**Truth Currents** **6-26-20**

 Have you ever considered how someone claiming to be a Christian can have such a crazy view on current events? We all have a family member or friend or somebody that says, “Oh, I’m a Christian but I think this or this or this.” And we wonder Biblically, how they could hold those positions.

 Let me read to you a series of Tweets that was on Twitter this week. And I just want to give you an extreme example of what I’m talking about.

This person says:

I am a Christian. And I believe proselytizing is violence against another person.

I am a Christian. And I believe LGBTQ+ people are divine and should lead us.

I am a Christian. And I learn a lot from people who do not share my faith.

I am a Christian. And I don’t go to Church.

I am a Christian. And I don’t believe the Bible is the Word of God.

I am a Christian. And I embrace sex positivity, which includes but isn’t limited to sex outside of marriage.

I am a Christian. And I believe everyone has access to God. Everyone!

I am a Christian. And I do as I please.

I am a Christian. And I know Christianity has been used as a weapon of white supremacy for so long that any Christian who isn’t actively dismantling white supremacy is harming people with their theology.

I am a Christian. And I believe people know what’s best for themselves. Sometimes that means running away from Christianity and I applaud them.

 Well, for sure this is an extreme example. I would argue that this person is not a Christian and has no real understanding of what Christianity is all about. Nevertheless, we are surrounded by people who wear the name of Christ and claim to be Christian but hold a variety of positions that they can’t justify from a Biblical standpoint.

 I’ve watched in recent years, as individual believers and as churches in some cases, have been swept up in the passions of a cultural moment, the social issues of the day, whatever happens to be the hot topic. Often, I see those people and those churches holding unbiblical positions: Pro-Abortion for example, support of same gender marriage. I can’t tell you how many churches fly the stolen rainbow flag in front of their churches. Today, the hot topic is systemic racism. And I see believers thinking that they are somehow mimicking Jesus, a Jesus that they have invented in their head, and not living out the framework of a Biblical worldview.

 We get to that position because we don’t think Biblically. We fall prey to the prevailing ideas and we accept the proposed solutions that are being offered by our culture, even though we know, from our understanding of reality, that often those solutions just won’t work.

 How did we get here? Well, let me give you some suggestions. First of all, I believe we have absorbed the Secularist worldview, especially on social media. I call it “Practical Atheism.” It is the spirit of our age that even believers have fallen into the trap of trying to solve the problems of our day with God nowhere to be found in the equation. It’s as if we say we believe in God and we may even go to church on Sundays, but God has no relevance to the way we live out our lives, the positions we hold. That’s how we have Christians who hold political and social positions that are directly, specifically contradicted in the Word of God.

 Research on social media tells us that those who use social media, who operate from a Biblical worldview is a distinct minority. George Barna suggests that “*…it is at most, about 9-11% of the nation that operates from a Biblical worldview.*” That means that when you jump on the bandwagon of whatever the issue is, if everybody around you is on the bandwagon to do something, there’s a **really good chance** it’s not for you.

 How do we evaluate? Well, first of all before you sign on with some organization that’s pushing some position on some issue, study the statement of belief for that organization. Go to the website. Find out what it is they believe.

Black Lives Matter is a perfect example. We believe Biblically, that all life is significant and black lives matter. But the organization “Black Lives Matter” with capital letters, Black Lives Matter as an organization, their website is very straight forward. They are fully in favor of abortion, which boggles my mind because abortion is disproportionately damaging to the black community in this country. They’re not only for abortion but their website tells you that they are interested in “*…disrupting the traditional family structure*.” And they want “*…all gender lines removed in every aspect of society.*”

You may agree “black lives matter.” I certainly think that all lives matter and that right now we have a seminal moment to really reach out and solve some societal tensions. But “Black Lives Matter” with a capital, the organization, I can’t go there.

Besides studying statements of belief, check out where their money goes. Any organization you plan to donate to, before you donate make sure where their money is going. They may say one thing on their website, but where their money is actually spent tells you everything you need to know about whether you should be involved or not.

Don’t use hashtags until you know the origin of the hashtag. Until you know what the original intent was to try and generate a trend on social media. Be careful about jumping on social media bandwagons.

Secondly, besides absorbing a Secularist worldview, I think we’ve gotten to where we are today because we have mistakenly allowed our empathy to be perceived as agreement on action. What we’re being told today is that because only those who have experienced certain traumas are given credibility to speak about those traumas, the rest of us are told that we have to listen. We have to listen respectfully. I’m ok with that. In fact, the Bible teaches me that I need to be “*quick to listen*,” that I need to be “*slow to speak*.” That should be a standard approach in the life of a Jesus follower.

But we’re told today that we need to listen respectfully to those who are relating their experiences. But then we’re told that because we don’t have the same identity group or we don’t have the same set of experiences as the people that are being listened to, that we can then make no further contribution to the conversation. And so, there are Christians who say, “Well, I’m just listening. I just want to have empathy.” But because we then don’t pursue our involvement in the conversation, it appears that our listening is an approval of the course of action that is being purposed.

Think about it this way. We’ve been told for years. I’ve been told this myself. I’ve been told, “*You can’t speak about abortion because you don’t have a uterus*.” We’re told today that you can’t speak about racism unless you’re black. Well, here’s the thing. Identity separation or tribalism is dividing a society to the place where we will not be able to live together as a single people.

In fact, the reality is, we believe that truth is objective. Truth is not determined by your personal experience. It is not shaped by your particular skin color, or gender or anything else. Truth is objective and it speaks to these issues from every angle. In other words, I can speak Biblical truth about abortion even though I’m not a woman. I can speak Biblical truth about discrimination, even though I’m not a person of color.

Right now, in our culture we’re missing an opportunity because certain values are being promoted as universal. We’re told that life is valuable. Yes, absolutely, life is valuable. We need to remind people that that is a belief, that is an idea that comes out of a Judeo-Christian worldview. Life is valuable because we are special creations made in the image of God.

In fact, the Secularist worldview has no business holding the idea that life is valuable because in an evolutionary system, life is not valuable. It’s a throw away. It’s the product of random chance.

We’re being told today that there are some things that are just objectively wrong. They’re always wrong. Yes, we agree with that. That comes out of a Judeo-Christian worldview. There is an objective standard. Some things are always right. Somethings are always wrong. It’s not shaped by your personal morality or your individual experiences or your tribal ethnicity.

In a Secularist worldview, how can anything be objectively right or objectively wrong? It just is what it is. In an evolutionary worldview there’s no value. There’s only survival. There’s only advancing myself. There’s no framework within Secularism to produce a society that can function in community.

We’re being told that “Justice Matters.” Yes! Justice Matters. That is an idea that flows directly out of a Judeo-Christian worldview. The Secularist worldview can’t argue that justice matters because I make up my own morality. It can’t be wrong if I chose to do it. Every man does what’s right in his own eyes. So, justice is a foreign idea to Secularism.

These ideas are only out there because they flow out of an underlying Judeo-Christian worldview that was foundational in the formation of this country. They won’t acknowledge that but we’re missing the opportunity because we’re listening but we’re not engaging in the conversation. We’re missing the opportunity to point out that the very things they want are not achievable in a Secularist worldview. They’re only achievable from a Judeo-Christian standpoint because that’s where those things have meaning.

And finally, there’s one other thing. We’ve gotten to where we are because we’ve allowed society to establish a misunderstanding of what love is. We’re told that we need to love one another. That is everywhere these days. And I absolutely agree. But the Secular definition of love means that everyone is allowed to do whatever they want to do. And that love is allowing them to do whatever they want to do. In other words, in Secularism love is an action based on self-defined standards. That won’t work.

There has to be some unmovable reference point for us to know what love is. Fortunately, the Bible gives us exactly that. In the 22nd chapter of Matthew Jesus is asked by someone, “*What is the greatest commandment of all?*” He says this, “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” Then He continues, “*This is the greatest and most important command. But the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself*.”

Jesus gives us the two greatest commandments. But by making “*love your neighbor as yourself*” second, He’s suggesting that the second commandment can only be understood under the umbrella within the context of the greatest commandment, “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*” In other words, the way we love our neighbors flows out of the standard of what we know about God.

That means that love is not letting other people do what they want and giving them our explicit approval for anything they choose to do. Biblical love means wanting for other people what God wants for them even if they don’t want that for themselves.

We offer a standard, a reference point by which current events, current passions, current topics can be evaluated. And we have a place to stand so that we can make the world better. The current prevailing philosophy in our country cannot do that.

C.S. Lewis tells a story about his conversion to Christianity. He wrote these words.

“My argument against God was that the universe seemed so cruel and unjust. But how had I got this idea of just and unjust? A man does not call a line crooked unless he some idea of a straight line. What was I comparing this universe with when I call it unjust? Justice requires a standard and there is no objective standard in a purposeless universe.”

 Listen, this is Truth Currents. Our goal here is to think Biblically so that we can engage our culture productively. Open up God’s Word. Go back to the standard. Find the reference point. And let’s take every thought captive for Jesus Christ.