

Race issue - 2

种族问题浅谈（二）

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□ *What is Social Justice?*

什么是社会公正？

“Social Justice” is a rather vague term being floated around these days. The most concise definition I’ve come across is this: equity in terms of distribution of wealth, opportunity, privilege, and resources in a society. Regarding the issue of race, social justice pertains to the idea that America is fundamentally racist toward people of color and we need to change the system to achieve more equitable results for people of color. There are two areas of debate pertaining to this discussion. First, is it actually true that America is fundamentally racist and in need of change? Second, even if the premise is true, should the church participate in this effort? And if so, how?

Regarding both questions, I answer *no*.

“社会公正”一词最近常常见诸媒体，意思却很含糊。我能找到的最简洁的定义是：在一个社会里，财富、机会、特权和资源分配公平。涉及到种族问题时，社会公正跟这种思想捆绑在一起，认为：美国从骨子里歧视有色人种，我们需要改变她的体系来为有色人种争取公平的结果。我想就两点展开讨论：一，美国真的从骨子里歧视有色人种并需要改变吗？二，即便是，教会需要参与吗？如果需要，如何参与？

对这两个问题，我的答案都是否定的。

□ *Is America fundamentally racist?*

美国骨子里有种族歧视吗？

There is a political narrative being pushed today that America is fundamentally racist. Before we address this issue, it is important to first define what we mean by “racist.” Traditionally, to be racist means to look down on someone and treat them as inferior on account of their skin color. In other words, it is favoritism or partiality based on skin color. Racism can be manifested economically or politically through discriminatory practices based on one’s skin color. So, for example, if a colored man wanted to eat at

a restaurant, he would not be allowed to eat there on account of his skin color, even if he were a willing customer able to pay for the food. Or, for example, during the Jim Crow era of the South, there were one set of laws for whites, and another set of laws for blacks. There are two different standards for people, based on their skin color. This is no longer true in America since the Civil Rights Act of 1964, when discrimination on race has been made illegal.

现今，一种被炒作的政治言论就是美国从骨子里歧视有色人种。在我们讨论这个问题之前，有个重要的定义得先弄明白：什么叫种族主义？（在美国）传统上，种族主义就是因别人的肤色低看别人，把他们当劣等人种对待。换句话说，种族主义是因肤色引起的偏爱或偏见。在经济和政治领域，种族主义体现为对肤色不同的人区别对待。比如，一个肤色深的人想去某家餐馆吃饭，他愿意付账也付得起账，却不让他进，不为别的，只因他的肤色深了点。又比如，在吉姆克劳（Jimmy Crow）时期，美国南方施行两套法律，白人一套黑人一套。白人黑人肤色不同，法律的标准也就不一样。但是，1964年《民权法案》通过后，美国就不再这样了，种族歧视是违法的。

However, starting in the 1960-70s, and more and more prevalent today, the definition of racism has changed. Proponents of social justice today employ the term “racism” differently. Today, it pertains primarily to inequality of outcome and inequality of power. That is, if a colored man does not achieve the same level of status, or wealth, or privilege as a white man while participating in an institution, then the institution is “racist.” And those who disproportionately benefit from the institution are “racist” by association.

然而，20世纪60-70年代起，种族主义的定义就开始变，而且变得越来越离谱。今天，社会公正的推手们所谓的“种族歧视”更多指的是结果与权力的不均等，跟几十年前的意思完全不一样。就是说，如果一个肤色深的人在一个机构里没有获得与白人同等的地位、财富或特权，这个机构就存在种族歧视，那些在这个机构里不成比例受益的人就成了所谓的种族主义者。（编者注：照社会公正的推手们的说法，好大学不成比例地招收亚裔学生，就是搞种族歧视，亚裔学生不成比例地进了好大学，就是种族主义者；要消弭这种种族歧视，就得人为地干预大学招生，保证录取结果的均等，而不问学生的付出。）

Biblically speaking, there are various texts that condemn racism in the traditional sense of the word (Acts 10:34-35, James 2:8-9). That is, we are not allowed to treat different people by different standards. However, the second sense of the term racism is unbiblical. The bible nowhere demands that society be structured with equality of outcome (i.e. privilege and power) between different tribal groups.

圣经上多处谴责传统意义上的种族主义（使徒行传 10: 34-35，雅各书 2: 8-9）。神不允许我们用不同的标准对待不同的族群。但是，上面提到的第二种种族主义却不符合圣经教导。圣经上从来没要求一个社会必须这样构建：保证不同族群能取得相同的结果，包括特权和权力。

To take an example, Israel was composed of 12 tribes, but not all twelve have equal power or privilege. In Genesis 49, Jacob gives different blessings to each son. Some had more blessings than others, even though it is not obvious why some should have more while others less. Then later during the period of the conquest of Canaan, each tribe were to be allotted according to their size (Num. 33:54). However, this was not actually the case, as the tribes of Dan, Issachar, and Zebulun received disproportionately smaller shares of the land, even though they were three of the most populous tribes (Josh. 19:10-23, 40-46). One may say that this is unfair. However, none of the judges, kings, prophets, not even God himself, ever condemns this uneven distribution of privileges. However, the Mosaic Law always applied to every tribe, and every individual within that tribe. God is concerned about impartiality (Lev. 19:15, Ex. 23:2-3). But he does not demand that every people group have equality of outcome. The secular mantra that “inequality of outcome is unjust” does not stand biblical scrutiny. As Christians, we cannot tolerate an unbiblical redefinition of justice. To do so is to call evil good and good evil (Isa. 5:20).

举个例子，以色列有十二支派，但不都有同等的权力。创世记 49 章记载，雅各临终前给十二个儿子祝福，有的得到的多，有的得到的少，圣经没告诉我们什么原因。之后征服迦南时，各支派本该按照人数多少分地（民数记 33: 54），事实却非如此。但、以萨迦和西布伦三支派人多，分到的地却不成比例的小（约书亚记 19: 10-23, 40-46）。也许，有人说这不公平。但是，没有哪位士师、君王或先知，甚至神自己谴责这种分地的不均。另一方面，摩西的律法适用于每个支派，适用于每个人。神不允许我们偏待人（利未记 19: 15，出埃及记 23: 2-3）。这就是神要求的公正。他没要求所有族群都有相同的结果。俗语说“结果不均就是不平等”，这话经不起圣经的检验。作为基督徒，我们不能容忍对“公正”一词的不符合圣经的重新定义。那样做等于称恶为善，称善为恶（以赛亚书 5: 20）。

Furthermore, even from a common sensical perspective, there is a fundamental flaw in this type of thinking. This framework doesn't account for human agency and personal responsibility. Equal outcome can only be expected if every person, or groups of people, were exactly the same in terms of talent, intelligence, values, culture, and work ethic. Real life experience tells us that any such expectations are absurdly unrealistic. For example, Asians are extremely underrepresented in American pro-sports. Is

America systemically racist against Asians? While I will not deny that there are individual instances of racial discrimination (i.e. Jeremy Lin), it is very disingenuous to say that racism rather than culture accounts for the Asian underrepresentation in pro sports. The fact is Asian people just do not value sports as much as other racial groups. There is an inequality in outcome, true. But let's not kid ourselves and blame it on the system or white people when the reality is that most Asian families and students care more about grades and violin than playing professional basketball.

更进一步，眼下这种社会公正的思潮从常理看也有一个原则性的错误：它没有考虑人的选择与责任。只有每个人、每个族群的天赋、才智、价值观、文化及职业道德完全相同，才可能出现结果的均等。实际生活告诉我们，这根本不现实，这种期待很荒唐。举个例子，亚裔在美国职业体育界的代表性严重不足，这是否意味着美国歧视亚裔？我不否认歧视亚裔的个案的存在（比如林书豪所遭遇的），但若说“亚裔在美国职业体育界代表性严重不足是种族歧视的结果”就是胡说八道了。要是这样的话，怎么解释亚裔在学术界的卓越表现呢？事实上，亚裔对于体育的重视程度远不及其他族裔。亚裔家庭和学生更关心学习成绩和拉小提琴，而不是职业篮球。亚裔在职业体育界的代表性严重不足是文化理念的差异造成的，我们不能自欺欺人地怪罪体制或种族歧视。

This same principle can be applied to other issues. For example, blacks and brown people are under-represented in colleges. That is true. But what do we do with the well-documented fact that there is an anti-intellectual culture within many black communities? Or regarding the example of the prison system, young black males are disproportionately represented in prisons compared to whites. This is true. But what do we do with the fact that young black males commit a disproportionate amount of violent crimes (over half of violent crimes are committed by black males, which is eight times the rate of white males)? Is it possible that these cultural differences between racial groups account for the disparities in educational attainment and incarceration rates? One would have to purposely ignore a large swath of data to push for the narrative that every major institution in America is purposely discriminating against people solely based on their skin color.

同样的原则可以运用到其他方面。例如，黑色和黄色人种（编者注：指墨西哥裔）在大学里代表性不足。这是事实。但是，有据可查的事实表明许多黑人社区崇尚读书无用论。我们讨论黑人在大学里代表性不足的时候，不能忽略这点吧？还有，跟白人比起来，监狱里的黑人不成比例的高，这也是事实。但是，我们讨论坐监的问题的时候，也不能视而不见年轻黑人男性犯罪率高的事实吧（美国一半以上的暴力犯罪是黑人男性干的，按人口比例，这是白人的 8 倍）？不同种族在教育水平和坐监率上的差异是不是因为文化差异而造成的呢？一个人需要故意无视大量的数据事实才能大肆渲染“美国每个主要机构都故意根据肤色歧视有色人种”。

□ *The Case Against Social Justice*

对社会公正的批判

Even if it can be granted that America is an imperfect society (which can be said of every society), to what extent should the church get involved in political-social activism? It would be helpful to remember that the mission of the church is to go and make disciples of all the nations (Matt. 28:19). Our job as a church is to save people's soul from hell. The only way that can happen is for individuals to recognize their individual sins, repent and believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. And in order for that to happen, the church needs to preach the gospel (Rom. 10:14).

即便说美国是个不完美的社会（可以说每个国家都不完美），教会应该在多大程度上参与社会政治运动呢？我们要谨记一点：教会的使命是去让万民做耶稣的门徒（马太福音 28：19）。教会的工作就是拯救人的灵魂，不至于下地狱。唯一的方法就是让人认自己的罪，悔改，相信耶稣基督，接受耶稣做他们的救主和主。要完成这一使命，教会要去传讲福音（罗马书 10：14）。

Now many people cite Jesus' example of helping the poor and healing the sick as a model to engage in "holistic missions" (i.e. we preach the gospel *and* make the world into a better place). However, a few qualifications are needed.

现今，有很多人引述耶稣救助穷人、医治病人的例子，认为这是“整全的布道”的典范（既传讲福音，又改变世界）。但是，这是有前提的。

First, there is a difference between helping the poor and ending poverty. The former entails helping the poor out of a regenerated heart. That is, it is a *natural* act flowing from a compassionate heart. The latter is a mission, a goal, a program. Jesus certainly helped the poor, but he was not interested in ending poverty. He healed lepers, but he did not seek to end leprosy. Jesus calls us to have compassion, and compassion will naturally flow toward our neighbors when the situation presents itself. But Jesus also affirmed that there will always be poverty, pain, suffering on this side of heaven (Matt. 26:11, Rom. 8:18-21). To expect the church to actually succeed in ridding injustice and suffering in the world, even if we tried, is quite naïve.

首先，帮助穷人和消除贫困是有区别的。前者是帮助穷人有一颗新造的心，是由爱心而生出的好行为；后者是一项任务，一个目标，一项工程。耶稣当然帮过穷人，但他无意消除贫困。他医治大麻疯病人，但无意消除大麻疯病。耶稣呼唤我们要有同情心，当邻舍遇到困境，我们会自然而然地帮助他们。同时，耶稣也指出这世上会有贫穷、痛苦和苦难（马太福音 26: 11，罗马书 8: 18-21）。期待教会成功消除世上的不公正与苦难，就太天真了，即使尝试去做，也不会成功。

Second, whatever physical healings Jesus performed served to authenticate his preaching (Mk. 1:38, Jn. 20:30-31, Acts 2:22). The miracles and healings were not primarily meant to make people's lives better physically. Jesus worked these miracles to credit the gospel message he preached so that people can put their faith in him as the messiah. In cases where his miracles did not produce faith in himself, Jesus withheld his providence and miracles (cf. Matt. 13:58, Jn. 6:26-66). The call for social justice today often times is an end in itself, as if somehow making the world a better place has intrinsic value apart from regenerating the hearts of individual men and women.

其次，耶稣所行的医治都是为了证明他所传的道（马可福音 1: 38，约翰福音 20: 30-31，使徒行传 2: 22）。神迹和医治的主要目的不是为了让人在地上过的更好一些。耶稣行神迹是为了辅助他传讲福音，帮助人相信他就是弥赛亚。如果神迹不能帮助人建立对他的信心，耶稣就不施行神迹了（马太福音 13: 58，约翰福音 6: 26-66）。今天，人们常常把追求社会公正当作终极目标，仿佛男女都无需洗心革面、只要能使这个世界变得更好就有内在价值。

Third, whatever good we can bring to this world will ultimately be burned up in the end when Jesus returns and makes the New Heaven and New Earth (2 Pet. 3:10, Rev. 21:5). Let's say you were on the Titanic as it was sinking into the ocean. Everyone on the ship is going down with it. But then another cruise ship comes along to save the passengers. It would be extremely foolish to expend your energy trying to salvage the Titanic from its inevitable demise. The proper response would be to spend all your energy getting onto the other ship and helping others to do the same. When it comes to salvation, the analogy is the same. This world is destined for destruction. God is creating a new world, a new kingdom – one without sin, pain, suffering, and death. He's calling us to believe in Jesus so we can have a place in his kingdom. But if we instead focus our efforts on salvaging this current kingdom, we'll go down with it. Our job is not to patch up the current kingdom, but to get ourselves and as many people as possible to God's kingdom.

最后，当耶稣再来，创造新天新地的时候，我们为这个世界所能做的一切都将化为灰烬（彼得后书 3: 10，启示录 21: 5）。假设你在即将沉入大海的泰坦尼克号上，船上每个人都要随之沉没。当一艘救援轮来搭救乘客时，一个人想尽力拯救注定要灭亡的泰坦尼克号，那是非常愚蠢的。正确的做法是他竭尽全力上那艘救援轮，并帮助其他人上船。论到救恩，同样的道理。这个世界注定要被毁灭。神要创造一个新的世界，一个新的国度——一个没有罪、没有痛苦、没有苦难和死亡的世界。神呼召我们信靠耶稣，好在神的国里有份。如果我们将全部精力用于挽救这个世界，就会同它一起灭亡。我们要做的不是修补这个世界，而是让自己和更多的人进入神的国。

The goal of the church is to make disciples. If we can make the world into a better place along the way, then great. But if not, then we are not to worry about it. When Jesus comes back, he will make all things new. Our job is to participate in the work of the Holy Spirit now and get people into God's kingdom. Ten thousand years from now, the church will not look back on this life and regret the temporal physical sufferings we could have alleviated in this brief generation. However, we will regret the souls who suffer eternally in hell. In that place the worms never die and the fire never quenches. The damned are forever shut from the presence of God, without rest, without light, without hope. If you truly want to do the work of God, pray and work for the salvation of those yet to know Christ. Let him take care of the rest.

教会的目的是使人做耶稣的门徒。如果能顺便使这个世界变好一点，那当然好。如果不能，也不用担心。当耶稣再来，他将更新一切。我们的任务就是与圣灵同工，使更多的人进入神的国。一万年以后，教会不会回顾这短暂的今生，不会因为我们没有做更多以减轻身体之苦而懊悔，只会为那些在地狱里受苦的灵魂而懊悔，在那里虫是不死的，火是不灭的。落入地狱的人会永远与神隔绝，没有安息，没有光明，没有盼望。如果你真的想为主做工，请为还不认识基督的人祷告，向他们传福音，剩下的就交给神。