

Adult Sunday School Class: Taking Sides.
Class Two – Summary Notes
Sunday February 27th 2022

Prayer

Introduction: review main points from Class One

- A. Make the Scriptures your primary shaping influence.
 - 1. There are many sources from which we pull information to form our views. And there are many sources that are forming us. As followers of Jesus, the Gospel must be our primary shaping influence and all others must fall in line with Scripture.
- B. How we treat others matter as well as speaking the truth.
- C. We can avoid the either or positioning of our culture and (like Jesus) form the Gospel centered position

Race and Racism

- A. Few topics are as a front and center in our culture as is racism.
- B. Where have we seen the topic of racism come to the forefront in recent years?
 - a. Share personal stories of becoming aware of Racism.
- C. If we are to follow the example of Jesus, before we address the issue of racism we need to go back and ask, what was God’s intention for human society from the beginning.
- D. What role do human beings play in the created order of God?
 - a. Genesis 1.26-31 –
 - i. What do we learn about human beings in this passage? (created in God’s Image, and created to have dominion over other elements of creation.)
 - ii. What does it mean to be created in God’s image? (reflecting God’s personhood into creation in such a way that it is plain.)
 - b. Genesis 2.15-23
 - i. How does God intend human beings to use thier dominion? (dominion was always to be expressed in accordance with God’s expressed will and so our dominion was always intended to put God’s will into practice.)
 - ii. The ultimate question in the Garden is, will humans express dominion to accomplish the express will of God or will they use their dominion over creation to rebel against God and set up their own kingdom?
 - iii. And are both human beings exactly the same or are there distinctions between the two? (distinctions, female and male)
 - 1. Despite physical distinctions the nature of humanity remains the same. (men and women are both created in the image of God and intended to bear that image in this world.)
 - iv. What do Adam’s words about the woman communicate about her in verse 23 (that he and she share equality right down to her flesh and bones)

- v. Coincidentally the first time a man ever opens his mouth in the book of Genesis it is to praise his wife.
 - vi. “Helper who is fit for him” does not indicate subservience in any way but rather indicates equality. (verse 18)
 - vii. **Adam was regarded by his Creator as incomplete and deficient as he lived at first without the benefit of a proper counterpart. He was without community. God said: “It is not good for the man to be alone” (Gen 2:18)...Accordingly, in order to end man’s loneliness, God formed “for Adam [a] suitable helper” (Gen 2:18) – Walt Kaiser**
 - viii. “Helper” does not necessarily indicate any level of inferiority or subservience because the exact same Hebrew word is used again in Deuteronomy 33.29 to describe God.
 - ix. Here it is God who is Israel’s helper. It would be completely inappropriate to suggest that as time went on God would serve as Israel’s inferior or subservient counterpart.
 - x. This word, as it is used in the Old Testament conveys the idea of strength and power.
 - xi. **Adam says to Eve, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman', for she was taken out of man”. This idiomatic expression points to family propinquity, one’s own close relative, or, in effect, “my equal”. –Walt Kaiser**
 - xii. God intends the family to be a microcosm of how to live in Society which is why family is so important in Scripture. As Parents we are to model for our children what God desires us to be.
 - xiii. So what have we learned about humanity and society in this passage?
 - xiv. God desires human society to be made up of people who are equal despite physical distinctiveness because they are all made in the image of God, who complement one another. And together pursue the will of God in creation.
- c. Genesis 3.16
- i. What is the consequence of sin on human society? (subservience, and rivalry)
 - ii. This is not a commandment; God is not declaring that this is how he wants it to be. Rather it is a declaration of reality. – This is how it will be, now that you have chosen sin over obedience.
- E. Racism is the result of that which at its core is a desire by one human being or a group of human beings to place another person or group into subservience, inferiority, or rivalry.
- a. It is a direct result of the fall and it is at its core sinful.
- F. Dealing with Racism in Scripture
- a. Exodus 1.7-14
 - i. What precipitated this oppression of the Israelites? (fear)

- ii. Is Racism as we experience it fueled in some way by fear?
 - iii. What would have happened to Egypt if they had blessed the Hebrews instead of oppressing them?
 - iv. Had they treated them as equals they would have been blessed (Genesis 12.1-4)
 - v. Fear led them to see the Hebrews as a threat to be controlled.
 - b. Exodus 1.15-22
 - i. Did the oppression/slavery of the Hebrews work to assuage the fears of Egypt? (Apparently not.)
 - ii. Now they are engaged in genocide/violence to solve the “Hebrew problem.”
 - iii. Where does this fear fueled hatred of Hebrews lead Pharaoh and ultimately all of Egypt? (Into plague and the destruction of Egypt’s army.
- G. Leviticus 19.33-34
 - a. God calls his people to be different because of their experience in Egypt.
 - b. Love must be extended to those who are not like you, don’t belong to your tribe.
- H. God’s ultimate plan for humanity excludes racism – Revelation 7.9-17

Summary

- I. Racism is personal for many of us and not simply an issue to be debated.
- J. Racism stands contrary to the will of God and finds its roots in sin.
- K. God’s people are called to reject racism.