the world terribly broken, God himself steps into the picture to initiate a rescue operation.⁸

→ “God owes no man a pardon,” writes Greg Koukl. Moreover, character-bound, God cannot simply overlook the man’s and woman’s disobedience; nor can He overlook ours. His options, we might say, are limited. As we will see, a rescue operation will cost Him heavily, but He initiates one anyway. What does this say about God?

Read Genesis 3:15 again. God said to His arch enemy, the serpent, or Satan,

And I will put enmity
Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel.

This verse provides the first hint in Scripture of a possible rescue operation. Later, as God revealed more, we would learn about the remarkable details. The plan — God’s campaign to restore fellowship between Himself and humanity — would involve His sending Jesus, His own Son, to the earth live a perfect life and to pay sin’s penalty for those who were guilty. Born of a virgin,⁹ Jesus had no human biological father; an angel came and announced to Mary that she would be His mother. Jesus was the Seed of the woman.

The death He would die would be the most horrific form of death imaginable — crucifixion — and in His death He would be separated from or forsaken of God,¹⁰ His own Father, as well. Thus, His death would be both physical and spiritual. He would be crucified on a Passover Friday and be buried; but then, on the following Sunday, would rise from the dead. It would be God’s way of saying He had accepted His Son’s death as payment for the sins of those who were guilty and who would welcome that death as payment for their sins. It was a plan that would deal the serpent, or

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Satan, a fatal blow. In the process, Satan would injure, but not permanently harm, God’s Son. We these elements in Genesis 3:15.

Describing the strategy concisely, we can say that Jesus would make it possible for God to forgive and thereby remove the sins of those who would repent of their sins,¹¹ trust that the death of Christ was sufficient to secure their salvation, and acknowledge Him as Savior and Lord.

→ *On what basis does God forgive sins?*

→ *Why doesn’t God simply forgive everyone?*

→ *Why do you think so many people simply assume they’ll be OK when they stand before God? In other words, why do you think so many assume God will let them into heaven — even though they haven’t really sought Him? See Isaiah 55:6-7 and Jeremiah 29:13.*

Forgiven!

Let me tell you, forgiveness makes the serpent — AKA the devil — *very angry!* Satan hates forgiveness, because it undoes his work of keeping people at odds with God. In 2 Corinthians 5:14-21, the apostle Paul wrote,

Satan hates forgiveness, because undoes his work of keeping people at odds with God.

⁵¹⁴ For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

¹⁶ Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ¹⁸ Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ

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reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

In Ephesians 1:7 the apostle wrote,

In Him [Jesus] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace....

What is forgiveness? Remember from the Bible study session that

Forgiveness is “the act of setting someone free from an obligation to you that is a result of a wrong done against you.” For example, a debt is forgiven when you free your debtor of his obligation to pay you back what he owes you.

Forgiveness, then, involves three elements: *injury*, a *debt* resulting from the injury, and a *cancellation of the debt*.¹²

There is perhaps one thing that Satan hates more than forgiveness, and that is the shed blood of Christ that makes divine forgiveness possible and that brings a real solution to the core problem humanity faces.¹³

Recall from the Bible study session Francis Schaeffer’s observation that **“The ‘condition of man’ is not what modern man thinks it is. Man is a sinner who needs an overwhelming love. Jesus has come to save His people from their sins.”**¹⁴

→ *Name some of the things Satan likely will be able to accomplish by getting people to think the “condition of man” is very different from the way the Bible describes it.*

→ *What is the “condition of man” according to the social justice narrative and critical race theory? What solution or solutions do these ideologies seek to impose?*

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Those Whom Christ Has Forgiven Forgive Others

You might remember that in our Debriefing for Session 4, you heard several times from Corrie ten Boom, who, along with her family during World War 2, courageously hid Jews from the Nazis, even in their own home, and even though it put every member of the ten Boom family in danger. The ten Booms saved many lives but were arrested, and all but Corrie died either in prison or as a result of the cruel treatment they received at the hands of the Nazis. Here is a powerful story of forgiveness from Corrie’s presentation.¹⁵ You can listen to the clip on the **resource page** for this debriefing. Visit <https://www.discoverbedrocktruth.org/dbrp07/>.

That’s not all! The same talk by Corrie was broadcast in two parts on Dr. James Dobson’s Family Talk. Part 1 is here,¹⁶ and Part 2, here.¹⁷ This particular clip comes from Part 2. In it, she shares how she came to forgive her Christian friends for some offenses they committed against her. Go to the **resource page** for this debriefing to listen to the clip.

Again, Satan *hates* forgiveness. He hates it when God forgives, and he hates it when Christians forgive. Not surprisingly, therefore, Satan *loves* CRT and the social justice movement of which CRT is a part — because these promote resentment, envy, hatred, animosity, and other attitudes that provide fertile ground for an unforgiving spirit.

→ Why does a failure to forgive give Satan a foothold in a person’s life? When bitterness and a refusal to forgive prevail among the masses, what happens in, and to, society?

→ How does forgiveness offered by the offended party to the person or persons who offended him/her/them (whether the offense is perceived or real) thwart Satan’s efforts, especially in the realm of the social justice movement and CRT?

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The Battle Against False Teachings in the Christian Church Is Not New

We’re going to change direction here for a bit but will return soon to emphasize once again the importance of forgiveness. Why are we taking this detour? Because it will be extremely helpful for us to look back into church history to see that Satan’s tactics aren’t new. In fact, the earliest battles against false ideologies in the church took place in the first century. The church was in its infancy, and the New Testament still was being written.

Galatia

In **Galatia**, a Roman province located in what is now central Turkey,¹⁸ churches and individual Christians were buying into the idea that faith in Christ alone was not sufficient for salvation, and that an individual needed to exercise faith in Christ *and* perform works prescribed in the ceremonial Jewish law — including circumcision. This is what Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia in Galatians 1:6-9; 3:1-4,

1⁶ I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, ⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed....

3¹ O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? ² This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? ⁴ Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

→ *Reread Galatians 1:7. Did you know that the gospel of Christ can be perverted? The Greek word translated pervert in verse 7 means “to turn around.”¹⁹ How does adding something to the gospel, or altering it in some way, turn it around? We might could say that turning the gospel around corrupts it. What does it mean to corrupt something? How does a “gospel” that’s been turned around or corrupted deceive people and harm them?*

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→ *What’s at stake with a corrupt “gospel”?*

If good works are necessary for salvation, then Jesus’ death was insufficient to secure salvation for us. As Isaiah 64:6 declares, “all our righteousnesses *are* like filthy rags” before God. Jesus’ death had to be *totally* sufficient, or else we aren’t saved and cannot be saved. The stark reality is that when God sent Jesus, He had no “Plan B.” We can rest assured that there didn’t need to be a “Plan B.” Christ’s death *is fully* sufficient. We perform good works *from* salvation, but not *for* it (see Eph. 2:8-10).

When God sent Jesus, He had no “Plan B.”

Jude

Jude, the writer of the epistle that bears his name and “a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,” (Jude 1) may also have been the half-brother of Jesus.²⁰ He wrote his epistle to “those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ” (v. 1). His letter was brief, but it carried a note of urgency. He declared,

³ Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴ For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ (vv. 3-4).

Bible scholar Edward C. Pentecost writes,

Jude’s words were written to those who shared faith and salvation. His words were a warning to the believers to beware of those apostates who had made their way into local assemblies and would destroy if possible the foundation of faith which the church was built...

Claiming liberty in Christ they interpreted His grace as **license** [NIV: “license for immorality”] to do what their flesh desired with no inhibitions. Their libertinism turned grace into barbarous licentiousness. These antinomians declared that since the flesh was not created by God, it was proper to give in to its desires. Not surprisingly, this perversion in practice was accompanied by a perversion in doctrine — a denial of the person and authority of **Jesus Christ**.²¹

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→ Recall that in Session 4, Pastor Cary Gordon described antinomianism as “a pejorative term for the teaching that Christians are allegedly under no obligation to obey the divine laws of ethics or morality summarized by the Ten Commandments.” You can hear the entire clip on the **resource page** for this debriefing.

Just how is buying into antinomianism also, in the words of Dr. Pentecost, “a denial of the person and authority of **Jesus Christ**”? How serious is that? What does all of this say about how seriously God views sin?

→ What is “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints”? Dr. Pentecost writes that it “is the body of truths taught by the apostles.”²² We can confidently add “and recorded in Scripture” to his definition.

→ The term “the faith” also appears in Acts 6:7; Galatians 1:23; Philippians 1:27; 1 Timothy 4:1; and 6:20-21.²³ How is it used in each of these passages?

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Jude reminds us that as Christians, we need to be people of “the faith,” people of the Book — the Bible. We need to know what the apostles taught and what the early church taught and believed. Chuck Colson writes,

What’s really at issue here is a dramatic shift in the prevailing belief of Western cultural elites; we have come into a postmodern era that rejects the idea of truth itself. If there is no such thing as truth, then Christianity’s claims are inherently offensive and even bigoted against others. Tolerance, falsely defined as putting all propositions on an equal footing—as opposed to giving ideas an equal hearing—has replaced truth. Millions acquiesce to the all-beliefs-are-equal doctrine for the sake of bettering their social position in our values-free, offend-no-one culture. But to succumb to this indifference is not to accept a tolerant or liberal view of Christianity; it is to embrace another religion, a belief in some supreme value—perhaps tolerance—but not in the God who is and who has spoken....

If the Church has any hope of answering today’s challenges, it must pursue what we call radical Christianity or orthodoxy. Radical is a good term; it means going back to the “root.” This is why throughout this book [Colson’s book, *The Faith*] we will be sending you back to the writings of the apostles themselves and of Church leaders and theologians of the first five centuries of the Christian era.²⁴

→ *What are some ways to increase our knowledge of and to solidify our commitment to “the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints”?*

Colosse

In the church at **Colosse**, a set of false teachings had taken hold that not only said that observance of Jewish dietary and ceremonial laws was necessary for salvation, but also that contained a dose of a religion called Gnosticism (from the Greek word *giosko*, which means “to know”).²⁵ *Gnosticism* “(1) emphasized a special higher truth that only the more enlightened receive from God, (2) taught that matter is evil, and (3) denied the humanity of Jesus.”²⁶

Anytime the church has to deal with a set of false teachings antithetical to Christianity and wrapped in a movement, the threat to the Christian faith is very real.

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→ *Why would Satan especially love a counterfeit gospel that claimed acquiring a special knowledge was necessary to get to God?*

While we can see numerous parallels between the teachings of the social justice movement and several false teachings that took hold in the early church, I want to focus in particular on Gnosticism and Paul’s charge to the church in Colosse to

2⁸ Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. ⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power (Col. 2:8-10).

Just a few lines earlier in his letter (in verse 3) the apostle had written that in Christ “are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” The Colossian Christians were complete in Christ but were being told that they needed more than Christ. They were being told they needed to obey the Jewish ceremonial laws and needed to acquire a special knowledge that would give them keen insight in their relationship with God.

Wokeness: The Special Knowledge of the Social Justice Gospel

In the teachings the social justice movement promotes within the church, we see a form of Gnosticism. The “special knowledge” emphasized by the movement is called *wokeness* or *being woke*. Let’s put it another way. In the social justice narrative, what is the source of the information about who the oppressors are and who the victims are, and about what the members of each group need to do when they learn? All of this knowledge comes from being “woke.”

Woke refers to a component within the social justice movement that stresses the importance being keenly aware of and sensitive to what is believed to be society’s systemic oppression of blacks and other minorities.

A PDF file of a resource page offered during our Debriefing of Session 6 is titled “Definitions of Some Key Terms of the Social Justice Movement.” You may remember it from our Debriefing for Session 6 (**Item 6.1DB**). It also is designated as **Item 7.1DB**. It contains additional information about being “woke.”

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Although it is promoted as a process resulting in enlightenment, becoming woke actually can be likened to being put in a locked prison cell. I’m referring to both those deemed “oppressors” and those deemed “oppressed.” The “remedies” wokeness and the social justice movement recommend only keep “oppressors” and “victims” more securely locked in.

There is only one way out of this prison. The first step in breaking loose is to understand that the “special knowledge” of wokeness is a lie. **Why is it a lie? Because the “condition of man” is not what the social justice movement says it is.** Having misdiagnosed humanity’s core problem, it goes on to offer a counterfeit solution.

The “special knowledge” of wokeness is a lie because the “condition of man” is not what the social justice movement says it is. Having misdiagnosed humanity’s core problem, the social justice movement goes on to offer a counterfeit solution.

The “solution” it offers is called “anti-racism,” but anti-racism is racism repackaged. It is a new religion and even a new cult. Evangelical leader Voddie Baucham understands this. In his book *Fault Lines* he writes, “Antiracism offers no salvation—only perpetual penance in an effort to battle an incurable disease. And all of it begins with pouring new meaning into well-known words.”²⁷

→ *What familiar words has the social justice movement redefined?*

The Liberating Power of Forgiveness

We said earlier we would return to focus once more on forgiveness. Receiving God’s forgiveness after repenting of our sins and trusting Christ for salvation is a first step toward cooperating with God so that His will is “done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10), a concept we discussed in our most recent Bible study session. Then, having been forgiven, we as Christians can forgive others — indeed, we are compelled to do so. That, too, advances God’s will on earth (vv. 9-15). We know that no one ever could owe us a debt that would approach the size of the debt God cancelled for us when He forgave us, so we understand we have been set free to forgive! This theme is worth exploring further.

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Dr. James Montgomery Boice²⁸ demonstrates the nearly incredible power of forgiveness with this story, which he credited to pastor Harry Ironside.²⁹ It involves the son of a man who was a friend to Czar Nicholas 1 in pre-Communist Russia. Here is a summary of the incident Dr. Boice relates.

The young man had been put in charge of the finances used to pay the wages of military personnel. Unfortunately, he took up gambling, and his losses mounted — even to such an extent he began taking money from the treasury over which he’d been put in charge. In no time his stealing became a habit, and he fed it constantly.

One day the young man learned an auditor would be coming through and examining the books. Realizing he’d be found out, he calculated what he’d taken, what few resources he had left, and the massive amount of money he owed, which he knew he had no hope of ever repaying. Yes, he was at the end of his rope! He wrote a note explaining everything and resolved to shoot himself at midnight. At the end of the note, the guilty man wrote this poignant question:

A great debt; who can pay?

Then, as he waited for the fateful hour when he would end it all, he drifted off into a fitful sleep.

That very night, Czar Nicholas himself made his way through the facility where the young man was sleeping. Nicholas saw him, the open books, and the note — and he realized all that had transpired. He considered awakening the lad and having him arrested and prosecuted, but in a flash he was overcome with a sense of mercy and good will. Nicholas took the pen in his own hand and wrote just one word at the bottom of the paper. Then he slipped quietly away.

As sunrise came and light began streaming through the window, the guilty man awoke suddenly and realized he’d overslept. He grabbed the revolver and was about to pull the trigger to end his own life, but then he noticed the additional word at the bottom of his note. Underneath his own question, “A great debt; who can pay?” Czar Nicholas had signed his own name—*Nicholas*.

Could it really be? Could the czar really have seen all, yet still be willing to pay the massive debt? Wide awake at this point, the crooked but now hopeful bookkeeper ran to check the signature on the paper against what he knew to be the czar’s own signature in the government files. Yes, it indeed *was* the czar’s signature! Nicholas did know all, yet he was willing to forgive! The evidence was right there in front of him! Now, realize this: Nicholas wouldn’t simply overlook the offense, but essentially offered to pay the debt *himself*!^{30,31}

The Perfect Master

What would be your response to such an offer? It reminds me of a legal provision for the new nation of Israel that has long fascinated me. We see it in Deuteronomy 15:12-17. If a Hebrew

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purchased another Hebrew as a slave, the one purchased would serve six years and then be freed in the seventh — but at the time of his scheduled release, the slave could decide to stay. If he declared he loved his master and wanted to continue to serve him, he would have his ear pierced with an awl and would become the permanent property of his owner.

Don't get too uptight because I'm using an illustration about the system of slavery authorized in the Old Testament. My point here isn't about slavery, but about loyalty and service. Slavery, or indentured servitude, was regulated in ancient Israel, and this was one of the provisions. What would cause a servant to choose to serve his master forever? The master himself! *That* is the kind of Master, Savior, and Lord Jesus is! And the forgiveness He extends to us when we come to Him on His conditions is just the beginning! Read Romans 5:1-11; 8:28-39.³²

The apostle Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.” The immediate context for Paul's admonition was sexuality and sexual behavior, but what he wrote applies to all areas of a believer's life.

How can we as Christians honor God? In the context of the social justice movement, we honor Him by upholding the true gospel and pointing out ways the social justice “gospel” falls short — way short. Moreover, we can forgive! We can affirm our African-American brothers and sisters as capable and responsible human beings who have special contributions to make to society and the church. They are not victims! In *Fault Lines*, Voddie Baucham writes,

Racism is real. Injustice is real. No matter how many times I say those things, I still will be accused of turning a blind eye to them—not because I deny them, but because I deny the CRT/I³³ view that they are “normal” and at the basis of everything.

But there is another way of seeing. “The history of the USA is neither purely wicked and racist, nor perfect,” writes Thomas Sowell. “Correlation is not causation, disparity is not necessarily discrimination. Complex problems require complex solutions....To make racism the driving force behind slavery is to make a historically recent factor the cause of an institution which originated thousands of years earlier.”³⁴

Together as white Christians and as African-American Christians, we must refuse to buy into the social justice narrative, and we must lovingly point to Scripture as providing a better way — even the best way. We need to raise our voices together — corporately in the church and as individual Christians. Why? Because so many have been taken captive by the lies.

→ *Why have the lies taken so strong a hold in society? Why have they taken so strong a hold in the church?*

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The Days Ahead

Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) said, “Socialism is precisely the religion that must overwhelm Christianity.... In the new order, Socialism will triumph by first capturing the culture via infiltration of schools, universities, churches and the media by transforming the consciousness of society.”³⁵

Gramsci’s prediction is being fulfilled in America today, here and now, and one of the big reasons this is happening is that the church doesn’t know and isn’t affirming, both within and outside its walls, what authentic justice is³⁶ — *and* what the true “condition of man”³⁷ is (see **Item 7.1**).

On the **resource page** for this debriefing, watch and listen to Voddie Baucham talk about what Christians are up against. The video³⁸ is only six minutes long.

→ Describe some of the challenges that churches and individual Christians face with regard to social justice and CRT.

While the social justice warriors claim oppression and white supremacy are systemic, it appears that it actually is the social justice narrative that is embedded in American culture. Certainly, if it isn’t embedded yet, it is well on the way! Yet, as we have seen over and over again, the social justice narrative is full of misrepresentations and lies. This is a spiritual war!

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The good news is that as believers, we have spiritual weapons with which to fight the spiritual battles in which we are engaged. In Ephesians 6:10-18, Paul wrote,

6¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

And in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Paul said this:

10³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵ casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ....

Yes, the challenges before individual Christians and the church are formidable — but they always have been. Let us rededicate ourselves to being

1. people of the Book — the Bible — who are committed to studying it, knowing it, sharing it, and living by its teachings;
2. people who understand where the front lines of spiritual warfare are being waged and who are not afraid to fight there;
3. people who understand what the Book says about the “condition of man” and are willing and ready to share it with others, along with the solution the Book recommends;
4. people who advocate for God-given rights and God-given freedoms, as these align with the biblical teaching and the self-evident truth that God has made all people in His image;
5. people of the truth, who are committed to declaring it forthrightly, yet in love, as it relates to every sphere of life;
6. people who love one another in the church, so the people of the world will know we are Christians (see John 13:35).
7. people who know and are willing to share with others what authentic justice means and how it can and does benefit both individuals and society; and
8. people who love Jesus Christ supremely and are not afraid to say so.

Let’s go!

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Next steps:

Visit <https://enemieswithinthechurch.com> often for helpful resources and informative updates.

The Bible studies at <https://www.discoverbedrocktruth.org> currently are free to all who wish to use them. These are Bible studies on topics that churches should be talking about, but for whatever reasons, they aren't. You're invited to explore the resources available there and to use them in individual and/or group study.

Pray for discernment. Choose carefully the teachers to whom you listen and whom you follow. Dive into God's Word! Discover the truth. Explore it. Learn all you can about it. Remember that Jesus said in John 8:32, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Also, meditate regularly on the words of the apostle Paul to the Colossian Christians, and to us, in Colossians 2:6-8:

⁶ As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, ⁷ rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

⁸ Beware lest anyone ^{1b} cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

May God strengthen us and enable us to lovingly, yet forthrightly, expose evil, speak the truth, and stand for authentic justice and the true gospel of Christ.

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Notes:

¹ <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/tag/false-teaching>

² <https://www.str.org/greg-koukl>

³ Greg Koukl, *The Story of Reality: How the World Began, How It Ends, And Everything Important That Happens In Between* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 84.

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⁴Ibid.

⁵In a footnote, Koukl gives credit to Francis Schaeffer for the idea of man’s being torn from himself in death: Francis Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time* in *The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, Ill.” Crossway, 1982), 70.

⁶Koukl, 84-85.

^{7,8}Koukl, 98.

⁹Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:18-23; displayed at <https://bit.ly/3JHvA1v>

¹⁰Psalms 22:1; Isaiah 53:1-8; Matthew 27:35-50; displayed at <https://bit.ly/3njWLry>

¹¹Luke 13:1-5; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; displayed at <https://bit.ly/3Jlqulz>

¹²Charles Stanley, *The Gift of Forgiveness*, in *Victory Over Life’s Challenges: Three Bestselling Works Complete in One Volume* (New York: Inspirational Press, 1995), 378.

¹³Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13-15; Hebrews 9:22; displayed at <https://bit.ly/42ROnQu>

¹⁴Francis A. Schaeffer, “What Difference Has Looking Made? (A Christmas Study),” in No Little People, in *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*, Volume 3: A Christian View of Spirituality (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1985), 123.

¹⁵<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V2e56rZOj9M>; <https://bit.ly/3LQeFMG>

¹⁶<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xssayWKiXLs>; <https://bit.ly/42FwaW4>

¹⁷<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaiOPqmAstU>; <https://bit.ly/3TRD32z>

¹⁸ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galatia_\(Roman_province\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galatia_(Roman_province))

¹⁹ <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g3344/kjv/tr/0-1/>; <https://bit.ly/3LRdUTC>

²⁰Kendell H. Easley, *Holman QuickSource™ Guide to Understanding the Bible* (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2002), 393.

²¹Edward C. Pentecost, “Jude” in *the Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty, New Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL, 1983), 920.

²²Pentecost, 919.

²³ <https://bit.ly/3J0mvDQ>

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²⁴Colson, Charles W.; Fickett III, Harold. *The Faith* (pp. 26,29). Zondervan. Kindle Edition. ~ You can purchase Chuck Colson’s book titled *The Faith* at <https://www.christianbook.com/faith-what-christians-believe-they-matters/charles-colson/9780310342311/pd/342316?event=ESRCG> or <https://bit.ly/40tDH8M>

²⁵ <https://biblehub.com/greek/1097.htm>

²⁶Millard J. Erickson, *The Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology* (Wheaton, IL: 2001), 77.

²⁷Voddie Baucham, *Fault Lines: The Social Justice Movement and Evangelicalism’s Looming Catastrophe* (Salem Books: Washington, DC, 2021), 67.

²⁸ <https://www.theopedia.com/james-montgomery-boice>

²⁹ <https://www.theopedia.com/h-a-ironside>

³⁰ <https://www.wordfoundations.com/one-way-and-one-way-only/>

³¹James Montgomery Boice, *The Christ of Christmas* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), 15-16.

³² <https://bit.ly/42liDxa>

³³critical race theory/intersectionality.

³⁴Voddie Baucham, 222.

³⁵<https://www.azquotes.com/quote/657043>

³⁶ <https://www.discoverbedrocktruth.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/biblical-justice.pdf>; displayed at <https://bit.ly/40ksJCO>

³⁷ <https://www.discoverbedrocktruth.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/schaeffer-com-quote-in-context.pdf>; <https://bit.ly/3llm8TD>

³⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjQHWXqS5Eg>