

Ruminations on Race, Racism and Riots

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[Note: I address these issues in considerably more depth in my forthcoming book, *American Crisis: The Historical Origins and the Social and Political Consequences of America's Culture War... and a Christian Response*, due for release in July 2020.]

Two Foundational Biblical Principles

As Christians, there are two foundational Biblical principles that should condition our beliefs and attitudes about race. First is the doctrine that all human beings are created in the *imago Dei* – the image of God – as we read in Genesis 1:27: “So God created man in his own image,... male and female he created them.” Second is the inference that we are called to be “post-racial” in our attitudes toward all people. In Galatians 3:28 the apostle Paul writes: “In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave or free, male or female.” If race had been a serious social issue at the time, I have no doubt that Paul would have added, “In Christ... there is no white or black or brown.” The Bible teaches racial equality, and it is patently unChristian to judge (or discriminate against) others based on their racial identity.

One's racial identity is nothing for which we should be either proud nor ashamed. It is simply a fact of nature. We did nothing to earn or deserve to be born white, black, brown, etc. For reasons we cannot know, God providentially chose to implant our soul within a particular body. “Pride” (in the positive sense of the word) is merely a sense of satisfaction (and hopefully, a sense of gratitude) that we derive as a result of accomplishing something worthwhile in life. Therefore, racial pride – or for that matter, racial shame – is nonsensical. We are created as individuals, and God judges us as individuals. Our self-identity should come through a realistic and humble awareness of who and what we are as a special and unique person – not our racial or ethnic heritage.

Nonetheless, due to our inherent sin nature, many people hold racist sentiments either because (1) they believe people of another race are inherently inferior; (2) they dislike people who look or act different from

themselves; or (3) they resent or even hate people of another race either for personal or philosophical reasons.

Christian social ethics also emphasizes that there are absolute and universal standards of right and wrong, decency and civility. Scripture does not condone moral relativism on any basis, whether it be racial, ethnic, class or gender. Different racial and ethnic groups sometimes have their own distinctive mannerisms, customs, etc., but these usually have nothing to do with basic moral and ethical standards of right and wrong. [Note: This is in keeping with the principles of natural (moral) law as Paul addresses in Romans 1-2.] If we truly believe in racial equality, then we hold all people to the same moral and ethical standards. As Martin Luther King Jr. famously put it, people should be judged on the content of their character rather than the color of their skin. To think or act otherwise is to rob people of their individual identity, which is dehumanizing. To grant moral exceptions to certain people based on their racial identity is itself racist.

Race and Cultural Marxism

At the outset of World War I, Marxists and socialists throughout Europe and America hoped the conflict would spawn a global revolution that would overthrow the old order – not just capitalism, but the political, social and religious (Christian) traditions of the past. As articulated by Marxists such as Vladimir Lenin, their slogan was “Turn the imperialist war into a class war!” However, most working class people and their labor unions dutifully supported their own national government and its war effort. In the last year of the war and in the years immediately following, a

Communist revolution succeeded in Russia but failed in Germany, Hungary, and several other European nations. Realizing they could not build a worldwide revolution solely on the bases of cultural elitists and the capitalist exploitation of the working classes, Neo-Marxists shifted their emphasis. They looked for other victimized and oppressed groups on whom they could build a revolutionary coalition. [Note: It wasn't that Marxists cared about oppressed humanity – they merely wanted to exploit such people to further their revolutionary movement.] In the United States, one potential group were blacks who had been subjected to slavery, discrimination and humiliating segregation throughout their history in America. Then, over the next several decades Neo-Marxists identified other groups who could be incorporated into their coalition including radical feminists, homosexuals, and many marginalized minorities.

Racism and American Culture

Is “white privilege” a factor in American society? Yes, it is. Some people definitely profit primarily because they are white. However, black privilege, minority privilege, and female privilege are also realities due to affirmative action programs that are either officially or unofficially implemented in many institutions and organizations that discriminate in favor of non-whites and females. Also consider other forms of privilege based on family connections, wealth, or association with certain social groups. There are special privileges accorded athletes, entertainers and celebrities. Just as no two people are truly “equal,” no society can guarantee total equality. Communist systems from the USSR to modern-day China and Cuba provide ample examples.

In reality, what we're witnessing today in America is the culmination – and the bitter fruit – of a cultural revolution that has been going on for many decades. As promoted in academia and the education system, the media, the entertainment industry, the corporate business world, and among many political leaders, Neo-Marxist ideas have seized control of the “commanding heights” of American culture. This is the scourge of Political Correctness – an intolerant social and political code intended to eradicate freedom of expression on important social, political and religious issues.

Thank God, white racism is no longer socially acceptable, and for decades public displays of white racism have been almost universally condemned. However, black racism *is* socially acceptable, and in fact it has become mainstream. Public displays of black separatism and racism are not only tolerated but promoted in everything from the Congressional Black Caucus to national organizations with a socio-political agenda (NAACP, etc.), separate black fraternities and sororities on college campuses, and even Black Entertainment Television (BET). This is a hypocritical double-standard that should be condemned – but it's not. Americans are constantly told that blacks and other minorities are victims of “systemic” or “institutional” racism. In fact, the only policies and programs that discriminate against anyone on the basis of race are affirmative action policies that grant preferential treatment to non-whites.

Furthermore, the underlying causes for the inordinate amount of poverty, crime and violence in predominantly black communities are studiously avoided. In general, these social pathologies are not nearly so prevalent in other minority communities in regard to the illegitimate birthrate, the problem of single-parent households and absentee fathers, the rampant drug-dealing and drug use, and terrible public schools. It should also be noted that Democratic politicians and teachers' unions remain adamantly opposed to education vouchers and school choice that could provide alternatives to academically-deficient and crime-ridden public schools.

In response to what they perceive to be inequities in the criminal justice system, many liberals and leftists call for expanding and strengthening “hate crimes” legislation. But this is exceedingly problematic. The idea of punishing a criminal more severely based on his/her motive rather than the act itself is totally unprecedented in the history of Western jurisprudence. Furthermore, classifying certain offenses as “hate crimes” violates the Constitutional principle of equal justice under the law. Punishing someone more severely because he committed a crime against a particular racial or ethnic minority, a woman or a homosexual is tantamount to punishing the perpetrator for his (supposed) motive rather than for the act itself. This is, to say the least, alarmingly Orwellian.



"It wasn't a hate crime, Your Honor
— I actually kind of liked the guy."

Who can possibly know, in lieu of an honest confession on the part of the accused, *why* he committed an act or *why* he targeted a particular individual? And does it really matter *why* he did it rather than the simple fact

that he did it? Certainly, the negative effect on the victim is the same regardless of the perpetrator's motive. The inference of "hate crimes" legislation is that some people's lives and property are more valuable or deserve more protection than the lives and property of others, which again violates the principle of equal protection under the law.

The Current Protests

The murder of George Floyd was inexcusable, and the police officers involved should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

Regarding the protests, however, the selective outrage is obvious. Each year, several thousand blacks are murdered. In recent years, the figures have been around 7,400 – slightly more than half of all homicide victims in the U.S. – about 90% of whom were murdered by other blacks.* In 2019, 30 unarmed Americans were killed by police while resisting arrest, 20 of whom were white and 10 were black. In the case of the 10 blacks, 5 of the police officers were prosecuted and convicted. (In the other 5 cases, police were not convicted due to extenuating circumstances.) As the pro-life movement constantly affirms, every life is sacred, but 5 unjustifiable killings by police out of a population of 45 million blacks hardly constitutes an epidemic of "genocide" against black Americans.

If protesters really believe that "black lives matter," why are they not out marching every day protesting the thousands of blacks who are murdered every year – 90% by other blacks? Furthermore, why are there no

* See <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2018/crime-in-the-u.s.-2018/topic-pages/expanded-homicide> and <https://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2016-09-29/race-and-homicide-in-america-by-the-numbers>.

mass demonstrations protesting the murder of former St. Louis police captain David Dorn by rioters? Why are there no mass demonstrations protesting the murder of federal security guard David Patrick Underwood in Oakland, California by rioters? Why are there no mass demonstrations protesting the injuries suffered by more than 750 police officers nationwide – many of whom were blacks and other minorities?

Also consider the utter hypocrisy of prohibiting Americans from attending church services during the COVID-19 lockdown and otherwise shaming people for not practicing "social distancing" in public, while encouraging massive protest demonstrations. Note this headline in The Daily Wire of May 30, 2020: "Minneapolis Mayor Asks Rioters To Wear Face Masks and Practice Social Distancing as City Burns." As the actor James Woods commented at the time: "Democrats were literally arresting Americans for opening their businesses, but now are silent as protesters burn them down. You were fined for worshipping in your church, but now cheered for marching in screaming crowds." The double-standard is as odious as it is obvious, but consider that if the Left had no double-standards, it would have no standards at all!

The Riots

The rioters who have been ransacking American civilization include urban gangs, thugs, and looters – but also Antifa, a violent Marxist revolutionary group whose slogan is, "Freedom begins when America ends." All have been marching under the banners of Black Lives Matter,* a racist and Marxist group that threatens anyone who dares to affirm that "All lives matter." Recall that this was the group that first attracted public notice several years ago with street protests and the chant: "*What do we want? Dead cops! When do we want it? Now!*"**

Obviously, not everyone protesting with Black Lives Matter is a violent black racist. However, not

* See <https://blacklivesmatter.com/what-we-believe/>.

** See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqQXmnMr_w8

Also see Ryan Bomberger, "Top Ten Reasons Why I Won't Support the #BlackLives Matter Movement" (<https://townhall.com/columnists/ryanbomberger/2020/06/05/top-10-reasons-i-reject-the-blm-n2570105>).

everyone who associated with the Ku Klux Klan was a violent racist who necessarily wanted to hurt (or lynch) blacks. Nonetheless, those who support organizations like BLM or the KKK are (to borrow a term from Lenin) “useful idiots” of these hate groups. That applies to any Christian organizations, churches, denominations, pastors or priests. Whether out of ignorance or cowardice, they are a disgrace to the Christian faith.

Our Brittle Civilization

In the Preface of my forthcoming book, *American Crisis*, I noted:

Writing in the spring of 2020 in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am reminded of just how fragile not only human life but also human civilization truly is. In many respects, civilization is but a thin veneer of laws, customs, values and beliefs integrated into our cultural traditions and institutions that regulates our lives under an illusion of relative tranquility. We normally assume that our civilization is solid, but in fact it is very brittle. Meanwhile, lying just beneath the surface is a roiling and boiling cauldron of agitation and turbulence. Every civilization, including ours, is a potential Pompeii that could easily be destroyed by one great cataclysmic eruption and buried beneath a proverbial ash heap.

Shortly after I wrote that, the riots broke out.

For three years, Americans were subjected to a politically-motivated “Russia collusion” investigation of President Trump, followed by an unconstitutional impeachment fiasco. For the past three months, Americans have been subjected to a social quarantine and lockdown that has devastated our economy, destroyed tens of thousands of businesses and cost millions of people their jobs. Now, for the past three weeks, public protests and riots have shut down and destroyed thousands more businesses.

Cowardly mayors and governors have allowed large sections of major cities to be looted and burned by street gangs, thugs and Antifa anarchists under the banner of “Black Lives Matter.” Note this June 11 headline: “Seattle ‘Autonomous Zone’ Has Armed Guards, Local Businesses Being Threatened With Extortion, Police Say.”*

* <https://www.foxnews.com/us/seattle-protests-armed-guards-local-businesses-extortion>.

Civilization truly is “but a thin veneer of laws, customs, values and beliefs integrated into our cultural traditions and institutions that regulates our lives under an illusion of relative tranquility.” Larry Elder has commented: “One of the big #FakeNews narratives is that ‘institutional,’ ‘structural’ and ‘systemic’ racism remain a major problem in America, when, in fact, race has never been a more insignificant barrier to success in America.” Former NFL star Burgess Owens adds: “There is nothing white liberals fear more than a God fearing, educated, black man. No, my friends... there is no systemic racism in America... just systemic “Marxist elitism”... an EVIL that uses, abuses and discards anyone for POWER.” [Note: Both Elder and Owens are black – a fact that would be unnecessary to mention if racial and moral sanity prevailed in America today.]

The Bottom Line

Christian morality and social ethics transcend racial categories. As Christians, we understand that human value stems from the fact that all have been created in the image of God. We are therefore called to love everyone regardless of their race, ethnicity, sex, social status, occupation, or physical or mental condition. We judge no one as superior or inferior based on their race or any other superficial distinctive. Furthermore, we hold everyone accountable – most importantly, ourselves! – to the same inviolable standards of appropriate speech and conduct. To do otherwise is an insult to anyone of any race. In fact, it is itself racist!



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