Marxism and Critical Race Theory

Review

 A number of weeks ago we started a series on the lies that we believe. We have discussed the following: 1. Live your truth 2. You have to learn to love yourself 3. You have to perform to be accepted 4. Love is accepting and affirming everyone just as they are.

Intro

 The reason I wanted to do this series is because we live in a broken world with many competing philosophies many of which are against God and His Word.

 That is why Paul warned us to be discerning in Col. 2:8

**“**See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=colossians%202:8&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29503a)] of this world rather than on Christ.”

 We are going to consider Marxism which is an economic/political philosophy which is having an influence in our culture and also consider critical race theory which is a modern approach to social change that was developed out of Marxism.

How many of you have heard of critical race theory?

Perhaps you saw the video. A woman stares down the lens of a camera, straight into our eyes. Her expression is weary, her tone angry. “How can you win?” she cries, with the air of a questions she’s asked a thousand times. “You can’t. The game is fixed, “she answers. “So when they say, “Why do you burn down the community? Why do you burn down your own neighborhood?- it is not ours. We don’t own anything. We don’t own anything.”

In the aftermath of George Floyd’s murder in 2020, Kimberly Jones’s viral video gave voice to the anger and anguish felt by many black men and women in the US and beyond. She spoke of a society rigged so that black people cannot succeed- however hard they work and whatever the content of their character.

We watch a video like this and our hearts go out to her. Is what she is assuming true and if it is what is the solution? That is what we are going to consider tonight. Tonight’s lesson is going to be a little more advanced and I debated teaching it but the reality is you are already dealing with the consequences of this teaching and therefore I felt like it was important for you to learn about it.

 Watch the video from The Secret Battle of Ideas about God

 Lesson: “Why Can’t We Just Get Along?” (7 minutes)

I. Basic Understanding of Marxism

 A. It is an atheistic, naturalistic worldview that says we live in a closed material world.

 B. According to Marxism there is only so much of the material world to go around and some people have taken more than their fair share.

 C. As long as this exists, we will have conflict.

 D. What needs to happen is for there to be a redistribution of these goods so that everyone is equal once again.

 E. The root of all conflict is the rich who exploit everyone else.

 F. Marxism wants to:

 1. abolish capitalism

 2. abolish private ownership

 3. Replace the exploitation of the rich with the government owning everything, which unfortunately leads to exploitation by the government.

II. Basic Understanding of Critical Race Theory (CRT)

 A. Critical race theory is a modern approach to recreate society

 B. It sees the world as a struggle between the oppressed and the oppressor.

 Do you know what “oppressed” and “oppressor” mean?

 C. While Marxism was more of an economic philosophy CRT critiques power and oppression along the lines of race (color of your skin), ethnicity (what country you are from), class (low, middle, or upper class financially) , gender (male/female), ability (skills and education), and sexuality (heterosexual, homosexual, LGTBQ, etc).

 D. It assumes that white, male, educated people hold all the power. Therefore, it then tries to recalibrate power in favor of the marginalized and the oppressed.

 E. According to CRT the American Government, law, culture, and society are inherently and inescapably racist.

 F. The personal perception of the oppressed- their “narrative”- outweighs the actions and intents of others.

 In other words, if you are in the oppressor group (white, male, wealthy, educated, Christian, heterosexual, able-bodied) then you can’t even speak to the issue.

 G. The reason for this is because “lived experiences” and identity are prioritized as more important than rationality in determining what is true.

 H. Therefore people’s lack of privilege (ethnic minorities, poor, abused, exploited, woman) and their oppressed status gives them greater discernment and a more complex view of the world. By this understanding, black oppressed people cannot be racist.

 I. On the other hand, those with privilege and “oppressor” status are believed to have blind spots when it comes to understanding the world and discerning truth. Therefore, we need to look to the marginalized for truth.

 J. According to this ideology, LGBTQ are more discerning of truth since they are marginalized.

III. A Christian Response

 A. Christians recognize the brokenness of the world of racism, poverty, exploitation, and injustice and want to do something about it. We are commanded to care for the widow and orphan, and the poor. (James 1:27)

 B. CRT suggests that people are essentially defined by their race (color of their skin) or class (how much $ they have) rather than by their individual acts and attitudes (Jer. 31:31-34, Rev. 20:11-13)

 C. What is racism?

 1. it is the unbiblical teaching that treats people differently according to the color of their skin.

 2. Do you see how CRT is racist? It treats people based on externals, like the color of their skin, ethnicity, class, or gender.

 D. Essentially CRT does nothing more than invert the oppressed and oppressor group so that if before blacks were being oppressed now white people are being oppressed. It doesn’t solve the problem.

 E. It emphasizes a person’s gender, race, sexual preference, economic status above and beyond a person’s own choices and responsibilities. (Gal. 3:28)

 F. According to the Bible, there is only one race, the human race.

 G. God divides people into 2 groups:

1. those redeemed by Christ

 2. Those who are unredeemed.

 H. CRT is not just a set of ideas but a worldview- a way of seeing the world, that contradicts Christianity.

 1. Who are we?

Christianity- We are made in the image of a holy, loving, and just God

CRT- Identity is found in how we relate with other groups as defined by class, gender, and sexual preference

 2. What’s wrong with the world?

Christianity-We have sinned against a holy God

CRT- Oppression is what is wrong

 3. How to fix the problem?

Christianity- the sin problem can only be fixed by Jesus’ death on the cross

CRT-Oppression is fixed by activism and overthrow of oppressive systems and their power. (that is what Black Lives Matters was all about)

 4. What is the meaning of Life?

Christianity- to glorify God; Christianity wants to do good works in response to our salvation. (James 2:26)

CRT-To free groups from oppression

 I. CRT erodes the Christian worldview by taking their eyes off the fundamental truths of who God is and how He works in the world.

 1. God is just but is He fair? Does God treat all people the same?

 2. the justice of God seeks to protect individual liberty while promoting personal responsibility. It is the equitable and impartial application of the rule of God’s moral law in society. When we break the law because God is just we experience consequences.

 3. God is just but He is not fair if fair means that God has to treat everyone the same.

 a. Some people are born in poor countries and others in the US

 b. Some people are more intelligent than others

 c. Some people are big and others small, some strong and others weak.

 d. Some have musical skills and others have athletic talents.

 4. CRT and Marxism say that everything has to be the same for everyone or it is unfair. That is not how the world works.

 J. CRT excuses a person from upholding biblical morality and even considers Christian sexual ethics as oppressive.

 K. CRT focuses on actions over belief and becomes a works a based way to try to save yourself.

 L. The bible addresses the issues of CRT by talking about the sin of partiality or favoritism. Read James 1:26-2:9

“My brothers and sisters, believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ must not show favoritism. **2**Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in filthy old clothes also comes in. **3**If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” **4**have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

**5**Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? **6**But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? **7**Are they not the ones who are blaspheming the noble name of him to whom you belong?

**8**If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,”[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+1%3A26-2%3A9&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30302a)] you are doing right. **9**But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.”

1. The sin of partiality deals with all these sins.

 2. When we make judgments based on externals (skin color, education, nationality, financial status, social status), we are committing the sin of partiality.

 3. The issue goes beyond race. There are many examples of groups of people with the same skin color who have fought in wars, and it wasn’t about race. There are divisions that go beyond racism.

 4. For some, the issue is classism. That is what the issue is in James 2 (rich & poor).

 5. Elitism – where I feel superior to you based on my education.

 6. Politicism – politics that divide us. I feel superior to you because of my political party.

 7. That is why the sin of partiality is a more encompassing understanding that includes all of these, and we separate from other people and look down on them.

 8. A mark of maturity is to stop judging and looking down on others based on these externals.

 M. What is the solution to partiality?

 1. Eph 2:1-3

“As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, **2**in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. **3**All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ephesians+2%3A1-5&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29233a)] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.”

 a. Remember that all of us at one time were children of wrath separated from God.

 b. There was nothing we could do to save ourselves.

 2. Eph 2:4-5

**“**But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5**made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.”

 a. It is only because of Christ that we are saved.

 b. We have nothing to boast in except Christ.

 3. Eph 2:11-16

Eph. 2:13

**“**But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

 a. It is only in Christ that we are brought near.

 b. It is only in Christ that we are able to be reconciled with one another.

 c. Our unity is found because we have Jesus Christ in common. He has “destroyed the dividing wall of hostility.” (2:14)

 4. It is only because of Christ that we are one. He is our new identity that supersedes all identities that would try to separate us.

 5. In Christ, we have been placed in the same family. Unity doesn’t mean uniformity. It doesn’t mean we all think the same and look the same. But it does mean that we find our unity in the cross of Christ.

 6. Our focus is on Christ and not each other.

 7. In Christ, unity is oneness of purpose (to glorify God) but not sameness of person.

 N. For those who aren’t in Christ, we don’t look down on them and judge them but have compassion on them because they are image bearers of God and need Jesus just as much as we did. (2 Pet 3:9, John 3:16)

 O. We need to learn to stop looking at the externals as primary and see that all people are image bearers of God.

 P. We need to be humble and realize it is only by the grace of God that I am who I am. It is not because of me. There is no place for me to be proud and look down on others.

 Q. So why do we pursue others that we don’t naturally like?

 “It is the love of God the compels us.” 2 Cor. 5:14-15

 “Love your neighbor as yourself.” James. 2:8

Conclusion

 We are all part of one race- the human race and we need to learn to value that we are all made as image bearers of God. To judge people based on their externals and judge them to be less than us, is to commit the sin of partiality. We must remember that I am who I am only because of Christ. Christ and the gospel is the only thing that ultimately unifies us.

What’s wrong with the world?

The Marxist/CRT worldview says the conflict in our world is from external causes.

The Christian worldview says that conflict starts within our hearts. (James 4:1-2) and so peace starts within us as we surrender our desires to follow God with our lives. (James 3:17-18).

The Marxist/CRT worldview wants to get peace through revenge. (Romans 12:19-21, Gal. 5:15)

The Christian response to conflict is to respond with God’s truth (James 2:1-12) and replace revenge with love and forgiveness (Gal. 5:14).

Small group questions

1. Describe what critical race theory is in your own words

2. What is the problem with critical race theory from a biblical perspective?

3. Have you ever heard about, seen, or experienced critical race theory? If so, where?

4. What is the sin of favoritism? What is wrong with showing favoritism?

5. How should we respond to people who are different than us?

6. What do you need to apply from this lesson?