

What is Wokeness?

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Wokeness is an anti-Christ worldview that goes by many different names, including Cultural Marxism, Critical Theory, and Social Justice.

A Utopian Vision

At its core, Wokeness or Critical Theory (CT) is an attempt to understand the causes of and solutions to injustice in the world. CT is a utopian worldview that promises complete equality (of outcomes) among all people, in all ways here on earth. The ultimate goal of CT is the transformation of society, and even human nature itself, to bring about those utopian conditions. Max Horkheimer, who took over as director of the Frankfurt School in 1930 and who first coined the term Critical Theory, said that the goal of CT is "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them." (Horkheimer, Max. 1982. Critical Theory Selected Essays. New York: Continuum Publishing. P. 244)

Over the past 90 years (and especially since the 1960s) CT ideology has become firmly entrenched into every aspect of American society, including the church. Its ideas are now assumed to be true by our society, and are no longer questioned. Even if you haven't heard the term Critical Theory before, or aren't exactly sure what it means, chances are you have heard one or more of the following terms, which are part and parcel with CT:

- social justice
- woke
- systems of oppression
- hegemonic power
- diversity
- equality
- equity
- inclusion
- intersectionality
- lived experience
- internalized oppression
- epistemic injustice

The Devil's Scheme

Wokeness teaches a different or false Gospel (2 Cor 11:4, Gal 1:6). It's a man-made attempt to establish justice and peace on earth without God or His laws, so it results in neither. And it's not just a benign, abstract philosophy, but rather it's a worldview that always results in the tangible destruction of human freedom and life. The end goal of Wokeness is to destroy, completely, every vestige of God's law and rule. Wokeness is truly the devil's scheme, and Paul warns us in Eph 6:12 to put on the full armor of God so we can stand against him:

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

During an interview for G3 Ministries in October 2020, John MacArthur warned that the social justice (aka Wokeness) agenda is more dangerous than any other controversy that he’s faced, and perhaps the most dangerous in the last 100 years ([G3 Podcast Episode 31, 30:14 - 42:22](#)). During that same interview he said that “this [wokeness] is the most destructive thing that I’ve ever seen happen to the Evangelical movement” ([starting at 41:24](#)).

Wokeness is Comprehensive

So hopefully the seriousness of this topic has been established. But what is it? What exactly does Wokeness teach? I will attempt to explain that further below, but before doing so I want to share two great resources for understanding Wokeness (or Social Justice). The first is Scott Allen’s great book *Why Social Justice Is Not Biblical Justice*, which I can’t recommend highly enough. And the second is [The Statement on Social Justice & the Gospel](#) (aka “The Dallas Statement”) which was put together by John MacArthur and other faithful Christian leaders back in June of 2018 to help combat this destructive heresy.

So what is it? What exactly does Wokeness teach? As I mentioned above Wokeness is an anti-Christ worldview, which attempts to remove every vestige of God’s law and rule from human life. It is borne out of the radically subjective post-modern worldview, which rejected God and elevated human reason to the place of God. In every aspect of human life and relationships it seeks to remove God’s plan and desires: from our worship of the one and only God, to God’s plan for the church, to God’s plan for marriage, to God’s plan for sexuality, to God’s plan for relationships, to God’s plan for human government. This can be seen clearly in our world today in the following ways:

- Rejecting the reality of sinful human nature
- Celebrating abortion
- Destroying heterosexual marriage
- Embracing promiscuity
- Promoting homosexuality
- Encouraging transgenderism and genital mutilation
- Dividing us as people made in God’s image along racial lines

Make no mistake, all of this is the goal of Wokeness.

Evangelical’s Weakness is Critical Race Theory

While many proclaimed followers of Christ, and churches, are capitulating on God’s plan for marriage and sexuality, this anti-Christ worldview is primarily infiltrating the church through issues of race relations, also known as Critical Race Theory (or CRT for short). Samuel Sey warns of the dangers of Christians embracing CRT in his article [Do Not Grow Weary Rejecting Critical Race Theory](#):

“Critical race theory isn’t just bad theology, it produces a false gospel—a false gospel that’s influencing many Christians to reject what the Bible says about racism and justice.

Many Christians suggest critical race theory is just a little theoretical framework that doesn’t replace their theology. But critical race theory doesn’t just redefine racism and justice. It’s an all-encompassing ideology that redefines a biblical understanding of righteousness and sin—it’s a little leaven that leavens the whole lump.

And for that reason, critical race theory has become one of the most destructive anti-Christ ideologies within local churches today. I’ve received many messages from many Christians lamenting how critical race theory is destroying their local churches, their families, and their friendships.”

Echoing this idea in his masterful book, Scott Allen astutely points out that “[r]ace, more than any other issue, is leading evangelicals into the arms of ideological social justice” (Scott Allen, *Why Social Justice Is Not Biblical Justice*, 142). A few pages later he unpacks why he believes Christians are unwisely embracing CRT:

“... Why are so many influential evangelical teachers and organizations supporting a clearly unbiblical ideology?

There are several possible reasons. First, there is the deceptive “Trojan horse” element of this ideology. On the surface, it champions things all Christians stand for: justice, racial equality, the dignity of women, and love towards those in the LGBTQ+ community. Many Christians embrace ideological social justice because they see it as the next great civil rights movement.

To give these Christian leaders the benefit of the doubt, I’m sure they want to do the right thing. They want to show compassion for those who are hurting. They want to “mourn with those who mourn.” They look at the victims of injustice and see image-bearers of God, and they long for justice to prevail. So they join forces with deeply unbiblical organizations and movements that appear to be biblical on the surface, in their talk of social justice, equality, and the value and dignity of “black lives.” But below this benign surface is an ideology that is incompatible and profoundly hostile to historic Christianity.

Far too many well-intentioned Christians are falling into this trap.

... But perhaps the deepest reason that evangelical leaders are embracing ideological social justice goes back to the great rupture of American Christendom at the beginning of the twentieth century when both mainstream Protestantism and fundamentalism abandoned the biblical worldview, replacing it respectively with either the social gospel or with a form of Gnostic dualism.” (Allen, 166-168)

For Evangelicals this looks and sounds like perpetuating the Woke lies of white evangelicalism, white privilege, white supremacy, systemic racism, theological colonialism and other such Woke beliefs. These Woke beliefs on race have infiltrated the church with the help of many different Christian pastors and authors. These influential books in particular have been the most destructive:

- *Divided by Faith*, Michael Emerson and Christian Smith, 2000
- *Prophetic Lament*, Soong-Chan Rah, 2015

- White Awake, Daniel Hill, 2017
- Woke Church, Eric Mason, 2018
- Insider Outsider, Bryan Loritts, 2018
- The Color of Compromise, Jemar Tisby, 2019
- Be the Bridge, Latasha Marrison, 2019
- Reading While Black, Esau McCaulley, 2020

CRT Litmus Test

So we've seen why Christians have unwisely rushed to embrace Wokeness and the key books that have been used to further mislead the church. But what exactly is Critical Race Theory? And how exactly would you know if you've unwittingly adopted aspects of its worldview? Here is a helpful summary of what CRT believes from [James Lindsay](#):

1. Racism/white supremacy exists everywhere, in every situation, organization, school, law, system, and even human relationship.
2. It demands that one should not ask whether there is or isn't racism in a situation but how the racism manifests itself. Critical Race Theory insists racism must exist everywhere.
3. Everything must be seen through the lens of race and people should not be judged as individuals but rather by their skin color.
4. It demands every person bow to its ideology and become activists who must tear down everything around them through making accusations of racism and constantly changing the definition of words (like "racism" and "privilege").
5. Any disagreement with or criticism of the ideology is seen as proof of the disagreeer's racism. The same with any attempt to use objective evidence to disprove its claims. Critical Race Theory actually rejects the idea of objective truth and meritocracy.
6. Black people can never be racist no matter what they do or say... unless they oppose or stand in the way of Critical Race Theory.

To make it even more concrete, and personal, I would argue that one has embraced CRT (even inadvertently) if any of the following statements are true:

- You believe in White Privilege (that it's oppressive to POC)
- You believe in Systemic Racism (that it's oppressive to POC)
- You believe that White people are systemically racist
- You believe that systemic racism is the cause of disparities between whites and POC
- You believe that being color blind is wrong and harmful to POC
- You believe that white people need to lament and repent
- You believe we need to give preference to POC (in admissions, businesses, art, or Biblical study)
- You believe we need to take ethnicity into account when reading/doing theology
- You believe that we need to read POC to get insight into Scriptures
- You believe that a major focus of the Bible is to address racial/ethnic issues
- You believe that theological colonialism is a major problem amongst American Christians
- You believe that America was actually founded in 1619 (on racism)
- You believe the declaration of independence is racist (and enforces white supremacy)
- You believe that America is fundamentally racist or sexist (or characterized by racism)

- You believe that racism is a unique characteristic of America
- You believe that racism/white supremacy is a major problem in America
- You believe that America still needs to lament and repent for racism today
- You believe that systemic racism is prevalent in American law enforcement systems
- You believe that the idea of objective truth and meritocracy are tools of white supremacists
- You believe that we need to lose the focus on the individual and instead focus on the group

Each and every one of these beliefs are founded on and perpetuated by the lies of the false Woke worldview. For more details see the appendix.

Conclusion

While this has been a very short treatment of an incredibly complex topic, I hope the danger posed by Wokeness is recognized. But even so I expect that much more needs to be done to explain why the lies of Wokeness and CRT are in fact lies. As Scott Allen pointed out above, the lies behind CRT is the area that Christians in particular are the most likely to fall prey to. So towards that end I would again highly recommend reading Scott Allen's book *Why Social Justice Is Not Biblical Justice*. He does a terrific job of explaining this from a thoroughly Christian point of view.

Appendix: More Details on CRT

Critical Race Theory (CRT) attempts to offer an explanation for why there are discrepancies (economic, educational, social, political, etc.) between white people and people of color. It asserts that the world is always divided into two groups, the oppressors (white people) and the oppressed (people of color). As a result, any and all discrepancies between the two groups are the direct result of racism. "The question is not 'Is racism at work?' but 'How is racism manifesting itself here and now?'" ([Mark DeVine](#)).

"CRT teaches that racism is endemic in all white people and in the white colonial founding of America in 1619" ([Mark DeVine](#)). And "only white people are capable of racism, because it is not essentially racial bias or hatred, but 'privilege' connected with long-standing social dominance" (John Zmirak and Al Perrotta, *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Immigration*, 39). Furthermore, those who have privilege (whites) will do anything to hold on to that power, consciously or unconsciously. Systemic racism is the result of those in power structuring society in ways which embeds and secures their power. White people always act in ways to preserve their privilege.

"Rather than judging people as individuals based on their actions or words" ([Allie Beth Stuckey](#)), CRT judges people solely based on the color of their skin. It is the social system and its inherent power dynamics that are seen as the causes of oppression, not necessarily willful individual agents. As a result, an individual white person is still guilty of racism even if they've never mistreated a person of color or never even held a single oppressive view or thought.

Because of this "our fundamental moral duty as human beings is to work for the liberation of oppressed groups" ([Neil Shenvi](#)). But if you accept this view of how society operates then you must accept this conclusion: Racism cannot be ended within the current system because the current system is actually both a byproduct of and a continuing excuse for racism ([Ben Shapiro](#)). The current system must be torn

down and people of color must replace white people. Unfortunately, the cycle will never end, because once people of color are in power then they become the oppressors and white people the oppressed. And the cycle repeats itself. There is no end to this and no hope for the two groups to be reconciled.