

Fake News, False Narratives, and the Gospel

Romans 1:16-17; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 9-27-20

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”
– Romans 1:16-17

There are three things that are very difficult and distressing about these days in our country:

- Fake News (history: what has happened and what is happening)
- False Narratives (interpretation: why things have happened or are happening)
- Destructive Solutions (response: how people are being told to respond)

There is a ‘different gospel’ (CT = Critical Theory or Social Justice or the Social Gospel) [see Galatians 1:6-8] being preached today in our country and we need to compare it with the true gospel, which is what I’d like to do briefly today by answering 5 questions.

1. God and Creation: *God is good!*

Why is there something and not nothing? (Romans 1:18-21; Genesis 1:1) The gospel declares that *there is something and not nothing* because we have been created by a good God Who is supremely revealed in Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:5; 4:8; Psalm 139:13-14) The ‘different’ gospel [such as CT = Critical Theory] declares that *there is something and not nothing* because our existence is ‘godless and meaningless’ and we must simply interact with one another and make the best of our temporary existence based on certain ‘groupings.’

So what is the gospel?

- That you have been carefully and individually created in the image of a perfectly holy and loving God and therefore, have great inherent value?
- Or that you came from nothing and you’re going to nothing and your only source of identity and meaning is in your ‘groupings’ and in the meantime, you have to make the best of it by vying for supremacy for your group?

2. Man and the Fall: *We are not good!*

What’s wrong with the world? (Romans 3:10-12, 23; 5:12; 6:23) The gospel declares that *what is wrong with the world* is the reality of the universal sinfulness of mankind and the just consequences of evil and suffering that it brings. (Luke 18:9-14, 18-19) A different gospel [CT] declares that *what is wrong with the world* is oppression through ideology.

So what is the gospel?

- That I am a sinner who needs a Savior?
- Or that I am a victim who has to save myself?

3. Jesus and Redemption: *He took our place!*

How do we fix it? (Romans 5:6 (See also Romans 5:7-10) The gospel declares that the only way to *fix it* is for God to do something for us and that's what He's graciously done in providing His own Son, Jesus, to be our Substitute in life and death and resurrection. (John 3:16; Galatians 2:20-21) The different gospel [CT] declares that *we fix it* by recognizing that we must save ourselves by changing the dominant narrative and norms and values through the power of lived experience, state control and deconstructive revolution.

So what is the gospel?

- That God has provided a Savior for sinners?
- Or that we must save ourselves?

4. Judgment and Consummation: *The best is yet to come!*

What comes next? (Romans 8:18-25; Romans 2:2-6, 16; Hebrews 9:27; Matthew 4:23; 2 Peter 3:13; Matthew 5:20) The gospel declares that *what comes next* is that Jesus, who rules and reigns now, will one day return to judge all men and to bring heaven to earth in the kingdom of God which will be filled with righteousness, joy and peace. (Psalm 16:11; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14) The different gospel [CT] declares that *what comes next* is that mankind will create its own utopia/heaven on earth in which everyone will be equal in wealth/status (equality of outcome) and independent in lifestyle/practice and peace/security will envelope the earth.

So what is the gospel?

- That Jesus will make sure that justice has been served regarding every sin and the righteous will enjoy full and lasting joy in God's presence?
- Or that mankind will determine who gets what and who does what and who lives?

5. Faith and the Free Offer: *Turn and trust and live!*

What do we need to do? (Romans 10:9) The gospel declares that *what we need to do* is to repent (turn from our sin to God for mercy and grace to be delivered from our sin) and believe (trust Jesus as our Savior and Lord). (Acts 20:21; Romans 3:21-22a) The different gospel [CT] declares that *what we need to do* is to work to overcome oppression (in whatever way we can) as an activist in the social justice movement and then we will be 'righteous.'

So what is the gospel?

- That we can be saved by turning from sin and entrusting ourselves to Jesus?
- Or that we are saved by earning our own righteousness by overcoming oppression?